



# Applying to Graduate School

# Outline

- ▶ Programs
- ▶ Application Components
- ▶ Choosing a Supervisor
- ▶ Timeline
- ▶ The Application is Submitted...Now what?
- ▶ FAQs



# Program Types

Clinical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Psychopathology</li><li>• Assessment and intervention</li></ul>
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Everyday” problems ; personal growth</li><li>• Educational settings</li></ul>
Industrial/ Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Workplace behaviour</li><li>• Agencies and businesses</li></ul>
Clinical Neuropsychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore relationships between brain and behaviour</li><li>• Academic or clinical settings</li></ul>
General Experimental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Theory testing and research</li><li>• Academic settings</li></ul>

# Degrees

- M.A. = Master of Arts
- M.Sc. = Master of Science
- M. Ed. = Master of Education
- Ph.D. = Doctor of Philosophy (clinician-scientist vs scientist-practitioner model)
- Psy.D. = Doctor of Psychology



# Components of an Application

- ▶ Statement of interest
- ▶ 2-3 reference letters
- ▶ Transcripts
- ▶ GREs
- ▶ CV
- ▶ Application fee (typically \$100/application)

# Statement of Interest

- ▶ Typically 1-2 pages in length
- ▶ Discuss your research interests, why you want to go to grad school, and why you are a good fit
- ▶ Tell a story BUT be professional
  - ▶ This is not a creative writing contest
- ▶ Have your undergraduate thesis supervisor/lab supervisor read it over



# Statement of Interest - Tips

- ▶ Tailor your letters to each program
- ▶ Indicate who you wish to work with
- ▶ Discuss your research interests and how your interests may fit with your potential supervisor's interest
  - ▶ Be specific
- ▶ Highlight your relevant experiences

# Choosing a Supervisor

- ▶ **Factors to consider:** Area of expertise, style, personality, standards, ability to collaborate, track record, ability to guide beyond the program, availability
- ▶ **What to do when you are interested:**
  - ▶ Read their recent publications
  - ▶ Begin initial contact via email
  - ▶ Outline your ideas and relate it to their current work
  - ▶ Speak to their current graduate students if possible



# Reference Letters

- ▶ Ask for the letters early
- ▶ Your referees should be faculty who know you well, outside of a classroom context
- ▶ Provide your referees with specific instructions

# Transcripts

- ▶ Order them early
- ▶ Need to be mailed to each institution you apply to
- ▶ Typically costs \$10 - \$12 per transcript



# GRE (Graduate Record Exam)

- ▶ Standardized test used around the world
- ▶ Required for a variety of different graduate programs
- ▶ Take the test early so that you have time to re-take it if necessary
- ▶ Psychology Test: Paper-based only
  - ▶ When: September, October, April
  - ▶ Where: See test center list at [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)

# CV


- ▶ An academic resume
- ▶ Include education, awards/scholarships, research experience, *relevant* practical experience, teaching experience, publications/presentations, professional affiliations
- ▶ Should be organized and descriptive
- ▶ Proof read



# Timeline

Sept	• GREs; Prepare funding applications
Oct	• Determine programs; visit if possible; Funding applications due
Nov	• Transcript requests; Letters of recommendation
Dec	• Finalize statements; mail applications
Feb	• Campus visit or interview
Mar	• Accept and decline offers
Apr	• Celebrate or regroup

(APA, 2007)



# The application is submitted. Now what...?

- ▶ Relax and congratulate yourself!
- ▶ Prepare for interviews
  - ▶ Practice your responses to interview questions in advance
  - ▶ Why do you want to be a graduate student in (insert program name here)?



# The application is submitted. Now what...?

- ▶ Why do you want to be a student in our program specifically?
- ▶ Be able to say your research interests/potential project fluidly and concisely
- ▶ Familiarize yourself with potential supervisors' most recent publications
- ▶ Prepare questions

# FAQs

- ▶ How many schools should I apply to?
- ▶ What if I do poorly on my GREs?
- ▶ Are my grades high enough?
- ▶ How important is volunteer work?  
Research experience?
- ▶ How should I dress for interviews?
- ▶ What if I am not accepted?
- ▶ *Other questions?*