



Wine & Wisdom: Applying for Psychology Doctoral Programs
28 February 2019 | 4.30pm - 6.00pm | HM 152

Introductions

What is it like being a Doctoral Student?

Commitments and investments; Expectations and reality; challenges and rewards
Switching careers; juggling families

Differences between programs and degrees

e.g. Clinical vs. Counseling
e.g. PhD vs. PsyD vs. EdD vs. LCSW

Timeline

1. ***Researching and deciding on programs to apply****
 - a. E.g. Start on PUBMED, topics of interest, chase references, and then find a lab and faculty you like
 - b. E.g. APA-accredited schools, location, research interests
 - c. E.g. Go to Lab's website: what do doctoral student researchers do, NIH website to see if they are funded, are they accepting students for next year
 - d. Create an excel spreadsheet of 10-15 schools/labs/faculty, application requirements, deadlines and other important comparison factors
2. ***Determining Fit***
 - a. Important to do your research on who you're applying to!
 - b. Don't hesitate to network with professors you want to work with, and their doctoral students - they can also connect you to other people in the field
 - c. Good to work in a lab prior to applying - they want to see how/if they can work well with you - however not everyone in a lab will get into the doctoral program.
3. ***GREs: General and Psychology Test***
 - a. Start studying in February so you can do it twice (e.g. April/May; September/October)
 - b. Programs usually want to see that you meet a certain cutoff
4. ***CV*****
 - a. Craft CVs depending on type of program and mentor you're applying to and where their priorities lie.
 - b. Research, Clinical, Work experience
 - c. Posters and Publications - how important?
5. ***Drafting and re-drafting Personal Statement***
 - a. Start as early as July; write many drafts; have many people read it
 - b. Journal often; Tell people why you want to pursue a doctorate
 - c. Not a CV
 - d. Research interests - broad and specific

- e. Personal narrative/history and foundational experiences that show why you're motivated and committed to pursue this, and what you want to achieve
6. ***Letters of Recommendations***
 - a. Ask early
 - b. Ask if they can write you a strong letter of recommendation
 - c. Ask in email vs. in person
 - d. Ask for the number you need + 1
 7. ***Financial Aid, Fellowships and Tuition***
 - a. Get a good sense of how you are going to fund your time in grad school, and the funding available from the Institution
 - b. Location and cost of living
 8. ***Interview *****
 - a. Do mock interviews with friends, mentors, senior colleagues
 - b. Group interviews want to see how you interact in a group

*** What to Look for in a Grad Program**

1. How long does the degree program take?
2. What do students who graduate from the program do afterwards?
3. What are the costs for the program? What kind of TAs or fellowships do they offer?
4. Who are the faculty you'd be interested in working with?
5. What specific interests would you pursue with those faculty?
6. Where is the program? What are the good things to do in the area?
7. What are student/advisor relationships like at the program? Are advisors very hands-on or hands-off? E, accessible, responsive - email?
8. What are grad student relationships like? Do grad students typically collaborate together or is it more competitive?
9. How many classes does the program require? How many years do you expect to be taking classes while in the program?

Get this information by checking websites (great resource), emailing graduate students, emailing professors (be careful about this- professors are busy and you should only email them short questions that you can't find information about elsewhere- like if they are accepting students), getting program brochures, or even calling the graduate admissions office at the school.

** For additional resources on how to write a CV and how to prepare for an interview (interview questions are also great prompts for starting the personal statement), email ipsp@tc.columbia.edu. Thank you Laura Meli for sharing these resources!