FAQ. I am interested in pursuing Ph.D. studies in your group. Are you taking graduate students? How should I apply? What are the odds of admission? What is the course of study like? What research projects and directions are pursued in the Kreiman Lab? Which programs should I apply to? Should I take time to do research before applying to graduate school?

Admissions

Graduate students play a central role in our research endeavors and we are happy to take graduate students in the lab (within space and other constraints). Admission to a Ph.D. at Harvard is administered through several graduate programs. This means that, in the majority of cases, you cannot directly apply to one laboratory. You have to apply to a Harvard program (see below). Admission to graduate school at Harvard is a competitive process and all programs receive a lot more applications than the number of students that we can admit. Admission is decided by a rotating committee of professors based on the application package as well as interviews. After admission to one of these programs, you can do a rotation in our lab (see below).

Graduate Programs

There are multiple graduate programs at Harvard. Most of the students that are interested in our lab apply to the following programs:

Program in Biophysics
http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~biophys/

Program in Biological and Biomedical Sciences
http://www.hms.harvard.edu/dms/bbs/

Program in Engineering and Applied Sciences [Computer Science, Engineering]
https://www.seas.harvard.edu/audiences/prospective-graduates

Program in Neuroscience [mostly for students with experimental background]
http://www.hms.harvard.edu/dms/neuroscience/

Program in Molecules, Cells, Organisms
https://www.mcb.harvard.edu/graduate/mco/

Program in Physics
https://www.physics.harvard.edu/academics/grad

Systems, Synthetic and Quantitative Biology
https://ssqbiophd.hms.harvard.edu/

Biological and Biomedical Sciences
https://bbsphd.hms.harvard.edu/

Applied Math
https://seas.harvard.edu/applied-mathematics/phd-applied-mathematics

This is NOT an exhaustive list. There are other suitable programs.

The above list refers to Harvard Ph.D. programs. There are, of course, lots of other amazing

programs in other universities. Within AI/computational neuroscience, the following universities have great Ph.D. programs: MIT, Stanford, Caltech, UC Berkeley, CMU, Columbia, Yale, Princeton, Brown, Duke, NYU, Cornell, U. Washington, Johns Hopkins, UCSF, UCSD, U. Chicago, Baylor, Brandeis, U. Penn, and many more. This is NOT an exhaustive list. This list focuses in the US but there are amazing Ph.D. programs in many other places too.

Which program should I apply to?

There is no right or wrong answer to this question. In general, you should apply to whatever program best matches your expertise and also your intended field of study. Many research projects sit at the intersection of different fields. There are physics Ph.D. students working on neuroscience projects, there are Biological and Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. students working on computer science AI projects, and many other combinations.

Should I take the GRE?

Rules about whether the GRE is required or not, or even allowed or not, vary with the particular program and have also been changing over time. Read the information about GREs in the specific program that you are applying to. If allowed, I would encourage you to take the GRE since it is an imperfect but good way of documenting your knowledge in specific areas and to standardize evaluations across people from different countries, etc.

Do I need a Master's degree to apply to get a Ph.D.?

No, a Master's degree is not required.

Should I do research before applying to graduate school?

This is a personal decision. There is no right or wrong answer. Many people start graduate school right after finishing their undergraduate degree. Many people take a year or a few years to pursue research or other interests before applying to graduate school. Both groups of students have been very successful in graduate school.

What do Ph.D. admissions committee look for in prospective students?

There is no single formulaic answer to this question. Admissions committee evaluate the students as a whole, trying to understand where they come from, whether they have taken advantage of the opportunities they had, how they dealt with challenges, and what they have done. They look at GPAs, GREs if available, statements of purpose, recommendation letters, and research experience or publications.

Rotations

Most of the graduate programs at Harvard encourage students to do rotations during the first year in graduate school. These rotations constitute a great opportunity for students to experience first-hand the research efforts conducted in each lab, the atmosphere of the lab, everyday research activities, techniques, questions and research directions. It is also a great opportunity to interact more closely with the PI and colleagues in the lab. We are happy to host students for rotations in the lab (within space and other constraints). There are several possible rotation projects for incoming students. Please send us an email if you are interested in a rotation in the lab.

Course of study and graduate life

The course of study depends on the specific program (see links above). Typically, students take several classes during the first year while doing rotations in a few labs (see "Rotations" above). Depending on the program, students also take some classes after the first year. Typically, the bulk of the work after the first year involves research in the chosen lab.

Funding

Tuition for graduate students is covered. Additionally, graduate students receive a stipend to cover their living expenses. See more information for each program by following the links above.

What research projects and directions are pursued in the Kreiman Lab?

You can get an idea of the ongoing research efforts and directions by following our publications. You can access our publications at http://klab.tch.harvard.edu/publications/publications.html
Feel free to contact us if you want to know more.