

**UNIVERSITY APPLICATION ORIENTATION
COHORT 2015**

Applications and Admissions to Graduate Programs in U.S. Universities: Process and Procedures

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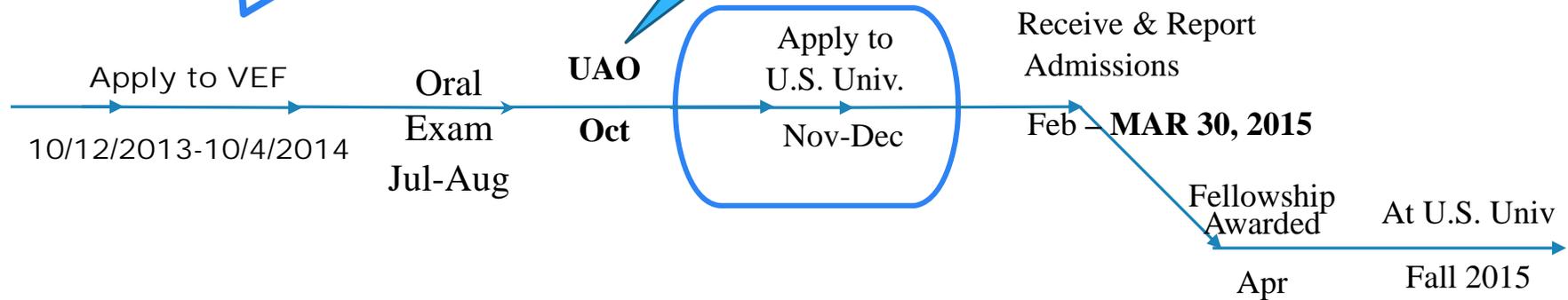
CONGRATULATIONS!

Where are You in the VEF Fellowship Program Process?

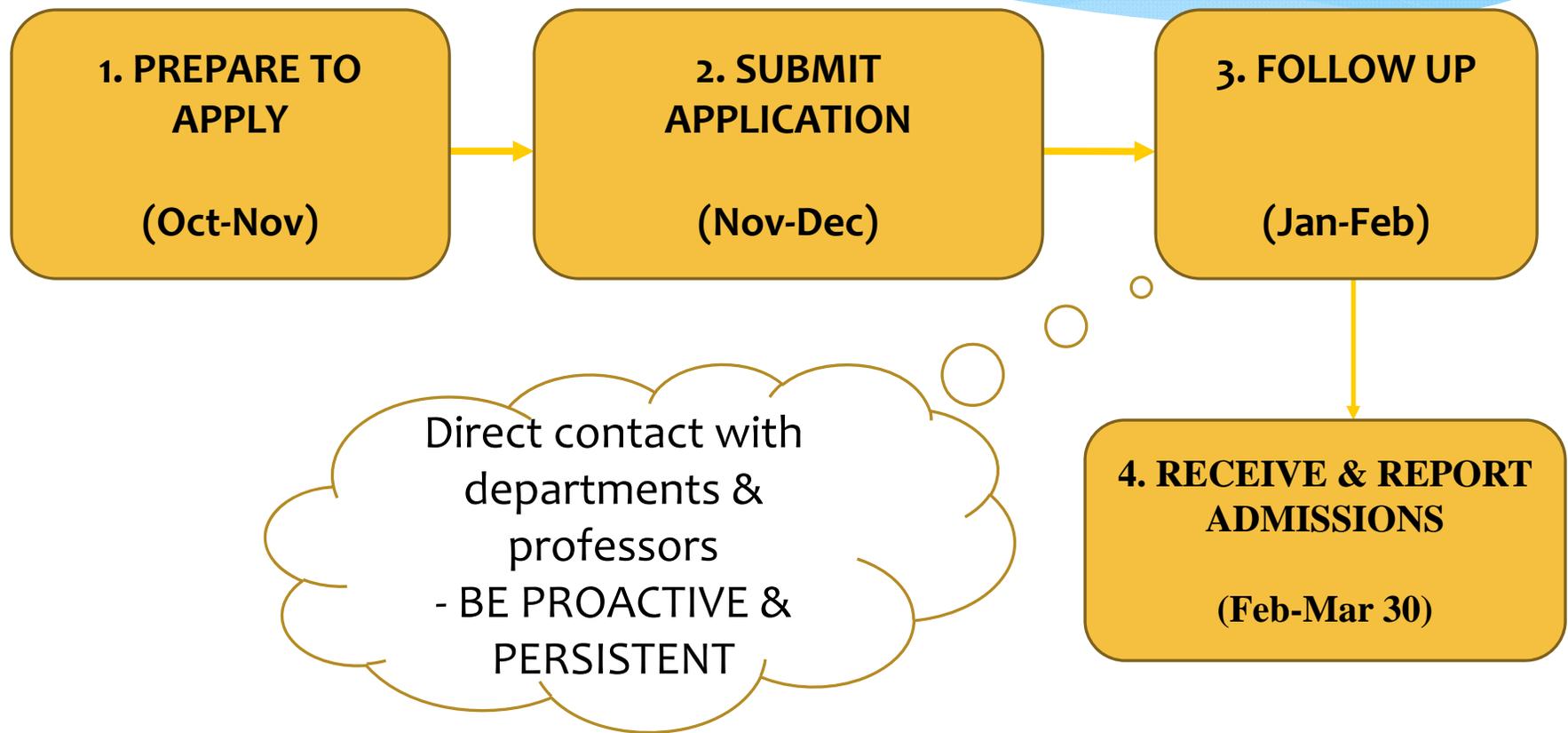
Alternates

Fellows

YOU ARE HERE!



