

Professional Development Workshop #3





Introductions



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Today's agenda

- Should I go to graduate school?
- What are my degree options?
- Deciding where to apply
 - Selecting a program
 - Selecting a PI/advisor/lab
- What will I need for my application?
- Tips for personal statements and interviewing
- Timeline for applying
- Q&A discussion panel

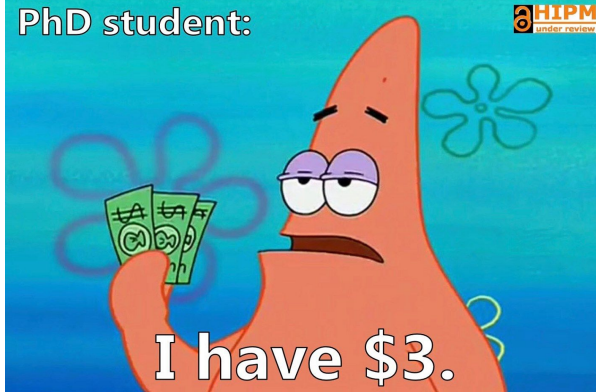
What words, thoughts, and feelings do you associate with graduate school?

<https://www.menti.com/zszfg92qvj>





PhD student:



I have \$3.

When you attend family events and they ask what you do for a living



Advisor: "So, how is your project going?"



Me:



Should I go to graduate school?

Ask yourself the following questions...

- Do I need this degree to get my “dream job?”
- Can I afford to go to graduate school?
- Am I emotionally and mentally prepared to go to graduate school?
- Are there any other experiences I need to strengthen my application?
- Do I want to go to graduate school?
- Do I need more time to discover the answers to these questions?



THE academic treadmill

What are my degree options?

- **Master's degree (MA, MS, MSW, MPH)**
 - 1-2 years
 - General psychology vs specialized programs
 - Not typically funded
- **Doctorate (PhD, MD/PhD, EdD, DrPH, ScD)**
 - 5-7 years
 - Research focus (some also have clinical focus)
 - With or without master's along the way
 - Programs will specialize in certain area of psychology (e.g., clinical, counseling, developmental, cognitive, neuroscience, experimental/quantitative, social, health, forensic, educational/school)
 - Typically funded
- **Doctorate with clinical focus (PsyD, DSW)**
 - 4-5 years
 - Little to no research focus
 - Not typically funded



How do I decide which programs/universities to apply to?



- Decide which type of program(s) you want to apply to
 - Doctorate or masters degree
 - Clinical focus and/or research focus
 - Area of specialization
- Pick 1-2 research topics that you're most interested in

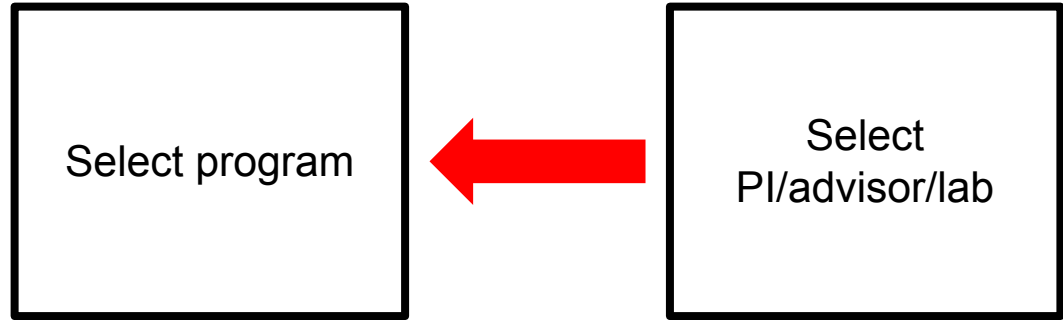
Selecting a **doctoral** program

Select
PI/advisor/lab



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Selecting a **doctoral** program



Doctoral Student Research Opportunities



For students interested in pursuing a Ph.D. degree at Boston University under the supervision of Professor Helen Tager-Flusberg, please consider the following:

