To Be or Not To Be
Graduate & Professional School Edition
Agenda

Undergraduate vs. graduate education

Common myths

Types of degrees

Program considerations

Application pieces
What You'll Learn Today

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to...

- Identify factors that determine if graduate school is necessary
- List different considerations when choosing a program
- Name the application pieces
NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES

Obtaining *requisite competencies* that broadly prepare college graduates for a *successful transition* into the workplace.

UC RIVERSIDE Career Center
Undergraduate vs. Graduate Education

Scope of study
Expertise Level
Output/deliverables expected upon graduation
Common myths

- Jobs in the sciences and psychology require advanced degrees
- Advanced degrees mean a higher salary
- Grad school will give me time to explore careers
Types of Degrees
Types of Degrees

**Master-Level**
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Education (MEd)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)

**Doctoral (academic and professional)**
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- Juris Doctor (JD)
- PharmD

**Others**
- Certificates
- Post-doctoral
- Combination (MD/PhD or MBA/JD)
Post-baccalaureate programs
What are they?

Great for…
• Career changers
• Improving academic standing before applying to grad programs
• Preparing to earn a second bachelor’s degree

Considerations…
• Programs are not equal to graduate education, but are more advanced than a bachelor’s degree
• Can be used to take pre-requisites for graduate or professional programs
• Typically 8-12 months
Program Considerations
What to consider when choosing a program

- Quality
- Prestige
- Cost
- Faculty
- Research
- Location
- Other...
Program considerations
How to search for programs

- Grad school websites
- Rankings
- Accreditation
Program considerations

Cohort Model

Course structure
- Highly structured
- Fewer electives

Peer networking
- Strong network with peers
- Limits external interaction

Time structured
- Standardized time frame
- Not flexible
Program considerations
Research vs. Applied

- **Emphasis**
  - Theory
  - Practice

- **Faculty Relationship**
  - Advisor
  - Mentor

- **Final Project**
  - Thesis/Dissertation
  - Exam/Portfolio/Practicum
Program considerations

Online or on-campus

Discussions
- In-class
- Online boards/forums

Access to resources
- In-person office hours and services
- Online/remote options

Online considerations
- Flexibility
- Motivation
- Study space
Program considerations
Financial Aid

- **Institutional Funding**
  - Teaching Assistant
  - Graduate Assistant
  - Research Assistant
  - Fellowship

- **Scholarships**
  - Merit-based
  - Need-based

- **Loans**
  - Unsubsidized
Program considerations
Get to Know the Programs

Get connected to programs' admissions:
• Find out what makes each program stand apart from each other
• Ask to get connected to current students of a program or alumni
• Make sure if a program is the right fit for you

Research Alumni of Programs on LinkedIn:
• Utilize the "Alumni" tab of different universities of interest
• Search for program names to find examples of current students / alumni
• Pay attention to experiences on alumni profiles
• Connect with people of interest to learn more about their career path
Application Pieces
Transcripts
- Official
- Unofficial
- Leave enough time to mail

Application
- Institutional
- Program-Specific
- Fees (program and institutional)

Exams
- Find your best study method
- Schedule early enough to allow for scoring
- Fees to take and to send scores

Personal Statements
- Share motivation and preparation
- Ask admissions representatives questions
- Highlight unique qualities and career goals
- Use the ARC

Letters of Recommendation
- Ask several weeks in advance
- Provide resume and highlights
- Writers should speak to academic preparedness and/or professional competence
Staying organized

Find a way to track your program research, application materials, and status that works best for you.
Staying organized

Find a way to track all of your applications and timelines that works for you

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Join the UCR Career Network, an online community for networking, mentoring, and job opportunities for alumni and students.

MENTORING
Matching process that connects current students with alumni or alumni with one another.

JOB SEARCH
Job board for those currently seeking employment or for alumni looking to hire other Highlanders.

NETWORKING
Discussion boards to meet and network with others who have similar career questions.

REGISTER AT CAREERNETWORK.UCR.EDU
Questions?
**Location:** We are located in the Career Center Plaza. Our entrance is the University Lecture Hall and the Surge Building, behind the UCR Campus Store.

**Hours:**
Mon. - Fri. 8 am to 5 pm

*Individual counseling appointments available*  
*Schedule on Handshake*

**Drop-in Hours:**
Mon. - Fri. (days & times vary)

*View drop-in schedule on our website [https://careers.ucr.edu/](https://careers.ucr.edu/)*