Questions For Graduate School Interviews

What Will You Be Asked During A Graduate Admissions Interview?
An interview is a significant step toward earning acceptance to a graduate program. You should prepare to talk about your academic interests, your career goals, and how you fit the program.

Here are a few sample questions:
- Tell me about yourself…
- What do you know about our program?
- Why did you choose to apply to our program?
- In what ways have your previous experiences prepared you for graduate study in our program?
- What do you believe your greatest challenge will be if you are accepted into this program?
- Why did you choose this career?
- If you are not accepted into graduate school, what are your plans?
- In college, what courses did you enjoy the most? The least? Why?
- Describe a research project you have completed. What was the purpose of the project and what was your role in the project?
- How would your professors describe you?
- How will you be able to make a contribution to this field?
- What are your career goals? How will this program help you achieve your goals?
- What skills do you bring to the program? How will you help your mentor in his or her research?
- Why should we accept you and not someone else?
- What are your hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?
- Describe a situation in which you had a conflict and how you resolved it. What would you do differently if you were in this situation again? Why?

What You Should Ask During A Graduate Admissions Interview
When you are at your interview, you should have some questions that you want to ask. There are two reasons to ask good questions. First, you should ask questions during your graduate admissions interview to gather the information that you need to determine if this is the right program for you. Second, good questions impress admissions committee members.

- What characteristics of this program distinguish it from competitors?
- Where are recent alumni employed? What do most students do after graduation?
- What types of financial aid are offered and what criteria are used for choosing recipients?
- Are there any scholarships or fellowships available? How do I apply?
- Are there teaching opportunities, such as teaching assistantships?
- Do most students publish an article or present a paper before graduation?
- What planned practical experiences are included in the program (e.g., internships)? Ask for examples of internship placements.
What is the relative importance of admissions test scores, undergraduate grades, recommendations, personal statements, experience, and other requirements?

Does the department prefer applicants immediately out of undergraduate programs or does the department prefer applicants with work experience? If experience is preferred or required, what kind of experience is important?

How are mentoring and advising relationships established? Are advisors assigned or chosen?

How long do most students take to graduate? How many years of course work? How long do most students take to complete their dissertations?

Do most students live near campus?