

# Applying to graduate school: some (idealized) tips

## In your penultimate year

- Think about your interests: are you interested in a particular area of study/research?
- Do some research of your own: where do you think would be a good place for you to apply? People usually apply to several places, with varying degrees of competitiveness. Consider faculty areas of expertise, available funding, location.
- Talk to your professors: where do they think would be good places for you to apply? Talk to them about your interests; even show them your transcripts.
- Consider an Honours degree; if you do one, consider applying for a JCURA award.
- Think about your GPA. Strategize! Everyone has strengths—focus on yours.
- Remember that you are sometimes required to submit a writing sample from a course you have taken: start thinking about which paper you will want to submit.

## In the summer before your final year

- Do some research on each department you might apply to; try to identify two potential supervisors, and contact them about your interest in the program. A useful link for speech sciences programs: <http://sac-oac.ca/students/academic-programs>
- Decide where you want to apply. Contact the graduate program officer in the department you're interested in applying to.
- Look carefully at the application procedures and deadlines for the graduate programs you've decided to apply to, e.g.: <http://www.uvic.ca/humanities/linguistics/graduate/index.php>
- Look carefully at the application procedures and deadlines for scholarships. Each university will have information about financial aid and funding on their graduate studies website: read this and look for scholarships/bursaries you can apply for. Check out UVic's page here: <https://www.uvic.ca/graduatestudies/finances/financialaid/>. For Canadians and permanent residents, Tri-Council agencies offer major graduate scholarships. UVic offers grantscrafting workshops in early September—attend if you can.
- Make a calendar. Applying to graduate schools is like an extra course—plan accordingly!
- Make arrangements for your English language proficiency tests, if required.

## In the Fall of your final year

- Make sure you request your transcripts well ahead of time — from *all* undergraduate institutions you have attended.
- Plan to notify your referees at least a month in advance of when you need your letters.
- Give yourself a month to work on your personal statement. Ask for feedback from the Coop and Careers office, friends, parents, anyone who will listen—and your referees. Give your referees lots of time (e.g. a month pre-deadline) to read and comment on your statement.
- Give yourself at least a week or two to work on your CV.
- Try to start each online application at least a couple of weeks before the deadline. Allot yourself a full day for each one. Give yourself lots of wiggle room!

## What happens to your application

- It will be checked by the Faculty of Graduate Studies where you are applying.
- It will be reviewed by the relevant department's graduate admissions committee, and often also circulated to potential supervisors who are not on the committee.
- Offers are not always made all at once, since they depend on funding and availability of supervisors. You can check with the Graduate Secretary about the status of your application.