

DHS Workshop: Applying to graduate school

Ash Catonio & Elliot Fonarev

Overview

Graduate School

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Funding

Requirements

Tips for:
Letter of Intent
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Q&A/ Workshop

Q&A
Workshop your materials



Graduate School



How to select programs?



- Ask your professors/ supervisors
 - Programs based on your interests
 - Reputable schools; researchers
- Researchers you want to work with
 - Identify research/researchers you admire
- Where you want to live
 - Most MA programs are 1-2 years
 - Masters programs in the US vary but are from 2-3 years
 - PhD programs vary: 4+ years

UNIVERSITY	PROGRAM	LINK	CONTACT	DEADLINE	APP MATERIAL	PEOPLE
University of California, Santa Barbara	Sociology	https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/graduateprogram	Inquiries: 805-893-3324 UCSB Graduate Division Attn: Graduate Admissions 3117 Cheadle Hall Santa Barbara, CA 93106-2070	December 1st, 2021	- Transcripts - Statement of purpose + personal achievements/ contributions (2-3 pages) - CV - 3 Letters of Recommendation - Writing Sample 10-15 pages - \$140 USD (174 CAD)	Verta Taylor https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/verta-taylor France Winddance Twine https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/france-winddance-twine Alicia Cast https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/alicia-cast Zakiya Luna https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/zakiya-luna Denise Segura https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/denise-segura Catherine Taylor https://www.soc.ucsb.edu/people/catherine-taylor
CGS-M	SSHRC	https://www.nser-csrsibg.ac.ca/students-etudiants/g-cs/cgsm-besem-eng.asp		December 1st, 2021		
University of British Columbia	Sociology	https://sociology.ubc.ca/graduate/phd-program/	Inquiries: 604-822-0503 soci.grad@ubc.ca 6303 NW Marine Drive Vancouver BC, V6T 1Z1	December 15th, 2021	- Transcripts - 3 Referees - Statement of Intent (500-1000) - Writing Sample - CV - \$108 CAD	Michaela Musto https://sociology.ubc.ca/profile/michaela-musto/ Dawn Currie https://sociology.ubc.ca/profile/dawn-currie/ Becky Ross https://sociology.ubc.ca/profile/becky-ross/ Amin Ghaziani https://sociology.ubc.ca/profile/amin-ghaziani/
The University of Toronto	Sociology	https://sociology.utoronto.ca/program-information/phd-program/	Inquiries: 416-946-4061 sociology.graduate@utoronto.ca 725 Spadina Ave. Toronto, ON Canada M5S 2J4	December 15th, 2021	- 2 Reference Letters - Writing Sample (10-25 pages) - Letter of Intent (1 page) - Academic transcripts - CV - Application form - \$120 CAD	Judith Taylor https://sociology.utoronto.ca/faculty-and-staff/judith-taylor/ Jessica Fields https://www.utsu.utoronto.ca/healthsociety/jessica-fields
University of Michigan	Sociology	https://lsa.umich.edu/soc/graduate/why-choose-michigan-sociology.html	Inquiries: 734-764-6324 sociology.department@umich.edu Room 3115 LSA Building 500 S. State Street Ann Arbor, MI	December 15th, 2021	- Transcripts - Academic Statement of Purpose (2 pages) - Personal Statement - Writing sample (10-20 pages) - 3 Letters of recommendation - \$90 USD (112 CAD)	Elizabeth Armstrong https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/elizabetharmstrong/ Sandra R. Levitsky https://lsa.umich.edu/soc/people/faculty/slevitsk.html Karin Martin https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/kamartin/ Paige L. Sweet Jamie Budnick (Institute for Research on Women and Gender) https://jami budnick.com/ Sarah McLaughlin (Deschobova)

Funding



Internal

- Program fellowship (funding package varies by program)
- Tuition is covered in package
- TAships: some guaranteed work
- RAships: some guaranteed
- Internal scholarships/top-ups

EG. Sociology at UofT: \$26500
(-\$8000 tuition)=\$18,500 guarantee
(+ additional opportunities for TA/RA work *this varies by department)

