5 STEPS
to Prepare for Graduate School

Step 1: Decide if Graduate School is Right for You

Graduate school is expensive, so it is important to give careful thought and consideration to whether/when/where you should attend. The testing and application process can be expensive, so the more forethought you can give your decision, the better off you will be.

Ask yourself the following:

- What is YOUR vision for your future?

- How does graduate school fit into your personal, academic, and career goals?

- Do you need an advanced degree for the career you aspire to?

Step 2: Identify and Research Graduate or Professional Programs

As a student in the Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering, you are likely looking at graduate school opportunities in related fields. You might even be looking into graduate programs offered at Indiana University. The most common graduate degrees pursued by bachelor's degree alumni from Luddy are: **Information Systems**, **Human-Computer Interaction Design**, **Computer Science**, and **Information Systems Technology**.

As you consider a graduate degree, note the following: degree type, program of study, geographic area, and admissions criteria. **Narrow your choices to only those schools you would be willing to attend.**

Step 3: Take Admissions Tests and Complete Applications

This part of the process requires a high attention to detail.!

Keep all your application materials together and develop a system to track requirements and deadlines for each program to which you apply. You should also record the date you mailed your application materials.

Each application is different but typically feature four key sections:
1. **Application form and resume or CV**
2. **Reference letters**
3. **Personal statement** *(essay about interest in program)*
4. **Transcript**

After submitting your applications, it is important to call the graduate admissions office and/or the graduate program itself to confirm your materials have been received.

Step 4: Choose the Best Program for You

After you've negotiated the application process and received your acceptances, it's time to decide which program is the best fit for you. Get specific with your analysis: talk with alumni, consider a site visit and tour if possible.

Step 5: Find Ways to Fund Your Future Education

Funding for graduate or professional school can come from many different sources, including graduate assistantships, fellowships and scholarships, resident assistantships, loans, and college work-study.

Graduate School Research

Use this section to begin organizing your research on graduate programs:

	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4	School #5
Degree Type (Master's, Ph.D., etc.)					
Program of Study					
Geographic Area					
Admissions Criteria (Applications, acceptance stats, required tests, deadlines, etc.)					
Academic (Faculty/student ratio, libraries, research labs, computer facilities)					
Social (Student body makeup, organizations, outside activities)					
Outcomes (Career opportunities post-graduation)					
Expenses (In-state vs. out-of-state tuition, housing, books and supplies)					
Financial Aid (Application deadlines, assistantships, fellowships, loans, work-study)					