

Sample Questions regarding Graduate School Programs

Faculty:

- How many faculty members does the program have?
- Are any leaving or retiring?
- If you can't find information on the website, what are the faculty's research interests and publications?
- What is the student to professor ratio?
- How available are faculty to the students?
- Are students assigned advisors or do they choose one?
- How much time do the faculty members spend away on research, conferences, etc.?
- What percentage of graduates gain employment in their field immediately upon graduation within one year?
- Which organizations hire graduates?
- Where are the employers located?
- What is the attrition rate?
- Why do students leave the program?
- What facilities are available to help students in terms of doing research or participating in internships throughout their graduate experience?
- Are there research facilities, computers, libraries or internship opportunities on sight?

Investigating the Program:

- Ask for statistics concerning GPA and test scores for accepted students.
- Some programs weigh test scores less heavily in admissions procedures, others will weigh them more. Learn what range of scores are for accepted applicants, to help you determine your likelihood of admission.
- How much emphasis is put on research, teaching or professional experience?
- Is the program licensed by accrediting bodies in their field?
- What is the curriculum?
- How flexible is the program?
- What is the estimated time to complete the program?
- Are assistantships available in the department or on-campus?
- What is the best way to find those?
- Can you go part-time or full-time?
- Are there research or internships requirements?
- If an internship is not required, is it an option?
- How do students receive internships?
- Are they selected and placed or are students required to find their own internship?
- Are the professors willing to back student research interests?

- What characteristics do they look for in considering admitting a student?
- What is the academic reputation of the department?
- With what professionally related activities are students involved?
- What facilities are available for graduate students?

Students:

- How many students are typically in each class?
- How available are the advisors and professors?
- How well prepared do students feel for major exams?
- How long do students usually take to complete their degrees?
- What do they wish they would have known before entering the program?
- What kind of flexibility in scheduling is there?
- Do students have problems getting into needed classes?
- Are assistantships available in the department or on-campus?
- What is the best way to find those?
- How does the department prepare the students to become a teaching assistant/research assistant?
- What is the workload associated with the department's assistantships?
- What is the students' impression of the faculty's commitment to mentoring students?
- What professionally related activities are students involved with?
- How do students get internships?
- Are they selected and placed or are students required to find their own internship?
- Why do students leave the program?
- How do students describe the communication by faculty in general?
- How do students describe the communication by faculty to students about the program requirements?

Housing:

- Is there graduate student housing on/off campus?
- What does it cost/include?
- Where is on campus housing located?
- What type of transportation is available?

Funding/Costs:

- Does the department provide assistantships, fellowships or grants?
- What is the department's history with funding its students throughout their graduate studies?
- Is funding available year round?
- What other sources of funding are available on campus?

- What is the cost of the program?
- What are the hidden costs (insurance, conferences, membership requirements, etc.)?
- Is there support for graduate students to attend conferences?
- What is the cost of living in that area?
- Has tuition risen in the recent past or is it expected to rise in the foreseeable future?

Employment Prospective:

- What kinds of employment are possible for students graduating from the programs you are considering?
- Where are past students employed?
- What is the rate of employment for graduates of each particular program?
- Where do graduates tend to live/work geographically?