



Preparing for Professional and Graduate Schools Fair

What is the Professional and Graduate Schools Fair?

The Professional and Graduate School Fair is an annual event held in October in which representatives from various graduate and professional schools come to University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) to promote their programs and answer your questions.

Before the Event

- ✓ Attend the relevant seminars related to Considering Further Education. Please visit cln.utoronto.ca for specific dates and times
- ✓ If you know what programs you are interested in pursuing, conduct research to find out which schools offer the program. Visit the AUCC Program finder at www.universitystudy.ca
- ✓ Visit the Academic Advising & Career Centre (AA&CC) website at www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc to determine which institutions are attending the fair and what program areas they represent.
- ✓ Prepare your questions (please see reverse for suggestions)

When should I apply to graduate schools?

Begin the application process one year prior:

- ✓ Research the programs to determine the individual deadlines and application requirements
- ✓ Register and prepare for any tests (e.g. GMAT, GRE)
- ✓ Complete your personal statement/ biographical sketch a month prior to the deadline to give yourself time to get feedback
- ✓ Complete the online application before deadline. These deadlines vary by program and can be as early as the fall
- ✓ Approach your references well in advance of the deadline to submit letters of reference. Provide them with a copy of your personal statement and resume/cv to help them write a strong letter

Start Early

Graduate schools require a high GPA and a demonstrated skill set on your application.

Improve your GPA:

Visit the AA&CC and the CTL to improve your academic skills.

Cultivate References:

Get to know your professors. Their research is interesting! Professors who know you fairly well are able to write strong reference letters for you.

Get Involved:

Join volunteer and co-curricular activities that develop your skills and demonstrate an ongoing interest in a career in the field of study to which you are applying.

Please note: While every effort is made to avoid errors, requirements do change. This tip sheet is intended as an informational document only. Detailed, up to date information about admission requirements and application procedures should be obtained directly from the individual institutions.

Sample Questions

The following are a list of sample questions to help you generate a personal list based on your concerns.

- ✓ What are the areas of specialty of your Faculty members?
- ✓ What are the benefits of attending your institution?
- ✓ What opportunities are there for funding at entrance and through the course of the program?
- ✓ How long do your students typically take to complete a Master's or Ph.D. program?
- ✓ What is a competitive mark to gain admittance (*remember, no one can tell you with certainty what grade will guarantee admission, however, you can learn the average from previous years*)
- ✓ How do you calculate this mark (e.g. is it the Cumulative GPA or the last ten courses)?
- ✓ Does the program require admission tests (GRE, GMAT, etc)? Is there a cut-off score?
- ✓ What are the other important factors that the admissions committee takes into account (e.g. volunteering, co-curricular activities, leadership experience and/or work experience)?
- ✓ May I visit the campus to speak with students and faculty?
- ✓ Are there any practicums/co-op/internships in the program?
- ✓ Can the program be completed on a part-time basis?
- ✓ Is it possible to receive advanced standing for work already completed?
- ✓ If I took some time off between my undergraduate degree and this program, would this affect my admissibility?

During the Event

- ✓ Have your questions ready when you approach the program representative
- ✓ Remember the importance of first impressions; conduct yourself accordingly
- ✓ If there is not enough time to ask all of your questions, ask how you can obtain further information. If the representative cannot answer your questions, ask for an alternate contact
- ✓ After having discussed your inquiries with the representative, take quick notes about what you learned

After the Event

- ✓ Check your notes to make sure you have all the information you need
- ✓ Following-up with contacts promptly may help them to remember you when you ask questions
- ✓ Attend the relevant professional and graduate school seminars offered by the AA&CC or other UTSC services such as the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL)
- ✓ Review AA&CC tip sheets on graduate school and career related topics on our website: www.utsc.utoronto.ca/aacc/tip-sheets

What if I don't get in?

Graduate school is very competitive and it's important to have a back-up plan. Possibilities include:

Re-apply: Contact the program admissions staff and/or faculty to talk about ways to make your application stronger

Find Work: The AA&CC can provide assistance with your job search for up to 2 years after graduation

Consider Alternate Careers: Speak to a Career Counsellor who can help you generate alternative career plans, visit our library, and review our online resources

Take a Post-Graduate Diploma: Gain industry specific knowledge and experience to facilitate entry in a related area

Broaden Your Horizons: Travel, volunteer, and experience new things

Evaluate which of these possibilities is right for you. Use the services of the AA&CC to help you find your starting point. We're here to help!