

# Unlocking The Secrets of Getting Into Grad School





#### UNLOCKING THE SECRETS OF GETTING INTO GRADUATE SCHOOL

This handout is a compilation of information that will assist you in researching, applying, and getting accepted to the graduate or professional school of your choice. Keep in mind that each program is different and an early start is important.

If you are starting late or if you are not sure about your next step, taking a year or two off to earn money and obtain more experience may be the best plan for you. It may even make you more marketable to a graduate school. Going to graduate school directly after completing your undergraduate education is not for everyone.

#### Should I go to graduate school?

#### YES...

- ...if your career goals require an advanced degree.
- ...if you want to study a specialty within a career field.
- ...if you seek a better job in your field.

#### NO...

- ...if you are avoiding the job market.
- ...if you plan on using it to explore a career field.
- ...if it is what someone else expects you to do.

In other words, go to graduate school if you have an academic, intellectual, or occupational reason to do so.

#### Should I go right away, work for a while, or combine the two?

- Going to graduate school immediately gives you academic momentum and you will be used to living
  without a regular paycheck. If your career goals require an advanced degree, then there is no need to
  delay.
- Getting a job may get you the experience you need to add meaning and clarity to the degree
  program, pay off some bills and eventually result in a higher starting wage as some companies prefer
  an advanced degree and work experience.
- Combining graduate school and working can take longer to get a degree, so consider whether a few
  years will make a difference. However, employment can add a deeper understanding of the education
  if you work in the field that you are studying

#### When should I apply to graduate school?

This timetable is suggested by *Peterson's Annual Guides to Graduate Study* and represents the ideal for most students. However, requirements vary by school and should be noted. (\*)

#### Junior Year - Fall and Spring

- Research institutions offering graduate programs in your area of interest.
- Talk to your academic advisor about graduate school in general, and ask for advice on programs to research.
- Narrow your selection to two or three institutions.
- Investigate national and local scholarships

#### Junior Year - Summer

- Find out which admission exams are required and pick up test bulletins. Take required admissions tests.
- Request the school catalog, application materials, and financial aid information online or by telephone.
- Write to the prospective department for additional information regarding graduate assistantships offered by the university. Pay close attention to application deadlines.
- Visit the institutions of interest.
- Check on application deadlines and rolling admissions procedures.
- Begin to prepare your application forms and write your application essay.
- For medical, dental, osteopathy, podiatry, or law school, you may need to register for the national application or data assembly service most programs use.

#### Senior Year - Fall

- Obtain letters of recommendation.
- Take graduate admissions tests if you haven't already.
- Send in completed applications and other required materials by the deadline to both the Graduate Admissions Office and the prospective department.
- Send a deposit to your institution of choice.
- Register for the Graduate and Professional Financial Aid Service (GAPSFAS) or the Financial Aid Form (FAF), if required.

#### Senior Year - Spring

- Check with all institutions before the deadline to make sure your application file is complete and all supporting materials have been received.
- Prepare for a visit and interview with institutions that have an interest in you.
- Notify other colleges and universities that accepted you of your acceptance to a program, so they
  may admit students on their waiting list.
- Send thank you notes to people who wrote your recommendation letters, informing them of your success.

<sup>\*</sup> You may not be able to adhere to this timetable if your application deadlines are very early, as in the case of medical schools, or if you decided to attend graduate school at the last minute. In any case, keep in mind the various application requirements and be sure to meet all deadlines. If deadlines are impossible to meet, call the institution to determine if a late application will be considered. You may get lucky.

#### Where can I get information and examples of tests?

The sooner you begin selecting graduate schools, the more time you will have for all of the details, like taking the required standardized tests. If necessary, you can take it more than once to get the best admissions scores. Most schools won't accept scores more than three to five years old. Find out which tests you need to take. Examples of tests are:

#### **DAT**--Dental Admission Test

 A comprehensive half-day examination that includes chemistry (organic and inorganic), biology, mathematics, verbal skills (reading comprehension, completions, and antonyms), and two and threedimensional perceptual ability. The DAT is administered twice a year, usually in April and October.