External

- Canada Graduate Scholarships
("SSHRC"/"NSERC"/"CIHR")
 - Masters (CGS-M): \$17,500 (1 year)
 - PhD (CGS-D): \$20,000 or \$35,000
(yearly, for 3 or 4 years)
 - *additional funds for Black student researchers
- Ontario Graduate Scholarship (OGS)
 - \$15,000
- OSAP
 - Financial need



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Application Requirements

* *

Typical Requirements

Letter of Intent

CV

Writing Sample

Reference Letters

GRE*

Personal statement*

Transcripts

- For all post-secondary institutions attended
- Around \$15 to order
- Official/ Unofficial

Other

- Application fees (~\$100)
- Can ask for fee waiver*
- Form (Application portal)



Letter of Intent



Requirements

- 1-2 pages
- Indicate your research interests
- Prospective research agenda
- Why the program is right for you (identify potential supervisors)
- Indicate your experience and how you're well-suited for the program

Tips

- There's a formula! Get a sample letter from a graduate student in that program
- Have multiple people read your statement
- Start **early!** 3-4 months ahead
- State names/connections to specific professors you want to work with
 - Networking with professors you want to work with beforehand is helpful!

Letter of Intent

Dear Admissions Team,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am enthusiastic about your MA program in Sociology as the ideal next step in my sociological training and pursuits. My excellent preparation at the University of British Columbia, where I attained Dean's List standing, research assistantship at the University of Toronto, and work experience as an assistant post-graduation, are all indicators of my academic promise.

While pursuing a double major in Sociology and Psychology at UBC, I collaborated with and was a research assistant to Dr. Judith Taylor. With this project, I received training in conducting interviews with frontline workers and began my career in visual sociology, photographing participants. Following this experience, I created a self-directed course under the supervision of Dr. Sean Lauer, continuing my exploration of the sociological literature on sexual assault and approaches to visual sociology. These undertakings and my close working relationship with both researchers, whom I highly admire, were crucial in my decision to continue onto graduate level work.

I am most interested in research at the intersection of gender, culture, and criminal legal studies. My generation has been a part of pivotal shifts in thinking about sexual autonomy and the expansiveness of identity. I have grown up in an era where consent is a complex nuanced concept and where important ideas of bodily integrity have begun to gain cultural traction. For such reasons, I am both excited and eager to be a part of a scholarship that is thinking in novel ways about identity and interrelation. I hope to focus my master's research on shifting understandings of sexual consent in the Canadian context. Frameworks I hope to explore include script theory (Gagnon and Simon's, 1986), dramaturgy (Goffman, 1959), gender performativity (Butler, 1990), as well as content and discourse analysis.

The high degree of expertise and range of experience in the UoFT Sociology department is my primary reason for applying. Having the opportunity to learn from your researchers will facilitate my important sociological questions, deepening their theoretical base, and strengthening my methodological approach. Further, I believe this program will prepare me accordingly for my goal of attaining a PhD in Sociology. Dr. Taylor, who has agreed to be my supervisor, will enhance my research by strongly anchoring it in feminist perspectives of sexual assault. Additionally, her extensive experience with feminist and community activism will introduce me to the important communities thinking critically on how to elaborate social consent definitions and understandings. Dr. Fields' research with high school and middle school communities is incredibly inspiring and hopeful for the direction I hope to take in terms of my preferred population. Her expertise would surely root my examination of consent within the sexual health education literature and its intersection with government legislation. Finally, Dr. Hannah-Moffat's knowledge and research on risk and gender within the court system would help focus my interests concerning the intersection / divergence of law-enforcement in relation to emerging cultural consent discourses. I would be honoured to learn under her guidance.

The community of graduate students currently working in the area of gender is another crucial draw I have to this program. The diverging approaches and experience of this cohort would greatly enhance my research pursuits. Reciprocally, my training experience and commitments would bring value to this discipline, helping push critical discussion forward.

