Pursuing Post-bachelor Study
at a Top U.S. University

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Outline

- General admission guidelines in top U.S. graduate programs
- Preparation and application tips
- Academic and personal adjustments to pursuing a post-bachelor degree in a foreign country
- A new academic elite member: Washington University in St. Louis
General Admission Guidelines

- **When**: at least **one week** ahead of the deadline
- **Which**: choose schools with
  - good reputation of the specific graduate program of interest as well as of the university as a whole
  - upward trend in faculty productivity
  - private university (well endowed, with professors strong in both research and teaching)
  - comfortable location (safe + reasonable cost of living + culture)
  - 雖有都會盛，卻無喧嘩聲
- **What**: admission committees pay special attention to:
  - Adequate English proficiency (speaking/writing)
  - Strong course/test performance
  - Professional and informative recommendation from reputable scholars
  - Good sense in research
  - Sufficient knowledge in the program applied
Important Information about Yourself

- **Resume:**
  - personal contact
  - education (high school & college)
  - exchange experience related to academics (if any)
  - job experience (if any)
  - academic performance (GPA, major GPA, test scores)
  - academic publications
  - honors and awards
  - leadership activities (academic only)

- **Personal Statement:**
  - your background
  - your qualification (don’t be shy about your quality, but never exaggerate)
  - your plan for graduate study that builds on your strength and matches the specific school you are applying
  - your post-graduation plan
Test Score needed

- **GRE**: for general program
  - 3 parts: Verbal, Quantitative and Writing
  - Application:
    - China: [http://cbt.etest.net.cn](http://cbt.etest.net.cn)
    - Hong Kong: [http://www.prometric.com/GRE/default.htm](http://www.prometric.com/GRE/default.htm)
  - Test format changes in China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korean from September, 2007

- **GMAT**: for business school
  - Similar to GRE structure
  - Application: [http://www.mba.com/mba/TaketheGMAT](http://www.mba.com/mba/TaketheGMAT)
Test Score needed

- **LSAT/MCAT**: for law/medical school

- **TOEFL**:
  - iBT since 2006
  - Application: [http://www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org)
  - required for non-native English speaker
  - Some school accept IELTS as substitute to TOEFL
Recommendation

- **2 or 3 letters** of recommendation
- Referees: reputation VS recognition
- Provide your CV and personal statements/statement of purpose
- Left about **2 weeks** time for referees
- In fact online submission is NOT convenient to most of the referees
- In case of paper recommendation, provide with envelopes and correct address labels (at least correct postal/zip code)
Personal Statement

- 1 to 1.5 page length
- Explain your shortcoming shown in material, eg GPA, year of absence
- Elaborate the material to differentiate yourself with other applicants
- Write a specific personal statement for your favorite schools and safety schools
- Give information the ad-com needed to justify recommending your enrollment under any challenge
Timeline

- GRE: computer part
- GRE: paper part
- TOEFL
- Find referee
- Deadline
- Decision release

- Apr: Prepare for GRE, Gather the document
- Summer
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec
- Feb
Personal Adjustment

- **Language Barrier**
  - English study groups, English conversation classes
  - Host family program
  - Do not worry about your accent

- **Loneliness**
  - Make friends by all kinds of means, i.e., participate in different activities

- **Active VS passive attitude**
  - Contact professors instead of waiting for professors to contact you

- **Culture Differences**
  - Be more confident, not to be too modest

- **Get out of your comfort zone**
  - Do not always stay in a small group of people with similar cultures or speaking the same language
Academic Adjustment

- **Decide early** which direction you would like to go
  - Academic or Industry
- **Sufficient preparation** of choosing the right advisor
  - Laboratory rotations/join professor-led study groups
  - Talking with different professors to know their specialty
  - The personality of the professors, the efficiency of supervision, funds raising capability
- **Your preference**
  - Small or big research groups
  - Independent researcher or need more guidance from your advisor
- **Interest is the most important**
A new academic elite member: Washington University in St. Louis

