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# Graduate Connections



University of Nebraska–Lincoln

A Newsletter for UNL Graduate Students published by the Office of Graduate Studies

February 2009

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## Navigating Graduate School

*Events, advice and strategies to help you succeed in Graduate School at UNL*

### ADVICE FOR COMPLETING A THESIS OR DISSERTATION

RESEARCH ON GRADUATE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES with writing a thesis or dissertation suggests many students aren't always sure what to expect when they begin the process. Dr. Ken Oldfield, professor emeritus at the University of Illinois, Springfield, offers these strategies along with some tips on how to manage the process. We've included advice from three UNL graduate students who've recently completed a thesis or dissertation.

**Start early.** Whether you're writing a thesis or a dissertation, start planning as early as possible. Begin by recording ideas in a notebook (that never leaves your side). Enroll in courses whose instructor and/or subject matter seems compatible with your interests. If possible, choose writing assignments that can serve as a basis for your dissertation or complement your dissertation goals. If you plan strategically, you can develop a "research stream." Using seminar research papers you've completed, you can define your research interests and extend your work into a possible dissertation topic.

**Choose your adviser wisely.** Oldfield suggests you first consider someone with a reputation for "getting people through." Ask advanced graduate students about faculty members with reputations for being "high producers" or those who have "positive attitudes and beliefs about graduate students and graduate education." Learn about faculty who are "more academically and socially engaged with graduate students than their low-productive counterparts."

Second, you want a thesis or dissertation adviser who pays attention – to the requirements for the degree, to deadlines and to you. Select a person who understands the process, communicates expectations clearly, and is fair but demanding. Finally, your adviser should have some experience, which means you might not want to select someone new to campus. Faculty members who have served as readers on other dissertation committees will likely be good advisers.

### **Choose your supervisory committee wisely.**

Dissertation supervisory committees generally include three or four additional faculty members. Again, consider people with reputations for graduating students and those who, for the most part, work well with their colleagues. Nathan Palmer, who recently completed a master's thesis in sociology, says "a well-designed committee that complements your skills and abilities eases the process a great deal."

So how do you identify these folks? Get to know your professors. Attend research colloquia to understand their areas of research. Take classes and engage your professors in conversations. Read their work. Talk to advanced graduate students. Your best strategy, however, is to rely on your adviser to help you choose your committee.

**Choose your topic...wisely.** When choosing your dissertation topic, remember these three words: Focus. Focus. Focus. You'll save yourself considerable time and effort by restricting your research problem. Also, choose a manageable topic. While your dissertation will be a huge and, hopefully, important project, it shouldn't take you a lifetime to complete. Rely on your adviser to help you narrow your topic so you don't remain in graduate school for twenty years.

Finally, Oldfield suggests, select a topic you can love to hate. He explains, "No matter which subject you address, after a while you will despise it. If you choose an uninteresting question, eventually it will be easy to avoid working on it." Not so with a topic you love.

**Schedule regular meetings with your adviser.** Stay in touch with your adviser and constantly seek his or her counsel. Your adviser has a broader view of your topic and the thesis/dissertation process, and his or her perspective will keep you focused. To ensure that both you and your adviser get the most out of your meetings, plan ahead. Before each meeting, make a list of the questions you want to ask or the topics you want to discuss. In other words, have an agenda.

Take notes. After the meeting, e-mail your adviser a brief summary of your discussion. It's more than likely that your adviser will have more than one advisee, and it's unreasonable to expect him or her to remember exactly what was discussed from one meeting to the next. E-mailing your adviser a summary of your meeting (be sure to keep a copy for your files) ensures that you're both on the "same page."

**Keep copies of everything.** We've heard of students who kept copies of their dissertation in the freezer, just

in case the house caught fire. Okay, so this might be a little over the top but it is good advice to store copies of your chapters in several places, such as a flash drive or an external hard drive.

Carolyn Brown Kramer, a recent UNL graduate with a Ph.D. in psychology, explains why keeping feedback from your adviser and committee is important: "They may expect to see their comments from previous drafts incorporated into later versions." She also suggests keeping old drafts in case you're asked to put something back in; it's also helpful to keep drafts to see how your ideas have changed over time.

**Ask for help.** If writing is your Achilles heel, Jennifer Overkamp, who received her doctorate in English last December, highly recommends the [UNL Writing Center](#) in Andrews Hall. "It's free and staffed with graduate students (some writing their own dissertations), and they can help with any stage in the writing process." The Writing Center helped Overkamp a great deal by keeping her motivated, since she needed to be sure she had written something before each scheduled meeting with a tutor.

Organized dissertation support groups can help you maintain your focus, provide feedback on your thinking and writing, and provide encouragement. (See p. 15 of this newsletter.) Someone to talk to can be especially helpful when you come up against writing blocks or personal or professional problems. And, if you just get bogged down and can't see *any* light at the end of the tunnel, a CAPS counselor is available at the University Health Center.

**Just do it.** In the end, it comes down to this. An effective strategy for accomplishing an important goal, such as writing a thesis or dissertation, is to establish routines. And write! For Jennifer Overkamp, that meant scheduling writing time when and where she was most productive. She treated her dissertation like a part-time "job" and designated hours each week to work on it. Creating a timeline – or a backwards calendar – for completing your dissertation is another effective strategy. Include the major benchmarks (data collection, analyses, chapters, dissertation defense) and set realistic goals.

A special thank you to our good friend Dr. Ken Oldfield for giving us permission – and latitude – to share his great ideas. For more tips, see his article, "How to Deal with Some of the Practical Problems Associated With Writing a Dissertation" (1988), *College Student Journal*, 22, 3, 270–276.

# Good Practices in Graduate Education

*Advice and strategies to strengthen ethics in graduate education*

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## HOW TO BE FAIR AND ETHICAL IN THE CLASSROOM

MANY ASPECTS OF THE TEACHING ASSISTANT'S ROLE may create ethical dilemmas of one sort or another. Your roles as adviser, evaluator, exam administrator, authority figure and peer have the potential to become problematic at times, often because they present conflicting demands. Because fairness is a perception based on interpretations of behavior, not intentions, many instructors may inadvertently engage in what students perceive to be unfair behavior.

