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Y Luego Que? Exploring Paths, Graduate Programs, and Options After Graduation

Amber M. Gonzalez (she, her, hers)
Professor, Child and Adolescent Development
Undergraduate Studies, College of Education
CSU Sacramento

Redefine the Possible™

What is Graduate School?

- Traditionally defined as "academic"
 - Centered on generating original research in a particular discipline
 - However, it may be "professional"
 - Centered on developing skills and knowledge for a specific profession



What is Graduate School?

- **Master's Degrees**
 - Offered in many fields of study
 - Some are designed to lead to a doctoral degree while others are the "terminal" degree for a profession e.g., Master of Library Science; Master of Business Administration
 - For full-time students, completing a master's degree usually takes 2 years
- **Doctoral Degrees**
 - Highest degrees possible
 - Usually require the creation of new knowledge via independent research
 - Completing this degree may take 5-7 years
- **Specialist Degrees**
 - Usually earned in addition to a master's degree and will require additional coursework, training, or internship experience
 - Usually prepares students for professional certification or licensing requirements (e.g., Ed.S. for school principal).



Why should I go to Graduate School?

- Learn more about what interests you most
 - reading, problem solving, discovering new knowledge
- Advance your career
 - increase earnings, job satisfaction, responsibility and freedom
- Achieve greater flexibility in your career
 - open doors to jobs you may not have considered
- Remain competitive in the job market
 - undergraduate degrees are not always enough in today's job market



How is graduate school different from my undergraduate education?

- **Specialized Knowledge**

- Study is concentrated in one area unlike the general exposure offered in undergraduate education

- **Specialized Skill**

- Requires active participation for successful skill development (critical reading, writing clearly, arguing persuasively, advance research skills, teaching)

- **Independent Experience**

- Unlike the undergraduate degree track, students must direct their own learning (content, process, timeline, teaching... etc.)

How is graduate education structured?

Professional Degrees

- Teaching Credential (K-12)
 - Clinical (hands-on, usually full-time internships (usually unpaid) at various sites)
 - 1-2 years (if full-time)
 - Teaching Performance Assessment
- Professional Masters (social work, public policy, urban planning)
 - Clinical (hands-on, usually full-time internships (paid or unpaid) at various sites)
 - 1-2 years (if full time)
 - Project Portfolio

How is graduate education structured?

Research Degrees

- Masters (often required to teach at a community college)
 - Graduate level coursework
 - Guided, independent research
 - Often preparatory for Ph.D.
 - 2-3 years
 - Thesis, Project, or Comprehensive Exams
 - Shorter than a dissertation (usually)

- Doctorate (often required to teach at a 4-year college or university)
 - Graduate level coursework and written/oral exams
 - Guided, independent research
 - 5-7 years
 - 2-3 years coursework/exams, 1-2 years dissertation process
 - Dissertation
 - New and interesting, unique research contributions

What can I do to prepare for a graduate education?

- Clarify your career plans and goals
- Research the requirements of your career path
- Maintain a competitive undergraduate GPA
 - Especially during junior/senior year
- Develop positive relationships with faculty
- Participate in student organizations
- Participate in undergraduate research programs
- Begin talking with graduate students in your prospective field of study



Where Do I Start?

- Research career aspirations
 - What is your career aspiration?
 - How does graduate school fit with that aspiration?
- Get involved with clubs and organizations
- Engage with your faculty
 - Visit their office hours, ask them questions about their graduate education paths
 - What did they study? Why that topic? Where did they go? What did they do as an undergraduate student to prepare them?
 - THIS DOES NOT NEED TO BE SOMEONE YOU HAVE TAKEN A CLASS WITH
- Gain research experience
 - Independent study with a faculty member (199 units)





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The Application Process

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The Application

- Consists of (often)
 - Personal Statement and/or Statement of Purpose
 - Letters of Recommendation
 - Other Writing Sample
 - Resume/CV
 - Test scores (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, CSET, CBEST)

Statement of Purpose

- Two different kinds
 - Statement of Purpose
 - Research Interests
 - Career Goals
 - Often needs to answer a guided question
 - Personal Statement
 - Your own story

How important are the statements?

- Allow admission committees to distinguish between similar applicants
- Opportunity to get an advocate on the admission committee
- Helps you to begin graduate study with a clear focus

Recommendation Letters

- Should come from *tenure track* faculty
 - Pay attention to the requirements
- Have a back up letter writer
 - They don't know they are a back up letter writer
- Ask in person, schedule an appointment
- Provide them with copies of your cv/resume and statements of purpose and the schools you are applying to and why
 - Be detailed

Contact Information

Amber M. Gonzalez (she, her)

Child and Adolescent Development Undergraduate Studies

College of Education, CSU Sacramento

amber.gonzalez@csus.edu

