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Graduate Connections- August 2011

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Graduate Connections

University of Nebraska–Lincoln

A Newsletter for UNL Graduate Students published by the Office of Graduate Studies August 2011

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Navigating Graduate School

Events, advice and strategies to help you succeed in graduate school at UNL

BIG RED JOINS BIG TEN

IF YOU'VE MISSED THE NEWS THAT UNL became the newest member of the Big Ten Conference on July 1, 2011, then it's time to join the party.

This story may seem most at home on the sports pages since the athletic benefit has been the most visible aspect of the invitation to become part of the Big Ten conference. However, the inherent academic advantages reaped by Nebraska in joining the Conference, and thereby its academic arm, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), cannot be understated.

Established in 1958, the CIC's mission is to advance academic excellence through collaboration across its member universities. It aims to be the national model for effective, voluntary collaboration among top-tier research universities.

Members include:

- University of Chicago
- University of Illinois
- Indiana University
- University of Iowa
- University of Michigan
- Michigan State University
- University of Minnesota
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Northwestern University
- Ohio State University
- Pennsylvania State University
- Purdue University
- University of Wisconsin-Madison

The invitation-only academic consortium increases the competitive advantage of its member institutions. For more than half a century, CIC members have worked together to advance their academic missions, generate unique opportunities for students and faculty, share

expertise, leverage campus resources, and collaborate on innovative programs.

Students stand to benefit from UNL's membership in the CIC through access to a variety of programs, including:

- The Alliance for Expanded Study Overseas Program—known as AESOP—which allows students to participate in study-abroad programs offered by other CIC universities.
- CourseShare, a program that allows students to take specialized courses at other CIC institutions via distance learning.
- The CIC partnership with the Google digitization project to make electronic copies of library holdings at member institutions. The project is transforming academic research, making rare books more readily available to scholars in remote locations.

Dr. Pat Dussault, Dean of Graduate Studies at UNL, pointed out that students will also see some less tangible but equally important benefits. "The CIC includes some of the nation's finest universities. Joining this group provides us not only with some remarkable opportunities for collaboration, but also the chance to hold ourselves up against graduate programs that are among the top-ranked in many of our disciplines."

While the Nebraska Cornhuskers and their devoted fans look forward to competing on the fields of play with other teams in the Big Ten Conference, the academic possibilities of shared research with CIC members only increase the excitement. For more information about how membership in the CIC can benefit UNL students, visit the Committee on Institutional Cooperation website.

SEEKING AND SELECTING A MENTOR

AS A GRADUATE STUDENT, YOU'LL inevitably need sound advice, encouragement, and celebratory congratulations. The people you'll turn to are much more than advisors, counselors, or buddies—they're your mentors, and now is the time to begin building relationships with them.

Mentors play a variety of roles and, according to the Graduate School at Penn State, a mentor is:

- An advisor, who has career interests similar to the student and shares knowledge with the student informally or in the classroom.
- A supporter, who gives the necessary level of emotional and moral encouragement, as, for example, prior to the final oral examination.
- A sponsor, who provides sources of information about research, grant, internship, employment, or other opportunities.
- A tutor, who gives specific, timely, and constructive feedback on performance.
- A model, who is a professional with integrity, thereby serving as a good role model.

There are many things to keep in mind when selecting a mentor, from your needs to the mentor's availability. The following are some tips from Dr. Sally Koblinsky, University of Maryland, for selecting and working with mentors.

How's Your Connection?

You can read the current and all past editions of **Graduate Connections** at: http://go.unl.edu/gradconnect

We invite your feedback and comments about **Graduate Connections**. Can you use the kinds of information you find in this issue? What 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 email to gsapd2@unl.edu.

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Selecting a Mentor

- Feel out prospective mentors by enrolling in their courses and asking your fellow students about their mentoring experiences with these faculty members. You want to be sure that you will be comfortable working with this faculty member and receptive to his or her mentoring style.
- Confirm that your prospective mentor has current interests that complement your own.
- Ask about your prospective mentor's ability to provide resources (time, funding, etc.) to support your research and scholarship.
- Consider your prospective mentor's academic rank, tenure status, current mentoring load, and connections with individuals in the types of jobs you'd like after graduation.

Working with a Mentor

- Start your mentoring relationship on a positive note by being open and honest from the beginning.
- Let your mentor know how your previous experiences (academic, professional, or personal) are in line with his/her interests.
- Make a plan for how often you'll meet with your mentor and how best to contact your mentor with questions outside your scheduled meeting times.
- Be respectful of your mentor's time. Always arrive to meetings on time and be prepared for meetings with notes from previous meetings, a list of discussion points, and a summary of the work you've done since your last meeting.
- Keep in contact with your mentor even when your research progress is slow. Communicate regularly and always ask questions when they arise.

