

Graduate Connections



University of Nebraska–Lincoln

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

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Getting What You Came for

Navigating Graduate School

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

TEN THINGS TO DO THE FIRST TEN WEEKS OF GRADUATE SCHOOL

Week 1 (Aug. 17-21)

Attend all new student orientation sessions offered to you. It's an opportunity to learn more about what's expected of you, and you'll meet other new students as well as more advanced students and faculty. For information about orientation activities in your department, contact your adviser.

Teaching assistants are welcome to attend the [campuswide workshops for teaching assistants](#) on Aug. 18. Also, take full advantage of the [new student welcome](#) festivities on Aug. 21 in the City Campus Union.

Week 2 (Aug. 24-28)

Classes start Monday, August 24. Graduate coursework will be more difficult than undergraduate-level courses, making time management an important skill. Maintain a healthy balance between school-related work and time for yourself. The best way to do this is to plan, plan, plan. Compile your assignments from your syllabi into a weekly list and work at a pace that lets you get your work for each class done in advance of the deadline and have time left over for you.

Week 3 (Aug. 31-Sept. 4)

Most departments have a detailed student handbook that clearly articulates the program's expectations, requirements and deadlines. Read the handbook carefully (and any other materials distributed by your department) to learn about program policies and procedures. This proactive step will help you avoid major mistakes early in your program of study.

Take a break: Attend the Huskers' first home game versus Florida Atlantic Sept. 5. Enjoy your day off Sept. 7!

Week 4 (Sept. 7-11)

Start a research journal to keep track of your research interests. Use every class assignment as an opportunity to discover what research stream interests you and find out as much as you can about it. Talk to your professors about their research interests. You can gain insights from the type of research they do, and you can narrow down your choices by crossing out the stuff you are not interested in.

Week 5 (Sept. 13-18)

Visit the [current students](#) page on the Graduate Studies Web site to find information about services and resources the Office of Graduate Studies offers, such as the Teaching Documentation Program, Mentoring Guidebook and the Guide to Success in Graduate School. You also will find more information about academic integrity, funding, important deadlines and forms required by the Office of Graduate Studies.

Week 6 (Sept. 21-25)

Begin planning for preliminary exams. Set aside time to review, and stick to that schedule. Review key concepts, your old notes and previous exams. If you aren't sure where to start or need help staying on task, form a study group with other students in your department. Begin studying the material early enough that you can meet with your professors to review questions.

Week 7 (Sept. 28-Oct. 2)

Find out about opportunities to meet other students on campus. Ask your adviser or graduate secretary about how to join your program's [student organization](#) and e-mail listserv.

Join UNL's [Graduate Student Association](#). The GSA provides several opportunities to volunteer or to participate in activities throughout the year. Participation in this organization is an excellent way to meet graduate students outside your department.

Week 8 (Oct. 12-16)

Review the [Mentoring Guidebook](#) on the Graduate Studies Web site. If you haven't already met with your mentor, schedule a time to meet. If you need to find a mentor or research adviser, begin meeting with faculty members to find the right fit. Review each faculty member's research before your meeting and make a list of questions. During the meeting, take notes about your discussion.

Week 9 (Oct. 19-23)

If you haven't already done so, create an [individual professional development plan](#). An IPDP will help you think about and plan for the different stages of your professional development throughout your career as a graduate student. Are you accomplishing your goals? What can you do to get back on track? Have your goals changed in the last year? Do they need to be updated?

Week 10 (Oct. 26-30)

Attend departmental research colloquia and become a graduate student superstar. According to Bloom & Bell (1979), graduate student superstars are visible. "Superstars [are] physically present in the department, during and often after working hours." Students who work hard and who actually let the faculty *see* them working hard are perceived as successful, highly productive students.

How's Your Connection?

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

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

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

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A successful transition to graduate school requires some thoughtful planning and maybe a sense of humor. Whether it's your first week in graduate school or your tenth, you might want to heed this advice from Lisa Terre of the University of Missouri-Kansas City: "Above all, be sure to ask for help if you are experiencing difficulties adjusting to your first few months on campus. Develop an appropriate professional relationship with your faculty adviser and let her/him know if you are having problems in the program. In addition to providing guidance about program matters, your adviser will be aware of broader university resources, such as writing labs and tutoring services. The [graduate chair] also is generally available to consult with students as needed. Don't

hesitate to access these important program resources at your disposal."

