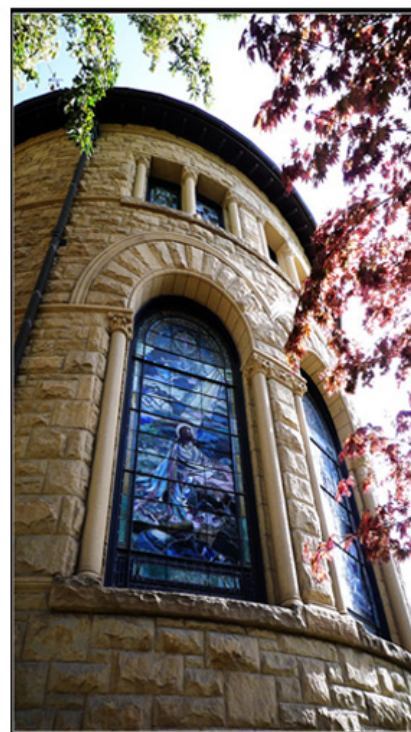


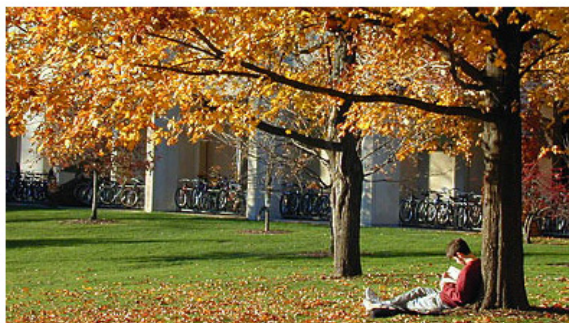
美国研究生院申请案例手册



2011



Dreams
Come True



CHINESE STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
伊利诺伊大学香槟分校华人学生学者联合会

前言

每至金秋，就是新一轮研究生院申请的开始。恰逢此时，许多同学都会问起我们类似的问题：要选择读研究生吗，读了有什么用？研究生申请上要注意什么问题，哪些因素是最重要的，哪些是不重要的？在美国读本科对申请有多大的帮助？同学们的这些问题成了我们想要为大家提供相关方面咨询和帮助的动力。最初的想法源于为 UI 在读本科生举办一次研究生申请相关的 workshop；但在同一时间召集到所有演讲者的困难让我们改变了想法，最终决定编撰一份美国研究生院申请案例手册跟大家分享我们收集到的信息。这样一方面避免了 workshop 过耳即忘的缺陷；另一方面也可以通过手册的不断地更新为每一届申请者提供更好的帮助。于是从 2010 年暑假开始，CSSA 研究生部开始了这项工作。

从模板的制定，到联系每一个申请成功的同学并说服他们帮我们撰写文章甚至是一段话，再到联系 UI 的教授访谈或是为学生提供申请建议，我们本着尽可能为大家收集到更多的不同方面信息的初衷，不厌其烦地“骚扰”各位热心的教授及学长，终于完成了这份申请手册的第一版。手册共分三章。第一章主要包括各类专题文章和教授访谈录，旨在研究生申请与否的问题以及如何看待研究生院在个人发展中的作用上帮助大家做出符合自身特点的判断。第二章中，我们收集了各个专业代表的申请成功案例，希望大家能从成功者的身上挖掘到对自己有用的信息。第三章以 FAQ 的形式集中了申请过程中大家普遍关心的问题，加入了申请成功者的看法和答疑。当然，条条大路通罗马，每个人有自己成功的模式和方法。我们衷心希望每个在申请道路上徘徊的，或是已经确定目标并正在朝目标努力的同学能从我们收集的信息中获取一些对自己有帮助或启发的信息，最终做出适合自己的选择。

受时间和资源所限，第一版的手册难免有许多不足之处，如有错误望大家谅解并欢迎为下一版手册提出宝贵意见。我们也会及时更新该手册，加入更多不同的案例，专题文章和对大家所关注问题的解答，努力为同学们提供更多有启发和帮助的信息。最后在此，我代表制作组全体人员感谢所有在忙碌学业和工作之余为该手册做出努力和帮助的老师及同学们。

UIUC-CSSA 研究生部部长

林帆

UIUC-CSSA 主席

戚善翔

2010 年 10 月于 Champaign-Urbana



CHINESE STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION
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Part I 理想和目标



理想和目标 — 为什么要读研究生

Why Graduate School?

