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Graduate Connections



University of Nebraska–Lincoln

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

November 2011

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Navigating Graduate School

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

MANAGING GRADUATE SCHOOL

IF YOU'RE NEW TO GRADUATE SCHOOL, it's likely that you've spent the last three months making some adjustments. By now, you've learned that the reading lists are longer and more extensive than those you were assigned as an undergraduate. You've also learned that you have a lot of independence, which sometimes might feel like a lack of direction. To help you manage graduate school successfully, we've compiled a list of ten suggestions that should keep you on track.

1. Make your department the center of your universe! Spend time getting to know the department staff, faculty, and other graduate students.
2. Whatever you do, don't get caught up in department gossip. It's messy and time-consuming, and it won't get you anywhere!
3. Stay in touch with your adviser. Keep your faculty mentor(s) informed of your progress and goals. Follow up every meeting with an email, summarizing your action plan.
4. Become close friends with the [Graduate Bulletin](#). Know the Graduate College policies for submitting a [Memorandum of Courses](#) (master's) or [Program of Study](#) (doctoral). And if you don't know what those are, look them up *now*! Talk to your adviser about course requirements and deadlines. Know what you're responsible for.
5. Identify faculty, support staff, advanced graduate students, Graduate Studies staff, and others on campus who can help you if (or when) you need it.
6. Maintain positive relationships with the faculty, especially your adviser. Learning to get along with others is an important skill in graduate school.
7. Keep a calendar that clearly plots the steps and self-imposed deadlines required for degree completion. If you don't plan, your chances for success are minimized.

8. Document your work. If you have a teaching assistantship, keep copies of your student evaluations. If you have a research assistantship, keep a research journal. When it's time to apply for a job, you'll be happy that you did!
9. Get involved. Attend departmental colloquiums and seminars. Volunteer to host a colloquium speaker. Network with others.
10. Remember that life is not all graduate school. Exercise, eat well, and maintain healthy relationships. Stay in touch with friends and family.

Source: Rovariss, D.J. (2004). How to successfully manage the graduate school process. *The Black Collegian Online*. [Electronic Version] Retrieved August 20, 2011 from <http://www.black-collegian.com/graduateschool/manage2004-1st.shtml>.

GRADUATION: AN INSIDE LOOK

I'M AMANDA BERGERON-BAUER, Recruitment and Retention Coordinator in the Office of Graduate Studies. At the end of each semester, I can be found directing graduates to the appropriate check-in table during [Graduate Commencement](#) at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. On August 12, 2011, I took an active role in the ceremony when I graduated with my Master of Arts degree.

My journey to graduation began in 2006 when I started taking classes, but my road to the ceremony started this past June when I applied for graduation and paid the graduation fee. With my department's approval, my name was officially on the graduation list. All communication about the ceremony, including when and where my cap and gown could be purchased, was sent through the postal service, a bit of a change for those of us accustomed to email. June was also when I finally stopped saying I expected to graduate in August 2011 and started telling people where and when the ceremony would be held. It was an exciting change to the way I thought about graduation. My partner and I discussed the pros and cons of bringing our two-year-old son to the ceremony. We had this discussion frequently until the day of the ceremony when we finally decided he should be there. He won't remember he was at the ceremony, but I will.

When I bought my cap and gown at the Wick Alumni Center in July, I learned the color of my hood was determined by my degree (Master of Arts), not my college (Education and Human Sciences). Buying my cap and gown made graduation and my participation in the ceremony very real. I could still change my mind about walking, but after paying \$100 for everything, I wasn't going to miss the chance to wear it. That afternoon, I took my gown out of the packaging and tried it on to make sure it fit, then hung it in a secure place away from my toddler, my cat, and myself. I wasn't going to let anything happen to that gown before the ceremony.

Having worked at several ceremonies, I've seen too many graduates running to catch up with the processional because they arrived late due to car trouble or parking issues. So I arrived at the 2:00 check-in time, even though it seemed early for the 3:00 ceremony. Not more than five minutes after I arrived, a colleague noticed I had the wrong gown! The packaging on my gown said master's, but a doctoral gown was inside. Thankfully the bookstore sells caps and gowns before the ceremony and I traded the doctoral gown for a master's gown.