Different Mentors, Different Roles

- Your primary research mentor may not be able to meet all your needs in a mentoring relationship. Consider seeking multiple mentors who can give you guidance and advice in other areas like teaching and career and professional development.
- An excellent teacher can help you develop your teaching skills through observing and evaluating your performance in a classroom. He or she may also be able to help you find teaching opportunities in your department, providing you with more opportunities to further strengthen your teaching skills.
- Your career mentor can discuss your career goals and give you advice on professional development. Ask your mentor to introduce you to individuals (colleagues, potential employers, other professionals) who may be able to help you advance your career. A career mentor can also help you hone your interviewing skills and prepare you for negotiating your first contract.
- Finally, keep in touch with your mentors after graduation. They'll want to know about your successes and may be able to continue to provide professional and career advice.

It's your responsibility to actively seek mentors to support your work and enhance your graduate education. Carefully select mentors that share your interest and can meet your needs, and build relationships based on honesty and trust. Your mentoring relationships will likely continue beyond your graduate education, and you'll benefit from academic, professional, and personal mentoring relationships that help you become a professional who can, in turn, mentor others.

Sources

Koblinsky, S. (2000). Mentoring Advice for Doctoral Students [Electronic version]. Retrieved July 22, 2011, from http://www.teal.usu.edu/files/uploads/Doctoral/MentorGuidPhDKoblinsky5-3-001.rtf.

Penn State Graduate Studies. (2006). Graduate Student Mentoring: Be More than an Advisor [Electronic version]. Retrieved July 22, 2011, from http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/facstaff/practices/mentoring.html.

ADVICE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

ONE OF THE GOALS GRADUATE STUDENTS HAVE IS landing a job upon completion of the degree. Dr. Lennard Davis, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, discussed his advice for new graduate students in his article, "What I Tell my Graduate Students". Here are a few highlights:

1. Talk about job placement as soon as you walk in the door and meet with your advisor.
2. Find out the minimum requirements for landing a specific job in your area of study. How many published articles and book reviews should you have? Are attending and presenting at professional conferences helpful to have on the curriculum vitae?
3. Learn about the timeline for academic publication. It can take a year or more to be

published after an article is submitted, so you need to start as soon as possible if you want to have one to three articles published.

4. Book reviews, which don't count as much as journal articles, are pretty easy to write and are published faster. Look at the journals in your field, turn to the back pages where the journal will often list "books received," and ask to review a relevant book.
5. Select your dissertation committee with the job search in mind. Pick professors who are skilled in your area of study and who also have national and international reputations. Reference letters from those professors will count a great deal.
6. Attend professional conferences and network while you are there. By attending sessions at the conference, you can learn the latest scholarly information about your subject well before the publication of those ideas. Attending a conference can also be a way of looking into the future to see what will be happening in your field.
7. Another important reason to attend professional conferences is that editors are often there looking for new books to publish and they don't shoo people away from their stalls. Getting to know those editors, and even pitching a book idea to them, is an important part of career development.
8. Book exhibits at professional conferences will let you browse through the newest texts and even unpublished page proofs before the information becomes known to other scholars.
9. If your advisor or department faculty will be at the conference, see if they can introduce you to editors that might be interested in your work.
10. Choosing your field and thesis or dissertation topic involves strategy. Look at a copy of the current job list in your field. If you applied for a job this year with the topic you selected, how many jobs would you be eligible for?
11. In terms of getting an article published, take any paper for which you received an A and expand it to article length. Ask your advisor to suggest academic journals with editors they know and send your article to them with a mention of your advisor's name.
12. When you are working on your job search, ask your advisor to review your letter of application, CV, writing sample, statement of teaching philosophy, and other materials you plan to send to the search committee. Work on the letter of application and make sure to highlight and "sell" yourself and your special qualifications.

Sources

Lennard, D.J. (2011). What I Tell My Students. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved July 1, 2011, from http://chronicle.com/article/What-I-Tell-My-Graduate/126615/

Good Practices in Graduate Education

Advice and strategies to strengthen ethics in graduate education

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY RESOURCES

Foundation

AT UNL, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EDUCATION IS BASED ON GRDC 98, an online responsible conduct of research course. Since its release last fall, more than 4,000 faculty, staff, and students have completed the course. Intended to provide only a common basis in academic integrity topics that apply to every discipline, GRDC 98 doesn't delve into many pragmatic details. For example, several case studies are presented, but they may differ from the particular circumstances in which you may find yourself. By its nature, GRDC 98 is lacking the critical components of face-to-face interaction, a chance for personal reflection, and plans for application.

Resources

Fortunately, GRDC 98 is just one item in the extensive catalog of academic integrity resources at UNL. Here are just a few examples:

Speak with a mentor (not necessarily your major advisor) about your concerns or interests—how a particular principle of RCR (such as authorship) is typically applied in your academic discipline, for example.

