

Graduate School Decision-Making

Choosing Appropriate Graduate Schools

Survey the Geo Grad School listings for overall strong geology graduate programs

What field(s) of geology do you like and do you want to pursue?

Look for top researchers in that field – recent journal articles, web pages

Look for top geo departments that offer studies in that field

(see the summary of Geo Grad School listings)

Do you have any geographic preferences for where you attend graduate school?

Questions to help narrow down the selection:

- Do the graduate programs offer teaching and/or research assistantships along with tuition wavers?
- What resources are available for graduate studies -- diversity of course offerings, lab equipment, office space
- What sort of funding is available for research?
- How closely do the faculty (especially your potential advisor) work with their students?
- Do the graduate students at that school often publish their work?

Learn about the programs:

Review printed brochures and advertisements

Visit departmental web pages

Contact current graduate students by phone or email:

- how do they like the program?
- how much time do the faculty spend with them on their research?
- do the graduate students and faculty actively attend professional meetings?
- do the graduate students and faculty actively publish their research?

Talk with your potential advisor -- what types of current or future research are they doing; could you become involved in that research?; what type of funding is available to support your thesis research?

What do reviewers look for in an application?

- Evidence of academic achievement (GPA, GRE scores)
- Ability to work independently
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Experience in research
- Responsible and competent applicants