CONSIDERING GRADUATE SCHOOL FOR ARTS & SCIENCES

Bryant University
Amica Center for Career Education
Step #1
Consider: “Right” Decision & “Right” Time?

Ask Yourself:
• Am I motivated to go to graduate school right now?
• Do I know what I want to study?
• Can I “get in” to the school I want?
• Do I have time to research and apply?
• How will grad school help me succeed?
• Can I afford it?
• Am I willing to re-locate?
Consider a GAP year

If by the end of Junior year you are still unsure of your career focus, consider deferring your graduate school plans for 1 year.

What is a GAP year?

- Explore potential careers
- Build new skills
- Travel
- Volunteer
- Intern
Step #2
Know your goals, plan of study and long-term career focus

Take time to figure out your short/long term goals:

• Talk to your faculty
• Meet with a Career Counselor in the Amica Career Center
• Consider assessment tools to help clarify your interests, skills and values.
• Enroll in a career course such as CPC 101.
• Research careers using resources such as: Myplan; Spotlight on Careers; Mynextmove
Step #3
Decide Where to Apply

Do your research! Consider…

- Specialization areas within program
- Faculty expertise & ratio to # of students
- Opportunities for research
- Location, culture & “fit”
- Reputation/ranking
- % of students who complete program
- Where graduates find jobs
- Funding sources: scholarships, fellowships, TA…
Resources for Researching Graduate School

- gradschools.com
- graduateschools.com
- collegesource.org
- petersons.com
- princetonreview.com
- graduateguide.com

Sites specific to area of study are also helpful!

Ask faculty for further resources
Step #4
Create an application checklist

- Official transcripts
- Graduate Admissions Tests
- Letters of recommendation
- Statement of Purpose
- Resume
- Interview (not always required)
- Application Fee
Requesting Official Transcripts

- To request your Bryant Transcript go to: http://www.bryant.edu/transcript
- Make sure you request an “official transcript” which insures confidentiality
- Fees are charged
Graduate Admissions Tests: GRE Exam

Most MS/MA/Ph.D. graduate programs require the GRE

• 3 parts: verbal, quantitative, and writing
• Approximately 3 hours and 45 minutes long
• Maximum score = 170
• Re-taking GRE — you can take 1 time per month. All scores reported, unless you cancel scores

To register, visit www.gre.org
(administered by ETS – Educational Testing Service)
Graduate Admissions Tests: **LSAT Exam**

**Law School Admission Test**

- Approximately 4 hours in length
- Take by December for admission the following Fall.
- Administered 4x each year
- The three multiple-choice question types in the LSAT:
  - Reading Comprehension
  - Analytical Reasoning
  - Logical Reasoning Questions
- Scores range between 120-180
- You can repeat the test, but all scores will be shown.

To register: [Law School Admission Council (LSAC)](http://www.lsac.org)
Other Graduate Admissions Tests

**GMAT**
- Typically required for admission to MBA graduate program
- Register through [MBA.com](http://MBA.com)

**MCAT** (Medical College Admissions Test)
- Typically required for admission to medical school
- Register through [aamc.org](http://aamc.org)
Letters of Recommendation

Choose your recommenders thoughtfully

- Do they know you well enough?
- How much credibility are they likely to hold with the universities to which you are applying?
- Are they likely to give you a positive reference?

How many Letters?

- Typically 3
- Tailor your references to your application package

It’s all in the asking…

- Give your recommender enough time
- Make sure they are willing to write on your behalf!
- Inform them about your graduate plans
- Give them a copy of your resume
- Keep in touch!
Statement of Purpose
Start writing early and plan for several drafts

Include:
- What has influenced your career path so far
- Your professional interests
- Short and long term career goals
- How specific program will help you reach your goals

Checklist:
- Grammatically perfect
- Succinctly written
- No spelling errors
- Make sure you Answer the Question!

