FACTORS TO CONSIDER FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL

Research

Faculty

Financial Support

Size of Program

Location

Resources/Services

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

➢ GPA
➢ GRE
➢ Statement Essays
➢ Letters of Recommendation
➢ Research Experience

Graduate School Application

Think of your application as a table with legs made out of GPA, GRE, Statement Essays, Letters of Recommendation, and Research Experience

Strong Academic Performance

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

- ➢ GPA
- ➢ GRE
- ➢ Statement Essays
- ➢ Letters of Recommendation
- ➢ Research Experience

- 3.0 or above GPA
- Transcripts (send any related to a degree)
- How are transcripts scrutinized?
  - Cumulative
  - Last 60/90 units – quarter vs. semester
  - Major
- Address any holes in your Personal Statement

Graduate Record Examinations

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

➤ GPA
➤ GRE
➤ Statement Essays
➤ Letters of Recommendation
➤ Research Experience

- Three sections: Quantitative, Verbal, Analytical Writing
- Score valid for 5 years
- Different programs may emphasize one section over another
  - Subject exams
- Some graduate programs require it – the exam may be phased out in the future
- GPA and GRE scores can be used to award fellowships
- Take advantage of campus resources!

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Applied Mathematics	Not Required
Bioengineering	Optional
Chemistry & Chemical Biology	Optional
Cognitive and Information Sciences	Not Required
Economics	**Required**
Electrical Engineering & Computer Sciences	**Required for M.S. / Optional for Ph.D.**
Environmental Systems	Optional
Interdisciplinary Humanities	Not Required
Materials & Biomaterials Science and Engineering	Optional
Management of Complex Systems	Not required
Masters of Management Program/MIST (M.M.)	Not Required
Mechanical Engineering	Optional
Physics	Not Required
Political Sciences	**Required**
Psychological Sciences	Optional
Public Health	**Required**
Quantitative and Systems Biology	Optional
Sociology	Optional

State Your Case

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

➢ GPA
➢ GRE
➢ Statement Essays
➢ Letters of Recommendation
➢ Research Experience

- In general, a personal statement is about 1-2 single spaced pages.
- Critical component of your application. Why?
- Read the prompts/directions carefully!
- Should be adapted to the graduate program.
- Audience: Admissions committees consisting of professors in your field.
- May be used to see if you qualify for additional funding.

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Quality and Quantity

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

➤ GPA
➤ GRE
➤ Statement Essays
➤ Letters of Recommendation
➤ Research Experience

- Usually 3 letters of recommendation are required.
- Letters should be from:
  - Faculty with whom you have done research.
  - Faculty with whom you took upper-division classes.
  - Internship supervisors or relevant work experience supervisors.
- Aim for at least 2/3 letters to be from faculty.
- How much lead time should you give?

Why is it Important?

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

➤ GPA
➤ GRE
➤ Statement Essays
➤ Letters of Recommendation
➤ Research Experience

- Get an inside look at what an academic or research career can offer.
- Learn about cutting-edge discoveries being made in your field.
- Acquire lab and research skills, hone critical thinking and writing skills.
- Networking
- Establish relationships with faculty who can write strong letters of recommendation.

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Graduate School Myths

> "
I can't afford graduate school

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" It's too late for me to consider graduate school

"

I need to have a Masters degree to get into a Ph.D. program

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"

I'm only a second year. I don't need to think about graduate school.

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START PLANNING NOW

- Test dates and preparation
- Potential recommenders
- Graduate programs and requirements
- School contacts and campus resources
- Research opportunities
- Write essays ahead of time and have them reviewed

Year 2	Year 3	Year 4-5
❑ Ask peers for recommendations of faculty and upper division courses	❑ Attend office hours of faculty with whom you want to build rapport	❑ Notify faculty that you want to have write your letter of recommendation
❑ Look into summer research opportunities	❑ Start undergraduate research and look into summer research opportunities	❑ Write and rewrite statement essays and have them reviewed by peers, staff, faculty
❑ Attend Graduate Fairs in the Fall and the CA Diversity Forum (Fall or Spring)	❑ Attend Graduate Fairs in the Fall and the CA Diversity Forum (Fall or Spring)	❑ Prepare for, schedule and take the GRE if needed
❑ Attend office hours of faculty with whom you want to build rapport	❑ Create a list of schools that offers graduate programs you are interested in along with requirements	❑ Apply to graduate programs, keep a list of school contacts

Smaller Programs =
More time with faculty working on research and mentorship

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Growing Campus
- **New facilities**
- **New resources**
- **New research space**

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Many Research Strengths

- **Climate change and ecology**
- **Solar and renewable energy**
- **Air and Water quality**
- **Artificial intelligence**
- **Cognitive science**
- **Stem-cell**
- **Diabetes and cancer**
- **Big-data analysis**

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

- ❖ Bioengineering - MS, PhD
- ❖ Electrical Engineering and Computer Science - MS, PhD
- ❖ Environmental Systems - MS, PhD
- ❖ Management of Innovation, Sustainability and Technology – MM
- ❖ Management of Complex Systems - PhD
- ❖ Materials and Biomaterials Science Engineering - MS, PhD
- ❖ Mechanical Engineering - MS, PhD

SCHOOL OF NATURAL SCIENCES

- ❖ Applied Mathematics – MS, PhD
- ❖ Chemistry & Chemical Biology – MS, PhD
- ❖ Physics – MS, PhD
- ❖ Quantitative & Systems Biology – MS, PhD

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, HUMANITIES & ARTS

- ❖ Cognitive & Information Sciences – MS, PhD
- ❖ Economics – PhD
- ❖ Interdisciplinary Humanities – MA, PhD
- ❖ Political Science – MA*, PhD
- ❖ Psychological Sciences – MA*, PhD
- ❖ Public Health – MSPH*, PhD
- ❖ Sociology – MA*, PhD

*denotes Masters offered only along the way to PhD

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LEARN MORE

Digital brochures for programs are available at:
graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/academic-studies

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FUNDING

97% of PhD students receive funding

- Fellowships
- Teaching Assistantships
- Graduate Student Researcher Appointments
- Grant Opportunities
- Apply for Pre-doc Fellowships
(graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/funding/external)

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CAMPUS RESOURCES

Graduate Resource Center (GRC)

- graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/GRC
- Peer Mentors, Diversity and Inclusion, Student Wellness, Social Activities
- Statistics/Writing Tutors – available in the GRC during the semester
- Graduate Mentorship: All 1st year Ph.D. are paired if grad program participates

Student Organizations

- Grad student specific: graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/graduate_rcos
- Open to all students: ucmerced.edu/clubs-and-organizations

Applying to UC Merced

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

➢ Online Application
➢ Transcripts
➢ GRE (varies by program)
➢ Statement Essays
➢ 3 Letters of Recommendation

- The earlier you apply, the better!
  - Application Deadlines
  - General Deadline: January 15th
  - Priority Deadline: December 15th

- Application fee waivers are available!
  - For domestic applications only
  - Graduate enrichment program participants such as: LSAMP, MARC, McNair Scholars Program, etc.

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CONTACTS

Will Lee-Ladouceur
wcll@ucmerced.edu

Jessica Ventura
jventura9@ucmerced.edu

Graduate Division
grad@ucmerced.edu
grad.ucmerced.edu

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