Graduate commencement separated from undergraduate commencement in

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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TIPS FROM THE EXPERT

Need a little help figuring out what needs to be done before graduation? Eva Bachman, Doctoral Specialist in the Office of Graduate Studies, suggests creating a timeline that starts with graduation and moves backward to your current stage. Be sure to include:

6. Graduate!
5. Deposit thesis or dissertation materials
4. Submit materials to Graduate Studies for review
3. Complete oral examination
2. Submit application for final oral exam
1. Apply to graduate

For more information about the requirements leading up to graduation, visit the Graduate Studies [Forms and Deadlines page](#).

December 2008, making the ceremony more intimate and, best of all, shorter. In August, I was proud to be a part of the first class of master's graduates to hear our names read as we received our diplomas. While I don't remember hearing anyone cheering for me (I was busy making sure I didn't trip on my way across the stage), I later found out I had several supporters in the crowd. My partner and son cheered me on when I crossed the stage, as did my friends in attendance and my colleagues from the Office of Graduate Studies who were helping with the ceremony.

After five years of taking courses, I thought the ceremony would be anticlimactic and expected to feel like this day was just another day. But as I stood with my fellow graduates, I had an immense feeling of accomplishment and was overwhelmed by just how excited I was to be there. August 12 wasn't just another day; it was a great day!

Good Practices in Graduate Education

Advice and strategies to strengthen ethics in graduate education

TIPS FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM

AS THE SEMESTER WINDS DOWN, you may find yourself gearing up for final research papers and projects. This is a good time for a refresher on avoiding plagiarism and being an ethical writer. The [UNL Student Code of Conduct](#), section 4.2.a.3, defines plagiarism as: Presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source) and submitting examinations, theses, reports, speeches, drawings, laboratory notes or other academic work in whole or in part as one's own when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.

In his article, "Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing," Miquel Roig gives 25 helpful guidelines for ethical writing. Here are a few highlights:

1. We must always acknowledge every source that we use in our writing; whether we paraphrase it, summarize it, or enclose it quotations.
2. When paraphrasing and/or summarizing others' work we must reproduce the exact meaning of the other author's ideas or facts using our words and sentence structure.
3. When in doubt as to whether a concept or fact is common knowledge, provide a citation.
4. Authors are strongly urged to double check their citations. Specifically, authors should always ensure that each reference notation appearing in the body of the manuscript corresponds to the correct citation listed in the reference section and vice versa, and that each source listed in the reference section has been cited at some point in the manuscript. In addition, authors should also ensure that all elements of a citation (e.g., spelling of authors' names, volume number of journal, pagination) are derived directly from the original paper, rather than from a citation that appears on a secondary source.
5. Authors should follow a simple rule: Strive to obtain the actual published paper. When the published paper cannot be obtained, cite the specific version of the material being used, whether it is conference presentation, abstract, or an unpublished manuscript.
6. When borrowing heavily from a source, authors should always craft their writing in a way that makes clear to readers, which ideas are their own

and which are derived from the source being consulted.

7. When appropriate, authors have an ethical responsibility to report evidence that runs contrary to their point of view. In addition, evidence that we use in support of our position must be methodologically sound. When citing supporting studies that suffer from methodological, statistical, or other types of shortcomings, such flaws must be pointed out to the reader.
8. Researchers have an ethical responsibility to report the results of their studies according to their a priori plans. Any post hoc manipulations that may alter the results initially obtained, such as the elimination of outliers or the use of alternative statistical techniques must be clearly described along with an acceptable rationale for using such techniques.
9. Authorship determination should be discussed prior to commencing research collaboration and should be based on established guidelines, such as those of the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors.
10. Academic or professional ghost authorship in the sciences is ethically unacceptable.

Visit the Graduate Studies site on [academic integrity](#) for more information on plagiarism and integrity in graduate education.

Source: Roig, M. Avoiding plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and other questionable writing practices: A guide to ethical writing. Retrieved March 12, 2009 from <http://ori.hhs.gov/education/products/plagiarism/>.

Professional Development Network

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

SEARCHING SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE

AN IMPORTANT PART of conducting research is understanding the existing literature in your field. In their book, *Mastering Your PhD: Survival and Success in the Doctoral Years and Beyond*, professors Patricia Gosling and Bart Noordam highlight the importance of spending time at the library to get a better picture of the work others have done. They state, “The investment of time in the library will pay off many times over in the lab. You don’t want to risk doing work that someone else has already done, or going down the same worn path that others have traveled before you” (p. 75).

UNL Libraries offers a variety of services, making it possible to spend both physical and digital time at the library.