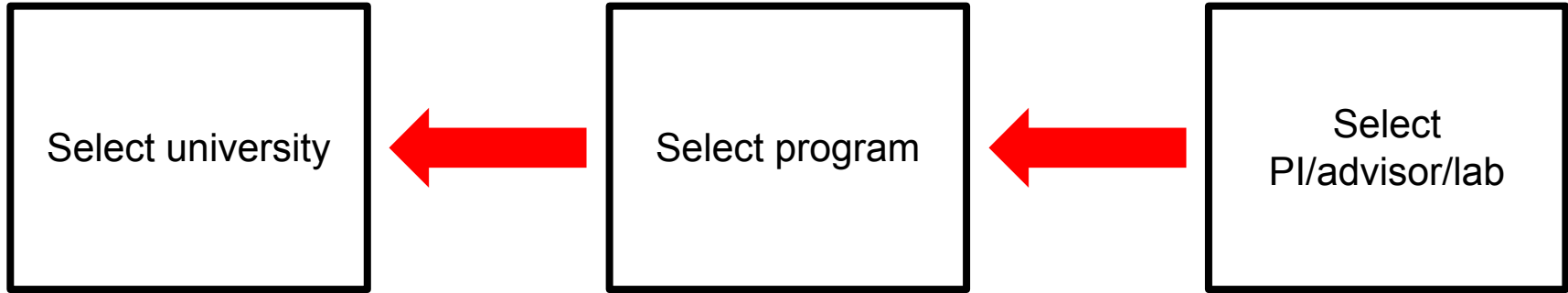
*Dr. Tager-Flusberg will NOT be accepting doctoral students for 2022.

- Dr. Tager-Flusberg supervises students who apply to the [Developmental Science Program](#) in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences or the [Department of Speech Language and Hearing Sciences](#).
- Dr. Tager-Flusberg is **NOT** able to accept students applying to the Clinical Psychology program in the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences.



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Selecting a **doctoral** program



Doctoral Student Research Opportunities



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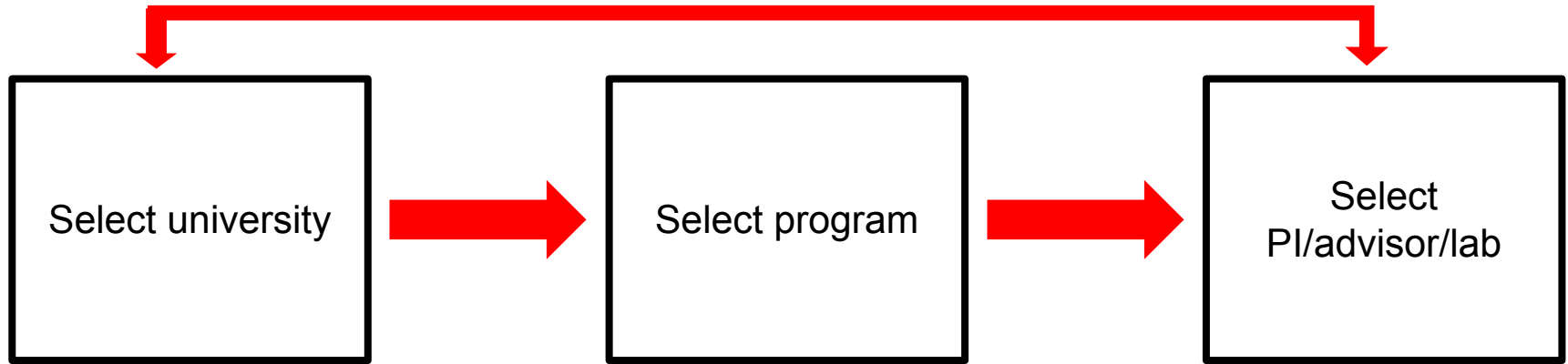
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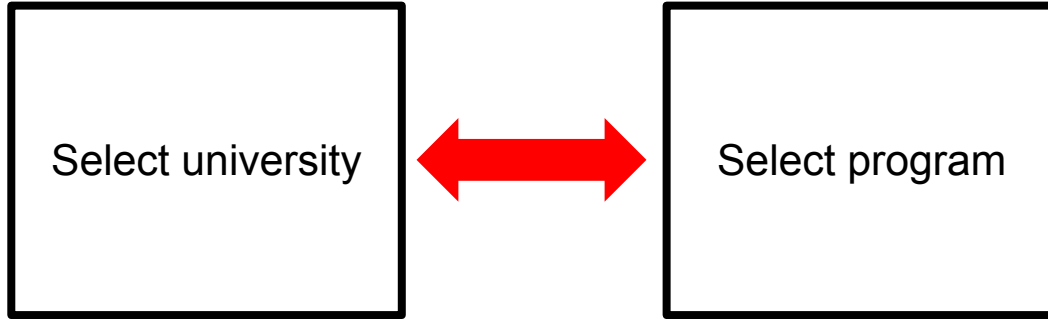
Selecting a **doctoral** program



