

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF A CALIFORNIA PRE-DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Each application is reviewed using the following set of criteria:

ACADEMIC RECORD – indicators suggest that admission to and success in a doctoral program are likely.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES – student had sufficient preparation for doctoral study, including theoretical sophistication and research experience.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS – of sufficient quality for success in a doctoral program.

FACULTY CAREER – student has interest in and potential for a faculty career, and willingness to teach a diverse student body.

LETTER FROM THE SPONSOR – indicates realistic confidence in the student and a willingness to provide necessary mentoring.

PLAN, BUDGET, AND TIMELINE – realistic and appropriate.

MAJOR REASONS APPLICANTS ARE REJECTED

- Long, rambling essays that are usually off topic.
- Essays don't demonstrate necessary experience in areas of research, community service, diversity, interest in teaching, etc.
- Research interests are described too generally or not described at all.
- Applicants' education and experience do not match the discipline they want to pursue in doctoral studies.
- Poor writing skills (i.e. grammar, syntax, spelling errors, etc.).
- Applications are incomplete and may be missing statements, faculty signatures, faculty recommendation letters, transcripts, budget, etc.
- Low GPAs that are not explained by faculty mentor.
- Activity plan and budget don't correlate; budget exceeds \$3,000; inappropriate activities/expenditures such as international travel or purchase of major computer hardware.
- Applicants do not meet qualifications to apply (must be junior, senior, master's degree student at time of application and award).
- Overkill on the 'poor me' syndrome.