Kuang Xu, an MIT PhD student who had his undergrad at the lovely campus of UIUC, shared some thoughts on why choosing graduate school. The graduate school referred in his articles concerns only research-orientated programs in a scientific or engineering field, which he is part of and thus more familiar with.

“I shall repeat what may have been iterated to you for a thousand times already: applying to graduate school is a highly personal decision. Contrary to what our traditional Chinese mentalities may suggest, that a longer education entails higher intellectual superiority and economic prosperity, it would be a misfortune to commit oneself to five or more years of ordeal where one labors day and night on research projects she couldn't care less about.

Hence, I would like to begin by asking you, who may be remotely interested in applying to graduate school at some point, to spend the majority of your efforts not on how to get in one, but on finding out your true passion, whether it lies in conducting cutting-edge research for the joy of satisfying your insatiable curiosity and thirst for knowledge, or perhaps in the hundreds of other fascinating careers that will change the world for better, which your U of I undergraduate education will have prepared you to embark on by the time your graduate. From my time both at U of I and MIT, I had met quite a few graduate students who still regret not having done their homework well, only to find out much later that changing course had become too difficult; that is the last experience you want from a graduate career.

One way to find out is to try something that resembles a graduate school experience but without the commitment, and undergraduate research is in my opinion the best place to start. It seems quite unimportant which group you begin your first project with, as it becomes much easy to switch groups once you have had the experience, but the key is to *start early*. It takes quite some time to know whether you like a field, and most of all, you do not want to end up a confused Senior having to toss a coin to decide your destiny. I started my first research project during the second semester of my Sophomore year, and yet still regretted not having started as a Freshman.

With the same spirit, but an opposite approach, you can also start by trying the other alternatives to see if life without graduate school is merrier. Get involved on campus with whatever professional clubs / organizations that interest you, spend some time improving your interview skills, and try to land a solid summer internship that will usher to you a new professional world beyond the confine of cornfields. I myself have worked on various internships during every summer throughout my undergraduate career. While they were scatted in four different professions (engineering, consulting, trading and research), I cannot be more grateful now for the skills learned, the friendships forged, and above all, the realization and confidence that there are more than one vocation that can shape me into a happy and useful person.”

UI 教授对申请研究生的观点

工学篇- 欧阳彦峰教授访谈录

教授简介:

UIUC 土木与环境工程助理教授

Xerox Award for Faculty Research Paul F. Kent 特聘教授

美国国家科学基金会

杰出青年教授奖 Gordon F. Newell Award

欧阳教授的研究主要集中在运输系统的效率和稳定性。研究主题包括运输和供应链网络运营，物流系统设计，交通流量理论，基础设施管理和运输安全。

在美国读本科的中国学生，申请时如何利用自身优势？

本科在美国读，相对于国内的学生而言优势很大，最主要的就是会熟悉美国的系统。

拿 Civil 为例，有结构，交通，环境等七个方向，各个方向间差别很大。本科生在 Junior 时，需要在这七个方向当中，必选五个方向的概论课。上过课之后，对专业方向有所了解，知道自己的兴趣所在，可以找老师联系，做一些 informal research。老师们对于这样学生的看法很 Positive，反映了这个学生很 Motivated，至少很感兴趣。这样既让老师对你有所了解，你也能对研究也有所接触。

如果有本科生来找我，我会让他参加组里的 group meeting，听听研究生的 on-going research,看看是否有感兴趣的东西。刚开始对研究可能没有 Idea，但可以慢慢熟悉和了解。

Master 和 PhD 的选择

现在 UIUC 的 Civil，有 course-only master，也有 PhD，需要做 Research，选择时看个人的兴趣。Master 跟本科多读一点没有区别，在 Industry 中，实际的项目做会的更多一些。

读 PhD 应该是 Interest-driven。如果没有兴趣，读 PhD 会做的很痛苦，必须要 take joy in it。听到一个很难的问题，第一反应是我想去试试，还是说 Who cares，在这一点上 make difference。如果喜欢 Challenge yourself，觉得我能做别人做不了

的事，并在其中获得乐趣，这样做 PhD 比较合适。Enjoy research 不能勉强，并不是每个人都喜欢 research。

所以在本科时 Active 一点很重要。从 Junior 年级开始，不一定非要做什么研究。如果有机会接触研究生，看他们在做什么，他们的工作是什么，分享他们的 joy，会有助于你 make informed decision。

