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Graduate Connections



University of Nebraska–Lincoln

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

February 2010

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Navigating Graduate School

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

MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE COMPLETION: IT’S IN YOUR HANDS

IF YOU’RE NEW TO GRADUATE STUDIES you may not be familiar with its language—those terms used to describe the processes and procedures unique to graduate education. For example, “satisfactory” student progress refers to a student’s ability to demonstrate good academic standing and overall performance in program requirements, within an approved graduate program time frame.

The criteria for determining academic progress vary among departments and/or programs, but generally you are expected to make sufficient progress in the areas of established program milestones—those measurable and observable stages or events in your graduate program that serve as markers of performance. Graduate program milestones in a Ph.D. program include selecting a supervisory committee, completing coursework, passing qualifying exams and defending your dissertation.

Insufficient progress toward program milestones may result in an excessively long graduate career, causing you considerable frustration and possibly leading you to withdraw from your program. So it’s important that you understand the milestones specific to your graduate program and develop a system to monitor your progress.

One strategy for staying on track—and ensuring sufficient progress toward your degree goal—is to work closely with your adviser to develop a progress plan. Here’s how:

- 1) Identify the milestones specific to your graduate program and to UNL Graduate Studies’ policies. For example, how soon are you expected to establish a supervisory committee and file a program of study (or memorandum of courses, if you’re a master’s student)? At UNL, doctoral students are required to establish a supervisory committee *before* they’ve accumulated 45 credit hours (for Graduate Studies policies and procedures, be sure to read the [Graduate Bulletin](#) available on line).

- 2) Once you identify program milestones, determine, with your adviser, the measures of progress. For example, what is meant by sufficient or good progress? What is acceptable progress? It might be useful to think in terms of semesters.
- 3) Next, set a target date for meeting each goal. Try to be as specific as possible. For example, instead of declaring a broad date like “2010” for submitting your program of study, make it “September 20, 2010.”
- 4) Prepare a short written report on the progress you’ve made and include future plans/goals. Be sure to record your accomplishments along the way. If you’ve presented a conference paper, submitted a manuscript for publication or obtained an extramural grant, make note of these activities. This record will come in handy as you prepare for a job search or apply for a graduate award, and your adviser will find it helpful as a means to further measure your progress as a future professional. Provide a copy to your adviser and schedule a meeting to discuss your progress.
- 5) Finally, record the date you achieved each milestone, then celebrate. Have a hot fudge sundae, go to the park with your family, or just take a breather!

A Sample Graduate Student Progress Plan for the Ph.D.*

The milestones and timeframes listed here are examples only; meet with your faculty adviser to establish a timeline that is appropriate for you and your program.

Milestone	Good Progress	Acceptable Progress	Target Date	Completed
Choose a research adviser	2 semesters	3 semesters		
Form a supervisory committee	3 semesters	4 semesters		
Construct a program of study	3 semesters	4 semesters		
Pass qualifying exams (if required)	5 semesters	6 semesters		
Complete required coursework	6 semesters	8 semesters		
Complete written comprehensive exam	7 semesters	9 semesters		
Achieve admission to candidacy	7 semesters	9 semesters		
Submit and defend dissertation proposal	8 semesters	10 semesters		
Complete final oral examination (dissertation defense)	9 semesters	12 semesters		

A Sample Graduate Student Progress Plan for the Master’s Degree*

The milestones and timeframes listed here are examples only; meet with your faculty adviser to establish a timeline that is appropriate for you and your program.

Milestone	Good Progress	Acceptable Progress	Target Date	Completed
Select adviser	1 semester	2 semesters		
Submit memorandum of courses	1 semester	2 semesters		
Complete required courses	3 semesters	4 semesters		
Complete comprehensive exam (thesis defense)	4 semesters	5 semesters		

*Forms are adapted from a form originally devised by the University of Utah

GRADUATE SCHOOL GLOSSARY

HERE ARE SOME TERMS that apply to almost all graduate programs.

Academic Residency	Established after a student has met the requirement to enroll in a specified number of credit hours related to the degree within a specific time frame. Academic residency ensures a cohesive educational experience.
Advancement to Candidacy	Occurs when the student has completed a substantial number of the credit hours in his or her Program of Study and all research/language tools (if required), and has passed the comprehensive examination (oral or written, in whatever form the academic department administers it).
Candidacy	The final stage in doctoral education, which primarily involves conducting research and writing the dissertation.
Comprehensive Exam	An exam administered by the academic home department to discover if the student’s knowledge of the subject areas of study is sufficient to advance to the dissertation writing stage. Comprehensive exams may be written or oral.
CV	Also called a curriculum vitae, or just “vita,” the CV is used to apply for college and university teaching positions as well as for fellowships and industrial research jobs. Those applying for administrative positions in academe may be asked for either a résumé or a CV.
Defense	The final requirement for the dissertation and the final oral examination on a doctoral candidate’s dissertation.
Full-time Certification	The process of certifying a student’s enrollment status while enrolled less than full time (9 hours). Certification allows the student to maintain full time enrollment status while working on dissertation research.
Full-time status – Graduate Student	Refers to enrollment in a minimum number of graduate-level credits per semester. At UNL, full-time status requires enrollment in a minimum of 9 graduate level credit hours per semester.
Hooding	An official ceremony celebrating the completion of a doctoral degree program, the highest level of educational achievement. Each institution has a unique doctoral hood. At UNL’s graduate commencement ceremony, doctoral students are “hooded” by their faculty advisers.
IRB	The Institutional Review Board is an internal administrative body of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln responsible for reviewing and authorizing study protocols for research involving human subjects.

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 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.

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Memorandum of Courses	Also known as a program or plan of study. At UNL, it must be filed before the student has received grades (letter grades, no reports or incompletes) in no more than half of the prescribed program, and must be approved by the student's adviser, the departmental graduate committee, the graduate committee(s) in the student's minor(s) in other departments, and the dean of graduate studies.
PFF	Preparing Future Faculty is a program that helps advanced doctoral students prepare for academic careers.
Postdoc	Short for "postdoctoral fellow," this term refers to someone who holds the Ph.D. (or M.D., other doctorate or the equivalent) and goes to a university, research center, industrial business or other institution with the purpose of engaging in research or participating in advanced training programs. Refer to the UNL Office of Postdoctoral Studies Web site for more information.
Program of Studies	An outline or plan of coursework to be taken to fulfill the requirements of a doctoral degree. May include transfer credits from a previous master's degree or graduate work and must be approved by the doctoral committee.
Qualifying Exam	Also known as "quals," these exams are common to many science and math graduate departments. Students who have completed coursework for a doctoral degree must pass an examination before embarking on the dissertation. A qualifying examination may be oral, written or both.
Research Compliance	Federal law requires that students who intend to engage in research that involves human or animal subjects, radiation, biohazardous agents, etc. receive approval of their research procedures before beginning to collect data. Go to the Office of Research Responsibility Web site to find out how to assure compliance.
Supervisory Committee	A faculty committee that advises the student on academic matters and is usually the examining committee for the doctoral comprehensive and/or oral defense.
Time-to-degree	The amount of time a graduate student has to complete his or her degree program from the time of admission into graduate school.

