Post-graduation options – going to graduate school

❖ Decisions
  ➢ Deciding to go to graduate school (or not)
    ▪ Clearly thought out plan or purpose
    ▪ exploration of financial options
      • fellowships and scholarships
        ♦ know criteria, deadlines, statistics
      • TA and RA-ships
      • loans
  ➢ Picking the right program – a qualitative/quantitative research project
    ▪ Statistics
      • reputation of program
      • time to degree and post-degree success
    ▪ faculty there who will want to work with you, and who you will want to work with
      • their papers and other available published work (including websites, blogs, etc.)
      • communicating with them
      • communicating with their current and former students
    ▪ Location and cost of living considerations

❖ The application process
  ➢ Making a good impression – what makes you a high quality applicant
    ▪ Preparing yourself
      • independent research, presentations and publications
      • volunteer or internship experience
      • having already applied for scholarships and fellowships
    ▪ Presenting yourself – thinking out your Letter of Intent
      • getting your application in well ahead of the deadline
      • high quality writing – you MUST sound professional
      • Develop a coherent narrative that tells the reader:
        ♦ Who are you, in a scholarly sense?
        ♦ Why are you right for their program?
          ➢ accomplishments and skills
        ♦ Why is their program right for you?
          ➢ your research on their program
  ➢ Generating letters of reference – enlisting troops in your campaign
    ▪ Select referees thoughtfully
      • can they talk about you in positive ways?
      • will what they have to talk about fit the narrative you have developed?
      • What weight will their recommendation carry?
    ▪ Give the referees tools to work with
      • be sure the referee knows your answers to
        ♦ Why this program?
        ♦ What will I be doing?