The UNL Ethics Center hosts graduate student brownbag discussions each month and maintains an

extensive ethics library—both physical (Avery Hall) and digital (http://ethics.unl.edu/).

Many academic departments have courses in Professionalism or Research Ethics. Refer to the Graduate Bulletin or your graduate secretary for details.

The Office of Graduate Studies offers a graduate seminar course (GRDC 901) that fosters individualized face-to-face discussion. It's offered in fall or spring semesters, according to demand. Send inquiries to gspd2@unl.edu.

Expansion

We're excited to announce a new brownbag series built around the Office of Research Integrity's newly-released interactive movie, *The Lab*. We'll alternately follow and guide the movie characters in a true-to-life scenario that's structured like a choose-your-own-adventure story, in which our choices affect both the narrative and the outcome. Details on place and time will be announced later this month. We hope to see you in *The Lab* this fall!

Professional Development Network

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

QUICK TIPS ON WRITING WITH STATISTICS

By Reuben Ternes

Reprinted with permission from the Purdue Owl, April 21, 2010

NEVER CALCULATE OR USE A STATISTICAL procedure you don't fully understand. If you need a statistical procedure, and you don't understand it, then you need to consult someone or learn how to do it properly.

Never attempt to interpret the results of a statistical procedure you don't fully understand. If you need to interpret a particular statistic, talk with a professional statistician and make sure you understand the proper interpretation. Unlike descriptive statistics, inferential statistics is anything but black and white, there may be several valid interpretations of a given statistic, and you need to be aware of which ones are better under which circumstances.

If you are using statistics in a paper, consider your audience. Will they understand the statistics you are using? If not, you may need to explain the procedure that you are using in detail. This is not inappropriate! It's better to include too much information than too little. Depending on your field, this may be done using an appendix, footnotes, or directly in the text.

Present as much information as needed so that your reader can make his or her own interpretation of your data. Certainly, your job is to help them interpret your data, but most statistics are used to support a persuasive argument. You need to give your readers enough information that they can reconstruct your argument from your statistics. If you don't give enough information, people will think that you are being deceptive, which can damage your credibility. You can't convince someone of anything if they are convinced that you are misleading them!

Use graphics and tables. Statistics can contain a lot of information, and using visuals can display a lot of information in a manner that can be quickly understood.

If it's applicable, and you can calculate it, do include some measure of variability; typically this is a standard deviation. Even if you aren't doing any inferential statistics, this statistic provides excellent information about your data set.

Be wary of using statistics from other places that are not peer-reviewed. Popular magazines are notorious for including bad statistics. Often times their 'sample' is a selection of people who choose to respond to some online query. Their sample often includes mostly women or mostly men (depending on the magazine) but rarely do they have a good representation from both genders, and many times the magazines imply that the results generalize to the entire population. While some might, many do not. If it's not from a reliable source, then don't use it.

Teaching Tip

FIRST DAY OF CLASS

JUST AS THE FIRST DAY is the most vital day, the first week is the most vital week for determining whether students will become engaged and be successful in your class.

- Arrive to class early and greet students when they come in.
- Start each class on time.
- Tell students how to address you (Mr., Ms., Dr., first name...).
- Introduce yourself in a unique way (e.g., skit, video, slides).
- Form dyads or small groups for acquaintanceship activities. Ask partners to make introductions to the class. Time spent allowing students to know each other now will pay off throughout the term. Benefits include increased self-concept and class participation.
- Learn student's names right away and address them by name in class. It has a positive influence on self-esteem and classroom atmosphere.
- Distribute and clearly discuss an informative, easy-to-understand syllabus.
- Have students write or discuss their expectations for the course and their own learning goals.
- To diagnose basic skills, give a short, in-class writing assignment during the first week or conduct a survey to assess students' subject matter knowledge and level of experience.
- Present substantial content on the first day and make an assignment to be due the next class.
- Don't dismiss the first class early—plan to utilize every minute to be sure you and your students get the most out of your time together.

Speaking of sources, if you used a statistic, you need to provide your audience with additional information including where the statistic came from. You should be wary of statistics that seem to appear out of nowhere.

A poor example: The ten largest cities in the U.S. comprised 54% of the total U.S. population.

A good example: According to the United States Census Bureau, in 2000, the ten largest cities in the U.S. comprised 54% of the total U.S. population. In the second example, your audience knows exactly where the statistic comes from (if they don't believe your statistic, they can go and check themselves) and it comes from a reputable source (the U.S. Census Bureau).

If you calculated a statistic, how did you calculate it? In some fields, you don't need to tell your readers how you calculated some statistics. For example, in psychology, you don't need to explain how you did an ANOVA or a t-test, but in other areas you might need to explain this in more detail.