AN ORALS SURVIVAL KIT

By Eric Hallstein, Michael Kiparsky & Anne Short

Reprinted with permission from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 14, 2009

<http://chronicle.com/article/An-Orals-Survival-Kit/47547/>

TOO OFTEN, NO ONE EXPLAINS to graduate students what to expect of their comprehensive exams.

It is like standing in front of a firing squad. Your executioners are four professors who are experts in their fields. You writhe before them as they take turns posing questions almost beyond your grasp. The threat hangs constantly over your head: Fail to satisfy them, and your graduate career will end.

That's how many graduate students imagine their oral exam. But the reality doesn't have to be that bad.

While it's true that a Ph.D. oral exam can be the most terrifying hurdle in graduate school, it can also be a positive and rewarding experience. Truly. For many students, the stress associated with preparing for orals is largely because they will experience the exam format for the first, and last, time. Too often, no one explains what to expect or how to prepare.

We know because we've been there. We're all doctoral students in the sciences and social sciences who have successfully passed our oral exams. And we are about to let you in on the real secret of orals: The outcome can be determined, in large part, in advance of the actual test. Your performance is the end product of a much longer process of collaborative learning and demonstration of knowledge that starts when you first meet the members of your exam committee.

The scope, structure, and timing of oral exams vary among institutions and departments. Some exams test your subject-area knowledge, some focus on your proposed research, and many cover a combination of the two. The nature of the exam may not be clearly spelled out to students, or it may be difficult to understand before you have been through the experience.

Your first task is to clarify what your exam will be about. As far in advance as possible, talk with students, faculty members, and advisers to answer some basic questions: What will be the structure of your exam? How much material will it cover? Will the exam focus on knowledge of your chosen fields, your proposed research, or both? Note that there may not be one-size-fits-all answers even within a single department.

As you proceed through your preparation, make a conscious decision about what the oral exam means to you. Frame it as an opportunity, rather than an obstacle, as you solidify your expertise, refine your research plan, and strengthen your relationships with members of your exam committee (some of whom may serve on your dissertation committee). This process will not only help you develop more effective studying and organizational habits, but also help you become proficient at discussing your research.

Prepare your exam committee. As soon as you know the members of your committee, meet individually with each of them. Every interaction you have with your committee will make the exam itself more predictable and your preparation more focused.

It's helpful to view those conversations as informal, friendly negotiations. In many cases, you can steer your committee members toward your objectives, although you should not expect to perfectly predict what will be on the exam.

If you have the freedom to construct your own committee, select people you like, people who like you, and people whom you think will like one another. If your department assigns faculty members to your committee, learn as much as you can about them and their research.

Ask committee members about their exam style and about the scope of the exam. It's fair to ask: "I know the exam will mostly be an extemporaneous conversation, but are there particular topics you want me to demonstrate knowledge of?" (Note: This question is one step away from "What are you going to ask me?") You need to establish expectations clearly with your committee to avoid nasty surprises and help make your studying efficient. Overcommunicate.

Try to meet with each committee member once or twice a month. That may not be normal practice in all departments, but push for it if you can. In each meeting, choose a topic, a book, or a paper to discuss, so as to gradually demonstrate your knowledge and expose areas that deserve more attention.

Develop reading lists. Many students are responsible for identifying their exam "fields" and developing reading lists that will define the content of the exam.

Define your fields carefully. Write a brief statement that delineates each field and how it relates to your research. That statement will help you create a focused reading list and may give your committee a better sense of the boundaries of your preparation.

Keep your reading lists as short as possible, but remember that expectations range widely. Natural science students in our program may have 10 seminal journal articles on their reading lists, while social science students often have dozens of books. In many departments, your reading list is a proxy for a wider body of knowledge you are expected to know. It includes the context, theory, and significance of the articles. Even a short list can be quite comprehensive. To really understand a key paper, you may have to trace it backward and forward in time, reading papers it cites and those that cite it later.

Discuss your reading list with your committee members as early as possible. Start small, as professors are more likely to add to a draft reading list than to subtract.

Organize and study. The oral exam is probably unlike any test you have ever taken. You will need a good system of taking notes and synthesizing information. You will also want to practice communicating your knowledge and thinking on your feet during the exam. Given the magnitude of the studying involved here, burnout is common. Our suggestions:

Project management is critical since you will work toward a test date many months in advance. Before you pick an exam date, create a study syllabus that realistically charts out a schedule for mastering your readings and for accomplishing other key milestones. Leave plenty of time to synthesize information and allow some elbow room for the inevitable slowdowns. Make sure your schedule includes a couple of long weekends off. Once you've mapped out a time line, stick to it.

Create a support group to work through concepts with others, and practice expressing your ideas orally.

Don't forget what is not on the list - you are being evaluated on your general expertise, so give yourself latitude to think broadly during your studying. Make a point to know the major historic breakthroughs and shifts in your fields. In addition to each text, understand the main ideas, themes, actors, and conflicts of your fields.

Many people find it effective to build the overall picture of their field as they study, rather than waiting until the end. Pace yourself. You want to know what authors said (or did) and how each one relates to the others.

For each reading, ask: How does this reading affect or influence my research? The reading could influence the study design or framing, exemplify a theoretical argument, or highlight a gap. The exam is about your ability to engage with the material, not to memorize it.

Write, write, and write some more. Orals are unlike class exams where you have to remember the material for only a few days. You need to become fluent in your discipline. Whether it is on notecards or multipage appendices, it is helpful for most people to systematically take notes on each source as soon as they finish reading it. You may want to record a two-sentence summary and list methods, key findings, and the source's relevance to your research. Those summaries will be a helpful reference for your studying.

Get some rest. Connections happen best when one is rested. Fresh ideas often emerge spontaneously in off hours.

The final push. In the final few weeks leading up to the exam, shift your focus toward synthesis of your readings, clear articulation of your ideas, and understanding the broader context of your chosen fields. The broad relevance of your subject matter is fair game in many departments. Think about how your topic fits into the "real world." Read the newspaper, attend relevant seminars, skim relevant journals.

About three weeks before your exam, recruit a few senior students to create a mock version. Follow that with a second mock exam a week later. Take those sessions seriously. Many students find practicing for orals to be their most important study aid. Even if you know the material, you need to practice communicating what you know under pressure.

