

GRADUATE ADMISSIONS GUIDE

FALL 2011

Graduate Admissions Offers New Ambassador Program

by Alyssa Rohricht

The Graduate Admissions Department has developed a new Graduate Ambassador program composed of graduate students and designed to guide students through the application process, attend open houses and information sessions, and answer any questions or concerns students may have about graduate school at KU.

KU offers graduate programs in a variety of areas, including Counseling, Business, Elementary and Secondary Education, Art Education, Instructional Technology, Library Science, Public Administration, Computer Science, Electronic Media, and Social Work. Most programs take two years to complete, however, a few of the programs can be completed in one year.

Emily Zimmerer, like most of the Graduate Ambassadors, received her undergraduate degree at KU. Zimmerer stated that the program is in place so that prospective students can “hear from the current graduate students about first-hand experiences [at KU.]”

For Zimmerer, the transition from her undergraduate degree to her graduate program was seam-

less. “Once I got started, it was a pretty easy transition,” stated Zimmerer. “I did not take any time off after my four years in my undergraduate program, so I was still in school mode.”

The graduate programs at KU are designed to accommodate students that also hold part-time or full-time jobs. All graduate classes are held in the evenings, and summer courses are also offered. For those students that are not currently interested in obtaining a Master’s degree but would like to continue their professional education, professional credit courses are also offered for non-degree and continuing education students.

Zimmerer noted that her undergraduate professors, as well as the Graduate Admissions Department and the Counseling Department, were all great resources when applying to schools and deciding which school to attend.

One of the biggest draws to KU for many students is the Graduate Assistantship positions that KU offers. Assistantships for graduate students cover full tuition and also offer a stipend of \$7,500 for the year. Graduate Assistants, if selected, work for one department for 20 hours-per-week.

For Zimmerer, the Assistantship was one of the deciding factors in coming to KU.



She said, “It is really helpful to have tuition covered while attending graduate school, which can be really expensive.”

The admission requirements for each of these programs vary, but a detailed outline of each program and its requirements can be found at the KU Graduate Studies web page at: <http://www.kutztown.edu/academics/graduate/index.shtml>.

The page can also be accessed by going to KU’s homepage and selecting Graduate Studies under the “Quick Clicks” bar. Additionally, the Graduate Admissions office, located in Boxwood House, offers information sessions throughout the semester.

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Graduate Application Deadlines:

Spring 2012 Semester:
December 1

Fall 2012 Semester:
August 1

Counseling Fall 2012 Semester:
December 15

Office Hours:
M-F 8 AM—4:30 PM
(Tuesdays until 6:30 PM during
Fall and Spring semesters)

Financial Aid Opportunities

by Alyssa Rohricht



A Master's degree can prove to be an invaluable asset in the ever-competitive job market; however, for many students pursuing a graduate degree, it can be a daunting endeavor, especially when considering the cost of attending graduate school. While there is not as much financial aid available for graduate students as there is for undergraduate students, there are options to help cover the costs of a Master's degree.

To start, full-time students in a Master's degree program are eligible for a Federal Stafford Loan based on need and with a 6.8 percent fixed interest rate.

According to Bernard McCree, Director of Financial Aid Services at KU, applying for loans on the graduate level is exactly the same process as for an undergraduate. Details can be found on the financial aid web site at <http://www.kutztown.edu/divisions/student-services/departments/fas/>.

One can access the web site through the Quick Links bar on the KU homepage.

In addition to federal loans, students are eligible for a federal work study that is also based on need. Work studies include on-and-off campus part-time jobs and a list of these can be found on KU's student employment web site: <https://stuapp.kutztown.edu/>.

One of the biggest perks that KU offers is the graduate assistantship. Graduate assistantships are available to students who are fully accepted into a Master's degree program, enrolled full-time with at least nine, but no more than 12 credits and are academically qualified for the assistantship position. The assistantships are for the fall and spring semester and offer a stipend of \$7,500 and a full tuition waiver. Graduate assistants work a minimum of 20 hours per week during the fall and spring terms.

These assistantships are available through the graduate web site at: <http://www.kutztown.edu/academics/graduate/>. Assistantships are not only financially helpful, they also offer students a great opportunity to get some hands-on experience within their program area and provide a great way to add to a resume and build networking.

For more information on graduate school at KU, please visit the graduate web site above, or stop in to the Graduate Admissions office located in Boxwood House on Main Street. For more information on financial aid, stop in at the financial aid office that is located in the Stratton Administration Building.



Letters of Recommendation

A common question among applicants to graduate programs is who should write letters of recommendation and the process of requesting the letters.

Some applicants are under the impression that recommendations should come solely from academia, which is worrisome because they have lost touch with professors and advisors.

Although professors and advisors are great choices as evaluators, keep in mind that the recommendations serve to attest to the quality of an individual's work. This means that there are others who can vouch for the strong qualities of graduate school applicants.

Consider sources like supervi-

sors in the workplace and co-workers. These people see the efforts put towards a goal day in and day out, and are strong choices for recommendations.

Community leaders can also site the strengths of an applicant who is deeply involved in volunteer work, public organizations, and even religious organizations.

