Planning to attend Graduate School?

Here is a checklist of things to do if you would like to begin graduate school full-time in Fall. The approximate timetable is provided to guide you through the application process in a timely fashion. You can certainly apply to graduate school at any time before the college deadlines. This particular timeline is designed for students who are interested in receiving assistantship and/or fellowship consideration.

**Summer**
- Decide what graduate program you would like to pursue. Remember that attending graduate school should lead you toward your ultimate career goal, not just to avoid getting a job and going to work. If you are having trouble narrowing down your graduate school options, then stop by the Career Development Center in Netzer 110 for assistance.

**August**
- Make a list of all the graduate schools in the country that offer your program. The Career Development Center can provide you with a list of all the colleges that have the graduate programs that you may be considering. Just stop by the office and ask for help. Some great online resources to help you in your search include gradschools.com, petersons.com, and gradsource.com. Also be sure to consult with faculty advisors and professors.

**September**
- Contact colleges/universities of interest and ask them to mail you information about the program, the college, financial aid programs and assistantships and to request a graduate catalog. The Career Development Center has postcards that you can use to begin this process. Just stop by and ask for some “yellow grad school postcards.”
- Determine if you will be required to take a graduate school admission test. There are several common exams including the GRE (general test and subject test), LSAT (for law school), MCAT (for medical school), and GMAT (for business school). Purchase a study guide from any bookstore and begin to prepare to take the exam. If you have difficulty in a content area, go to the Center for Academic Development & Enrichment (CADE) in 225 Alumni Hall and ask someone to review those concepts with you. There are also test preparation courses that teach test strategy and are available for a substantial fee. The Career Development Center has information, just stop in Netzer 110 and ask or visit our website at www.oneonta.edu/career.
- Sign up to take any required graduate admission tests. Keep in mind that it could take up to six weeks for your scores to be sent to the graduate schools. You want colleges to have those test results before they begin reviewing graduate applications. Taking the test early will also give you time to retake the exam, should that become necessary.
October
- Attend the Graduate and Professional School Fair in October. Admissions representatives from over 75 colleges and universities are typically in attendance.
- Review the materials from the colleges and narrow your choices down to three or four. Keep in mind that the average graduate school application fee is $50+ and that money is usually non-refundable.
- Graduate schools usually ask candidates to gather three letters of recommendation. Ask primary faculty members and/or other appropriate people if they would be willing to write you a letter of reference for graduate school admission. If they agree, you could establish a credential folder through the CDC’s DragonLink system to house all of your letters of recommendation. The benefit of this system ensures that each letter writer only has to write one letter of recommendation; from here it can then be sent electronically to each graduate school. Please remember to give each recommender a copy of your current resume to use as a guide when writing your letter of recommendation.
- Take standardized test(s).
- To order “official” transcripts, contact the Registrar’s Office from each post-secondary institution attended. If fall term grades are expected, then indicate on the transcript request form to mail “after current term grades.” Also be sure to ask the Registrar’s Office if the current term grades can be sent in time to meet the graduate school application deadline.

November
- Complete the applications and be certain to follow the instructions exactly. Print out the check list from the application section so that you can check off all the items needed by the school as you go through the process. If you have questions concerning the application process you will need to contact the graduate office at the school to which you are applying.
- Some graduate schools require applicants to write a personal statement as part of the application process. You can ask a faculty member or someone from the Writing Center in Alumni Hall to help you with this project. Remember to have a first draft with you before going to ask them for help.

Late December/Early January
- Submit all of your graduate applications no later than January 15th (unless the deadline is earlier than that date). This will put you in line for the best assistantships, fellowships and/or financial aid packages. You can certainly apply later, but you may lessen your chances for receiving some form of financial assistance. Many graduate schools send out acceptance letters as early as March for a fall start date.
- Contact graduate programs about the possibility of visiting the campus during your winter break. Make trips if possible. Also prepare for graduate interviews by scheduling a mock interview!

January/February
- It’s always a good idea to have a “Plan B”, so begin exploring the world of work. That way, if graduate school is not an option for you at this time, you will have already begun a preliminary job search. Also take advantage of other services provided by the CDC.

To explore the graduate school process further, please visit our website at www.oneonta.edu/career or stop by the office:

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