Library Liaisons

[Library liaisons](#) are subject specialists who serve as the primary link between the libraries and the campus community. Each library liaison develops services and collections that fit the needs of their discipline. Liaisons are an important resource when searching research literature in your field.

E-Resources

UNL students have access to a number of [online journal databases](#) such as the [JSTOR](#) and [Project MUSE](#). These databases make it possible to find articles about relevant

research from any location with internet access. UNL’s e-resources also provide information about choosing the best resources and finding public e-resources.

RefWorks

[RefWorks](#) is a web-based reference manager that will change the way you create bibliographies. RefWorks will format sources into the appropriate format (e.g., APA, MLA), organize your citations, and allow you to share references with others. Tutorials and a quick start guide are available to help you get started.

Gosling and Noordam recommend identifying the most recent research articles in your field going back approximately ten years. For each article, prepare a summary and assess the strengths, weaknesses, experimental setup, methods, data collection, and analysis. It isn’t necessary to read all articles word for word as long as you can create a concise summary.

The task of getting to know the scientific literature in your field can seem daunting. But as Gosling and Noordam point out, it’s time well spent, giving you an understanding of the breadth of research leading up to your project and providing depth to your own writing.

Source: Gosling, P., & Noordam, B. (2006). *Mastering Your PhD*. Germany: Springer.

Teaching Tip

MOTIVATING STUDENTS

Rule 1: Emphasize the most critical concepts continuously. Reiterate these concepts in lectures and assignments throughout the course.

Rule 2: Provide students with a visual aid when possible to explain abstract concepts.

Rule 3: Rely on logic when applicable. Point out to students which information is merely fact that must be memorized and which course material is based on logic.

Rule 4: Use in-class activities to reinforce newly presented material. After a new concept or subject has been presented via text reading, lecture, or class discussion, allow the students to put the concept into action by completing an in-class assignment.

Rule 5: Help students create a link when teaching something new. If the student can link the new material to something already learned, the odds of learning the new material are greatly increased.

Rule 6: Recognize the importance of vocabulary in a course. Students often struggle with new vocabulary in many courses, especially introductory ones. To succeed in these courses, students must become comfortable with the new terminology.

Rule 7: Treat students with respect. Give students their dignity, and they will give you their best efforts.

Rule 8: Hold students to a high standard. Maintaining high standards not only will motivate student learning, it will also be the source of student feelings of accomplishment when those standards are met.

From "Motivating Students: 8 Simple Rules for Teachers." *The Teaching Professor*, Aug. 1, 2004

BELOIT MINDSET LIST

BELOIT PROFESSORS Tom McBride and Ron Nief created the first Mindset List in 1998 for the graduating class of 2002 when they discovered some classroom references were too dated to be effective with students. The Mindset List uses popular culture references to help instructors understand what is relevant to the newest class of college freshman and which references might leave these students more confused than ever.

These are a few of our favorite items from the [2015 Mindset List](#).

1. There has always been an Internet ramp onto the information highway.
2. Ferris Bueller and Sloane Peterson could be their parents.
3. Their school's "blackboards" have always been getting smarter.
4. They "swipe" cards, not merchandise.
5. Amazon has never been just a river in South America.
6. Life has always been like a box of chocolates.
7. Video games have always had ratings.
8. Dial-up is soooooo last century!
9. Faux Christmas trees have always outsold real ones.
10. They've always wanted to be like Shaq or Kobe: Michael Who?

STUDENT EVALUATIONS: TAKING THE NEXT STEP

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE SEMESTER, after you bid goodbye to your students and submit final grades, you receive the email. Student evaluations are now available. You've been waiting anxiously for them. What will your students say? Did they enjoy the class? Did they feel they had learned something? Once you have the evaluations in hand, you have one bigger question: What do you do with those evaluations, anyway?

Before you open your evaluations, take stock of the semester yourself. Think about your approach to the material, the classroom dynamic, and the sorts (and quality) of feedback you gave on assignments. This will give you a starting point for understanding your students' responses.

How to read the evaluations

Read the evaluations twice. The first time, read them quickly to get a sense of the whole picture. Don't focus on any one particular comment, whether positive or negative. The second time, peruse the document. Consider what was and wasn't successful in your classroom. Look for opportunities for improvement (especially if you received good evaluations). Consider the following:

Look for patterns. Separate the comments on teaching from course design. What worked well and what did not? See if students make similar negative or positive assessments. Make a note to continue well-received teaching practices.