申请材料

GPA 最为重要，虽然不同老师具体关心的课可能不同。有的老师可能更关心专业课，而我个人更看重数学，因为我的研究中做 Modeling 很多。我会着重看几门课，其他的课我不太关心，也不看总的平均分。GPA 之所以重要，因为它是四到五年的 Record，不能在短期 make up，是对学生 Capability 比较真实的反应，

推荐信也很重要。如果你想跟这个老师，可以提前和他接触，拿到他的推荐信。我曾写过推荐信给我自己的学生，为了完成申请 Process。申请研究生院，一定要有的放矢。写推荐信的人如果是我认识的，要有力的多。所以做些 Homework，找到你的心仪教授 personally familiar 的朋友来写推荐信。否则，不认识的 XYZ 教授写的推荐信，doesn't really make difference。

另外尽量找 Academia 的老师。有时 Intern 的老板写的推荐信很好，但只能证明你是个 nice guy。Academia 和 Industry 中对人的要求是不同的。当然，也有的 American 老师更看重 Personality，喜欢 well-rounded 的学生。

英语的关系不是太大。UIUC 的 Civil 对 Toefl 有 minimal requirement，要求非常低。而 GRE 没有最低的 Requirement，但不要太低，虽然我们曾招收过 Verbal 400 的学生。我个人对于数学的要求比较高，790 以上，给一个犯错误的机会。英语总的来说，问题不大，但也看老师。有些老师看重 communication，所以会对写作要求较高，比较看重 PS。有些 International student 在写 PS 时，主要不是英语的问题，而是不知道 Story 该如何去讲，逻辑怎样组织。

最后总结来说，要主动去和教授联系，去了解他在做什么。读 PhD 是对未来五年的 commitment，你有义务去接触教授和他的研究，这样教授也可以去了解你。再有，无论是 GPA 还是研究经历，都是汗水实实在在浇灌出来的。如果在某方面有优势，make best use of it, don't rely on it。

商学篇 - Martin Wu 教授访谈录

教授简介：

UIUC 会计系副教授

Raymond A. Hoffman Faculty Excellence Award

University of Illinois Incomplete List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent

曾任纽约大学 Stern 商学院助理教授，不列颠哥伦比亚大学 Sauder 商学院客座助理教授。研究兴趣包括信息经济学，委托代理理论，管理激励问题，绩效评估，风险管理，资本投资决策和股票估价，以及审计经济学。

商学院：Master 和 PhD 的如何选择？

取决于自己最终想做什么。读 Master 之后可以去公司做事。如果是学术研究，硕士只是中间阶段，还需要进一步申请 PhD。

在商学院有几个出路，MBA（Master of Business Administration）是 Terminal Degree，一般是大学后有几年工作经验的人，学习管理的基础知识，然后去企业做 CEO 等。

也可以读各个专业的硕士学位，比如会计专业 Accounting，master 毕业之后可以去公司做会计，或者在会计公司做事务性工作。一般美国人在拿到 Master 之后会去工作。而对国际学生来说，读 Accounting 的 Master，一是学英语，另一方面是学习基本的专业知识。Master 之后读 PhD，可以做大学教授，也可以去公司里面做研究。再比如金融专业，华尔街的公司会雇佣在经济或金融方面基础知识较好的学生，既有 Master，也有 PhD。最近二十年来，华尔街雇佣了很多数学方面基础很扎实的国际学生。我的很多同学在 PhD 毕业之后就到华尔街就职。

在这方面，美国学生和中国学生的区别是，中国人一心只想向更高的学历进军，读完 master，读 PhD，之后的问题就是 Now what。而美国人的目标比较明确，中学时对大学、专业方面及毕业后的出路就有所规划。中国学生很聪明能干，了解的信息比我们出国的时候更多，对自己的抱负了解的更清楚，但与外国学生相比还是有差距。

从数学到 Accountancy 转的 Barrier

我自己在大学期间学数学，之后出国研究运筹学。运筹学要求对经济和金融要有所了解，我在上了相关的课程之后，打开了眼界。我想如果能将运筹学运用在经济和金融领域的研究中，将会很有意思。现在我在 Accountancy，感觉确实在做我自己想做的事情。总体来看，是从纯数学到应用数学，专业上来讲很容易。

