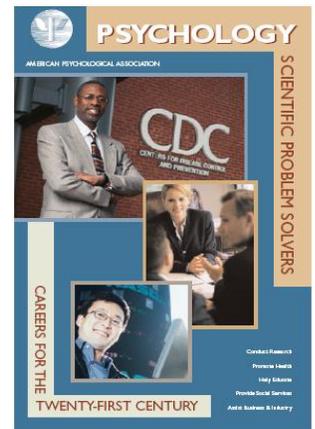


Psychology Careers & Graduate School Guide

Are you thinking about a career in psychology? The information in this handout may help you decide on the most ideal career for you, and (if applicable) increase your chances of acceptance into the best graduate school program that will prepare you for that career.

Exploring Different Careers in Psychology (pages 2-6)

- Careers for individuals with a bachelor's degree in psychology
 - Mental health careers
 - Business careers
 - Other careers
- Careers for individuals with a master's or doctoral degree in psychology
 - Clinical psychologists
 - Counseling psychologists
 - School psychologists
 - Educational psychologists
 - Developmental psychologists
 - Cognitive psychologists
 - Experimental psychologists
 - Human factors psychologists
 - Quantitative psychologists
 - Neuropsychologists
 - Health psychologists
 - Rehabilitation psychologists
 - Forensic psychologists
 - Social psychologists
 - Industrial and organizational psychologists
 - Sport and exercise psychologists



Thinking Ahead About Getting Into Graduate School (pages 7-10)

- Standard factors considered
 - GPA
 - GRE
 - Coursework
 - Letters of recommendation
 - Personal statement
 - Resume or vita
- Additional factors that may help you stand out
 - Research experience
 - Professional experience or internship
 - Teaching assistantship
 - Leadership in organizations
 - Study abroad program
 - Honors and awards

Finding The Graduate Schools For You (pages 11-12)

- Ways to find the graduate schools
 - Journal articles
 - *Graduate Study in Psychology*
 - Websites with program lists
- Factors to consider for applied doctoral programs
 - Accreditation
 - PhD vs. PsyD
 - PhD vs. EdD

Following A Recommended Timetable (page 13)

- Example timetable
 - Freshman and sophomore years
 - Junior year
 - Senior year



Exploring Different Careers In Psychology

If you are like many other undergraduate students, you may have entered college without a specific career, or even major, in mind. During your freshman and sophomore years, though, your interests may be drawn to a particular area of study, such as psychology. Still, you may not have any idea about what career path you would like to pursue within that area. Fortunately, there are many resources available to assist you in exploring and selecting the ideal career for you. In particular, Texas State University's Career Services (LBJ room 5-7.1, <http://www.careerservices.txstate.edu/>) provides career counseling and has an excellent resource library with several books containing important information about different careers.

Regarding psychology, the field offers several different career opportunities that vary depending on the highest degree earned. The table below presents a number of different career opportunities available to individuals with a bachelor's degree in psychology. Additional resources, including several books, are available for viewing in the main office of the psychology department (UAC 253). If you decide to pursue one of the paths below, (re)visit Texas State's Career Services for assistance in creating your resume, enhancing your interview skills, and finding the desired positions as your graduation date approaches.

Careers for individuals with a bachelor's degree in psychology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mental health careers 	<p>Although you can not become a licensed psychologist or counselor without a master's or doctoral degree, many people with a bachelor's degree in psychology may find related careers as assistants in various private, public, or government-run community service agencies, including but not limited to mental health hospitals, VA hospitals, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, social services, child protection services, nursing homes, and prisons. Beyond majoring in psychology, the best applicants for these positions often minor in one of the following areas: sociology, social work, social gerontology, family and child development, early childhood intervention, criminal justice, or forensic psychology.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business careers 	<p>Many other individuals with a bachelor's degree in psychology may find career opportunities in business, which values the knowledge of human behavior gained through their coursework in psychology. Examples of such positions include a store manager, sales representative, public relations officer, loan officer, insurance agent, advertising agent, administrative assistant, personnel administrator, and employment counselor. Other positions, which are available in universities, involve managing admissions recruitment, alumni relations, or fund raising activities. Appropriate minors that may increase employability in these positions include business administration, communication studies, or mass communication.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other careers 	<p>In addition to careers in business and the mental health field, other opportunities are available to people with a bachelor's degree in psychology. For example, some positions may involve coordination of various activities as directors of daycare centers, nursing homes, or parks and recreation departments. Helpful minors for these positions include family and child development, health and wellness promotion, or recreation administration. Additionally, some positions may involve conducting psychological investigations or pharmaceutical testing as a researcher, usually employed by large hospitals, private industries, or the government. These positions may require additional coursework in statistics and research methods.</p>