Statement of interest

University of Toronto, Graduate Department of Sociology

Early on in my undergraduate studies, I took on a degree in jazz performance in addition to my B.A. in social sciences. This came as no surprise to my family, who often jokes that I never outgrew my childhood proclivities to barrage people with both an impressive amount of 'why's and invitations to my one-woman shows. Unexpected, however, were the social experiences my music degree entailed. I distinctly remember questioning a history instructor as to why all but two of over two hundred jazz musicians we'd surveyed were male; "women," he responded, "just weren't as influential." As a female performer in jazz' hypermasculine landscape, I began to wonder what 'influence' truly was and how it factored into why there were still so few of me.

In turn, sociology allowed me to unpack my experience through the understanding that certain identities and forms of knowledge are valued more than others. Critical perspectives such as Adorno, Durkheim, Bourdieu, Harding, and Becker's fostered my understanding of both historical and contemporary mechanisms of social inequality and stratification related to gender, race, and class in the contexts of artistic and cultural production. I consequently developed a keen interest in researching the unequal distribution of power and labour in such contexts, grounding myself in standpoints issuing from science and technology studies as well as the sociology of knowledge, culture, work, gender, and health. In this vein, I have focused on topics such as music's ties to health, collaborative and improvised art scenes, work in creative industries, colonialism and Indigenous artistry, and social constructionism in the classification of music. In hopes that I be admitted, I have taken a gap year to conduct preliminary work for a mixed methods major research paper investigating the understudied effects of gender on enrollment and differential experiences in Canadian jazz music education. Ultimately, I aim to harness sociology's robust methodological and theoretical traditions to expand knowledge about artistic and cultural contexts as well as inform policy and practices that affect change within them.

With this in mind, I have undertaken academic, professional and extracurricular pursuits specifically geared toward honing my independent research and writing skills. I have extensively researched and worked on art, culture and health in the context of coursework, personal ethnographic projects, and research assistantships for various large and small scale initiatives. As a result, I have cultivated a strong competency in qualitative inquiry and research design, and developed a strong sense of orientation in the research process. Perpetuating this growth as well as the continued and enriched opportunity to keep doing what I love—reading, writing, and building relationships with my peers and mentors—greatly motivates my application to UoFT's MA program. Its department's research areas in the sociology of culture, gender, social networks, and work are greatly relevant to my own research orientations, and my correspondences with various faculty members have demonstrated that my project ideas and interests would find considerable support. Namely, in light of Dr. Jooyoung Lee, Dr. Vanina Leschziner and Dr. Daniel Silver's work on culture and art, as well as Dr. Sharla Alegria, Dr. Judith Taylor, Dr. Ann Mullen's approaches to investigating inequality in the production of knowledge and culture. These scholars' methodological foci would also allow me to hone my current research abilities and to diversify my skillset by furthering my engagement with theoretical and quantitative approaches. My admittance would therefore be highly conducive to building the knowledge, skills, and networks crucial to achieving my ultimate goal of undertaking doctoral studies and career in academia.

My established interests and profile as a diligent, highly motivated student with extensive experience in academic, research, and cross-disciplinary contexts make me an ideal MA candidate. I am confident that UoFT's MA program will best foster my ability to pursue my specific interests, and look forward to the opportunity to leverage my penchant for 'why's so as to produce new sociological knowledge and effectively apply it to current social problems.

-Identify the program/
motivations for applying

-Highlight previous undergraduate / research training

-Identify area of interests & theorists

-Highlight relevant extracurricular pursuits

-Spotlight which faculty in the program you want to work with

CV



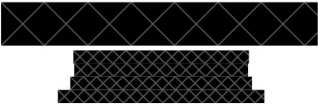
Requirements

- Education
- Experience (research, teaching, professional)
- Publications & Presentations
- Honours and Awards
- Certifications
- Volunteer Experience

Link to resources: [UofT Student Life / UTSC Career Centre](#)

Tips

- Utilize your university's career center
- Ask to see sample CV's (from professors, graduate students, peers)
- Use a template, this will help keep things uniform and organized
- Update frequently
 - Every month/every semester
- Don't sell yourself short!



