

How to Prepare for Graduate School?

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Introductions

Lesly:

- Major: General Psych
- 4th Year
- Transfer Student
- Interested in
Developmental Psych
- RA for the Baby Lab

Stephen:

- Major: General Psych
- 4th Year
- Peer Advisor



What we will be going over today!

Main Topics

- What is Graduate School?
 - What are research programs and how to find the one best for you?
 - How to apply
 - What is required
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- What is the GRE?
 - How to apply
 - How to prepare
 - Types of tests
 - Fees/Waivers



What is Graduate School?

“Traditionally, graduate school has been academic (centered on generating original research on a particular discipline), but it may be professional (centered on developing skills and knowledge for a specific profession), or a combination of both”




How to find the right program for you

Step 1: think about what field you are interested in and what you want to get out of the program

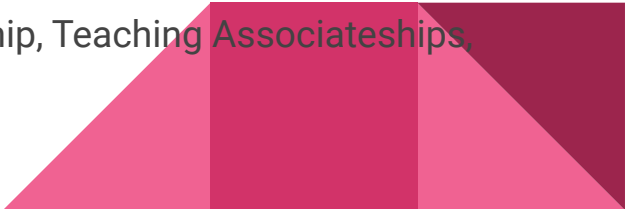
- Think about your career goals...
- Should you get a Masters or PhD?

Step 2: Look into programs and the locations of the schools


- apa.org is a great website that has a list of “Graduate Programs in Psychology”
 - Where do you want to live?
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How to find the right program for you (cont.)

Step 3: look into the requirements and cost for applying to the program

- Many programs require:
 - personal statements,
 - GRE (look into if schools require them or not)
 - minimum of 3 letters of recommendation
 - Official and unofficial transcripts
 - (some) programs require you know what Faculty lab you would like to work in
 - Some programs have application fees
 - Look into potentially getting an application fee waived
 - Financial Support: research assistantships, university fellowship, Teaching Associateships, Stipends
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What is the GRE?


- GRE = Graduate Record Examinations
 - Whether you are planning to go to graduate school, including business or law – or just exploring your options – you are taking an important step toward your future.
 - Similar to the SAT, the GRE is a standardized test that focuses on different areas that may be useful when applying to certain graduate schools.
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What's the difference between the SAT and the GRE?

SAT:

- Used for undergrad admissions
- Written/Paper Test
- Cost less
- Less availability of test dates

GRE:

- Used for grad admissions
 - Tested on a computer or paper
 - Generally costs more
 - More availability for test dates
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How to register for the GRE

- There are 3 ways you can register for the GRE
 - 1. Register online at ets.org/gre
 - Once the registration process is complete, you will get a printable voucher needed for the test.
 - 2. Register by phone by calling 1-800-GRE-CALL or 1-800-473-2255
 - Your confirmation number, reporting time, and test center location will be given to you when you call.
 - 3. Register by mail by completing the Authorization Voucher Request form found in the GRE Information and Registration Bulletin
 - Mail the fee and the signed voucher request form in the envelope provided to the address printed on the voucher.



Cost and Potential Fees/Waivers for the GRE

- The general cost for the GRE in the US is \$205.00
- The cost of a GRE Subject test worldwide is \$150.00
- Several Fees may apply regarding the GRE
 - Late registration fee: \$25.00
 - Rescheduling fee: \$50.00
 - Test Center Change: \$50.00
 - Changing the Subject Test: \$50.00
- Costs can be lessened through the GRE Fee Reduction Voucher.



GRE Fee Reduction Voucher

All these prices may be intimidating to those that might have financial troubles, however the ETS offers a limited number of GRE Fee Reduction Vouchers on a first-come, first-served basis to U.S. citizens or resident aliens who are college seniors or unenrolled college graduates who meet eligibility requirements and are planning to take a GRE test in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam or U.S. Virgin Islands.

- College senior requirements:
 - receiving financial aid through an undergraduate college in the United States, U.S. Territories or Puerto Rico
 - a dependent, who has a FAFSA Student Aid Report (SAR) that shows a parental contribution of not more than \$2,500 for the senior year OR self-supporting and have a SAR that shows a contribution of not more than \$3,000 for the senior year.
- Unenrolled college graduate requirements:
 - have applied for financial aid
 - have a SAR that shows a self-supporting status and a contribution of not more than \$3,000

GRE Fee Reduction Voucher cont.