About two weeks before the exam, start scaling back on your studying. Your mind needs time to rest and prepare. Shift from learning new material to synthesizing. Just before the exam, take a day or two off completely. Do something fun to help you relax. Get plenty of sleep.

Exam day. You are ready. Your hard work is about to pay off. Focus on the immense amount you have learned, not on the details that may have slipped through the cracks. The people on your committee want you to succeed - even if they might make you sweat in the process.

If you give a presentation, use it to show your committee members that you are ready for whatever they throw at you, and as a way to try to steer the conversation. Consider bringing a couple extra copies of written materials you have prepared, such as your research proposal or syntheses of your fields. Take notes as you are questioned and briefly outline your responses.

Try as much as possible to make the oral exam a conversation, rather than a question-and-answer session. Think of yourself as a teacher, rather than as someone being examined. You just may know more about the questions being asked than anyone else in the room.

If you are unclear about what a faculty member is asking, request clarification. If you are stuck and unable to proceed, ask for a slight push in the right direction. It can sometimes help to work things through from first principles. State your assumptions clearly before launching into quantitative derivations or theoretical discussions. That way, faculty members can more easily understand what you are doing and redirect you, if necessary.

Remember to breathe. The central goal of the oral exam is to find the limits of your knowledge. You will be pushed into discussing things you do not know well. At some point, "I don't know" is a correct answer. However, "I don't know, but here is how I would go about answering that question ..." is always a better one.

After the exam. Celebrate. Invite your friends out and take a well-deserved hiatus so that you are ready to return to your work.

The strong relationships you have built, the intellectual foundation you have established, and the approaches to learning you have developed will all help you to write your dissertation. In the end, the oral exam can be a satisfying entry point into the next phase of your research.

QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED BY GRADUATE STUDENTS

GRADUATE STUDENTS ARE FAMOUS for juggling a number of priorities: classes, research, undergraduate mentoring or teaching, and department commitments to name just a few. Somewhere in there you have a social life too. It's easy to forget some of the administrative requirements on the way to degree completion. To help you out, we've put together the answers to a few frequently asked questions.

How many hours may I transfer from another university? Master's students may transfer up to one-half of the program (normally 15 to 18 hours), provided the courses are being transferred from an accredited institution, are graduate level with satisfactory grades and have not been used for any other degree. Professional courses may not be transferred toward a graduate degree. All transfer credits must be approved by the academic department.

Doctoral students may use graduate credit hours received from an institution other than UNL to fulfill up to half of the total credit hours on the program of studies required by the supervisory committee to meet the degree requirements. The minimum number of credits required to obtain a doctorate at UNL is 90. These courses are reviewed by the supervisory committee at the time of the approval of the Program of Studies. All credits must be from graduate level, non-professional courses.

How long do I have to complete my degree? Master's students have ten years from the first course listed on the memorandum of courses to complete the degree. Courses exceeding the ten-year limit may not be used toward a master's degree.

Doctoral students have eight years from the end of the semester in which their program of studies is approved by the Graduate Studies Office. All coursework, including any required research/language tools, must be completed, comprehensive exams taken and the dissertation written, defended and deposited within that time frame.

When do I need to file my memorandum of courses or program of studies? Master's students need to submit the memorandum of courses prior to completion of more than one-half of the program, typically 15 to 18 credit hours (incompletes and no reports count toward this number).

Doctoral and specialist students need to submit the program of studies with 45 hours remaining to be taken. The Appointment of Supervisory Committee form should be filed for approval before the program of studies is submitted.

How can I change my memorandum of courses or program of studies? Your adviser should send an e-mail to Terri Eastin at teastin1@unl.edu (master's) or Eva Bachman at ebachman1@unl.edu (doctoral) stating the original course(s) listed and the name/number of the replacement course(s).

Am I eligible to use the full-time status form? Doctoral students who have been granted candidacy or thesis-seeking master's students may be eligible to submit the Certification of Full Time Graduate Status form each semester and, if enrolling for summer sessions, one for the entire summer. A full-time status form indicates that a student is full-time carrying less than 9 hours. The form is located on the [Graduate Studies Web site](#). Doctoral students may use this form for a period of two consecutive years (six times); master's students may use this form for one year (a maximum of three times).

Who can be my outside representative on the doctoral supervisory committee? Supervisory committees for doctoral students must consist of four University of Nebraska graduate faculty members. The outside representative must be a graduate faculty member outside the student's program/department but within the University of Nebraska system on any of the campuses. Courtesy members are ineligible to serve as outside representatives.

What are the deadlines for the next graduation? The [Graduate Studies Web site](#) provides all kinds of important information about degree completion, including the necessary forms and relevant deadlines. Select your graduate term for appropriate deadlines: [Master's](#), [Doctoral](#), or [Specialist](#).

If you have additional questions, please contact Eva Bachman, doctoral programs specialist, ebachman1@unl.edu, or Terri Eastin, master's programs specialist, teastin1@unl.edu.

Good Practices in Graduate Education

Advice and strategies to strengthen ethics in graduate education

26 GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM, SELF-PLAGIARISM AND QUESTIONABLE WRITING PRACTICES

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES are taken directly from "Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing" written by Miquel Roig from St. John's University, with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Research Integrity. <http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/plagiarism/>.

1. Ethical writers ALWAYS acknowledge the contributions of others and the source of their ideas.
2. Any verbatim text taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks.
3. We must always acknowledge every source we use in our writing, whether we paraphrase it, summarize it or enclose it in quotations.
4. When we summarize, we condense, in our own words, a substantial amount of material into a short paragraph or perhaps even into a sentence.
5. Whether we are paraphrasing or summarizing we must always identify the source of our information.
6. When paraphrasing and/or summarizing others' work, we must reproduce the exact meaning of the ideas or facts using our words and sentence structure.
7. In order to make substantial modifications to the original text that result in a proper paraphrase, the author must have a thorough understanding of the ideas and terminology being used.
8. Responsible writers have an ethical responsibility to readers and to the author/s from whom they are borrowing to respect others' ideas and words, to credit those from whom they borrow, and whenever possible, to use their own words when paraphrasing.
9. When in doubt as to whether a concept or fact is common knowledge, provide a citation.
10. Authors who submit a manuscript for publication containing data, reviews, conclusions, etc., that have already been disseminated in some significant manner (e.g., published as an article in another journal, presented at a conference, posted on the internet) must clearly indicate to the editors and readers the nature of the previous dissemination.
11. Authors of complex studies should heed the advice previously put forth by Angell & Relman (1989). If the results of a single complex study are best presented as a 'cohesive' single whole, they should not be partitioned into individual papers. Furthermore, if there is any doubt as to whether a paper submitted for publication represents fragmented data, authors should enclose other papers (published or unpublished) that might be part of the paper under consideration (Kassirer & Angell, 1995). Similarly, old data that have been merely augmented with additional data points and that are subsequently presented as a new study can be an equally serious ethical breach.
12. Because some instances of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and even some writing practices that might otherwise be acceptable (e.g., extensive paraphrasing or quoting of key elements of a book) can constitute copyright infringement, authors are strongly encouraged to become familiar with basic elements of copyright law.
13. While there are some situations where text recycling is an acceptable practice, it may not be so in other situations. Authors are urged to adhere to the spirit of ethical writing and avoid reusing their own previously published text, unless it is done in a manner consistent with standard scholarly conventions (e.g., by using quotations and proper paraphrasing).
14. Authors are strongly urged to double check their citations. Specifically, authors should always ensure that each reference notation

