

# GRADUATE SCHOOL FAIR TIPS

## The purpose of an Graduate School Fair

A Graduate School Fair is an excellent opportunity for you to explore and discuss a variety of graduate degree programs with representatives from several schools. It also provides you with a chance to develop valuable contacts with important individuals that may help you with the application process in the future.

## Reasons to attend a Graduate School Fair

- Research programs that are offered by a variety of schools.
- Compare different schools' objectives, philosophies, and curriculums.
- Discover what preparation you may need before you apply.
- Evaluate whether to begin graduate school right after completing your undergraduate degree or to wait 1-5 years.
- Acquire information to help you make decisions about when and where you may apply for graduate school.

## Prepare for the Graduate School Fair

- Explore the types of graduate degree programs you would like to pursue and what makes one program better than another. For example, verify licensure requirements, accreditations, field experience hours suggested, etc.
- Research the programs the list of participating schools offer and decide which schools you may want to target. Rank the schools according to your preference.
- Prepare questions to ask the representatives about their programs.
- Prepare answers for questions you might be asked. For example, representatives may ask you about: your plans after graduation, when you plan to attend graduate school and why you want a graduate degree.
- Plan to wear business casual attire. Remember, you want to make a good first impression. You want to project an appearance that says you are mature and serious.
- Create, review and bring your professional materials, such as your resume, business card, portfolio etc. You never know which representatives will be interested in reviewing these materials.

## Things to do at the Graduate School Fair

- Gather as much printed material as possible, such as business cards, brochures, handbooks, etc.
- Bring paper, preferably a portfolio, to write down the representatives' responses to your questions.
- Be prepared to talk about your current educational program, your related volunteer work, internship or job experience, and your future academic and professional goals.
- Become familiar with schools you may not have considered originally.



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## Factors to consider after the Graduate School Fair

- Really take a look at all the printed materials that you collected at the fair. Find out what additional information they provide. Look for more detailed information about the degree programs on their websites.
- Use that business card or other contact information after the graduate fair. Ask for assistance in connecting you to additional people on campus who might help you, such as the departmental advisor and fellowships office.
- Find out if there will be on-campus visitation days in the fall. Are these open or by invitations? Do they assist with the cost of travel?
- Find out if there are summer research programs on campus that will allow you an in-depth experience prior to applying.

*Attending a Graduate School Fair: Tips for Students*, Rackham Graduate School, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. Retrieved from <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/gss/tips.pdf>

*How to Prepare for the Graduate & Professional School Fair*, The Career Center, The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, Illinois. Retrieved from <http://www.careercenter.illinois.edu/events/fairs/gpfair/prepare>

*Tips on Attending the Graduate & Professional School Fair*, Career Services Center, University of San Francisco, San Francisco, California. Retrieved from <http://www.usfca.edu/career>