Why Graduate School?

- The ability to specialize, become an expert in your field
- Higher lifetime earnings potential, promoted further and faster
- Intellectual satisfaction - solve real world problems
Graduate School Options

- Might not be Electrical or Computer Engineering - many people go into Law or Management for graduate degree
- Preparation and planning is largely the same for any graduate program
- Consider how a graduate degree ties in with your future career goals
If funded

- You can afford to do your masters if you have the good fortune to be funded.
- Almost without exception, PhD students are funded.
Financial Example

- Tuition – Fall 2017
  ½ Graduate level, in state
  $2516 plus fees
- Assistantship
  $2000/month
  ½ time work as TA or RA (20 hrs/week)
- Can defer undergraduate loans
Create Statement of Purpose

1) What areas of research interest you?
2) Have you had any personal contact with departmental faculty?
3) Recognition for special skills or past achievements?
4) Relevant work experience?
5) Career you hope to pursue?
References

- At least 2 faculty references
- One might be a supervisor
- Sent to me: vlthorl@iastate.edu
Senior Year

- March of SR year meet with faculty members to discuss your statement of purpose and ask for letters of recommendation
- Important to ask the right people and manage the process
- Don’t hound, but check to make certain your references aren’t holding up your application
Fall of Senior Year Cont’d

- Sign up for standardized tests such as GRE or LSAT for Law GMAT for MBA
- April - order transcripts
- Make a calendar of deadlines for the schools to which you’re applying
Now it’s time to apply

- Complete applications - do draft first, many available on the web and more will be in the future
- No fee to apply to ISU
- September - contact programs about possibility of visits, enhances your chances for offer, helps your comfort level
How Application will be Evaluated

- GRE scores
- Statement of purpose/personal essay
- Grade Point Average, major and out-of-major
- Recommendation letters
How Admission Process Works

- Applications materials come in
- Recognize that your application is likely one of hundreds
- When all materials in, the application is reviewed by a committee, Director of Graduate Education, or Admissions specialist
The Waiting Game

- In many top level programs, students must be matched with the research needs of the faculty
- Expect a notification either way
- It’s okay to follow up with the school and check the status of your application
How to Evaluate Offers

- Stipends, what are they and what do they typically mean?
- RA versus TA
- Fellowships, check on whether or not they are renewable
- What progress do you have to maintain to keep your support?
Consider BS/MS (Concurrent)

- Eligible All undergrads (EE/Cpr E/SE)
- 3.3 gpa
- Double count 6 credits (grad and undergrad)
Credit rules

- Possibility to use 9 credits that weren’t used on your degree audit for undergrad (meet with me to see if we can do that)
- Also, you can use up to 9 credits as 300/400 level (don’t have to have all 500/600 level classes)
  - 1 - 300 level (not EE/Cpr E/SE)
  - 2 – 400 level OR 3-400 level
Concurrent Application

- [Link](https://www.grad-college.iastate.edu/common/forms/files/Application_for_an_ISU_Undergraduate_Student_Wishing_to_Pursue_a_Concurrent_Graduate_Certificate_or)
For further information

- Contact Vicky Thorland-Oster, Manager
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