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Graduate Students published by the Office of  
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Graduate Studies

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# Graduate Connections

Welcome to *Graduate Connections*, an electronic newsletter for graduate students at UNL (and for faculty and staff interested in issues important to graduate students). This quarterly publication provides information to help you make your way through your graduate school career, links you with news about events planned and organized just for you, provides timely information about deadlines and funding, and connects you with other graduate students at UNL.

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## Professional Development Network

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

### WORKSHOP FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS ON PREPARING NSF FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS

During the annual UNL Research Fair, the Graduate Studies Office will sponsor a workshop for graduate students on preparing NSF graduate research fellowship applications. The workshop will be offered twice on Wednesday, April 11, 2007 – from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and again from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. – in the City Campus Union.

The workshop presenter will be Tim Turner of the National Science Foundation's Graduate Research Fellowship Operations Center.

NSF's Graduate Research Fellowship Program offers a \$30,000 annual stipend and a \$10,500 cost-of-education allowance for three years. Participants in this workshop will learn how to put together an NSF graduate research fellowship package and receive valuable suggestions for writing a competitive fellowship application. (See page 4 of this newsletter for more tips on writing a successful fellowship application.)

NSF supports the following fields: chemistry, computer science, engineering, geosciences, life sciences, mathematical sciences, physics and astronomy, psychology, and social sciences.

### TEACHING DOCUMENTATION PROGRAM

The Office of Graduate Studies began offering its Teaching Documentation Program in fall 2006 for TAs at all levels. The program provides TAs with a variety of tools to analyze and document their classroom experiences – both to help them continuously improve their teaching and to get them started on a process for documenting their work.

If you are interested in the program, Dr. Rick Lombardo is available to meet with you to discuss questions related to teaching; visit your classroom and observe you as you teach; record a class session on videotape for you to review; hold discussion sessions with students to

## Teaching Tip

### Leading Discussions Effectively

*Classroom discussions can lead to important student learning. To most effectively use discussion as a teaching and learning tool in your course, consider these suggestions.*

- Identify your objectives for the discussion and share them with students at the outset.
- Provide clear guidelines for participation. Discuss them beforehand, stick to them, and enforce them during the discussion.
- Maintain an atmosphere of safety and respect.
- Use open-ended questions, ask students for clarification, examples, definitions.
- Summarize student responses without taking a clear stand one way or another.
- Invite students to address one another and not always "go through" you.
- Pause to give students time to reflect on your summaries or others' comments.
- Deal openly with conflicts – don't ignore them; listen to your students—attempt to learn from them.
- Control the "talkers" and call on the "non-talkers." But if a "non-talker" isn't ready to contribute, don't persist.
- Consider taking notes of main points on a chalkboard or overhead, but if you do, write everyone's ideas down.
- Toward the end of the discussion, review the main ideas, the thread of the discussion, and conclusions.
- Ask students about their reactions to the discussion session.

Source: Stanford University  
<http://ctl.stanford.edu/handbook.pdf>

identify your teaching strengths and areas that could be improved; or administer a mid-semester student assessment called TABS (Teaching Analysis By Students) to help you capitalize on strategies that are working and change things that aren't. In addition, he and other consultants can help you plan and develop a teaching portfolio and craft your teaching philosophy statement for academic job applications.

Physics and Astronomy Professor Gregory Snow is working with five graduate students, all first-time TAs, who participated in the Teaching Documentation Program during the fall semester 2006. He had the opportunity to witness a follow-up discussion Dr. Rick Lombardo held with one of the TAs after Rick had observed the TA teaching and had analyzed responses from questionnaires the students had filled out.

Dr. Snow says, "I was impressed by Rick's ability to distill the collected information and focus the TA's attention on a small number of areas where improvement or fine-tuning to his teaching methods was needed. Rick provides both oral and written feedback to the TAs in the program and to their supervisors. I am encouraging more of our department's graduate TAs to participate in Rick's program, since a small investment of their time results in noticeable enhancements in their teaching skills."