Pay attention to details. To learn from your evaluations, focus on specific qualitative comments. "I can't read the writing on the board" or "explanations in class are too short" can be addressed in future semesters.

Students look for *Command* and *Connection*. *Command* refers to your command of the subject and your apparent authority. It also

refers to your ability to gain students attention and respect. *Connection* is your relationship to your students. Do you know who they are, listen to their comments and concerns, and make yourself available?

Expectations. Student and teacher expectations in a course can be at odds. Were students surprised by the workload? Did they think they did too much group work? Were they unhappy about being called on during lectures? Include your expectations in future syllabi to help students understand learning goals, in addition to addressing your teaching style in class.

Trends over time. How does this evaluation compare with previous evaluations? Are you achieving goals you've made for your teaching?

What to do about evaluations

Put your evaluations in the greater context of your development as a teacher. Good teachers grow throughout their careers—reflecting on your teaching and implementing appropriate changes result in tangible improvements in the classroom and your evaluations.

Consider what your students want you to change. Ask yourself whether the change will *promote better learning*. If it won't, or if you have a specific reason for continuing as you have before, consider including a disclaimer or addressing expectations at the beginning of next semester.

Be student-centered. It might be tempting to teach toward the evaluation. Easy homework assignments, inappropriate socializing, and lenient grading result in good evaluations in the short term, but will hurt your students and quite possibly your reputation in the long-term. Center your classroom on your

students and meeting their learning needs. Come by your good evaluations honestly.

Accept variance. Including new materials, implementing new teaching styles, or challenging approaches in the classroom may be met with negative feedback. You and your department should acknowledge that perfect evaluations are not a realistic expectation.

Focus on becoming a better teacher. Identify two or three ways to begin improvements: read about teaching techniques, observe a successful colleague's class, ask for a colleague to observe you. As a TA, keep abreast of course material offerings, so that you can create your own syllabus when you are a professor.

Manage the feedback process. Don't wait until the end of the course to see how you are doing. Use mid-course surveys, videotaping, and classroom observations conducted by your peers or by the teaching development staff from the Office of Graduate Studies. Asking for an evaluation mid-semester gives you time to adapt to your class's needs.

The Office of Graduate Studies offers a number of services to graduate TAs, including mid-course evaluations, classroom observations, and consultations. Please email us at developoteaching@unl.edu to set up an appointment.

Adapted from: Bruner, Robert F. (2002). Taking Stock: Evaluations from Students. Teaching Concerns. Newsletter of the Teaching Resource Center for Faculty and Teaching Assistants. [Electronic version]. Retrieved August 30, 2011, from http://trc.virginia.edu/Publications/Teaching_Concerns/Fall_2002/T_C_Fall_2002_Bruner.htm

TOP 10 DO'S AND DON'TS OF THE ACADEMIC JOB SEARCH

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Do

1. Start a year ahead. The academic job search is a slow process. There may be phone interviews, off-site interviews, day-long (or several days long) campus interviews, etc.
2. Only apply if qualified. Read the ad and make sure your skills and experience are in line with what they are looking for. While you do not always need to have 100% of the qualifications, applying for jobs where you are dramatically under qualified just wastes your time and the time of the search committee.
3. Avoid form letters. Search committees want to know why you want to work at their university and how your skills and experience match the specifics of the job you are applying for. Generic letters never fully address the qualifications and are most often discarded.
4. Know the institution and department. Find out the strengths and limitations for both the institution and department. What is the focus of the department and how does this job fit in? This

will help you in writing a strong cover letter and in the interview process.