- All Faculty
- Brain, Behavior, & Cognition Faculty
- Clinical Faculty
- Developmental Science Faculty



Selecting a **master's** program



**BOSTON
UNIVERSITY**

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM

Things to consider when selecting a PI/advisor/lab

- Are they currently doing research on a topic that you're interested in?
- Do they have access to methods/tools needed to answer your research questions?
- Have they recently published papers with their students as a 1st or 2nd author?
- What programs are they affiliated with at their university?
- Are there other doctoral students currently in the lab?
- Are they “junior” or “senior” faculty? What is their mentoring style?
- Do they have research funding?
- Do they collaborate with other labs?
- Are they accepting students for the upcoming application cycle?

Connect with PI before submitting your application

Email template

Dear Dr. _____,

My name is _____, and I am currently a _____ year undergraduate student studying psychology at Boston University. [If you work with someone the PI knows well, you can mention that personal connection here].

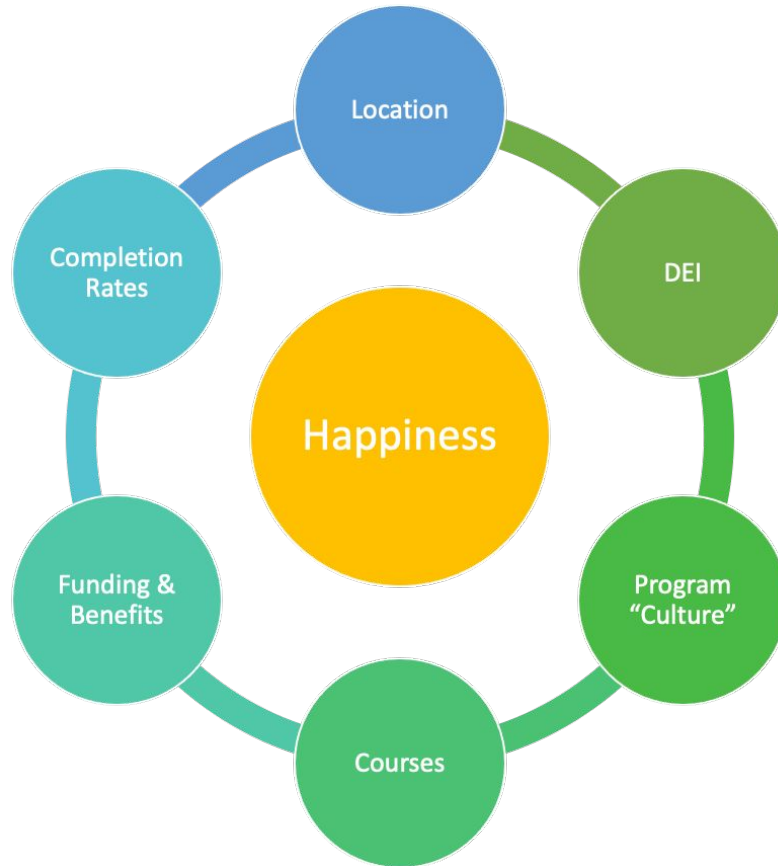
I have taken great interest in your research on _____. I am particularly fascinated in your recent paper/study on _____.

