

McNair Scholars: Taking Steps toward Graduate School*

Freshman Year (Self-Discovery)

Explore your interests and abilities. Talk to and visit your academic advisor.

Develop positive long term study habits and skills.

Explore campus resources available to students (e.g., Tutoring Services, Writing Centers)

Establish a 3.0 GPA or above.

Sophomore Year (Assessing Your Options)

- √ Define and establish your short and long-term personal, life, and career goals.
- √ Begin to make contacts in your chosen career area.
- √ Identify potential mentors among professors or graduate students.
(Mentoring relationships are valuable for both undergraduate and graduate career success).
- √ Conduct independent research with a professor of your choice.
- √ Attend talks, colloquia and presentations given by professors/graduate students in your field.
- √ Attend graduate and professional school fairs.
- √ Begin web searches on summer internships or research opportunities at various universities.
(Contact your McNair Counselor or visit the Career Center for more details).

Junior Year (Setting Your Goals)

- √ Examine and set your short and long-term career direction.
- √ Strengthen your mentoring relationships. Discuss your interests with faculty and advisors.
- √ Research appropriate graduate programs. Contact the department(s) you are applying to for catalogues and publications. Visit campuses and departments when possible.
- √ Research entrance exam/test dates and fees. Take the entrance exams before your Senior year.
- √ Attend graduate and professional school fairs.
- √ Attend talks, colloquia and presentations given by professors/graduate students in your field.
- √ Participate in a summer research internship.

Senior Year (Making a Choice)

- √ You will be applying about 1 year in advance of when you enroll in graduate school.
- √ Register to take the entrance examination the summer before your senior year. Check with the department(s) you are applying to find out when they want the scores.
- √ Research application fees and fee waiver options.
- √ Apply before December 1!! Most universities now offer online applications. Inquire about application deadlines based on the semester and year in which you plan to enroll.
- √ Apply early for federal funding fellowships (e.g. National Science Foundation, NASA).
- √ Complete the application process (letters of recommendation, statement of purpose, Transcripts and test scores {GRE, MCAT, etc}).
- √ Contact the schools to ensure that your application is complete.

*Thanks to the University of California System for their contribution in writing "Taking Steps toward Graduate School."