Though people with a bachelor's degree in psychology are very employable, as evident above, most careers in psychology are only available to individuals with a master's or doctoral degree. Of the psychologists with graduate degrees, some work primarily as researchers (in universities, government, and industry), others work primarily as practitioners (in mental health centers, schools, and businesses), and many work as both.

Regarding the key distinctions between master's and doctoral degree recipients, people with doctoral degrees generally have more career opportunities available to them than people with master's degrees. For example, although master's degree recipients may teach courses at a university, usually only doctoral degree recipients may become professors with tenure (positions with job security). Further, in many settings, master's degree recipients only work as assistants to, or under the supervision of, doctoral degree recipients. Not surprisingly, people with doctoral degrees also generally receive higher salaries than people with master's degrees.

These psychologists are typically specialized in a particular area, such as health, school, or industrial and organizational psychology. Brief descriptions of these specializations and their associated careers are provided in the table below. Most of this information comes from *Psychology Careers for the 21st Century* (<http://www.apa.org/topics/psychologycareer.html>). Additional information may also be found in Robert Sternberg's *Career Paths in Psychology: Where Your Degree Can Take You – 2nd Edition*, and other books available for viewing in the main office of the psychology department (UAC 253).

Careers for individuals with a master's or doctoral degree in psychology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Clinical and counseling psychologists 	<p>Clinical psychologists diagnose and treat people with various mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders. They may be generalists and work with a wide range of disorders and populations of patients, or they may be specialists, exclusively treating specific problems such as phobias or schizophrenia, or exclusively focusing on specific populations such as young children or the elderly. These psychologists typically work in hospitals, mental health centers, clinics, private practice, or schools. However, some work in universities, teaching and conducting research in the field.</p> <p>Counseling psychologists help people to understand the causes of their problems and to recognize their strengths and the available resources to cope with those problems. Examples of such problems include difficulties with one's marriage or family, discrimination based on one's sexual orientation or a physical disability, and excessive stressors interfering with one's work. These psychologists typically work in the same settings as clinical psychologists.</p> <p>As indicated above, clinical psychologists typically help people with psychiatric disorders, whereas counseling psychologists typically help healthier people cope with their problems. Recently, however, the graduate training received and the professional services provided by these two types of psychologists are overlapping.</p> <p>Aside from doctoral degree recipients having more career opportunities and higher salaries than master's degree recipients, another key difference involves licensure and practice. With a master's degree and passing score on the state's examination, you may become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) who practices counseling or a Licensed Psychological Associate (LPA) who practices psychology under the supervision of a Licensed Psychologist (LP). In contrast, with a doctoral degree, after a passing score on the state's examination and two years of supervised experience, you may become an LP and practice psychology without supervision.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ School psychologists 	<p>School psychologists work directly with public and private schools. They assess and counsel students with academic or behavior problems, consult with teachers to optimize the learning environments of students with learning disabilities, consult with parents to improve communication with their child, and conduct behavioral interventions when appropriate. They may also develop, implement, and evaluate programs to promote health and well-being and to prevent violence, substance abuse, and risky sexual behavior. Most of these psychologists work in elementary and secondary schools, mental health centers, state departments of education, or private practice. However, some teach and conduct research in universities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational psychologists 	<p>Educational psychologists assess the effectiveness of different teaching techniques and learning strategies, while considering a variety of factors, such as the abilities, motivation, social interactions, and cultural differences among students. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or serve as consultants in creating educational materials, classroom programs, and online courses to promote and maximize student learning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developmental psychologists 	<p>Developmental psychologists study the physiological, cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development of the human being that takes place throughout life. Until recently, the primary focus was on childhood and adolescence, the most formative years. But, as life expectancy grows, developmental psychologists are increasingly interested in aging, especially in researching and developing ways to help elderly people stay as independent as possible. Although most of these psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, some serve as consultants to day care centers, schools, nursing homes, social service agencies, or mental health agencies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cognitive psychologists 	<p>Cognitive psychologists study the different aspects of human perception, attention, memory, language, problem solving, decision making, learning, and motivation. Cognitive psychologists frequently collaborate with physiological psychologists, computer scientists, philosophers, and professionals in other fields to better understand the mind and behavior. Although most of these psychologists teach and do research in universities, some work as researchers in business and government.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Experimental psychologists 	<p>Experimental psychologists study the same topics as cognitive psychologists, but they may also conduct research on animals other than humans, and they may study additional topics, such as the effects of substance abuse and neurological factors. Although most of these psychologists teach and do research in universities, some work as researchers in business and government.