Although one might expect students to be most concerned with outcome or procedural fairness because it affects their grades, Dr. Rita Rodabaugh has found that students consider violations of interactional fairness to be the most severe. Interactional fairness refers to the nature of the interaction between instructor and students and encompasses impartiality, respect, concern for students, integrity and propriety.

Below we offer tips on how to be fair and ethical in the classroom, thereby avoiding as many classroom problems as possible.

**Impartiality.** Students expect an instructor to treat everyone in the class equally. Few professors intentionally favor certain students over others, but it is probably impossible not to like some students more than others. Differences in liking may foster differences in interactions, such as allowing certain students to dominate discussions. Even subtle differences in how students are treated may lead to perceptions of partiality where none exist. To avoid giving the impression of partiality, carefully monitor your behavior and interactions with all students.

**Respect.** Respect involves treating students politely. Ridiculing a student or calling a student's comment "stupid" is inappropriate in all circumstances. Students expect an instructor to listen to, carefully consider, and give thoughtful replies to their ideas when they challenge the instructor's views. An instructor who is perceived as impatient or demeaning, either directly through comments or indirectly through tone of voice, facial expressions, or posture, loses students' respect.

Patience is especially difficult when students actively misbehave in class. However, students also expect instructors to be polite in those situations. Should you face disrespect, try to remain civil and calm, thereby modeling the appropriate behavior for students. It is always appropriate to meet privately with an offending student, during which you can be more direct in communicating expectations for classroom deportment.

**Concern for students.** Students expect their instructors to care about them and their academic performance. You can demonstrate such concern by learning and using students' names, talking to them before and after class, carefully answering questions, and inviting students who appear to be having problems with the course to discuss those problems and potential solutions. You also can express concern by giving due consideration to student complaints, taking remedial action when the complaints are valid, and carefully explaining your position when the complaints are not valid.

**Integrity.** Integrity means being consistent and truthful, and explaining your policies, procedures and decisions and why they are necessary, so that their fairness can be judged and understood. For example, an attendance policy may be justifiable because attendance is correlated with increased learning and better grades. Explaining the educational goals of various types of assignments also can be effective. You also can demonstrate integrity by delivering promised rewards and penalties, and admitting ignorance when appropriate.

**Propriety.** Propriety means acting in a socially acceptable manner that does not offend students' sensibilities. Students expect you to follow the rules when interacting with them, even if you believe there might be pedagogical value in breaking them. For example, research indicates that most students find it inappropriate in most or all circumstances for an instructor to tell an off-color story or joke. Likewise, showing an emotionally upsetting film without warning students in advance was considered highly inappropriate.

Students also expect instructors to respect their privacy; most students find it inappropriate to require them to reveal highly personal information in a class discussion. Finally, students expect instructors to maintain an appropriate social distance: 54% of students surveyed in a 1993 study by Patricia Keith-Spiegel and colleagues thought it inappropriate for an instructor to date a student and 70% believed it inappropriate for a professor to have a sexual relationship with a student.

**Conclusion.** Ethical issues are often seen in terms of outright abuse of power or privilege. However, where fairness is concerned, many behaviors that teachers may unthinkingly exhibit on a day-to-day basis, such as sharing personal information about their weekend “activities” or making changes in course content and procedures during the semester, may be perceived quite differently by students. According to Stephen Brookfield, author of *The Skillful Teacher*, perceptions of unfairness can undermine the trust between student and teacher that is necessary for effective learning. It’s important to carefully monitor one’s behavior and policies to ensure that they are not only, in fact, fair but are perceived as fair by students.

Adapted with permission from Whitley, Jr., B., Perkins, D., Balogh, D., Keith-Spiegel, P. & Wittig, A. (2000, July/August). Fairness in the classroom. *APS Observer*, 13 (6). [http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/tips\\_0700.html](http://www.psychologicalscience.org/teaching/tips/tips_0700.html).

## Essential Connections

*Critical information about the fundamentals of graduate study at UNL*

### HELPING STUDENTS: A PEER MENTORING APPROACH

DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR FIRST SEMESTER as a graduate student? Or are you there right now? Most new graduate students soon find that they are expected to be more independent in their programs than they were as undergraduates. In graduate school the “rules of the game” are considerably different than they are in undergraduate studies. While faculty advisers are excellent resources for forms, deadlines, discussions about research and many other academic aspects of graduate student life, who can help you with the social side of graduate school, navigating campus and the culture of the department? Establishing a peer mentoring program in your department can provide several benefits for new and advanced students.

In *Creating a Mentoring Culture*, Lois Zachary defines mentoring, discusses how to create a mentoring program and outlines the benefits of mentoring. She says, “Because mentoring combines the impact of learning with the compelling human need for connection, it leaves individuals better able to deepen their personal capacity and maintain organizational vitality in the face of continuous challenge and change” (page xxi).

Challenge and change are two things Sharon Zumbunn, a doctoral student in educational psychology at UNL, remembers well from her first semesters as a graduate student. She recalls her strong desire to connect with advanced students who could help her with questions about navigating the program from a student’s perspective. In the fall of 2008, she started a peer mentoring program for cognition, learning and development (CLD) graduate students in Educational Psychology.

## How’s Your Connection?

You can read **Graduate Connections** on the Office of Graduate Studies web page, receive notification of the latest issue from your department, or have issues delivered directly to you via e-mail. To subscribe, send a message to [gsapd2@unl.edu](mailto:gsapd2@unl.edu) with [subscribe GC] in the subject line and your name and e-mail address in the body of the message.

We invite your feedback and comments about **Graduate Connections**. Can you use the kinds of information you find in this issue? What else can we include to help you make the right connections in the course of your graduate career? Are you engaged in research or other scholarly activity that you want to share with readers of **Graduate Connections**?

Please share your thoughts with us so we can bring you a relevant, lively and useful quarterly publication. Send e-mail to [gsapd2@unl.edu](mailto:gsapd2@unl.edu).

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## Teaching Tip

### Handling Disruptions

*Even though you've spelled out your classroom policies in your syllabus and talked to your students about classroom civility, you still may occasionally have to deal with disruptive behavior. Here are a few strategies you can employ.*

**Clarify standards for the conduct of your class.** For example, if you want students to raise their hands for permission to speak, say so, using reminders as needed.

**Consider a general word of caution,** rather than warning a particular student (e.g. "We have too many conversations in the room right now. Can we please all concentrate on the same subject?")