- Founded in 1853
- Medium-sized:
  - 3,000+ instructional faculty
  - 6,500+ undergraduates
  - 5,500+ graduate/professional
  - 1,300+ part-time
  - students from 120 countries
  - 90+ programs, 1,500 courses
- Set in St. Louis
  - suburb of a 2.6 million MSA
  - adjacent to Forest Park
  - 169-acre main campus
Brookings Hall
Landmark of Danforth Campus
Gothic Buildings
Arts & Greens
The Gateway Arch - St. Louis
Forest Park – the Extended Campus
A New Ivy League University

- USA & World Report rankings:
  - undergraduate: 12
  - 20 graduate/professional programs in top-10
- Top 10 in endowment funds
- Top 5 in Federal grants/awards
- Many prestigious winners/fellows:
  - 22 Nobel Prize Winners
  - 7 Pulitzer Prize
  - 2 National Medal of Arts
  - 12 National Medal of Science
  - 72 National Academy of Sciences
  - 5 National Academy of Engineering
  - 4 American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering
  - 31 American Academy of Arts and Sciences
  - 11 American Institute of Architects
  - 15 American Law Institute
International Connections

- **Study abroad program (undergraduate level)**
  - 89 programs in 44 different countries
  - 34% of WU graduating seniors report having participated in a study abroad program for a semester, a summer or a year
  - Approximately 500 Arts and Sciences students study abroad each year, roughly 320 during the semester and academic year and 180 during the summer

- **McDonnell International Scholars Academy (graduate level)**
  - 39 scholars from 21 of 25 partner universities
  - 23 ambassadors to 25 partner universities
McDonnell Scholars

- Class of 2006: 18
  one CUHK (Juanyi Yu)
- Class of 2007: 13
  one CUHK (Tsz Nga Wong)
- Class of 2008: 12
- Class of 2009: 11
- Steady-state:
  - 70-100 scholars
  - 30-35 partner universities
  - more international corporate sponsors

Application Procedures

- Submit a regular application to one of our graduate or professional degree programs
  - Applicants should request the financial aid that they would request even if not applying to the Academy
- Apply separately to the McDonnell Academy by Feb. 1
  - If admitted to a degree program but not to the Academy, a student will receive whatever financial aid the degree program would have otherwise offered
  - If a student is admitted to a degree program and to the Academy, the Academy’s financial package will apply
McDonnell Scholars

- **Scholars in residence:** 39 Scholars
  - Represent **21** of 25 partner universities
  - 13 are Corporate or Foundation Fellows

- **Location Distributions**
  - 20 from Greater China (Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan)
  - 5 from South Korea
  - 3 from Singapore
  - 3 from India
  - 2 from Israel
  - 1 from Japan
  - 1 from Thailand
  - 1 from Chile
  - 1 from Netherlands
  - 1 from Hungary
  - 1 from Turkey
McDonnell Scholars

Field of Distribution

School of Social Work, 3
School of Law, 3
School of Engineering & Applied Science, 13
School of Design & Visual Arts, 1
Graduate School of Art & Science, 15
Olin Business School, 4
Partner Universities

- Bogazici University
- Budapest University of Technology and Economics
- China Agricultural University
- Chulalongkorn University
- Fudan University
- Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay
- Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya
- Jawharlal Nehru University
- Korea University
- Middle East Technical University
- National Taiwan University
- National University of Singapore
- Peking University
- Seoul National University
- State University of Campinas
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences
- Technion—Israel Institute of Technology
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- Tsinghua University
- University of Chile
- University of Hong Kong
Academy Sponsors

**Corporate Sponsors**

- **Ameren**
  St. Louis, MO
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  St. Louis, MO
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  Seoul, South Korea
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- **Nestlé Purina PetCare**
  St. Louis, MO
- **Peabody Energy**
  St. Louis, MO
- **Risun Coal Chem. Group Ltd.**
  Beijing, PRC
- **Rohm and Haas**
  Philadelphia, PA

**Foundation Sponsors**

- **Lee Foundation**
  Singapore

**Individual Sponsors**

- **Carol and Jon Epstein**
  St. Louis, MO
- **Cho-Yee and Patricia To**
  Ann Arbor, MI
Annual Routine Activities

