

GRADUATE SCHOOL

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OUTLINE

- I. SHOULD I GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?
- II. HOW DO I APPLY?
- III. WHERE DO I APPLY?

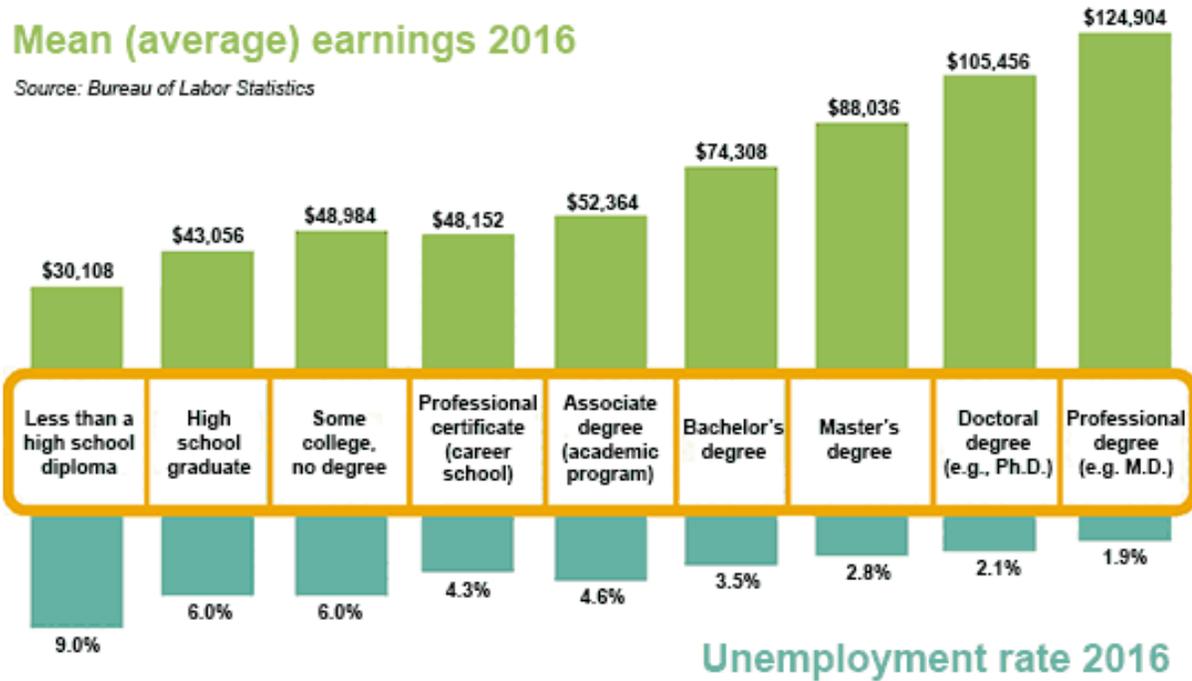
SHOULD I GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?

10 REASONS TO GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

1. INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE
2. GETS NOTICED IN TODAY'S JOB MARKET (QUALIFIED FOR MORE)
3. NEW SKILL DEVELOPMENT
4. PURSUE YOUR INTERESTS (SPECIALIZATION)
5. CONTRIBUTE TO FUNDAMENTAL KNOWLEDGE
6. MAKING CONNECTIONS AND NETWORKING
7. INCREASE YOUR FINANCIAL PROSPECTS
8. ACADEMIC RECOGNITION
9. SURROUND YOURSELF WITH INTELLIGENT PEOPLE
10. GAIN AN INTERNATIONAL QUALIFICATION