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human factors psychologists 	<p>Human factors psychologists conduct research on how people work best with machines. For example, they may collaborate with engineers to design computers that prevent fatigue and eyestrain, explore more efficient arrangements of an assembly, or enhance the usability of hearing or visual aids. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as researchers in various industries or government agencies, such as the Defense Department or NASA.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quantitative psychologists 	<p>Quantitative psychologists also called psychometric psychologists; focus on various methods and techniques for designing experiments and analyzing data from psychological or other research. They may develop new statistical techniques, or apply existing techniques to novel problems. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or serve as statistical consultants in insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, quality assurance offices, research firms, educational and psychological testing companies, and government agencies.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Neuro-psychologists 	<p>Neuropsychologists, also called behavioral neuroscientists or physiological psychologists, explore the relationship between the brain and behavior. They may study how the normal brain functions through studies with humans using such imaging techniques as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) or through experimentation on animals. Or, they may study the biological basis of psychiatric disorders, or how brain injury affects emotion, cognition, and behavior. With further training, they may become clinical neuropsychologists, who assess and treat people with brain injuries or other neurological problems. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as practitioners in hospitals and other clinical settings, or as researchers in pharmaceutical and other companies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Health psychologists 	<p>Health psychologists specialize in how biological, psychological, and social factors affect health and illness. They may study how patients handle illness, why some people don't follow medical advice, or how people may change poor health habits (e.g., substance abuse, risky sexual behaviors, smoking, lack of exercise, and poor diet). They may also develop health care strategies that foster emotional and physical well-being, or educate medical personnel about psychological problems that arise from the pain and stress of illness and about symptoms that may have psychological rather than physical causes. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as consultants in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, or public health agencies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rehabilitation psychologists 	<p>Rehabilitation psychologists work with stroke and accident victims, people with mental retardation, and individuals with developmental disabilities caused by such conditions as cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. They address such issues as personal adjustment, interpersonal relations, the work world, and pain and anger management. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as practitioners in hospitals and rehabilitation centers.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forensic psychologists 	<p>Forensic psychologists apply psychological principles to legal issues. For example, they may help a judge decide which parent should have custody of a child, assist attorneys with jury selection, or evaluate a defendant's mental competence to stand trial. Forensic psychologists also conduct research on such topics as jury behavior, eyewitness testimony, and interrogation methods. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as consultants in correctional institutions or mental health agencies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social psychologists 	<p>Social psychologists study how a person's beliefs, feelings, and behavior are shaped by interactions with other people. They are interested in such topics as interpersonal relationships, group behavior, personality, leadership, and prejudice. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as consultants in businesses and government agencies where they help with a variety of problems in organization and management.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Industrial and organizational psychologists 	<p>Industrial and organizational psychologists apply psychological principles and research to the workplace in the interest of improving productivity and the quality of life at work. Many of these psychologists serve as human resources specialists, helping organizations with the hiring and training of employees through workshops on such topics as stress management and sexual harassment prevention. Others work as management consultants to solve a particular problem in such areas as strategic planning, quality management, and coping with organizational change. Finally, some teach and conduct research in universities.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sport and exercise psychologists 	<p>Sport and exercise psychologists study the psychological factors that influence and are influenced by participation and performance in sport, exercise, or other physical activities. They may study how sport and exercise enhance personal development and well-being throughout the life span. They may also assist coaches in helping athletes refine their focus on competition goals, become more motivated, and learn to deal with anxiety and fear of failure that often accompany competition. These psychologists teach and conduct research in universities, or work as consultants for professional or college sport teams.</p>
--	--

According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* produced by the U.S. Department of Labor, employment opportunities for psychologists are expected to grow through 2014, with the greatest number of opportunities available to quantitative psychologists and to school psychologists, and above average rates of growth for individuals with degrees (especially doctoral degrees) in applied areas of psychology, such as health, clinical, counseling, and industrial and organizational psychology. For information on the salaries of psychologists in different positions, go to <http://www.apa.org/workforce/publications/09-salaries/index.aspx>.