Be clear as to what population(s) your statistic is meant to generalize to. If your sample included only male college students, you should be very careful if you want to generalize your results to female lawyers. Don't imply that your sample generalizes to everyone if your statistic was calculated from a more specific population.

RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS

WHETHER THIS IS YOUR FIRST SEMESTER TEACHING or your tenth, you can find a variety of services and support right here on campus to you help improve your teaching strategies and document your successes as a teacher.

Handbook for Graduate Teaching Assistants

The GTA Handbook provides information about your role as a teacher as well as advice on balancing teaching responsibilities and graduate coursework. As a graduate teaching assistant, you can also learn new strategies for leading discussions, teaching in labs and studios, and promoting academic integrity. In addition to teaching strategies, the GTA Handbook gives suggestions for evaluating your teaching and using student feedback to implement changes.

21st Annual Fall Campuswide Workshops for Graduate Teaching Assistants

This annual event is an opportunity for all graduate teaching assistants to learn something new about teaching undergraduate students. From helping novice teachers get started to giving veteran teachers new strategies and ideas for the classroom, the TA workshop has something for everyone. More information is available in the Events section of this newsletter.

Teaching Documentation Program

The Teaching Documentation Program provides an individualized consultation to help you improve your teaching strategies. After an initial interview, a consultant conducts a classroom observation and collects feedback from students. You'll meet again with the consultant to review the collected data and identify strengths and development needs. You'll receive a formal letter outlining development efforts that can be used as part of an

academic or teaching portfolio.

Constructing a Teaching Portfolio
For teaching assistants seeking careers in education, a teaching portfolio will be valuable during the job search. Visit the Office of Graduate Studies' Constructing a Teaching Portfolio for more information about how to build and maintain a rich and comprehensive teaching portfolio.

Many departments offer teaching courses, workshops, and support. Check with your advisor for more information about teacher development opportunities in your department.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

- Fall Campuswide Workshop for Graduate Teaching Assistants
- 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

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're interested in receiving these announcements, you can subscribe to the listserv by sending an email to Nathan Meier at nmeier2@unl.edu. Funding announcements archives also are available at http://research.unl.edu/sp1/oldfa.shtml.*

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION DISSERTATION GRANTS

AERA INVITES EDUCATION policy- and practice-related dissertation proposals using NCES, NSF, and other national databases. Dissertation grants are available for advanced doctoral students. Applications are encouraged from a variety of disciplines, such as (but not limited to) education, sociology, economics, psychology, demography, statistics and psychometrics.

Deadlines: 9/1/11, to be reviewed in October;
1/6/ 12 to be reviewed in February;
3/16/12 to be reviewed in April

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

www.aera.net/grantsprogram/res_training/diss_grants/DGFly.html

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HISPANICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION OUTSTANDING DISSERTATIONS COMPETITION

THIS COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ANYONE who has completed a dissertation that focuses on Hispanics in higher education **or** to any Hispanic who has completed a dissertation in the social sciences between June 1, 2007, and Aug. 1, 2009. Dissertations are eligible if they are in domains related to the Educational Testing Services (ETS) corporate mission, including education, linguistics, psychology, statistics, testing, and so forth. Dissertations in the humanities, sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics are **not** eligible.

Deadline: 9/5/11

Award amounts: $5,000, $2,000, and $1,000
http://www.aahhe.org/OutstandingDissertationsCompetition2008.aspx

FULBRIGHT GRANTS FOR GRADUATE STUDY ABOARD

THE DEADLINE FOR APPLYING for the Fulbright is September 9, 2011.

For more information, contact Dr. Laura Damuth at ldamuth1@unl.edu.

EWING MARION KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

THE KAUFFMAN DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM is an annual competitive program that awards up to fifteen Dissertation Fellowship grants of $20,000 each to Ph.D., D.B.A., or other doctoral students at accredited U.S. universities to support dissertations in the area of entrepreneurship.

Deadline: 9/14/11

Award amount: $20,000

http://www.kauffman.org/research-and-policy/kauffman-dissertation-fellowship-program.aspx

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD encourages academic excellence by recognizing contributions to the field of public water supply. All master's theses and doctoral dissertations relevant to the water supply industry are eligible. The manuscript must reflect the work of a single author and be submitted during the competition year in which it was submitted for the degree.

Deadline: 10/1/11

Award amounts: Doctoral dissertation: First, $3,000; Second, $1,500; Master's thesis: First, $3,000; Second, $1,500

http://www.awwa.org/Membership/Content.cfm?ItemNumber=3501&navItemNumber=13974

HENRY LUCE FOUNDATION AND AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS IN AMERICAN ART

ACLS INVITES APPLICATIONS for the Henry Luce Foundation/ACLS Dissertation Fellowships in American Art designated for graduate students in any stage of Ph.D. dissertation research or writing.

