

# Thinking about Graduate School in Psychology?

1. Find out what type of career you are interested in and what degree/license is required.

[hss.fullerton.edu/psychology/](http://hss.fullerton.edu/psychology/) / [www.bls.gov/](http://www.bls.gov/) / [campusapps2.fullerton.edu/career/](http://campusapps2.fullerton.edu/career/)

2. Find out what schools offer that degree or prepare you for that license.

[www.gradschools.com/](http://www.gradschools.com/) / [www.bbs.ca.gov/](http://www.bbs.ca.gov/) / [www.allpsychologyschools.com/](http://www.allpsychologyschools.com/)

3. **Research the graduate programs.** Check out their websites or contact their graduate program coordinators. Some questions you might ask:

- What are the admission requirements? (GPA, letters, experience, tests, prereqs)
- What is the program's philosophy? (Models, values, theories, emphasis)
- How are the classes scheduled? (Full or part-time, day or night)
- What is the class size? (Smaller class = more individual attention)
- What types of research opportunities can they provide? (Faculty, facilities)
- When are the application deadlines? (Fall, Spring, or both)
- How long is the program? (PhD & PsyD are 4-5 yrs; MA & MS are 2-3 yrs)

4. **Work on your application materials** which may include:

- Statement of Purpose (personal essay)
- Curriculum Vitae (like an academic resume)
- Letters of Recommendation (from individuals who know your strengths)

Faculty members can be a great resource by offering guidance and helping to edit these materials. It is often required that some of your letters of rec. be from faculty members. Make sure to choose individuals who can speak of your strengths that will make you a successful grad student. This is so much better than merely choosing letter writers based on their position or status. Provide your letter writers with information about the program, a copy of your statement, a copy of your CV, your transcripts, and a stamped addressed envelope. Do not use the same statement, CV, and letters for every program. They should be tailored to each specific program.

<http://www.psychgrad.org/> / [www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article\\_540.asp](http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_540.asp)

5. **If required, take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE).** The General GRE is like the SAT but graduate level. It has a math, verbal, and writing section. You also might need to take the Advanced Subject GRE in Psychology. This is like a final exam for all your psychology classes. You can prepare for these tests by enrolling in prep courses through CSUF Extended Education (\$335) or through other programs. You can purchase prep books at most bookstores. You can also study for the Psych GRE with an intro psych textbook or by enrolling in PYSC 408, History of Psychology. To score high on the GREs you need to learn strategies and techniques and also put a lot of time into practicing the problems. Plan to take the GREs when you can put a few months' effort into studying and leave plenty of time for the schools to receive your scores (about 6 weeks). Register for these exams far in advance.

<http://www.gre.org/> / [www.csufextension.org/](http://www.csufextension.org/) / [www.greguide.com/](http://www.greguide.com/)

6. **Submit your application** and related materials by the deadlines specific to each program.

7. **Apply for the FAFSA!** This is a great way to finance graduate school since some programs encourage you to work minimally. Also, talk to the graduate program about the possibility of working on campus as a graduate assistant.

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>