

CSU Chico LSAMP
Guide for Students interested in Graduate School

California State University Chico Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation encourages students to attend graduate school. Our program provides various opportunities to help students prepare for graduate school. These include, but are not limited to, Undergraduate Research, CSU-LSAMP Scholars Program, Graduate School Visits, Conferences, and fee reimbursement for GRE, TOEFL Exams, and Graduate School Applications. LSAMP provides funding for all the opportunities mention above¹. Ask about them. LSAMP students, who are interested in attending graduate school, should take advantage of all these opportunities to better prepare for graduate school. Graduate schools are interested in students who have done undergraduate research and presented their research at conferences. Try and do this before your senior year. The timeline below illustrates the process toward graduate school during your senior year.².

August

1. Look for graduate schools that offer your program of interest.
 - Narrow your research to at least six schools but no more than 10.
 - Look online. Read. Read. Read.
 - Ask your professors. Ask your friends.
2. Review for the GRE Exam.
 - LSAMP will reimburse the fee.
 - A GRE study book is also available.
3. Start writing your **Statement of Purpose & Personal Statement**.
 - This is the most important part of any graduate school application.
 - This takes time and you want it to reflect all you want graduate school to know about you.
4. Talk to Ben Levitt, our graduate advisor. Enroll in his Grad Prep course.

September

5. Continue writing **your Statement of Purpose & Personal Statement**.
6. Take the **GRE Exam**.
 - **Send** scores to your all of your graduate schools.
 - **We will need a copy of your score to reimburse you.**
7. Ask at least three professors if they would write a letter of recommendation in your behalf. These should be people who know you and like you.
8. Look for **Fellowships** that might help pay graduate school.
 - GEM fellowship is great program.
 - Look for more and apply.
9. **READ** your graduate schools program requirements and deadlines. Try to budget your time to meet their specific requirements well before the deadlines.
10. **Order official transcripts**.
 - Some graduate schools require transcripts from all universities and community colleges you have attended.
 - Carefully re-read graduate schools program requirements.

¹ Details shall be discussed with Lori Holcombe.

² This information is subject to change. Please verify the details.

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Guide for Students interested in Graduate School

October

11. By now you should have a statement of purpose and a personal statement ready.
 - Arrange **for** several people to read and help you improve your documents, Lori Holcombe, Ben Levitt, Lupe Jiminez, or Career Center Advisor are good candidates.
 - Remember that these documents are really important.
12. Follow up and make sure that at least **three faculty are** willing to write a letter of recommendation. Offer them a brief outline of what you would like them to include (your GPA, your research presentation, your commitment to your studies, and the names of the schools you have chosen and their addresses).
13. **Submit** fellowship applications.
 - Some fellowships have early deadline e.g. GEM.
 - Try to meet these deadlines.
14. **Start applying** to graduate schools.
 - Start early so you can submit your application by the fellowship **deadline**.
 - For most graduate schools, the fellowship deadline is usually earlier than the general.
 - You want to meet these deadlines for all your schools.

November

15. **Continue** working on your statements.
 - By now you should be almost done with these documents.
 - Based on your interests, some graduate schools have deadlines during the first week of December.
 - Try to meet these deadlines.
16. **Continue** working on applications.
 - **Try** to complete applications this month.
17. **Inform** professors and faculty, who are writing a letter of recommendation, about the deadlines by which you **must submit** your documents. You may wish to give them deadlines, which are a bit earlier than the actual deadlines.
 - Try to inform all your recommenders at least a month in advance.
 - Send reminders to recommenders.

December

18. **Submit complete applications** before graduate schools programs deadlines.
 - As mentioned before, different programs have different deadlines.
 - Also, different schools have different applications fees. LSAMP usually reimburses up to three graduate schools applications. Check with Lori
 - A complete application include;
 - i. A complete online application.
 - ii. Statement of Purpose and Personal Statement.
 - iii. Letters of Recommendations.
 - iv. GRE Scores
 - v. Please refer to your program for more accurate details.

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January

19. **Submit complete applications** before graduate schools programs deadlines.
 - As mentioned before, different programs have different deadlines.
 - Also, different schools have different applications fees. LSAMP usually reimburses up to three graduate schools applications. Check with Lori
 - A complete application include;
 - i. A complete online application.
 - ii. Statement of Purpose and Personal Statement.
 - iii. Letters of Recommendations.
 - iv. GRE Scores
 - v. Please refer to your program for more accurate details.
20. CSU LSAMP has a **Bridge to the Doctorate** program that funds a few students at a selected campus in the CSU system to work on a master's degree for two years. In 2011 the campus was CSU Northridge at \$30,000/year with tuition and other benefits. The BD program also helps you prepare for your doctorate degree, selecting a university, guiding your research, sending you to conferences, etc.

