

Please interview **three graduate students (preferably Ph.D. students)** in your field of interest or fields similar to those you would like to explore in graduate school. If no Ph.D. program exists in your discipline here at UI, interview master's students. Make a list of questions (no less than five) specific to you and your research interests. Remember, the goal of this exercise is not only to gain a further understanding about the graduate school process; it is also an opportunity to build relationships with graduate students in your area of interest. Also, use this assignment to gain an understanding of what it's like to be a graduate student.

You should begin the conversation by informing the graduate student about:

- The purpose of the McNair Achievement Program
- Your area of interest for graduate school
- The list of schools you are thinking about for graduate school.

Use the following questions as a guide for what to ask, but feel free to add questions of your own:

- Name, department, research interests
- What was your path to graduate school?
- Where did you receive your bachelors, masters?
- How did you decide where to do your PhD?
- What will earning a PhD mean to you?
- What has been the most difficult aspect of completing your doctorate?
- What professional associations would benefit a student looking to attend graduate school?
- What are some names of journals that I should begin to explore?
- What scholars do you recommend I read?
- What should I be doing right now to increase my chances of getting accepted into graduate school?
- What graduate schools would you recommend I explore based on my research interests?
- If I could have one book in my collection for graduate school, what would that book be?

Following the interviews you must complete a 3-page report summarizing your interview experience.

You can get the names of graduate students from the department office or department website. Look for graduate students with similar research interests. If you are having trouble, be sure to ask Vicki. Sometimes you can find graduate students in other departments who might be conducting research matching your interests.

The best way to speak with a graduate student is to set up an appointment either via e-mail or telephone. Please be sure to introduce yourself and let them know that you are in the McNair Achievement Program and are eventually going to pursue a Ph.D./graduate degree. Explain that you would enjoy speaking with them about some questions that you have concerning the field and about graduate school.