

Looking Into Graduate Schools - How To Be Successful in the Application Process

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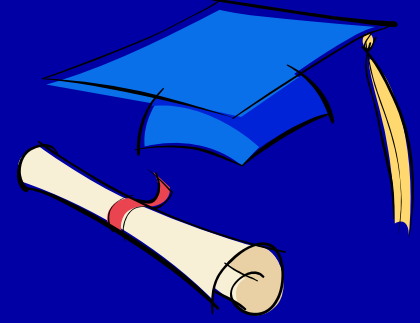


What are your goals?

Obtaining Graduate Degree that Makes a Difference!



A Difference of Degree...



Doctorate vs Masters of Science Degree

Conventional Discipline (Chemistry, Physics, Biology) vs
Specialized Degree Area

Engineering – Masters is the Working Degree

Other Sciences – Ph.D.

Industry in many cases looks for Masters Degrees

Research Institutions look for Ph.D.

Choosing a School..

Unlike Undergraduate Education – Graduate Education is mentored by your Faculty Thesis Advisor.

MENTORS vs TORMENTORS...

Selecting a Thesis Advisor should be a Main Focus of Looking at Graduate Programs – ESPECIALLY FOR Ph.D.

Seasoned Veteran vs New Faculty Member...

BIG NAME vs NEW KID ON THE BLOCK.

Pros and Cons of Each

Consider your Strengths and Weaknesses

Do you feel you need lot of Guidance..

Or are you confident in working on your own..

Tenured Faculty vs Asst. Professors

Tenure Process can be Stressful for Students as well as Faculty.

Choosing a school

- Masters programs typically 1-2 years
- Ph.D. programs typically 4-5 years
- Its not a LIFE SENTENCE – even though it may feel like a life sentence..
- Getting the Best Training and Education should be first on your list of goals.. Not where your Boy or Girl Friend is deciding to go to school in English Literature...Nor should you be focused on if there is a Beach nearby..



The Application

- GRE scores (do your best.. And if you have a bad day consider retaking)
- DON'T WAIT UNTIL LAST MINUTE..
- ASK ADVICE ABOUT ESSAYS.. These are important and should not be written as what I did on my summer vacation.. Also put reasonable goals – inventing “warp-drive” should be kept to minimum...
- REFERENCES.. Give them a HEADS UP.
Also – Read the Signs.. If you get the feeling that potential reference is uncomfortable writing a letter.. Find another reference – bad or weak reference can kill your application!

TRANSCRIPTS – PLAN AHEAD!

CALL THE DEPARTMENTS TO MAKE SURE APPLICATION IS COMPLETE AND RECEIVED!

So To How Many Schools Should I Apply ?

- Cost of Applications..
- References Get Tired – so Too Many not Good..
- Visiting the Departments Before Hand virtually and in person.
- Talk to Faculty Members and GRADUATE STUDENTS.
- Grad. School is a Marriage.. Both should benefit from your being there!

Going Straight to Graduate School vs Working for Awhile

- Don't expect to find a "research" job with a B.S.
- B.S. degree will land you "technician" positions.
- Working can help to give you the insight into your "real" goals if you want to do research.
- Waiting for too long can lead to "problems" in course work, needing to refresh knowledge base, etc.

Other issues...

- Marriage
- Kids
- Too late to go back?
- Too late to try another field?
- Troubles in Graduate School – Never Give Up Never Surrender!

GRAF Opportunity

- Complete one year in graduate school
- Continue graduate education in Climate Change Research Areas where DOE Climate Change Research Division is active.
- Find Two Mentors – University Advisor and DOE Advisor (not at same institution).
- Apply for GRAF (Bridging Opportunity)
- DO ASK FOR ADVICE.. That's what were here for!

Ok.. So you made it.. And now you hit some “Bumps in the Road?”

- Graduate Advisor turns out to be Mr. Hyde..
- Graduate Advisor does not get Tenure
- Graduate Advisor moves
- Problems with Comps (Ok.. So take the M.S. and move on to another school)
- Your thesis project does not work out
- Bad Thesis project

■ COMMUNICATION KEY TO SOLVING ALL...

