


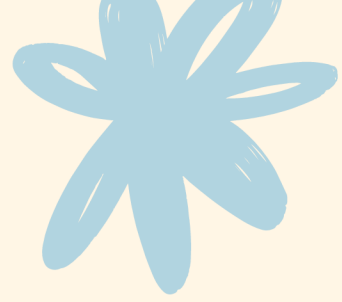
Careers in Psychology & Applying to Graduate School

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An illustration of a woman with long black hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt and a red vest. She is holding a red laptop in her left hand and a white tablet in her right hand. The tablet shows a simplified diagram of a computer interface with a window, a keyboard, and a mouse. To her right is a large whiteboard with a brown border and a window-like header with three icons (minimize, maximize, close). The whiteboard contains the text "What can you do with your degree after you graduate?". The background is a solid blue color with decorative elements: a pink curved shape on the left, a red flower-like shape at the top left, and a large red shape at the bottom right.

What can you do
with your degree
after you
graduate?



Working with a Bachelor's Degree

- You can work in a variety of positions with a Bachelor's Degree.
- You can work with chronic psychiatric patients, people in correctional facilities, and drug rehabilitation patients.
- However, you may also find yourself working in advertisement, research, or state department health and human services.



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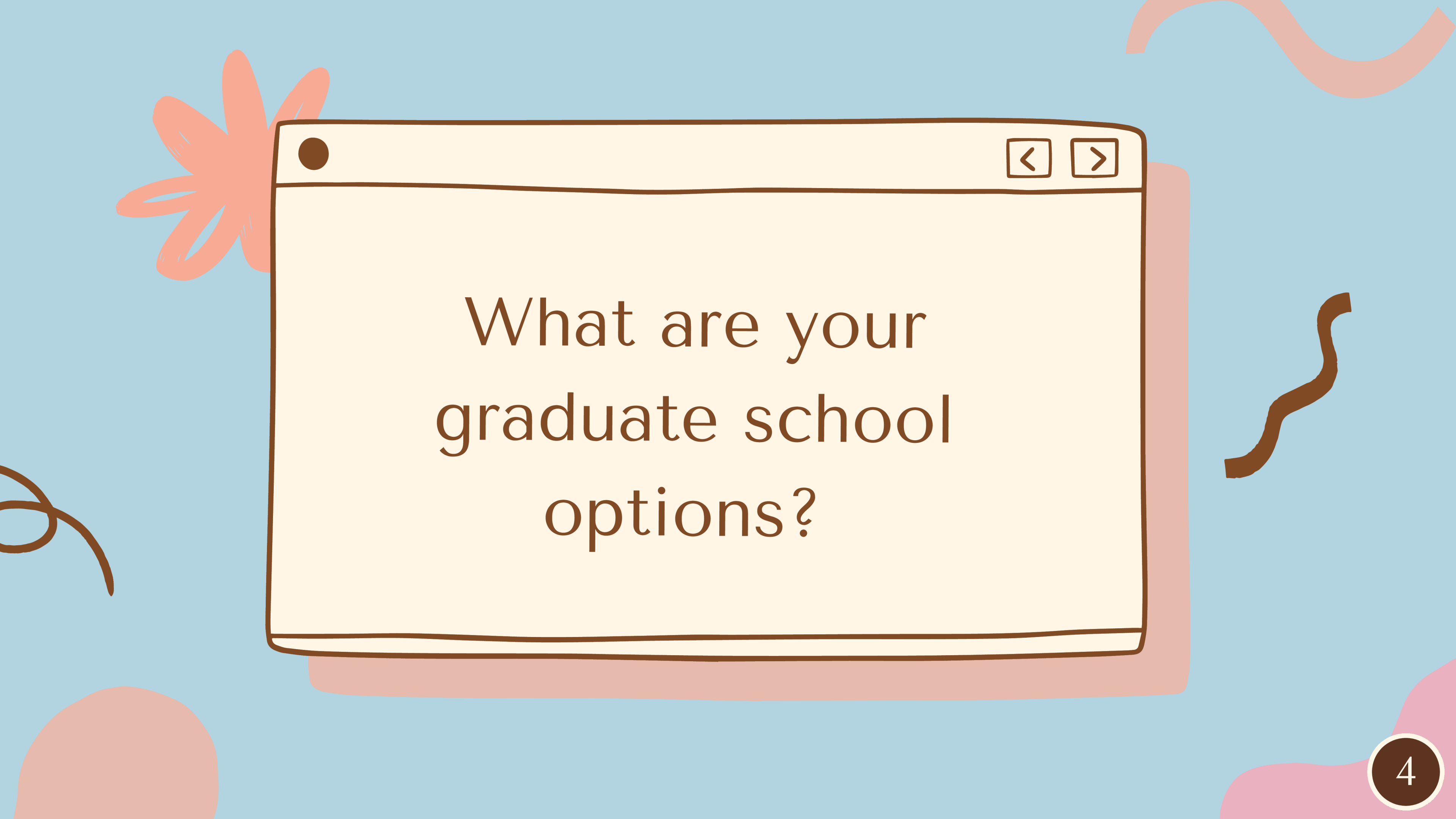
WORK SETTINGS:

- Vocational rehabilitation clinics
- Correctional institutions
- Mental health facilities
- Universities
- Research Labs embedded in organizations (e.g. military post)

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POSITIONS:

- Data analyst
- Case management specialist
- Career counselor
- Psychiatric technician
- Marketing researcher
- Research Assistant
- Project Coordinator
- Lab Manager
- Psychology Teacher at the high school level (but keep in mind many states also require a teaching certificate)



What are your
graduate school
options?

The Different Helping Professions

TYPES OF GRADUATE DEGREES IN **PSYCHOLOGY**:

- Clinical - MA, Ph.D., Psy.D.
- Counseling - MA, Ph.D.
- School - MA, Ph.D.
- Industrial/ Organizational - Ph.D.,
Human Engineering - Ph.D.

TYPES OF GRADUATE DEGREES IN **PSYCHOLOGY**:

- Community - Ph.D.
- Neuropsychology - Ph.D.
- Psychological Associate - MA

The Different Helping Professions

LICENSES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE:

- Psychology (Ph.D. in Clinical, Counseling, or School)
- Psychiatry (M.D.)
- Social Work (LSW, Ph.D.)

LICENSES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE:

- Licensed Professional Counselor
- Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist
- Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor

The Different Helping Professions

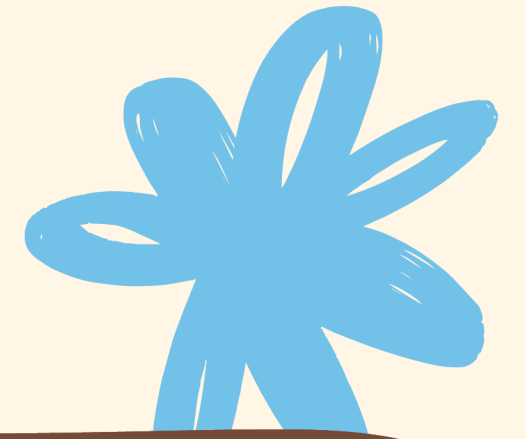
ALLIED AREAS:

- Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor-MA
- Licensed Professional Counselor (Life Crisis Counseling)-MA
- Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor-BA

ALLIED AREAS:

- Social Work-BSW, MSW, Ph.D.
- Psychiatric Nursing-Ph.D.
- Psychiatry-M.D.

