TIMETABLE FOR CHOOSING AND APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOLS

Use this timetable for an overview of the choices and actions that should occur during each year of your undergraduate career, as well as for a semester-by-semester checklist. In other words, plan now to recheck this timetable as each semester ends in order to make sure that you are progressing effectively in preparing for and applying to graduate schools.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

1. Elect at least one or more math and science course beyond the general university requirement.
2. In your psychology classes, note your professors’ research areas. Get in touch with those professors whose research interests you.
3. If your university has graduate programs, try to meet graduate students. They are often teaching assistants for courses. Ask them what graduate life is like, what kind of study load you can expect in various specialties in psychology, which professors can provide detailed information about graduate school, and which professors you should work with on research projects.
4. Find out when your state psychological association has an annual meeting and whether students are welcome. Also, will there be a regional convention in your area? Students are welcome at all of these regional meetings, which are usually held in late March, April or early May. Check a recent copy of the American Psychologist in your library for the place and date. At these conventions, try to meet graduate students from other schools to ask them the same kinds of questions described in Item 3 above.

JUNIOR YEAR

1. Continue Items 2 and 4 listed under the sophomore year.
2. It is now important to become involved in a research project, if you have not already done so.
3. If you are interested in the clinical and counseling areas of psychology, it is now time to arrange for some clinically related experience, if you have not already done so.
4. Prepare for, register for, and in the spring take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) aptitude test and the Miller Analogies Test (MAT).

SUMMER BEFORE YOUR SENIOR YEAR

1. Consult the APA publication, Graduate Study in Psychology. Begin the process of deciding, on the basis of qualifications and goals, which schools interest you.
2. Request bulletins, brochures, financial aid forms, and department application forms from the schools to which you might eventually apply.
3. Prepare for the GRE Advanced Test.
4. Prepare a resume.
BEGINNING OF SENIOR YEAR

1. Ask your psychology department counselors and faculty members for information about graduate programs and undergraduate requirements that you might have to fulfill.

2. Arrange for conference(s) with faculty who know about graduate schools in your preferred specialty areas. Take them a copy of your resume so that they can recommend schools for which you may qualify. Send for any additional information you want about various schools.

3. Plan informative visits to schools now, not in the spring

4. Register for, and in October or December at the latest take THE GRE Advanced test. If you did less well than you expected in the aptitude test, or if you have not yet taken it, register for this test now. Remember, scores are not immediately available after you have taken the test. Plan ahead!

5. If your school has an office in charge of fellowships, scholarships, and/or loans, pick up information and necessary application forms. Deadlines for fellowship applications are often even earlier than those for admission.

6. Request a student copy of your transcript from each undergraduate institution that you have attended. Check for errors since any changes may take many weeks; if you wait until the application deadline to do this, you may either miss the deadline or be forced to submit an incomplete or erroneous transcript. Merely obtaining a transcript may take weeks because colleges are sometimes swamped with transcript requests just when you need yours. Again, plan ahead.

7. Make sure that you will have enough money in December to pay for all necessary application fees and transcripts. Depending on the number of schools you apply to this amount could easily exceed $200.

8. You will probably only now be able to order an up-to-date copy of Graduate Study in Psychology from the American Psychological Association. This book will give you the latest information, requirements, and deadlines.

NOVEMBER OF SENIOR YEAR

1. Narrow down your list of schools to apply to. Check the application deadline for each school. Post these deadlines where you will see them frequently.

2. Graduate schools generally require from three to five letters of recommendation. If you wait any longer, you will risk being late for selection deadlines.

3. Begin working on your personal statements.

4. Request that GRE and MAT results be sent to all schools that you have decided to apply to.
DECEMBER OF SENIOR YEAR

1. Prepare final copies of application materials. Include a photocopy of your GRE and MAT results if you have them. They should be at least two weeks before the deadline. Keep a photocopy of each application for your records. Be sure to include the necessary fees with your applications.

2. Request that your undergraduate transcript(s) be sent to all of the institutions that you have applied to.

3. Make sure that your letters of recommendation are sent in.

JANUARY-APRIL OF SENIOR YEAR

1. Verify that your application materials were received.

2. If you receive copies of any GRE result after your applications have been submitted, send a photocopy to each school.