Resources for Lists of Graduate Schools

All Areas
*Graduate Study in Psychology*. American Psychological Association: Washington, DC.

U.S. News & World Report rankings of graduate school programs:
http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-humanities-schools/psychology-rankings
Note that these rankings can be broken down into several specialty areas (behavioral neuroscience, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, experimental psychology, industrial-organizational psychology, and social psychology)

Behavior Analysis
ABAI-accredited programs:
http://www.abainternational.org/accreditation/accredited-programs.aspx

Clinical/Counseling
APA-accredited clinical, counseling, school, and combined psychology programs:

CACREP-accredited counseling and related educational programs:
http://www.cacrep.org/directory/

Educational Psychology
U.S. News & World Report rankings of educational psychology programs:
http://grad-schools.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/best-graduate-schools/top-education-schools/education-psychology-rankings

Industrial-Organizational
Information about I-O psychology graduate programs:
www.siop.org/gtp/

Rankings of I-O programs:
http://siop.org/tip/backissues/TIPApr02/02gibby.aspx

Social-Personality
Map of social-personality psychology programs:
http://www.socialpsychology.org/maps/gradprograms/

Social Work
CSWE-accredited social work programs:
http://www.cswe.org/Acccreditation/Accredited-Programs.aspx

For general information about applying to graduate school in psychology, see:
Writing a Personal Statement: Suggestions and Recommendations

• Essays give you a chance to express yourself in ways that are not possible in other application materials
  – Express your enthusiasm for psychology and chosen area of psychology
  – Explain why you are uniquely suitable for admission to their program
  – Explain why you are particularly excited/interested in their program

• Allow yourself ample time to write, revise, edit, and proofread
  – Ask others for feedback and suggestions
  – Pay attention to grammar and spelling

• Follow instructions to the letter (word or page limitations, formatting, answering every question)
  – General length is between 500 and 1000 words

• Don’t repeat data that are already in your application, such as standardized test scores or GPA

• Don’t talk about controversial topics—religion, politics, etc.

• Use your essay to highlight your strengths and uniqueness

• Describe yourself honestly and realistically

• Autobiographical statements—not literally your autobiography!
  – Focus on summarizing significant experiences or events that helped shape you as a person and influenced your career goals and ambitions

• Demonstrate that you have done the research when emphasizing your match with the program

• Use professional tone in writing, but avoid dressing up your essay with big words
Letters of Recommendation
Basic Information Form

Please complete this form and return it to your professor. In return for this letter the Psychology faculty ask you to keep in touch. We want to know where our graduates are going, what they’re doing, and how we’re doing.

Hints:

1. Give your references a grid that includes the schools to which you are applying, the degree (Masters or Doctorate), the field (e.g., Clinical, Developmental, Counseling, etc), and the due date for the letters.

2. When you send your references particular forms that individual schools need filled out, BE SURE TO REVIEW THOSE FORMS BEFORE SENDING THEM TO YOUR REFERENCES. Often times these forms contain information that you need to complete. DO NOT SEND YOUR REFERENCES INCOMPLETE FORMS.

Your name:

Make sure you include the proper reference forms (with your name on them) and / or names & addresses of institutions to which you are applying.

Date you gave me this form:

Date you need my reference (you should give me **two weeks minimum**):

When were you at UIS?

What was your overall GPA? Psychology GPA? Last 2 years GPA?

What courses did you have with me? Tell me what the courses were, when you took them and what grade you got.

Who is your adviser?

What kind of research experience do you have?

What kind of teaching experience do you have?

What have you done in my classes, besides tests?

What are your career goals? (i.e., research, teaching, clinical work, etc.):

What is your primary area of interest in psychology:

What kind of special honors, academic scholarships received, etc have you received?

What kind of experience do you have relevant to your application (including internships/AST)?
This timeline serves as a general guideline for ways to prepare for graduate and/or professional school during your undergraduate career. Depending on each person’s unique academic and career goals, the order and information of the steps given may vary. For a more comprehensive plan of preparing for graduate and/or professional school, consult a career counselor at the UIS Career Development Center.

First Year

♦ Talk to others, such as Upperclassmen, who might be pursuing a psychology related career path. Ask them:
  - What are the general requirements?
  - What are some prerequisite courses?
  - Which professors should you take classes with?
  - Is this program/major a good fit for you?
  - What are some mistakes they made that you can avoid?

♦ Start taking general requirements and prerequisites:
  - Meet with an academic advisor and faculty members to arrange a class schedule that will prepare you for higher level classes and graduate school.

♦ Start thinking about an undergraduate major:
  - Talk to a Career Counselor at the UIS Career Development Center about the different options to meet your career goals, or just to figure out your career goals!
  - Don’t rule out majors other than psychology, as they can be supplemented with elective coursework, but can be more challenging to accomplish.