EDUCATION

- Sept 2020-Present **Unclassified Student:** University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
- SOCI 410C, SOCI 361, SOCI 465
- Sept 2014-April 2018 **Bachelor of Arts:** University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
- Double Major: Sociology & Psychology
 - GPA: 4.1

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- Sept 2017-April 2018 **Sociology Self-Directed Studies:** University of British Columbia,
- Created a self-directed course under the supervision of Dr. Sean Lauer
 - Prepared a course outline and reading list based on my previous research assistant experience with Dr. Taylor, focused on sexual assault counselling and visual sociology
 - Completed a final research paper investigating the initial data obtained from this ongoing research project
- May 2017-Jan 2018 **Research Assistant:** University of Toronto, Toronto, ON
- Collaborated with Dr. Judith Taylor building a research project that explores the diverse perspectives in sexual assault counselling
 - Completed the ethics review form and its required amendments
 - Created the research material including the literature review, letter of invitation, project website, consent form and interview schedule
 - Helped contact potential participants
 - Attended initial interviews with Dr. Taylor, taking photos of the participants for historical record of their work

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

1)	Canadian Graduate Scholarship Masters Program – <i>Pending</i>	2021	\$17,500
2)	Ontario Graduate Scholarship Program – <i>Pending</i>	2021	\$15,000
3)	Dean's List, University of British Columbia	2016-2018	N/A
4)	Golden Key International Member	2018	N/A
5)	John Alexander Scholarship in Humanities, UBC	2018	\$1,300
6)	Alberta Rutherford Scholarship	2014	\$2,000
7)	Calgary Italian Sportswomen Scholarship	2014	\$500

WORK EXPERIENCE

- May 2019-Present **Art Director/Assistant:** Freelance Film & Television, Toronto, ON
- Responsible for script breakdowns, budgets and expense reports
 - Sourcing set décor and props; scheduling their pick up and return
 - Dressing sets to uphold production designer's artistic vision
- May 2019-Present **Production Assistant:** Freelance Film & Television, Toronto, ON
- Responsible for coordinating equipment rental; filing expense reports
 - Communicating scheduling and set protocol with crew members
 - Working diligently at constantly evolving administrative tasks
- Feb 2019-Dec 2019 **Hostess:** MARBL restaurant, Toronto, ON
- In charge of reservation intake and assigning nightly floor plans
 - Greeting guests; making sure all requests are accommodated
- May 2019-Present **Note taker:** University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC
- Recording detailed and clear class notes for students registered in UBC Access & Diversity, distributing them in punctual manner

VOLUNTEER AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR

- March 2020- Current **Certified Listener Society,** Certified Listener
Providing early stage emotional support to individuals in need via an online chat/text platform.
- March 2020- Current **Shelter Movers,** Mover/ Driver
Providing moving services to survivors and their families, helping them relocate safely away from their abuser.
- Sept 2019-Dec 2019 **University of Toronto Continuing Education**
1680 – Writing Short Fiction: Introduction
- April 2019-May 2019 **Art Gallery of Ontario Workshops,** Introduction to Film and Video Art
- Sept 2016-May 2018 **UBC Film Society,** Member & Volunteer

SKILLS & INTERESTS

- Languages:** Bilingual High School Diploma: Canadian French
- Software:** Microsoft Office: Excel, PowerPoint, Word
Adobe: Photoshop, Lightroom, Premiere Pro
Google Suites, SPSS Statistics 22.0
- Travel:** Solo travel: Vietnam, The Philippines, Cambodia, Bali
Italy, Spain, Mexico, USA, Canada
- Sport:** Toronto Sport & Social Club basketball
UBC Nitobe Intramural basketball

