

Timeline for Applying to Graduate School*

Junior Year

- Fall and Spring
 - take advanced psychology courses to prepare for the Psychology Subject Test
- Spring
 - study for the GRE General Test and Psychology Subject Test
- Summer
 - take the GRE General Test
 - examine and compare key variables for your programs of interest:
 - identifiers (e.g., school name, location, program name, degree offered)
 - admissions (e.g., number of applications, offers, and acceptances)
 - qualifications (e.g., minimum, mean, and median GRE, subject test, GPA)
 - funding (e.g., annual cost, percentage/types of students receiving funding)
 - faculty (e.g., number in the program, those of interest and their areas)
 - program (e.g., accreditation, time to completion, research/practicum experience, internship acceptance rates, alumni placements, alumni licensure rate)

Senior Year

- August
 - narrow your list of programs to 20-25 and review each detail
 - order and inspect a copy of your transcript to ensure that it is error-free
 - develop your vita and a personal statement that can be adapted to each program
 - ask potential writers if they can provide a strong letter of recommendation
- September
 - finalize your list of programs (a total of 10-15 is optimal in most situations)
 - organize information by creating a file for each program
 - determine which professor(s) you are interested in and read their current work
 - contact professors of interest to see if they are taking students the next year
 - finalize your vita and personal statements based on extensive feedback
 - deliver information packets to the faculty writing letters of recommendation
- October
 - take the Psychology Subject Test
 - order official transcripts for each program
 - order GRE scores for each program
- early November
 - retrieve letters of recommendation
- mid Nov.- early Dec.
 - finalize applications and make a copy of each
 - mail applications
 - verify that application was received
- January-March
 - wait (and then wait some more)
 - develop and begin implementing a back-up plan in case you receive no offers
 - interview
- April 1
 - deadline for offers from graduate schools
- April 15
 - submit your decision to the graduate schools on (or preferably before) this date
- after April 15
 - inform your letter writers of your decision and thank them for their assistance

*Adapted from:

Helms, J. L., & Rogers, D.T. (2011). *Majoring in psychology: Achieving your educational and career goals*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Checklist for Preparing the Application Packet*

___ Cover Letter

- Indicating that this is your application to their graduate school
- Indicating to which program you are applying
- Indicating the contents of your application
- Requesting that they mail the enclosed postcard when your application is complete (if they don't have a process to do this already)

___ Vita

___ Copy of GRE General Test and Psychology Subject Test Scores

- Original is sent by ETS

___ Official copy of your transcripts in a sealed envelope (and signed/stamped over the seal)

- If the program requires transcripts to be sent by the school, include a photocopy of transcripts in the packet

___ Writing samples (maximum of two). Possible examples include:

- Copy of a publication you authored or co-authored
- Copy of your senior thesis
- Copy of a research article you authored and submitted for publication
- Copy of a poster you presented at a conference
- Copy of a research article you presented at a conference

___ Copies of publications and conference presentation handouts

___ Professional statement/Statement of Purpose (Remember: Times New Roman 12 font; Proofread)

___ Application Forms

___ Additional essays required by program

___ Self-addressed stamped postcard for them to mail when your application is complete

___ Letters of recommendation in sealed envelopes (signed over seal), unless required to send them separately

___ Application Fee

*Adapted from:

Helms, J. L., & Rogers, D.T. (2011). *Majoring in psychology: Achieving your educational and career goals*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.