Don't isolate yourself and keep self pity to a minimum!

<http://www.er.doe.gov/>

<http://www.ualr.edu>

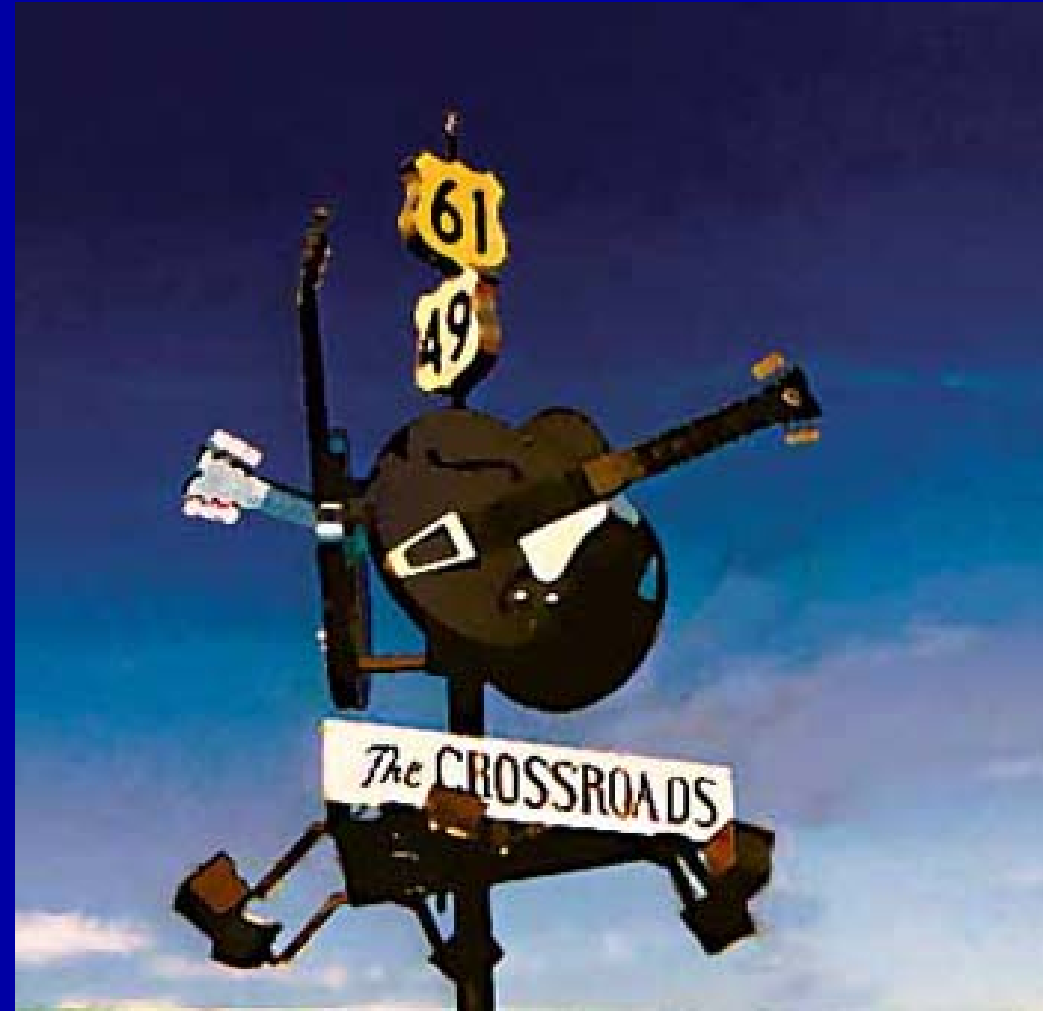
NEED DIRECTIONS –
BE HAPPY TO HELP
LEAD YOU DOWN
THE RIGHT PATH
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HAVE A GREAT SUMMER IN GCEP!