



# CONSIDERING GRADUATE SCHOOL

## FINDING & EVALUATING PROGRAMS

### 1 Explore Programs

Start at MSU: Share your interest with career advisors, academic advisors, and faculty members in your areas of interest - these folks often have a broad knowledge of graduate school programs.

Expand your search: Explore programs using online graduate school guides, researching international associations in your field, and by connecting with MSU alums and other professionals who have careers in your desired grad school field

### 2 Evaluate Programs

As you review program websites, organize key features on a spreadsheet. The list on the side bar is a good place to start. You'll also want to make note of program director contact information so that you can easily reach out.

### 3 Engage Online

Reach out to program directors to share your interest and ask about visit days and/or webinars for prospective students, as well as other questions you can't find on their website.

Beyond getting answers to your questions, this can help you get a sense of what folks who work for the program are like, as well as getting them familiar with your name and interest in the program.

### 4 Connect In Person

Graduate school can last for 1-8 years - visiting helps you evaluate your fit with the program, demonstrates your interest to faculty, and may increase your chances of obtaining financial support.

During your campus visit you can sit in on classes, talk with current students, connect with faculty about their research, interview for assistantships and other funding opportunities, and gain a clearer sense of whether the program is the right fit.

#### WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING PROGRAM OPTIONS:

Cost and financial aid

Application deadlines - some programs may have multiple deadlines

Availability of assistantships and funded work

Faculty-student ratio

Location and cost of living

Career outcomes of graduates and alumni connections

Course requirements (class topics, thesis, comprehensive exams, credit hours, etc)

Research opportunities

Experience opportunities (practicums, study abroad programs, field work, etc)

Job market in your desired field

Application requirements

Support mechanisms for students