A Guide for Engineers Applying for Graduate School

Sponsored by Tau Beta Pi
Ohio Gamma Chapter
Outline

- Should I apply?
- Where should I apply?
- Should I go now or work a while first?
- Should I get MS, PhD, MD, JD?
- What are the deadlines?
- What are the parts of the application package?
- How do I maximize financial aid chances?
- Should I take the GRE?
- Question & answer session with panel
Should I apply?

YES

- BS is not enough training to be a good engineer
- At least MS gives more training (some fields like Chemical Engineering are mostly BS or PhD)
- Graduate degree makes better job mobility
- MS or PhD enables more interesting jobs-- R&D, team leader jobs usually require graduate degrees
Where should I apply?

- Match your academic performance and career goals with school/program
- Ask your faculty for advice on picking programs
- Contact faculty at schools of interest
- Visit schools of interest if possible
  - Talk with faculty and see facilities
  - Talk with students at the school
  - Personality is as important as topic and national ranking
What about changing fields?

- Some fields make smoother transitions than others, but mixed backgrounds can make more flexible career.
- Graduate programs may admit conditionally and require some remedial undergraduate courses when changing areas.
Go now or later?

GO NOW:
+ Already a student
+ Math hasn’t been forgotten
+ Used to exams/HW
+ Used to being poor
  - Burn out
  - Poor getting poorer

GO LATER:
+ Get industrial experience
+ Get perspective of what is important
+ Get company to pay
  - Hard to be poor after earning money
MS, PhD, MD or JD?

- MS is a useful terminal degree for most engineering situations (except ChemE)
- MS has higher hiring salary than BS
- PhD usually required for R&D work, teaching at university, consulting, useful for starting high tech business
- Medical schools like engineers (Need premed courses and MCAT)
- Law schools like engineers (Need LSAT)
What are the deadlines

- Each school is different
- Often financial aid requires earlier deadline than just admission
- Financial aid deadline usually December, January
- OSU fellowship deadlines:
  - International students: November 30
  - Domestic students: January 15
Completing the application

- Application form/transcripts
- Personal Statement:
  - be concise and focused
  - give concrete examples of what you want to do and how you are well suited to do it.
  - Show how specific experiences trained/motivated you
- Recommendation Letters
  - Sign the access waiver
  - Pick your recommenders carefully
  - Tell recommenders to use University letterhead
- GRE scores
  - Take GRE early enough to have scores send in time
  - Have official scores sent directly to schools
How do I maximize my financial aid chances?

- Get a good match of school with your interest and talents
- Get your company to pay for it
- Get good recommendation letters from faculty who know you individually
- Make sure your application is complete and well written
Should I take the GRE?

- Many schools do not require GRE for admission but DO require it for financial aid.
- If not required and financial aid is not an issue it may help or hurt depending on the score and your GPA.
- OSU REQUIRES GRE SCORES FOR DEPARTMENTS TO NOMINATE STUDENTS FOR FELLOWSHIPS.
Prof. David Tomasko, Chemical Engineering

Prof. Bradley Clymer, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Biomedical Engineering, Biomedical Informatics

Sunil Hari, BSBME, MSEE, Med Student

Aaron Lambert, BSME, ME Graduate Student