Thinking Ahead About Getting Into Graduate School

Upon deciding on a career that requires a graduate degree, you must concentrate your efforts on getting into graduate school. Unfortunately, admission is competitive, with acceptance rates around 20-80% for master's programs and 5-40% for doctoral programs, depending on the program's competitiveness. Many things may be done to excel above your competition, though. The table below presents the different factors that are considered by graduate school admissions committees. The first six (GPA, GRE, coursework, letters of recommendation, personal statement, and resume/vita) are the standard and the most important factors, whereas the remaining six (research experience, professional experience or internship, teaching assistantship, leadership in student organizations, study abroad program, and honors/awards) are additional factors that may help you stand out among other candidates.

Standard factors considered by graduate school admissions committees	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GPA 	<p>The first thing that graduate school admissions committees look at is your grade point average (GPA). Generally, most master's programs prefer at least a 3.0 GPA, whereas most doctoral programs prefer at least a 3.5 GPA. However, the GPA is only one factor considered in the admissions process. For example, a 4.0 GPA may not guarantee your acceptance if you are lacking in other areas. Conversely, even if you are not in the top 10% of your class, many schools may still be happy to have you in their program based on your other qualifications in the factors below.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GRE 	<p>The second thing that graduate school admissions committees look at is your score on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Many programs require a minimum score of 1000 on the verbal and quantitative components combined, with the most elite programs rarely selecting a candidate with a score below 1300. So, take this test seriously and plan on studying for it, perhaps 10-20 hours a week for 3 months. The Princeton Review, Barron, and Kaplan produce GRE prep books that include useful practice tests, along with lists of high-frequency words that you should know. If you wish to save money, two prep books are available and may be viewed online at Peterson's Testing and Education Reference Center's website (http://www.petersons.com/graduate-schools/gre-test.aspx), which also has an online practice test that you may complete. If you do not have time to study, but \$1000 to spare, you may take Kaplan's GRE prep course (http://www.kaptest.com/gre). On occasion, Texas State University also offers free preparation classes through the Student Learning Assistance Center (http://www.txstate.edu/slac/stad-test-prep/gre.html).</p> <p>Some programs will also require you to take the advanced portion of the test in psychology, which is separate from the verbal and quantitative parts of the general GRE. Because this test covers all the different areas, reviewing an introductory text would be a great way to study for this test. Or, you may use a preparatory book, such as <i>The Best Test Preparation for the GRE Psychology</i>.</p> <p>You should take the GRE up to 3 months before the application deadlines, because the schools may not receive your scores for up to 4-6 weeks if results are not sent electronically, and because you may need to retake it if your scores do not meet the schools' minimum criteria. To register for the test, go to http://www.gre.org</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coursework 	<p>Many programs will require that you have taken specific undergraduate courses. If you complete the psychology major in our department, you should not have a problem with this. Yet, specialized programs may require specialized courses. Beyond these requirements, preference may be given to candidates with additional science courses, or to candidates with minors related to the field of study to which they are applying (e.g., a mathematics minor for quantitative programs, a business administration minor for industrial and organizational programs, a biology major for neuropsychology programs).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Letters of recommendation 	<p>Most graduate school admissions committees require 3 letters of recommendation from faculty who know you well and can attest to your ability to succeed in graduate school. If your only experience with a faculty member was in a class in which 80 other students were enrolled, the person may not be able to say much about you, even if you came to class regularly and earned an A. So, get to know them by participating in class, visiting with them during office hours, talking with them about careers and graduate school, and assisting with their research.</p> <p>When requesting letters, first ask the people if they would be willing to write you a favorable recommendation. Then, six weeks before the deadlines, provide the writers with an organized packet of materials with information about you (your resume with contact information included, a current copy of your transcript, and a statement of your career aspirations) and with information about the graduate schools. In a cover letter, for each school, identify the program to which you are applying, the application submission deadline, whether an additional form must be completed, and whether the letter should be mailed directly to the school or returned to you in a sealed envelope with their signature across the flap. As to additional forms, <i>most will have a section that you must complete before giving to the writers</i>. If asked to indicate whether you waive access to the letter of recommendation, answer affirmatively (that you do waive the right) so that the letter will be seen as genuine. As to envelopes, include a stamped and addressed envelope if the letter should be mailed directly, or include an envelope with your name and the school's name on the outside if the letter should be returned to you.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal statement 	<p>Most graduate school admissions committees require you to submit a 1-2 page personal statement. This statement is an opportunity for you to provide a sample of your best writing. Given the importance of this statement, plan to spend a month writing and revising this essay, and solicit feedback from psychology professors and from individuals with superb writing and grammar skills.