



## A Graduate School Checklist

- Start thinking about graduate school early in your academic career. Build strong relationships with professors in your field of interest and maintain a good GPA.
- Contact your favorite professor or advisor to discuss the graduate school process. Generate a list of questions and concerns. In order to prepare for your meeting, consult various resources such as:
  - <http://www.petersons.com/GradChannel>
  - <http://www.gradschools.com>
  - <http://www.gradprofiles.com>
  - <http://www.gradsource.com>
  - [http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/grad/rankings/rankindex\\_brief.php](http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/grad/rankings/rankindex_brief.php)
- Once you have determined that graduate school is a viable option, contact the Minnesota State University, Mankato Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program at (507) 389-1188. If you wish to consider programs at other institutions, you may locate a program by visiting the following link:  
<http://www.mcnairscholars.org/McLoc.xcgi?listedaddr>
- Apply for summer research programs and relevant internships as soon as possible. Many programs require at least sophomore status. Make sure that you have a quality research experience by fully participating in the program, refining your research skills, writing an excellent paper, and seeking opportunities to present your work.
- Build a list of potential graduate programs. Remember that you are applying to a department in addition to the actual university. Familiarize yourself with the application process and make sure that you meet the requirements.
- Many graduate programs require an admissions test, such as the GRE. Start preparing to take the GRE or the admissions test that is applicable to your field of interest no later than your junior year. A limited number of fee waivers are available to students who qualify financially. Contact your financial aid office to find out if you are eligible for a fee waiver. Visit the GRE website at <http://www.gre.org> for more information on the test. Free online test preparation is available at <http://www.number2.com>
- Apply early. Graduate programs may require an application, letters of recommendation, official transcripts from all undergraduate institutions attended, GRE scores obtained in the last 2 to 4 years, a writing sample, and a personal statement. Make sure that you are familiar with your program's requirements and submit a completed application. Note that some schools have one deadline for admission and an earlier deadline for fellowship and assistantship consideration.
- Believe in yourself. Know that you are capable of succeeding in graduate school.