

## **Graduate School Considerations**

### Ask faculty:

- Applied vs. fundamental objectives, Work focus
- Lab funding
- Positions available on what specific projects
- Project selection and assignment
- Lab and one-on-one meeting frequency and format
- Style/ Approach

### Advisor:

- Style
- Applied vs. fundamental objectives
- Publication record
- Citation record
- IP disclosures
- Lab size, scale
- Work focus
- Lab composition – postdocs, docs, masters
- Lab funding
  - o Sources
  - o Current
  - o Future
  - o What is available for me?
  - o How is financial support decided
  - o Does each student receive financial support
  - o Which areas are being funded
- Openings on what specific projects
- How are advisors and projects selected and assigned
  - o Method and timeline
- Does professor publish with their students
- Does advisor send students to conferences, etc.
- Graduate students leaving and others taking over projects
- Overall vision – how are you now operating and plans for continuing
- Meeting
  - o Frequency
  - o Individual, group
- Tenure track/ tenured yet?
- Facilities and access to them

### Academics:

- Research
- Courses
- Research hours, class hours
- Courses per term
- Qualifying exam subjects, timing, and regulations
- Flexibility in class choices?

### Support:

- Work space
- Tech support

- Housing – cost, location, quality, availability, process
- Happiness, support
- Geography, location – urban vs. rural, region, country
- Demographic Specific (ethnicity, LGBTQ, gender, religion, etc.)
- Insurance – cost, dental, vision, medical
- Funding – stipend amount, cost of food
- Facilities – gym, clubs, societies, fun
  - o Accessible to grad students?
- Crime rate

#### Future Prospects/ Outcomes:

- PhD
  - o Admission
  - o Qualifying exams pass rate
  - o # yrs to a degree
  - o Timeline for that degree
  - o Publications
- Career
  - o Academia
  - o Post doc
  - o Industry
  - o Companies
  - o Utilities
  - o Think tanks
  - o Government/ policy
  - o Ask for examples

#### Other Considerations:

- Trust your gut
- Are students trying to sell me on the place?
- Do I feel like I belong and am drawn in and want to be there?
- Collaborative community?
- 10 years from now, what do I want to be doing?
- Current students' sense of happiness
  - o What do you do outside of research
  - o Happiness with program position in mind
- Productivity
- Support for helping me be productive
- Can I survive it?
- Apply to a few dream/ stretch schools, some middle, and some likely/ guaranteed