Deadline: 11/9/11

Award amount: $25,000

http://www.acls.org/programs/american-art/

ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION AND AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIPS

ACLS INVITES APPLICATIONS for the fourth annual competition for the Mellon/ACLS dissertation completion fellowships for graduate students in the humanities and related social sciences. Applicants must be prepared to complete their dissertations within the period of their fellowship tenure and no later than August 31, 2013.

Deadline: 11/9/11

Award amount: $25,000, plus funds for research costs of up to $3,000 and for university fees of up to $5,000

http://www.acls.org/grants/Default.aspx?id=512

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL-DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIPS

CAA'S PROFESSIONAL-DEVELOPMENT Fellowships support promising artists and art historians enrolled in M.F.A. and Ph.D. programs nationwide. Fellowship categories include Visual Arts and Art History.

Deadline: 9/30/11

Award Amount: $5,000

http://www.collegeart.org/fellowships/

AAPG RODNEY A. BERNASEK MEMORIAL GRANT

THE RODNEY A. BERNASEK MEMORIAL Grant is awarded annually to a graduate student studying geology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Deadline: 1/31/12

Award Amount: $2,000

http://foundation.aapg.org/gia/bernasek_rodney.cfm

The Graduate Student Writer

Tips to make the writing process work for you

WRITING TIPS FROM THE MASTERS

PROFESSIONALS, WHETHER IN ACADEMIA or industry, often live or die by the pen. As a graduate student, you are no doubt discovering that your professional survival depends on your ability to communicate with others about what you know and how you have learned it. Your writing will eventually be competing with that of others who have the same aspirations as you do—for jobs, grants and fellowships, and publication in peer-reviewed journals.

Your ability to exchange ideas, collaborate with others, and ultimately succeed hinges on the ability to write effectively. Here are some timeless tips, straight from the pens of the world's most renowned authors, to help you develop both style and substance.

1. Omit the boring parts

I try to leave out the parts that people skip. ~Elmore Leonard

Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret. ~Matthew Arnold

Say all you have to say in the fewest possible words, or your reader will be sure to skip them; and in the plainest possible words or he will certainly misunderstand them. ~John Ruskin

Try to always write with your readers in mind. What do they need to know and want to know? If you have nothing to say, or what you say has no meaning for the reader, there is no point in writing it.

2. Eliminate unnecessary words

I believe more in the scissors than I do in the pencil. ~Truman Capote

Substitute damn *every time you're inclined to write* very. *Your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be.* ~Mark Twain

The road to hell is paved with adverbs. ~Stephen King

Don't be fooled into believing that words like *really, actually,* or *extremely* make writing more forceful. They don't—they just get in the way. Cut them and never look back.

3. Keep it simple

When you wish to instruct, be brief; that men's minds take in quickly what you say, learn its lesson, and retain it faithfully. Every word that is unnecessary only pours over the side of a brimming mind. ~Cicero

Vigorous writing is concise. ~William Strunk Jr.

Maybe it was all those late nights as an undergraduate struggling to fill out mandatory ten-page papers that made us think the only worthwhile writing is long and drawn out. While it's more difficult to express yourself in the simplest possible manner, it's so much more effective. More work for you means less work for your reader.

4. Let criticism guide you

You have to know how to accept rejection and reject acceptance. ~Ray Bradbury

You must keep sending work out; you must never let a manuscript do nothing but eat its head off in a drawer. You send that work out again and again, while you're working on another one. If you have talent, you will receive some measure of success - but only if you persist. ~Isaac Asimov

Engrave this in your brain: EVERY WRITER GETS REJECTED. You will be no different. ~John Scalzi

Writing means putting yourself at the mercy of others who may not always say nice things about what you write. Learn to make the most of the insults and accept the praise with a dose of skepticism. Use the criticism from others to improve and strengthen your writing. Foster a relationship with a good editor—one who knows sound writing and isn't afraid to teach as s/he critiques.

5. Write a lot, all the time

Quantity produces quality. If you only write a few things, you're doomed. ~Ray Bradbury

By writing much, one learns to write well. ~ Robert Southey

For many writers, it's hard to know where to begin. So forget about beginning—just write. Keep a journal to make notes and observations about your research and your reading. Comment on ideas you hear from others. Critique presentations you hear at conferences. And take every opportunity to write wherever you find one.

6. Write what you know

The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas. ~ Linus Pauling

If any man wish to write in a clear style, let him be first clear in his thoughts; and if any would write in a noble style, let him first possess a noble soul. ~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Learn as much by writing as by reading. ~Lord Acton

Successful writing is all about trust and authority. It makes sense to write about your area of expertise. If you don't have an expertise, reading and writing is the best way to develop one and put it on display.