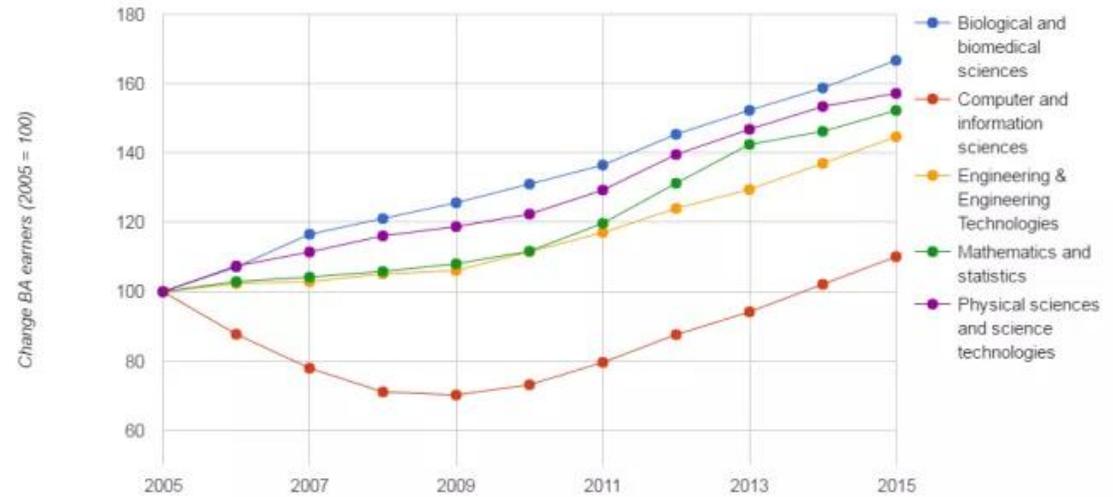
Mean (average) earnings 2016

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Unemployment rate 2016

US bachelor's degrees, growth by field of study (2005 = 100)



Data via National Center for Education Statistics, danwang.co

7 REASONS **NOT** TO GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

1. **BACK-UP** PLAN - NOT SURE WHAT ELSE TO DO..?
2. YOU THINK AN ADVANCED DEGREE IS **REQUIRED** TO GET AHEAD
3. YOU WANT TO MAKE MORE **MONEY**
4. **UNCERTAIN** WHAT YOU WANT TO DO WITH YOUR LIFE
5. YOU ARE JUST **CURIOUS** OR LOVE **LEARNING**
6. TRYING TO APPEASE YOUR **PARENTS**
7. GRADUATE SCHOOL IS **NOT UNDERGRAD**

GAP YEAR:



You will perform better in graduate school

Make new friends

Experience what the world has to offer

Build up your resume

Less likely to burnout

Develop life skills

Learn independence

You will have more time to think

Become more well-rounded

Gain work experience

HOW DO I APPLY?

Freshman - Junior Year

- Get good grades, research experience, and find research that excites you

May

- Begin researching schools you are interested in
- Take practice GRE, GRE Subject, etc. tests

June - September

- Study for graduate entrance exams

October

- Finalize your list of perspective schools
- Take specialized GRE test
- Ask for letters of recommendation

November

- Finalize CV, research & personal statements, and ask professors to proofread

December

- Submit applications

PARTS OF AN APPLICATION:

Transcripts

Testing &
Scores

Letters of
Rec

Personal
Statement

Research
Statement

CV

Interviews

Application
Fee &
Deadlines

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Submit your transcript request months in advance

It can take a few weeks for your request to be processed and mailed.

Schools will want transcripts submitted to them directly from your undergraduate institution(s)

Do not have transcripts sent to you first, so that you can forward them. This may invalidate the documents.

Add an addendum to explain any negatives

A one- to two-paragraph explanation of the circumstances behind the situation, along with an acceptance of responsibility and an outline of the actions you have taken to ensure that the problem will not recur.

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The exam tailors the level of difficulty based on an individual's performance. If you are excelling, the questions will become more difficult.

\$160 –
GRE
\$205 –
Subject

The GRE can be retaken each month, up to five times per year.

4 hours for
GRE, 3
hours for
Subject
GRE

Spend 8
to 12
weeks
studying

GRE Subject Tests:
Math, Physics,
Psychology, Biology,
Chemistry, Literature,
Biochem and Cell &
Molecular Bio were
discontinued

Scores are
sent to 4
schools for
free; \$23 per
additional
school

The Subject Tests
are given three
times a year, in:
September
October
April

Lots of free
practice tests
are available
– types of
questions,
timing, etc.