5. Attend professional association meetings. In addition to staying on top of current research and trends, screening interviews may be held there and you can take advantage of numerous networking opportunities.
 6. Keep records. Know where you have applied to, their timelines, contacts, etc. This will help you stay organized and keep everything from running together.
 7. Ask your references for permission before listing them. It is important to know if they would be able to provide a positive reference for you. Be sure to provide them with your CV.
 8. Practice interviewing. This includes your job talk! You may find assistance from your university's career center, trusted colleagues or a mentor.
 9. Have questions to ask in the interview. Come prepared with both general questions (e.g.: vision for department) and specific to that institution. Also, have more questions than you think you'll need. Chances are, you will be meeting with several individuals and you will not want to repeat all of your questions.
 10. Follow up with a thank you letter. It is important to thank the search committee for their time and reinforce your interest in and qualifications for the position.
2. Forget to proofread your cover letter and CV before you send it. Even the best and brightest make mistakes sometimes (and spell check does not always pick them up!)
 3. Send unnecessary information. Only send what is asked for. If they want more, they will let you know.
 4. Interview somewhere if you would never accept the job. It wastes the search committee's time and can have negative impact on your career if they find out.
 5. Dress too casually for the interview. It is better to be overdressed than underdressed, so dress up from what you wear in the classroom.
 6. Badmouth a previous institution. It is a small world out there!
 7. Go into your job/tech talk without knowing how long it should be or knowing your audience. Not all who attend will be from your area of expertise so keep that in mind as you prepare your talk.
 8. Overstate your qualifications. The truth is likely to come out eventually and misrepresenting your qualifications can ruin your career.
 9. Be overly aggressive. Job searching can be a stressful time, but don't call two days after the interview to find out when you can expect to hear back (you should ask their timeline during the interview).
 10. Get discouraged if you do not get a job offer right away. As mentioned earlier, the academic job search is a long process. You will likely interview at several institutions before landing an offer. It is all about finding the right match (for both you and them!)

Don't

1. Wait until the last minute to update your resume or compile your teaching portfolio. The last thing you want to do is stress out over what should go in your portfolio when your dream job becomes available.

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>.

CIC/SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

THE COMMITTEE ON INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION (CIC) and the Smithsonian Institution (SI) invite fellowship applications for one-year fellowships to support research in residence at Smithsonian Institution facilities. Fellowships carry a stipend of \$30,000. All fields of study that are actively pursued by the museums and research organizations of the Smithsonian Institution are eligible. Because the University of Nebraska–Lincoln is a CIC member, doctoral candidates at UNL are eligible to apply.

Eligibility

Students must have completed all course work for their programs and must have been admitted into doctoral candidacy and satisfied all requirements except completion of the dissertation in order to qualify.

Benefits

The stipend is \$30,000 for one year, and fellows are eligible for tuition and health insurance benefits in accordance with their university policy. Fellows are eligible to receive allowances for related expenses and

for temporary relocation to the Smithsonian Institution facilities in Washington, DC.

Application Instructions

To be considered for the CIC/SI Fellowship, applicants must complete the fellowship [program guide](#).

A PDF of the completed application must be submitted electronically by November 15, 2011, at 5 p.m. to the graduate fellowship office at the student's home institution. The UNL contact is:

Jane Schneider
Office of Graduate Studies
jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu
402-472-8670

November 15—Campus deadline for applications
Late November—Campus committees choose one nominee

November 29—Final nominees invited to submit online application to the CIC/SI committee

January 1—Award decision is made by CIC/SI

NSF GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

THE PURPOSE OF THE NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) is to help ensure the vitality and diversity of the scientific and engineering workforce in the United States. The program recognizes and supports outstanding graduate students who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees in fields within NSF's mission. The GRFP provides three years of support for the graduate education of individuals who have

demonstrated their potential for significant achievements in science and engineering research.

Deadlines: In November and vary by discipline—refer to the program solicitation for details

Award Amount: \$30,000 stipend and a cost-of-education allowance of \$12,000 to the degree-granting institution.

http://nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?WT.z_pims_id=6201&ods_key=nsf11582

FORD FOUNDATION/THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES PREDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP

THESE PREDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS provide three years of support for individuals engaged in graduate study leading to a Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree. The awards will be made to individuals who, in the judgment of the review panels, have demonstrated superior academic achievement, are committed to a career in teaching and research at the college or university level, show promise of future achievement as scholars and teachers, and are well prepared to use

diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

Deadline: 11/14/11

Award Amount: \$20,00/year stipend; \$2000 institutional award for tuition and fees.

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/xpeditio/groups/pgasite/documents/webpage/pga_063981.pdf

FORD FOUNDATION/THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP

THE DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS provide one year of support for individuals working to complete a dissertation leading to a Ph.D. or Sc.D. degree. Awards will be made to individuals who, in the judgment of the review panels, have demonstrated superior academic achievement, are committed to a career in teaching and research at the college or university level, show promise of future

achievement as scholars and teachers, and are well prepared to use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students.