7. Take a chance—don't always play it safe

Zest. Gusto. How rarely one hears these words used. How rarely do we see people living, or for that matter, creating by them. Yet if I were asked to name the most important items in a writer's make-up, the things that shape his material and rush him along the road to where he wants to go, I could only warn him to look to his zest, see to his gusto. ~Ray Bradbury

Get it down. Take chances. It may be bad, but it's the only way you can do anything really good. ~William Faulkner

Doing what worked once will only get you so far. Experiment with new styles, even if it means taking criticism. Without moving forward, you'll be left behind.

Sources:

10 Writing Tips from the Masters. www.pickthebrain.com/blog/art-of-writing/

Quotable Quotes on Writers and Writing. www.logicalcreativity.com/jon/quotes.html

Announcements

News of note for graduate students

2011-2012 UNL GRADUATE STUDIES BULLETIN

THE 2011-2012 UNL GRADUATE BULLETIN is available online at http://bulletin.unl.edu. If you need help navigating the bulletin, please contact Jane Schneider at jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu or 402-472-8670.

REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL AID

IF YOU ARE USING FINANCIAL AID, there may be implications for not being registered appropriately. If you need to withdraw from any courses, that change may cause you to repay financial aid earlier than anticipated. Please be aware of drop and add deadlines. All enrollment instructions and drop/add deadlines with the refund schedule are found on the Registration and Records website.

To view more information about financial aid, visit the Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid website.

THE UNL HEALTHY OPTION STUDENT INSURANCE PLAN

UNL'S GRADUATE STUDENT INSURANCE plan provides excellent coverage at an affordable price. You can find more information at the Graduate Studies website.

Coverage highlights include:

- Medical expenses for accidents or illnesses up to a total of $250,000 from August 15, 2011, to August 13, 2012
- A Well Baby benefit of $250 per policy year is available when a child is covered by this policy
- Dental care is a covered service
- Prescriptions are covered by the UHC Prescription Program

The total premium cost for the first semester (August 14, 2011 - December 31, 2011) is $610; of that amount, the

graduate assistant cost is $128 and the university-paid portion is $482. The total premium cost for the second semester and summer (January 1, 2012 - August 13, 2012) is $940; of that amount, the graduate assistant cost is $197 and the university-paid portion is $743.

Enroll by going to the University Health Center website. However, if you are a graduate assistant or international graduate student (F1 or J1 visa holder), you will be automatically enrolled for basic coverage and do not need to fill out the enrollment form or sign up through the MyRED account. Dependents of all students will need to complete an enrollment form available at the University Health Center.

If you have your own insurance and need to opt out of the plan, just complete a Waiver Request Form, available online 09/09/11 for fall OR 01/27/12 for spring/summer. You **will** be automatically enrolled in the plan and your student account will be charged unless you complete a Waiver Request Form.

The waiver form must be filled out EACH fall and spring semester online and submitted to the University Health Center by the published deadline.

For more information:

- The health insurance brochure
- The dental insurance brochure
- For in-depth questions about insurance coverage and enrollment forms, contact Bev Heiserman at 402-472-7507 or bheiserman1@unl.edu.
- For questions about graduate assistant eligibility, contact Jane Schneider at jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu or 402-472-8670.

Health Insurance 101

If you have questions about the UNL Healthy Option Student Plan or health insurance in general, the University Health Center (UHC) will be offering two sessions of Health Insurance 101 to answer your questions. Health Insurance 101 will be held on Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2011, at both noon and 6 PM at the UHC in conference rooms A, B, C; food will be provided.

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES requests nominations for two annual award programs.

Graduate Recognition Awards

The Dean's Award for Excellence in Graduate Education Award honors faculty members whose dedication to graduate students and commitment to excellence in graduate mentoring have made a significant contribution to graduate education at UNL.

The Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award recognizes excellence in graduate student research at UNL.

The Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award recognizes graduate teaching assistants who have demonstrated special effectiveness in teaching undergraduates at UNL.

Graduate Award nomination forms are available online.

- **Deadlines:**
- Submission of the nomination form: 1:00 PM Wednesday, October 5, 2011.
- Submission of the supporting materials from nominees and peer faculty: 1:00 PM, Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

Folsom Distinguished Thesis and Dissertation Awards

The annual Folsom Distinguished Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation Awards recognize the outstanding research and creative accomplishments of UNL graduate students. These awards are made possible through a generous gift from the family of Lowe R. and Mavis M. Folsom to the University of Nebraska Foundation. We are grateful to the Folsom family and the University of Nebraska Foundation for providing this opportunity to showcase the important scholarly contributions made by our graduate students.

The recipient of the Distinguished Master's Thesis Award will receive a $500 honorarium. The recipient of the Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award will receive a $1,000 honorarium.

