To Be or Not to Be?
Graduate & Professional School Edition

UCRIVERSIDE Career Center
Agenda

1. Undergraduate vs Graduate Education
2. Common Myths
3. Types of Degrees
4. Program Considerations
5. Application Pieces
Undergrad vs. Grad
Undergrad...
- Learner (Novice)
- Broad Foundation
- Externally Directed
- Passive Learner

Graduate/Professional...
- Colleague to Expert
- Development of Specialty
- Self-Directed
- Active Learner & Creator
Common Myths
Myths

Jobs in the sciences or psychology require advanced degrees

Consider long term career goals

While many fields require advanced degrees, most do not

Many opportunities exist for those with undergraduate training only
Myths

The more education I have, the more money I can make once I have a job.

Consider the cost of attending graduate school vs. the lost income potential

Education + Experience = Earning Potential

Not all graduate degrees directly correlate to a higher salary
I’m not ready to find a job, but I’ve done well in school. I’ll go to grad school until I’m confident about the job market.

Graduate school is not meant to replace your job search

An advanced degree without practical experience may undermine your career success

An advanced degree may result in being overqualified for jobs of interest
Types of Degrees
Types of Degrees

**Master-Level**
- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Master of Business Administration (MBA)

**Doctoral (Academic and Professional)**
- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- Medical Doctor (MD)
- Doctor of Education (EdD)
- Juris Doctor (JD)

**Others**
- Certificates
- Post-doctoral
- Combination (MD/PhD or MBA/JD)
Post-Baccalaureate Programs

Have a bachelor’s degree but want to...

A Post-Baccalaureate program may be for you

.... improve academic standing for graduate/professional school?

.... change your career?

.... earn a second bachelor’s degree?
Post-Bac Programs are...

Not considered traditional graduate education, but are more advanced than a bachelor’s degree

An option to take pre-requisite courses for graduate or professional programs

Typically eight to 12 months in length
Program Considerations
Choosing a Program

- Quality
- Prestige
- Faculty
- Research
- Cost
- Location
- Other...
Program Considerations

Finding programs
Program Considerations

**Cohort Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Structure</th>
<th>Peer Networking</th>
<th>Time Structured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly structured</td>
<td>Strong network with peers</td>
<td>Standardized time frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer electives</td>
<td>Limits external interaction</td>
<td>Not flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research or Applied Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program Considerations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Emphasis</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area of Study</strong></th>
<th><strong>Faculty Relationship</strong></th>
<th><strong>Final Project</strong></th>
<th><strong>Structure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theory</td>
<td>Specific</td>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td>Thesis/Dissertation</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Broad</td>
<td>Mentor</td>
<td>Exam/Portfolio/Practicum</td>
<td>Cohort</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Program Considerations

Campus
• In class discussions
• Access to faculty/peers
• Access to campus services
• Financial aid options

Campus or Online

Online
• Online forums
• Flexibility
• Self-motivated
• Study space
Questions to ask yourself:

**Program Considerations**

- What are my career goals after graduation?
- What kind of relationship do I want with my peers?
- What is my work-style like?
Financial Aid

Institutional Funding
- Teaching Assistant
- Graduate Assistant
- Research Assistant
  - Fellowship

Scholarships
- Merit-based
- Need-based

Loans
- Subsidized
- Unsubsidized
Application Pieces
General Application Pieces

- Resume
- Transcripts
- Exam Scores
- Personal Statement
- Letters of Recommendation
Transcripts
- Official
- Unofficial
- Leave enough time to mail

Application
- Institutional
- Program-Specific

Exams
- Find your best study method
- Schedule early enough to allow for scoring

Personal Statements
- Share motivation and preparation
- Ask admissions representatives questions
- Highlight unique qualities and career goals
- Use the ARC

Letters of Recommendation
- Ask several weeks in advance
- Provide resume and highlights
- Writers should speak to academic preparedness and/or professional competence
Find a way to keep track of your program research or application status that works for you

Stay organized
**Connect. Inspire. Empower.**

**Come See Us**

**Hours:**
Mon. - Fri. 8 am to 5 pm  
except Wed. 9 am to 5 pm

**Drop-In Hours:**
Mon. - Thurs. 10 am-3pm  
Fri. 10 am-12 pm

---

UCR Career Center  
CAREERS.UCR.EDU • (951) 827-3631