

ACE YOUR GRADUATE SCHOOL INTERVIEW!

WHY DO GRADUATE SCHOOLS CONDUCT INTERVIEWS?

Admission committees want to learn more about you than applications and test scores can tell them. They want to assess your motivation and dedication to your subject and determine if you have a clear idea of how your graduate work will prepare you for your career. They are looking for a good “fit” - in graduate school you will often work more closely with faculty and fellow students than you did in college. They want to be sure you share the philosophy, research interests of the department and its faculty and that you can manage challenges and succeed in their program.

IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TOO!

By showing your best self and impressing the interviewers with your enthusiasm and ability, you can increase your chance of admission. By asking questions about the program, past student successes, financial aid options and ways you can become involved in the educational community, you show your interest and help discover if the school is the best place to help you meet your goals.

SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU DO YOUR BEST:

Make a good impression

- Dress, speak and act professionally
- Be conscious of non-verbals such as handshake, eye contact, body language
- Show enthusiasm, be honest and be yourself
- Turn off your cell phone and be pleasant and polite to everyone you meet

Be prepared

- Do extensive research on the school, the department, and the faculty including their publications, research and teaching interests
- Learn about their focus and specialty areas. What is unique about them and of particular interest to you
- Prepare and practice answers for typical questions. These will often focus on how you plan to use your graduate degree, your goals, and the contributions you will make to their work

Send a thank you

- Thank the interviewer(s) for taking the time to meet with you and express again your interest in joining the program.
- Refer to a topic of special interest discussed in the interview
- Re-emphasize something about you that shows you will make a contribution
- Send a hand-written note or a professionally constructed email with 48 hours of the interview

SAMPLE GRADUATE SCHOOL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTEREST IN THE PROGRAM AND FIELD AND FUTURE PLANS

- What attracted you to this program?
- Why did you choose your career?
- How will this program help you achieve your career goals?
- What are your research interests or areas of special interest?
- What other schools are you considering?
- If you are not accepted into graduate school, what are your plans?

ABOUT YOU

- Tell us about some of your strengths and weaknesses?
- How do you handle stress?
- What do you do in your spare time/hobbies?
- What will be your greatest challenges if accepted?
- How will you finance your education?

PREPARATION/UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

- Describe research projects you have worked on. What was the purpose of the project, and what was your role?
- In what ways have your experiences and training prepared you for graduate study in our program?

FIT FOR THE PROGRAM/POTENTIAL AS A SCHOLAR

- How will you contribute to our program and this field?
- What do you see as the major trends in your field of study?
- Talk about a current issue in the field: Why does it interest you? Why is it important and what is your opinion about it?

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS FOR US?

ALWAYS be prepared with good questions. Do not ask questions that are extremely obvious from having read the website and department literature.

- What distinguishes this program from others?
- Where are recent graduates employed?
- What are the opportunities for teaching assistantships/fellowships?
- What practical experiences are included in the program?
- What research is being conducted in the department with which I could be involved?