

PREPARING FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL

Presented By

The Communication Studies Department

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

REASONS TO APPLY FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL



Commitment

To strengthen your commitment to a field where a graduate degree is useful (e.g., healthcare, education, social work)

Marketability

To enhance your marketability in your field, stand out in the job market, try a new career path, or advance in current field

Qualifications

To qualify for teaching or research positions (private high schools, community colleges, or online programs)

Specialized Skills

To develop specialized research skills, explore a subject in greater depth, and strengthen your analytical skills

Flexibility

To use your PhD in a range of careers: DEI work, industry, political campaigning, academic editing/publishing, and more

FINDING GRADUATE PROGRAMS THAT ALIGN WITH YOUR INTERESTS



Seek Advice

Talking with your professors and advisor can help you determine if a particular program aligns with your academic interests and career goals.

Faculty Expertise

Because you will work closely with faculty in graduate school, look at faculty expertise to determine whether a program aligns with your interests.

Ask Grad Students

Asking about the experiences of graduate students in programs you're interested in can help you learn more about what it feels like to be a member of those programs.

Professional Organizations

Many professional organizations keep data about graduate programs in their field. Check out the National Communication Association, National Women's Studies Association, and American Studies Association for information.



SELF REFLECTION

01 Completing a graduate degree could take 2-6 years. What matters most to you?

02 Where you do want to live?

03 Will the program fund you as a Teaching or Research Assistant?

04 Do the prestige and reputation of the program matter to you?



FUNDED PROGRAMS

You should discover information about funding opportunities before applying to graduate programs.

Working for the university – as a Teaching Assistant, Instructor, and/or Researcher – may mean you can receive tuition remission and a living stipend. There may also be opportunities for grants, fellowships, and scholarships. Make sure also to complete a FAFSA application.

Be sure to think about living expenses. Your graduate student budget will be modest and you will want to be able to make ends meet.

COVER LETTER/ PERSONAL STATEMENT

+Your personal statement should explain why you want to join the program, are a good fit, and what experiences have prepared you

+Evidence of ability – classes you've taken, conferences, research projects, internships/fellowships, clubs/service organizations, personal experiences, technical skills, foreign language proficiency, etc.

+ Tips on writing a personal statement

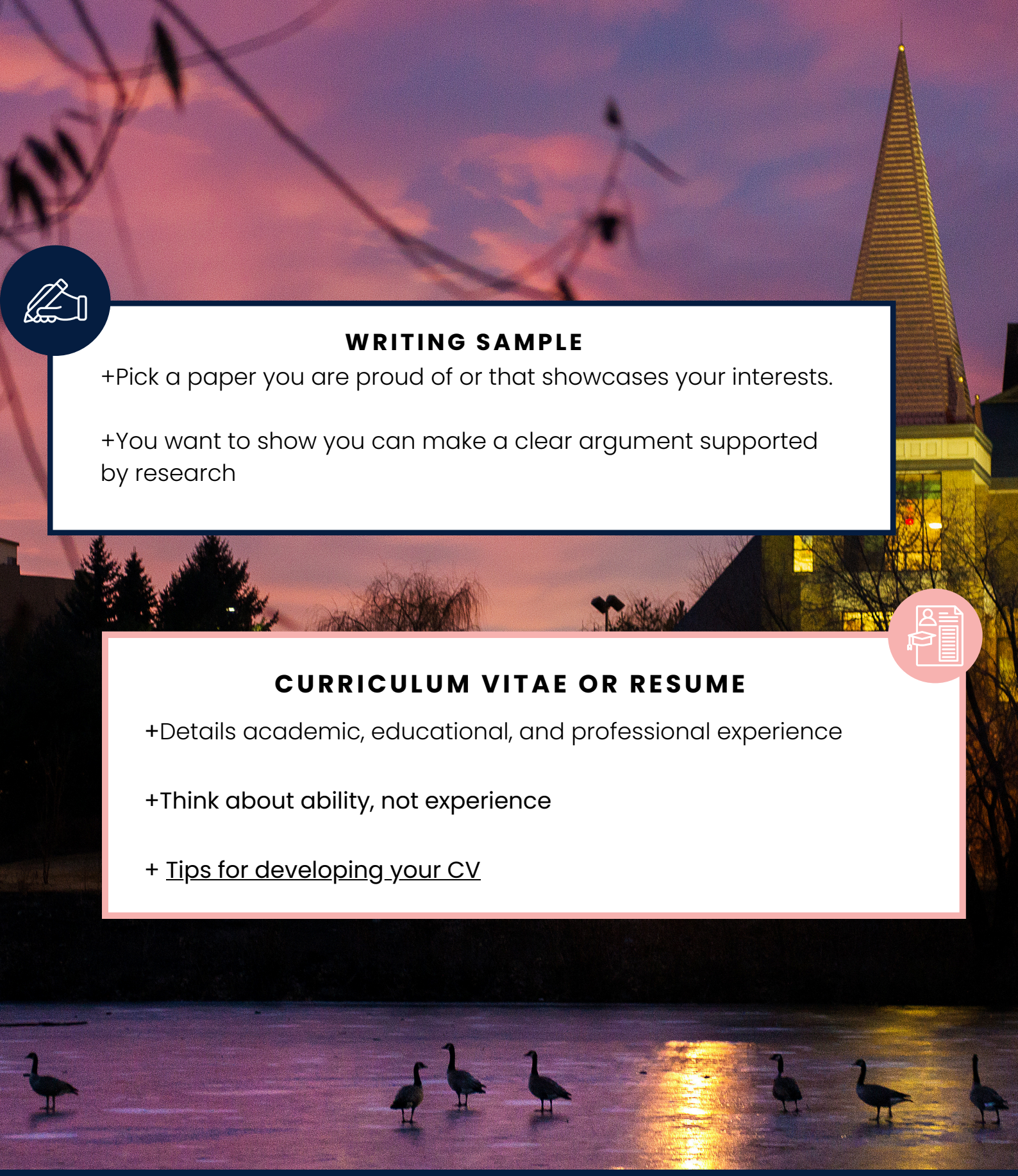
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

+Programs generally look for academic professors or mentors, not a friend or parent.

+Ask an advisor, professor whose classes you've taken or professor you've worked with in an extended capacity.

+ Tips for requesting letters of recommendation

MAJOR COMPONENTS FOR YOUR APPLICATION



WRITING SAMPLE

+Pick a paper you are proud of or that showcases your interests.

+You want to show you can make a clear argument supported by research

CURRICULUM VITAE OR RESUME

+Details academic, educational, and professional experience

+Think about ability, not experience

+ Tips for developing your CV

MAJOR COMPONENTS FOR YOUR APPLICATION



ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPTS

+ You can request your official or unofficial transcripts through the Office of the Registrar.

GRE TEST

+Take this in advance to have scores sent and remember that some programs are test-optional.

+Three sections: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, analytical writing.

+Test fee is $200 and fee reduction programs are available for individuals who can demonstrate financial need, for those who are unemployed and receiving unemployment compensation, and for national programs that work with underrepresented groups.

MAJOR COMPONENTS FOR YOUR APPLICATION