Application Action Plan



YOUR GOAL UNTIL MAR 30, 2015

- * To get admission, with financial aid, into highly regarded U.S. graduate programs that accept VEF financial terms.
 - * 5 universities recommended by U.S. professors or VEF
 - * Other universities of your choice, including safety school(s)

Application Documents

- * **Application form**
- * **Statement of purpose (SOP)**
 - * Be author of your own, start early, contact SOP reviewer early
- * **Letters of recommendation (LOR)**
- * **Supporting documents**

Education Documents

- * Certified transcripts: translated, Vietnam's grading system (available from EducationUSA)
- * University diplomas
- * Evidence of financial resources (VEF financial support letter)
- * Evidence of English proficiency (TOEFL & GRE) (sent directly by ETS)
- * Awards and merits (certified English translation)
- * Curriculum vitae
- * Explanation of your Vietnamese name (optional)

Application Form

- * IMPORTANT to state that
 - * **For Fellows**: "I am a Fellow for a VEF Fellowship and I am seeking supplementary financial support from the school." (with the VEF letter of financial support included in your application)
 - * **For Alternates**: "I am seeking full financial support from the school; however, as an alternate for a Vietnam Education Foundation Fellowship, I may be awarded a fellowship that would require supplementary financial support from the school. I will inform you if my status changes."
- * check (✓) boxes asking if you request financial support* from the university.

What Makes an Application Stand out?

In addition to high test scores (TOEFL, GRE, GRE Subject test) and the VEF financial support letter

- * **SOP**
- * **LORs**
- * **CV** (background & research experience, GPA, **awards**, honors, extracurricular activities, leadership, publications, and skills)

→ Schools/professors read these to **get a whole image of you**

Letters of Recommendation (LOR)

- * A good LOR should be **reasonable, specific, & personalized**
 - * **Reasonable:** recommender **knows you and your work well** and has the **qualifications** to evaluate you; the title of the person is less important than the depth of what is written
 - * **Specific:** cites examples, provides specific information, contains details of your preparation and your potential, demonstrates your breadth, and tells little stories about you.
 - * Example: What was your rank in class? What is the outcome of a project you have done? How do you relate to others?
 - * **Personalized:** gives insight into what kind of person you are and believes in your potential by providing information about you and your program (program you are applying to; field/area of study/research; future goals, etc.)
- ⇒ **Contents of LOR should match SOP** (research, teaching, and/or work experience)

Curriculum Vitae

- * Spend time writing and rewriting your CV
- * Make it short (1–2 pages) and sharp
- * Most notable:
 - * GPA
 - * Class rank
 - * Awards/honors
 - * Research experience
 - * Publications
 - * Relevant work experience
 - * Special talents/skills
 - * Volunteer work

Key: Your CV should indicate that you are an outstanding student

Selecting U.S. Universities

- * Be strategic as to where you apply – dream school(s) and a safety school
 - * Five recommended U.S. universities
 - * Others of your choice—Consider the VEF Alliance
- * **Also consider**
 - * Schools that have already had successful VEF Fellows and/or Vietnamese students.
 - * Schools where well-known professors in your field teach (reference lists)
- * **Google search:** Key words of research interest, fields of study, professor names, schools, etc.
- * Follow up on the status of your application

Application Timelines

- * Application season: late September to mid December
 - * Different from university to university, from discipline to discipline
 - * Weekly reviews of complete applications
- * Apply early
- * Admission decision: December 15 to early March
- * Deadline to inform VEF: March 30, 2015

Contact Universities & Professors in the U.S.

- * Make sure your application is complete.
- * Review status online.
- * Contact admissions office.
- * Send a personalized email to the professor.
 - * Craft a good Email subject
 - * Do homework, study & think, make it short but sharp.
 - * Indicate that you visited the professor's homepage and found a good match.
 - * Don't send exactly the same letter to every professor.
 - * Might attach your CV with the letter.
- * Be persistent and proactive.

Formula for Success

4 “Ch”s

■ Ch

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CHIẾN THẮNG

Formula for Success

4 “Ch”s

- Chuẩn bị
- Chăm chỉ
- Chủ động
- Chiến lược

CHIẾN THẮNG

Summary

To enhance your application to highly regarded U.S. graduate schools:

- Cultivate effective recommendations/LORs
- Start to write a superior SOP **NOW**
- Be strategic in selecting mentors, graduate programs
 - Study school websites, professor homepages (their current research)
 - Know application timelines -> submit application early, before the due date
- Prepare well tailored application docs (SOP, LORs, CV, scores, diploma, merits and awards, research, extracurricular activities, leadership)
- Follow up & report admissions to VEF.



**Thank you
&
GOOD LUCK!**



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