



Navigating the Waters: Getting Admitted and Sailing to Success in Graduate School

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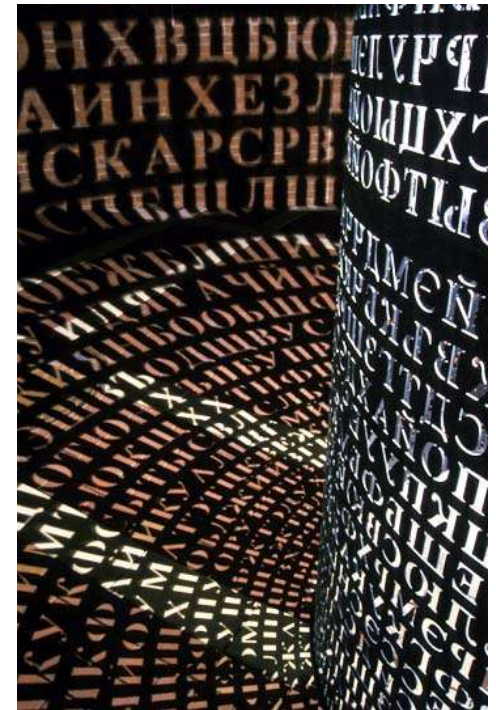
Assistant Dean

The Graduate School



What is Graduate School?

- Graduate education is specialized and intended to develop an expertise in a particular academic area
- A centralized Graduate School is typically a unit within an institution that awards advanced degrees
- The advanced degrees generally offered include doctoral and master's degrees as well as graduate certificates



What are the advantages of attending Graduate School?



- Obtain a job that requires an advanced degree – professional or academic
- Increase your professional network to provide more and better career opportunities
- Give you greater flexibility to change careers
- Increase your earning potential and job satisfaction

Now or Later? When Should I Attend Graduate School?

**The average age of a graduate student at UNC Charlotte is 32.3
(Fall 2008)**

Now, immediately after completing the undergraduate degree:

Advantages:

Knowledge of the academic field is current

Already acclimated to the student experience

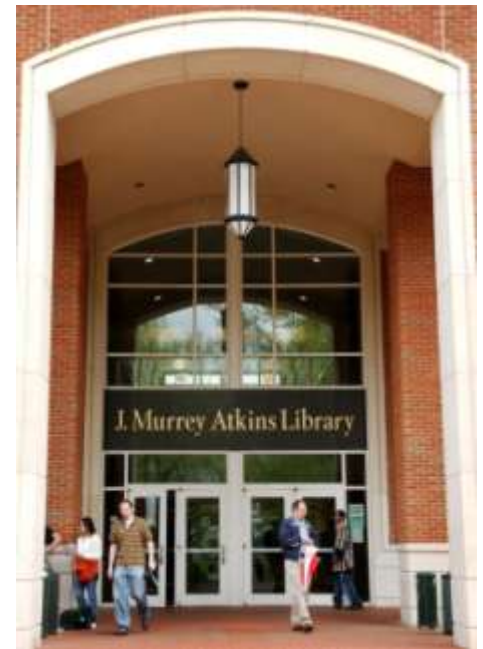
Usually fewer large financial responsibilities

Challenges:

Accumulation of additional student debt

Burnout

Little or no experience in the field



Now or Later? When Should I Attend Graduate School?

Later:

Advantages:

Some programs require work experience

Strong support system (spouse, friends, co-workers)

More financial stability

Challenges:

Financial responsibilities (mortgage...) can make the transition difficult to manage financially

Managing the transition back to the life of a student can be tough



Are all Graduate Schools the Same?

Most people consider these factors if the institution offers the degree/major of interest:

- **Reputation of the program**
- **Reputation of the faculty**
- **Reputation of the institution**
- **Inclusiveness of graduate community**
- **Alumni placement and success**
- **Funding/mentoring opportunities**



Prospective Student Qualities

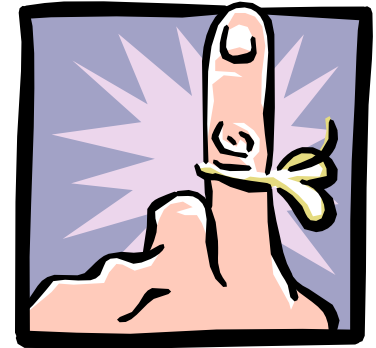


The Application Process

- **Apply online**
- **Provide the Graduate School with letters of recommendation, official test scores, transcripts, and a statement of purpose**
- **Graduate School “refers” file to academic department for consideration**
- **Department recommends applicant for admission**
- **Graduate School notifies person of admission**



Tips!



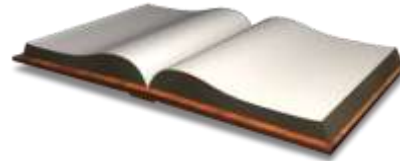
- **Apply early**
- **Apply to 3 or 4 programs**
- **Submit documents on time**
- **Follow status of application closely (online)**
- **Communicate with the graduate coordinator**
- **Interview on campus if possible**
- **ASK to be considered for funding, fellowships, and assistantships**

Admission Considerations

Minimum Admission Requirements

- **Undergraduate and/or graduate GPA**
- **Bachelor's degree (or its' US equivalent) from a regionally accredited college or university**
- **Satisfactory test scores (MAT, GRE, GMAT)**
- **English language proficiency scores (TOEFL, MELAB, IELTS)**
- **Strong and relevant letters of recommendation**
- **Experience in field or associated discipline**
- **Research background**
- **Capacity of program to enroll/support new students**

About Us.....