appearing in the body of the manuscript corresponds to the correct citation listed in the reference section and vice versa and that each source listed in the reference section has been cited at some point in the manuscript. In addition, authors should also ensure that all elements of a citation (e.g., spelling of authors' names, volume number of journal, pagination) are derived directly from the original paper, rather than from a citation that appears on a secondary source. Finally, authors should ensure that credit is given to those authors who first reported the phenomenon being studied.

15. The references used in a paper should only be those that are directly related to its contents. The intentional inclusion of references of questionable relevance for purposes of manipulating a journal's or a paper's impact factor or a paper's chances of acceptance is an unacceptable practice.
16. Authors should follow a simple rule. Strive to obtain the actual published paper. When the published paper cannot be obtained, cite the specific version of the material being used, whether it is conference presentation, abstract, or an unpublished manuscript.
17. Generally, when describing others' work, do not rely on a secondary summary of that work. It is a deceptive practice, reflects poor scholarly standards, and can lead to a flawed description of the work described. Always consult the primary literature.
18. If authors must rely on a secondary source (e.g., textbook) to describe the contents of a primary source (e.g., an empirical journal article), they should consult writing manuals used in their discipline to follow the proper convention to do so. Above all, always indicate the actual source of the information being reported.
19. When borrowing heavily from a source, authors should always craft their writing in a way that makes clear to readers which ideas are their own and which are derived from the source being consulted.
20. When appropriate, authors have an ethical responsibility to report evidence that runs

contrary to their point of view. In addition, evidence that we use in support of our position must be methodologically sound. When citing supporting studies that suffer from methodological, statistical, or other types of shortcomings, such flaws must be pointed out to the reader.

21. Authors have an ethical obligation to report all aspects of the study that may impact the independent replicability of their research.
22. Researchers have an ethical responsibility to report the results of their studies according to their a priori plans. Any post hoc manipulations that may alter the results initially obtained, such as the elimination of outliers or the use of alternative statistical techniques must be clearly described along with an acceptable rationale for using such techniques.
23. Authorship determination should be discussed prior to commencing research collaboration and should be based on established standards, such as those of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.
24. Only those individuals who have made substantive contributions to a project merit authorship in a paper.
25. Faculty-student collaborations should follow the same criteria to establish authorship. Mentors must exercise great care to neither award authorship to students whose contributions do not merit it, nor deny authorship and due credit to the work of students.
26. Academic or professional ghost authorship in the sciences is ethically unacceptable.

Angell, M., & Relman, A.S. (1989). Redundant publication. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 320, 1212-1214.

Kassirer, J. P. & Angell, M. (1995). Redundant publication: A reminder. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 333, 449- 450. Retrieved 3/7/03 from <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/full/333/7/449>.

NOTE: UNL's Robert J. Kutak Center for the Teaching and Study of Applied Ethics is offering a session on "Responding to Plagiarism" on March 25 as part of its [Brownbag Luncheon Series](#).

Professional Development Network

Tips and strategies to give graduate students a leg up in launching a professional career

10 RECOMMENDATIONS TOWARD EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

By Willis M. Watt

Academic Leader, 24(1) (January 2008): 1, 8.

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DAVID W. LESLIE, CHANCELLOR PROFESSOR of education at the College of William and Mary, notes that “colleges and universities have presented leadership conundrums...from the most varied perspectives...Yet this vast trove of purported wisdom remains somehow unsatisfying and desperately random” (Wergin, 2007, p. xv). That is to say, despite all that has been written about leadership, the question still remains: What does it take to be an effective leader?

At the risk of being redundant, I wish to share 10 recommendations that I am convinced enhance an individual’s ability to be an effective leader. These principles are based on the concept of “leading in place” as recently popularized by Wergin and Shapiro. Shapiro (2005) states, “Leadership is an action, not a title, and the ability to lead can be found in every person. Each of us must claim our authority to lead at the right time and in the right place” (p. 1).

Here are 10 characteristics that I have found to positively contribute to effective emergent leadership. My suggestions are presented in a David Letterman-ish style, beginning with the least and advancing to the most important.

Number 10: Follow procedures and adhere to policies. Effective leaders are essentially good followers. They understand that they are accountable to those in authority. They know it is not a good idea to behave as a lone wolf, but that they must instead keep their work priorities aligned with the organization’s goal and have an appropriate sense of self-importance. People who lead in place value the necessity of following procedures and adhering to established policies.

Number 9: Submit to the authority of others. Closely related to number 10 is the recognition that we are all under the authority of someone, whether it is a supervisor, director, president, board of governors, or whomever else.

Number 8: Take risks. Sometimes it is necessary for leaders to step outside the box, to be innovative. Leaders must be flexible enough to know when it is time to try a new procedure or implement a new policy.

For many taking a risk is frightening, but such behavior can be invaluable, benefiting the entire group.

Number 7: Commitment. Any person who assumes a leadership role needs to be committed to the group. The group’s vision and mission must be internalized by the leader. An effective leader is a person who can commit to using his or her ability to lead others, perform technical skills, and conceptualize situations, thus helping to ensure goal achievement.

Number 6: Be proactive. Covey (1989) points out the need to be proactive. Individuals who assume leadership must take the proverbial bull by the horns and move forward to be successful.

Number 5: Expect conflict. Conflict among people is a natural, inevitable, and constant factor of human interaction. An effective leader expects conflict and is able to manage it in a productive manner.

Number 4: Tell the truth, but with compassion. To some degree conflicts occur because people are not able to differentiate between task-related conflict issues and their personal investment in a given situation. Bracey, Rosenblum, Sanford, and Trueblood (1990) point out the importance of truthfulness in leadership. Yet at the same time the leader must compassionately tell the truth (e.g., about a faculty member’s job performance, etc.).

Number 3: Listen. Communication plays a vital role in the achievement of interpersonal and organizational goals. Communication is a two-way process. Effective communication requires leaders capable of effective listening. Covey’s (1989) Habit #5, Seek First to Understand, Then Seek to Be Understood, reflects the epitome of effective listening. Ineffective listening undermines people’s self-esteem, self-confidence, and creativity. Remember, hearing and listening are not synonymous terms.

