

# Research Protocol

1. **Project Title:** Survey of Prospective, Current and Former Graduate Students

2. **Investigators:** Gaurav Sharma (*gauravv.sharma @mail.utoronto.ca*), Shamanth Chedde (*shamanth.chedde @mail.utoronto.ca*), Nikisha Jeyakumar (*nikisha.jeyakumar @mail.utoronto.ca*), Syed Sharjeel Haider (*sharjeel.haider@ mail.utoronto.ca*), Jun Zheng (*jun.zheng @mail.u toronto.ca*), Muskan Patpatia (*muskan.patpatia @mail.utoronto.ca*)

3. **Purpose:** The purpose of our research is to understand the difficulties faced by students who are preparing or have prepared their graduate school applications to help us derive requirements for the design of novel interactive computational media that are intended to be useful to prospective graduate students. A brief description of our design concept is: a tool that can help reduce the stress and overcome the difficulties faced when creating graduate school applications.

4. **Process to be followed:** We will brief the participants about the purpose of the study, explain the consent form to them, and ensure that they sign the consent form. We will then engage the participants in a 15-20 min survey.

5. **Participant selection:** Participants will be chosen from prospective graduate students, current graduate students, students who have recently applied but were rejected, and former graduate students. Prospective graduate students are those CURRENTLY APPLYING to graduate studies, NOT those who are INTERESTED in applying. Current graduate students include those that have just been accepted into graduate studies. Graduate studies include professional schools (e.g. medical schools, law schools), Master's programs and even PhD programs. This does NOT include certificate programs. Participants will be identified via personal connections such as friends and classmates, and through their network of connections. They can also be identified online as members of graduate school forums, Facebook groups, Reddit threads and other forms of social media that cater to graduate students. They will be selected according to whether they are currently applying to graduate school, have applied to graduate school, have been accepted to graduate school, have been rejected by graduate schools, are currently in graduate school, and have completed graduate school. If they are a PhD student, they are considered to be currently attending graduate school. If they have completed their graduate studies, they should be within one year of having completed them. In general, they will be characterized by age, level of study and field of study.

6. **Relationships:** Our relationship to the participants may be described as follows: Friends, peers, classmates, family members, no relationship.

7. **Risk and benefit:** There will be minimal risk to the participants, for example that they feel that they have wasted their time. The only benefit will be to contribute to the education of the investigators. Participants are free to withdraw before or at any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.

8. **Consent details:** We will brief the participants about the purpose of the study, and explain the **attached consent form** to them, and ensure that they consent to participate and sign the consent form.

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9. **Compensation:** Participants will receive no compensation.

10. **Information sought:** The information to be sought is described in the attached survey.

11. **Confidentiality:** Information will be kept confidential by the investigators. Names or other identifying or identified information will not be kept with the data. The only other use will be to include excerpts or copies in the assignment submitted, but names and other identifying or identified information will not be submitted.

# Consent Form

## **Consent Form:** Survey of Prospective, Current and Former Graduate Students

I hereby consent to participate in a research study conducted by Shamanth Chedde for an assignment in University of Toronto Scarborough, Computer Science course *CSCC10 Human Computer Interaction*.

I agree to participate in this study the purpose of which is to understand the difficulties faced by students who are preparing or have prepared their graduate school applications to help derive requirements for the design of novel interactive computational media that are intended to be useful to prospective graduate students.

I understand that

- The procedures to be used are answering questions in a 15-20 min survey.
- I will receive no compensation for my participation.
- I am free to withdraw before or any time during the study without the need to give any explanation.
- All materials and results will be kept confidential, and, in particular, that my name and any identifying or identified information will not be associated with the data.

### **PARTICIPANT**

Name (please print)\_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

### **INVESTIGATOR(s)**

Name Shamanth Chedde Signature\_\_\_\_\_

# Survey

What is the Purpose of This Study?

In this study, we want to investigate the difficulties that students face when applying to graduate school. This includes professional schools (medical school, law school etc.), master's programs and PhD programs.

If you are someone who is currently applying to graduate school, has applied to graduate school, is currently a graduate student or has already completed graduate school, then you are eligible to fill out this survey. You can fill out this survey regardless if you've been accepted to or rejected by a graduate school. If you do not fall under any of these categories, then you cannot fill out this survey.

**1. How would you describe yourself? \***

- ☐ Undergraduate student currently applying to graduate school
- ☐ Undergraduate student already applied to graduate school
- ☐ Currently a graduate student
- ☐ Completed graduate school

**2. What is your age group? \***

- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-30
- ☐ 30+

**3. What is your field of study? \***

- ☐ Life/Biological Sciences
- ☐ Environmental Sciences
- ☐ Computer Science
- ☐ Social Science
- ☐ Political Science
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What type of graduate school did you apply to? Select all that apply. \***

- ☐ Professional School (Medical, Law, Dental etc.)
- ☐ Master's Program
- ☐ PhD Program
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Did you get accepted into graduate school? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Haven't heard back yet

**6. How difficult is/was the graduate school application process? \***

Not Difficult at all      Somewhat Difficult      Difficult      Very Difficult      Extremely Difficult

☐                      ☐                      ☐                      ☐                      ☐

# Survey

7. Rank the difficulty of the different parts of the application. Select 0 if you didn't need to submit that piece as part of your application \*

	0 (N/A)	1 (Least difficult)	2	3	4	5 (Most difficult)
Letters of recommendation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Statement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Admissions Exams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resume/CV	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. For the part that you ranked the most difficult (5), briefly explain why you found it the most difficult. \*

9. How stressful is/was the graduate school application process? \*

Not Stressful at all	Somewhat Stressful	Stressful	Very Stressful	Extremely Stressful
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Rank the different parts of the application from least stressful to most stressful. Select 0 if you didn't need to submit that piece as part of your application \*

	0 (N/A)	1 (Least stressful)	2	3	4	5 (Most stressful)
Letters of recommendation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal Statement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interviews	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Admissions Exams	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resume/CV	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. For the part that you ranked the most stressful (5), briefly explain why you found it the most stressful. \*

12. Do you agree with the following statement? Applying to graduate school has negatively impacted my mental health \*

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Do/Did you have any (human or technological) resources available to help you with your application? \*

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

14. If you answered Yes to the question above, please specify some of the resources available to you.

## Survey

**15. Did you/Are you using any of the resources available to help you? \***

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

**16. If there were some resources available that you didn't use, briefly explain why you didn't use them.**

**17. How useful did you find the resources that were available to help you with your application? \***

- [illegible]