If you want to know more about the ways the Office of Graduate Studies can support your teaching, contact Dr. Richard Lombardo, 402/472-5334 or [rlombardo2@unl.edu](mailto:rlombardo2@unl.edu).

### STILL TIME TO APPLY FOR PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY

The Office of Graduate Studies is accepting applications to the Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program, a national initiative to help advanced Ph.D. students increase their competitive edge in the academic job market. PFF supplements departmental efforts to help advanced graduate students better prepare for faculty careers, through a combination of seminars and structured mentoring experiences.

PFF fellows are **advanced doctoral students** selected by procedures internal to each participating department. Students should contact their department graduate chairs to express interest in the PFF program.

What will you gain from participating in PFF?

- Additional information about faculty roles and activities
- Better awareness of institutions in which graduates may work and the expectations those institutions have for their faculty
- Mentoring by a faculty member at a partner institution
- A network of professional colleagues
- Increased confidence as academic professionals

Perhaps most important, PFF's widely favorable reputation among academic institutions gives participating graduate students a valuable credential in the academic marketplace. In short, PFF can help students get faculty positions that fit their professional goals.

PFF recognizes that participants have a wide range of needs and skills. For this reason, the program is designed to be flexible. Students

participate in a seminar during the second five-week summer session and, during the following fall semester, a mentoring experience at a partner institution.

Throughout the entire PFF Program, we focus on such topics as hiring and tenure procedures, professional development, preparing for the job market, constructing research and teaching portfolios, new faculty experiences, the meaning of scholarship at various academic campuses, and challenges and opportunities for the university in the 21st century. In addition, the structured mentoring experience gives students an opportunity to discuss issues of faculty life as they build new professional relationships.

For more information about the PFF program, please visit our website <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/gsapd/pff/> or contact Dr. Laurie Bellows, [lbellows1@unl.edu](mailto:lbellows1@unl.edu) or 402/472-9764.

## Calendar

*Keep connected with the Grad Studies Calendar – important deadlines, dates and dealings you need to know about. Click on the links for more information.*

### WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

- March 9 [Grant Writing Seminar](#)
- April 10-12 [Research Fair](#)
- April 11 Fellowship Application Workshop
- April 11 [Graduate Student Poster Competition](#)

### DEGREE DEADLINES

[Doctoral Degrees](#) to be conferred May 2007

- Jan 26 Application for Advanced Degree
- Mar 29 Application for Final Oral Exam (or Waiver); Preliminary Copy of Dissertation/Abstract; Incomplete Grades Removed
- Apr 19 Oral Examination
- Apr 20 Dissertation Deposit; Dissertation Grades; Final Fees; Final Forms
- May 4 Doctoral Hooding Ceremony
- May 5 Commencement

[Masters Degrees](#) to be conferred May 2007

- Jan 26 Application for Advanced Degree
- Mar 22 Final Examination Report Form
- Apr 5 Preliminary Copy of Thesis
- Apr 19 Oral Examination
- Apr 20 Incomplete Grades Removed
- Apr 20 Results of Written Comprehensive Exam and/or Option II Paper
- Apr 20 Thesis Deposit; Final Examination Report Form; Payment of Binding Fee
- May 5 Commencement

## How's Your Connection?

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

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# Announcements

News of note for graduate students

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## UNL GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 5!!

UNL graduate student fellowship applications for funding in the 2007-2008 academic year are due Feb. 5. See <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/funding-fellowships.shtml> for more information. If you have

questions about the application or the selection process, contact Jane Schneider, [jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu) or 402/472-8670.

## FORMER MCNAIR SCHOLARS: WHO ARE YOU?

UNL's McNair Scholars Project would like to create a database of McNair alums on campus to showcase the success of the Department of Education's Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program. Any graduate student who is a McNair alumnus, from

UNL or another university, is invited to contact Carol Boehler, [cboehler2@unl.edu](mailto:cboehler2@unl.edu) or 402/472-5062. Please let her know your name, the university at which you were part of the McNair Program, your current department, e-mail address, and phone number.

## WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY SUMMER DOCTORAL FELLOWS PROGRAM INVITATION

Washington State University invites doctoral candidates to apply for its six-week Summer Doctoral Fellows Program (June 18 to July 27). The program gives selected doctoral students the opportunity to work closely with faculty mentors at Washington State University in preparing for academic careers as future faculty members.

During the program, fellows will work on completing dissertations; participate in seminars on topics related to faculty roles and expectations in higher education; and design individual programs to enhance their teaching, research, and other scholarship.

Interested candidates should submit a curriculum vitae, graduate school transcript, three letters of

recommendation, and a 3-5 page career goals and research interest statement to:

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

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

For additional information, about the program, go to <http://www.gradsch.wsu.edu/summerfellow.htm>, or contact Joe Merrill, 509/335-6412 ([joem@wsu.edu](mailto:joem@wsu.edu)) or Steve Burkett, 509/335-6424 ([sburkett@wsu.edu](mailto:sburkett@wsu.edu)).

## MENTORING GUIDEBOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Reminder: The guidebook, "How to Get the Mentoring You Need: A Guide for Graduate Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln," is available for all

graduate students at the Graduate Studies front desk in Seaton Hall. Stop by and pick one up, or send e-mail to [abergeon1@unl.edu](mailto:abergeon1@unl.edu) and ask us to send one to you.

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

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

Professional development workshops  
Professional development courses  
Teaching Documentation Program  
Individual consultation on teaching, careers, job searches

Assistance gathering student feedback  
Advice on creating an academic career portfolio  
Teaching resource library

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# Navigating Graduate School

*Advice and strategies to help you succeed in your journey through graduate school at UNL*

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## APPLYING FOR GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

At the dissertation stage of your graduate program, a fellowship can be a critical resource, especially if your research requires money for travel, equipment, supplies, and time to collect data and write. But aside from the money, there are several reasons for going through the process of preparing a fellowship application. First, it gives you experience with a professional activity integral to any researcher's career. Second, it tells future search committees that your research ideas are marketable. Finally, the mere fact that you were funded once will make you more competitive for the next fellowship or grant.

It's never too soon to seek outside support. Even in the first year of graduate school, it can't hurt to apply for fellowships, awards, travel funds and small stipends. Look for small foundations or seek funds from within your university. Although the amount of money may be small, you'll gain grant writing practice, self-confidence, and a positive track record.

But to support your dissertation work, you'll want to tap the "big guys." In the sciences, for example, the best fellowships will cover tuition expenses and pay stipends of up to \$30,000 a year, for multiple years. Some also provide money for research expenses.

Applying for a fellowship is not a one- or two-weekend endeavor. Many successful applicants begin the process a year or more in advance, making February a good time to start planning for major fellowship applications due in November (like the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, the Jacob Javits Fellowship and fellowships sponsored by the American Association of University Women, the Ford, Spencer, and Andrew Mellon Foundations and the National Physical Science Consortium). If you plan well ahead of your deadline and build extra time into your schedule, you can get most of the work done by the end of the summer and feel confident about submitting your application in the fall.

As with any large project, you'll be most successful if you divide it into smaller, manageable segments and create a timeline for completing each task: refining your research focus; finding the right fellowship; planning

the proposal; drafting your application narrative; getting expert feedback and revising the draft; gathering collateral and supporting materials; and, finally, submitting your application. We suggest the following timeline of tasks to complete if you want to meet a November application deadline:

**FEBRUARY: Refine your research focus.** If you haven't yet keyed in on an essential research question, use your experiences as a student in a major research university to help hone your ideas – write down everything that comes to you from the classes and seminars you attend, lectures you prepare, and papers or articles you read.

Spend time in the library or on searchable computer databases to discover what's already been done in your area of interest – and what hasn't yet been done. Capture these ideas and adapt them to your own sub-discipline. Eliminate topics that aren't novel or central to your discipline.