Number 2: Love people. Roger D’Aprix stated that leaders must be “loving in [their] organizational relationships” (cited in Goldhaber, 1993, p. 217). “Loving” in this context means that we acknowledge the value of our coworkers and respect them with the

dignity they deserve. We let them know that we care for them whether we like them or not. The bottom line is that individuals must value people and relationships with them if they are to claim their “authority” to lead.

Number 1: Check your attitude. I contend that effective leadership begins with a correct mindset. That mind-set is founded upon an individual’s willingness to lead, to serve others. An effective leader desires the opportunity to step up to be involved in controlling not only his or her personal actions, but the actions of those being led. This leadership attitude flows from a reasoned choice; it is a conscious decision to take on the role with all its rights and responsibilities. Amid the natural chaos and interpersonal interactions, effective leaders are able to demonstrate a fixed purpose. Such leadership is determined to ensure not only that personal goals are reached, but more important, that the group achieves its objectives and fulfills its mission. Those who seek to lead in place must be compelled to lead no matter the personal cost.

In closing, allow me to point out that these characteristics are not some magic formula for success, nor do they serve as a 10-step program like the AA 12-step recovery program; but when you adopt these characteristics and their underlying principles, I am certain that you will be a more effective leader.

I agree with David W. Leslie, chancellor professor of education, that there has been a lot of thinking,

theorizing, and writing about leadership. Yet I am convinced that we should continue to explore what constitutes effective leadership. In doing so it may be that we can bring greater clarity to what it takes to lead effectively.

Based on what I have shared, I do not pretend that I have answered the question of what it takes to be an effective leader. Hopefully, however, by sharing my thoughts about leading in place, I have added to the wisdom of literature concerning effective leadership.

These characteristics are based on my leading in place for more than 30 years in the academic community. Let me encourage you to take action, to claim your authority to lead when the time comes, in the right place.

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STRATEGIES FOR GETTING STUDENTS TO READ

CLASSROOM RESEARCH SUGGESTS that, for any given day and assignment, only 20-30% of the students have completed the assigned course reading, which means instructors are often attempting to facilitate learning when the majority of students have not yet been exposed to the background material or other information necessary to master course concepts.

Eric Hobson, Director of The Excellence in Teaching Center at Georgia Southern University, offers a number of tips for instructors to increase the likelihood that students will read. Among them:

1. Recognize that not every course needs a textbook. If no available text offers a good fit with your course, consider a reading packet or a recommended reading list.
2. Use your syllabus as a teaching tool. A learner-centered syllabus can help students understand why

the reading assignments contribute to learning and how they relate to other course content and course activities.

3. Explain the reading assignment’s relevance to the course topic. Making the implicit explicit helps novice readers make the connections between seemingly dissimilar or loosely related items. The more you connect course readings and course learning goals, the more likely students will see the reading material as relevant and worthwhile.
4. Assign reading close to the “use date” — the class session during which the information contained in the reading will be used. When short, but frequent, reading lists are assigned close to the “use date,” students are more likely to read the assignments.

Teaching Tip

THE ONE-WORD JOURNAL

This is a simple technique described by Angelo and Cross (1991) to encourage students to read and to reflect on what they read.

Ask students to choose a single word that best summarizes the reading and then write a page or less explaining or justifying the word choice and reflecting their summary and knowledge of the text. Students should cite examples that explain why that particular word summarizes the text, main ideas and concepts, and how the word choice reflects any emotions that arose from reading the text.

Keep in mind that the choice of a specific word is less important than the quality of the explanation for that choice. This assignment can then be used as a basis for class discussion.

A variation reported by Erickson and Strommer (1991) is to ask students to write one complex sentence in answer to a question you pose about the readings and provide three sources of supporting evidence. For example, "In one sentence, identify the type of ethical reasoning Singer uses in his article 'Famine, Affluence, and Morality.' Quote three passages that reveal this type of ethical reasoning."

Another quick journaling solution lies in writing "headlines" to capture the essence of the reading. Encourage students to have fun with this exercise by playing with alliteration, humor, metaphors, verse, parody, rhyming, puns and dualities.

<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/motivate.html> Barbara Gross Davis, UC Berkeley, Tools for Teaching

5. Help students "into the text" by previewing the reading. Students are more likely to read an assignment when they've been told something interesting about it or about how it connects to previous or future course topics.
6. Include class activities that encourage students to read. Reading guides, study questions and short writing assignments are examples of activities that will engage students in the reading material. (See Teaching Tip for one idea.)
7. Allow in-class time (approximately 15 minutes) for students to read or review material that is central to the class lecture or activities.
8. Teach reading strategies overtly. Some students may need to learn even such basic skills as text marking.
9. Monitor students' reading. Periodically ask students to anonymously report if they've completed the reading assignment for a given class period. There are myriad ways to assess whether students are keeping up on their reading, and you also can gain valuable insight into the beliefs students have about course-linked reading and the rationale(s) they use in choosing to read—or not read—for class.
10. Get assistance when you need it. Few instructors are trained to teach reading.

Adapted from IDEA Paper #40 *Getting Students to Read: Fourteen Tips* by Eric H. Hobson, Georgia Southern University 2004 The IDEA Center

HELPING TROUBLED STUDENTS

CONFLICTS WITH TROUBLED STUDENTS can happen when you least expect them. From a student angry about a bad grade to a one who comes to you for help with a personal problem, it's wise to be prepared. Your response could significantly affect the student's ability to constructively deal with the problem.

One way to be prepared is to be aware of behaviors that may indicate a student is in trouble. Sometimes grades and attendance can provide clues. If an undergraduate student repeatedly requests special allowances for late work or absences, begins receiving unaccountably poor grades or misses classes when attendance was not previously a problem, your student may be in trouble. Other times, emotional responses such as highly disruptive behavior, an exaggerated or inappropriate emotional response or a marked change in personal hygiene can signal a problem.

Dr. Robert Portnoy, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services, lists some of the more prevalent signs of someone in distress. This list is intended to provide basic information only.

- **Depression.** While we all may feel depressed from time to time, "normal" depressions may consist of only one or two symptoms and usually pass within days. Clinically depressed students will exhibit multiple symptoms for a longer period of time. Some of these symptoms are sleep disturbances, poor concentration, change in appetite, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, withdrawal, poor hygiene, loss of self-esteem and preoccupation with death.

