Identify Graduate Programs that Match Your Interests

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?