A good research question has an important answer that fills a void in the larger body of knowledge in the discipline. A good dissertation question, however, must be answered in about two to four years, so a large, important question may have to be broken down into feasible (but just as valid) parts.

**MARCH: Find the right fellowship.** You have a variety of resources to help you find the right funding source for your research. Each issue of this newsletter lists a sampling of funding opportunities for graduate students. In addition, the Graduate Studies website (<http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/funding-external.shtml>) offers additional starting points, listing some federal and privately funded organizations that provide financial support. Each week, the UNL Office of Research provides a broader sampling of current grant funding opportunities, including fellowships, at [http://www.unl.edu/research/fa\\_current\\_week.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/research/fa_current_week.pdf).

On the Web, GrantsNet is a good place to start looking for fellowships. Spending some time searching carefully for the right opportunity may reward you with more obscure, less competitive sources of money in your discipline.

Once you've decided which fellowships to apply for, it's time to gather information. Explore the sponsor's website to determine eligibility requirements, deadlines, and the number and amount of the awards. If you're not sure your project is eligible, contact the agency and ask.

**APRIL/MAY: Plan your proposal.** Tailoring your proposal to the interests of the agency or foundation is critical. The goal of your written proposal is to convince the funding agency that your project will in some way contribute to its mission.

Many sponsors will define the length and organization of the proposal. Do not deviate from the directions. Study the call for proposals thoroughly, and create a proposal outline that addresses all the criteria.

**SUMMER: Draft the narrative.** Begin by clearly stating the research question and why the answer is important. You have to make this a compelling case in the first page (preferably the first paragraph) of the proposal. Provide enough background to help readers understand the research question, followed by a clear and succinct statement of the purpose and significance of your research.

The proposal also should contain preliminary results from pilot studies (if there are any) and show that the methods you propose to use to answer the research question are valid and feasible. The more specific you can be about methodology without becoming tediously technical, the better.

Finally, your proposal should demonstrate that your project is manageable within the time frame of the grant or fellowship.

**AUGUST/SEPTEMBER: Get expert feedback.** Ask your adviser and other colleagues to read the proposal. Ask colleagues from outside your field to make note of undefined terms and jargon and tell you if you made a compelling case for doing the project.

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER: Revise the draft.** With your reviewers' comments in mind, revise the narrative for clarity of both ideas and expression. Read each section aloud to make sure it flows. Have someone with an eye for detail read through your final version. If you are a non-native English speaker, get an editor. Review once more the format and organizational requirements of the funding agency. Many proposals are disqualified simply because they didn't follow the prescribed format or comply with the page limit.

**OCTOBER: Gather collateral and supporting materials.** Remember that your entire application counts, not just your research plan. Don't neglect the other required essays. For example, the section on your background should justify why you are qualified to carry out the research you propose, and the section on career goals should show how you plan to use the skills you will develop during your schooling.

Most fellowship applications must also include your curriculum vitae and letters of recommendation from faculty members. Be sure your vita is up to date (see the November 2006 issue of "Graduate Connections" for tips on preparing a CV).

You also must offer evidence that your work has the support of your department or university. Contact potential references well in advance of the application deadline and ask them to write letters of support. Provide specifics about the fellowship for which you are applying (if they haven't yet seen a copy of your proposal, make sure you give them one), and suggest the kinds of things you would like each recommender to emphasize in his or her letter.

**NOVEMBER: Submit the application.** Even though you may be one of hundreds seeking a particular fellowship, don't let the odds discourage you. Instead, see submitting your application as an opportunity to explore an idea you want to pursue, without expecting a big payoff. Besides, if you've crafted the best application you can, your odds of getting the award have risen dramatically.

NSF graduate research fellow Michael Kiparsky (2006) wisely notes: "However your fellowship application turns out, you will gain valuable experience and a much deeper understanding of a field of interest to you. You might also get a dissertation topic out of it, or, equally valuable, the knowledge that you don't want to explore that topic. . . . And maybe, just maybe, you will be rewarded by a life-changing letter."