- **Agitation or acting out.** Departures from normal or socially appropriate behavior might include disruptiveness, restlessness or hyperactivity, antagonism, and an increase in alcohol and/or drug abuse.
- **Disorientation.** Some distressed students may seem “out of it.” They may exhibit a diminished awareness of what is going on around them, forgetfulness, misperception of facts or reality, rambling or disconnected speech, and behavior that seems out of context or bizarre.
- **Drug and alcohol abuse.** Signs of intoxication during class or interaction with university officials are indicative of a problem that requires attention.
- **Suicidal thoughts.** Most people who attempt suicide communicate early messages about their distress. These messages can range from “I don't want to be here,” to a series of vague “goodbyes,” to “I'm going to kill myself.” Non-verbal messages could include giving away valued items and putting legal, financial and academic affairs in order. All of the above messages should be taken seriously.
- **Violence and aggression.** You may become aware of students who may be dangerous to others, manifested by physically violent behavior, verbal threats, threatening e-mail or letters, harassing or stalking behavior, or papers or exams that contain violent or threatening material.
- **Avoid escalation.** Distressed students can sometimes be easily provoked. Avoid threatening, humiliating and intimidating responses. It is usually not a good idea to “pull rank” and assert authority unless you are certain of the student's mental health status. Distressed students need you to listen and affirm their feelings. You can always remind them of the rules at a later time.
- **Ask direct questions.** Take a calm and matter-of-fact approach. Ask students directly if they are drunk, confused or if they have thoughts of harming themselves. You need not be afraid to ask these questions. You will not be “putting ideas in their heads” by doing so. Most distressed students are relieved to know that someone has noticed and is paying attention.
- **Do not assume you are being manipulated.** While it is true that some students appear distressed in order to get attention or relief from responsibility, only a thorough assessment can determine this. Attention-seekers can have serious problems and be in danger, too.
- **Know your limits.** You will be able to assist many distressed students on your own by simply listening and referring them for further help. Some students will, however, need much more than you can provide. Accept that you may not be out of your depth and facilitate an appropriate referral. Some signs that you may have over-extended yourself include: Feeling stressed out or overwhelmed by the situation, feeling angry at the student, feeling afraid, having thoughts of “adopting” or otherwise rescuing the student, or reliving similar experiences of your own.

Knowing what to look for can help you identify a troubled student. But what should you do when he or she does come to you for help?

Most situations can be handled by talking to the student away from other disturbances, giving the student your undivided attention and staying in control of your emotions. Let the student know you are listening, and convey support by summarizing what the student says.

While you aren't expected to be a “watchdog” or provide a thorough assessment, you may be the first contact for a student in distress and in a position to ask a few questions. According to Dr. Portnoy, following these guidelines can lead to a positive outcome for all parties.

- **Safety first!** Always keep safety in mind as you interact with a distressed student. Maintain a safe distance and a route of escape should you need it. If danger to you or the student seems imminent, call the UNL Police Department at 472-2222.

When a student trusts you enough to come to you with problems, this does not mean you should provide ongoing counseling. The best outcomes are likely to occur when you refer the student to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS; 472-7450) for an appointment during office hours. Again, if you ever feel that you, the student or other students are in danger, call 472-2222 for the University Police immediately.

If you have concerns about a student or just don't know how to approach a specific situation, contact CAPS for a consultation at 472-7450.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Fall Campuswide Workshops for Graduate Teaching Assistants	Professional development workshops Professional development courses	Individual consultation on teaching, careers, job searches
Institute for International Teaching Assistants Preparing Future Faculty Program	Teaching Documentation Program Assistance gathering student feedback	Advice on creating an academic career portfolio

Funding Opportunities

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

NOTE: UNL's Office of Research and Economic Development 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. Funding announcements archives also are available at <http://research.unl.edu/sp1/oldfa.shtml>.

UNL DOCTOR OF PLANT HEALTH PROGRAM FELLOWSHIPS

THE DOCTOR OF PLANT HEALTH PROGRAM, a graduate level professional program for plant practitioners across multiple disciplines, addresses the detection, diagnosis and management of all plant health issues. UNL's DPH program has been awarded a USDA-NIFA National Needs Graduate Fellowship grant. This grant will fund three fellowships for students entering the DPH program UNL – two beginning August 2010 and one beginning January 2011. Each fellowship will award \$24,500 per year for three years.

Evaluation of candidates for the two fall semester fellowships will begin Feb. 15 and will continue until suitable candidates are identified. Evaluation for the January 2011 award begins Aug. 1. For more information about qualifications and application

procedures, visit the [DPH Program Fellowship Web page](#).

Additional DPH fellowships also are available, including the BASF-FEAE/NAICC and the Syngenta-FEAE/NAICC industry fellowships of \$30,000 each. Multiple DPH Program Curtis Fellowships of \$20,000 each are also available.

All fellowships will be competitively awarded, and students will automatically be considered for available fellowships when they have been accepted into the DPH program. The DPH application procedures and the most current fellowship opportunities are found at the [DPH Web site](#). Contact Dr. Gary Hein (402-472-3345; ghein1@unl.edu), program director, for more information.

JAMES MADISON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

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: 03/01/10

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

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

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's Oak Ridge National Laboratory facility.

Deadline: ongoing

Award amount: \$525 per week for master's research; \$550 per week for Ph.D. research; \$105/week housing allowance, one round trip between home or school and ORNL, tuition and fees for off-campus programs

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

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: 04/01/10

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/>

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: 06/15/10 for fall 2010 internship (09/07-12/10/2010)

Award amount: weekly stipend of \$225.

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

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 for advanced doctoral students and are intended to support students while they write the doctoral dissertation. Applications are encouraged from a variety of disciplines, such as (but not limited to)

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

Deadlines: 03/16/10 to be reviewed in May

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

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: 02/23/10

Award Amount: \$12,000 for the 2010-2011 academic year

http://www.rff.org/rff/About/Fellowships_and_Internships/Fisher/Joseph-L-Fisher-Doctoral-Dissertation-Fellowships.cfm

The Graduate Student Writer

Tips to make the writing process work for you

WRITING ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH: VERB TENSE

CONSISTENCY OF VERB TENSE helps ensure smooth expression in your writing. The practice of the discipline for which you write typically determines which verb tenses to use in various parts of a scientific document. In general, however, the following guidelines may help you know when to use past and present tense. If you have questions about tense or other writing concerns specific to your discipline, check with your adviser.

USE PAST TENSE. . .

To describe your methodology and report your results.

At the time you are writing your report, thesis, dissertation or article, you have already completed your study, so you should use past tense in your methodology section to record what you did, and in your results section to report what you found.

We *hypothesized* that adults would remember more items than children.

We *extracted* tannins from the leaves by bringing them to a boil in 50% methanol.

In experiment 2, response *varied*.

When referring to the work of previous researchers. When citing previous research in your article, use past tense. Whatever a previous researcher said, did or wrote happened at some specific, definite time in the past and is not still being done. Results that were relevant only in the past or to a particular study and have not yet been generally accepted as fact also should be expressed in past tense:

Smith (2008) *reported* that adult respondents in his study *remembered* 30 percent more than children. (Smith's study was completed in the past and his finding was specific to that particular study.)