#### **GMAT**--Graduate Management Admission Test

A half-day examination testing skills in both math and verbal areas. The content may vary from
test to test. Included may be reading recall, reading comprehension, antonyms, analogies, sentence
completions, mathematics (data sufficiency and data application), and writing ability. The GMAT is
administered four times a year, usually in October, January, March and July.

#### **GRE**--Graduate Record Examination

• This test consists of a three-hour morning aptitude examination and a three-hour afternoon advanced test in the candidate's major study area. Question types in the verbal area include reading comprehension, antonyms, analogies, and sentence completion. The questions in the quantitative area include mathematical problem solving (sharpening of fundamental concepts in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and graphs, with practice in applying these concepts in many non-routine situations) and quantitative comprehension. The analytical ability section includes logical diagrams, analytical reasoning, and analysis of explanations. The GRE is administered six times a year, usually in October, December, January, February, April and June. The GRE advanced tests are administered in the afternoon on the same day except in February, when they are not offered.

#### LSAT--Law School Admissions Test

A half-day examination. It varies in content from test to test. Any particular test may include four
or five of the following: Data Interpretation (graphs and charts), Quantitative Comparisons, Cases
and Principles (three of six possible types), Logical Reasoning, Practical Judgment (data evaluation
and data application), Logical Games, and Writing Ability. The LSAT is administered five times a
year.

#### MAT--Miller Analogies Test

• This test consists of 120 analogies and is required for admission to many graduate schools. The MAT, administered by Psychological Corporation, is given frequently throughout the year at some 600-test centers at colleges and universities throughout the country.

#### MCAT--Medical College Admission Test

 A full-day examination that consists of four parts: Science Knowledge (biology, inorganic and organic chemistry, physics), Science Problems (biology, chemistry, and physics), Reading, and Skills Analysis. It is administered twice a year, usually in April and September.

#### OCAT--Optometry College Admission Test

A half-day examination that includes biology, chemistry, physics, quantitative ability, verbal
ability, and non-referent (study) reading of scientific materials. The OCAT is given three times a
year, usually in November, January and March.

#### PCAT -- Pharmacy College Admission Test

• A half-day examination that covers Verbal Ability, General Non-Scientific Work Knowledge, Quantitative Ability, Biology (basic biology and major human biology), Chemistry (problems and principles in organic and inorganic chemistry), and Reading Comprehension, with an emphasis on scientific topics. The PCAT is given three times a year-November, February, and May.

When you have decided which test to take, you can obtain a test application for most tests in Career Services. Each test application booklet includes a complete description of the test, instructions, test dates for the next year, and sample questions.

#### What will I need to provide with my application?

Are you getting ready to apply to graduate or professional school and wondering what you will need to provide? According to the College Board, you may be asked for any or all of the following:

#### Application fee

- Most colleges and universities charge a non-refundable application fee.
- Many will waive the fee for applicants from low-income families.
- Check with each individual school.

#### Application form

 Almost all institutions will require an official application form that provides information about your background, previous education, and graduate school plans.

#### College transcripts

- You will probably be required to supply the institution with a copy of your undergraduate academic transcript.
- Requests for transcripts may be made at the Registrar's Office or in Academic Records.

#### Admissions test scores

- Many colleges require that you take one or more standardized admissions tests.
- Plan to take these tests several months before the application deadline to allow enough time to report the score to each college.

#### Letters of recommendation

- Most graduate schools require that you submit one or more letters of recommendation from a
  professor, advisor, counselor, alumnus, or adult member of the community.
- If possible, choose people who not only know you well, but who are also familiar with the graduate school you want to attend.
- Depending on the program, you may want to use faculty members as well as professionals in your field.
- Be sure to provide plenty of time for people to write these letters for you.
- Bring them the recommendation form, and a self-addressed stamped envelope if necessary. You may
  also want to supply your references with a copy of your resume or relevant coursework to help them
  write you an appropriate recommendation.