**Try speaking with the student after class** if the behavior is irritating, but not disruptive. It's possible the student is unaware of distracting habits or mannerisms and does not intend to be offensive or disruptive.

**In the rare event you have to speak to the student during class,** try to do so in a friendly but firm manner, indicating that further discussion can occur after class. Avoid harsh language and public arguments. Try to separate the person from the behavior, using appropriate "I" statements rather than accusatory "you" statements (e.g. "I find it difficult to carry on discussions when you continually engage in side conversations.")

**If a student persists in disrupting class,** direct him or her to leave the classroom. Whenever possible, however, consult in advance with your faculty adviser or department chair if you notice an escalation in disruptive behavior.

**If a disruption is serious, and other reasonable measures have failed,** you may have to adjourn the class and call campus police. You should write a detailed account of the incident and identify witnesses, as needed.

Source: UC Davis  
<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/FILES/ClassroomEtiquette.pdf>

Kim Marxhausen, a first year educational psychology doctoral student and participant in the mentoring program, commented that "it has been a long time since advisers have been students, but mentors know what is going on and how to get things done. There are always things that people tacitly know, but in the fast-paced world of graduate school you do not have time to learn them as you go. You need to know now what is expected of you and how typical your reactions and concerns are." Marxhausen appreciates having someone to contact about questions and to encourage her to attend campus activities she may not have tried otherwise.

For Zumbrunn, the first step to creating the CLD peer mentoring program was meeting with a focus group of students to better understand their needs. She then met with Dr. Laurie Bellows of the Office of Graduate Studies, as well as CLD faculty to gather ideas about designing a program that would meet both the needs of CLD students and expectations of the department. Advanced students were asked to volunteer as mentors and paired with new students, who had completed an information sheet during the summer.

Zumbrunn describes the benefits of the CLD peer mentoring program: "The benefits of our peer mentoring program are twofold. First, mentors offer new students support, guidance and encouragement. New students seem to appreciate the unique perspective (and empathy) the advanced students can offer. Second, the program offers advanced graduate students an opportunity to mentor students. This valuable experience likely proves beneficial, as many of our graduates continue their careers in academia."

Despite some of the challenges that come from starting a new program, Zumbrunn and Marxhausen are excited about the future of the CLD peer mentoring program. Marxhausen plans to become a mentor when she is ready for the task, and Zumbrunn believes that the student-led aspect of this program is an important component in "keeping students interested and passionate about carrying the mentoring torch."

If you are interested in starting a peer mentoring program in your department, please contact Dr. Laurie Bellows at [lbellows1@unl.edu](mailto:lbellows1@unl.edu) for more information.

Zachary, L. J. (2005). *Creating a Mentoring Culture*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PROGRAMS OF STUDY, MEMORANDUMS OF COURSES AND GRADUATE (800- & 900) LEVEL COURSES

**Program of Study/Memorandum of Courses.** The Program of Study (doctoral degree and educational specialist degree) or Memorandum of Courses (master's degree) outlines the degree requirements determined by the student's major professor and the advisory committee. Depending on your degree goal, you'll complete a form (available on the [Graduate Studies Web site](#)), obtain approval from your adviser and graduate committee, and submit the form to the Office of Graduate Studies for the dean of graduate studies to review and sign.

The Program of Study and Memorandum of Courses are important to your overall graduate experience; each serves as a "contract" between you

and your graduate committee and the graduate dean, spelling out what is required for completion of your degree.

All graduate programs require you to complete a certain number of credit hours *after* the form is submitted to Graduate Studies and approved by the dean. Doctoral students, for example, should have at least 45 hours remaining (exclusive of research tools, language requirements or collateral courses) after the form is approved. For master's students, the Memorandum must be submitted before you have completed *half* the program. So attention to detail is important!

Once the dean of graduate studies approves the Program of Study or Memorandum of Courses, a copy will be returned to you for your records. We strongly recommend you keep this copy throughout your graduate education to monitor your progress and address questions you might have about courses needed. Deadlines and forms are found at: <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees/>.

**Graduate Level (800 or 900) Courses.** Each graduate program has unique requirements, but the one requirement common to all graduate degree-seeking students is that only graduate level (800- or 900-level) courses may be placed on the Program of Study or Memorandum of Courses. Undergraduate (100-400 level) courses taken to satisfy deficiencies or to better prepare you for further graduate work are placed in a special section of the form and are not included in the hours needed to complete the program.

An 800-level course without a 400-level cross-listing will be signified in the [graduate bulletin](#) with an

asterisk (\*) in front of it. You'll be required to have a certain number of graduate level only courses in the program. Policies, areas of study, course lists and other information regarding graduate education also can be found in the graduate bulletin at <http://bulletin.unl.edu>.

Some 800-level courses may be cross-listed with a 400-level course and are not considered graduate-level only. The number and grades allowed for such courses are limited, and you must be sure it is okay to have those on your program. Because 400- and 800-level cross-listed courses have different call numbers, it's possible to accidentally register for the wrong level, so it's best to check your course schedule as soon as you register for classes.

If you find you've incorrectly registered for a 400-level course this semester, don't despair! You have some time to change to a graduate course – up to 60 days from the semester in which you took the course. A word to the wise: Don't wait until you're ready to graduate to make a change. If your instructor is no longer available and can't verify that you actually did graduate level work, most likely you'll have to take additional courses to graduate.

To make a change, complete a *Schedule Adjustment Form* and have your instructor sign it. The instructor also must verify that you have indeed completed graduate level work. Regular reviews of your programs and class schedules provide an avenue for making any changes before it's too late.

If you have any questions about changing from undergraduate to graduate level courses, please contact Jane Schneider at [jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu) or 402-472-8670.

## Professional Development Network

*Events, workshops, tips and strategies to give graduate students a leg up in launching a professional career*

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### THE INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IPDP): A CAREER MANAGEMENT TOOL

IN THE AUGUST 2008 ISSUE OF *GRADUATE CONNECTIONS*, we introduced you to the “Next Stage” approach to professional development, which requires you to “think ahead, look ahead, and . . . act ahead” of the stage you currently occupy.