真正的 Barrier，是国内外对于研究与实际联系的不同态度。国内的教育强调基础，有句话叫做“学会数理化，走遍天下都不怕”。但在国外，最受欢迎的是商学院、法学院以及医学院这样和实际联系很紧的专业。比如 Accounting，经常会请 accounting firm 的合伙人来系里做讲演，我们的学生去会去他们那里实习，双方的关系很密切，他们实际中所做的和我们所研究的也很相近。传统上，中国的知识分子比较“清高”，和外面没什么联系，但这在国外是吃不消的。You have to know what is going on in practice，所学必须与实际相联系。

那么，实际的工作经验在申请时有何作用呢？如果是做研究读 PhD，工作经验不是非常重要，希望有一两年即可。但是如果再长，我们就会有顾虑：为什么你能在实际工作的环境里呆那么长的时间。实际工作中事务性的工作很多，一般一两年就会厌烦。在实际工作中待五年以上，我们会有顾虑说他为什么能忍受这么久，说明他可能缺乏好奇心。我对 PhD 学生的考量主要是，是否有潜力，是否有好奇心。好奇心对于研究非常重要

如果最终是去公司，三到五年的工作经验是最好。这样他有实际的经验，再学习一些理论上的东西，很快能将所学运用到实际工作中去。

关于申请材料

成绩非常重要，它体现了一个人是否可以精通某个方面。我的英语老师曾说，you have to know something about everything, and know everything about something。学术研究必须从后一句开始，PhD 应该对某个专业方向很精通，而 MBA 的知识构成相对比较 General。

推荐信也很重要。好老师的评语一般不会太好，一般刚出来的老师，没有什么经验，会写很好的评语。最后一般会综合权衡。如果是我认识的相关领域的同事，他的推荐信如果写的很好，我会很重视。但如果是我不认识的人，他的推荐信的分量就不是很强。学生应该趁上课的机会，结识有名的老师，和他们打交道。他们在外面有权威，看事情有深度，看人也很准。同样一句话，看谁说的，分量很不相同。

名师出高徒，如果专业的权威人物看准你，对你在 Market 的价值会 make a difference。

英语成绩非常重要。对 Accounting 而言，不管做研究还是进 Industry，必须和人打交道。比如审计，可以看账本，但在谈话中，通过逻辑推理也可以得到很多可以意会，不能言传的信息。比如 Body Language，特定的措辞。要能揣摩别人是怎么想的，就好比下棋，要知道对手怎么想，才能制胜。所以这对于英语的要求就非常高。我的一个很重要的建议就是，you have to spend some time to improve your English. GMAT 的分数至少要在 700 以上。

中国人的考试没有问题，但应用是最大的问题。Native 一小时可以读 30 页，写 3-5 页。我现在，除非是自己的专业，否则也很难在一小时内清楚完整的写 3-5 页。另外，要尽量和外国人打交道，了解他们的文化。Native 在不同的场合，出于本能的反应，同义词的斟酌上非常准确，这就是文化。在中国，说一个人是红楼梦中贾宝玉，那么对这个人就有个清晰的印象，不需多说。而在美国，有些事情用一个电影明星的名字就能准确的表述，但如果具体来讲，故事可能一个小时也讲不完。这是需要长年累月的积累的。

而对于个人陈述，有人说，我对什么都感兴趣，但其实是还没找到真正的兴趣。一个人如果对某个方面真正感兴趣，那么在文字中就能体现出来，看得出来他花了很多时间去了解，这就叫 Passion。For application, you have to have passion, that's most important. Some people have passion for industry practice. Other just got their talent for doing research, like curiosity and intelligence. You need to find your strength, and use your strength to compete. You have to have passion.

选校

申请研究生院，主要是看导师，看这个 Program 是否有对自己前途发展有影响力的名导师。这就需要对自己感兴趣的方向，以及申请的学校有所了解。另一方面是看毕业生的工作情况，他们找到的工作是否符合你的预期。相反，名次对研究生院来说，参考意义不是很大。

Part II 申请成功案例



案例一

许匡	
本科背景	UIUC, ECE 专业, 2009 届
专业	ECE, Minor Technology Management
申请大学	MIT, Stanford, Berkeley & UIUC
录取大学	MIT
GPA/Ranking	N/A
GRE/GMAT	N/A
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	Kuang began his first undergraduate research project as a Sophomore, and had continued till his graduation. He also co-founded the Promoting Undergraduate Research in Engineering (PURE) program at UIUC.

