

# Identify Graduate Programs that Match Your Interests

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There are hundreds of thousands of graduate programs across the globe and many of them are excellent. The choices can seem overwhelming. It's nice to have a pick of so many educational opportunities, but at the same time, applying to more than a few schools can get very expensive, fast. So, what criteria should you consider to determine which schools are your best choices?

Questions to ask when weighing graduate school options:

- What kind of reputation does the school/program have? Are the professors well respected in the field?
- Is the school accredited? By whom?
- What is the size of the program?
- Who are the faculty? What research is being done?
- Is it possible for a student to “stop-out” for a period? Can you defer admission?
- How is the school ranked?
- Where is it located? What is the city like?
- Are there opportunities to get involved on campus and in the community?
- How diverse is the student population? The faculty? The community?
- Does the location match geographically with post-graduate plans?
- What kind of financial aid is available?
- What kinds of support services are available?
- What are the course requirements of the program?
- Does the program require comprehensive exams or a thesis?
- How long does it typically take to complete the program?
- What are the admissions prerequisites?
- What is the placement rate of graduates?
- Do graduates tend to become faculty or go into practice/industry?
- Who advises the students? Do the advisors also mentor students?
- Who teaches the courses?
- Are there any practicum or internship requirements?
- When are the courses primarily offered (day versus evening)?
- Is the location flexible (i.e. can you take courses through distance education)?
- Can you take classes part-time?
- Is the master's program separate, or part of the Ph.D. program?
- What are the costs?
- How competitive are the students?
- How extensive are the library holdings, computer labs, and other research facilities?
- *Can you see yourself as a student there?*