

## Preparing for Graduate School

- 1). Spend some time exploring if graduate school is really for you. Talk to your professors about what their experiences were like and ask them what they like and dislike about their current work. If you are interested in attending graduate school in sociology, you should review the website for the American Sociological Association (<http://www.asanet.org>). If you're interested in attending graduate school in anthropology, review the website for the American Anthropological Association (<http://www.aaanet.org>). If you're contemplating a degree in archaeology, you might read an essay by Paul Mullins of IUPUI, located at <http://www.iupui.edu/~anthpm/adgrad.html>. If you are interested in graduate school in social work, you may want to talk with the director of the MSW program here on campus (Paul Newcomb, NS 416, (574) 520-4464, [pnewcomb@iusb.edu](mailto:pnewcomb@iusb.edu)) about the IU MSW program and other programs.
  
- 2). Prepare yourself to be a good candidate for graduate school by presenting a paper at an undergraduate student conference (e.g., the Midwest Student Sociology Conference), obtaining a research grant (e.g., through SMART), participating in the American Sociological Association's Honors Program, attending a regional conference, publishing a paper in one of IUSB's undergraduate journals (*New Views on Gender* or the *Undergraduate Research Journal*), or getting involved in the Sociology or Anthropology Club. For pre-social work students, the internship program SOC S-494 would be a good idea.
  
- 3). Before you contact departments, have some areas of interest in mind and be prepared to pose some research questions about those areas. Find out if those departments have people that work in the subfields of your interests.
  
- 4). Cultivate relationships with at least three of your current professors before appearing at their door asking for a reference. When you request a letter of recommendation, provide the professor with adequate information. The following materials would be helpful to the professor: transcript, resumé, list of academic and non-academic accomplishments that are not on your resumé, relevant statements from the departments to which you are applying (about their areas of specialization and the qualities they are looking for in an applicant), and any other information you would like the professor to highlight in her/his letter.
  
- 5). Check out *The Complete Guide to Graduate School Admission* and *Graduate Admissions Essays* from IUSB's Career Services Office (520-4425).

### **Choosing a Graduate Program**

This page applies especially to sociology programs, but similar advice applies for other areas too.

1). Browse through the American Sociological Association's *Guide to Graduate Departments in Sociology* (the Sociology/Anthropology Department has a copy you can borrow) or the American Anthropological Association's yearly guide to Academic Departments, located at <http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/guide.htm>. You might also check out *Peterson's Graduate & Professional Programs: An Overview* from the Career Services Office.

2). Ask your professors and advisor for their recommendations.

3). If you have read a book or article you really liked, locate the author and email her/him about her/his department.

4). Investigate the schools you identified in Steps 1-3 more thoroughly by looking at their web pages. Make sure that you examine faculty resumés (which we call a curriculum vitae) and browse through each faculty's current publications.

5). As you narrow your list of possible schools, call each department's graduate school advisor (or chairperson) and ask more specific questions, such as: What percentage of the faculty publish with students? What do you consider to be the department's main strengths and weaknesses? What unique opportunities does the department offer? Where have the last few graduating classes gotten jobs? For how many years do you typically fund graduate students?

If you're interested in working with a particular faculty member, find out if she/he has worked with (e.g., co-authored an article) graduate students and if his/her students have graduated.

6). If at all possible, arrange to visit a program and sit in on a class. Talk to students to get the "lowdown" on the program. Some departmental web sites have e-mail addresses for the graduate students and you might be able to communicate directly with some students before or after your visit. Arrange meetings with the Director of Graduate Programs and other faculty as well. They might remember you and your interest in their program come admissions time.

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