Planning for Graduate School

Is Graduate School Right For You?
Whether or not to attend graduate school is a big decision. Ask yourself these questions:

• In what ways is being a graduate student different from being an undergraduate?
• How well have I performed in my past academic pursuits?
• How genuinely interested am I in this field?
• Is it worth the effort?
• How will this degree improve my job prospects?
• How will I pay for graduate school?

Graduate School Information
Getting the most thorough information will help you make the best decision. The valuable resources below provide the kind of information you need.

• UAB’s Graduate School: main.uab.edu/Sites/gradschool/
• Career Services website: careerservices.uab.edu/Internet Resources
  This website hosts information on choosing a graduate program and applying to graduate school, along with school directories, profiles and financial aid
• Alabama Connection: alabamaconnection.org
  This website gives information on graduate school exploration
• Career Services Resource Library:
  Located in HUC 532. It includes books and directories providing school information and examples of admissions essays and personal statements

Graduate School Application – Basic Steps:
Efficient and accurate management of the application process is key to your successful admission. View the steps below to get an idea of what is entailed in applying to graduate school.

➢ Begin the application process at least one year before you plan to start your graduate study. For fall admission, program deadlines vary, generally falling between December 1st and March 1st
➢ Plan to submit your applications early
➢ Conduct thorough research to determine which schools are best suited to your academic and career interests. Select one or more professors from each program of interest and familiarize yourself with their work
➢ Learn the selection procedure for each school to which you apply. Make sure your application shows you are a good fit for each program
➢ Determine which standardized test(s) are required; start studying, take a practice test and get registered. You may begin this process the summer before starting your senior year. If you are not satisfied with your scores, you should have time to retake the test(s) in the fall. Many programs require applicants to take the GRE. For more information, visit www.gre.org
➢ Make contacts at your prospective schools, visit the schools and meet with professors for informational interviews (p. 8). Talk with students who are enrolled in your programs of interest
➢ Network with professionals to learn more about what it is like to work in your prospective field
➢ Begin writing your personal statement (p. 14) several months in advance. This is a requirement for most applications and will help you further define your graduate school goals
➢ Select and contact professors you will use as references (p. 29)
➢ If applying for federal financial aid, complete the FAFSA online as soon after January 1st as possible