EDUCATION	
B.A. Anthropology (Maj.) and Sociology (Maj.) McGill University, Montreal, QC	09/2014—05/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPA 3.54/4.0 <i>Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans</i> Certificate (2016) 	
B.Mus.: Jazz Studies (Maj.), Social Studies of Medicine (Min.) McGill University, Montreal, QC	09/2016—05/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GPA 3.5/4.0 	
WORK EXPERIENCE	
Research and Course Assistant: Department of Anthropology Department of Anthropology: McGill University, Montreal, QC.	08/2019—present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assists in course-related tasks (e.g., organization of materials and technical and organizational support of faculty and teaching assistants) Answers student concerns, revising course content, etc.) Organizes online resources and learning management system to optimize navigation and accessibility for students Formats and proofreads forthcoming articles and books Knowledge of citation programs such as Zotero and Mendeley data so as to prepare it for qualitative data analysis 	
Research Assistant: Music technology The Schulich School of Music's Area of Excellence in Music Technology: McGill University, Montreal, QC.	09/2019—05/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzed, mined and organized qualitative data in accordance with a pre-established taxonomy of orchestration techniques so as to expand a large-scale orchestration analysis and research database Conducted the review of current literature in music perception and cognition pertaining to timbre and techniques of orchestration Performed and revised the optical character recognition (OCR) of treatises and scores, developing a mastery of ABBYY FineReader's OCR tools 	
Research and Coordination Assistant: Community arts program Laboratory of Urban Culture, Montreal, QC	01—05/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated free weekly art, music, theatre and writing workshops as well as community concerts for all ages, providing accessible, culturally relevant educational activities for groups of ten to fifty participants Established effective communication between the public, participants, instructors, visiting artists, and program coordinators, including the creation of promotional materials for upcoming events and activities Collaborated closely with community organizations and local elementary schools in the development and implementation of programming, ensuring its wider reach within targeted populations such as children in after-school care and at-risk youth 	
Tutor Anthropology Students' Association; Arts Undergraduate Society Essay Center	09/2016—05/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edited, proofread, and provided essay consulting services 	

Action words

Results/ contributions

- Conducted review sessions and provided specific, content-based knowledge in medical anthropology to students in one-on-one and group (2-10) settings

Translator and Research Assistant: Community wellness program Listening to One Another program: the Jewish General Hospital, Montreal, QC.	05—10/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transcribed interview data and translated (FR-ENG) interview content and program materials, widening the scope of program delivery Assisted in the facilitation of conference proceedings, ensuring their smooth function 	
Research Assistant: Project in cross-cultural psychiatry Religious Precipitants in Psychiatry project: the Jewish General Hospital, Montreal, QC.	09/2017—07/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organized and summarized clinical data within a pre-established methodological framework, enabling the large-scale comparison and analysis of patient cases Conducted background research on relevant practices in cross-cultural psychiatry 	
AWARDS AND DISTINCTIONS	
Undergraduate Student Research Award (USRA) Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and McGill University, Montreal, QC	04/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$5,125, awarded to conduct research within the framework of the Analysis, Creation and Teaching of Orchestration (ACTOR) project \$1,125, supplemented by Prof. Stephen McAdams \$1,500, supplemented by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies (FRQNT, "Quebec research funds – Nature and technology") 	
Enriched Educational Opportunity Award McGill University Schulich School of Music, Montreal, QC	04/2018; 01/2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$500, funded to conduct independent ethnographic research focused on the intersection of music making and wellbeing at pow-wows in Québec and Ontario \$250, funded to conduct independent ethnographic research at Montreal music jam spaces and compensate interview participants \$260, funded to attend the Society for Ethnomusicology's annual conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in November 2018 \$750, funded to attend the annual Applied Anthropology conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in March 2020 *Cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions 	
Arts Research Internship Award (ARIA) McGill University Faculty of Arts, Montreal, QC	12/2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,000 funded to conduct research at the Laboratory of Urban Culture under the supervision of Dr. Sarah Branson (Faculty of Arts, McGill University) 	
Anonymous Donor Award McGill University, Montreal, QC	07/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2,000 awarded to conduct research at the Laboratory of Urban Culture 	
Sir William Peter Award McGill University, Montreal, QC	07/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$1,500 awarded to conduct research at the Laboratory of Urban Culture 	
Student Life Award Music Undergraduate Students' Association (MUSA): Schulich School of Music, Montreal, QC	04/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$250, funded to attend the Society for Ethnomusicology's annual conference held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in November 2018 	

