



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

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Office of Alumni Career Management

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# Career Development

- Programs/Resources
  - Web resources, career management system, webinars, programs, career fairs, individual career advising (in-person and remotely).
  - [www.go.osu.edu/AlumniCareerManagement](http://www.go.osu.edu/AlumniCareerManagement)
  
- Career Changes:
  - Launching
  - Transition
  - Underemployment
  - Unemployment
  - Encore Career
  
- A Lifelong Process:
  - Assessment
  - Exploration/Research
  - Personal Branding
  - Networking/Job Search
  - Professional Development





# Cyndi Freeman

Senior Director  
Graduate Student Recruitment  
and Diversity Initiatives

The Ohio State University  
Graduate School



# Crafting A Winning Application

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Cyndi Freeman  
Senior Director

Graduate Student Recruitment and  
Diversity Initiatives



# Why are you considering graduate school?

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- ENHANCED CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
- INCREASED EARNINGS
- INFLUENCE HOW WE UNDERSTAND OUR WORLD



# How is graduate school different than undergrad?

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- MORE FOCUSED
- MORE INTENSE
- MORE EXPENSIVE
- MORE INDIVIDUALIZED



# How do you decide where to apply?

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- Make sure the program has direction, faculty, and courses relevant to your goals
- Reach for the stars, and have a back up plan



# How many programs should you apply to?

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- Know your budget
- Ask for application fee waivers from any institution
- For Big Ten programs, request a CIC FreeApp

**[CIC.UIUC.EDU](http://CIC.UIUC.EDU)**





# To be successful, you need to take initiative.

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- Do your research
- Show your motivation
- Your application is you—on screen and on paper
- Make sure your materials reflect who you are and what you bring to the program



# Is the grad school admissions process different?

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- Yes
- More selective
- Standards are higher
- You are evaluated by a faculty committee in your desired program



# What do I need to provide?

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- Application form
- Statement of purpose
- Letters of recommendation from faculty
- Transcripts
- Test scores
- Supplemental material



# How are test scores used?

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- Test scores are just one piece of portrait painted by your application
  - Test scores can level the playing field
  - Know what score your programs are looking for
  - Put effort into preparing for the test



# What is the selection criteria?

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The committee will do a whole-file review of your application

- Grades
- Test scores
- Academic and non-academic experiences
- Motivation
- Fit between your interests and program's areas of expertise
- Desired cohort size



# What about recommendation letters?

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- What function do recommendation letters serve?
- Who should you ask?
- How should you make this request?
- Yes, you can ask a recommender for multiple letters



# What is the protocol for asking for a letter?

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- Start early and don't blindsides people
  - Have an actual conversation
  - Provide them with everything they need (**resume, statement of intent, transcripts, details of research experiences**)



# What are statements of intent?

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- Window into who you are and what you will contribute
- Make sure you know what the program offers and what you will contribute





# Statement: what to do and what not to do.

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- Don't get too personal
- Don't name drop
- Don't write more than what's asked for
- Fill in gaps about your academic record
- Get lots of feedback on drafts
- Proofread, proofread, proofread



# What should I ask the program about?

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- Average time to degree
- Financial support
- Attrition rates
- Completion rates
- A visit to campus as a prospective student



# What should I ask current students about?

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- How long does program really take?
- What is the experience like?
- How is the advising?
- Is there any mentoring going on?



# Pay attention to your own observations.

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- What are the demographics of the faculty and student body?
- What is the climate for the entire spectrum of human diversity?
- Do students really seem to want to be there?
- Can you see yourself with them?



# How do I decide which offer to accept?

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- Make sure you are comparing apples to apples, especially with funding packages
- Research what it would be like to live and learn at each school
- Pay attention to quality of life



# What if I have more questions?

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