#### Sources:

McKinney, Mary (2005). Twelve tips for getting grants. *Successful Academic News*. <http://www.successfulacademic.com/eazines/may22005.htm>

Kiparsky, Michael (2006). Career advice for scientists. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (online) <http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2006/05/2006051101c/careers.html>

Diffley, Peter & Russo, Joseph (2003). Tips on writing grant and fellowship applications. *The Princeton Review*. <http://www.princetonreview.com/grad/finance/articles/scholarships/granttips.asp>

# Research News

Research tips and other information for graduate researchers

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## GRANT WRITING SEMINAR OFFERED BY UNL OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON MARCH 9

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies is sponsoring “Getting Started as a Successful Grant Writer and Academician,” a one-day grant writing seminar for graduate students, post doctoral students, research fellows, and pre-tenure and research assistant professors. This seminar will focus primarily on NIH and NSF proposals and is designed to introduce participants to the proposal writing process and to

strategies designed to get researchers started in their academic careers. The session will be held March 9, in the City Campus Union, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

There is no charge for participants as long as they are affiliated with a UNL department. Register on line at <http://research.unl.edu/grantseminar.shtml>.

## GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH POSTER COMPETITION

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies and the Nebraska Chapter of Sigma Xi announce the 2007 Graduate Student Poster Competition to be held on Wednesday April 11 during UNL’s annual Research Fair. This year the competition has been expanded to include all graduate disciplines. \$50 prizes will be awarded in each discipline category.

The deadline to register/enter the competition is March 9. Visit <http://researchfair.unl.edu/gsrcac.shtml> for further details and registration information.

Questions may be directed to Michelle Howell Smith, [mhowell2@unl.edu](mailto:mhowell2@unl.edu) or 472-4458.

## 2007 RESEARCH FAIR, APRIL 10-12

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies invites you to attend the 2007 UNL Research Fair, a three-day event featuring collaboration, creativity, innovation and celebration of achievements. Whether you are a member of the faculty, an undergraduate or a graduate student, you will find opportunities to network with officers from federal agencies and engage colleagues in your current research work and ideas for the future.

The Research Fair features a number of activities for graduate students, including a workshop on preparing fellowship applications and the research poster competition, both described earlier in this newsletter.

Fair dates are April 10, 11, and 12 at the City Campus Union. More information is available at <http://researchfair.unl.edu/>. The schedule will be updated as the Fair dates draw near, so be sure to check periodically for new information.

The 2007 Research Fair is free and open to the public. Most events will be held in the Nebraska Union. Registration for the sessions with program officers is not required, but we would like to ask that you register for the [Grants Management Lunch](#) on April 10 and the [Research Responsibility Lunch](#) on April 11.

## TIP FOR RESEARCHERS: SEVEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHING A RESEARCH PROJECT

A Q&A routine for safely and successfully launching a research project, large or small:

- What are you trying to do? Articulate your goals using absolutely no jargon.
- How is it done today, and what are the limitations of current practice?
- What is new in your approach, and why do you think it will be successful?

- Who cares? If you are successful, what difference will it make?
- What are the risks and payoffs?
- How much will it cost? How long will it take?
- What are the midterm and final “exams” to check for success?

From an interview with George H. Heilmer, then President and CEO of Bellcore (Bell Communications Research) (*IEEE Spectrum*, June 1994, page 58).

## Funding Opportunities

Listed here are several fellowship opportunities, but this is by no means a comprehensive listing. If you need help locating other funding sources, please contact Jane Schneider, 402-472-8670 or [jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto:jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu). Graduate Studies consultants also are available to advise you on preparing fellowship applications. Contact Laurie Bellows, 402-472-9764 or [lbellows1@unl.edu](mailto:lbellows1@unl.edu).