Previous research *showed* that children *confuse* the source of their memories more often than adults (Lindsey et al., 1991). (The research was conducted in the past, but the finding is now a widely accepted fact.)

To describe a fact, law or finding that is no longer considered valid and relevant.

Nineteenth-century physicians *held* that women *got* migraines because they *were* "the weaker sex," but current research *shows* that the causes of migraine *are* unrelated to gender. (Note the shift here from past tense [discredited belief] to present [current belief].)

USE PRESENT TENSE. . .

To express findings that continue to be true.

Use present tense to express general truths or facts or conclusions supported by research results that are unlikely to change – in other words, something that is believed to be always true:

Genetic information *is encoded* in the sequence of nucleotides on DNA.

Galileo asserted that the earth *revolves* the sun. (The asserting took place in the past, but the earth is still revolving around the sun. Note also that no source citation is needed here since it is a widely known and well-accepted fact that Galileo made this assertion.)

Sexual dimorphism in body size *is common* among butterflies (Singer 1982). (Note how this statement differs from one in which you refer to the researcher's work in the sentence: "Singer (1982) *stated* that sexual dimorphism in body size *is common* among butterflies." Here you use past tense to indicate what Singer reported, but present tense to indicate a research result that is unlikely to change.)

We chose Vietnam for this study because it *has* a long coastline. (Use past tense to indicate what you did [chose Vietnam], but present tense to indicate you assume that the length of Vietnam's coastline is unlikely to change.)

We used cornmeal to feed the fingerlings because it *provides* high nutritional content at a relatively low cost. (Past tense reflects what you did [used cornmeal], but present tense indicates that

neither the nutritional content nor the cost of corn meal is likely to change.)

To refer to the article, thesis or dissertation itself.

Use the present tense in reference to the thesis or dissertation itself and what it contains, shows, etc.

For example:

Table 3 *shows* that the main cause of weight increase was nutritional value of the feed. (Table 3 will always show this; it is now a fact that is unlikely to change, and will be true whenever anyone reads this sentence, so use present tense.)

To discuss your findings and present your conclusions. Also use present tense to discuss your results and their implications.

Weight *increased* as the nutritional value of feed *increased*. These results *suggest* that feeds higher in nutritional value *contribute* to greater weight gain in livestock. (Use past tense to indicate what you found [weight increased], but use present tense to suggest what the result implies.)

Sources:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Ed.

[*The Comprehensive Guide to Writing in the Health Sciences*](#), University of Toronto.

Announcements

News of note for graduate students

REMINDERS FROM THE GRADUATE REGISTRAR

NEW POLICY! Graduate assistants are not required to register for courses during the summer term.

However, if you are a graduate assistant employed in the summer but not registered for courses, you'll be subject to FICA and Medicare taxes. You also will have limited access to libraries and will be assessed health center fees and recreation center fees for usage.

Also note that minimum registration needed to receive financial aid during the summer is 4 credit hours. You can take these credits in different summer sessions, but financial aid is disbursed during the session in which you reach half-time enrollment status.

Please note these deadlines:

March 5 is the last day to change to or from "pass/no pass."

April 9 is the last day to withdraw from classes. Withdrawals after that date must be accompanied by a signature from the instructor and supporting documentation.

Contact Jane Schneider, jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu or 472-8670, if you have any questions.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: 2010-2011 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 involves a summer seminar; the second part takes place during the fall semester, when 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 or 402-472-9764, or visit the [PFF Web site](#).

ATTENTION THESIS-OPTION MASTER'S STUDENTS: ELECTRONIC THESIS IS IN YOUR FUTURE

BEGINNING THIS SEMESTER, master's students who've completed a thesis will be able to submit it electronically through Digital Commons. In August 2010, electronic submission of theses will be required for all thesis-option master's students.

An electronic thesis is a thesis that is converted to a PDF file and submitted electronically to Digital Commons, UNL's open-access repository that allows faculty, researchers and students to deposit digital materials for long-term preservation and world-wide electronic accessibility. An electronic thesis can be prepared using

almost any word processing software and can incorporate relevant multimedia objects without the requirement to submit multiple copies on paper. Consequently, an electronic thesis is less expensive to prepare, consumes virtually no library shelf space, and is likely to get wider recognition because of its availability on the Web.

If you'd like to submit your thesis electronically this semester, contact Terri Eastin at teastin1@unl.edu for more information.

LINCOLN COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER OPPORTUNITIES

THE LINCOLN COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER is seeking tutors for a program that offers expanded individualized and small-group instruction to support and enhance learning that occurs during the regular school day. Tutors receive \$10-\$30 per hour, depending on their education, experience and certification.

Lincoln CLC also accepts after-school volunteers and/or paid club instructors who can work well with students in an environment designed to promote hands-on learning experiences.

For more information about either program, contact Kathie Phillips at kphilli@lps.org, 436-1971, or LeaAnn Johnson at ljohns2@lps.org, 436-1964.

Events

Campus activities and other events of interest to graduate students

LAB SAFETY COLLOQUIUM ON CRYOGEN SAFETY, FEB. 16 OR 17

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (EHS), in partnership with the Office of Research and Economic Development, is sponsoring a campus-wide Laboratory Safety Initiative to provide up-to-date safety information for faculty, staff, and students who work in laboratories. The goal of this safety initiative is to assist with research by providing voluntary training in the latest laboratory safety procedures.

The next colloquium on Cryogen Safety will be presented by Pam Hendershot, Praxair Specialty Gas & Distribution. Several sessions will be offered on Feb. 16 and 17. More [information is available online](#), or you may contact Elizabeth (Betsy) Howe, Environmental Health & Safety at 472-5488 or ehowe2@unl.edu.

WRITE WINNING GRANTS SEMINAR, MARCH 12

UNL'S OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT is pleased to host the upcoming grant writing seminar, "Write Winning Grants" March 12, 2010, 8:30 a.m.-5p.m. in the Nebraska Union auditorium. Lunch is included.

This seminar is offered 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, writing for reviewers, and strategies of proven value in presenting an applicant's case to reviewers.

[Online registration](#) is now open. Please contact Peg Filliez in the Office of Research at pfilliez1@unl.edu or (402)472-2851 if you have questions.

NURAMP WORKSHOPS TO BE OFFERED IN SPRING 2010

THE SPRING 2010 NURAMP (Research Administration Management Program) workshop series for UNL faculty, staff, postdocs and graduate students who conduct, support or administer research projects runs March 25 through May 6.