Folsom Award nomination forms are due by 1:00 PM, Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

More Information

Award recipients will be honored at a reception in the spring semester. See a list of past recipients on the Office of Graduate Studies website. For more information about award nominations, contact Jane Schneider at 472-8670 or jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu.

Events

Campus activities and other events of interest to graduate students

ATTENTION NEW AND EXPERIENCED GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS!

THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES invites all teaching assistants to participate in the 21st Annual Campuswide Workshops for Graduate Teaching Assistants on Tuesday, August 16.

The workshops provide an exciting and energizing start to the fall semester for both new and experienced teaching assistants, and are especially useful in preparing new TAs for their first classroom experiences at UNL. Skill sessions and disciplinary break-out sessions will focus on a variety of topics, including The First Day of Class, Responding to and Grading Students' Work, and Using Technology to Promote Student Learning. Dr. Susan Ambrose, Associate Provost for Education and Director of the Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence at Carnegie Mellon and co-author of the book, *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (2010), is the featured keynote speaker.

The Campuswide Workshops provide a nice complement to department-specific training. In addition, the workshops offer you an opportunity to meet and interact with other teaching assistants across campus and can be a great start to building interdisciplinary relationships among graduate students.

A buffet lunch is provided, compliments of the Office of Graduate Studies, but you must pre-register! A listing of the skills sessions and registration form are available online.

NEW GRADUATE STUDENT WELCOME, FRIDAY, AUGUST 19

MEET FELLOW STUDENTS and learn more about the resources available at UNL and in the community to help ease your transition into graduate school. New Graduate Student Welcome will take place Friday, August 19 from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM in the Nebraska Union and will feature a campus and community resource fair and complimentary lunch. More information is available online.

FALL 2011 GRADUATE ORIENTATION FOR NEW AND TRANSFER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, FRIDAY, AUGUST 19

FALL 2011 ORIENTATION for new and transfer international students will take place Friday, August 19, at the City Campus Union. Check-in is from 8:30 AM to 9:15 AM, followed by various presentations and orientation activities, including New Graduate Student Welcome sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies.

The event includes several small-group information sessions, followed by lunch, an optional campus tour, and other evening social activities.

More information is available online.

DOCTORAL GRADUATION INFORMATION SESSIONS

IF YOU'RE PLANNING TO GRADUATE in December or May, be sure to attend one of these information sessions. You'll learn about the necessary forms, where to find them and when to submit them in order to graduate on time. 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.

For students in our Omaha programs, a special general/graduation information session will be hosted on September 13 at 1:30 PM at PKI Room 130. Registration is optional for this session.

Pre-register online for one of the following sessions:

- Thursday, September 8, 5:30-6:30 PM, Nebraska Union
- Tuesday, September 13, 1:30-2:30 PM, PKI, Room 130
- Wednesday, September 14, Noon, East Campus Union

If you're unable to make one of the sessions, contact Eva Bachman at ebachman1@unl.edu for more information on a video presentation.

Interactions

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO STUDENT FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS

KUDOS TO THE FOUR PRESIDENTIAL and three Fling fellows who were selected during the current graduate student fellowship competition held from December 2010-February 2011. The Presidential fellows will receive a $24,000 stipend, health insurance, and tuition and fee benefits.

Presidential fellows:

- Bradley Baurain, Ph.D. student in teaching, learning and teacher education
- Shannon Cummins, Ph.D. student in business
- Rhitankar Pal, Ph.D. student in chemistry
- Derrick Stolee, Ph.D. student in mathematics and computer science

The Fling fellows will receive a $20,000 stipend, health insurance, and tuition and fee benefits

Fling fellows:

- Kellie Buford, Ph.D. student in history
- Deli Qiao, Ph.D. student in electrical engineering
- Samuel Wortman, Ph.D. student in agronomy

The application for funding for the 2012-2013 academic year begins the first week of December 2011 and closes the first week of February 2012. If you want to apply, you can start getting materials ready by viewing last year's application.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNL GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN'S Graduate Student Association (GSA), I welcome you to the 2011-2012 Academic Year and invite you to participate as an active member of GSA this next year. Through the GSA, you can serve on an internal or external committee, help create new policy on behalf of UNL graduate student population, or advocate for open access rights. You'll develop important leadership skills that can set you apart from your colleagues in today's job market. GSA also sponsors several professional development events and monthly social activities, allowing you to make connections with other graduate students.

For more information, check out our website or email us at gsa@unl.edu where you can sign up for our listserv.

Sylvia Jons, President, Graduate Student Association
Graduate Student, Higher Education Administration

THE GSA SERVES AND REPRESENTS all graduate students at UNL. In particular, the GSA promotes the intellectual community of graduate education, sponsors opportunities for professional development, creates occasions for social interaction among graduate students, and advocates for issues relevant to graduate students and graduate education.