Careers in Research



Employment in Research Labs

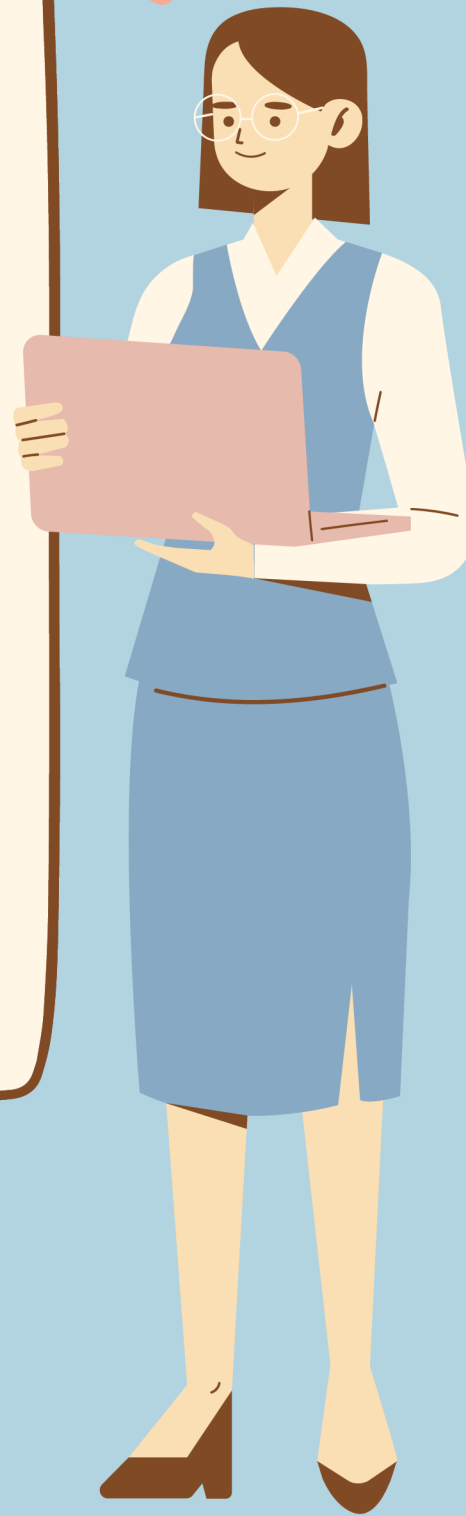
- Research Labs in Psychology Departments
- Independent Research Labs
 - Education Testing Service
 - Stanford Research Institute
 - Battelle Research Institute

- US Government Research Labs
 - Public Health Service
 - National Institutes of Mental Health
 - US Department of Defense Labs
- Consumer Products Industry Market Research

Different Degrees

The next 3 slides break down the different degrees that you can pursue in graduate school. The degree you pursue is dependent on the following -->

- How much time and money do you want to spend on graduate school?
- What do you want to be able to do in your career?
- Which degree fits best with your career interests?





Master's Degree

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In a Master's program, one trains to become a psychology professional. A psychology professional will consider how to apply the principles of psychology to solve specific problems that their client may have. Choosing which type of Master's degree you want will help you prepare for which area you want to work in. Degrees include:

- Clinical Social Work
- Marriage and Family Therapy
- Mental Health Counseling
- School Counseling



Master's Degree

2/2



After obtaining a Master's degree you can get licensed to become a therapist. Requirements vary from state to state, so it's important to find out what you need to qualify for licensure. Potential licenses include:

- Licensed Clinical Social Worker
 - (LCSW)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist
 - (LMFT)
- Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor
 - (LPC or LPCC)

Ph.D. or Psy.D. ?

ACCORDING TO THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION:

The Ph.D. is generally regarded as a **research degree**. Although many professional psychology programs award the Ph.D. degree — especially those in university academic departments — these programs typically have a greater emphasis on producing new knowledge and engaging in research.

A Ph.D. can open doors for you to pursue a career in research and/or academia.

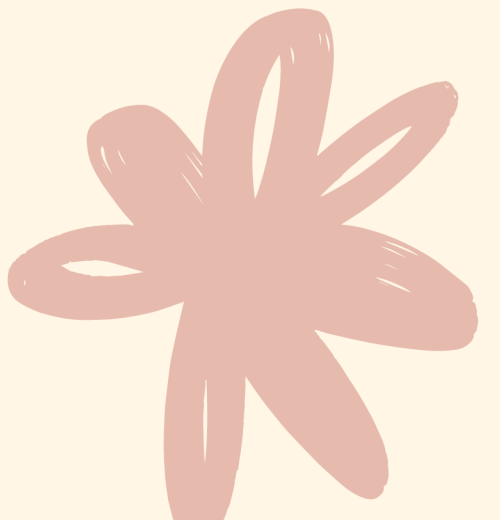

Psy.D. programs generally have much less of an emphasis on research than Ph.D. programs.

