Summary Notes

1. The only 2 Reasons to go to graduate school. (YOU MUST HAVE BOTH!)
   - Career Aspirations
   - Desire to Learn

   Grad school is where these 2 things intersect

2. How Do I apply?

   **Statement of Purpose:**
   - 1-3 pages of “Why”
   - Include:
     - Motivation
     - Qualifications
     - Career Goals
     - Why you are a fit for a certain program.
   - Write at least 6 drafts and then keep editing
   - This is the most important part of your application process; the ONE time the admissions committee will get to hear from YOU.

   **Letter of Recommendations**
   - Have at least 3–4, one will need to be the “KEY RECOMMENDER”
   - 2 of the recommenders need to be academic
   - A practitioner can also recommend if you are headed to that kind of field
   - Identify recommenders EARLY! This is very important.
     - Give lots of advanced notice. Professors will begin to observe you, think about you and interact with you differently.
     - Have a resume ready and give to the recommender
     - Remind the professor what classes you took and what papers you wrote

   **GRE Scores (standardized tests)**
   - How to prepare:
     - Give it up to 8-9 months. Treat it like a distance race
     - Train, cramming does not help.
     - Suggestion: Go to Barnes & Noble to the testing section and select prep texts. Take to sitting area, spend 15 minutes per book, and open each in the middle to get a sense of which one is best for you. Buy that one and stick with it.

   **Curriculum Vitae / Résumé**
   - Keep your resume updated regularly / you should never have just one.
   - Custom design your resume for the specific program
   - Evaluate how academically intensive the program is and determine whether application will also need a CV. If so,
   - Research other scholars’ vitæ to identify the best formats
Writing Sample  (This will not be required in all programs)

- Take time to recover former samples (papers, articles, etc.) Make a selection of the best and always revise carefully.
- Edit them according to the specifications of your program. Highlight papers / samples that address the focus of the kind of work you will do.

Transcripts

- Review / Troubleshoot for errors. Scrutinize carefully

Application Fees

- Be prepared for costs.
- Fees can range from $30 - $80 per application.
- If you are applying to multiple programs you must anticipate these fees.
- GRE fees, text and prep sessions also add fees. Count on $850 - $900 altogether.

3. Action Steps

- Gather information on programs that might interest you. Be logical and rational in your approach. Find at least 25 if possible, and create specific metrics on the strengths, weaknesses and values of each.
- Create a portfolio of your work. Be sure to include writing samples and evidence of relevant academic projects.
- Talk to individuals who have studied what you want to study and / or earned the degree you are considering. Discover all you can from their experience and recommendations.
- Approach faculty about planning for letters of recommendation.
- Create a workable timeline and progressively complete your goals.

4. Resources

- Attend grad school workshops offered weekly to help guide your preparation.
- Time and location TBA.
- Contact professors / alums / others who can support across the university

5. Advice

- Do not let financial concerns prevent you from considering grad school. There are numerous funding sources available.
- Prepare for the GRE, but don’t sweat it too much.
- Don’t take it personally if you don’t get into the program. There are always options.