If you're planning a career in academia, you'll need to understand what is expected of new faculty, how

institutions of higher education differ depending on their missions, and how an institution's mission might influence faculty roles and responsibilities. If you were to think “next stage,” you might participate in the Preparing Future Faculty Program which would introduce you to the full scope of faculty roles and responsibilities – including teaching, research, and service – and learn how the expectations for these

responsibilities often differ in different campus settings.

Likewise, if you're exploring a non-academic career path, such as becoming a scientific writer, policy analyst or foundation executive, you'll need to determine the skills and knowledge to develop before you take the next step.

No matter which path you take, we suggest creating an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) to help you plan for your future. An IPDP is a written plan outlining your career goals and the steps you need to take to meet those goals. An IPDP helps you focus your professional development by creating a career "action plan" for skill development and career management. It provides a means for you to document your development, through assessment and reflection, allowing for continued growth and development – and is an excellent tool you can use to identify, organize, and plan for the next stage.

**Components of an IPDP.** Creating an Individual Professional Development Plan encompasses four key tasks:

*Skills assessment:* Assess your strengths and identify specific areas that you would like to target for development.

*Goal-setting:* Identify your career goals and determine a match/fit with your knowledge and skills.

*Action Plan development:* Reflect on your progress toward your professional goal(s) and outline the steps/strategies you'll take to move forward towards the next stage.

*Document development:* Document your progress and further clarify your strengths and the skills you need to build to reach your professional goal(s).

**Developing an IPDP.** To develop an IPDP follow these five steps:

*Step 1. State your professional activities and roles.* Identify your current roles and responsibilities as a graduate student. Using the four developmental categories above, identify your teaching, research and service activities, professional memberships, campus or department involvement, and undergraduate advisory functions. Assign each role and activity to one of four developmental categories: *discipline, instructional, career or organizational development.*

*Step 2. Assess skills and knowledge.* List your skills and knowledge. Identify the strengths you have acquired. What areas are sufficiently developed and what areas should benefit from additional learning? Write down your existing skills and knowledge as well as those areas that require attention in the four development categories found in the IPDP.

*Step 3. Write goals for professional development.* Write your professional and personal goals. Ask yourself: Where do I want to go? What areas of my work do I want to develop? Write down the overall goals you want to accomplish in the short term (next year), mid-term (next 1-2 years), and long-term (3-5 years). You can then assign each goal to one of the four developmental categories.

*Step 4. Create an action plan.* Determine how you're going to get where you want to go. Write down the skills and knowledge you want to develop, then identify strategies or action steps you'll need to take to achieve your goals. Sometimes it's also helpful to create a timeline for starting and completing work on your stated goals.

*Step 5. Document your development.* Track your development through your accomplishments. Using personal statements; feedback from faculty advisers, peers, and undergraduate students; a curriculum vitae; the outcomes from your coursework and/or research and other samples of your work, you should be able to determine whether you've achieved the goals you established and whether you need to develop additional skills or knowledge to achieve them. An academic portfolio is one method for collecting evidence of your achievements.

Continuous self-assessment and reflection are central to a useful, effective IPDP. Because your professional development is a life-long task, you'll want to reflect on how you're doing. Does your plan reflect your goals? Are your goals clear? Have you gathered the right "evidence" and documented your development to reflect new learning and growth? You might consider keeping a journal, finding a peer with whom to share your progress, or organizing a discussion/ support group where you can get feedback.

**Benefits and resources.** Completing an IPDP requires a minimal investment of time and energy, but the return on your investment can be significant. Beyond clarifying your future, an IPDP allows for future

planning and introspection, and will help chart your development to ensure achievement of the Next Stage.

You'll find an IPDP template for graduate students on the [Graduate Studies Web site](#).

**For additional reading.** If you're interested in the challenges and opportunities you'll face as a new faculty member, check out these resources:

*The Top Ten Things New Faculty Would Like to Hear from Colleagues.* <http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/postings/566.html>

*What Colleges and Universities Want in New Faculty* by Kathryn A. Adams. [http://www.aacu.org/pff/pdfs/PFF\\_Adams.PDF](http://www.aacu.org/pff/pdfs/PFF_Adams.PDF)

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Fall campus-wide workshops for TAs  
Institute for International Teaching Assistants  
Preparing Future Faculty Program

Professional development workshops  
Professional development courses  
Teaching Documentation Program  
Assistance gathering student feedback

Individual consultation on teaching, careers, job searches  
Advice on creating an academic career portfolio

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## Interactions

*Personal achievements of graduate students, research reports, teaching successes, calls for collaboration and student-to-student interaction*

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## CONGRATULATIONS TO 2009 GRADUATE AWARD WINNERS

*KUDOS TO EIGHT INDIVIDUALS honored at a reception on February 4, recognizing their outstanding contributions to teaching and research at UNL.*

### The Lowe R. & Mavis M. Folsom Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation and Master's Thesis Awards

Funded by a generous gift from the Folsom family to the University of Nebraska Foundation, these awards recognize distinguished research accomplishments of doctoral and masters candidates. Nominated dissertations and theses undergo a rigorous, multi-stage review process, and the winning scholarly products must represent an "unusually significant" contribution to the discipline.

This year's recipient of the Folsom Distinguished Dissertation Award is **Dr. David Miller**, biomedical engineering. The Folsom Distinguished Master's Thesis Award recipient is **Curtis Wray**, chemistry.

### Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award

The Office of Graduate Studies recognizes the valuable role graduate teaching assistants play in enhancing undergraduate education at UNL. We're very proud of our programs that support the development of cutting-edge pedagogical skills among

TAs, and proud also of the efforts of faculty members who mentor and inspire TAs in each department.

The Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award honors graduate students who have demonstrated extraordinary effectiveness in advancing the learning of undergraduate students in their charge. The award is given based on the following criteria: demonstrated excellence based on student evaluations of teaching effectiveness; utilization of innovative teaching techniques; and engagement in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

This year's Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award winners are **Tamy Burnett**, English; and **Jennifer Green**, statistics.

### Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award

The Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award recognizes the extraordinary quality of research and creative activity carried out by UNL graduate students who hold research assistantships. Research mentors nominate selected students; the review criteria include the centrality of the student's on-going contribution to his or her research team and demonstrated promise as a researcher, and the originality and significance of the student's own research or creative activity.

