

Graduate School Application Timeline

Please note: This is a **tentative guideline!** The Center for Career and Professional Development (CCPD) has devoted considerable time to make this timeline applicable to as many individuals as possible, but graduate programs differ. **It is always important to research in advance the required standardized tests and application deadlines for the programs that you are interested in.** We've left additional room for you to add to or make changes as necessary.

May (prior to Senior Year)

- Start researching schools and programs if you haven't already. Seek guidance from professors, your academic advisor, and Career Coaches with the CCPD.
- Begin preparing for standardized graduate school exams, such as the GRE, LSAT, GMAT, or MCAT. Visit our Admissions Test page for links to exam descriptions, preparation resources, and practice exams.
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June

- Register for the GRE. Completing the exam as early as possible will allow you to retake it if necessary. If you need to take a different admissions exam, now is the time to add the deadline and testing dates to your schedule.
- Complete a practice version of the admissions exam so that you can assess your strengths and areas for improvement.
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July

- Contact the programs you're interested in and request additional information, establish contact with admissions officers, and familiarize yourself with all of the application requirements. This will help you begin narrowing down your options.
- Start thinking about how you will fund graduate school. Explore all financial aid options.
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August

- Take the GRE or other necessary admissions exams. Doing so early will ensure that you have time to re-take it if you're not satisfied with your results.
- Begin reaching out to individuals that you would like to write recommendation letters for you. Review our guidelines for requesting a recommendation on the CCPD's Manage the Application Process page.
- Write a rough draft for your statement of purpose.
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September

- Schedule campus visits and interviews with the universities you are interested in.
- Continue working on your statement of purpose. Request feedback on your draft from several different people. We recommend contact your Career Coach, faculty members, peers, and/or WKU's writing center.
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October

- Finalize your list of schools.
- Request copies of your official transcript be sent to your intended graduate programs.
- Send formal requests for recommendation letters, if you haven't done so already.
- Update your resume and collect any work samples or other documents you may need.
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November

- Start your applications. Seek input from faculty, Career Coaches, and your peers.
- Finalize your personal statement.
- Begin applying for financial aid, fellowships, grants, and assistantships.
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December

- Complete and submit all applications as soon as possible. We recommend keeping copies for your records as well.
- Confirm that all of your recommendation letters and transcripts were received.
- Take a moment to relax.
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January

- Fill out the FAFSA as soon as possible and continue applying for other forms of financial aid.
- Send thank you notes and emails to everyone that wrote recommendation letters and gave feedback on your personal statement and applications.
- Keep track of which programs have received your applications (most programs mail receipt postcards or have online tracking systems) and make inquiries before the deadline if an application hasn't been received.
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February

- Begin preparing for admissions interviews. Consider what questions you may be asked and develop a few for you own. Schedule a mock interview with a Career Coach at the CCPD.
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March

- Keep track of your acceptances and rejections as they come in, and visit those schools that have accepted you.
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April

- Expect final responses during this month. Inquire about any programs that haven't responded as the deadlines approach.
- Discuss acceptances, rejections, and other career options with faculty member or a Career Coach at the CCPD so that you can make your final decision.
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May

- Notify accepting programs of your final decision.
- Enjoy your summer!
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