The Psy.D. is a **professional degree in psychology generally offered by private schools**. Programs conferring the Psy.D. degree focus heavily on the application of psychological science to provide a service to individuals or groups.



What Area of Psychology Interests You?

The next 5 slides will explore some of the areas of psychology that you can consider for graduate school. Think about:



Which of these areas align with your interests and skills?

What population of people do you want to work with and in what context?

How much time do you want to invest in your degree?



The Different Areas of Graduate Study



THERE ARE SEVERAL TYPES OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN PSYCHOLOGY. SOME OF THESE AREAS ARE:

- Developmental
- Social and Personality
- Biopsychology
- Cognitive
- Behavioral Neuroscience
- Cognitive Neuroscience
- Clinical, Counseling
- Perception Brain & Behavior
- School
- Industrial-Organizational (I-O) Psychology



THERE ARE ALSO OTHER TYPES OF GRADUATE SCHOOLS THAT OFFER FIELDS RELATED TO PSYCHOLOGY.

For example, UT Austin's School of Human Ecology contains a Department of Human Development and Family Sciences. They "emphasize research, teaching, and training in individual development and relationship processes."

Counseling and Clinical Programs

(approx. 6-7 years for Ph.D., Ed.D., Psy.D.; 2-3 years for Master's degree)



Similarities

- Clinical practice
- Diagnostic assessment
- Individual, family, and group counseling
- Academia (research and teaching)



Differences

- Counseling and Clinical Programs tend to be more similar than different.
- However, Clinical Programs may place more emphasis on “psychopathology training and external practicum opportunities” - R. Morgan and L. Cohen, APA.org

- Counseling Programs may allow for more course and training flexibility within the program.

Find the people you're most interested in working with and don't worry about whether they're counseling or clinical.

Did you know?



“A smaller percentage of applicants gain admission to clinical psychology doctoral (Ph.D.) programs than to law school, medical school, or any other type of advanced graduate degree program”*

Prinstein M (2017). Mitch’s uncensored advice for applying to graduate school in clinical psychology. Retrieved from [Prinstein, M. \(2017\). Mitch’s uncensored advice for applying to graduate school in clinical psychology. Retrieved on July, 20, 2019.](#)

School Psychology

(approx. 6-7 years for Ph.D., Ed.D., Psy.D.; 2-3 years for Master's degree)

The school psychology program at UT Austin follows a science-practitioner model to "prepare PhD psychologists to understand and enhance the development of children and adolescents in context."

This program includes training in the foundations of psychology, research, the practice of competency and ethics in the application of assessment, intervention, and consultation.

School psychologists provide important services in these systems, including:

- assessment and diagnosis of behavioral and learning problems of students
- implementation of therapeutic interventions
- consultation with families, administrators, and teachers.

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

(Master's 2-3 years, Ph.D., Psy.D. 6-7 years)

I-O psychologists work in business doing psychological assessments, testing, interpersonal mediation, group dynamic assessments, and workshops on stress, depression, communication skills, etc.*

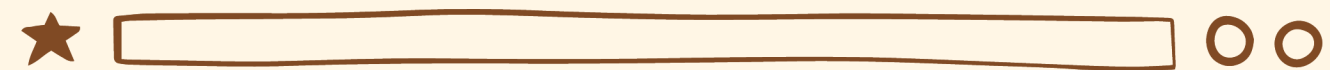
As an I-O psychologist, you may be hired to work for a private business or decide to do freelance work.

I-O psychologists may also participate in the selection of employees through an evaluation process.