</p> <p>Regarding content, if the instructions do not identify specific questions for you to answer, include the following information. First, explain why you have chosen a career in the field of study to which you are applying. Convince the reader that you have given this career path much thought, and discuss how your experiences (personal, work, school, and research) have cultivated your interests in the field. Second, explain why you have chosen the specific school's program. Convince the reader that you are familiar with their graduate program, and discuss how your academic background and professional goals match their program's mission. You should even identify a couple of faculty members with whom you wish to work, and indicate why you wish to work with them. Additional tips and guidelines for writing a "winning" personal statement are provided at the following website: http://www.psichi.org/Pubs/Articles/Article_98.aspx</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Resume or vita 	<p>Most graduate school admissions committees also require you to submit a copy of your resume, which is called a vita or curriculum vitae in academics. As with the personal statement, plan to spend a month writing and revising your vita, and solicit feedback from psychology professors and from individuals with superb writing and grammar skills. Regarding content, you should include your contact information, education, honors and awards, research experiences, professional (applied psychology) experiences, other employment, and memberships in student or professional organizations. Some tips on writing your vita are provided at the following website: http://psych.hanover.edu/handbook/vita2.html . In addition, Texas State University's Career Services is also a great resource.</p>
<p>Additional factors that may help you stand out among other candidates</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research experience 	<p>Most graduate school admissions committees, particularly for doctoral programs and for research-oriented master's programs, prefer candidates who have strong backgrounds in methodology and statistics. The first step in achieving a solid background is to do well in the PSY 3301: Introduction to Statistics course, and in the PSY 3302: Experimental Design and Research Methods course.</p> <p>Beyond courses, one way to strengthen your research background is to work in a faculty member's lab. To pursue this option, first identify faculty whose research interests you at http://www.psych.txstate.edu/faculty/directory.html Then, through email or during office hours, ask those faculty if they are accepting volunteers to assist with their research or if they are accepting students for their PSY 4395: Independent Study research course. Sometimes, this option may lead to you being a co-author on a conference presentation or even a published journal article, which looks very impressive to graduate school admissions committees.</p> <p>Another way to strengthen your research background is to apply to the University Honors Program (http://www.txstate.edu/honors/) and complete an Honors Thesis. Although this option requires you to take additional courses and requires one full year to complete the research, the work is your own, revealing to graduate school admissions committees that you possess the initiative that they desire in candidates.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Professional experience or internship 	<p>For some graduate school programs, such as counseling and clinical psychology, professional experience is valued. If you are unable to find a psychology-related job, you may still gain experience through volunteering in the community. Many opportunities are often announced in weekly meetings held by the Psychology Association and Psi Chi at Texas State. You may also choose to complete the PSY 4396: Internship in Psychology course, which is described at http://www.psych.txstate.edu/courses/internship.html. To take this course, you must receive approval from Robyn Rogers (rr16@txstate.edu or 512-245-8711).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teaching assistantship 	<p>Aside from research and/or professional experience, a few candidates may have experience as an undergraduate instructional assistant, usually at the request of a professor in whose course they excelled. Depending on the professor, this position may involve holding office hours and answering emails to ensure that the students understand the course material, recording attendance and grades, and perhaps such other tasks as giving a lecture in one or two of the classes. Such an experience reveals to the graduate school admissions committees that you are an intelligent and responsible person, who has demonstrated a mastery of the course material and excellent organization and communication skills.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Leadership in organizations 	<p>Along with superb communication skills, leadership is another attribute valued by graduate school admissions committees. The admissions committees are looking for individuals, who not only work well with other people, but who also show great initiative and responsibility. Although these characteristics are sometimes difficult to assess, they are often assumed for candidates, who have served as an officer in a student organization, such as the Psychology Association or Psi Chi. An overview of these organizations is provided below.</p> <p>The Psychology Association at Texas State is a student organization that holds weekly meetings with guest speakers on various topics in psychology, organizes opportunities to volunteer in the community, and hosts various social activities. Membership is open to anyone interested in psychology, and officer positions are open to any member. For more information, see http://www.psych.txstate.edu/studentorgs/psychassoc.html .</p> <p>Psi Chi is the national honor society in psychology. Similar to the Psychology Association, the Psi Chi chapter at Texas State holds weekly meetings with guest speakers, organizes numerous volunteer opportunities, and hosts various social activities. In fact, this chapter has recently received national recognition, and one of its sponsors, Dr. John Davis, is also currently serving as the National President of Psi Chi. To become a member, you must have an overall GPA of 3.0, a psychology GPA of 3.25, and 9 semester hours of psychology courses. For more information, go to the chapter’s website at http://www.psych.txstate.edu/studentorgs/psichi.html or contact one of the sponsors: Dr. Randall Osborne (reosborn@txstate.edu or UAC 262F) or Dr. John Davis (JD04@txstate.edu or UAC 253N).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study abroad program 	<p>Initiative and responsibility, which are associated with leadership in organizations, are also characteristics of someone who has studied abroad. Texas State offers a variety of Summer I and Summer II programs at locations throughout the world. Through these programs, you earn course credit that may be applied toward your degree program at Texas State. In addition, you also develop an appreciation for and sensitivity to other cultures, which is extremely important in any field of psychology. For more information, go to Texas State’s study abroad program website at http://www.studyanywhere.txstate.edu/study_abroad or contact Dr. John Davis (JD04@txstate.edu or UAC 253N), who has led several programs in the past.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Honors and awards 	<p>Finally, special honors and awards may help you stand out among other candidates. Whereas most of these are academic (Dean’s List, scholarships, honor societies, University Honors College), some awards may recognize your extracurricular activities, such as leadership in an organization or a significant amount of community service.</p>

