CONSIDERING GRAD SCHOOL?

If you are considering Grad school and wondering how to navigate the process or what you need to do, the following is a step by step guide. Further supports and resources can be found on our website studentsuccess.ca or schedule an appointment with our career professionals through OscarPlus-appointments.

Step 1: Reflect

- What is your motivation for more education?
- When is the best time for you to pursue graduate or professional school?
- What is your career vision?
  - Will graduate school help you get there?

*** Be honest with yourself and be clear with your motivations

Step 2: Explore your options

Gather info from internet resources
- Career Cruising – studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca
- www.universitystudy.ca
- Professional association websites

Gather info from people
- Professionals working in the career field
- Professors or students in the programs of interest
- Admission Coordinators or Program Coordinators of the programs

*** Not sure what you are looking for? Then take a step back and do some career exploration.

Step 3: Know your options

There are many types of Graduate programs:
- Research intensive Masters or Ph.D
- Applied/project based programs
- Professional focused with internships
- Course based graduate level
- Some require subject knowledge in same field
- Some will accept a wide range of undergrad programs

*** You can also consider graduate level certificates or post-graduate certificates at College or University Continuing Education.
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Step 4: Thoroughly research your options

The School
- Graduate admissions, financial supports, student supports.

The Program
- Program and courses—sound interesting?
- Research focused, project focused, internships?
- Accredited with regulatory body for profession?

The Professors and Research focus
- “a must” for research based graduate programs.

**** HINT: After thoroughly reviewing the web info, direct your program questions to the admission coordinators.

Step 5: Gather the Details

For EACH program, gather the facts
- GPA—how do they calculate it? Min. vs reality?
- Required courses? Recommended?
- Reference Letters—Academic vs Professional?
- Resume/CV - which do they want?
- Personal Statement OR Letter of Intent (they are different!)
- Entrance Exams? Need to research those
- Experiences needed?
- Interviews—what type, when?
- Deadlines?
- Costs of admissions? Cost of program? Extra costs?

**** HINT: Create a spreadsheet

Step 6: Take a Pause

- Overwhelmed? Confused? Still have Questions?
- Feeling Uncertain? Intimated by the process? Will I get in?

**** HINT: Clarify your Priorities and Develop a Plan - see step 7-9
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Step 7: Clarify your Goals for Grad School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academically</th>
<th>Professionally</th>
<th>Personally</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you want to learn?</td>
<td>What do you hope the program will provide career wise?</td>
<td>What do you want to achieve personally?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you learn best?</td>
<td>What opportunities do you hope the program will provide to support your career goals?</td>
<td>Financial considerations?</td>
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<td>What will help you be successful?</td>
<td>What supports do I hope the program/school has to help me transition after the program?</td>
<td>Location considerations?</td>
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<td>What would be interesting for?</td>
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<td>Relationships to consider?</td>
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<td>What skills or knowledge do you want to develop?</td>
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<td>Time commitment and best timing for you?</td>
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Step 8: Evaluate your Options

List your Academic, Professional and Personal Goals and then evaluate your programs based on your own criteria to help you with your decision.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities/Goals</th>
<th>Option #1</th>
<th>Option #2</th>
<th>Option #3</th>
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<th>Option #5</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Academic</td>
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Step 9: Get Organized!

- Create a chart/spreadsheet with all the details, requirements, deadlines.
- As new questions emerge, make a note of them and source out an answer.
- Make a list of requirements for your applications and develop a plan to meet them.
- Create a timeline with deadlines in mind to help you stay on track.

Step 10: Apply!

@MacSSC, #MacTalksCareers
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