



APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dickinson ACS Student Chapter

Fall 2024 Workshop

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ABOUT PROF. WILKINS

- Dickinson '15 (Chemistry, Mathematics)
- Fulbright Research Fellow in Germany (2015 -2016)
- Caltech PhD (Chemistry) – NSF GRFP
- NASA Postdoctoral Program Fellow
- Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Dickinson



ABOUT PROF. LEAL

- ☞ University of Texas Rio Grande Valley '16 (Chemistry, minor: Biochemistry)
- ☞ Oklahoma State University '21 – PhD in Organometallic Chemistry
- ☞ Research & Development Analytical Chemist – Alkem Labs 2021 – 2022
- ☞ Postdoctoral Teaching & Research Fellow – Austin College 2022 – 2024
- ☞ Assistant Professor of Chemistry at Dickinson – 2024



WORKSHOP GOALS

1. **Reflect** on why you are thinking about graduate school.
2. **Brainstorm** elements to go into a personal statement.
3. **List** people who will write strong letters of recommendation.



OUR REASONS FOR GRAD SCHOOL

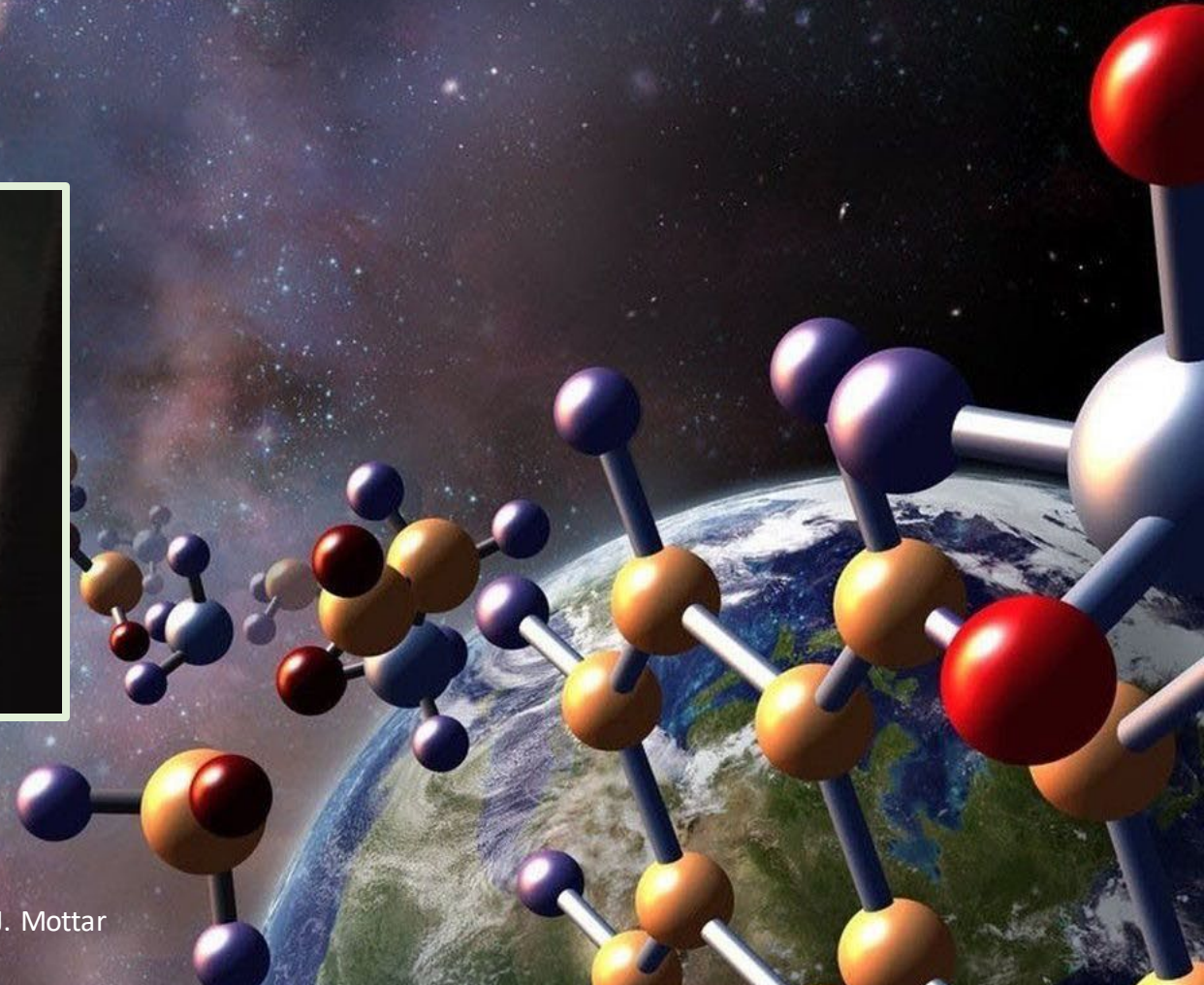


Image: NASA/J. Mottar

REFLECT

Why are you
thinking about
going to graduate
school?



PHD OR MS?

If you want to pursue an MS in the US, you might want to apply for a PhD program with the (secret) intention of mastering out.

PhD (or equivalent doctorate degree)

- ☞ Longer duration*
 - ☞ 5-7 years (US) – no MS required
 - ☞ 3 years (elsewhere) – MS required
- ☞ Research-focused
- ☞ Paid for research (STEM) and teaching
- ☞ Tuition paid by program

MS (or equivalent master's degree)

- ☞ Shorter duration*
 - ☞ 1-2 years (US)
 - ☞ 2-3 years (elsewhere)
- ☞ Coursework-focused
- ☞ Less likely to be paid for research and teaching
- ☞ Tuition paid by student

* Duration depends on program, institution, full-time versus part-time, and personal factors

APPLICATION MATERIALS*

- Online application/questionnaire
- Application fee
- Statement of purpose / personal statement
- Letters of recommendation (typically 3)
- Transcripts
- Résumé or CV

* May vary by program

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General info

- Name/contact info

Education

- Institution(s)
- Undergraduate major, GPA

Professional experience

- Internships
- Shadowing
- Other work

GRE scores

- Might not be required
- \$\$\$

* May vary by program

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Fees: \$50-\$125+

Ask for a waiver!

Financial burden

Former intern

Fellowship partner

Applying early

Just because

* May vary by program

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BRAINSTORM

What do you think
are your strengths
as a grad school
applicant?



BRAINSTORM

What are some examples of growth in your academic or professional life?



CV / RÉSUMÉ (US)

Résumé

- 1-2 pages
- Skills for specific role
- Usually for industry

CV (curriculum vitae)

- No limit for length
- Record of everything
- Usually for academia

L^AT_EX

ACS Student Chapter Workshop
by Prof. Wilkins in October

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Pick letter writers who

- ☞ Know you well and have worked with you
- ☞ Can comment on your research skills (e.g., from lab coursework)
- ☞ Can comment on your growth
- ☞ Can address skills/experiences other writers can't

Tips

- ☞ Give at least one month notice (but ask ASAP)
- ☞ Send list of ideas for letter content

LIST

Who are three people who might write you a strong letter?



GENERAL TIPS

- Start your applications early!
- Get feedback from friends (and the Writing Center!).
- Ask for fee waivers.
- Start with higher priority applications first in case you get tired.
- Demonstrate growth and an eagerness to learn.
- Tailor each personal statement to the application.