

The graduate admission process typically includes a personal statement and an interview. To help prospective students prepare, I've included some questions that I will typically ask during interview or look to answer while reading a personal statement.

One general piece of advice I will offer: Remember, the interview process isn't about trick questions or a "secret handshake" to get in the door. The process is intended to help the student consider their career aspirations and to ensure the training program we offer will prepare the student for that goal.

Possible questions in an interview or to address in a personal statement:

1. What type of career do you hope to have in 10 years? What are the types of daily activities you look forward to doing in your future job?
2. What experiences have you had that informed your decision to pursue a degree in psychology or neuroscience?
3. Tell me about any experiences you've had in research, either as an investigator or participant. What have you learned from those experiences that has helped you decide to apply to this graduate program or to work in my lab?
4. If you have presented or published research, I will ask you to talk, briefly, about what you did, the hypothesis and the result. In particular, what is a future direction of the work. I may also ask you questions about strengths and limitations of the research, which is a typical experience in my lab and often leads us in the next exciting direction for future research.
5. If you are applying to work with me as a primary research mentor, which parts of my research specifically interest you? Typically I recruit students who are interested in learning more on topics that I study. If you are interested in something I don't study, please explain how it relates to my program of research and why you think I would be a good mentor for the work.
6. Graduate school is challenging, in part due to the need for time management, demanding creative and intellectual work, receiving and using criticism, and developing independence. What are your experiences that have prepared you to meet these challenges and continue to develop professionally?
7. In practice, our research plans may not work as expected. Tell me about a time when an assignment or research project did not work as planned. How did you respond? What did you learn from the experience?

I will typically reserve some time for you to also ask me questions. You should have some questions prepared--this is your time to interview me to ensure that the lab, my mentorship, the training program and department will help you prepare for your career.

Here are some example topics:

- Mentoring style
- Expectations for students at early and late stages of graduate training

- Opportunities for publishing, presenting research, and grant writing
- Protected time for teaching, service and other professional development activities
- Strengths of the training program or department, and areas where we are actively trying to develop or continue to improve
- Collaboration with other labs and the broader research culture on campus
- Advice on coursework and expectations for specific courses (e.g., statistics)
- Available funding mechanisms for stipend and tuition support
- Living in Metro Detroit