How did Kuang get started? –more concrete tips on graduate school applications

1. **Find (early) undergraduate opportunities.** Start as soon as you can! A good place to begin is a structured undergraduate research program offered through your department or college. For example, the PURE program in ECE targets specifically freshmen and sophomores to provide them with early research opportunities. If such opportunities do not present themselves, take the initiative to approach faculty members. As long as the topic sound interesting to you, it does not matter even if you have not the slightest idea of the technical details: you shouldn't be wasting your tuition if you did as an undergrad. Let them know of your genuine interest and bug them until they cannot go to sleep without feeling the abysmal guilt for not taking you into the group – that was how I got my first project. I was exaggerating, of course, but you get the point of being persistent in pursuing your passion.
2. **What makes a successful graduate school application.** I do not intend to elaborate on this topic, as it is no more than a natural extension from the first bullet: all that a professor cares about in reviewing applications is to assess your ability, knowledge, and most of all, passion in conducting research. What is a better proof of all that than a letter from your undergraduate research supervisor saying you had spent a happy two years doing research with joy? That is all that matters, and all that should matter.
3. **Communications.** This is the last and most personal point. I always feel I enjoyed knowing the personal aspects of my advisor, my lab mates, and other researchers, as much as I enjoyed the technical part of the project itself. As harsh as it may sound, as intentional students many continue to struggle, even after several years, to communicate in English beyond the level of mundane matters. While we have the luxury of being immersed in the Chinese community at UIUC to hide away from nostalgia, I urge you to become as proficient in English as you possibly can, and use it as a tool to *know people around you*. For often in such conversations, you get to have a glimpse of your colleges' deeper wisdom on life and work, which will eventually inspire that of your own.

案例二

石嘉慧	
本科背景	香港科技大学，EE 专业，2010 届
专业	计算机科学
申请大学	10 几所
录取大学	斯坦福大学
GPA/Ranking	系里排名 1 st /103
GRE/GMAT	690+800
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	一次实习，两次和教授做暑假研究，IEEE 香港区本科生论文比赛第二名，在国际的机器人比赛和生物工程方面的比赛拿过奖，还有一些比较杂的项目比如 RFID。

每个人决定读研究生的时候一定要想清楚自己的理由，尤其是读博士，时间比较长又辛苦。但如果确定了自己真的特别喜欢做研究，以后想当教授、做学术，或者其他研究性很强的工作的话，博士是一定要读的。但如果更倾向去工业界，也许读个一两年的硕士更适合，同时在硕士期间也可以接触到更多研究工作，继续考虑今后是否要读博，如果发现自己对其它领域（比如社会科学或者商业，甚至传媒）更感兴趣，转方向也更灵活。我选择去美国读研究生是因为美国在计算机领域最为发达，也很重视工程（不像有些地区只重视金融业），这样能接触到最前沿的技术，认识特别热衷于技术，特别有创造力和活力的人，自己的发展空间也会更广。

成功经历分享和感慨

其实申请学校这件事情还是很看运气的。比如说经济不景气会导致申请学校的人增多竞争更加激烈，比如说某些热门专业的热门方向很难申请，也比如说今年你申请的实验室很多都不招人。所以呢，谋事在人成事在天，自己尽量做好，但要是最后结果不理想也完全不需要怀疑自己的能力和水平，心态放平。

案例三

王帅	
本科背景	青岛大学，英语专业，2009 届
专业	教育心理学 (UIUC)
申请大学	19 所
录取大学	18 个 offer，其中 Harvard, Upenn, Columbia, Northwestern 和 UIUC 给了录取或者奖学金
GPA/Ranking	3.9/4.0, Major GPA: 4.0 Ranking: 1/150
GRE/GMAT/TOEFL	GRE:1400 ; TOEFL: 110
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	无 paper 发表，但是有一定研究经历，实习经历和本科留学交换经历，本科担任学生会主席，获得过国家奖学金，校一等奖学金等，申请中提交 2 份 Writing Sample。


王帅自述如何选择学校：

申请目标定位选择我可能跟论坛里大部分的人不同。因为其实我并非一门心思想要出国的。所以在申请的时候没有什么后顾之忧，申请的基本都是综合 Top50 的学校，专业 Top15 的项目，用四所综排 Top50-70 的学校保底，完全不考虑不被录取怎么办。申请的 19 所学校里面，除了威斯康星一所给了 rejection，剩下的包括哈佛在内的学校都给了 offer 或者 admission。不少人会觉得我的定位或申请很成功。事实上不是如此。记住，真正申请成功的人是那种拿了一大把的 rejection 然后只有几个满意的 offer 或者 admission 的人。因为这种人往往都冲上了比自己觉得靠谱的学校更高一些的选择。