#### Personal essay

- Most institutions require a personal essay or autobiographical statement.
- The essay can be especially important if you are not able to have an interview.
- This is your chance to express personally your background, interests and goals, and why you are interested in this graduate field of study and the particular institution.
- Read the essay instructions carefully, paying careful attention to length limitations.

- Show the graduate school that you are articulate, realistic, and a competent writer. Be clear, concise and to the point.
- Grammar, punctuation, and spelling count, so be sure that your essay is perfect before you submit it
  with your application.
- View the guide to Writing Personal Statements and Graduate/Professional School Essays contained in this handout.

#### FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION

The range of financial assistance available at the graduate level is very broad. There are three basic types of aid – grants and fellowships, work programs, and loans – and various sources – the federal government, state governments, educational institutions, foundations, corporations, and other private organizations such as professional associations.

- Fellowships & Grants An outright award of money (called a stipend) based on merit that requires no work or service in return. Competition is very keen. Ask each specific program that you are considering about these awards.
- Teaching Assistantships Usually a full or partial tuition remission and sometimes a stipend. Requires undergraduate teaching, lab supervision, proctoring exams, or grading papers depending on the level of the student.
- **Research Assistantships** Usually a full or partial tuition remission and sometimes a stipend. Similar to a teaching assistantship except the responsibility is to assist a faculty member in research efforts rather than teaching.
- Administrative Assistantships Work in an administrative office on campus as opposed to teaching or doing research. Usually a full or partial tuition remission or a stipend.
- Residence Hall, Student Personnel, or Counseling Assistantships This type of assistance is frequently given to Student Personnel, Counseling, Psychology, Higher Education, and Social Work graduate students. Sometimes include room, board and salary in addition to tuition remission.
- GI Bill Veterans can get assistance for graduate as well as undergraduate school.
- **Loans** Loans are offered through banks, government agencies and universities. Usually have lower interest rates.
- **Military** Can often get support for graduate and professional education in exchange for a commitment to future military service.
- Employment It is difficult to manage both full-time work and full-time graduate study. It may be wise to consider doing one or the other part-time, even if this means it will take longer to earn a degree. Find out whether a graduate co-op program is available; this can give you an income plus practical work experience in the field.

#### BEST SOURCES TO LEARN ABOUT GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Adapted from Graduate Admissions Essays by Donald Asher

#### **Professors**

This is your best source. Professors know you, they know which programs favor students from your school, they know the relative quality of graduate programs in their fields, and they even have personal friends at graduate programs where you might like to apply.

#### Other Students and Alumni

Alumni at graduate programs will give you the most honest information about the quality of the program and the faculty.

#### Peterson's Guides

Peterson's guides have every accredited program in the United States. They're a little dense and boring, but if you want to learn about programs there's no other complete resource. All major university libraries have a full set of Peterson's guides.

#### **Specialty Guides**

Find specialty guides for your field, for example, *Graduate Programs in Neurosciences*, by asking professors, using the subject search engine at amazon.com, or by using the subject search engine on CD from *Books in Print*, available from your university bookstore. Some associations also print guides to graduate programs. Find out about them by looking up the association's HQ phone number in the *Encyclopedia of Associations*; then just call them and ask them.

#### **Academic Journals in Your Field**

Top students should get grad school ideas directly from the academic journals. The best programs generate the best and the most articles, so look in the journals for writing and/or research that interest you. Then find out where the article writer teaches.

#### Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States

This is the best source for unbiased, multivariable analysis of graduate programs. It is the result of a National Research Council-funded study, limited to the top programs in 41 major subject areas.

#### Educational Rankings Annual

A compendium of data from other sources. Expensive, but can be very useful. Check your library.

#### The Gourman Report

Another "ranking" book, with methodologies that are never fully explicated. Can be useful.

#### The Business Magazine Rankings

Business magazines are in the business of selling business magazines. Their editors usually know less about higher education than they know about automobiles, which is not a lot. These "rankings" are not useful *per se*, but you can get ideas to investigate further.

