

# So you want to go to Grad School in Psychology . . .

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Prof. Geoff Navara  
and  
David King



# What We'll Cover in the Session

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- Building your experience
- The process of applying to graduate schools
- Sources of financing your education
- Helpful resources



# Some Opening Thoughts

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  - You need to start thinking fairly early on in your undergraduate career (as early as second year);
  - Your academic career begins in undergraduate studies, it is important to act professional and respectful to your colleagues and the professors.

# Building Your Experience

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- Get to know your professors
  - Many schools require 3 references from professors who know you and your work. Attending a class and getting a good grade does not necessarily mean that the professor knows you. It is helpful if the professor has had interactions with you in a variety of contexts (e.g., asking questions in class, meeting in office hours, working as a volunteer/paid research assistant, etc.) not just via e-mail correspondence.

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  - Professors are very interested in you and your career, however, we are also generally very busy. Before you set up a meeting time with your professor to discuss your questions please: 1) do your homework; 2) have a clear purpose; and 3) be specific.
  - Recommendation letters are very important - not just for you, but also for the professors who are backing up their statements with their reputations.

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- Volunteer experience
  - Many schools say that they like to see volunteer experience in their applicants, and for some (e.g., counseling programs) this may be true; however, many schools do not weigh these experiences heavily in their acceptance deliberations.

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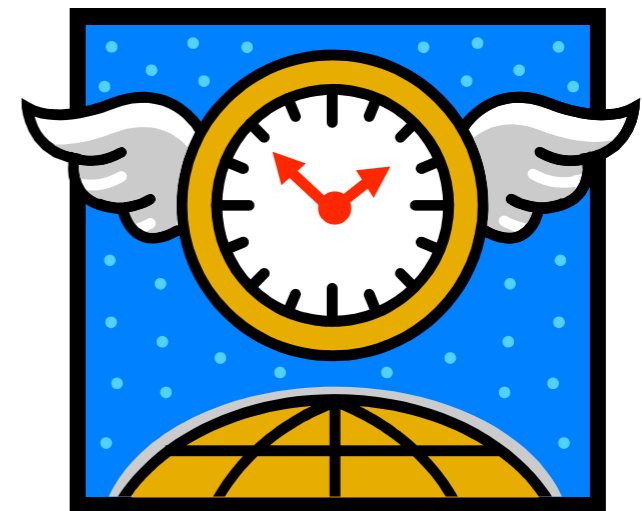
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- Have a look at the handout.



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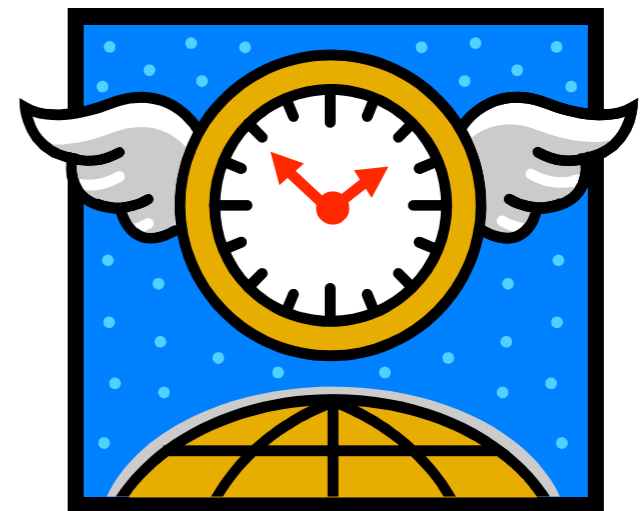
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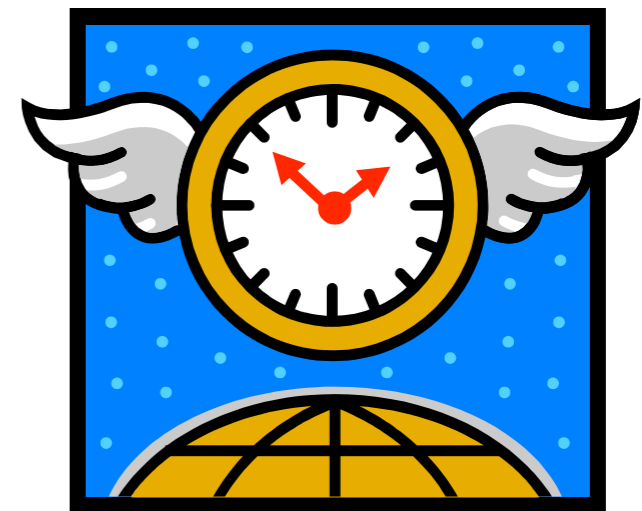
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- Take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or any other exams required by your program of study as early as possible (perhaps also in the summer between third and fourth year)