♦ Begin volunteering and/or looking for a part-time job or internship where you can learn valuable skills to benefit your psychology profession. Getting a better sense of the field and networking to build new relationships is essential to a successful career!
  - This will allow you to get your foot in the door with different organizations.
  - Maintain a strong professional relationship with people who could write you recommendation letters and serve as references.
  - Working with professionals in this field will allow you to learn some of their personal experiences in the field. They can also inform you on grad school options and answer questions that you may have.
  - Even if you do not get a job or opportunity you apply for, keep in contact with the people. You never know when something may arise!
  - Conduct informational interviews with professionals in the field to gain their insight and advice on the psychology field!
  - Throughout your undergraduate career, it is important to network not only with others in your classes, but professors and other professionals in the field. Join student clubs and community organizations whenever you can to gain valuable connections and experience! Also, consider memberships to organizations as most have student discounts!
Second Year

- After you have chosen psychology as your undergraduate major, declare it in writing and fill out all necessary paperwork. Follow up on it to make sure everything has been processed.
- Pick a concentration and continue to take the general education classes as well as some of the core classes in psychology.
- Continue to take the general education classes as well as some of the introductory classes for the major.
- With your career counselor, consider what areas of psychology you may want to pursue (i.e. research, clinical, animal, etc.).
- When considering different options for graduate school, also think about online degree options and programs that allow you to earn a Master’s degree while pursuing your Doctorate. Do not rule out certificate programs as well, as these can serve for specialty areas within your career field. Be sure to consider all of your possibilities with your career counselor!
- Consider different graduate degrees at the schools you are interested in. Consult your career counselor for assistance in choosing a graduate degree and to research the outlook of that degree and career field.
- At the end of your sophomore year find the academic advisor specific to the psychology department. To do this talk with professors, your current advisor, or Upperclassmen. Once you have found your advisor begin planning you schedule for your first semester of junior year.
- Throughout your whole undergraduate career, stay up to date on psychology news and current events, when time permits. The more knowledgeable you can be about your specialty and career field, the better!
- Start paying attention to different issues in your field, such as Public Health issues, ethics, patient confidentiality, and legal issues.

Third Year

- Meet with your psychology advisor to make sure that you are on the right track for the following semester, regarding your coursework.
- Ask the Psychology Department or inquire within the community for a research assistant position.
- If a Senior Honors Research Project is required discuss ideas with your advisor to ensure that you are prepared for the future.
- Start looking into grad school options, especially the application. Applications will need to be sent out first semester of your senior year.
- You will also need to take the GRE (Graduate Record Examination). Come to the Career Development Center and find all the resources you need, such as ways to register, testing dates, locations, and all other necessary information.
- It is beneficial to take the GRE in either spring of your junior year or the summer going into senior year. This way if you are not satisfied with your score, you can retake the test.
  - To prepare for this test you can use many resources such as, books, online courses, and programs offered by the Career Development Center.
If you are choosing to take your Psychology Degree into a medical field or a law career you will want to take the MCAT (Medical College Admissions Test) or LSAT (Law School Admissions Test).

- To prepare for these tests you can use many resources such as, books, online courses, and programs offered at your school, such as the programs put on by the Career Development Center.

**Summer after Third Year**

- Think about those applications!
  - Start gathering information needed for your applications.
  - Make sure you get organized so that you complete all applications on time!
  - A chart of all the schools and information usually works well in addition to check lists.
- If you are waiting to take the entrance exams in the beginning of your senior year use the summer to prepare!
- Continue with your summer internships, research, and jobs!! Not only will you learn beneficial information, gain experiences, and continue networking, but you also can save money for those expensive applications and tests!

**Fourth Year**

**First Semester:**

- Meet with your advisor to make sure that you are on the right track to graduation and have fulfilled all necessary requirements for all certifications.
- If you have not already done so take the GRE, or other exam depending on your career path.
- Contact faculty members and other professionals to ask if they are willing to write recommendations.
- Begin working on your vitae or resume and stop by the Career Development Center to have it critiqued!
- Begin working on a draft of your personal statement of academic and professional goals. Need help? Come to the Career Development Center and get one-on-one advice! Also, share your personal statement with professors to get their input.
- Offer recommendation forms to the faculty members; remember to include the addressed and stamped envelopes as well, always following the exact instructions of the university you are applying to.

**Second Semester:**

- Complete all applications with January deadlines in December and request for transcripts to be sent out.
- From January to April, contact the department you applied to and be sure they have received all paperwork and test scores.
- Schedule and prepare for interviews. Come to the Career Development Center and do a mock interview. There are numerous resources available to take advantage of!
- Once you have heard from schools and evaluated all options, notify the school you will be attending, and let other schools know that you are declining your acceptance.
Resources

American Psychological Association
http://www.apa.org/

Association for Psychological Science
http://www.psychologicalscience.org/

Encyclopedia of Psychology
http://www.psychology.org/links/Resources/Doing_Research/

GradSchools.com
http://www.gradschools.com/FieldofStudy/Psychology/22.html

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
http://www.ets.org/gre/

Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)
http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat

Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT)
https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat/

Psychology Newswire

Society of Clinical Psychology

Student Doctor Network
http://www.studentdoctor.net/