I am planning to apply to doctoral programs this fall. Will you be accepting any doctoral students in the _____ program at _____ University for the 2022 admission cycle?

If so, I gladly welcome to opportunity to discuss my research interests and experiences further. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Things to consider when selecting a program



What will I need for my application?

- Resume/CV
- Personal statement
- Transcripts
- 2-3 recommendation letters
 - PIs/research supervisors
 - Professors/TFs
- \$\$\$
- Optional/not always required...
 - GRE
 - Diversity statement
 - Writing sample

Tips for writing your personal statement

- Tell your story
 - Chronological order can be helpful place to start when outlining, but isn't necessarily the best format
- Mention your maturity, motivation, initiative, and passion through specific examples
- Highlight “fit”
- Include the following...
 - General → more specific research interests
 - How previous research and clinical experiences have shaped those interests
 - Which PI you want to work with
 - Why you're a perfect match for that PI/what you'll add to their ongoing research
 - How graduate school will help you achieve your future career goals
- Create a template that you adapt for each program
- Read successful examples
- Get feedback!

Opening: What big question are you interested in?

Body: What are your experiences? How did these shape your interests and goals?

Closing: Why are you applying to this program?

Interview etiquette

- **Know who you'll be meeting with ahead of time**
 - Title
 - Lab
 - Research interests
- **Prepare a list of questions to ask each interviewer**
- Arrive early
- Bring a copy of your resume, paper abstracts, and poster presentations
- **Bring pen and paper to take notes**
- Dress professionally
- Exhibit positive, confident body language
- **Do not leave the interview early**
- Put your phone away
- **Send a thank you email**

Timeline for applying to graduate school

- June-July
 - Draft personal statement template
 - Take GRE
 - Create list of programs
 - **Ask for recommendation letters**
- August
 - **Contact potential PIs via email**
 - **Conduct informational interviews**
 - Edit list of programs
- September
 - Finalize personal statement template
 - Update resume/CV
- October
 - Adapt personal statement template for each program
 - Send transcripts
 - Send GRE scores
- November
 - Fill out online application questions
- December-January
 - **Submit applications**
 - Practice interview questions with friends/family
- January
 - First round of phone/zoom interviews
- February-March
 - **In-person interviews**
- March-April
 - **Offers sent**



Helpful resources

- REACH for graduate school in psychology:
<https://sites.google.com/view/reach-for-graduate-school>
- APA accredited programs: <https://accreditation.apa.org/accredited-programs>
- Applying to graduate school:
 - <https://www.apa.org/education-career/grad/applying>
 - <https://spsp.org/resources/student/applying-to-grad-school>
- Grad school guru: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/grad-school-guru>
- Graduate School Coach: <https://www.youtube.com/c/IvanValdovinosGradSchool>
- List of additional graduate school resources:
<https://www.psychresearchlist.com/grad-school-resources.html>
- Perdue OWL writing resources: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- Writing your personal statement:
 - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/11qNTom2wOZGCmUSBWxjZ79E4WnPheXU7/view>
 - <http://theramirezgroup.org/resources>
- GRE prep:
 - <https://gre.magoosh.com>
 - https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/prepare/powerprep/

Q&A discussion panel

- **Ian Chandler-Campbell, M.S.**
 - Doctoral student in Applied Human Development at BU
 - ilc@bu.edu
- **Jay Wilson, M.A.**
 - Doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at BU
 - jayw@bu.edu
- **Maria Jose (Majo) Bustamante, M.A.**
 - Doctoral student in Clinical Psychology at BU
 - majob@bu.edu
- **Rebecca Levine, MSW, LICSW**
 - Doctoral student in Education Studies at USCD
 - relevine@ucsd.edu

Life as a doctoral student

- Coursework
- Teaching
- Mentoring
- Research
 - Administrative tasks
 - Recruitment
 - Collecting data
 - Analyzing data
 - Writing grant proposals
 - Writing manuscripts
- Clinical training/supervision