

HOW TO APPLY FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL

Successful graduate school application often leads to a well-funded rewarding graduate study experience. The financial support often includes a tuition waiver and an excellent stipend as a TA (Teaching Assistant) or a RA (Research Assistant) or both.

Materials Needed for a Competitive Application

- ❖ Necessary course work in different programs within the major (Earth Sciences or Geography)
- ❖ Satisfactory GRE Test Scores
- ❖ Recommendation Letters
- ❖ Letter of Intent or Graduate Study Statement of Interest
- ❖ Resume

Preparation Process

- ❖ Academic Preparation: Take the necessary courses specified on the checklist and do as well as possible
- ❖ Keep in mind that you should take as much math as possible, at least Calc I & Calc II, if you are planning to specialize in meteorology
- ❖ Obtain at least a 3.0 GPA overall
- ❖ Obtain a minor and/or do multiple tracks related to the field you intend to pursue graduate degree(s), if you have time
- ❖ Do an independent research project with one of the department professors (summer research and/or a semester-long research project)
- ❖ Be a course lab assistant, department tutor, computer lab monitor
- ❖ Join an honor society, if you are qualified and invited
- ❖ Get involved in Geosociety activities as much as you can
- ❖ Talk to your advisor about your interest in pursuing a graduate degree
- ❖ Attend the annual graduate school info session given by the department chair and other faculty, usually in October
- ❖ Prepare for and take the GRE test ahead of the application deadline for the programs you are interested in

Application Process

- ❖ Find the right programs that you are interested in
 - Talk to your advisor and other professors in the area of your interest

- Look through the discipline publication, for example the "Guide to Geography Programs in the Americas" -- available in the department
 - Look up the web sites of the programs you are interested in
 - Talk to the professors, more than one professor if possible, whose research is of interest to you, phone or email the professor(s) and visit the schools you are interested in if time permits
 - You should probably apply to three or four different schools to improve your odds of getting at least one assistantship offer
- ❖ Organize the application materials together
- Transcript or transcripts
 - GRE test scores: Take the GRE by the end of the first semester of your senior year, e.g., fall semester if you graduate in spring
 - Resume
 - Recommendation letters -- ask appropriate professors and give them plenty of time ahead of the application deadline
 - Essays or statements
 - Prepare for possible fees: GRE test fee (~\$185), application fee (~\$50 per program), transcript fee (\$10 per copy)
 - Get all necessary materials prepared at the end of the first semester of your senior year. For example, most application deadlines are around December to January, if you apply for fall admission.
- ❖ Submit applications -- complete online applications, otherwise, send in by mail
- ❖ Follow up

GRE site: www.GRE.org