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"Safety" schools | "Solid" schools | "Reach" schools

NOTES. **Scroll down for additional general notes.**

Basic program info		**University**										
		Department or school										
		Name of program										
	e.g., MA, PhD, MSW	**Degree type**										
	URL, so you can find it again quickly	**Web site**										
Application information												
	Critical, to help you plan your timeline	**Application due date**										
	Whatever info you can find: median total score, interquartile range (label it for each school so you know!)	**GRE range of accepted students**										
	Specific courses, work experience, or other requirements or accomplishments. Compare against your resume/CV to see whether your're ready, & if not, do them before applying!	**Other prereqs**										
	how many, and if specified, from whom (e.g., a professor, a clinical supervisor)	**# letters needed**										
	Do they accept a "common" (shared) essay, or do they ask for additional ones on topics they specify?	**# essays, topics**										
		application fee										
Fit of program with my interests	GRE topic exam	**other application reqts**										
	Name, email, phone #	**Contacts at program**										
	Ask them about their experiences, and tell them about your interests and goals. What did they say?	**Comments from contacts**										
	Will help you (1) identify your favorite choices, and (2) write tailored essays for them. Might include concentrations, other curriculum features, internship opportunities, research centers.	**Pros of program for my interests and career goals**										
	If very many things appear here, program might not be a good fit for you!	**Cons of program for my interests**										
	Critical for doctoral applicants, less so for masters. NOT just big names, but people who's research, clinical, or policy topics or skills mesh well with your stated interests and goals.	**Faculty with whom I'd like to work, & their research areas**										
	Compare the placements of their graduates with your career objectives, whether clinical, research, teaching, policy, etc.	**What their grad students go on to do?**										
Funding												
		Funding application due date?										
	e.g., fellowship, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, other	**Types of funding available**										
	e.g., what % of grad students do they fund	**Other funding notes**										

Action status	**Date contacted**
	Date application submitted
	Date visited
	Application status
	Deadline to respond
	Final decision

Notes

1) Type **DETAILED,** thorough notes into this spreadsheet, saved with your name in the filename. This comparison is the basis for where you will spend the next 2-6 years of your life and gain credentials for your career!
Yes, it is time-consuming, but worth it! Fill out as much as you can about ONE PROGRAM AT A TIME, to save yourself a lot of going back & forth to websites etc.
Look first at their curriculum, prereqs, and career placements, which can help you rule out some programs quickly so you don't waste lots of time on them.

2) Early in the investigation process, look at a **minimum of 10 programs** because you will rule some out as you go.
Ask your mentor, professors in your department, and people in your desired field for suggestions to fit your interests, and ask them why they recommend each school.

3) Over the next month or two, narrow your choices to 6-10 programs **ANY OF WHICH YOU WOULD BE HAPPY TO ATTEND.**
Do NOT apply to schools "just because" or if you know you don't like them...
a) of the schools you plan to apply to, 2-3 should be "safety" or "backup" schools that you are virtually certain to get into, given **YOUR** grades, scores, experience, etc. compared to the criteria they state and to the students they typically accept
EXCEPTION: If you are willing to forgo grad school for another year if you don't get into one of your higher choices. Better to keep your options open until you actually have to decide whether and where to attend!
b) also pick 2-3 "solid chance" (not guaranteed, but likely that you will be admitted)
c) pick 2-3 "REACH" schools - those that you would like to attend but are highly competitve either overall, or given your grades, scores, etc.
Your advisors can help you figure out which category of admissions competitiveness your choices fall into. ASK to make sure you have a range

4) If you are applying to more than one type of program or degree (e.g., some masters, some doctoral, or some MPH some MSW), apply to a range of each type

5) Widen columns as needed to fill in the information.
6) Add other columns if you think of other topics that are important to you.
7) Back up this document often, and consider putting it on Google docs or someother easily accessible but secure site.