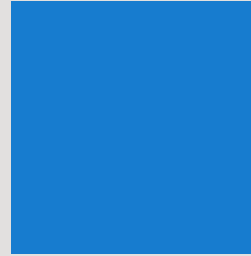
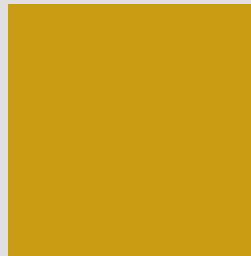
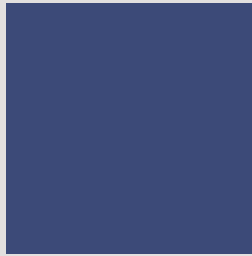
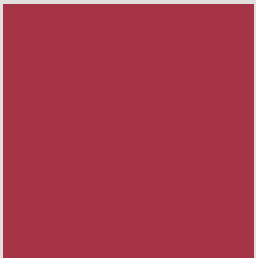


Graduate School Guide








J. Eugene Smith Library, 1st Floor

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EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
The Office of Career Success
A Division of Academic Affairs

-  **Is It Right For You?**
-  **Prepare Yourself**
-  **Choosing Your Program**
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Is it Right for You?

Go vs....

- If you can say yes to any of the following, then grad school could be the right choice for you:
 - Are you considering a specialized profession, e.g. law, medicine, MBA?
 - Are you hoping to enhance your earning potential or chance for future promotion?
 - Have you been offered free or reduced tuition, a fellowship or research opportunity?

...Not Go

- If you say yes to any of the following, you might want to consider if grad school should be your next step:
 - Are you burnt out on academics and your studies and would rather enter the work force?
 - Is the thought of additional financial costs for your continued education concerning you?
 - Are you considering grad school because you don't know what else to do or because someone told you should go?

What Grad Schools Look For:

- **Intellectual Ability:** Factors such as your GPA, reputation of your undergraduate program, difficulty of coursework and overall performance all play a part.
- **Work or Field Related Skills:** What experiences do you have which have prepared you for graduate school, e.g., internships, research experience, have you managed people or projects.

Prepare Yourself

First Year

- Diversify your class selections and explore areas of interest.
- Focus on doing well in your classes and set a strong academic foundation.
- Get involved on campus; join clubs and organizations or volunteer through the CCE.

Sophomore Year

- Finalize your major and consider adding a minor.
- Develop and demonstrate your writing, research, and analytical skills.
- Build strong relationships with faculty members in your academic department.

Junior Year

- Complete an internship; explore career interests, gain practical experience, and develop professional contacts.
- Talk to your advisor/professors about graduate programs and their suggestions; consider which professors might serve as references when you begin to apply.
- Gather information on grad schools; request catalogs; attend Graduate School Fairs. (See our suggested resources for researching schools and programs later in this guide.)
- Visit the campuses or attend an open house of the programs you are most interested in.
- Think about taking your MCAT in the spring if you are considering med school.

Summer Before Senior Year

- If Law School is in your future, you should be taking your LSAT exam during the summer.
- For other graduate programs, be sure to determine what graduate program admissions test you may need to complete (GRE, GMAT).
- Begin prepping for the exam and schedule a time to complete it.
- Review the application materials and **note all application deadlines**. You may need to start the process for some programs earlier than others!
- Medical school deadlines are generally the summer before your senior year.
- Law school deadlines are generally the fall of your senior year.
- For most other programs of study, plan to complete your graduate school admission file by January or February of your senior year.

Senior Year

- Complete your research of institutions and programs and decide where you will apply.
- Carefully select faculty and/or professionals who can write positive, persuasive and personalized letters of recommendation for you.
- Utilize your resources when writing your personal statement; this includes your faculty advisor, the Office of Career Success and the Writing Center.
- Investigate financial aid and employment opportunities at prospective institutions.
- If your graduate program requires an interview for admission, consider doing a mock interview with the Office of Career Success to prepare.

Additional Steps

- Attend Graduate School Fairs.
- Talk with your professors, mentors and Eastern alums.
- Schedule campus visits and meet with program heads.
- Research where graduates are working and connect with them via LinkedIn. Ask them how graduate school helped them in reaching their career goals.
- Visit websites:
www.gradschools.com
www.usnews.com
www.petersons.com
www.gradview.com
www.princetonreview.com
www.graduateguide.com

Choosing Your Program

Academic Reputation & Teaching Methods

- How well regarded is the institution and the program you are choosing; are you considering a reputable, accredited school? Use this link to find out: <https://ope.ed.gov/dapip/#/home>.
- Does the program specialize in research or practical application through hands-on learning?

Facilities & Housing

- What academic facilities are available—library, computer labs, training and research labs?
- Is campus housing available for graduate students or will you have to secure your own housing?