- Welcome Week
  - Chancellor’s reception
- Academy Monthly Luncheon with Invited Speakers
- Eisenhower Fellows & McDonnell Academy Event
- Global Leadership Visions for 2nd-year Scholars
- Trip to Washington DC/NYC for 1st and 2nd-year Scholars during Spring Break
- McDonnell Academy Reception & Thanksgiving Dinner @ Wertsch’s Residence
- McDonnell Academy Graduation Celebratory
- Etiquette Training Session
- Shakespeare Festival in Forest Park
Other Activities (2006-2008)

- **2006-2007**
  - British Petroleum Presentation by BP Energy and Biosciences Institute
  - Presentation on American Culture and Religion
  - Performance of Lou Donaldson at Jazz at the Bistro
  - St. Louis Symphony Orchestra Performance and Reception
  - Eliot Society Dinner
  - Meeting with John Balkema of Caterpillar

- **2007-2008**
  - Performance of Othello at St. Louis Black Repertory Theater
  - Holiday Open House
  - Public Lecture on the Knowledge Commission and their priorities in higher education by Sam Pitroda, Chairman of India’s Knowledge Commission
  - Meeting with Cho-Yee To, Almu of WUSTL, faculty member of University of Michigan and CUHK, Individual Sponsor of McDonnell Academy
  - Meeting with Wenzhong Zhou, Chinese Ambassador to the United States
  - Citizen of the Year Award Celebration: Chancellor Wrighton
  - Fourth of July Dinner/Fair St. Louis
Other Activities (2008-2010)

2008-2009

- International Conference on Globalization: Cultures, Institutions and Socioeconomics at CUHK
- U.S. Vice Presidential Debate Reception
- McDonnell Academy @ St. Louis Art Museum
- CUHK Pro VC Jack Cheng’s visit to WUSTL
- The Great Nuclear Debate Panel led by Dingli Shen, Professor of Fudan University
- Citizen of the Year Award Celebration: John McDonnell
- Trip to Chicago for 3rd-yr Scholars in June

2009-2010

- Cards vs Cubs Baseball Game
- Black Rep Ragtime @ Edison Theatre
- Trip to Federal Reserve Bank in St. Louis
- St. Louis Symphony: Beethoven's Fifth
- Breakfast with Amnon Rubinstein, Leading Scholar on Constitutional Law in Israel
- Breakfast with Professor Renjie Dong - Chinese Agricultural University
- Charles Freeman lecture, “2010 in Sino-American Relations”
- India Research Consortium, Networking Event and Symposium
- Dinner with Mr. Albert Ip, Merrill Lynch (Asia Pacific) Ltd
- Lunch with Mr. James Tsien, Managing Director of HPH
- Tea Tasting with McDonnell Ambassador Linda Cottler
2nd International Symposium on Energy and Environment

- Dec 8-10, 2008 in Hong Kong
- Participants
  - 16 Partner University CEO’s
  - 61 Academic Leaders from Partner Universities
  - 28 Corporation Representatives
  - WUSTL Ambassadors, Steering Committee, Interested Faculty, McDonnell Scholars, Students
  - Speakers: Steven Chu and others
  - Corporate Sponsors

- Roll-out of Consortium on Clean Coal Utilization
- Multi-University Aerosol Network formed by faculty from 14 universities
International Conference on
“Globalization: Cultures, Institutions and Socioeconomics”

- Dec 12-13, 2008 at CUHK
- On causes/consequences of globalization in related to Greater China
- Distinguished keynote and plenary-session speakers:
  - Nobel Laureate Sir James Mirrlees and Douglass North
  - Michele Boldrin/Gerald Early/Robert Hegel/Murray Weidenbaum (WU)
  - David P. Conner (OCBC, Singapore)
  - Beng-Huat Chua (Nat’l U Singapore)
  - Frank Dikotter (HKU)
  - Chang-Tai Hsien (Chicago)
  - Gordon Mathews/Shaoguang Wang (CUHK)
  - Aihwa Ong (Berkeley)
  - Hsiao-Yen Peng (Academia Sinica)
  - Henry Wan (Cornell)