Getting Into Graduate School

Tips for getting in to the graduate school of your dreams...
Why Should You go to Grad School?

1. You want to study something you are passionate about.

2. The job you want requires a graduate degree.

3. You can typically earn more money with a graduate degree.
Why you should NOT go to graduate school...

1. To avoid the Job Market—sometimes it is best to spend some time researching careers, working for a little while and then pursuing graduate school.

2. To please someone else—YOU must have a genuine interest in the academic subject or career field.
Where to start

Know what subject/area you want to focus on.

Know which degree you want to attain.

Research many programs on a national scale—determine which ones you would be happy with.
Resources for Researching Graduate School

Bates faculty members
Alumni and currently enrolled students
Practicing professionals
Professional Associations
Academic Journals
Questions to research and ask of Graduate Programs

What is the curriculum?
How long does it typically take to complete the degree?
What are the demographics of the students?
What is the criteria for choosing the TA’s, RA’s?
How reliable is the financial support?
What types of jobs have been attained by recent graduates?
Can I meet some current students?
The Application Process – kind of like college...

Apply to about 6-15 schools that seem like a good fit.

Apply to at least 2 safety schools, 2 probable and 2 reach schools.

The research that you have already done should help you determine what schools are a good fit for you.
Becoming a Top Candidate...

Contact programs you are interested in.
Identify a couple of professors in each program--connect your interests with their research.
Read some of their works BEFORE contacting them.
Email them to ask questions regarding the program or something they have written.
Indicate your own interests and propose an area that you might want to study.
Application Criteria

The BASIC CRITERIA:
GRADES
TEST SCORES-GRE, GMAT, MCAT, LSAT

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT IS ALMOST AS IMPORTANT:
Essay
Letters of Recommendation
Grades and Scores

Let the graduate program know about a resolved problem with a grade or grades in a particular semester.

Take tests when you are READY!! Don’t just give it a whirl to see how you do...those scores are seen!
The Essay/Personal Statement

Demonstrate knowledge of the profession/area of study.
Highlight relevant experience.
Connect your interests to their program.
Address academic or career goals.
Include your own vision/mission.
Be interesting... they are reading a lot of these.
Letters of Recommendation are important.

Identify faculty who know you well and will write a positive, personal recommendation.

Discuss specific post grad plans with them.

Provide background information including resume, grades, papers.

Emphasize when you will be applying.

Write thank you notes!!

Ask for letters before you graduate even if you are not applying—faculty know you best right now!
Contact the Graduate Financial Aid Office from each school to find out what kind of aid they offer and how to apply.

Research options such as Teaching or Research Assistants, fellowships, grants, loans.

To learn more, check out: www.finaid.org and www.accessgroup.org.
I did not get in 😞...

Meet with faculty, career development center staff to discuss. Determine deficiencies in your application: grades, test scores, etc.

Apply to more schools and more safe schools.
Apply earlier.
Take a course or two and do well.
Gain experience and apply again in a few years.
If waitlisted, stay in contact with updates.