Deadline: 11/17/11

Award Amount: \$21,000

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/xpeditio/groups/pgasite/documents/webpage/pga_063982.pdf

NIH/RUTH L. KIRSCHSTEIN NATIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE AWARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL PREDOCTORAL FELLOWS

THE PURPOSE OF this individual predoctoral research training fellowship is to provide support for promising doctoral candidates who will be performing dissertation research and training in scientific health-related fields relevant to the missions of the participating NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) during the tenure of the award.

Deadline: 12/8/11(also 4/8/12 and 8/8/12)

Award Amount: Award includes stipend, tuition and fees and institutional allowance. See program announcement for details.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-111.html>

NIH/RUTH L. KIRSCHSTEIN NATIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE AWARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL PREDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN HEALTH-RELATED RESEARCH

THE PURPOSE OF this individual predoctoral research training fellowship is to improve the diversity of the health-related research workforce by supporting the training of predoctoral students from groups that have been shown to be underrepresented. Such candidates include individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Deadline: 12/13/11 (also 4/13/12 and 8/13/12)

Award Amount: Award includes stipend, tuition and fees, and institutional allowance. See program announcement for details.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-112.html>

SAE INTERNATIONAL DOCTORAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

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

Deadline: 2/15/12

Award Amount: Loans up to \$5,000 per year for up to three years, for a total of \$15,000.

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

JAMES MADISON GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

JUNIOR FELLOWSHIPS are awarded to outstanding college seniors and college graduates without teaching experience who intend to become secondary school teachers of American history, American government, or social studies in grades 7–12. Junior fellows must complete graduate study within two academic years of full-time study. Senior fellowships are awarded to superior current teachers who must be able to complete graduate study within five calendar years of

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

Deadline: 3/1/12

Award Amount: Up to \$24,000 for two years, not to exceed \$12,000 per academic year.

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

The Graduate Student Writer

Tips to make the writing process work for you

GUIDELINES FOR USING TABLES

ONE OF THE MOST EFFICIENT ways to present a large amount of information to a reader is to collect it in a table. Tables, which present lists of numbers or text in labeled columns, are generally used to describe the results of statistical analysis and other pertinent quantitative data.

Be careful, however, not to use tables to “bulk up” an article or to disguise marginally significant results behind a screen of complicated statistics. Always ask if readers need a table to help them understand your point. Don't use tables to simply replicate data already presented in the text of the paper. And if you have very little numeric information to present, it should be described in the text of your paper, not presented in a table. As a general rule, if the table would contain no more than two columns, present the data in the text.

It's a good idea to create tables before you start writing your first draft. Organizing your data in this way will help you be certain of your results before you need to interpret them.

Table Creation and Location

Create tables with the table function in Microsoft Word. Don't use tabs. In most manuscripts, tables are located on separate pages that follow the reference section. Most journals want the table title and table on the same page, with each table on a separate page in numerical order. Check with your targeted journal to be sure. If the journal wants the tables integrated into the text, place them so a page break doesn't occur in the middle. Don't wrap text around tables.

Relation of Tables and Text

Because tables supplement the text, refer to all tables in the text and explain what the reader should look for when using them. Use sentences that draw the reader's attention to the relationship or trend you wish to highlight, referring to the appropriate table parenthetically. Focus only on the important point the reader should draw, and leave the details for readers to examine on their own. Avoid sentences that give no information other than directing the reader to the table.

Each table must be able to stand alone, independent of the text, so be sure to include an explanation of every abbreviation except standard statistical symbols and abbreviations with the table.

Documentation

If you are using tables and/or data from other sources, be sure to properly document your sources. If you wish to use a table that has been previously copyrighted, get written permission from the copyright holder if it is to be included in an article for publication.

Consistency and Coherence

Abbreviations, terminology, and probability level values must be consistent across tables in the same article. Likewise, formats, titles, and headings must be consistent. Don't repeat the same data in different tables.

Table Structure (see example below)

Table Number. Number all tables sequentially with Arabic numerals in the order in which you refer to them in the text (Table 1, Table 2, etc.). Do not use suffix letters (e.g. Table 3a, 3b, 3c); instead, combine the related tables.

Title. Like the paper itself, each table must have a brief but explanatory title. When appropriate, you may use the title to explain an abbreviation parenthetically—for example, *Trends in Numbers of Adopted Children (AC) v. Foster Children (FC) in Nebraska, 2005–2010*. In APA Style, the title should be italicized and each word capitalized (except *and*, *in*, *of*, *with*, etc.)—for example, *Correlations Between Age and Test Scores*.