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  - Talk with graduate students about their experiences getting into graduate school
  - Be realistic! Do your homework and only apply to schools where you have a reasonable chance of getting into the program

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- Contact potential faculty to see if they are taking on new students in the year that you are applying - however, remember that they are probably very busy, so they may not engage in in-depth discussion about the program, research interests, etc. - that is up to you to do your own research on the issues.

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  - Make sure to read recent publications of faculty you wish to work with, and refer to their research ‘intelligently’ within your letter of intent

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- Provide organized materials for your reference letter writers
- Good things to supply to your referees:
  - a transcript of your grades (a copy or printout from MyTrent is usually sufficient)
  - your letter of intent (hopefully a 2nd or 3rd draft)
  - a copy of your GRE scores (if your intended school requires them)
  - all the various forms and instructions needed to write letters for each school, including deadlines. Ensure that you have filled in all the necessary blanks.



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- Wait

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- Many universities offer internal scholarships, bursaries, teaching assistantships and research assistantships. Information is usually available on the graduate studies websites of the various institutions

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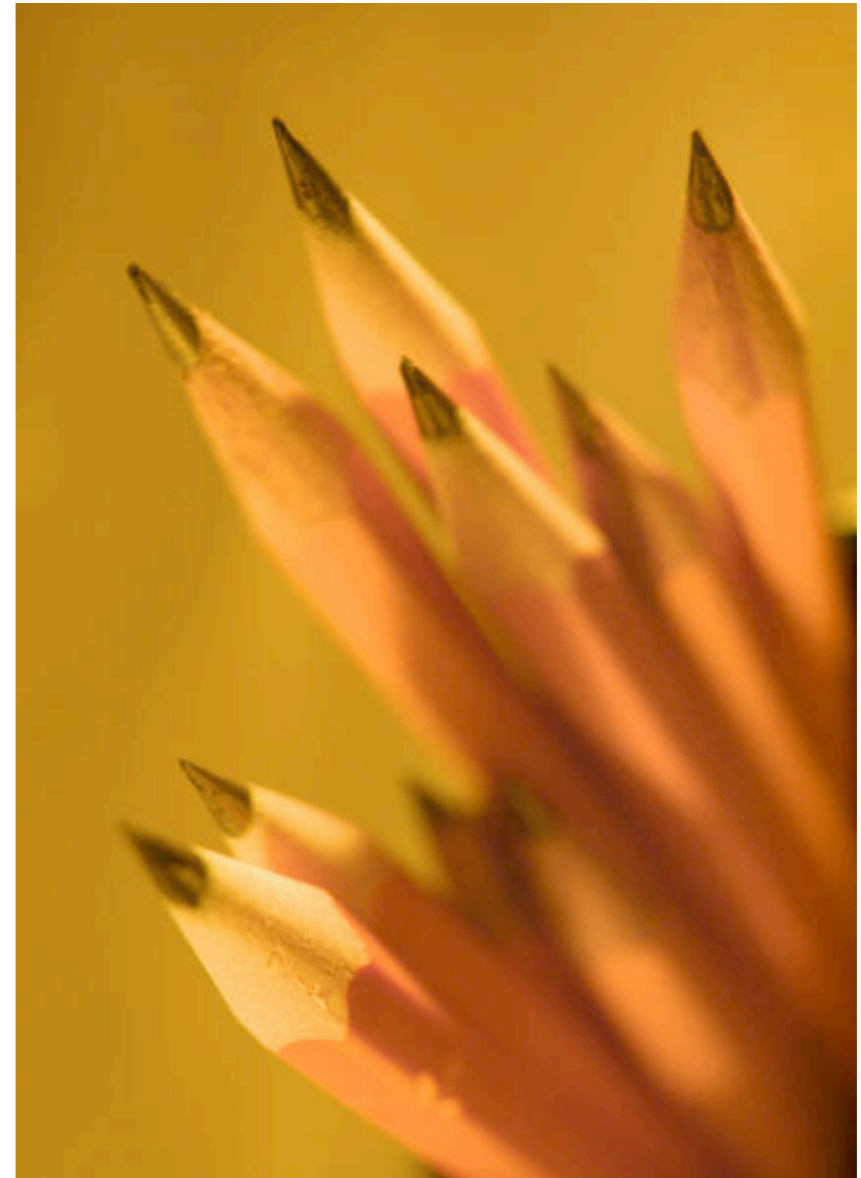
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- WWW is probably your greatest resource
  - Canadian Psychology Association ([www.cpa.ca](http://www.cpa.ca))
  - List of universities ([www.uwaterloo.ca/canu/index.html](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/canu/index.html))

