

# Considering Grad School

## Research your prospective field

- ▶ **Talk with** professors, graduate students, or other UCI staff
- ▶ **Meet with** people working in that industry or studying in that field
- ▶ **Check out** the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* by visiting [www.bls.gov/ooh/](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/)
- ▶ **Identify prospective schools** and seek information on their programs. Check out the *Peterson's Guide to Graduate and Professional Schools* online at [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

## Evaluate the Various Graduate Programs

- ▶ **Department**
  - Certain institutions are known for particular programs. Check out the U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate Schools online or at the UCI Division of Career Pathways.
- ▶ **Faculty**
  - Research the reputation and areas of specialization of the faculty.
- ▶ **Program**
  - Each school has a different curriculum and philosophy. Make sure they meet your educational goals.
- ▶ **Facilities**
  - Find out about the libraries, laboratories, and research facilities. What is the depth of the library collection in your particular field of interest?
- ▶ **Size**
  - There are advantages and disadvantages to both small and large universities.
- ▶ **Placement**
  - Where do graduates go after completing the program?
- ▶ **Degree Requirements**
  - List all requirements such as residency, unit requirements, language requirements, examinations, candidacy, and thesis or dissertation.

## Finance your Education

- ▶ **Fellowships**
  - Given to students with the expectation that they will maintain and achieve good standing.
- ▶ **Loans**
  - Explore school, private, and government options. Repayment of loans can vary.
- ▶ **Assistantships**
  - You receive a stipend for which you perform services related to your field.
- ▶ **Grants**
  - Like fellowships, these are gifts to graduate students that do not have to be repaid.
- ▶ **Work-Study**
  - This type of financial aid assists graduate students by providing job opportunities within the institution or in a public or non-profit agency for up to 20 hours a week.

## Prepare for the Admissions Process

- ▶ **Complete your bachelor's degree**
- ▶ **Aim for a minimum 3.0 GPA**
  - Some schools average your last two years of school, or the courses in your field of concentration.
- ▶ **2-3 letters of recommendation**
  - Choose individuals who know you academically and/or professionally and will give you the best recommendation. The job title or status of that person does not usually matter; however, at least one reference should be a professor. Before asking for a recommendation, meet with your reference to discuss your career goals and inform them about the program(s).
- ▶ **Statement of Purpose**
  - State why you are the most qualified to be in that particular program. This is a qualitative way to show your eligibility, not quantitative like GRE scores, transcripts, and grades.
- ▶ **Admissions tests**
  - In most cases, the Graduate Records Exam (GRE) will be required. Check with each school to identify the appropriate exam.
- ▶ **Application**
  - Read instructions carefully and meet all requirements and deadlines.

## Resources available at the Career Center

- Preparation for GRE, LSAT, CBEST, DAT, etc.
- ABA Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools
  - MBA programs
- U.S. News & World Report - Best Graduate Schools
- APA Guide to Graduate Study in Psychology