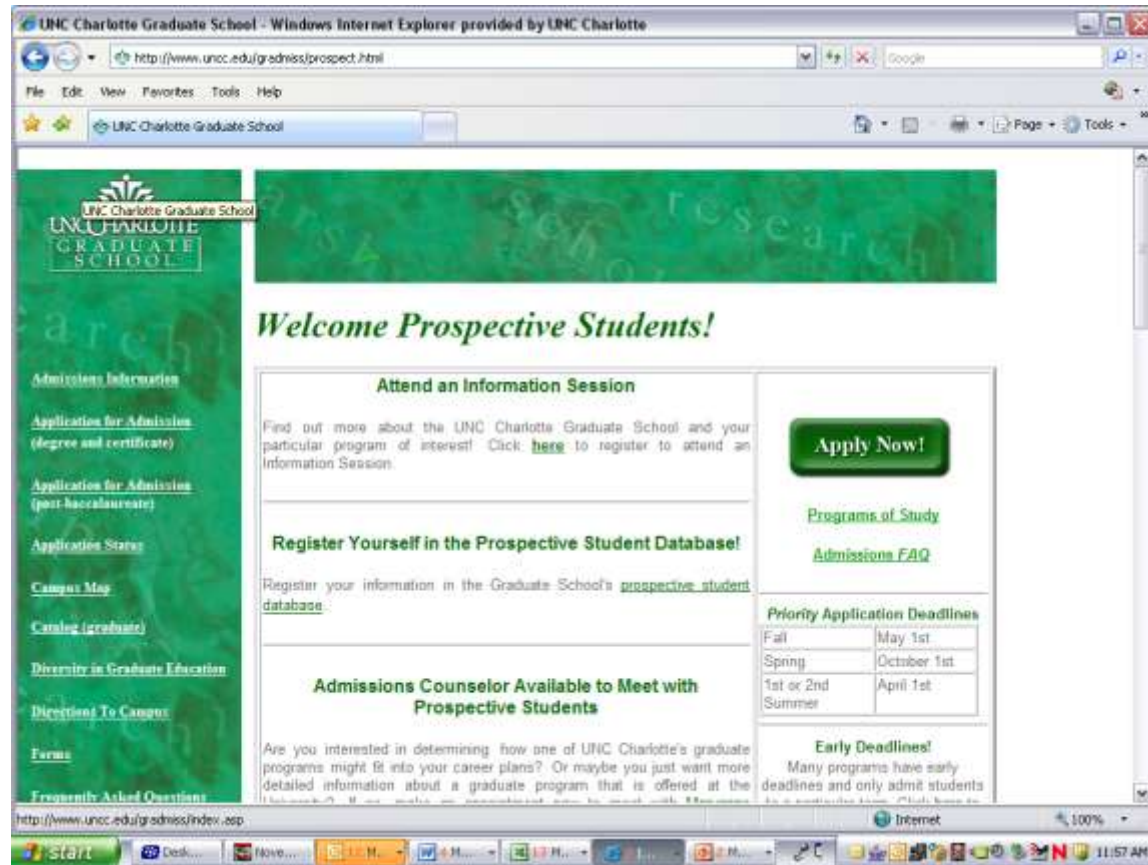
- **Seven colleges**
- **18 doctoral programs**
- **62 master's programs**
- **Numerous graduate certificate programs**
- **Nearly 700 members of the Regular Graduate Faculty teach and mentor graduate students**
- **Almost 5,000 graduate students!**
- **Graduate students come from nearly every state in the union**
- **International students come from a variety of countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Central and South America**

Our Mission

The Graduate School's role is to foster excellence in all dimensions of post baccalaureate studies and is the primary advocate for graduate education and for graduate students at the University. Graduate education functions to explore and advance the limits of knowledge and define the state of the art in an academic discipline. Our purpose is to serve society's needs in specific technical and professional ways as well as the need for intellectual expansion. In accomplishing this mission, the Graduate School values integrity, collaboration, efficiency, innovation, and inclusiveness in all that it does.



Consider Applying for Admission at UNC Charlotte



Apply Online Today!



How is Graduate School different from undergraduate education?

- Many students work with graduate faculty to produce *original* research
- Coursework tends to be more *specialized* in one or two concentrated areas of study
- Students develop skills to help them in a particular occupational area (ex. Clinical Psychology or Business)
- Students may write a dissertation or thesis, produce a final project, and/or participate in an experiential opportunity off campus
- Students develop critical thinking and analytical skills

Succeeding Academically

- **Attendance counts**
- **Participation**
- **Taking Notes**
- **Reading and preparation**
- **Autonomous learning**
- **Using Resources**



Classes versus Research

- **Masters v. Doctoral level work**
 - **Professional**
 - **Skill building and expertise**
 - **Research**
 - **Find a research passion**
 - **Mentorship**
 - **Assistantship training**



Graduate Funding

- **Masters v. doctoral**
- **Professional v. Research**
 - i.e. **Education v. STEM**
- **Grants, Loans, Fellowships, Scholarships**



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Importance of Writing...

- **Honing your writing**
- **Writing routines**
- **Seeking feedback**
- **Working toward publication**



Importance of Mentorship

- **Assess the culture**
- **Self assessment**
- **Collaboration**
- **Find a good match**



Having a Life...

- **Beyond the Books...**
- **Co-curricular opportunities**
 - Professional development
 - Student Government
 - Cross disciplinary collaboration
 - Service
 - Committee and association work



Good Luck!