Have at least 3 people review
- Faculty (or someone who understands your area of study)
- Amica Career Center
- Bryant Writing Center - Unistructure Room 275

Resource: statementofpurpose.com
Resume & Interview

- Tailor your resume to your application package!
- Don’t limit to 1 page—you are encouraged to have multiple pages, if relevant to your area of study.

- Common Categories
  - Education
  - Study Abroad/Languages
  - Related coursework/projects
  - Research/Presentations
  - Professional work/Internship Experience/Fellowships
  - Leadership, athletics, activities
  - Community involvement
  - Professional memberships/conferences

- Typically Interview with competitive graduate programs
- Only finalists are asked to interview
- Applicants pay own expenses
  
  PREPARE before each interview
Financing Graduate School

- **Assistantships** - Campus-affiliated work assignments (e.g. graduate teaching instructor, research associate) that provide a stipend and waive tuition.
- **Scholarships** - Help pay for books, tuition, housing or other education-related expenses. Can be merit-based, need-based or career-specific.
- **Grants** - Awarded to cover expenses associated with tuition, research or travel. Grants are typically need-based and do not need to be re-paid. Types of grants include: federal, state and graduate-school specific.
- **Loans** - Money must be paid back. Available from government or private sources.
- **Fellowships** - Typically cover living expenses to facilitate research work on a project. Awards usually based on academic merit.
Resources for Financing Graduate School

- **Scholarships.com**
- **Idealist** — include the word “fellowships” in your search
- **Profellow** — a fellowship database
- **Fastweb** — list of fellowships
- **Gradschools.com** — list of funding resources
- **USA Government Scholarships** — list of funding resources
- **FinAid** — student guide to financial aid
- **Federal Student Aid for Graduate Studies**
- **College Grants Database**
- **Paying for Graduate School** — US News & World Report resource
Ideal Timeline

- October Senior Year
- Fall Semester Junior Year
  - Figure out your plan
  - Start your research
  - Talk to Bryant faculty
  - Attend a Bryant graduate school orientation session
- Spring/Summer Junior Year
  - Register & study for tests
  - Build your resume: attend conferences, perform research
  - Network with faculty in grad programs you desire
- August/Sept. Senior Year
  - Register for subject test
  - Finalize list of prospective schools
  - Contact your recommenders
  - Begin your statement of purpose
- October Senior Year
  - Request transcripts
  - Send recommenders extra materials
  - Contact schools and arrange campus visit
Ideal Timeline

December
Senior Year

• Complete and submit all applications (earlier the better)
• Verify that recommendations have been sent
• Apply for assistantships

January – March
Senior Year

• Focus on Financial aid, private loans, grants and fellowships
• Continue campus visits and interviews
• Send thank you notes after interviews

April
Senior Year

• Once accepted, withdraw from applicant pool
• Inform and thank references
• Mail required deposit
• Appeal aid package or apply for alternative loans

CELEBRATE!
Tips for “Getting In”

- Strong Grades
- Connect with faculty at prospective universities
- Network at Bryant
- Conduct Research
- Apply to at least 5 schools
- Prepare for Tests
- Promote Yourself
Additional Resources

- Postgraduate Programs - Amica Career Center website
- Graduate School Guide
- Fellowships Guide
- GAP Year
- Bryant University Graduate Programs

Additional Career Fairs:

- Boston Idealist Grad Fair
  (September 29, 5-8PM – over 175 graduate schools represented)

- 2014 Law School Recruitment Forum
  (November 11, Noon-7PM)

Other Career Fairs posted on Events Calendar
For Questions Contact:

**Amica Center for Career Education**

*Located in the Unistructure, next to Salmanson Dining Hall*

**Phone:** (401) 232-6090  
**Email:** [careers@bryant.edu](mailto:careers@bryant.edu)  
**Website:** [http://career.bryant.edu/](http://career.bryant.edu/)

- [Bryant Career Connection (BCC)](http://career.bryant.edu/)
- [Events Calendar](http://career.bryant.edu/)

**Hours:** Monday-Friday 8:30AM - 4:30PM