小结：

(1) 我一直觉得没有负担的人才会跑得最快。瞻前顾后，畏首畏尾的人往往在出国这条路上不会取得很好的申请结果。

(2) 如果你不像我一样，而是只认准出国这一条路的话，那么在申请和选校时请注意拉开档次，并调整好保底学校。很多人觉得合适的是申请比例是冲一冲的学校：靠谱的学校：保底的学校 = 3.5：5：1.5。我个人觉得，适当加大冲一冲的学校比例。人生就这一次，咱爷们现在不冲什么时候冲！



(3) 同档次学校不要申请过多。举个例子，哈佛和普林的某专业在名气基本等同的情况下，如果你的申请被哈佛拒掉，基本也就意味着你被普林拒掉。不要过于贪心，同档次的学校，选出你最中意的几所即可。当然，如果你的 research 跟某个学校的教授极其 match，或者你的推荐人与某学校有很深的渊源，又或者你的家庭富裕到足够再建一个哈佛的图书馆，那么你要充分利用资源。

(4) 保底学校要真正保底。很多人的保底学校最后却并未录取某人，这是我们应当避免的情况。亦或者只有保底学校录取的时候，却不愿意去了，那这个底保的又有何意义？

软件条件：申请教育必须掌握的

- a) 教育学方面的知识。
- b) 心理学方面的知识。心理学是教育学的基础。
- c) 教育研究方法。教育实验研究方法，有各种实验假设，被试的选择，数据的收集和分析，涉及到教育和心理统计方面的知识，还有就是各种课堂的实践活动。
- d) 教育实践心理学。教育实践心理学需要学习的主要有普通心理学，发展心理学和教育心理学。

案例四

潘子赢	
本科背景	MSU, Maths 专业, 2009 届
专业	Mathematics
申请大学	UIUC, Umich, UW-Madison, Indiana U, MSU
录取大学	UIUC, MSU
GPA/Ranking	3.82
GRE/GMAT	GRE subject 81%
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	Worked as teaching assistant of a precalculus course for two years. Undergraduate research project at Michigan State University

Choosing PhD in Mathematics:

I chose to work on a PhD in mathematics, because I'm interested in the subject and I hope to obtain intellectual satisfaction for my own. The motivation is mostly interest-oriented. In a Ph.D program, you can fulfill your intellectual goals. But you have to accept the fact you are always over-committed and overworked. You are paid much lower compared to a real job. Your social circle might be very narrow, since you don't have many opportunities to work with people from different field.

Building Relationship with Professors:

Professors play an important role in your application since they write your reference letters. If you think that's all they can do for you, then you are wrong. They can actually help you a lot more. Take myself for example. When I was applying for graduate school, I asked my professors for suggestions on almost everything. I asked them on school choices and research interest. I even asked one professor to read my personal statement and make some suggestions on revision. Some professors even offered to help my admission through their personal connections. You might think how I can make professors to do that. They all seem very busy and might not even have time to write the reference letters. Well, it is true or false. The key is to impress them and build up good friendship with them. No pair can be good friends overnight. Good impression always takes time to build up. There are several tips on the table and you can even explore by yourself. For example, asking questions is an important one. I don't think any professor will forget your face if you ask him a question after every class, no matter how big the class is. Moreover, frequent question asking shows your working attitude to professor and it also helps you to learn actively. The next one I want to say is that "Never be shy to talk

to your professors.” If there is anything you think that you can ask professors to help, just ask. In my point of view, most of the professors are interested in helping students. There is really nothing to lose. On the other hand, you can also offer to help the professor do some chores or make some suggestions about the course. In this way, you can build up the friendship slowly. Nevertheless, you need to keep in mind that not all professors are nice but there will be someone who is cool. In all, good relationship with professors can make them know your better, where good recommendations are just on the way.