Amounts

Specific Details

EXTRA-CURRICULAR AND VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES	
Student Association President Music Undergraduate Students' Association (MUSA): Schulich School of Music, Montreal, QC	04/2018—05/2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensured the smooth functioning of the Music Undergraduate Students' Association through the management of finances, event planning, internal and external affairs, and communication between students and staff Represented the student body in Schulich School of Music faculty and administration meetings, delivering monthly progress reports and presentations as well as establishing communication between the student association, building management, the dean, and associate deans 	
Internal Affairs Students' Association (MUSA): Schulich School of Music, Montreal, QC Students' Society of McGill University's Legislative Council as a counsellor of Music, advocating for Music students' interests by liaising with representatives on a campus-wide basis	09/2017—04/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinated a successful faculty-wide formal fundraising event (raising over \$10,000 to cover student association costs) as well as two council election cycles as Counsellor (2016, 2017, 2018) and Editor-in-Chief (2019) 	09/2016—04/2019
Verstehen: McGill's Undergraduate Journal of Sociology , Montreal, QC	09/2016—04/2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced in the academic peer review process; proofread and formatted over twenty academic works including abstracts, references, and author biographies Oversew the collection and selection of texts for an undergraduate academic journal as well as the latter's promotion, printing and publication 	
Committee Member McGill Schulich School of Music's Ethnomusicology Hire Selection Committee, Montreal, QC	09/2018—04/2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborated with faculty, staff and graduate members of McGill's Schulich School of Music in the selection, interviewing, and assessment of ethnomusicologist candidates Represented undergraduate students by maintaining transparency and a close rapport with other student representatives 	
Committee Member McGill Senate Gendered and Sexualized Violence Implementation Committee, Montreal, QC	01/2018—04/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contributed to the development and implementation of McGill's incoming Gendered and Sexualized Violence policy Worked with committee members to develop effective solutions to problems of sexual and gendered violence on campus Engaged with and reviewed policy and survey data pertaining to campus-wide issues of harassment, discrimination, and violence 	
Support Worker Sexual Assault Center of McGill's Student Society (SACOMSS), Montreal, QC	09/2016—07/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided in-person and telephonic support informed to those affected by sexual violence, promoting and maintaining wellbeing amongst survivors situated both on and off campus Sought extensive training in active listening grounded in feminist and pro-survivor approaches, and maintained a high degree of familiarity with Montreal community resources pertaining to health promotion, crisis intervention, and substance abuse 	

Writing Sample



Requirements

- 10-25 pages
 - Page count depends on program
- Usually 1 longer paper (ie: an honours thesis)
- Usually required to be the solo author

Tips

- Use course papers/ assignments in line with your research interests
- Work you are proud of!
- If you don't have a single paper that's 10-25 pages you can include 2+ shorter papers
- Go over/ edit/ rework the papers you are submitting!
- Have other folks read and make suggestions!

Reference Letters



Requirements

- 2-3 depending on program
- Academic references
- Add their contact information in the application portal
- Depending on the program, may have certain requirements
 - Some want only referees with PhDs (not grad instrs.)
 - Some want those who have worked with you in closely

Tips

- Ask your referees at least 1 month before the deadline (up to 2 months is best)
- Choose referees who can speak to your work and abilities well
- Make a spreadsheet for your referee to assist them in managing deadlines and requirements
- Nudge!


Summary

- Seek mentors and reviewers for application materials (use templates from former applicants, ask TAs/profs for feedback on letter of intent).
- Start early! It takes time to compile, edit, and collect everything, especially reference letters.
- Understand funding options: guarantees, risks, and cost of living!
- Do your research on programs! Talk to current graduate students, organize application deadlines and requirements, ask your mentors
- This process can be intimidating, but don't sell yourself short!



Q & A





**Let's workshop
your materials!**



Thank you!