- This reduction voucher also applies to those who are unemployed and through several national programs in the US.
 - Requirements for those that are unemployed:
 - a United States citizen or resident alien and 18 years or age or older
 - currently unemployed and have become unemployed within the past six months
 - able to submit a copy of an Unemployment Benefits Statement from the past 90 days as proof of unemployment
 - National programs that offer GRE Fee Reduction Voucher
 - Gates Millennium Scholars Program
 - Maximizing Access to Research Careers (MARC) Undergraduate Student Training in Academic Research (U-STAR) Program
 - Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)
 - All the national programs that offer the voucher can be found online at Fee Reduction Section at [ets.org/gre](https://www.ets.org/gre)
- To apply for the free reduction voucher, complete the GRE Fee Reduction Request Form at https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/fees/reductions

What is tested on the GRE?

- The GRE will test you on three different areas:
 - Verbal Reasoning which measures your ability to:
 - analyze and draw conclusions from discourse; reason from incomplete data; identify author's assumptions and/or perspective; understand multiple levels of meaning, such as literal, figurative and author's intent
 - select important points; distinguish major from minor or irrelevant points; summarize text; understand the structure of a text
 - understand the meanings of words, sentences and entire texts; understand relationships among words and among concepts
 - Quantitative Reasoning which involves:
 - understand, interpret and analyze quantitative information
 - solve problems using mathematical models
 - apply basic skills and elementary concepts of arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis
 - Analytical Writing which rests your ability to:
 - articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively
 - support ideas with relevant reasons and examples
 - examine claims and accompanying evidence



GRE Subject Tests

- In addition to the general GRE, there are also subject tests that focus on different areas. These areas include the following: Biology, Chemistry, Psychology, Math, Physics, and Literature.
- The subject tests are only given in paper form three times a year in September, October, and April
- Testing takes 2 hours and 50 minutes and does not require timed sections.



Structure of the GRE

As there is the option to take it on the computer or paper, there are different ways the test is divided.

Structure of the Paper-delivered Test

Measure	Number of Questions	Allotted Time
Analytical Writing (Two sections)	Section 1: "Analyze an Issue" task Section 2: "Analyze an Argument" task	30 minutes per section
Verbal Reasoning (Two sections)	25 questions per section	35 minutes per section
Quantitative Reasoning (Two sections)	25 questions per section	40 minutes per section

The Analytical Writing sections will always be first, while the other four sections may appear in any order.

Structure of the Computer-delivered Test

Measure	Number of Questions	Allotted Time
Analytical Writing (One section with two separately timed tasks)	One "Analyze an Issue" task and one "Analyze an Argument" task	30 minutes per task
Verbal Reasoning (Two sections)	20 questions per section	30 minutes per section
Quantitative Reasoning (Two sections)	20 questions per section	35 minutes per section
Unscored¹	Varies	Varies
Research²	Varies	Varies



Scoring: How the GRE is scored

The GRE is scored through a point system on a scale of 130-170 for Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning and a scale 0-6 for Analytical Writing

Scores Reported on the *GRE*® General Test

Section	Score Scale
Verbal Reasoning	130–170, in 1 point increments
Quantitative Reasoning	130–170, in 1 point increments
Analytical Writing	0–6, in half point increments

If no questions are answered for a specific measure (e.g., Verbal Reasoning), then you will receive a No Score (NS) for that measure.



Reporting your test score and validity

- Once your score is received, based on how well you did, you may report it to the institution that may require the GRE score.
- The score you get may be reportable up to 5 years after you have received it which makes the validity of the score last for 5 years.



How to prepare for the GRE

There are a plethora of ways to prepare, here are some suggested ways

- Taking a gap year to focus on the GRE and staying proactive
- Purchasing practice tests from official practice test companies such as Kaplan
- Attending workshops and centers that offer review and tips for taking the GRE.
- Accessing the ETS website that offers practice tests and other tips.



Last Tips!

1. It's okay to not go to Grad school right after graduating
 - a. Take a Gap Year!
 - b. Explore options
 - c. Gain experience
2. Do not get discouraged if you do not get into the program you want the first time around
 - a. Keep Trying
3. If you can, apply to multiple programs
4. Go to Grad school until YOU feel ready

