

# Going to Graduate School in Psychology: An Introduction

Dr. Larry Hatcher

## Advantages of going to graduate school:

- Allows entry into occupations directly related to psychology
- Better earnings
- As time goes by, graduate degrees may be more required
- It's fun!

## Is it expensive?

- For some students, yes
- For other students, no

## Types of Graduate Degrees you may earn:

### Masters degree

- M.A.
- M.S.
- Typically 2 years
- May include an internship

### Doctoral degree

- Requires 4 years (theoretically)
- 5-7 years in practice
- Some subfields require internship

## Psychology Reference Books

Available at Psychology Dept. Office (1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Brown Building)

## "Graduate Study in Psychology" from the APA

- Lists every grad program in psych in U.S.
- Masters and Doctorate
- Provides fairly detailed info about each program

“Getting In” from the APA (221 pp)

- Very comprehensive
- Is grad school right for you?
- What are your chances?
- Choosing programs
- Applying to programs
- Timetable

“Career Paths in Psychology” Edited by Robert J. Sternberg

- Focuses on careers that require graduate degrees
- Great variety of subfields (Academic careers, clinical, counseling, community, research, government, school, industrial, consumer, human factors, military, health)
- On reserve

Process of Applying to Graduate School

- See Psych Dept. Handout for Details
- I will mention a few important points

For graduate programs, deadlines are usually December through February to begin the following fall

If there is still time, get involved in a research project outside of class:

Your own independent project

Or

As an assistant to a faculty member on her or his project

You must take the GRE test

- Go to web site [www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)

You must study for the GRE

- A lot

Get a GRE-prep book from bookstore or Amazon.com

Ideally:

- Study all summer
- Take it at end of summer

Ideally,

- Take General Test on one date
- Subject test on another (if you need subject test in Psychology)

Can take it in fall, but don't wait too late

Requesting letters of recommendation

Ideally, do this in September – October (give at least six weeks if possible)

- 1) “Are you willing to write a letter?”
- 2) “Are you able to write a positive letter?”
- 3) Do as much work as possible for the letter writer

Number of applications:

- Apply to at least 5 to 10 programs
- One-third should be “sure bets”