

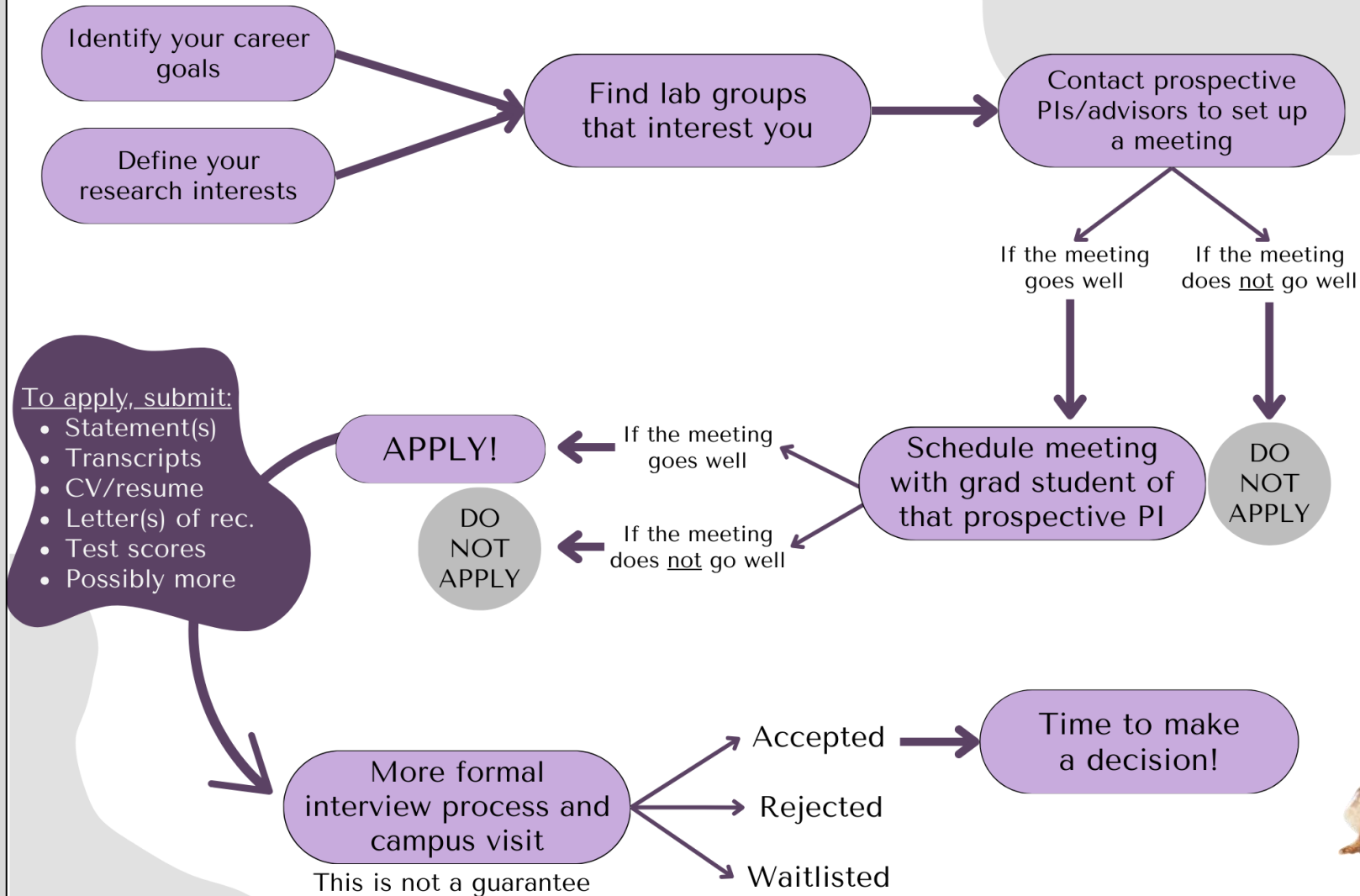
Preparing Your Graduate School Applications



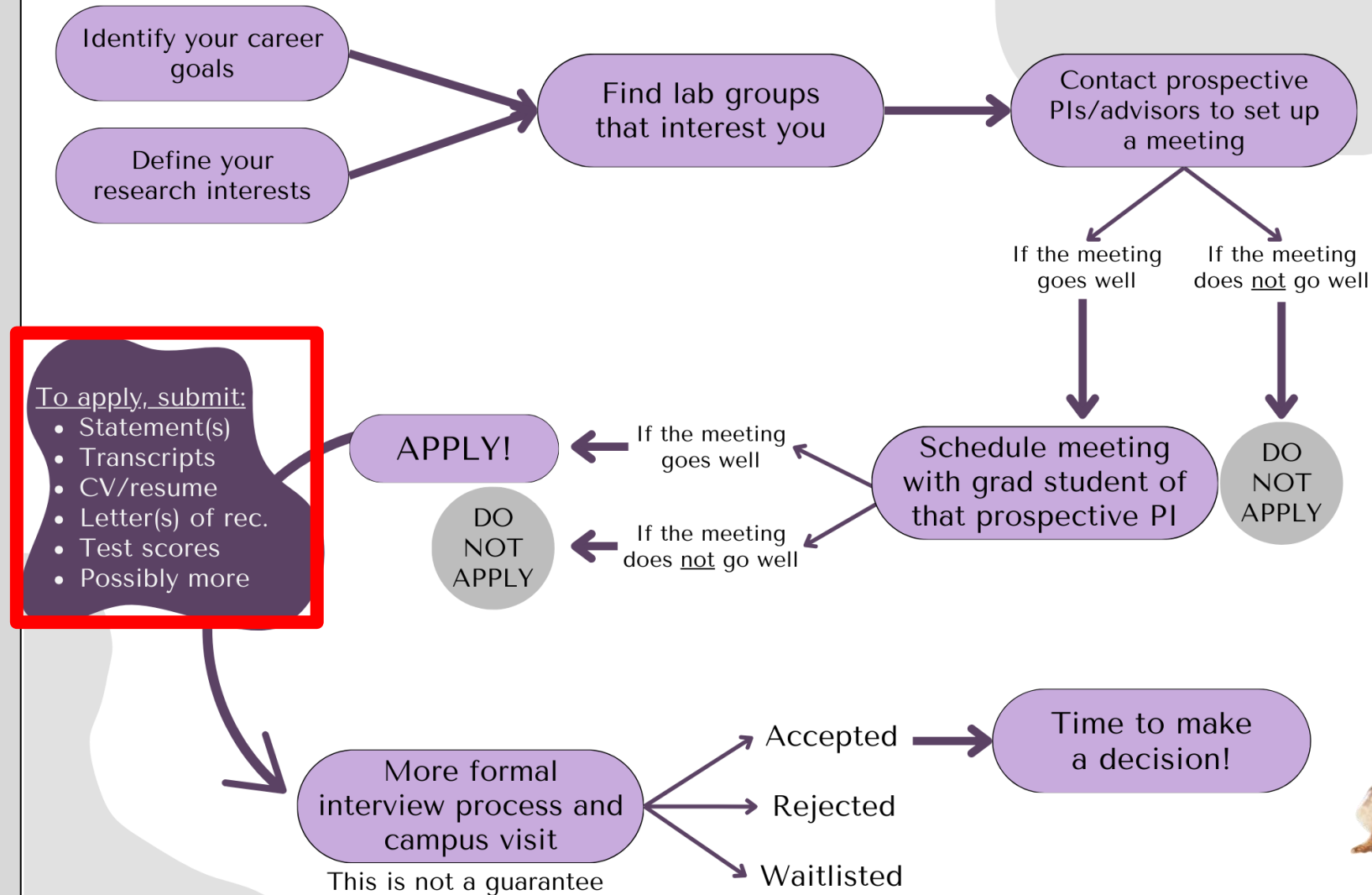
Hosted by:

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles

APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL



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To apply, submit:

- Statement(s)
- Transcripts
- CV/resume
- Letter(s) of rec.
- Test scores
- Possibly more



Today's speakers

Anna Thonis



Postdoctoral Researcher
New York University

Itzue W. Caviedes-Solis



Assistant Professor
Swarthmore College

Today's speakers

Anna Thonis



- Research statements
- Personal statements
- Fees

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- CVs
- Letters of recommendation
- Standardized tests

Assistant Professor
Swarthmore College

A note on statements



The statements required by a university varies by university and by department, and can vary by Master's or PhD

Some universities require both a Research Statement and a Personal Statement

Other universities may require only a Statement of Purpose

The Research Statement

Key components

- Research interests broadly
- A summary of relevant research experience (past and present)
- Proposed research project
- Proposed methodology
- Potential contributions to the field

Make sure to tailor your statement to each program to which you are applying

Make sure you read the specific statement requirements and guidelines for each university



The Research Statement

The 'previous experience' portion



Ideally, this is research related to what you would like to focus on during your PhD.

If your past research is not similar whatsoever to your proposed research, identify the skills you gained from those less-relevant research experiences that you intend to put forth in your proposed research

Some of your past research experience may be worth including in your personal statement, but don't get them confused! They have different goals depending on where they are discussed.

The Research Statement

The 'proposed research' portion



Discuss your proposed research with your prospective advisors and tailor your statement accordingly, if possible.

For your proposed research, include:

1. A clear statement on the primary aims of the proposed research
 - a. Potentially even a set of objectives
2. Background that puts your proposed research in a broader context / why is it important
3. Research methods (even loosely)

The Personal Statement

Key components

Why do you want to pursue a graduate degree

What you aspire to do after graduating with your advanced degree

Why you want to be in THIS department and work with THIS advisor

Search what this university and respective department offer that makes you particularly interested in it

What are your strengths that will help you succeed in graduate school



The Personal Statement

Is it OK to mention research experience in your personal statement?

YES, however – make sure to read the guidelines for each of the statements if the university to which you are applying provides them.

If mentioning research in your personal statement, it should be with the goal of relating it to your motivations and goals.

Specific research skills/methods you have learned should **NOT** be in your personal statement



The Personal Statement

Other tips

Don't be mushy! If you want to give some context through a story that shaped you, that is OK, but be concise and to the point. Grad application review committees often do not want to read long personal stories.

Try to show people who you are as a person.



The Statement of Purpose



Essentially just a personal statement and a research statement tied into a single document, but with less research detail

Therefore, it will include:

- Academic and professional background
- Your research interests
- Your motivations for pursuing a graduate degree

The Statement of Purpose

Key components and general order



- Motivation / what got you interested in the field
- A detailed account of your academic and research background, especially as they relate to the field to which you are applying
- Your research interests for graduate school
- Why you are pursuing an advanced degree / career goals
- Your fit with a specific program and who you want to work with (name drop prospective advisors)
- Conclude by underscoring your enthusiasm for grad school, research, and that specific program

Application fees

- Can vary widely by university and program, but typically between \$50 - \$150
- Many programs offer **fee waivers** for applicants who demonstrate financial need, belong to certain underrepresented groups, or have been affected by specific circumstances.
 - Look on the university's graduate school or department websites
 - Contact a department administrator or the admissions office
- Application fees are usually non-refundable



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