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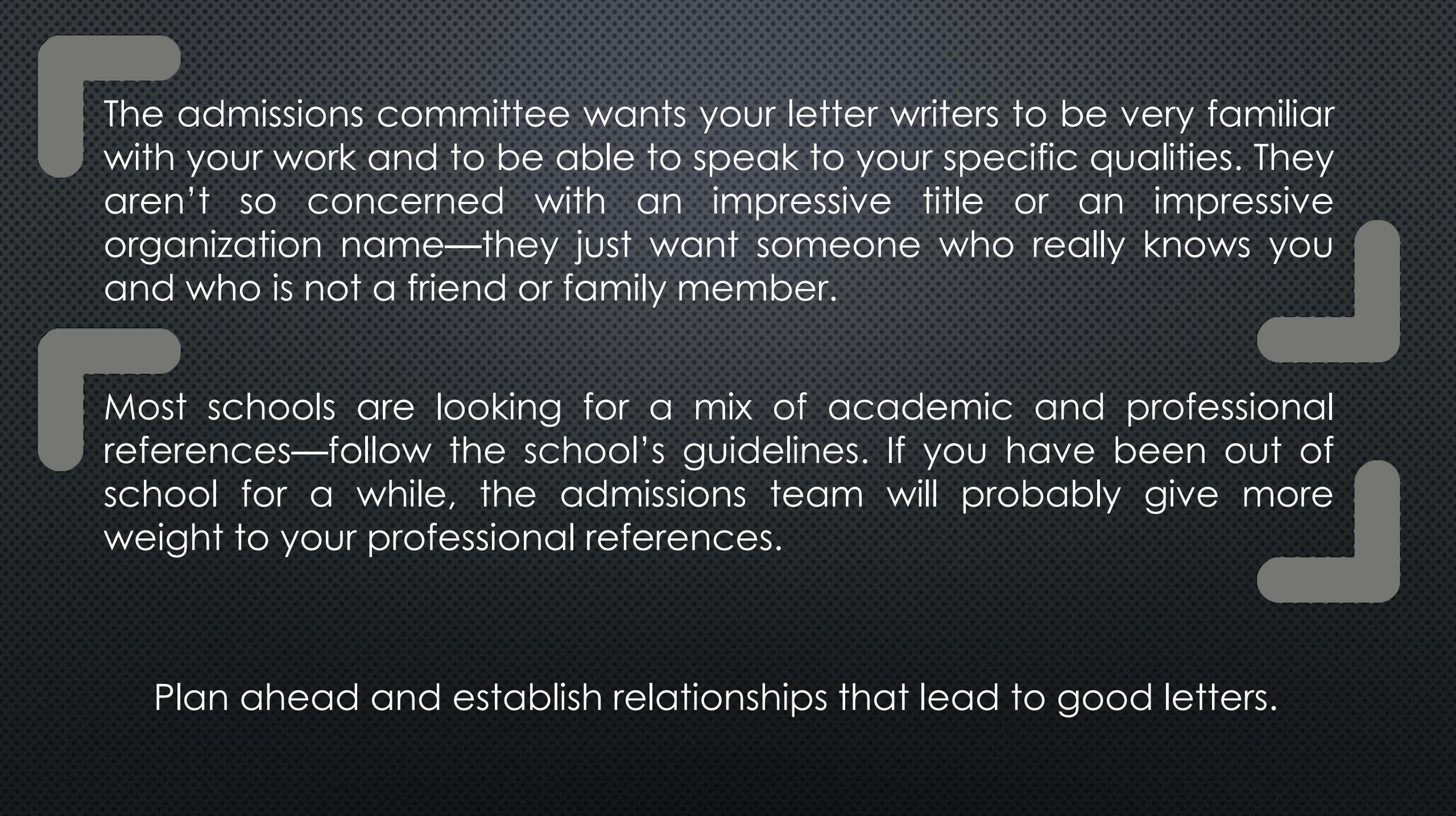
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The admissions committee wants your letter writers to be very familiar with your work and to be able to speak to your specific qualities. They aren't so concerned with an impressive title or an impressive organization name—they just want someone who really knows you and who is not a friend or family member.

Most schools are looking for a mix of academic and professional references—follow the school's guidelines. If you have been out of school for a while, the admissions team will probably give more weight to your professional references.

Plan ahead and establish relationships that lead to good letters.