This year's recipients of the Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award are **Dr. Anton Turanov**, biochemistry, and **Jamie Wilkinson**, psychology

### Dean's Award for Excellence in Graduate Education

The Excellence in Graduate Education Awards honor faculty members whose dedication to graduate students and commitment to excellence in graduate

mentoring have made a significant contribution to graduate education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

This year two faculty members were honored with Excellence in Graduate Education Awards: **Dr. Rick Bevins**, professor, psychology; and **Dr. Sebastian Elbaum**, associate professor, computer science and engineering.

## GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION has put together a full calendar of events for spring 2009.

**Graduate Student Appreciation Week (March 31 - April 4).** All graduate, professional and post-doctoral students are invited to be entertained, to socialize and to relax during Graduate Student Appreciation Week (GSAW). GSA will have a booth at the City Campus Union throughout the week and will host several events.

In conjunction with Graduate Student Appreciation Week GSA announces two awards. Find nomination forms at <http://www.unl.edu/gsa/gkaw.shtml>:

**Graduate Student of the Year.** Nominations are due Feb. 28. Graduate students, faculty and staff are invited to nominate an outstanding graduate student for the graduate student of the year award.

**Outstanding Service to Graduate Students.** Nominations are due Feb. 28. All currently enrolled graduate students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln are invited to honor a faculty member or administrator whose dedication to graduate students and commitment to excellence

in graduate teaching, advising, and mentoring have made a significant contribution to the quality of life and professional development of graduate students at the university. The nomination is open for all ranks.

**Graduate student survey.** The GSA has developed a survey that will be distributed around mid-semester. The survey will ask questions about your graduate school experience and satisfaction with policies that affect graduate students. The information collected in this survey will allow the GSA to more effectively advocate on your behalf.

**Friday Afternoon Club** is something new we are trying this spring. Grad students are invited to meet at W.C.'s, 1228 P Street, every Friday from 5:30 to 6:30pm. Look for goldenrod T-shirts!

**Ice Skating.** On Sunday, March 1, join other UNL graduate students from 9:30-11:30 p.m. in the Ice Box at the State Fair Grounds for ice skating. Admission is free with a UNL I.D. Skate rental is \$2.00.

**The Big Event**, a campus wide volunteer project, takes place on Saturday, April 25. <http://bigevent.unl.edu/>

## Funding Opportunities

*A sampling of information on fellowships, scholarships, competitions and other funding prospects*

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### SAE INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

THE SAE DOCTORAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM offers forgivable loans to assist and encourage promising engineering graduate students to pursue careers in teaching engineering at the college level. For each year of qualified teaching after graduation, one year of loans will be forgiven.

**Deadline:** 04/01/09

**Award amount:** loans up to \$5,000 per year for up to three years, for a total of \$15,000

<http://students.sae.org/awdscholar/loans/doctoral/>

## AMERICAN LEGACY FOUNDATION DR. ALMA S. ADAMS SCHOLARSHIP

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED for The Dr. Alma S. Adams Scholarship for Outreach and Health Communications to reduce tobacco use among "Priority Populations" who are disproportionately targeted by the tobacco industry, or who often lack the tools and resources to combat smoking in their communities. Identified priority populations are Native Americans/Alaska Natives, Hispanics, African

Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

**Deadline:** 4/20/09

**Award amount:** \$10,000 annually (up to two awards)

<http://www.americanlegacy.org/adams-scholarship.aspx>

## KENNEDY CENTER INTERNSHIPS

THE KENNEDY CENTER selects over 20 college juniors, seniors, graduate students and recent graduates each semester for full-time internship placements in such areas as advertising, development, education, press, programming, production, technology and the National Symphony Orchestra.

**Deadline:** 3/01/09 for summer 2009 internship (May 26 - August 7)

**Award amount:** weekly stipend of \$225.

<http://www.kennedy-center.org/education/artsmanagement/internships/>

## HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH EXPERIENCES AT OAK RIDGE NATIONAL LABORATORY

THIS PROGRAM ENABLES qualified graduate students in the physical, life, social and environmental sciences, engineering and mathematics to conduct their master's thesis or Ph.D. dissertation research in residence at the DOE facility.

**Deadline:** ongoing

**Award amount:** \$525 per week (master's thesis research); \$550 per week ( Ph.D. thesis research), plus \$75/week housing allowance, one round trip between home or school and ORNL, and tuition and fees for off-campus programs (offered at the discretion of the research mentor)

<http://www.ornl.gov/hereatornl/>

## JAMES MADISON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

TWO TYPES OF FELLOWSHIPS are offered: *Junior fellowships* are awarded to outstanding college seniors and college graduates without teaching experience who intend to become secondary school teachers of American history, American government, or social studies in grades 7-12. Junior Fellows must complete graduate study within 2 academic years of full-time study. *Senior fellowships* are awarded to superior current teachers who must be able to complete graduate study within 5 calendar years of part-time

study. The fellowships are intended exclusively for graduate study leading to a master's degree.

**Deadline:** 03/01/09

**Award amount:** up to \$24,000 for two years, not to exceed \$12,000 per academic year

<http://www.jamesmadison.com/>

## AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION DISSERTATION GRANTS

AERA INVITES education policy- and practice-related dissertation proposals using [NCES](#), [NSF](#), and other national data bases. Dissertation grants are available to support advanced doctoral students while they write the doctoral dissertation. Applications are encouraged from a variety of disciplines, such as education,

sociology, economics, psychology, demography, statistics and psychometrics.

**Deadline:** 03/06/09 to be reviewed in April

**Award amounts:** up to \$20,000 for one-year projects.

[http://www.aera.net/grantsprogram/res\\_training/diss\\_grants/DGFly.html](http://www.aera.net/grantsprogram/res_training/diss_grants/DGFly.html)

## RESOURCES FOR THE FUTURE: JOSEPH L. FISHER DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS

RFF WILL AWARD FELLOWSHIPS for the coming academic year in support of doctoral dissertation research on issues related to the environment, natural resources or energy. RFF's primary research disciplines are economics and other social sciences. Proposals from the physical or biological sciences must have an immediate and obvious link to environmental policy matters.