Lines. You can use horizontal lines to separate information and make it clearer. However, don't use vertical lines in an APA format table.

Headings. Each column should be identified using a descriptive heading, even the stub column which customarily lists the major independent variables. Keep headings clear and brief. The heading shouldn't be much wider than the widest entry in the column. You can use abbreviations for standard terms without explanation. Uncommon definitions should be explained in a note below the table. The first letter of each heading should be capitalized.

Body. To present quantitative data clearly and efficiently, arrange it logically—that is, data to be

compared must be presented next to one another (before/after, young/old, male/female, etc.), and statistical information (means, standard deviations, N values) must be presented in separate parts of the table.

In reporting the data, consistency is key. Express numerals to a consistent number of decimal places. Never change the unit of measurement or the number of decimal places in the same column. Explain all abbreviations, special use of italics, parentheses, dashes, and special symbols. Correctly identify probability level values and attach asterisks to the appropriate table entries. Be sure to assign a probability to the same number of asterisks in all the tables in the same document.

Additional Notes. If additional explanation is needed, you can add a note or notes below the table. Organize notes according to the convention of general, specific, probability (in that order). General notes refer to some aspect of the entire table; specific notes refer to a particular column or row; probability notes specify the probability level.

Table 1

Dogs Scoring Above Average in Intelligence by Breed and Gender

Breed	Male	Female	%
Dachshund	123	456	17.6
Terrier	456*	789	31.1
Labrador	789	123	51.3
Totals (n=3060)	1368	1692	

No animals were harmed during testing.

Note: average score = 150.

* One male terrier escaped after testing. That animal's score is included.

Sources:

Anderson, G., (2004). *Almost Everything You Wanted to Know about Making Tables and Figures*. Retrieved October 1, 2011 from <http://abacus.bates.edu/~ganderso/biology/resources/writing/HTWtablefigs.html>.

San Francisco Edit. *Twelve Steps to Developing Effective Tables and Figures*. Retrieved October 1, 2011 from <http://www.sfeddit.net/tabfig.pdf>

Angeli, E., et all. (2011). *APA Tables and Figures*. Retrieved October 1, 2011 from <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/19/>

Announcements

News of note for graduate students

CURRENT GRADUATE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION AVAILABLE IN DECEMBER

ARE YOU READY TO COMPETE? Current graduate students are eligible to apply for fellowship funding for the 2012–2013 academic year.

The **Presidential Fellowship** is awarded to doctoral candidates or MFA students. The fellowship stipend is \$24,000 for the academic year. The award also includes tuition, fees, and the university's portion of the student health insurance.

The **Fling Fellowship** is awarded to advanced master's or doctoral candidates. Master's students must be within one year of graduation and doctoral students must be within two years of graduation. The fellowship stipend is \$20,000. This award also includes tuition, fees, and the university's portion of the student health insurance premium.

The number of fellowships awarded in 2012 will be based on available funding. The current student fellowship application will be available online starting December 7 on the [Graduate Studies website](#).

Students must submit an application, an academic goal statement, CV, and two letters of recommendation from faculty members.

This is a highly competitive process. Applications are ranked by faculty members on the UNL Fellowship Committee. Here's a helpful hint: Previous successful applicants made use of an article about creating a successful application that appeared on page 8 of the [November 2008 edition of Graduate Connections](#).

THE UNL HEALTHY OPTION STUDENT INSURANCE PLAN – SPRING INFORMATION

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

Students can enroll on [MyRED](#). However, graduate assistants and international graduate students (F1 or J1 visa holder) 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.

Graduate Assistants who have their own insurance need to opt-out of the plan with the [Waiver Request Form](#), which must be completed online by 1/27/12 for Spring/Summer. Otherwise, you will be automatically

enrolled in the plan and your student account will be charged.

The waiver form must be filled out online 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 402-472-8670 or jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu.

NEW GRADUATE-LEVEL COURSE IN TEACHING & LEARNING IN POST-SECONDARY SCIENCE EDUCATION

FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS SPRING, the Earth and Atmospheric Science program is offering GEOS 898: Teaching and Learning in Post-Secondary Science Education, a new graduate level course designed for teaching assistants in the science fields. This course aims to improve essential research skills, help TAs determine

student learning difficulties, understand student misconceptions in the sciences, and give strategies to improve student learning in the lab, and classroom. For more details about the course, please contact Dr. Leilani Arthurs at larthurs2@unl.edu.