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### THE NEBRASKA CENTER FOR ENERGY SCIENCES RESEARCH: AQUILA ENERGY SCIENCES FELLOWSHIP

A new fellowship for students in the second year of a master's or doctoral program in any of the physical sciences, engineering, economics, areas relating to energy or public policy, political science, and architecture, and demonstrating the potential to make an impact on the energy sciences in their graduate research.

**Deadline:** 02/28/07

Award amount: \$2500

<http://ncesr.unl.edu/jobs.html>

### U.S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE: CANON NATIONAL PARKS SCIENCE SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Doctoral dissertation scholarships for Ph.D. students throughout the Americas to support research critical to conserving the national parks of the region. Research projects in the biological, physical, social and cultural sciences are eligible, as are projects in technology innovation in support of conservation science.

**Deadline:** 05/03/07

Award amount: \$80,000

<http://www.nature.nps.gov/canonscholarships/>

### 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 advertising, development, education, press, programming, production, technology, and the National Symphony Orchestra.

**Deadline:** 03/01/07 for summer 2007 internship

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

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

### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY LABORATORY GRADUATE PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

Enables qualified graduate students in the physical, life, social, and environmental sciences, engineering and mathematics to conduct their master's thesis or Ph.D. dissertation research in residence at the DOE facility when the necessary resources are not available on campus. The proposed research program must be acceptable to the university for an advanced degree and meet the programmatic interest of the particular research facility.

**Award amount:** annual stipend of \$12,000-\$14,000; annual allowance of \$10,000 for a spouse and one dependent child and \$15,000 for a spouse and two or more dependent children; a maximum of \$3,500 paid to the university for tuition and fees

For application materials write to Laboratory Graduate Participation Program, Science/Engineering Education Division, Oak Ridge Institute for Science & Education, P.O. Box 118, Oak Ridge, TN 37831-0117.

**Deadline:** at least four months prior to starting date

## 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:** 04/01/07

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

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

## ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION / LUMINA FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The key objective is to promote innovative scholarship by creating an intergenerational community of scholars who will examine social, institutional, and policy barriers to opportunity and student success.

**Deadline:** 5/10/07

**Award amount:** \$14,000 for three years

<http://www.ashe.ws/fellowship/aboutfellowship.htm>

## JAMES MADISON MEMORIAL FELLOWSHIP FOUNDATION GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS FOR TEACHERS

Fellows receive the opportunity to deepen critical research and writing skills; develop professional ties that can significantly affect their career paths; and strengthen their teaching proficiency in government, history or social studies. Two types of fellowships are offered: Junior Fellowships for students about to complete, or who have completed, their undergraduate course of study and intend to pursue full-time graduate

work; Senior Fellowships for teachers who want to pursue graduate studies on a part-time basis through summer and evening classes.

**Deadline:** 03/01/07

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

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

## AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION DISSERTATION GRANTS

AERA invites education policy- and practice-related dissertation proposals using [NCES](#), [NSF](#), and other national data bases. Dissertation grants are available 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:** 03/01/07 to be reviewed in April; 05/05/07 to be reviewed in October

**Award amounts:** up to \$15,000 for one-year projects.

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

## NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION: 2007 NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM CENTENNIAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Applicants must be pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in environmental science, natural resource management, biology, public policy, education, geography, political science or related disciplines, and engaged in research focused on improving management and understanding of fish, wildlife and plant resources.

**Deadline:** 4/13/07

**Award amounts:** \$5000 for undergraduate, master's, and J.D. students; \$15,000 for Ph.D. & D.V.M. students

<http://nfwf.org/programs/centennialscholarship/index.cfm>

## SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWSHIP

A strategic fellowship program funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation designed to help graduate students in the humanities and social sciences formulate doctoral dissertation proposals. The 2007 program is organized around five distinct research fields: Black Atlantic Studies; The Political Economy of Redistribution; Rethinking Europe: Religion, Ethnicity, Nation; Visual Culture; and Water Sustainability. Ten to 12 fellows in each research field will participate in

two workshops: one in the late spring to help prepare them to undertake pre-dissertation research on their topics; and one in the early fall to help them synthesize their summer research and draft proposals for dissertation funding.