Topics to be addressed include proposal development strategies, preparing proposals for submission, creating proposal budgets, conducting research responsibly, receiving and administering an award and protecting intellectual property. Additional elective sessions will focus on UNL's export control policy, forms and requirements for using Grants.gov, using the report feature in NUgrant, and PARs (Personnel Activity Reports) and effort reporting.

A complete schedule of dates, times and locations, as well as registration information, is available at [the NURAMP Web site](#). Participants may register for the entire series or for individual workshops.

The goal of NURAMP is to ensure that UNL research continues moving forward in compliance with funding requirements and in support of the principles of institutional integrity and credibility. NURAMP provides the latest information on research regulations, policies and procedures, and access to resources and contacts for assistance in managing research projects and programs.

NURAMP educational activities and resources are available for all university employees engaged in research and creative activity, as well as administrative staff who support research at the program, department or college levels in planning, managing or administering grant-funded or sponsored projects.

For more information contact Liz Banset, NURAMP coordinator, ebanset1@unl.edu, 472-7003.

2010 RESEARCH FAIR & GRADUATE STUDENT POSTER COMPETITION

YOU ARE INVITED to attend the 2010 UNL Research Fair, a three-day event sponsored by the Office of Research and Economic Development, 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 6, 7 and 8, 2010 at the City Campus Union. More information is available at the [Research Fair Web site](#). The schedule will be updated as the Fair dates draw near, so be sure to check periodically for

new information. The 2010 Research Fair is free and open to the public.

In conjunction with the Research Fair, the Office of Research and Economic Development and the Nebraska Chapter of Sigma Xi will sponsor the 2010 Graduate Student Poster Fair on Wednesday, April 7. 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 March 26. 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.

NEBRASKA LECTURE, APRIL 15

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND the spring Nebraska Lecture, “The Dead Sea Scrolls after 60 Years: What Have We Learned?” April 15 at 3:30 p.m., in the Nebraska Union auditorium. Guest lecturer is Sidnie White Crawford, professor and chair of the Department of Classics and Religious Studies.

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 and Economic Development.

Interactions

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO 2010 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 are funded by a generous gift from the Folsom family to the University of Nebraska Foundation, to 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. Kurt Knecht**, Music. The Folsom Distinguished Master’s Thesis Award recipient is **Ms. Carina McCormick**, Educational Psychology.

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 Office of Graduate Studies recognizes the valuable role graduate teaching assistants play in enhancing undergraduate education at UNL. We’re proud of our programs that support the development of excellent pedagogical skills among TAs, and proud also of the efforts of faculty members who mentor and inspire TAs in each department. This award is based on demonstrated excellence reflected in 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 **Ms. Saadia Bihmidine**, Natural Resource Sciences; and **Ms. Julie Iromuanya**, English

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 **Mr. Samuel Saunders**, Civil Engineering; and **Ms. Katie Walsh**, Psychology

The Dean’s Award for Excellence in Graduate Education honors 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. Tim Carr**, Professor, Nutrition and Health Sciences; and **Dr. Wonyoung Choe**, Assistant Professor, Chemistry.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION is looking forward to a great semester.

Events. We kicked off January with a successful Better World Books Drive fundraiser (thanks for your support!) and are pleased to announce several upcoming events, including free classes at the UNL Rec Center for graduate students and a free skate night in early February. Stay tuned or see your department's legislative assembly rep for more details.

Elections. Officer elections for the 2010-2011 academic year will take place during the February legislative assembly meeting. We are accepting nominations from now until Friday, Feb. 5, for all executive positions. You may nominate yourself or someone else.

Note: To be eligible, a candidate must have served on the LA, the executive committee, or a GSA committee

for at least one academic semester and have the intention of remaining a graduate student for the full term of May 1, 2010 - April 30, 2011. No other experience is necessary.

More information out about the different positions available can be found on our Web site at <http://www.unl.edu/gsa>.

Graduate Student Appreciation Week. Slated for the second full week of April, Graduate Student Appreciation Week will include new events as well as several hits from previous years. Rumor has it that a karaoke night will make a debut and the free massages you loved will be receiving an upgrade! Bowling and Buzzard Billy's Beer Night are also planned.

We love your feedback: please feel free to contact us with questions, comments, or concerns at gsa@unl.edu.

Did you know?

In Fall 2009, for the sixth-straight year, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has made [U.S. News and World Report's annual evaluation of America's Best Colleges' Top 50 list of Public National Universities](#). UNL is ranked near the top third of all national universities both public and private, (96th out of 262), and is tied with four other universities as 43rd in [the "Top 50" list for public national universities](#). This places UNL among the top one-fourth of all public universities.

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.

EVENT AND DEADLINE DATES

Feb. 16 or 17	EHS Colloquium: Cryogen Safety
March 5	Last day to change to or from “pass/no pass”
March 12	Write Winning Grants Seminar
March 25	Ethics Brownbag: Responding to Plagiarism
March 25-May 6	NURAMP Workshop Series
April 6-8	Research Fair
April 9	Last day to withdraw from classes
April 15	Nebraska Lecture

DEGREE DEADLINES

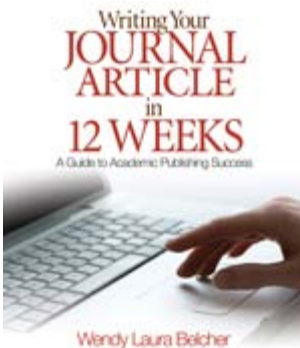
Date	Master's degrees to be conferred May 2010	Doctoral degrees to be conferred May 2010
March 25	Submit final exam report (or four weeks prior to oral)	
April 1		Application for final exam report; submit preliminary copy of dissertation/abstract; incomplete grades must be removed
April 8	Submit preliminary copy of thesis (or two weeks prior to oral)	
April 15	File results of written comprehensive exam and/or option II paper; incomplete grades must be removed	
April 22	Final day for oral examination	Final day for oral examination
April 23	Deposit thesis and final examination report form; pay binding fee	Deposit dissertation; dissertation grades submitted; final fees; final forms due
May 7	Commencement	Doctoral hooding and commencement ceremony

Readers' Corner

Interesting reading for graduate students

WRITING YOUR JOURNAL ARTICLE IN 12 WEEKS: A GUIDE TO ACADEMIC PUBLISHING SUCCESS

by Wendy Laura Belcher, [Sage Publications, Inc.](#), 2009



IN HER BOOK, BELCHER lays out a series of detailed steps for publishing an academic article. This is a *work* book; each chapter—or week—identifies daily writing tasks designed to help the writer accomplish the goal of submitting an

article for publication in twelve weeks. The author also helps readers examine their feelings about writing. Topics addressed include common reasons articles are rejected, how to pick the “right” journal, strengthening the article’s structure and revising. While this guide focuses specifically on publishing humanities and social science journal articles, any writer interested in publishing will find the strategies outlined in this book helpful.