Every graduate student at UNL is a member of the GSA. The GSA is governed by its Legislative Assembly, composed of one representative from each academic department (~60 students), 5 representatives from each campus (10 students), and an executive committee (~9 students). These 80 students meet on a monthly basis to discuss graduate student issues, events, and opportunities.

What's In It for You?

- Become more informed of local, regional, and national issues
- Know where to take graduate student issues to be solved and where to find solutions to graduate student issues
- Network with graduate students outside and within your department via GSA events

- Network with graduate students at other universities within and outside your field of studies on a social and political level
- Leadership development opportunities
- Service opportunities (via internal and external GSA committee membership)
- Inclusion in important decisions and changes for graduate students
- Knowledge of university structure and policies
- Familiarity with campus administrators and their roles within the system

Recent Accomplishments

- Supported the elimination of a policy mandating that graduate assistants register for summer credit hours in order to teach during the summer
- Hosted the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students Annual meeting
- Endorsed the Office of Graduate Studies position on academic integrity: "Graduate Students should be held at the highest level of integrity as tomorrow's most respected professionals"
- Conducted a graduate student demographic survey
- Sponsored Open Access Week
- Supported the "Well Baby" benefit and pharmacy plan addition to student health insurance
- Helped establish graduate assistant fee deferment
- Sponsored the Graduate Student Appreciation Week, recognized by the Governor and State of Nebraska in March 2008, March 2009, April 2010, and April 2011

Current and Future Initiatives include

- Extending fee deferment to graduate students with fellowships
- Obtaining key card access for all graduate students into their department's building
- Developing student and family leave protection for graduate students who miss prolonged periods of school due to illness, maternity, or unforeseen emergencies
- Establishing library proxy capabilities and extended library services for graduate students
- Increasing/restructuring legal services for graduate students
- Obtaining funding for widely supported campus level travel and research grants
- Creating a GSA Newsletter (annual to current students, also include in new student packets)
- Improving University communications to graduate students
- Exploring restructuring of graduate student fees (at all levels)
- Continuing creating/participating in social, professional, and service opportunities at UNL

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

Aug. 12	Graduate College Commencement
Aug. 16	Annual Campuswide Workshops for Graduate Teaching Assistants
Aug. 19	New Graduate Student Welcome and New International Student Orientation
Sept. 7	Health Insurance 101
Sept. 8	Doctoral Information Session
Sept. 13	Doctoral Information Session
Sept. 14	Doctoral Information Session

DEGREE DEADLINES

Date	Master's degrees to be conferred Dec. 2011	Doctoral degrees to be conferred Dec. 2011
Sept. 30	Application for advanced degree	Application for advanced degree
Nov. 3	Submit final exam report (or four weeks prior to oral); incomplete grades must be removed	
Nov. 10		Application for final exam report; incomplete grades must be removed
Nov. 18	Submit preliminary copy of thesis (or two weeks prior to oral); File results of written comprehensive exam and/or option II paper	
Dec. 1	Final day for oral examination	Final day for oral examination
Dec. 2	Deposit thesis and final examination report form; final fees; final forms due	Deposit dissertation; dissertation grades submitted; final fees; final forms due
Dec. 16	Graduate College Commencement	Graduate College Commencement

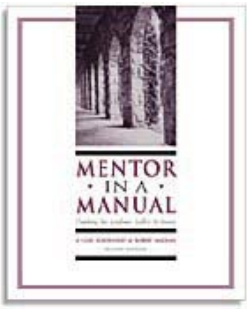
Readers' Corner

Interesting reading for graduate students

MENTOR IN A MANUAL: CLIMBING THE ACADEMIC LADDER TO TENURE

A. Clay Schoenfeld and Robert Magnan

FOR ANY STUDENT CONSIDERING or embarking on a faculty position, *Mentor in a Manual: Climbing the Academic Ladder to Tenure* by A. Clay Schoenfeld and Robert Magnan is for you. *Mentor in a Manual* provides valuable advice for surviving the tenure track and is a useful tool in understanding how to achieve tenure. This twelve-chapter text offers guidance on finding equilibrium among competing priorities, navigating committee service and presenting credentials. Graduate students considering a faculty position will benefit from the candid discussions about life on the tenure track.



Graduate researchers and teachers, regardless of their professional goals, can benefit from Schoenfeld and Magnan's chapters that include information on:

- Research prerequisites
- Final research checklist
- Getting published
- Teaching preparation
- Classroom protocol
- Creating a course
- Taking teaching outside the classroom

Mentor in a Manual is a comprehensive text that will not only help new future faculty better understand tenure but also provide graduate researchers and teachers with solid advice. Learn more about *Mentor in a Manual* on the publisher's website.