#### World Wide Web (www)

Online data are voluminous but shallow, and can be downright misleading (for example, some sites list schools in order of having paid a subscription fee). Use the Web to investigate schools you're interested in, in this order: university-department-faculty-specific faculty member's research interests-his or her advisees (i.e., currently enrolled graduate students). Information on related labs and institutes might interest you more than the main department.

#### **Graduate School Fairs**

One of the only places to meet a lot of graduate professionals quickly, but don't fall in love on the first date! Check out other schools.

#### QUESTIONS TO ASK ANY GRADUATE PROGRAM

- 1. What do you teach here?
- 2. What is the largest and the most typical class size for a graduate class? Are classes restricted to graduate students or are undergraduates common in your graduate classes?
- 3. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of going to grad school immediately after completing the undergraduate program? The advantages and disadvantages of waiting a few years? The best use of the interim time?
- 4. What are the criteria and process for selecting teaching assistants, research assistants, and fellows?
- 5. I will probably need financial assistance. Can you tell me how most students fund their studies here?
- 6. Will I get to develop my own topics, or will I be expected to work on a professor's ongoing research?
- 7. What is the mean time to complete (a) class work, (b) research,

- (c) dissertation? (i.e., what is the mean time to complete the Ph.D.? Ask about the program as a whole, but perhaps more importantly, by professor.)
- 8. What is your attrition rate? Of those who don't finish, what are their reasons?
- 9. What kind of student thrives in your program?
- 10. How reliable is your financial support year to year? Is the first-year offer always sustained given attainment of academic goals?
- 11. What is the age, race, gender balance, ratio of married/single, and geographical origin of graduate students in the program? (In other words: Are there any other people like me?)
- 12. May I have some bibliographies of recent publications by faculty? Which professors have won awards and grants lately (and presumably need graduate assistants)? [Or do this on your own before the meeting!]
- 13. Can you tell me about your placement rates and types of jobs obtained by recent graduates? (*Avoid* relying on testimonials and anecdotal evidence.)
- 14. May I meet some currently enrolled students (in person or via phone or email)? (Be sure to ask about their research topics and be sure to take notes on specific profs mentioned.)
- 15. How can I be a strong candidate for a program like this?

Adapted from *Graduate Admissions Essays* by Donald Asher (Ten Speed Press, 2000) Donald Asher, Asher Associates, San Francisco, 415-543-7130, <a href="mailto:donaldasher.com">don@donaldasher.com</a>

#### WRITING PERSONAL STATEMENTS AND GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL ESSAYS

#### INTRODUCTION

Writing a personal statement is often the most difficult part of the graduate/professional school application process. However, an essay or "personal statement" should always be submitted with your application, even if the school says it is optional. If your qualifications make you a borderline student at a school that makes a point of considering subjective factors in its admission decisions, then your personal statement could make a difference between acceptance and rejection.

Writing requirements vary widely. Some programs request only 1 or 2 paragraphs about why you want to pursue graduate study, while others require numerous specific essays. Since personal statements/essays can reveal your character more clearly than other application materials, they may provide evidence that you bring something to the distinctive to the field: unusual ability, background traits, experience, or a unique way of looking at the world. You won't be admitted to a top school unless you distinguish yourself.

#### WHAT TO WRITE

Before writing anything, stop and consider what a reader might be looking for; the general directions or other parts of the application may give you some indication. A number of things may be evaluated, including:

- Expectations with regard to the program and career opportunities
- Writing ability
- Major area of interest
- Educational background
- Immediate and long-term goals
- Reasons for pursuing a graduate degree in a particular field and at a particular institution
- Maturity
- Personal uniqueness what you would add to the diversity of the entering class

Some schools require specific essays, while others provide no direction at all. There are both advantages and disadvantages to vagueness. Since no specific topic is required, one can write about whatever will do the most good. The drawback of not having a precise topic is that you'll have to choose your own topic. This choice will probably be difficult to make. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

Write about Yourself. Schools want to know about you, your talents and evidence that you will succeed academically and professionally.