HOW TO ASK FOR A LETTER:

- Ask in person and early (at least a month in advance)
 - ▶ “Can you write me a strong letter?”
- Provide each letter writer with a packet containing:
 - ▶ Your CV/resume, research statement
 - ▶ Specific instructions – deadlines for each university, links to upload letters
 - ▶ Request for email confirmation when letters are sent
- Assume professors are forgetful
 - ▶ Send reminder emails (two week notice, one week notice, two day, one day)
 - ▶ Send thank you notes to everyone who took time to write a letter for you

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“ Graduate programs care about the person behind the standardized test score and grade point average. A personal statement is the only part of the application where a candidate gets to make their own case for what they can add to the cohort of incoming first year students. ”

University admissions representative Meg Radunich

Faculty have a vested interest in admitting students who will be fun for them to work with and watch grow. Determine which key points are most important to make and then choose experiences that demonstrate those points.

Tell one or two specific stories or scenarios really well instead of having a broad focus and attempting to tell your life story.

Demonstrate why you want to attend this program and how doing so relates to their place academically, locally and globally. Strong personal statements show that candidates understand the "big picture" of the profession and the true meaning and impact they will have in their communities.

Address these topics: What you want to study and why, your experiences in that field, what you plan to do with your degree once you have it, and how this program fits with your goals.

If you've been away from school for a time or are changing fields, address the timing of your application: why go back to school now as opposed to earlier?

Read the essay question and answer it, even if that means writing different essays for each school to which you apply.

If you are submitting a similar essay to multiple schools, make certain that you use the right school name each time.

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Research projects you have worked on



Papers you have authored or co-authored



Research areas you are interested in and why



Professors you might want to work with



Indicate that you are ready to take on the challenge of independent research



Show that you possess the creativity, passion, and drive that will take you from more passive learning to active invention and hypothesis

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CV/Resume parts

Name, Contact info
Education
Community Service
Research/Teaching
Experience
Employment (relevant)
Extracurriculars

Fellowships & Grants
Honors and Awards
Theses
Memberships
Presentations
Publications
Skills & Certifications

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Thoroughly research the school, prepare your talking points about the school (which you can use in developing sophisticated questions, for example), and your talking points about your achievements, relevant skills, and applicable life experience.



Prepare the story of your accomplishments and major turning points so that you can offer supporting evidence of your commitment to the issue area, your skills, and your readiness for grad school.



They want to know whether you have what it takes to succeed in graduate school and the profession, like maturity, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation. How well do you express yourself, manage stress, and think on your feet?

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COSTS

Most grad school applications cost around \$50-\$85. More competitive schools can cost around \$175. Consider this when applying to a handful of schools.

If the cost is prohibitive, consider requesting a fee waiver. They are available on a limited basis to students meeting strict requirements.

Testing: GRE - \$160, Subject GRE - \$205, MCAT - \$315

DEADLINES

A majority of deadlines fall between December 1st and January 31st.

Check with each individual university to be sure. Some deadlines are as early as October 31st and some as late as March 1st.

Check what is due at the deadline. Some schools have separate deadlines for people providing your letters of recommendation – perhaps a week or two later than the application deadline.

WHERE DO I APPLY?

01

Determine

- Determine your non-negotiables

02

Specify

- Specify your professional goals

03

Organize

- Organize yourself using spreadsheets

BEFORE LOOKING AT GRADUATE PROGRAMS

MASTERS

1-2 YEARS

PAY OUT OF
POCKET

START JOB
SOONER

CAREER
ORIENTED

FURTHERING
GENERAL
KNOWLEDGE OF
A FIELD

PHD

4-8 YEARS

SOME
PROGRAMS ARE
PAID

HIGHER SALARY
UPON
COMPLETION

RESEARCH
ORIENTED

SPECIALIZED
KNOWLEDGE
(BEST IN THE
FIELD)

10 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING A GRADUATE SCHOOL

THE DEGREE
PROGRAM

FACULTY

RESEARCH

LOCATION

QUALITY OF LIFE

TIMELINE (MASTERS
OR PHD)

RESOURCES – THE
PHYSICAL FACILITIES

COST OF
LIVING/PAY

RANKING

ACCREDITATION

FINANCIAL SUPPORT



Grants



Scholarships and Fellowships



Research or Teaching Assistantships



Loans

OVERALL TIPS

Start Early

Know Yourself

Ask, Ask, Ask!

Google is Your Friend

Be Yourself