Costs & Aid

- Does the institution have assistantships you can apply for to help offset the cost of your degree?
- Is Financial Aid available for graduate students?

Size

- How large is the enrollment in your program of study? Will you be a number, or a name to your professors?

Employment

- Employment: Where have students found employment after graduation?

Standard Tests

GRE

- **Graduate Record Examination**
 - Standard test for most grad schools and schools of business.
 - Measures verbal & quantitative reasoning and analytical writing.
 - For more info, or to register for the test visit: <https://www.ets.org/gre/>.

GMAT

- **Graduate Management Admissions Test**
 - Standard for graduate management programs, e.g. MBA programs.
 - Measures analytical, writing, quantitative, verbal and reading skills.
 - For more info, or to register for the test visit: <http://www.mba.com/us>.

LSAT

- **Law School Admission Test**
 - Comprised of 5 sections of multiple-choice questions.
 - Measures reading comprehension, analytical reasoning and logical reasoning.
 - Must also complete a 35-minute writing sample which is shared with each school you apply to.
 - Take your LSAT by December if applying for fall admission.
 - For more info on the LSAT, we suggest <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lSAT/about-the-lsat/>.

MCAT

- **Medical College Admissions Test**

- Consists of multiple-choice questions that assess problem solving and critical thinking skills.
- Measures knowledge of general concepts and principles in the areas of natural, behavioral and social sciences.
- Take your MCAT no later than end of your junior year between June and September.
- Scoring well is often key to your acceptance-- ***You can take the test multiple times however, some schools may view this unfavorably.***
- You should consider delaying taking the MCAT if you haven't completed the appropriate coursework to prepare; you haven't had enough time to study; or your practice test scores are low.
- For more info on the MCAT we also suggest this site: <https://students-residents.aamc.org>.

Test Prep

You may utilize multiple on-line sites for test preparation. Each of the individual testing sites also provide resources and links to test preparation materials and test questions. Below we share with you some resources available to assist you with your test preparation:

www.kaplan.com

www.princetonreview.com

<http://www.testprepreview.com/>

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Mock GRE testing sponsored by Eastern's Psychology Department

Application Process

Deadlines

- Be aware of application deadlines. Don't procrastinate, applying early can make a difference.

Application Materials

- Letters of recommendation are almost always required.
- Transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended, including study abroad.
- Essay or Personal Statement.
- Current Resume or CV.

Stay Organized

- Create a folder for each program you apply to.
- Print out a copy of the program requirements and application instructions and deadlines.
- Keep a copy of your personal statement and resume/cv included in your application.
- Make a list of who provided you with letters of recommendation.

Tips

- Tip #1:** The Registrar's Office can assist you with providing an official copy of your transcript to the programs you are applying to.
- Tip #2:** Build positive relationships with your professors and maintain contact with them. They will be excellent resources for letters of recommendation.
- Tip #3:** The Center for Internships and Career Development can help you with your Personal Statement.
- Tip #4:** An in-person interview may be a part of the admission process. Treat it like a job interview and do your prep work in advance.

Additional Information

Personal Statement

- Stay within length limitations (words, characters, pages, etc.).
- Include examples of experiences to showcase your skills and abilities.
- Show enthusiasm; let your dedication and interest in your field of study come through.
- Be honest; do not pretend to be someone you are not.
- Never emphasize or dwell on weaknesses or shortcomings.
- Do not simply repeat the information on your resume.

Interviewing

- Review your application and resume and identify key points you want to highlight in your interview.
- Prepare some questions of your own to ask.
- Treat it like a job interview; dress appropriately, be on time, etc.
- Practice for the interview and anticipate questions designed to determine if you are a good fit for the program.
- Be aware of your body language and non-verbal behavior in the interview.
- Keep in mind the interviewer(s) may not be concerned with your opinions but **do care about your ability to communicate effectively.**

Financing

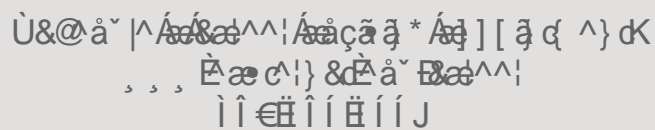
- Continue to fill out your FAFSA form.
- Research and ask about Graduate Assistantships, Fellowships, Teacher Assistant and Research Assistant positions.
- Research private scholarships you qualify for.
- Federal loans are available to you; however, interest will begin accruing from day one.
- Federal work-study positions may still be available to you; ask the financial aid office at the institutions you are applying to.
- If you are working and pursuing a graduate degree, ask your employer if they offer tuition assistance.

How To Connect With Us



Visit our Career Studio in the J. Eugene Smith Library, 1st Floor

View studio hours online at www.easternct.edu/career



Office of Career Success



Eastern Connecticut State University Alumni and Students



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