**Be Specific.** Write about events and activities. Often the best essay topic is a description of some incident or activity which led you to your field of study.

**Tell a Story.** Stories can keep the attention of a tired reader.

Emphasize Your Uniqueness. An essay about a problem you solved or an obstacle you overcame is always appropriate. You could also find an interesting way to write about a feature of your personality or what you have learned about yourself and/or your field.

Don't Choose a Topic that Makes You Seem Immature or of Questionable Character.

Avoid Talking about in the Abstract. This can sound like a personal ad or make you seem distant.

Avoid Negatives. A positive, attractive personality is hard to exhibit while dwelling on negatives. Focus on positives. Talk about what you learned, not why your grades were low.

Avoid Clichés. "I want to help people." "The human body fascinates me." "This career would be rewarding and challenging."

Ultimately, an essay or personal statement for an application should be a clear, succinct statement showing that you have a definite sense of what you want to do and enthusiasm for the field of study you have chosen. Your essay should reflect the clarity, focus, and depth of your thinking.

#### **HOW TO WRITE**

You've done this before. Writing for graduate/professional school is no different than writing anything else, except that it may count more. You'll need to organize and write several drafts, have the essay read a critiqued by others, and polish the grammar and rhetoric. The chief reason application essays are unpersuasive is that insufficient time is taken with them.

When beginning to write, set down all the information as fully as possible. You may outline the points you want to cover and then expand on them, or you can simply put your ideas down on paper as they come to you. Making an outline will likely lead to an organized essay, whereas writing spontaneously may yield a more inspired piece of writing. Don't worry if the initial drafts are too long, the information will be pared down and refined. Now you are ready to organize the essay.

CATCH THE ATTENTION OF A BORED AND EXHAUSTED ADMISSIONS OFFICIAL BY WRITING A FORCEFUL FIRST SENTENCE. Then, use one of two main approaches for organizing an essay. Begin with specific details and progress to a general conclusion, or state some general first, and then describe the pieces of evidence that support it. Some essays fall more naturally into a deductive, or conclusion first, mode of organization, while others are more effective if told inductively, or detail first.

#### **MORE TIPS**

Before attempting to write the first sentence, construct an outline of your main ideas and themes. If a specific question is asked make sure to address it.

There is no need to list your honors, awards, and activities if these were specified elsewhere. However, feel free to highlight things like these in the context of your essay.

Without required specificity, the best advice for writing a personal statement is to draft and polish one carefully, and then use essentially the same creation for all schools.

Ask people to read your essays. Lots of people. Friends know your stories and can guess what you are trying to say even if you haven't written it clearly.

Ask your readers to paraphrase the main point. Also ask if anything was confusing or unclear.

Grammar, punctuation, word usage, proper paragraphing, and other writing techniques all count.

Make sure your name appears on each page of your essay. Number the pages and use paper clips rather than staples.

Regardless of what and how you write, always have others critique it. Don't be surprised, however, if you get differing opinions on the content. In the end, only you can decide on the best way to present yourself.

#### REFERENCES

Lermack, P. (1997). <u>How to get into the right law school</u>. Lincolnwood, IL: VGM Career Horizons. <u>Peterson's graduate and professional programs: An overview</u>. (1996). Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides. Thank you to Darwin Kysor, Director of Career Services at Juniata College, for providing this information.

## WRITING EXERCISES FOR THE GRADUATE ADMISSIONS ESSAY, STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, OR LETTER OF INTENT

Answer each question with a narrative essay of any length, from a paragraph to several pages, whatever feels right.

