



Ready Reference D-25

Preparing for Graduate School

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So, you have decided that you want to go to graduate school after completing your bachelor's degree. There are many things you must consider when this decision is made, and this ready reference is here to help you be as prepared as you can for graduate school.

To start off:

Students should consider what is most important to them when they want to receive a degree. Just like going into undergrad, graduate school has many important parameters that affect what school students select.

- Choose a graduate program based on what you want, and not choose a program based on what a particular school has to offer.
- Make a list of the subjects that you are most interested in and then find a school that offers those programs for that subject, and yes there are schools that offer what you want.
- Do your research! Know what you are getting yourself into before applying.

What you need to Apply:

After knowing which program you would like to pursue, see what the requirements are to be accepted. Here are some common requirements in graduate school applications:

Test Scores:

Most of the time graduate programs will require you to take a test to be considered for acceptance. For engineering, architecture, and technology programs, the GRE is what is most common. The GRE is applicable to general graduate studies and is a test to measure your intellectual ability following completion of your undergraduate program. Another common path that is seen from CEAT undergraduate students is going into business related programs for graduate school (MBA). To study business in graduate school, the GMAT is usually required. Learn more about the GRE and GMAT at these resources:

- *GRE Overview – Oklahoma State University*
https://universitycollege.okstate.edu/preprofessional/all_explore_to_apply/admission_process/entrance_exams/exam_specific_info/gre_general.html
- *The GRE General Test -* <https://www.ets.org/gre/>
- *5 Things to do before taking the GMAT -* <https://www.mba.com/business-school-and-careers/student-experience/test-day-confidence>

Paperwork:

There is a lot of paperwork required to apply and attend graduate school, like undergrad. Here is what you should prepare:

- **Your academic history** – Name of all universities/colleges attended, along with starting and end dates, and all degrees received.
- **Letters of recommendation** – It is strongly encouraged by CEAT Career Services that

students have at least 2-4 strong, professional letters of recommendation. (See Ready Reference E-11)

- **Resume or CV** – This may not always be a requirement, but it should be something to prepare for a graduate school application. Schools may want to see your involvement and learn more about you, professionally, before admission.
 - CV or Curriculum Vitae is like a resume but highlights more of your background and goes into detail. These can be multiple pages long. See ready reference E-13 for more details about CV.
- **Official Transcripts** – Believe it or not, graduate programs will want proof that you have completed your bachelors' program.
- **Financial Guarantee Form:** Can be submitted before or after application, however, this form is required if student is admitted.

Other Information:

- International students may have to provide proof of English proficiency by submitting scores from a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam.
- There is standard application fee for apply to graduate school at OSU, they are as follows:
 - \$50 for US citizens or permanent residents.
 - \$75 for international applicants.
 - \$25 for US citizens or permanent resident card holders (non-degree seeking)
- Some applications may require additional materials such as statements of goals, a writing sample, or personal statement.
 - A personal statement is common contributor to your application among many types of graduate schools and is a letter describing your goals, passions, involvement, and contributions. The purpose of this is for the admissions department to learn a little more about you when considering your acceptance. See ready reference E-18 for more information about personal statements.

For more information about what to expect from the application, see this link:
<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/application-process/index.html>

Getting Involved:

Most of the time, especially in CEAT, graduate students will be encouraged to get involved with something in their program outside of their coursework. To be fully prepared for graduate school it is advised that incoming students research and reach out to inquire about these positions. Here are a couple of common involvement opportunities to consider as a graduate student:

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA):

A lot of graduate students within CEAT are also part of a research project here at OSU under a faculty member. Typically, this position is directly related to their field of study and can offer as real work experience for students.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA):

Graduate students will also see the opportunity to be a graduate teaching assistant. As you may recall from undergraduate courses, GTA's are assistants to the professors of an undergraduate course. Typically, GTA's help with grading assignments, administering exams, and holding GTA office hours for extra help in the course.

More information about GRA and GTA positions as well as more ways to get involved can be found at OSU's graduate college website, or by following this link:

<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/financing-your-graduate-education/assistantships.html>

Financing your Degree:

Have you considered how you will pay for your graduate education? Well, there are many ways to do this, almost as many as your undergraduate degree. This information will vary by institution and program; however, these are some top ways from OSU to get you degree paid for:

- *Scholarships* – OSU does not give scholarships for graduate students but they do provide a list of outside scholarships to apply for at this link: <https://go.okstate.edu/scholarships-financial-aid/types-of-aid/scholarships-and-grants/outside-scholarships.html>
- *Graduate Teaching or Research Assistant Positions* – As referenced above, these positions are paid most of the time!
- *FAFSA* – FAFSA does provide financial aid to graduate students across the nation, and it doesn't hurt to apply! <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
- *Part-time job* – Depending on your graduate program, there may be a choice to pursue your degree full-time or part-time. This will give you flexibility to work while earning your degree! Find a job at: <https://hireosugrads.com>
- *Fellowships* – Merit or project-based awards given to full-time graduate students: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/financing-your-graduate-education/graduate-fellowships/index.html>
- *Student Loans* – Funds that are borrowed to help pay for educational expenses. Generally, there is a limit on how much you receive – but there are many types: <https://go.okstate.edu/scholarships-financial-aid/types-of-aid/work-and-loans/loans/index.html>

Timeline of getting into Graduate School:

