The Graduate School Experience

By Hannah Nelson

I am currently a senior psychology major at CSB/SJU, and have now completed the requirement of 40 credits in psychology. This has been a great journey of discovery, and I have learned much about myself in the process. After graduation, I plan on attending graduate school, and I know that the path I choose will be determined by the experiences I have had in college. In order to make an informed decision, I have begun to research different schools and programs that may be of interest to me.

Graduate School

Grad school, while not a requirement, can be a rewarding experience. It allows you to pursue your interests in more depth, and to develop your skills as a researcher. It can also be a valuable addition to your resume, and can open up new career opportunities. However, it is not easy to navigate the process of applying to graduate school. It involves completing the GREs, writing a statement of purpose, and getting letters of recommendation. These steps can be overwhelming, but they are necessary in order to succeed in the application process.

The GREs

The GREs are required for most graduate programs in psychology. They test your skills in verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing. The exam is administered in a computer-based format, and is composed of three sections: the verbal reasoning section, the quantitative reasoning section, and the analytical writing section. The exam is typically given on a Saturday in the fall, and is approximately three hours long. It is important to prepare for the GREs in advance, as they are a significant component of the application process.

Writing a Statement of Purpose

A statement of purpose is a crucial component of the graduate school application process. It is an opportunity for you to share your interests, goals, and experiences with the admissions committee. It is important to be clear and concise in your writing, and to highlight your unique qualifications. A thesis statement is a good way to start the writing process, and it is important to keep your statement focused and to avoid rambling.

Getting Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are an important component of the graduate school application process. They are typically written by professors or other professionals who know you well. It is important to ask for letters of recommendation early, as it can take some time for them to be completed. It is also important to provide your recommenders with as much information as possible, so that they can write a strong letter for you.

Researching Graduate Programs

Researching graduate programs is an important part of the application process. It involves visiting websites, contacting professors, and attending open houses. It can be challenging to determine which programs are the best fit for you, but it is important to consider factors such as location, program offerings, and faculty members. It is also important to consider the cost of living in the area where the program is located.

Conclusion

Graduate school can be a rewarding experience, but it is not easy to navigate the process of applying. It involves completing the GREs, writing a statement of purpose, and getting letters of recommendation. These steps can be overwhelming, but they are necessary in order to succeed in the application process. By preparing in advance and researching different programs, you can increase your chances of being accepted into the graduate program of your choice.