WEIGHING YOUR PRIORITIES

This activity is designed to help you decide what’s most important to you in pursuing graduate studies. This is not the only way to make the decision, or even necessarily the best way. Instead, it’s means as a quick way to get a sense of some of the factors that will inform your decision about what graduate or professional programs to pursue, and a personalized system for comparing potential programs.

Step 1: Rank Importance of Program Characteristics from 1-5

Characteristic

Program Structure and Organization

 1    2    3    4    5

Program Flexibility (part-time vs. full-time)

 1    2    3    4    5

Location

1    2    3    4    5

Campus Environment

1    2    3    4    5

Reputation of Program

 1    2    3    4    5

Fit with Faculty Interests/Research

 1    2    3    4    5

Campus Support System (advisors, tutoring, etc)

 1    2    3    4    5

Diversity of Student Population

 1    2    3    4    5

Cost

 1    2    3    4    5

Record on Job Placement of Graduates

 1    2    3    4    5

Step 2: Evaluate Potential Programs Based on Their Characteristics

Use your rankings from Step 1 as the “importance factor” to come up with a numerical system to compare programs. It sounds complicated, but it’s not: just write the number you circled in step one on the “importance factor” line here. Then, evaluate each program you’re looking at on each characteristic, on a scale from 1-10. Multiple the number you circle by the importance factor number, and write down that score. Then, add up all your scores to get an overall program score. ***Do this for every program*** and you have a quick frame of reference for comparing how well they fit with what you’re looking for – the higher the score, the better the fit relative to other programs.

Program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Characteristic Importance Factor Score

Program Structure and Organization

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Program Flexibility (part-time vs. full-time)

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Campus Environment

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Reputation of Program

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fit with Faculty Interests/Research

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Campus Support System (advisors, tutoring, etc)

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Diversity of Student Population

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Cost

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Record on Job Placement of Graduates

 1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10 X \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 **Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_