**Deadline:** 02/28/09

**Award Amount:** \$12,000 for the 2009-2010 academic year

[http://www.rff.org/rff/About/Fellowships and Internships/Fisher/Joseph-L-Fisher-Doctoral-Dissertation-Fellowships.cfm](http://www.rff.org/rff/About/Fellowships_and_Internships/Fisher/Joseph-L-Fisher-Doctoral-Dissertation-Fellowships.cfm)

**NOTE:** UNL's Office of Research sends out weekly announcements of funding opportunities, several of which relate to fellowships in a wide variety of fields of study. If you are interested in receiving these announcements, you can subscribe to the listserv by sending an e-mail to Nathan Meier at [nmeier2@unl.edu](mailto:nmeier2@unl.edu). Funding announcements archives also are available at <http://research.unl.edu/sp1/oldfa.shtml>.

### TEN QUICK TIPS FOR PUTTING TOGETHER A SUCCESSFUL FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

1. Review the program announcement carefully.
2. Develop an outline of your proposed graduate research and personal essays.
3. Discuss your proposed research with your adviser or mentor.
4. Conduct a literature search to learn about past research in your area.
5. Draft your Research Essay.
  - Emphasize the significance of your work and how you will communicate your results to the greater scientific community.
  - Describe what research areas you are passionate about.
6. Describe the link between your proposed plan of research and previous research experiences.
6. Revise your proposed plan of research & application essays multiple times, waiting several days to re-read and rewrite.
7. Have your mentors, friends and family read and critique your application essays.
8. Meet with your mentor or advisor to review your final research plan before you submit it.
9. Check application completeness and receipt of supplemental materials.
10. Mark absolute deadlines for the application on a calendar.

## Resources for Researchers

*Research tips and other information for graduate researchers*

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### LAB SAFETY INITIATIVE

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (EHS), in partnership with the Office of Research, is sponsoring a campus-wide Laboratory Safety Initiative to provide up-to-date safety information for Principal Investigators (PI), staff, and students who work in laboratories. The shared goal of EHS and the Office of Research in this safety initiative is to assist with

research by providing voluntary training in the latest laboratory safety procedures.

The next colloquium, Laser Safety: Hazards, Bioeffects, and Control Measures, will be held Feb. 11 in 110 Hamilton Hall from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. This colloquium is presented by Gus Anibarro from the Laser Institute of America.

Previous colloquia are available on-line at the Environmental Health & Safety web site: <http://ehs.unl.edu/training/#colloquium>, or the Office of Research web site: [http://research.unl.edu/ljsi\\_9-06.shtml](http://research.unl.edu/ljsi_9-06.shtml).

Address questions to Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, Environmental Health & Safety at 472-5488 or [ehowe2@unl.edu](mailto:ehowe2@unl.edu).

## Events

*Campus activities and other events of interest to graduate students*

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### DOCTORAL GRADUATION INFORMATION SESSIONS, FEB. 17, 18, & 26

ARE YOU A DOCTORAL STUDENT in your last semester at UNL? Are you planning to graduate in May or August? If so, attend an information session sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies. We'll "walk" you backwards from your graduation date, explaining the process and identifying the tasks you'll need to complete to graduate. You'll have an opportunity to ask questions regarding the process for applying to graduation, the graduation ceremony, and other graduation-related topics.

Attend one of these sessions if you plan to apply for spring or summer 2009 graduation.

Tue., Feb. 17, 3:30- 4:30 p.m., Nebraska Union  
Wed., Feb. 18, noon-1:00 p.m., East Union  
Thurs., Feb. 26, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Nebraska Union

Pre-register at:  
<http://graduate.unl.edu/rsvp/dissertation.php>. For more information, contact Eva Bachman at 472-8669.

### TEACHING & LEARNING WORKSHOPS, MARCH 9

THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES is sponsoring two workshops focusing on important teaching and learning issues. The featured presenter is Kathleen Yancey, Professor of English at Florida State University.

#### *Assessing General Education*

Monday, March 9, 10-11:30 p.m., Nebraska Union

This session will focus on the various purposes of general education assessment and strategies for making it sustainable and worthwhile for students, faculty, departments, colleges, and the university.

#### *Using E-Portfolios for Assessment*

Monday, March 9, 2-3:15 p.m., Andersen Hall

This session will focus on opportunities, challenges, and practices in the use of electronic portfolios for assessment.

Both sessions will allow time for discussion.

### WRITE WINNING GRANTS SEMINAR, MARCH 13

THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH is pleased to host the upcoming grant writing seminar, "Write Winning Grants" March 13, 2009, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Nebraska Union auditorium.

The UNL Office of Research hosts this seminar each year primarily for UNL faculty. However, if there is room, other UNL staff, post-doctoral research fellows and graduate students are welcome to attend without charge.

The seminar comprehensively addresses both practical and conceptual aspects important to the proposal writing process. Emphasis is given to such things as idea development, identification of appropriate granting agencies, how to write for reviewers, tips and strategies of proven value in presenting an applicant's case to reviewers.

Online registration is now open. [Click here](#) to register. For more information, contact Peg Filliez in the Office of Research at [pfilliez1@unl.edu](mailto:pfilliez1@unl.edu) or (402)472-2851.

## NEBRASKA LECTURE, APRIL 9

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND the spring Nebraska Lecture, *"I pass so poorly with paper and types": The Making and Remaking of Walt Whitman in a Digital Age*, April 9 at 3:30 p.m., in the Nebraska Union auditorium.

Kenneth M. Price, the Hillegass University Professor of nineteenth century literature and co-director of UNL's Center for Digital Research in the Humanities,

will discuss the Walt Whitman Archive, which allows anyone unparalleled access to Whitman's work. He'll also explain how digital technology has transformed humanities research.

The lecture is free and open to the public, with a reception following. It is sponsored by the Office of the Chancellor, the UNL Research Council and the Office of Research.

## 2009 RESEARCH FAIR AND GRADUATE STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION, APRIL 14-16

THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH invites you to attend the 2009 UNL Research Fair, a three-day event featuring collaboration, creativity, innovation and celebration of achievements. Whether you are a member of the faculty, an undergraduate or a graduate student, you will find opportunities to network with officers from federal agencies and engage colleagues in your current research work and ideas for the future.

Fair dates are April 14, 15 and 16 at the City Campus Union. More information is available at <http://researchfair.unl.edu/>. The schedule will be updated as the Fair dates draw near, so be sure to check periodically for new information. The 2009 Research Fair is free and open to the public.