*Graduate School & Careers in Psychology. (n.d.). Retrieved September 27, 2016, from <http://psych.wisc.edu/newman/Pages/Graduate%20School%20&%20Careers%20in%20Psychology.html>

Psychiatry

(M.D., minimum. 3-4 years of training after Medical School; full time) NO RESPH



Psychiatrists tend to work in hospitals, clinics, and private practice. They usually work with patients who have more severe disorders (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder) although some psychiatrists prefer working with patients who have less severe disorders.



According to the American Psychiatric Association, after completing medical school and taking a written exam for a state license in the practice of medicine, one would pursue a minimum four year residency for psychiatry. **During this residency**, one spends time “learning the diagnosis and treatment of mental health, including various forms of psychotherapy and the use of psychiatric medications and other treatments. Training takes place in in-patient, out-patient, and emergency room settings.”



Choosing the Right Graduate School

- What are your research interests?
- What population do you want to work with?
- Do the graduate schools you are applying to have what you need in a program for both your academic growth and your immediate needs?

The next 4 slides contains information that you may want to consider when looking at graduate schools.

Applying to a Lab

- Very often, when you apply to graduate schools, you may be applying to a lab rather than the school as a whole.
- When professors chose graduate applicants to work in their lab, they look for people whose research interests are similar to their own and who have worked with similar populations. Keep this in mind when choosing which labs you want to apply to.
- One way to get to know these professors is by reading their published works as well as their current research interests. Use your university's library database to check out what their interests are. Additionally, the programs you are applying to should have a short bio about them, information about their lab, and their CV.



Financial Assistance

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- Consider what kind of financial assistance the graduate program can provide for you.
- One form of support is a research assistantship, which pays you to help conduct research for a professor or a lab.
- Another is a teaching assistantship, which pays you to help a professor teach a course.
- You might also receive fellowships or grants through your lab, psychology department, or university. These fellowships vary in amount and time they are available.

Financial Assistance

1/2



- Again, your university should have this information available online. Some universities only supply these forms of financial support for a specific amount of time or after certain requirements are met. It's important to know the different ways you can support yourself financially, so that you can plan accordingly.
- Keep in mind that cost of living varies city-to-city. Do research on how much you need to budget for rent, food, commute, ect. If you have the chance, talk to grad students in the area to get an estimate of what to expect.

Applying now or later?

- A lot of students apply to graduate school right after they graduate. If you feel that you will lose motivation or direction after taking time off, then applying immediately could be best for you.
- However, if you need to take time off before applying you can do that. Spend this time saving money or getting more psychology-related experience. Working in a lab doing research would be an asset to your application and show that you are a motivated individual.
- It is important that you stay involved in psychology-related jobs/activities. A gap year without any “purpose” could hurt your chances.
- Another thing to consider is that the quicker you apply, the more relevant your letters of recommendation will stay.



What do grad schools look for?


★ Slides 21 to 25 covers the different documents and activities that graduate schools use to determine your eligibility for their program.


- What have you done so far that demonstrates your abilities and talents in psychology?
- What can you do in the future that increases your eligibility for your desired program?
- Which of these things can you work on in the timeline that you have?





Applying to Graduate School (GPA)

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- Grade point average is an important aspect of your application. The higher your GPA, the better your chances of getting in to graduate school.
 - Very competitive programs may look for GPAs at 3.5 or higher and many may not consider anyone under that GPA.

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- If you have an explanation for a low GPA (such as trouble adjusting, a personal crisis, one bad class, etc.) consider mentioning it in your statement of purpose. Additionally, mention how you overcame that obstacle, and why it won't be an issue in the future. However, be careful not to spend too much time or space on this.
 - Upper division GPA and psychology course GPA is usually more important than lower division GPA.

Applying to Graduate School

(Letters of Recommendation)

- Obtain a minimum of 3 letters from psychology professors.
- They may be able to compensate for GPAs and GREs that are weak.

- Get involved in a research lab. Letters from faculty research advisors can be great assets to your application.
- Form relationships with faculty. The more they get to know you, the more potential the letter has to be authentic and convincing.