# Concluding Thoughts

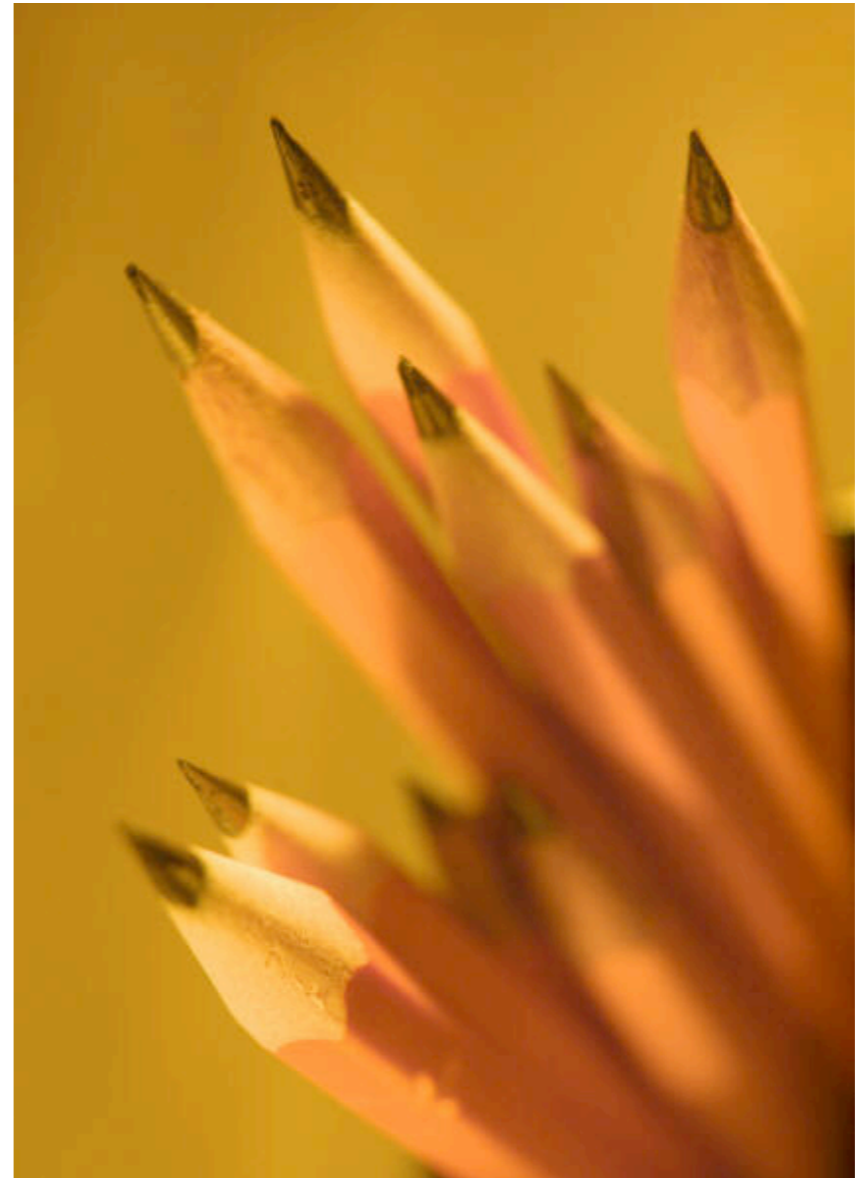
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# Concluding Thoughts

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- If you do not succeed . . . try again!!!