In conjunction with the Research Fair, the Office of Research and the Nebraska Chapter of Sigma Xi will sponsor the 2009 *Graduate Student Poster Fair* on Wednesday, April 15. All graduate disciplines are welcome to participate and all participants will receive constructive feedback from faculty judges in their areas. This is a great opportunity to showcase your work and to grow professionally.

The deadline to register is April 3. More details will be posted soon at the Research Fair Web site. Questions may be directed to Michelle Howell Smith at 472-4458 or [mhowell2@unl.edu](mailto:mhowell2@unl.edu).

## Announcements

*News of note for graduate students*

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### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: 2009—2010 PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY FELLOWS

NOMINATIONS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED for the next class of Preparing Future Faculty fellows. To participate in the PFF program, you must be an advanced doctoral student at UNL selected by your department. Contact your department or graduate chair to express your interest in the PFF program and ask to be nominated. Once you've been selected as a fellow, you'll be enrolled in the summer seminar (GRDC 900A, 900B and 900D) and be matched with a PFF mentor.

The PFF program is part of the effort of the Office of Graduate Studies to enrich graduate education at UNL, providing doctoral students with opportunities to observe and experience faculty responsibilities at a

variety of academic institutions with varying missions, diverse student bodies and different expectations for faculty.

The first part of the program is a five-week, on-campus summer seminar. The second part takes place over the fall semester, as students make two to four visits to a partner campus in the Lincoln-Omaha area and participate in various mentoring activities. Fellows may opt for a spring mentoring activity at a second campus.

Participating fellows in the PFF program are paired with faculty mentors at partner institutions. After an initial consultation in the fall, fellows and their mentors construct an individual program of activities

designed to develop teaching competence, knowledge of the academic profession and an understanding of the partner institution's academic culture. Many PFF students find the mentorship experience to be the most helpful and rewarding aspect of the program, and they often maintain lasting professional relationships with their PFF mentors.

UNL Preparing Future Faculty alums can be found at Vassar, Pepperdine University, Wartburg College, South Dakota State, Texas State University-San

Marcos, University of Nebraska-Kearney, Hillsdale College, Seattle University, St. John's University, Creighton University, the University of Michigan Medical School, California Institute of Technology, the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory (Chemistry Division) and the University of St. Thomas.

For more information on any aspect of PFF, contact Dr. Laurie Bellows in the Office of Graduate Studies, [lbellows1@unl.edu](mailto:lbellows1@unl.edu) or 402-472-9764 or visit the [PFF Web site](#).

## REMINDERS FROM THE GRADUATE REGISTRAR

**March 6** is the last day to change to or from "pass/no pass."

**April 10** the last day to withdraw from classes. Please note withdrawals after that date must accompany a

signature from the instructor and supporting documentation.

Contact Jane Schneider at [jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu) or 402-472-8670 for more information.

## INVITATION: WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY SUMMER DOCTORAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY invites applications from doctoral candidates who are nearing completion of their graduate degrees and preparing for careers in higher education to attend a six-week Summer Doctoral Fellows Program (June 14 to July 25). Applications will be considered in the following colleges: Agricultural, Human and Natural Resource Sciences; Business; Education; Engineering and Architecture; Liberal Arts; Nursing; Pharmacy; Sciences; and Veterinary Medicine.

The purpose of the program is to provide selected doctoral students with the opportunity to work closely with faculty mentors at Washington State University in preparing for academic careers as future faculty members. During the program, fellows will:

- Work on completing dissertations or dissertation proposals
- Actively engage in seminars on the changing roles and expectations of faculty, the future of the professoriate, the changing nature of higher education, and issues facing faculty of color and women in higher education including the STEM disciplines
- Design individualized programs for enhancing their ability to teach, conduct research, and other scholarship

Interested candidates should submit a curriculum vitae, graduate school transcript, three letters of recommendation, and a 3-5 page career goals and research interest statement to:

Dr. Howard D. Grimes, Dean, Graduate School  
Attn: Summer Doctoral Fellows Program  
PO Box 641030  
Washington State University  
Pullman, WA 99164-1030

Please note that this year some funding will come from an NSF ADVANCE Institutional Transformation award to increase representation of women in academic STEM disciplines. STEM candidates should state their interest in being considered for the EXCELinSE Award

The deadline for receipt of applications or a notification of interest is March 15.

The program is designed primarily for U.S. citizens from diverse backgrounds.

For additional information and details of the program, please consult the Summer Doctoral Fellows Program page at <http://www.gradschool.wsu.edu/current-students/funding/fellowshipsandgrants/summerdoctoralfellows.html>, or contact Joe Merrill at (509) 335-6412 ([joem@wsu.edu](mailto:joem@wsu.edu)).

## KAREN DUNNING SCHOLARLY PAPER/CREATIVE ACTIVITY AWARD

THE WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES PROGRAM announces the Karen Dunning Scholarly Paper/Creative Activity Award for 2009. A cash award of \$200 will go to each of two undergraduate and two graduate students for a scholarly paper, research project or creative activity in Women's and Gender Studies. A creative project may include poetry, artwork, drama, dance, photography, music, etc.

Students must be currently registered at UNL to be eligible. The deadline for submission is March 12 at noon. Information and application materials are on the web at <http://www.unl.edu/womenssp>. Students can also call the Women's and Gender Studies office at 472-9392, or e-mail [gmoore3@unl.edu](mailto:gmoore3@unl.edu).

## ELECTRONIC COPIES OF ARTICLES FROM ENGINEERING LIBRARY NOW AVAILABLE

ON JAN. 12, THE UNL LIBRARIES started providing electronic copies of articles from journals housed in the Engineering Library, as well as the Library Depository Retrieval Facility (LDRF), to graduate and undergraduate students. Articles will be scanned and delivered electronically to students via their ILLiad

accounts. Library staff will scan the article for you. Journal volumes can still be loaned at the user's request.

With questions, contact the Interlibrary Loan Office at 472-2522, open 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. (M-F), located at 221 Love Library.

