

Choosing to attend graduate school as part of your career path is a complex process. First, determine if graduate school is right for you at this time or in the future. If it is, you can view the prerecorded workshops created by the NAU Graduate College to learn more about preparing an excellent application and personal statement, found here: <http://nau.edu/GradCol/Student-Resources/Events-Workshops/Workshop-Series/>

## Is graduate school right for me?

### Why graduate school?

1. What type of graduate or professional program do you want to pursue?
2. How do you envision that this program will help you progress in your professional goals?
3. How do you envision that this program will help you progress in your personal or educational goals?

### When can I enroll?

1. When would you like to start a graduate program?
2. What are the pros and cons of starting a graduate program right after finishing your undergraduate degree versus applying after obtaining professional experience?

## I am ready for graduate school, now what?

### Research a range of programs.

1. Review a list of schools and programs in your academic area. What are the five schools that are highest on your list? Why have you ranked these programs highly?
2. What are five more schools that are still attractive even though they are not your highest priority? What is appealing about these schools?

### Consider your strengths as an applicant.

1. What are your strongest assets as an applicant? Consider factors such as academics, standardized tests, and extra-curricular involvement.
2. What are your potential weaknesses as an applicant? How can you improve on these areas of weakness?

### Preparing your applications.

1. When are your applications due? Most graduate programs require applications be submitted no later than January for a fall start date. Some programs such as Medical School require earlier application submission dates.
2. When are you going to take your graduate admission exam for your chosen program? Do you need to take an exam? Some exams such as the GRE and GMAT can be taken any time. Other exams such as the LSAT are only offered at certain times during the year.
3. When and how are you going to ask faculty members and other professional contacts for letters of recommendation? You should typically allow one month for someone to write a quality letter.
4. When do you want to begin and finish writing your personal statement? This is really the only piece of the application in which you have complete control. Take your time and get feedback from people you trust throughout the process.