February

21. **Submit complete applications** before graduate schools programs deadlines.
 - As mentioned before, different programs have different deadlines.
 - Also, different schools have different applications fees. LSAMP usually reimburses up to three graduate schools applications. Check with Lori
 - A complete application include;
 - i. A complete online application.
 - ii. Statement of Purpose and Personal Statement.
 - iii. Letters of Recommendations.
 - iv. GRE Scores
 - v. Please refer to your program for more accurate details.
22. Finalize the process.
23. Continue to look for graduate schools scholarships that might help pay for your education. Contact the departments, advisors, and graduate school contacts, and ask them about these opportunities.

March

24. At this point you might want to **visit** some graduate schools.
 - Ask Lori or Ben to contact the graduate schools and schedule an appointment with an individual, who may give you a tour and introduce you to faculty and students in their program.
 - Create a list of questions that are relevant to you.
 - LSAMP will help cover travel costs for graduate school visits. Contact Lori before you drive or fly.
25. Check your email for additional information graduate schools might require.

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April

26. During this month, graduate schools usually send out the acceptance email or letters.
- I hope you receive many offers. (If you do, congratulations. If not, keep looking. It's not too late. Remember the BD program in January.)
 - Check your email for this information.
 - It is important that you read this email carefully because some graduate schools have an acceptance deadline.
 - i. This means that graduate schools need to know if you will be attending their program.
 - ii. An acceptance letter is usually what you want to sign and send back as soon as you decide which school you will attend.
 - If you have not receive a confirmations email. It is OK; some schools send this email during May.

May

27. **Accept an offer.**
- This is a personal decision.
 - Contact the college for any questions you might have.
 - Consult your parents, advisor, counselor, and anyone who might give you good advice.
 - Listen carefully to good advice. Do not rush into a decision, but do not procrastinate. This is important.
 - In the end you must make your own decision.
28. At this point you will have to contact your graduate school coordinator to ask him what you must do next.
- Register for classes
 - Housing
 - Paper work
29. I hope you are accepted to your dream school.
30. Remember to thank your recommenders and everyone who helped you along the way. Also remember to give back, especially by encouraging the LASMP students to apply to graduate school.

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General Recommendations

1. Do not neglect your grades! Study privately and in groups. Be willing to accept and give help. Go to office hours whenever a concept is unclear.
2. Get involved in undergraduate research projects.
 - LSAMP offers two different research opportunities.
 - i. CSU-LSAMP Scholars program.
 - ii. Undergraduate Research
 - CSU Chico and your major department offer research opportunities.
 - i. If you have an idea, talk to a teacher with expertise in your topic.
 - ii. If not, talk to a favorite teacher about possibilities.
3. Work with professors on research projects.
 - Get to know your professors and their projects.
 - Ask each of your professors what research they have done, are doing, or want to do.
 - Ask your peers and classmates if they have done research.
 - Go to research conferences, exploring student, faculty, and professional research.
 - Go to poster presentations. This will give you a better idea of what's expected. Carefully examine prize-winning posters.
4. Apply for internships.
5. Try to publish reports or projects.
 - Present your undergraduate research at a National Conference.
 - There are applications you can submit e.g. SHEP and NSF.
 - Read research journals in your major.
6. Study for the GRE. You want to score high on this exam.
 - Start early.
 - Join a study group. See Ben Levitt.
7. Visits schools and ask questions about their program. You can do this online and in person.
8. Prioritize your time to finish ahead of deadlines. You may wish to attend a time management lecture or read a book on the subject. It may make all the difference.
9. Change your attitude about work. Mental labor is work, often harder than manual labor. Excelling in your field is a lifelong journey that begins every day with a commitment. Be efficient, but don't be lazy. Organize your time, your resources, your abilities, and your thinking towards the present and the future.
10. These are just some recommendations but you should do more than what is mentioned here. The more extracurricular activities, projects, publications, internship, and diverse background you have, the more prepared for graduate school you will be and the more likely you will be accepted to a graduate school program.
11. Do something today. You've got a lot going for you and a lot of people who want the best for you and expect the best from you. Go for it.