案例五

吴昕	
本科背景	Lafayette College
专业	金融
申请大学	The Wharton School, U of Rochester, Yale 等
录取大学	The Wharton School 等
GPA/Ranking	3.70
GRE/GMAT	GMAT :730
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	在本科学学校跟教授有研究经验。跟某校外 research institute 有研究经验。

Writing Personal Statement:

A stellar personal essay, however, could make a big difference. For those who are applying for a PhD program, I think that it is important for the applicant to describe any previous research experience in order to show that he understands (at least to some extent) what research is about. Some would say that it is also important to know exactly what research area one is interested in, but I think that it is perfectly alright to indicate a general interest in the subject, and a willingness to explore different areas later on. However, if one knows which specific research area he is interested in doing, it might help if he indicates the faculty members he is interested working with in the school he's applying to. Finally, it might be helpful to personally get in touch with the professors in the schools one is interested (which I did not do), although I feel that this would be helpful only in the case that one has a specific research area/topic in mind, and knows which faculty members he could potentially work with.

案例六

王赓	
本科背景	Caltech, EE 专业, 2009 届
专业	EE
申请大学	7 Graduate Schools
录取大学	Caltech Master Program
GPA/Ranking	N/A
GRE/GMAT	450 GRE Verbal
工作经验/研究经验/国际大赛	Active participation in research and projects

Undergrads life at Caltech

I transferred to Caltech from a US community college and had spent 3 years at Caltech. I say the undergraduate at Caltech is the most difficult, indeed. No jokes. The school is small and you basically know anybody around, including your student colleagues, professor, custodians, the Mexican chef trying to cook good Chinese food, the security. There are only about 20 EE undergrad students in my year. Yes, only 20. I think there were more during the fresh year, but some of them either dropped out and change major or something. You took most of your classes with the same group of people. Some of them are insanely smart or insanely working hard. I am neither of them. Then they let you take many graduate level courses that graduate student need to take at Caltech. I got to know a lot of Chinese grad student from Qinghua or Beida from these classes. Every EE undergrad has to go thru those class as well as those crazy "undergrad level" class where you have to complete a mp3 player in a school term, both hardware and software drive, from scratch.

Graduate School Application

In term of applying school, I do not really have any experiences or "tricks", or secret methods, or anything like that. I just go to the grad school website and created an account, filled in bunches forms, and submit before deadline. Oh, btw, I spent roughly 2 weeks looking at GRE vocabularies, and finally gave up when I realized how many words I have to remember and would probably forgot them all within a week right after. I think I got 450 or something for English part. Who cares? Many of my colleagues also did not spend much time on applying schools. Instead, they studied or participated some activities when they finally could in the senior year. I know one of my classmate he was doing one of his projects all the time at the time of applying school, and he passed most of the deadlines and said "ok, then I just stay at Caltech". I guess he just love what he is doing and don't care where he is doing it. Besides, Caltech is an awesome place, I love it. I did not apply for PhD because I think that is not my type. I think most of EE students in my year got accepted by Caltech master program if they applied. Half of them stayed at Caltech last year.

Part III FAQ



1 选校有什么窍门？最注重什么？

（石嘉慧：）当初我向一个 UIUC 的教授问过类似的问题，他说，你去找学校排名，然后把前 30 所都申了。然后我告诉他申请学校是要交钱的，他才知道原来不只是投简历那么简单。不过这个意思就是说，申请多一些会比较稳妥，可以降低一点由运气因素引起的风险。要有几个保底学校，几个和自己水平相当的学校，也要记得申请顶级名校，你怎么知道自己申请不上。

（潘子赢：）There is definitely a lot to concern. You always want to choose the program that fits you best. Ranking of the programs cannot tell everything. If you don't have an area of interest yet, you'd better choose a comprehensive program where you can have various choices in the future. If you have one, you can choose the program which is strong in your area of interest. However, it is important to have a backup plan because people do change and sometimes the change can be abrupt. Location also matters if you don't want to work in academics in the future. For example, there are more job opportunities in the industrial world on the east and west coasts compared to middle-west.

2 什么是好的申请材料？

尽量保证每个硬性条件（GPA、研究经验、推荐信、个人陈述、比赛和 project）没有太大的缺陷，再在某一方面比较突出，比如研究成果，国际比赛的名次，甚至知名教授写的强烈推荐信。曾经有一个教授说了一个申请时经典的句子：Make a difference!

3 本科生科研是不是很有用？

要申请研究生的话本科一定要有研究经验，最好能有研究结果，比如 paper 或者完成的 project。否则不光是教授不确定你能不能做研究，连你自己都不知道自己喜不喜欢（真的不是每个人都喜欢）。申请时候的个人陈述里面要有描述研究经历的部分，如果和教授面试或者聊天也有话可说。

（潘子赢）Undergraduate research is a good way for professors to learn whether you can conduct research and succeed in graduate school. Thus it is a good source of recommendation letters. However, you don't have to accomplish anything significant in the research. The idea of undergraduate research is to get experienced and prepared for the future.

