

Meeting minutes:
Psi Chi/UPO
Grad School Night
February 11, 2009

- Different grad students from various psychology areas:
 - Doug & Veronica in Clinical, Lindsey & Amy in Law, Ariel, Maria, and Sarah in Developmental, and Becky in Social
- Most psych majors want to go to grad school in social or clinical
- **A main part of grad school is research:**
 - Being persistent is critical
 - Choose your advisor carefully when you apply
 - Interdisciplinary work may or may not be allowed
 - Make sure where you're going will be a good fit for your interests and comforts (i.e. the living should also conform to your parameters)
- **Getting into grad school:**
 - Some students take gap year(s) after graduating undergrad studies. If so, DO LOTS OF RESEARCH to help your credentials
 - Volunteering in labs will really help you. One of Amy's friends was rejected from every grad school she applied to, but after later volunteering in labs, was accepted to UC-Irvine
 - The APA wrote a book called "Getting In." It may be helpful to read
 - Remember, you are applying to a PROGRAM, not a SCHOOL.
 - GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO APPLY.
 - The GRE is a major factor in psychology grad school considerations
 - Take a look at what the APA may have to say
 - Contact prospective professors early... not everyone will be taking students!
Essentially, you have to DO YOUR RESEARCH.
 - Facebook may hurt you... consider blocking it. They can and do look at it!
 - More people go to grad school when the economy is bad like it is now

- Admissions committees may have piles of applications: those that are “locks” for acceptance, those that are certain rejections, and those that are “on the bubble”
- One weak area on your application will not eliminate you from consideration
- **HAVE MANY PEOPLE READ YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENTS.** Watch out for certain “kisses of death” on it
- Letters of recommendation: Make sure your writer can write you a “good” letter
 - Have contact with the writer... e.g. do research with them or go to office hours
 - Help your letter writer: provide stuff like CV
 - The writer being in the area that you apply to is VERY helpful
- **Acceptance and the next steps:**
 - Acceptance letters usually come around late January
 - You will almost certainly be interviewed (before and/or after acceptance)
 - Let a school know if you are going to reject their offer after they’ve accepted you
 - When interviewing, conduct yourself professionally... basically from plane debarkation upon arrival until plane embarkation for departure
 - Use a professional-sounding e-mail address that has your name in it
- **Life in grad school:**
 - Treat it like a job. You have to have balance!
 - All the panelists agree: It’s what you make of it
 - Learn how to say “NO.” You will be busy, and have to say no to opportunities
 - Each program is different, in terms of structure, and other components
 - You will likely have less extracurricular activity in grad school
 - Know about the cost of living where you will be
 - Funding may not be guaranteed for the whole time
 - Having taken stats/research methods classes (e.g. 350) will immensely help you for both getting in and succeeding in grad school (*besides, Cal’s class is one of the most enjoyable that I have taken ☺*)

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Weiss