Finding the Graduate Schools for You

As previously mentioned, admission into graduate school is fairly competitive, with acceptance rates around 20-80% for master's programs and 5-40% for doctoral programs, depending on the competitiveness of the program. To increase your chances of acceptance, beyond strengthening your application based on the factors identified on the previous three pages, you should also apply to many different schools. Depending on the strength of your application and whether you plan on applying to master's programs or directly to doctoral programs, you should probably apply to 5-10 different schools: a few dream schools that are very competitive, a few good schools that are moderately competitive, and a few almost sure-thing schools that are less competitive. Below are three different methods that are typically used to find these programs.

Texas State University offers an MA in Psychological Research. For information, see:

<http://www.psych.txstate.edu/degrees-programs/graduate/mapr.html>

Ways to find the graduate schools for you	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journal articles 	<p>When researching graduate schools, you must actively seek programs for which your interests are similar to the interests and areas of expertise of the program's faculty. One way to ensure such matches is to review the most recently published research in the field. To do so, go to the current periodicals section of the library (3rd floor of Alkek Library), and browse through the issues of several psychology journals. For each issue, skim through the titles of the articles, and read the abstracts of the articles with interesting titles. When an abstract sounds interesting, write down the name of the journal, the title of the article, the authors and their university affiliations, and a sentence or two identifying what interested you. After writing down several entries, you will know what topics interest you and in which schools those topics are being studied. Then, go to the psychology department websites for those schools to find out more about the authors, the other faculty in the department, and what graduate programs are offered. By the way, don't be afraid to actually contact professors about your interest in their research and with an inquiry on whether they will be accepting new students in the upcoming year.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Graduate Study in Psychology</i> 	<p><i>Graduate Study in Psychology – 2013 Edition</i>, a book produced by the American Psychological Association, offers students much information on approximately 600 graduate psychology programs in the United States and Canada. For each program, this information includes but is not limited to the number of applications received, the number of students accepted into the program, the application requirements (e.g., minimum GPA and GRE scores), in-state and out-of-state tuition costs, and the availability of financial aid (e.g., scholarships, internships, research or teaching assistantships). Regarding organization, the departments are listed by state, but there is also an index of programs grouped by the specific areas of study. A copy of this publication is available for viewing in the main office of the psychology department (UAC 253). After finding a number of different programs, you should go to the department websites to find out more about the program and its faculty.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Websites with program lists 	<p>The following two websites contain searchable lists of graduate programs grouped by the specific areas of study: http://www.gradschools.com/psychologysearch.html and http://www.petersons.com/ and As with the methods above, after finding a number of different programs, you should then go to the department websites to find out more about the program and the faculty in the department.</p>

The information above stresses the importance of finding schools in which the program’s specialization and the faculty’s research match your interests. When researching these schools, though, you must also consider additional factors, such as the accreditation and the type of degree offered by applied doctoral programs.

