How to start thinking about Grad School
Before you apply—questions to ask

- Why do you want to go?
- Is location important to you?
- What are the financial options?
- Read around the internet about the selection process: [All Things Linguistic]
Before you apply—helpful exercises

• Attend conferences
• Get teaching/tutoring experience
• Talk to faculty at Western about interest areas
Deciding where to apply

• Look at program reputation
• Find faculty who are currently doing work that is interesting to you
• Reach out!—email professors at schools who are doing cool things and see if you can contact current students
• Look at program requirements for first-year coursework and prepare early to get ahead
Application components

Letters of Recommendation

• Build relationships with professors who know what you’re interested in and can provide guidance as well as a strong letter

• Give professors plenty of time in advance, and write a thank you note after

• WWU’s Guidelines for Obtaining Letters of Recommendation for Graduate School
Application components

Personal Statement

• Use clear organization and the mechanics of an academic essay by including a strong opening or thesis, details to support your claims, and a clear summarization.

• Read each prompt carefully and make every effort to understand and respond to it.

• WWU’s Guide to Writing Personal Statements

“The grad school ‘personal’ statement is actually a research statement. The admissions committee wants to know that you have some idea what research involves and what kind of research you are interested in doing.”

—Gretchen McCulloch, All Things Linguistic
More tips

Consider attending institutes (CoLang, LSA Summer Institute), working on research teams, or completing internships to explore linguistic research.

Use spreadsheets to compare pros/cons of different options.

Have a backup plan.
Grad School Advising for
Western’s Linguistics Students

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Western’s Career Services Center Grad School Advising

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