**Deadline:** 03/01/07

**Award Amount:** up to \$5000

<http://programs.ssrc.org/dpdf/>

## ELDERHOSTEL K. PATRICIA CROSS DOCTORAL RESEARCH GRANT

This grant is intended to aid doctoral students (in education, psychology, gerontology, social work or a related discipline) researching topics relevant to aging and later-life learning.

**Deadline:** 2/15/07

Award amount: \$5000

<http://www.elderhostel.org/grants/?CFID=44786&CFTOKEN=67783352>

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

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

**Deadline:** 02/28/07

**Award Amount:** \$12,000 for the 2007-2008 academic year

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

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

## Interactions

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

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## CONGRATULATIONS TO GRADUATE AWARD WINNERS

Kudos to seven individuals honored at a January 25 reception to recognize their outstanding contributions to teaching and research at UNL.

**2007 Lowe R. & Mavis M. Folsom Distinguished Doctoral Dissertation Award**

*Funded by the Folsom family through the University of Nebraska Foundation, this award recognizes and rewards distinguished scholarship and research at the doctoral level. Nominated dissertations represent original work making an extraordinarily significant contribution to the discipline.*

This year's recipient is **Dr. Lu Yuan**, who completed her Ph.D. in physics and astronomy in August 2006, under the supervision of Professor Sy-Hwang Liou. Dr. Yuan's dissertation is titled "Study of Magnetic Layers in Magnetic Sensors." Her research led to development of a magnetic sensitivity mapping (MSM) system, one of only a few such systems available around the world. She is currently a junior scientist engineer at Protior, Inc., in Boulder, Colorado.

#### **2007 Lowe R. & Mavis M. Folsom Distinguished Master's Thesis Award**

*Funded by the Folsom family through the University of Nebraska Foundation, this award recognizes and rewards distinguished scholarship and research at the master's level.*

The 2007 recipient is **Ms. Adriana Trejo Sanchez**, who received an M.S. in industrial and management systems engineering in Dec. 2005 under the supervision of Dr. Susan Hallbeck. Her thesis is titled "Ergonomic Evaluation of a Laparoscopic Grasper." According to Dr. Hallbeck, Ms. Trejo Sanchez is doing cutting-edge research and her work has implications for future medical devices that could be a step-function beyond what is available today.

#### **2007 Excellence in Graduate Education Award**

*The 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 the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. These awards are given based upon the professors' demonstrated excellence and lasting impact on distinguished scholarly/creative activities; successful graduate research mentoring (as evidenced by a pattern of research collaboration and co-authored publications with graduate students); and special graduate advising or mentoring efforts.*

This year there are two recipients of the Excellence in Graduate Education Award: **Dr. Stephen Mason** and **Dr. James Gentry**.

**Dr. Stephen Mason**, professor of agronomy and horticulture, invests heavily in students personally and professionally, recruiting capable and motivated students, tailoring their programs to match their career goals, and working with them from conceptualizing the research through the publication of results. He views research as a critical training ground where he and his graduate students work as partners and learn. Dr. Mason earned a Ph.D. in agronomy at Purdue University in 1983.

**Dr. James Gentry**, professor of marketing, initiated the annual Ph.D. symposium in 1990, attracting doctoral students from as many as 15 graduate programs in the U.S. The symposium enhances the visibility of the graduate program by providing a scholarly forum for UNL students and others to demonstrate their research skills and interests through the presentation of scholarly papers. Dr. Gentry earned a D.B.A. in marketing at Indiana University in 1973.

#### **2007 Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award**

*Graduate teaching assistants play a critical role in enhancing undergraduate learning at UNL. The Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award honors graduate teaching assistants who have demonstrated special effectiveness in teaching undergraduates in a variety of settings.*

The 2007 recipient is **Ms. Elizabeth Ribarsky**, a doctoral student and graduate teaching assistant in communication studies. Dr. William Seiler, department chair, characterizes Ms. Ribarsky as "a self-reflective teacher, always looking for ways to improve her teaching and maximize student learning. She is always striving to learn what other teachers do to promote better learning in and outside of the classroom."