4 GPA 是不是越高越好？

（石嘉慧：）是的，GPA 很重要，但是 GPA 没有研究能力重要。如果有发过很好的 paper，GPA 大概在前 30% 就可以，不要太低。但如果没别的特别显眼的地方，就要尽量把 GPA 提到前几名。

（吴昕：）Personally, I think that GPA and GMAT/GRE scores are important only to a certain extent. For example, as long as one scores above 700 for the GMAT, it doesn't make much of a difference whether one scores 730 or 740.

5 Paper 是不是必须要有？

不一定。但如果有作为第一作者在顶级会议发表的论文，会极大地提高申请学校时的竞争力。但是没有也没关系，其实绝大部分本科生在申请学校的时候都没有已经发表的 paper，包括大部分申请到顶级学校的本科生。

6 推荐信对申请有多大帮助？

（石嘉慧：）如果一群本科生，谁也没发过论文，谁的成绩和 GRE 都很好，选哪个？在没有研究成果的时候对方只能根据推荐人对你的描述了解你的研究能力。最理想的情况是有一个很熟悉也很欣赏你，又在自己的研究领域里家喻户晓的教授写一封热情洋溢的强烈推荐信，说你是他见过的学生里的最优秀的或者前 1%。如果有一个 MIT 的教授强烈推荐，那拿 MIT 的 offer 就不难了。不过当然这样的理想情况并不容易达到。

（吴昕：）I think recommendation letter helped me a great deal to be able to get professors who knew me very well to write favorably and honestly about me. In my case, I got four recommendation letters (usually three are required) from four different departments - economics, business, physics, and music - in order to demonstrate the diversity of my academic experience and interests. It is important to have an open mind and a creative potential when it comes to research. With my recommendation letters (as well as my personal essay), I tried to deliver the message that I possessed these characteristics.

7 GRE 要多少分才够申请？考的一般该不该重考？

（石嘉慧：）不同的专业，不同的学校有不同的要求。GRE 要争取一次考好。要是分太低了又有把握再考一次能提高很多的话可以再考。其实 UIUC 和 MIT 的计

计算机系不要求 GRE 成绩，有些学校也只需要你填最后或者最好的一次成绩。具体分数要求要参看各个学校的 申请主页。

(潘子赢:) It really depends on the program. There are programs where committee members don't care GRE score at all. But in general, verbal 500+ should be enough for science and engineering programs.

8 社团经历、社会活动有用吗？

这取决于申请的专业，对于理工科的研究生，科研能力最主要。太多的社团活动反而会让老师觉得你容易分心，不会专心科研。

9. 其他推荐参考资料 – 王帅提供

(一) 新手必读类

- 1、上海交大的饮水思源
- 2、北京大学的飞跃手册
- 3、太傻十日谈
- 4、美国大学地图

(二) 学校排名类 274-4 m3

- 1、US News 综合排名: c1/C! ,z(t7/D8/G9`6\
- 2、US News 专业排名
- 3、Times 世界大学排名
- 4、上海交大世界大学学术排名 4Q-1

(三) 综合类的文章

- 1、我不是牛人我怕谁：非牛人的申请战略和非常具体的方案（1 万字）
- 2、关于成绩排名之我见 ZZ
- 3、牛与不牛：我心目中的牛人（转贴+感想）

***问题征集 + 经验分享

如果您对研究生申请有任何其他的问题或宝贵经验，欢迎发送邮件至

cssagrad@gmail.com

致 謝



为更好地给在 UIUC 就读的中国本科生申请研究生院的过程提供帮助，本着让更多学生了解美国研究生院申请中需要考虑的方方面面，UIUC-CSSA 研究生部编撰了“美国研究生院申请案例手册”。该手册集中收录了 UI 教授对研究生申请的观点以及以往在研究生申请中取得优秀成绩的学长们的宝贵经验。该手册的出版离不开 UIUC-CSSA 研究生部工作人员们的共同努力，也离不开在此过程中为我们提供各种帮助的老师 and 同学们，更离不开在百忙里抽出时间来参与我们的访谈，帮助我们撰写文章的老师 and 学长们。在此我们对他们的付出表示衷心的感谢。

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朱志龙

杨潇

司同

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