## Calendar

*Keep connected with the Grad Studies Calendar – important deadlines, dates and dealings you need to know about. For other deadlines related to graduation and degree completion, go to [www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/degrees).*

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### MASTER'S DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED MAY 2009

March 26	Submit final exam form (or four weeks prior to oral)
April 9	Preliminary copy of thesis
April 22	Incomplete grades must be removed
April 22	File results of written comprehensive exam and/or option II paper
April 23	Final day for oral examination
April 24	Deposit thesis and final examination report form; pay binding fee
May 8	Commencement

### DOCTORAL DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED MAY 2009

April 2	Application for final oral exam (or waiver); preliminary copy of dissertation/abstract; incomplete grades removed
April 23	Final day for oral examination
April 24	Dissertation deposit; dissertation grades; final fees; final forms
May 8	Doctoral hooding and commencement ceremony

## Word to the Wise

Tips for graduate students on a miscellany of topics

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### DISSERTATION SUPPORT GROUPS FOR PH.D. STUDENTS

FINISHING YOUR DISSERTATION? You don't have to go it alone. According to Michael Kiparsky, a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow in the Energy and Resources Group (ERG) at the University of California at Berkeley, a peer support group can "guide you through the confusion, improve your writing, and help you spend your time wisely."

Based on his own experiences, Kiparsky advises graduate students to form a dissertation-support group made up of fellow doctoral students. "Find one or two colleagues who are at about the same stage of research as you are. Meet once a week with the goal of furthering one another's progress." A peer support group will, in his words, "enhance your productivity."

What's the payoff? Kiparsky is emphatic: "Faster progress. The insights of your peers can be invaluable as you are developing ideas or writing. Having an audience for practice presentations and brainstorming sessions is helpful as well. Also, you can maximize your meetings with professors by preprocessing with your support group the first stages of a decision or research question. Consistent, regular input can help you break through stagnant periods, and harness the productive ones."

How to proceed? Based on his own experiences, Michael Kiparsky recommends the following:

**Limit the size of your group** to a maximum of three people. Any more than three will dilute the amount of time available for focused personal attention.

**Choose your members carefully.** Don't form a group with your friends. Do form a group with people you respect and admire for their productivity and savvy. Approach colleagues once you have thought through your needs, and get them on board for the goals you have developed.

**Disciplines don't matter** – much. Your colleagues can have very different research projects and backgrounds. Some congruence of interest and background is helpful, of course, but weekly discussions and shared written drafts will quickly make the members of your group the people who most deeply understand the ins and outs of your work.

Each member of the group should be at approximately the same stage of progress in his or her dissertation.

**Be businesslike.** Treat your group as a professional relationship and separate your professional interests from your personal ones.

**Meet weekly.** An ongoing understanding of the content and process of one another's research is the value of these meetings. You won't get that continuing support through occasional meetings with a professor, a lab group or journal club. Less frequent meetings will dilute your ability to participate in the substance of the other members' work, as you will need to spend more of your time catching up.

**Emphasize product.** Make a point of pushing each other to exchange written work often, even before you think you want to start writing the dissertation itself. Sharing outlines and unfinished subsections will help you clarify your thinking as you write.

**Limit your time.** Meetings of an hour to 90 minutes are long enough, and will force you to stay on task.

**Organize each session.** You can divide up the time so each member gets an equal share to discuss whatever is most important to them. Alternatively, you could focus the session on whoever has the most pressing needs that day; just make sure everyone feels well served over the long run.

Forming a dissertation-support group is a "commitment to involvement in others' work," writes Kiparsky. He notes that the meetings can be "some of the most valuable time" you spend on your own Ph.D. work. Having a core community that is familiar with not only the details of your current research, but also where you came from and how you have justified getting there, Kiparsky writes, "is priceless."

His conclusion: a dissertation support group can be a really good thing because "being happy in grad school is a beautiful thing, and that may be the most powerful secret weapon of all."

For more tips on forming a dissertation support group, see Kiparsky's 2007 article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*  
<http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2007/08/2007080801c.htm>

## Readers' Corner

Interesting reading for graduate students

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### RESOURCES FOR WRITING A THESIS OR DISSERTATION

#### Developing Quality Dissertations: A Graduate Student's Guide to Achieving Excellence

*Barbara Lovitts and Ellen Wert*

BARBARA LOVITTS AND ELLEN WERT have written three short booklets – one for the sciences, one for the social sciences, and one for humanities – that explain the purposes of the dissertation and the criteria by which it will be assessed. The booklets are designed to help students understand the context of their course work; the need to take an active role in shaping their studies; and the importance of thinking ahead about the components of the dissertation and the quality of scholarship they will need to demonstrate. Faculty and

advisers will find the booklets helpful for setting clear expectations for student performance and for helping students understand the desired quality of work. Included are rubrics that students can use to self-assess their work and that can aid faculty in providing focused feedback.

This book is available from [Stylus Publications](#).

#### Complete your Dissertation or Thesis in Two Semesters or Less

*Evelyn Hung Ogden*

THIS NEWLY UPDATED GUIDE describes how to manage the dissertation or thesis process in two semesters or less. Written for doctoral and master's degree students enrolled in on-campus programs and students pursuing accelerated and online-based degree programs, this book demystifies the seemingly daunting process. From choosing a topic and adviser, to efficient researching and the actual writing and defense, *Complete Your Dissertation or Thesis in Two Semesters or Less* provides students with all the information needed to conquer this academic experience. Updates to this edition include an update to the length of graduate studies and technological advantages now available to graduate students.

This book contains six chapters: 1) The Doctoral Facts of Life: The Beginning; 2) Researching Your Committee: The Really Critical Research Project; 3) Selecting a Dissertation Topic; 4) Spending Money and Using the Twenty-first Century to Your Advantage; 5) Designing Your Dissertation and Preparing the Prospectus and Proposal; 6) Writing The Dissertation: Twenty Workdays to Go!; 7) Defending the Dissertation: Two Hours to Doctor; and 8) Celebrating, the Last Revision, Post-Partum Depression.

Details available at [Amazon.com](#).

#### Other Resources for Completing a Thesis or Dissertation

Bryant, M. T. (2003). *The Portable Dissertation Advisor*. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Foss, S. K., & Walters W. (2007). *Destination Dissertation: A Traveler's Guide to a Done Dissertation*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Lanham, MD.

Glatthorn, A. A., & Joyner, R. L. (2005). *Writing the Winning Thesis or Dissertation: A Step-by-Step Guide*. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.

Sternberg, D. (1981). *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation*. St. Martin's Griffin: New York, NY.