Factors to consider for applied doctoral programs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accreditation 	<p>The American Psychological Association (APA) presently accredits doctoral training programs in clinical, counseling, and school psychology. Accreditation provides assurance that the program is engaged in continuous review and improvement of its quality, that it meets nationally endorsed standards in the profession, and that it is accountable for achieving what it sets out to do. Though graduating from an accredited program does not guarantee jobs or licensure for individuals, it may facilitate such achievement. For example, some internships and employment positions may require a degree from an APA approved program. Further, in some states, licensure may only be available to graduates of an APA approved program. A list of APA accredited doctoral programs may be found at http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/doctoral.html</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PhD vs. PsyD 	<p>For clinical psychology, two separate doctoral degrees are offered - the traditional PhD (Doctorate of Philosophy in Psychology) and the newer PsyD (Doctorate of Psychology). Though many similarities exist between them, the PhD and PsyD programs tend to differ in their focus, rates of acceptance, length of training, and financial assistance available to students. PhD programs tend to assign equal weight to the development of both research competencies and clinical skills, making their graduates employable in a wide variety of research or applied settings. In contrast, PsyD programs assign much greater weight to the development of clinical skills, making their graduates employable only in applied clinical settings. Beyond this primary distinction, compared to PsyD programs, PhD programs typically have lower acceptance rates and take approximately 1 to 1.5 years longer to complete their degrees, but they do offer more financial aid to their students.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PhD vs. EdD 	<p>For counseling and school psychology, two separate doctoral degrees are offered. Programs through the university’s education department offer the EdD (Doctorate of Education) degree, whereas programs through the psychology department offer the PhD (Doctorate of Philosophy) degree. Though many similarities exist between them, the PhD programs tend to provide more extensive research training than the EdD programs.</p>

Following a Recommended Timetable

The previous pages contain much information that may initially be overwhelming, but following a simple timetable will help ensure that you do everything needed to get into the right graduate school that prepares you for your desired career. The table below presents one such timetable. Other recommended and more detailed timetables, along with additional important information, may be found online at such websites as <http://www.psywww.com/careers/time-grd.htm>, or in books that are available for viewing in the main office of the psychology department (UAC 253).

- *Getting In: A Step-By-Step Plan For Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology*, by the American Psychological Association
- *The Complete Guide to Graduate School Admission: Psychology, Counseling, and Related Professions*, by Patricia Keith-Spiegel and Michael Wiederman

Example timetable	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freshman and sophomore years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore careers in psychology (see pages 2-6) ○ Get involved in the Psychology Association (see page 9)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gain research experience, especially if you might apply to doctoral programs or to research-oriented master's programs (see page 8) ○ Gain professional experience with an internship, if you might apply to applied programs such as those in clinical or counseling psychology (see page 9) ○ Get involved in Psi Chi (see page 9) ○ Research different graduate school programs (see pages 11-12) ○ Study for the GRE (see page 7)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3 months before deadlines: Take the GRE (see page 7) ○ 2 months before deadlines: Prepare your vita and personal statement (see page 8) ○ Six weeks before deadlines: Ask for letters of recommendation (see pages 7-8) ○ Two weeks before deadlines: Submit application materials <p style="text-align: center;">(Application deadlines are usually between December and March)</p>

What if it's too late? If you are about to graduate with your bachelor's degree and you have missed the deadlines for applying to graduate school, don't worry. Instead, use the next year to your advantage by gaining additional research and/or applied psychology experience, strengthening your relationships with the people you plan to ask for letters of recommendation, studying extra hard for the GRE, spending extra time developing your vita and personal statement, and the like. Although this route may not be the typical or even your preferred path, it may ultimately increase your chances of acceptance into the right graduate school program that will prepare you for the career of your dreams.