

**TIPS FOR SURVIVING THE
GRAD SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS**
(Collected from Class of 2012 - University of Pittsburgh)

1. LEARN ABOUT AUDIOLOGY AND SPEECH/LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY

- **Get involved in extracurricular activities**
 - **Shadow** professionals in different settings
 - **Volunteer** in people-related fields
 - **Join NSSLHA** and be an active member (e.g., committee head; officer position)
- Take time to **get to know your professors & advisor.**
 - It's easier for them to write a letter of recommendation when they have interacted with you outside of class
 - Seek options to volunteer on research projects with a professor
- **Study to learn**, while it is tempting to memorize content in each class, the undergraduate courses focus on developing an important foundation for graduate studies
 - Work hard to learn all you can
 - Do well in all of your courses – your GPA will count when you apply to graduate school

2. ADVANCE PREPARATION

- **Use resources** developed to help students apply to SLP and AuD programs
 - Explore **Ed Find** on the ASHA website for info on AuD and SLP graduate degree programs: <http://www.asha.org/students/academic/EdFind/>
 - Explore AAA info on AuD degree programs (links on left provide info on all programs) <http://www.audiology.org/education/students/programs/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Read materials designed to help guide you through the application process at <http://www.asha.org/students/academic/Graduate-School.htm>
- **Gather information about programs** (spring of your junior year) to determine the best options for your interests, needs, and abilities
 - Consider the range of geographic areas open to you
 - Identify programs that fit your profile in terms of GPA and GRE Scores (on EdFind)
 - Look for schools that offer opportunities in disorder areas/settings that are of interest
 - Talk to your academic advisor and professors to get their input on programs to consider
 - Contact professors of universities of interest to learn more
 - Set up a time to visit and talk with members of the faculty
 - Find out when *Open Houses* are held and make arrangements to attend if possible
 - Ask for the names of some current grad students you could talk to. Find out from them what do they like and what do they wish was different
- **Take the GREs early** (spring junior year or summer between junior & senior years). This will give you the opportunity to re-take the exam if needed
- **Contact professors early** to initiate a request for grad school letters of support.
 - Find out what materials they need from you and how early they need the items
- **Send for an official transcript** of all colleges you have attended – that will be helpful when completing applications
- Begin brainstorming about your **personal statement** and start drafting it
- **Save your money** – the application process will require some funds

2. THE APPLICATION PROCESS

- **Get organized** – work on your applications a little each day to decrease the stress and **don't procrastinate**
 - Finalize the list of programs you will apply to. Be realistic – apply to schools you believe you have a chance of getting in to – include some reach schools and “safety” schools.
 - Create a spreadsheet summarizing info on each school (due dates; application format – CSDCAS, on-line, paper; contact person; items requested, etc)
 - Make a folder for each school and a checklist to help you track which items you have completed and which still need to be completed
 - Create a checklist of what each professor wants in terms of materials to allow them to write your letters of support. Track when each item is done.
 - Consider other events in your life (i.e., midterms; job responsibilities) as you plan out your timeline for completing the application process
- **Complete your personal statement**
 - In most cases you'll do the same personal statement for all programs
 - Have family and friends proofread it and give you feedback
 - Use the Writing Center on campus
- **Prepare a resume** – some applications require one
- **Take time to breathe and remember why you love this field!** Don't lose sight of why you are going through the stress of applying to graduate school.
- **Complete the applications**
 - Trust the CSDCAS process – they take your application process seriously
 - Make sure you have all necessary items completed for each application
- **Have transcripts sent**
- Deliver an **organized packet to the recommenders early** - most faculty write letters for many students, so get your materials to them at least 4-6 weeks before you need the letters sent out
 - Send reminders 10-14 days before you need the letters to arrive, to help ensure that letters are sent
- **Call each school after your application is submitted** and your transcripts are sent to ensure that your application is complete