Finding the Right Grad School Program:
It’s more than a Google search
Dana Mordecai
Assistant Director, Graduate Recruitment

- 17 years in graduate enrollment management
- President of the Texas Graduate Admissions Professionals organization
- Friend of McNair since 2009
- Countless McNair conferences and visits

Introduction
Your turn

A: Have already made my grad school selection.

B: Have already started the search process.

C: Have not started looking at all.
GETTING STARTED

EVALUATE PROGRAMS - THINGS TO CONSIDER

NOW WHAT?
Getting Started

GET THOSE SPREADSHEETS READY
Getting Started

- Define program interest
  - Current research topic
  - Passion project
  - Need flexibility for future decision?

- Resources to find programs
  - Faculty, McNair staff, grad school fairs/recruiters, and Google too!
  - Gradschoolmatch.com
  - Niche.com

Other ideas??
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email sent</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor Anderson</td>
<td>Worked in lab for past 3 years</td>
<td><a href="mailto:CAnderson@school.edu">CAnderson@school.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Professor is terrible at emails, might want to follow up in person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily Smith</td>
<td>Anderson’s Grad Student. I worked directly under him and mentored me in the past</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ESmith@school.edu">ESmith@school.edu</a></td>
<td>263-343-4852</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td>Need to ask in person to get lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor Petrov</td>
<td>Took multiple classes with him</td>
<td><a href="mailto:DPetrov@school.edu">DPetrov@school.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Said to come to his office hours MWF 3pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Marks</td>
<td>Petrov’s first year grad student, TAed my class</td>
<td><a href="mailto:JMarks@school.edu">JMarks@school.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td>didn’t have a great relationship with, but should still reach out to him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexis DiMarco</td>
<td>Friend in the same field, graduated two years earlier and went to grad school</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ADiMarco@school.edu">ADiMarco@school.edu</a></td>
<td>473-285-2954</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Said we should schedule a video chat to talk about all the places she applied and some professors she collaborates with now. Also said to contact her friend Erin Scherer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erin Scherer</td>
<td>Alexis’ friend at a different school, but studying something more closely related to what I want to study</td>
<td><a href="mailto:EScherer@school.edu">EScherer@school.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Should follow up in a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee Wang</td>
<td>Aunt Caroline’s contact who has a PhD and has been working for 10 years in a similar field</td>
<td><a href="mailto:LWang@company.com">LWang@company.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
<td>Aunt Caroline says to contact in two weeks after things die down at work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenn Levy</td>
<td>Emily’s friend from undergrad she put me in contact with</td>
<td><a href="mailto:JLevy@company.com">JLevy@company.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenn did her undergrad with Emily, then got a masters, and has been working for a year in my field. Emily gave me an introduction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluate Programs

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN REVIEWING YOUR OPTIONS
Quality of Program

- Reputation of faculty and/or program
- Do you need/want a Tier One school?
- U.S. News and World report
- Other program rankings
Ed Dzialowski
Title: Professor
Department: Biological Sciences
College: College of Science

Curriculum Vitae
Click Here to View Faculty CV

Education

PhD, Drexel University, 1999.
Major: Control of heat exchange in reptiles by distributing blood flow to the limbs and torso.

MS, Drexel University, 1995.
Major: Physiological control of heat exchange in lizards.

BA, Kalamazoo College, 1993.
Major: Biology.
Quality of Program

- Program Outcomes
- Facilities
- Academic and research fit to your goals
Statistics

In an effort to provide comprehensive information for all interested individuals, The Duke University Graduate School posts summary data on its PhD, and master’s programs. These data include information such as total applications, admissions, matriculations, demographics, median GRE and GPA scores, and career outcomes.

ALL DEPARTMENTS
- All Departments: PhD and Masters Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
- All Departments: PhD Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
- All Departments: PhD Completion Rates Statistics
- All Departments: PhD Time to Degree Statistics
- All Departments: PhD Career Outcomes Statistics
- All Departments: Master’s Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
- All Departments: Master’s Career Outcomes Statistics

ABOUT:
- COVID Safety Protocols for Visiting TGS Offices
- Graduate Education at Duke
- Dean’s Welcome
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Staff Directory
  - Statistics
    - All Departments: PhD and Masters Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
    - All Departments: PhD Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
    - All Departments: PhD Completion Rates
    - All Departments: PhD Time to Degree Statistics
    - All Departments: PhD Career Outcomes Statistics
    - All Departments: Master’s Admissions and Enrollment Statistics
    - All Departments: Master’s Career Outcomes Statistics
Geographic Location

- Weather/climate
- Cost of living
- Other opportunities during and after your grad career
Student Support: Beyond Your Academic Department

- **Professional Development**
  - Workshops
  - Teacher training programs

- **Thesis/Dissertation support**
  - Bootcamps
  - iThenticate by TurnItIn

- **Travel grants and other research support**
  - Funding for conference travel
  - Funding for research expenses

- **Additional funding like institutional scholarships**
  - Pro Tip: Look for support to seek external funding

- **Access to tools for grad students**
  - Pd.Education - supporting writing and critical thinking
GRAD Gargoyle helps you develop skills to support your success as a graduate student, postdoc, and as a professional.

Increase the impact of your scholarship with effective communication and teaching.

Fellowship Advising
One-on-one and small group consultations to identify tailored funding opportunities.

Diversity
Resources for graduate students and postdocs to discuss issues, concerns, etc. related to diversity as it affects their academic and career development.

GRADTalk
Programs and resources to help graduate students and postdocs increase the impact of their scholarship and build public speaking skills.

Sounding Board
Private sessions to discuss optimizing their work-life balance and satisfaction; connecting with university resources; and problem-solving while navigating their academic and professional careers.

Writing Resources
Writing support tailored to distinct needs of graduate students and postdocs.

Teaching Resources
The University is committed to helping you succeed as you learn and exercise the craft of teaching, and as part of the University, you play a vital role in contributing to our shared traditions of scholarship and teaching.

Academic Exchange Program
Exchange programs allow doctoral students to take advantage of faculty, classes, and research centers at 25 partner institutions.

Council on Advanced Studies Workshops
Council on Advanced Study Workshops facilitate interdisciplinary exchange of ideas between students and faculty.

English Language Institute
Courses and tutoring to strengthen English language skills and cultural knowledge.

Chicago Center for Teaching
The Chicago Center for Teaching offers pedagogical training for graduate students, postdocs, and faculty members.
Student life: Beyond Your Academics

Campus climate and culture
- Diversity
- Emphasis on research
- Social atmosphere

Graduate student government or advocacy group
- Other student orgs

Community relationship
- Students
- Locals
Funding Opportunities

IT’S MORE THAN YOUR OFFER LETTER
Understand their funding model

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is funding part of the admissions consideration?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long is it offered? Does it start Day 1?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What additional benefits come with an offer?</td>
<td>Tuition remission, Health insurance, Parking options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What else does the institution offer to grad students?</td>
<td>McNair Scholarship, Diversity focused scholarship, Are these stackable?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now what?
Next steps for your search

- Submit request for information
- Reach out to program
- Talk to grad school recruiters
Resources

- Get Me To Grad School Blog - getmetograd.com
  - Email templates for reaching out to faculty; tips on questions to ask current grad students; how to detect and avoid bad advisors

- Council of Graduate Schools - cgsnet.org
  - GradSense resource offering tips on student debt, cost of living, etc
QUESTIONS?
Email: dana.mordecai@unt.edu