

Tips on Applying to Graduate School

It is not the intent of this information sheet to instruct the applicant on how to apply to graduate school (CSULB has a course, PSY 301, which does that). However, after some feedback from students at other institutions, it is obvious that some undergraduate programs do not provide that instruction, nor make information easily accessible to their students. Therefore, some resources and tips will be given here to assist those who would like to learn how to make themselves more competitive in the graduate school process.

Books on how to apply to graduate school:

Keith-Spiegel, Patricia, and Michael W. Wiederman. 2000. *The Complete Guide to Graduate School Admission: Psychology, Counseling, and Related Professions*. Second edition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Getting In: A Step-by-step Plan for Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology. 2007. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Other related books:

Graduate Study in Psychology, 2011 Edition. 2010. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Buskist, William, and Amy Mixon. *Allyn & Bacon Guide to Master's Programs in Psychology and Counseling Psychology*. 1998. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Buskist, William, and Thomas R. Sherburne. *Preparing for Graduate Study in Psychology: 101 Questions and Answers*. 2006. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Sternberg, Robert J., ed. *Career Paths in Psychology: Where Your Degree Can Take You*. 2006. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Web Sites on how to apply to graduate school and related topics:

www.psychgrad.org/apply.html

Great information on several topics concerning graduate school application

www.gre.org

Official site of the Graduate Records Exam (GRE)

<http://www.csulb.edu/~psych/gradprgm/prostud/gre10.pdf>

Tips on the GRE

<http://www.csulb.edu/~psych/gradprgm/prostud/reclatters.pdf>

Tips on requesting letters of recommendation

<http://www.csulb.edu/~psych/gradprgm/prostud/writeperst.pdf> *or*

www.csulb.edu/colleges/cla/departments/psychology/graduate_application/perstate.pdf

Tips on writing a personal statement

Additional tips:

- ♦ Make sure your personal statement is a “polished piece” of writing. Very often it is the only example of your writing abilities provided to the selection committee.
- ♦ Treat everyone with whom you come in contact in a professional manner. Very often professors serve as Graduate Advisors.
- ♦ Follow up on your application with each institution to make sure it is complete.
- ♦ Keep all materials related to each school in its own folder. Place or staple a check sheet in the front of each folder. Keep a contact log, noting the date and name of each person you speak to or email, as well as what it was regarding. Retain photocopies of materials you have sent to each institution.
- ♦ Type whenever possible. Neatness and accuracy count!