GRADUATE STUDIES IS ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES is excited to announce two new ways to stay connected with our office. We are now posting updates about events sponsored by Graduate Studies as well as news from across campus on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We encourage

prospective and current students as well as alumni, faculty, and staff to use these social networking sites to stay connected with campus and the Office of Graduate Studies. Like us and follow us today!

Events

Campus activities and other events of interest to graduate students

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 for graduation, the graduation ceremony, and other graduation-related topics.

Attendees are welcome to bring a sack lunch/dinner to the session. Dessert and drinks will be provided.

[Pre-register online](#) for one of the following sessions:

Wednesday, January 11, noon, East Campus Union

Thursday, January 19, 5:30–6:30 p.m., Nebraska Union

Monday, January 23, 5:30–6:30 p.m., Nebraska Union

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

NUTECH VENTURES SPEAKER SERIES

JOIN NUTECH VENTURES for a discussion of issues in innovation and entrepreneurship.

All presentations begin at noon and are open to the public. A free lunch will be provided for the first 40 attendees.

11/21/11: Jane Garrity, Startup Visa (Nebraska Union)

01/23/12: Cheryl Barts, Anatomy of a Patent (East Campus Union)

02/27/12: Stuart Martens, Basics of IP (Nebraska Union)

Visit [NUtech Ventures](#) for a full list of speakers.

Interactions

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2011–2012 OTHMER FELLOWSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS to UNL who received an Othmer Recruitment Fellowship were honored at a luncheon on September 28, 2011. These students will receive the fellowship in addition to their assistantships for three academic years.

Recipients:

David Anthony, Computer Science & Engineering; Haley Bergstrom, Nutrition and Health Sciences; Veronika Burobina, Electrical Engineering; James Crews, Jr., English; Robin Criter, Special Education and Communication Disorders; Christina Davis, Chemical &

Biomolecular Engineering; Joshua Ewalt, Communication Studies; Jean Philippe Gibert, Biological Sciences; Michael Greene, Agronomy & Horticulture; Gabriel Houck, English; Elise Johansen, Marketing; John Kiat, Psychology; John Killingsworth, Construction Engineering; Hyesun Lee, Educational Psychology; Zhe (Cliff) Li, Finance; Bethany Lowndes, Industrial Systems Engineering; Sarah Malone, Sociology; Sara Rogers, Biological Chemistry; Shafiun Shimul, Economics; Allison Skinner, Psychology; Dave Stamps, Music; Shana Sundstrom, Natural Resource Sciences; Ethan Twisdale, Mathematics; Crisha Yantis, Art and Art History.

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

Nov. 21	Thinkers and Tinkerers: Jane Garrity, Startup Visa
Dec. 7	Current graduate student fellowship competition application goes online
Jan. 11	Doctoral Information Session
Jan. 19	Doctoral Information Session
Jan. 23	Doctoral Information Session
Jan. 23	Thinkers and Tinkerers: Cheryl Barts, Anatomy of a Patent
Feb. 8	Deadline for submission of all fellowship application materials
Feb. 27	Thinkers and Tinkerers: Stuart Martens, Basics of IP

DEGREE DEADLINES

Date	Master's degrees to be conferred Dec. 2011	Doctoral degrees to be conferred Dec. 2011
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

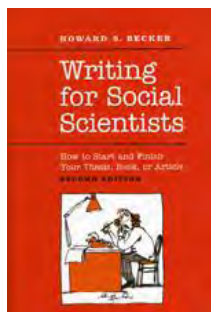
Readers' Corner

Interesting reading for graduate students

WRITING FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENTIST: HOW TO START AND FINISH YOUR THESIS, BOOK OR ARTICLE

By Howard S. Becker with a contribution by Pamela Richards

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1986, Dr. Howard Becker's



overview of recent writing technology and how to use

Writing for the Social Scientist: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book or Article provides useful advice for social scientists on being better and more productive writers, overcoming writers block, rewriting and revising. The second edition, published in 2007, includes a new chapter that provides an

that technology to make the writing process easier and more efficient.

Becker aims to help writers find a tone that will connect with readers. With more than 40 years experience in research, teaching, and writing, Becker address common writing issues in the social sciences and provides practical advice. Any writer who could use a little extra help with the editing process, writing with a professional tone, and reviewing current literature will find *Writing for the Social Scientist* to be a helpful tool.