When you ask a professor to write a letter for you, make it easier for them to write the letter you want by giving them relevant information about yourself, courses that you took, your grades, and any activities you participated that are relevant to the programs you are applying to.



Applying to Graduate School

(Research Experience)

✕ □ -

Being involved in research labs is a great benefit to your application. The applied skills and experience that you gain from a lab may not be something that you can gain from a normal course. Ask a professor that you've previously had a course with if you can volunteer in their lab.

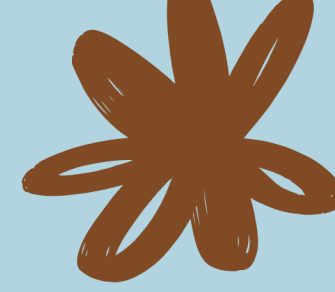
✕ □ -

The best labs to work in are those whose research interests align with your own. If you are unsure of what specific research area you're interested in, make sure to look into several labs until you can find the one that feels right for you.



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Psychology departments will have a list of available labs on their websites.



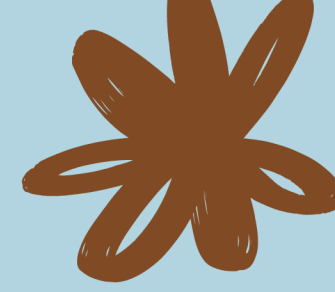
Applying to Graduate School (GREs)

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Most graduate schools will require you to take the Graduate Record Exam.

- The GREs consist of three sections: verbal, quantitative reasoning (math), and analytical writing (which measures abstract thinking).
- Some schools, but not all, may also require you to take the "advanced" portion of the test in psychology. So check to see if this is required for the schools you're interested in.
- Graduate schools are required to provide information about the GRE scores of past graduate students.



Applying to Graduate School (GREs)

2/2



Prepare for it.

- The best way to prepare for the GRE is to get comfortable with it.
- Knowing what will be on the test and what strategies to use is essential.
- You can buy books that break down the GRE and include practice tests. If studying on your own doesn't seem like enough, there are also classes you can take for the GRE. These can be a little pricey, so check to see if your university offers a discount rate or free classes. ETS also offers free prep services on their website that includes samples of past GRE questions.



Applying to Graduate School

(Personal Statement)



- Your personal statement gives you the chance to show off who you are and what makes you an asset to the programs you are applying to.
- Highlight the accomplishments and skills that show you will do well in their program? Include the interests you have that align with their program, and how you plan to use your experience there for your future.



- Make sure to have some faculty members from the program in mind. You will need to mention which lab(s) you would like to work in and why it aligns with your research interests. This is a great time to mention relevant past lab experience to show that you already have some training.
- Avoid general statements like "I'm really interested in psychology" or "I just want to help people." Avoid making general statements and try to be as specific as possible.

Timeline

If you intend to go to graduate school right after you finish your undergraduate work, here's a rough timetable for preparing your applications:

Spring semester or before your junior year:

- Think about what type of program interests you
- Start communicating with faculty
- Get involved in research or an independent study project

Summer before your senior year:

- Read through Graduate Study in Psychology
- Make a rough list of schools you might apply to
- Start writing your personal statement
- Begin studying for the GREs/Take GREs

Fall semester of your senior year:

- Email graduate coordinators to receive information about the schools you're interested in
- Email the faculty that you are interested in working with to be sure he/she is accepting a student
- Take the GRE before October
- Ask professors to write recommendation letters as early as September

Make sure to check when your Ph.D. applications are due; deadlines vary by school and program

After the fall semester:

- Await acceptances or interview offers



Additional Information to Consider

If you're a member of an underrepresented group in psychology, you can consult the Minority Fellowship Program of the American Psychological Association to identify schools that have a diverse graduate student body.

Some schools have minority graduate student associations that you can contact for information about the campus and general advice for applying.

If your interest in Psychology focuses on Minority and/or Diversity Studies, contact a faculty member who can give you recommendations on schools that have a lab with a diversity focus.





The Multicultural Lab at UT Austin

<https://labs.la.utexas.edu/mclab-new/>