- 1. How did you first get interested in this field of study?
- 2. What has influenced this interest over time? What professors, classes, labs, papers, research projects, books or ideas have influenced you? What out-of-class experiences have influenced you?
- 3. If your interest has changed over time, how has your prior interest contributed to your understanding of/approach to your current interest?
- 4. Make a list of all your undergraduate papers, labs, and research projects. If you cannot remember their exact names, approximate or paraphrase.
- 5. Do you have any publications or presentations at academic conferences? Are there publications you can submit or any academic conferences you can attend (in any capacity) between now and when you would begin your graduate studies?
- 6. What will you do between now and when you will arrive at your graduate institution? Which classes will you take? What skills will you acquire? What internship, work or community service experiences will you complete?
- 7. How have you researched your graduate school options to date? Have you visited schools, researched them on Web sites, written to professors, attended conferences?
- 8. Can you remember encouraging words you have received from professors, employers, coaches, or peers? If others have encouraged you to pursue your goals, can you remember, as exactly as you can, what they said to you? If so, make a list of quotes.

- 9. What is your GPA in the following categories: overall, year by year, over the last four completed semesters, in your major, since you declared your current major, in math and sciences, not counting math and sciences, not counting semesters abroad, etc.? Look at your transcripts and see if there are other ways of analyzing your GPA that might be of interest to admissions readers.
- 10. How have you prepared yourself for success in graduate school? What body of relevant knowledge will you take with you? What study or laboratory skills will help you succeed? What personal attributes will help you?
- 11. Have you overcome adversity to get where you are? (Be brief.)
- 12. What makes you unique or unusual? List several things.
- 13. What are your leisure activities? What do you do when you are not being a student? What do you do to relieve stress?
- 14. How might you contribute to the academic community you intend to join? How will that community be benefited by association with you?
- 15. Can you name specific professors of interest at your top three graduate programs? If so, list them along with their research/academic specialties.
- 16. What will you do with this degree? Will you teach, do research, work in industry or government? All of the above? (If you don't know, don't invent.)

This handout courtesy of Donald Asher, adapted from *Graduate Admissions Essays* (Ten Speed Press, 2000), the best-selling guide to the graduate admissions process. See *Graduate Admissions Essays* for sample essays in all fields.

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE PRE-WRITING EXERCISE BUILD A TABLE OF UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECTS

#### Suggestions:

- list projects in order of interest to your targeted reader
- use working titles to describe your research projects
- name your professor/advisor/supervisor

#### Sample Undergraduate Research Projects

Designed original research into the ultrafiltration of proteins, including developing a theoretical model for design, design and actual prototyping of cross-flow ultrafiltration unit, and experimentation to determine optimal settings for maximal permeate flux. A Biochemical Engineering Laboratory senior project under the direction of Prof. L. Hintzer.

- Designed a stream remediation project involving liquid-liquid extraction to remove *m*-xylene from contaminated water; also used EPA QUAL2E to model the effects of DO, BOD, and Nitrogen cycle, under the guidance of Prof. L. Hintzer.
- Conducted research into mathematical models of potential use for codifying chaotic systems such as watersheds, an independent study under NSF grant supervised by Prof. P. Cenczynksy. Abstract and draft findings available at http://www.HarveyMudd.edu/~czynsky/models2.html.
- Designed and conducted original research into quantitative and qualitative properties of a meteorite sample
  using atomic absorption spectrophotometry, emission spectrophotometry, induction coupled plasma, and
  laser spectrophotometry under the direction of Prof. R. Hull-Wallace. Results presented at the Argonne
  National Laboratory during annual meeting of the International Association of Amateur Astronomers,
  2003.

This is not just for science students! Similar descriptions can be written about papers and projects in the liberal arts
and other fields, e.g., "Designed and conducted an in-depth analysis of the use of lightness and darkness to convey
moral authority in Elizabethan poetry of,, and, resulting in a 28-page paper presented in
summary to the Anderson College English Department Colloquium, Nov. 1st, 2005."

- 1. Apply earlier (avoid the last six weeks before the deadline).
- 2. Apply to more schools (six is usually considered a prudent minimum: two safe schools, two middle of the road schools, two reach schools).
- 3. Apply to more safe schools (even 4.0 students can and do get rejected).
- 4. Visit and wow 'em (be sure to follow Asher's Law).
- 5. Go to summer school in the targeted subject and wow 'em (it's easy to get into summer school, even at Harvard).
- 6. Take one class at a time in the targeted subject and wow 'em (remember: your most recent grades count the most).
- 7. Get volunteer or internship experiences in the targeted field (even part-time, even unpaid).
- 8. Work in a "real job" in the targeted field (there's no substitute for actual experience, and recommendations from supervisors in the profession).
- 9. Get an intermediate degree (such as a master's or even just a credential).
- 10. Get older and try again (many times, that's all it takes).