When contacting potential evaluators, be sure to include reasons why the recommendation from that person is valuable, and than them in advance. It is courteous to provide an addressed, stamped envelope for added convenience. Be sure to provide a deadline to send the recommendation as well as the appropriate contact information. Be sure to keep tabs on your myKU checklist

to determine whether recommendation letters have been received. If there are outstanding evaluations nearing application deadlines, you should contact those who have not sent recommendations and gently remind them of the deadline.

There is a form for evaluators to complete that can be found at www.kutztownmasters.com. This form should accompany each letter of recommendation that is sent.

Strong letters of recommendation greatly enhance applications, so be sure to consider these helpful guidelines in the planning stages of your application to a graduate program.



International Students at KU

For students finishing up their undergraduate career, the decision of whether or not to pursue graduate school is always a difficult one. For many international students, the decision can be even more intimidating.

At the undergraduate level, KU has international students from over 50 countries and representing every continent. However, at the graduate level, less than 20 of the over 700 students are international or non-residents. These international graduate students come from countries such as China, India, Ghana, Nepal, Egypt, Cameroon, Turkey, and Russia.

KU Masters of Business Administration (MBA) student, Liangyu Chen, decided that she wanted to continue her graduate studies at KU after finishing her undergraduate degree here. Chen came to the U.S. in 2008 from the east coast of China, and has been continuing her studies since then. She says that she chose KU because of its great location near cities like Philadelphia and New York City, and because of the size of the university. Chen said that KU is a good school for international students because, "It is not a huge school that nobody really knows each other. It is a nice small or middle-sized school so people can learn more about each other

and make friends."

When Chen decided that she wanted to continue studying at KU, her professors were very helpful and gave her advice on how to get accepted in the MBA program. Her professor also talked with her about the graduate assistantship program, which gives students a full tuition waiver and a stipend of \$7,500 dollars per year in exchange for working 20 hours per week on campus. Chen's assistantship and the fact that she can complete her MBA in just one year, were both deciding factors in attending KU, she said.

The transition for KU international, undergraduate students looking to continue their studies in a graduate program is an easy one, according to Chen. She said that the process was quick and simple since she was already a KU student. She said, "I just had to get all of the documents ready and that's it. The people [at KU] were very

nice and flexible, too."

Other than the fact that all graduate courses are offered in the evening, rather than during the day, Chen said that the transition between working on the undergraduate level to working on the graduate level is not difficult to adjust to. For other international students at KU looking to continue on to graduate school, Chen said the most important thing is to overcome the language barrier and learn to be self-disciplined in school work.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT
KUTZOWN UNIVERSITY'S
GRADUATE PROGRAMS? VISIT
WWW.KUTZTOWNMASTERS.COM
FOR MORE INFORMATION!



Work Experience and Graduate School

Kutztown University's graduate programs do not require students to have prior experience in the workforce before applying. The programs are designed to include the most current information about the subjects students study, meaning that anyone will benefit from them and not only those who have been working for several years. In fact, the diverse mix of students coming from varying degrees of professional experience and those who are fresh out of an undergraduate program provides the opportunity for networking and learning from one another.

Fast Forward by Ryan Smolko



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Looking back to the spring of 2009, it is amazing how time flies. My academic career at Kutztown happened by chance as a result of a bike ride on a Sunday morning. I just happened to be riding next to an admissions counselor at KU, who after a brief exchange proceeded to inform on the M.Ed. in Student Affairs program. I had thought about immediately going for my master's degree, since I had graduated at the height of the recession, but had a few reservations.

I wondered if I was prepared for the rigor of graduate coursework, or if I really needed it for my field. After trying unsuccessfully to obtain an entry level position in higher education I decided to apply. It was the best decision I have made in my life to this point. Sitting in my Fundamentals of Counseling on the first day I was quite apprehensive, but by the end of that first class I knew I had found the right place. Our professor Dr. Hamlet was wonderful and looking back really laid the foundation from which my counseling skills, along with theoretical orientation grew. My classmates as well spanned the professional spectrum, from right out of undergrad like myself to a practicing professional in a variety of counseling settings. Their experiences, both personally and professionally gave great insight into our coursework.



From then on as I have gone through the program I have gained so much professionally, as well as personally. It really goes hand and hand. Working with college-aged students is challenging and if you are anything less than genuine, they will know it in a heartbeat. I have learned that being a professional, regardless of the field chosen

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means learning for life. As an undergrad, many think that once they graduate they won't need to look at a book but it's imperative to continually strive for personal and professional growth. In the fall of 2010 the rubber really hit the road when I began my graduate assistantship in the Graduate Admissions office.

Though I know admissions is not where I want to work upon graduation, I am forever grateful to the staff in the office for the opportunity to develop as a professional. I made mistakes, but took my lumps and grew as a result. Coming back to the position this fall I can see already the strides I have made. Career Services is where my passion truly lies. I have been at DeSales University during the practicum and internship phase of my program. It is a wonderful experience working with students and seeing them grow in so many ways as they move through their academic career. I am confident through my education and experiences that

I will be ready come graduation in May.

