GRADUATE SCHOOL
BASIC TRAINING:

WHAT IS GRADUATE SCHOOL & IS IT FOR YOU?
Getting started...

- Write down your current major/interests
- What jobs do you think you might want?
- Do you think graduate school is the way to get there?
What is “Higher Education”?

What is Graduate School?
Education Progression

High School -> College -> Graduate School -> Post-Doc -> JOB
High School v. College

- Consumer of given knowledge
- Emphasis on classes and grades
- General knowledge
- Supervised, supported learning environment

Critical consumer of knowledge
- Emphasis on classes and grades still
- General knowledge – informed by direct research by faculty
- Autonomous learning environment
Bachelor’s Degrees

- Bachelor of Science (B.S.)
  - Natural Sciences, Profession and Technical Fields

- Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
  - Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts
Jobs Requiring Bachelor’s Degrees:

- Accountant
- Air Traffic Controller
- Laboratory Technologist
- Computer System Analyst
- Construction Manager
- Federal Agent
- Graphic Designer
- Insurance Agent
- Journalist
- Personal Financial Advisors
- Physician Assistants
Critical consumer of knowledge

Emphasis on classes and grades still

General knowledge – informed by direct research by faculty

Autonomous learning environment

Producer of knowledge

Emphasis on application: research, conferences, externships, internships

Specialization

Professional environment

Independent learning – self-motivation critical
Graduate School Education/Skills

- No longer just accept knowledge, but rather, think critically about the knowledge you obtain
  - Challenge ideas

- Apply knowledge and skills
  - Research
  - Practicum experiences
Master’s Degrees

- Master of Arts (M.A.)
- Master of Science (M.S.)
- Master of Laws (L.L.M.)
- Master of Fine Art (MFA)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)
- Master of Education (M.Ed.)
- Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)
Why apply to a Master’s degree program before (or when) applying to a Doctoral program?

- Low Undergraduate GPA
- Weak GRE Scores
- Lack of Research Experience
- Uncertainty About Career Goals
- Poor Letters of Recommendation
- Inadequate Undergraduate Coursework
- Later Application Deadlines  
  (Sayette, Mayne, & Norcross, 2010, p.23–24)
Professional Degrees

- Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D)
- Law (L.L.B. or J.D.)
- Medicine (M.D.)
- Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.)
- Pharmacy (Pharm. D.)
- Theological Professions (B.D., M.Div., Rabbi)
Doctoral Degrees

- Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
  - Can be in many fields (anthropology, chemistry etc.)
- Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.)
- Doctor of Education (Ed. D.)
Jobs requiring Graduate Degrees:

- Archaeologist
- College Professor
- Dentist
- Doctor
- Economist
- Lawyer
- Librarian

- Pharmacist
- Physical Therapist
- Psychologist
- Scientist
- Veterinarian
“Post-Doc”: What is it?

- A postdoctoral (fellowship) position is a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training.
- Goal: Help the person learn the professional skills needed to succeed in a career path
- Placements can range from judicial clerkships to research labs to clinical placements to policy positions (e.g., Congressional Fellow)
- Can last one to five years, depending on the field
Post-Doc: Why would I want to?

- Obtain specialized training
- Collaborate with leaders in your field
- Learn how to obtain grant money
- Increase your marketability
- Keep yourself relevant while looking for a permanent position
- Network
Is Graduate School for you?
Do I need a graduate degree?

- If you have a potential career idea, research it! Look up information on people in that field. What degrees do they have?
- Look at job listings that interest you – what degrees do they want?
Things to Consider:

- Do I need to go to graduate school?
  - Is it important for my field of interest?
  - What degree is appropriate?

- Is this the right time?
  - You don’t have to go straight into graduate school from undergrad

- Financial considerations:
  - Does the program offer financial aid?
  - Pay differences between jobs, degrees
Questions to ask:

- Practical questions:
  - Do I have the motivation to be in school for 2–7 more years?
  - Can I afford graduate education?
  - Do I have the academic qualities to succeed?
    - GPA, time-management, organization
  - Do I have the personal qualities to succeed?
    - organization, time-management, family considerations, other life circumstances
Questions to ask:

- What are my career goals?
  - How do I get there?
  - In your field, are what are the advantages/disadvantages of graduate education?

- How will my education be different?
  - Varies by field (inquire from prospective programs)
  - Graduate faculty
    - Relationships/connections
    - Knowledge obtained
      - Thinking critically
      - Higher level of expectation
      - Discussion v. lecture based classes
How much money will I spend? Is it worth it?

- Look up tuition rates for each of your prospective schools (in state vs. out of state)

- Figure out if you are eligible for financial aid and/or loans

- Do they pay? Many programs (especially PhD) fund students (pay them and their tuition)
Questions to ask:

- Will increasing my education be economically beneficial?
  - Will I make more money?
    - Varies by field
  - Do your research and ask questions of professionals in the field

Aid Sources

• Private Sources
• Graduate Assistantships
• Teaching Assistantships
• Research Assistantships
• Fellowships
• Grants
• Tuition Waivers
• Application Fee–Waivers
• Loans
Websites to Explore

- FINAID.ORG
- FASTWEB.COM
- SALLIEMAE.COM
Prestigious Scholarships

- Rhodes
- Fulbright
- Marshal
- Rotary
- Watson
- Mellon
Salary differences between degrees:
(Examples from CareerBuilder, 2008)

- **Chemistry**
  - Bachelor's degree: $45,385
  - Master's degree: $56,617

- **Economics**
  - Bachelor’s degree: $47,326
  - Master’s degree: $63,429

- **Engineering**
  - Bachelor’s degree: $54,181
  - Master’s degree: $69,752
Earnings after Graduate School

- Figures from 10 years ago...
Earnings continued…

- For more complete figures check the census bureau’s website

- For more recent figures check the institution of education sciences’ website
The CUNY Pipeline Program for Careers in College Teaching and Research

- Support for students from underrepresented groups with interest in doctoral study in any field (EXCEPT law or medicine)
- Funding of up to $5,000 per student (including stipend and GRE reimbursement!)
- Apply as a junior
- Minimum GPA of 3.2
- Applications due March 7th
- See flyer for additional information
- Administered by Office of Educational Opportunity and Diversity at The Graduate Center
Thank you!

Any questions........?
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