#### **2007 Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant Award**

*The Graduate Research Assistant Award recognizes the excellent quality of research carried out by UNL graduate students. This award is given based the student's on-going outstanding contribution to research, future promise as a researcher and the originality, imagination, and significance of his or her research or creative activity.*

This year there are two recipients of this award: **Dr. Satya Bulusu** and **Ms. Camile Semighini**.

**Dr. Satya Bulusu** received a doctoral degree from UNL in Dec. 2006 and was a graduate research assistant in chemistry under the supervision of Dr. Xiao Cheng Zeng. One of Dr. Bulusu's most important contributions is the discovery of structural transition of the boron cluster and his investigation of the growth pattern of semiconducting clusters. Together with collaborators at Washington State University, Dr. Bulusu has uncovered the first elemental metal cage in nature.

**Ms. Camile Semighini** is a doctoral student and graduate research assistant in biological sciences, with a

specialization in plant pathology, under the supervision of Dr. Steven Harris. Some of Ms. Semighini's work includes characterization of different gene products in the fungal DNA damage response. Dr. Harris praises

her intelligence, technical skills, motivation and ambition as exceptional, and notes that she has succeeded in every project she has initiated in the lab.

## NOTES FROM THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

### Check Out the NEW Legislative Assembly Meetings of the Graduate Student Association

Building GSA is an exciting time, and we invite you to be a part of the process. Join us on the second Tuesday of every month in the Union for our meetings – **February 13, March 20, and April 10.**

- Meetings will last only one hour: 6-7pm.
- No more reports from the officers and committee chairs
- Clear agenda
- Actionable Items (specific proposals that require a vote)
- Your Voice – bringing GSA issues that affect your life as a graduate student

### GSA Wins NAGPS Award

In its inaugural year, the UNL Graduate Student Association has garnered national attention in its efforts to build a representative body for graduate students. In November 2006 the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students, a grass-roots group

that represents the over 2 million graduate students in the U.S., recognized the UNL group. GSA received the 2006 award for outstanding development of a graduate student association. Thanks to everyone who made this possible.

### Graduate Student Appreciation Week

Be looking for events sponsored by GSA during the week of **April 2-6**, recognized by campuses nationwide as **Graduate Student Appreciation Week**. Not only are we excited about bringing to UNL campus-wide events specific to graduate students, we are excited about facilitating interdisciplinary affiliations among the graduate students who attend these events. If you have suggestions about what would make you feel appreciated, or if you would like to help GSA in the planning and operation of these events, please email us: [gsa@unl.edu](mailto:gsa@unl.edu).

Go to <http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/gsa/> for more information about UNL's GSA.

## Readers' Corner

*Interesting reading for graduate students*

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**On Writing Well** by William Zinsser (Collins; 25th anniversary edition, 2001) should be a staple on any student's bookshelf. And even if you have a stack of "how to write" books, Zinsser's should be on top.

According to Amazon.com, simplicity is Zinsser's mantra: he preaches a stripped-down writing style, strong and clear. He has no patience for excess (most adjectives and adverbs, he says, just add clutter) or tired phraseology.

He recommends that all writers read their work aloud (don't commit something to paper that you wouldn't actually say) and write under the assumption that "the reader knows nothing" (not to be confused with assuming the reader's an idiot).

In addition to the chapters on the expected – usage, audience, interviews, leads – Zinsser also focuses on such trouble spots as science and technical writing, business writing, sports, and humor.

"This book is as engaging as it is instructive. It's so easy to read and understand, you can't help but improve. It spells out everything that's wrong with most people's writing, then provides simple solutions. You'll cut pounds of fat from your writing. Your sentences will sparkle and your paragraphs will dance. Best of all, your readers will read, not groan."

– Bob Dickson, Valencia, CA

For more information, go to [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).