Don't forget that the best time to apply is early in the fall so that you can start graduate school the following fall, so be sure to plan ahead!

<u>Asher's Law</u>: Thou shalt not write, nor call, nor visit any graduate faculty member without having read some of his or her works first.

#### WHY YOU NEED TO APPLY EARLY AND TO SEVERAL PROGRAMS

(these are actual cases)

One student was rejected because her portfolio was "accidentally placed on the wrong pile." The graduate school discovered its mistake later in the season, but had already sent the student a rejection letter. Rather than admit what had happened, they let the decision stand.

A student applying for a Ph.D. in philosophy received a letter from a major university rejecting his application for a Ph.D. in Germanic languages.

A student was rejected by an internationally acclaimed architecture program after his portfolio was reviewed by Prof. X. When he called to inquire about the status of his application, Prof. Y picked up his portfolio, glanced through it while the student was on hold, and reversed the decision of Prof X. Thus was he admitted.

One professor forgot to mail a wonderful letter of recommendation he had written for his favorite advisee, and she was rejected.

Another professor was not granted tenure, and stopped performing all duties whatsoever that were not contractually required. This included writing letters of recommendation that he had already agreed to write. At least one of his advisees was not admitted to a graduate program because of this. The student never knew what happened.

A student failed to send original transcripts from a community college she attended while in high school. The transfer grades from the community college appeared on her regular college transcript but, through a bizarre chain of events, an overzealous student employee and a 50 cent library fine from six years prior conspired to keep her out of graduate school.

A student had a wonderful exchange of letters with a department chair, some of which included such statements as "We're so delighted that you will be joining us next year." Nevertheless, she was rejected by the graduate school office, which had more authority than the department.

Adapted from Graduate Admissions Essays by Donald Asher

#### GRADUATE SCHOOL LITERATURE

- 1. Admission Requirements of U.S. & Canadian Dental Schools
- 2. Barron's Guide to Law School
- 3. Barron's How to Prepare for the MCAT
- 4. The Best 286 Colleges
- 5. The Chiropractic College Directory

- 19. Guide to Graduate Education in Urban and Regional Planning
- 20. Barron's Guide to Medical & Dental Schools
- 21. The Best Medical Schools
- 22. Chemical Sciences Graduate School Finder
- 23. The College Blue Book

- 6. Annotated Practice MCAT
- 7. A Guide to Sources of Financial Aid for Osteopathic Medical Students
- 8. Directory of Medical and Dental Schools
- 9. Financing Graduate School
- 10. Getting into Medical School
- 11. Grants for Graduate and Postdoctoral Study
- 12. Cracking the LSAT; How to Prepare for the LSAT
- 13. Medical School Admissions Requirements
- 14. The Official Guide for GMAT Review; How to Prepare for the GMAT
- 15. The Official Guide to MBA Programs
- 16. Peterson's Guides
- 17. Preparing for the GRE
- 18. The Official Guide to Financing Your MBA

- 24. The Complete Guide to Preparation for the MCAT
- 25. Directory of Graduate Preparation Programs in College Student Personnel
- 26. Directory of School Psychology Graduate Programs
- 27. Free Money for Graduate School
- 28. Graduate Study in Psychology
- 29. The Complete Guide to Graduate School Admissions
- 30. How to Get Into the Right Law School
- 31. Neuroscience Training Programs
- 32. Veterinary Medical School Admissions Requirements in the U.S. and Canada
- 33. The Official Guide to U.S. Law Schools
- 34. The Premedical Planning Guide
- 35. Scholarships, Fellowships and Loans
- 36. Worldwide Graduate Scholarship Directory