

Timeline for Applying to Graduate School*

Daniel T. Rogers and Jeffrey L. Helms
Kennesaw State University

Junior Year

- Fall and Spring
 - take advanced psychology courses to prepare for the Psychology Subject Test
- Spring
 - study for the GRE General Test and Psychology Subject Test
- Summer
 - take the GRE General Test
 - examine and compare key variables for your programs of interest:
 - identifiers (*school name, location, program name, degree offered*)
 - admissions (*number of applications, offers, and acceptances*)
 - qualifications (*minimum, mean, and median GRE, Subject Test, and GPA*)
 - funding (*annual cost, percentage of students receiving funding and types*)
 - faculty (*number in the program, those of interest and their areas*)
 - program (*accreditation, time to completion, research/practicum experiences, internship acceptance rates, alumni placements, alumni licensure rate*)

Senior Year

- August
 - narrow your list of programs to ~25 and review each in detail
 - order and inspect a copy of your transcript to ensure that it is error-free
 - develop your vita and a personal statement that can be adapted to each program
 - ask potential writers if they can provide a strong letter of recommendation
 - September
 - finalize your list of programs (a total of 10-15 is optimal in most situations)
 - organize information by creating a file for each program
 - determine which professor(s) you are interested in and read their current work
 - contact professors of interest to see if they are taking students the next year
 - finalize your vita and personal statements based on extensive feedback
 - deliver information packets to the faculty writing letters of recommendation
 - October
 - take the Psychology Subject Test
 - order official transcripts for each program
 - order GRE scores for each program
 - early November
 - retrieve letters of recommendation or confirm their readiness for electronic submission
 - mid November – early December
 - finalize applications and make/print a copy of each
 - mail/submit applications
 - verify that applications were received
 - January – March
 - wait (and then wait some more)
 - develop a back-up plan in case you receive no offers
 - interview
 - April 1
 - deadline for offers from graduate schools
 - April 15
 - submit your decision to the graduate schools on (or preferably before) this date
 - after April 15
 - inform your letter writers of your decision and thank them for their assistance
-

*Adapted from:

Helms, J. L., & Rogers, D. T. (2011). *Majoring in psychology: Achieving your educational and career goals*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. (Release date: Summer 2010)

Checklist for Preparing the Application Packet*

Jeffrey L. Helms and Daniel T. Rogers

- Cover letter
 - Indicating that this is your application to their graduate school
 - Indicating to which program you are applying
 - Indicating the contents of your application
 - Requesting that they mail the enclosed postcard when your application is complete
- Vita
- Copy of GRE General Test and Psychology Subject Test Scores
 - Original is sent by ETS.
- Official copy of your transcripts in a sealed envelope (and signed/stamped over the seal)
 - If the program requires transcripts to be sent by the school, include a photocopy of transcripts in the packet.
- Writing samples – maximum of two – Possible examples include:
 - Copy of a publication you authored or co-authored
 - Copy of your senior thesis
 - Copy of a research article you authored and submitted for publication
 - Copy of a poster you presented at a conference
 - Copy of a research article you presented at a conference
- Copies of publications and conference presentation handouts
- Personal statement (Remember: Times New Roman 12 font; Proofread)
- Application forms
- Additional essays required by the program
- Self-addressed stamped postcard for them to mail when your application is complete
- Letters of recommendation in sealed envelopes (signed over seal), unless required to send them separately
- Application fee

*Adapted from:

Helms, J. L., & Rogers, D. T. (2011). *Majoring in psychology: Achieving your educational and career goals*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. (Release date: Summer 2010)