If your adjustment issues are more personal than academic, arrange for a confidential appointment with a professional at the University Health Center's Counseling and Psychological Services. If you're currently enrolled in seven or more credit hours during the semester, you automatically pay student fees that allow you to benefit from reduced UHC rates.

In Dr. Terre's words, "Graduate school is the beginning of an exciting life adventure. Make the most of it."

Reference: Bloom, L. J. & Bell, P. A. (1979). Making it in graduate school: Some reflections about the superstars. *Teaching of Psychology*, 6, 231-232.

CAREER TALK: LEARNING THE LINGO

If you're preparing for a career in academia, you might want to learn the lingo. Here is a list of some commonly used terms.

AAUP: The [American Association of University Professors](#). This organization helped to establish rights for university professors to protect their academic freedom and also has a collective-bargaining arm. Job candidates may want to check out the [AAUP's annual report](#) on the economic status of the profession, the most reliable information available on faculty salaries.

A.B.D.: All But Dissertation. A term used to designate that all course requirements have been met, but the dissertation has not yet been completed. Do not use this designation when applying for non-academic positions. You have a better chance of getting a position at a university if the vita can honestly reflect Ph.D. instead of A.B.D.

Adjunct: The position is temporary and not on the tenure track. The term also can refer to someone who teaches part time.

Assistant Professor/Associate Professor: In the first full-time position on the tenure track, the title is assistant professor. Once tenure is earned by an assistant professor, he or she can become promoted to associate professor and eventually to full professor.

Assistant Research Professor: A full-time research position with few or no teaching responsibilities. Research professorships are almost always funded by grants or fellowships apart from the regular university budget.

Campus Interview: A candidate is brought to campus so the department or search committee can assess the "fit" for the candidate and the position.

Convention Interview: This interview takes place at an annual meeting or convention of a scholarly association and usually lasts for 30 minutes to an hour. Search committees interview many candidates this way and usually determine who will be invited for campus visits based on these screening interviews.

CV: Curriculum vitae, which provides details about your academic work, including your publications; is usually much lengthier than a résumé. The purpose in preparing either is to interest a prospective employer enough to invite you for a personal interview. In order for a résumé or curriculum vitae to be effective, it must be targeted to the employers who are going to read it.

Degree in Hand: When a job ad states that a candidate must have a degree in hand, it means that all work for the degree has been completed and the Ph.D. will be conferred, either by the time the candidate takes the job, or the next time the institution regularly confers degrees.

Evidence of Excellence in Teaching: A collection of data and written materials that documents your teaching, showing how well you meet your goals for student learning. There are numerous ways you can document effective teaching, including teaching awards received, comments from faculty observers, course materials (syllabi, quizzes, samples of completed student work) and end-of-semester student

evaluations. The material provided should help the reader evaluate your overall effectiveness as a teacher. Most institutions will request some “evidence of effective teaching” as part of the application package.

To learn more about how to select, organize, and present student evaluations, see our Web site on [Constructing a Teaching Portfolio](#).

Job Talk: The presentation you give on campus about your research when you are invited for a visit as part of the hiring process; job talks can vary in length.

Postdoc: A postdoctoral fellow holds the doctoral degree or the equivalent and is hired at a university or other institution with the purpose of engaging in research or participating in advanced training programs. Look closely at particular positions to be sure you will be receiving professional development support.

Send Credentials: It means send a cover letter, a CV, and either letters of recommendation or the contact information for recommenders. Contact the hiring department and double check before sending.

Soft Money: Funds that support a position that is partially or wholly financed by grants; sometimes the

person in the position is responsible for writing grants to raise the dollars to pay the salary.

Standing Faculty: All faculty members who have tenure or are on the tenure track; i.e., those with the titles of professor, associate professor and assistant professor are considered members of the standing faculty.

Statement of Purpose: A cover letter introducing you and your goals.

Tenure: A professor's permanent job contract, granted after a probationary period of six or seven years (depending on the institution), that protects against summary dismissal.

Tenure Track: The path to tenure. In a job ad, the term “tenure track assistant professor” indicates that the position can lead to promotion and tenure.

Time to Degree: The number of years it takes to complete a doctorate. The amount varies by discipline.

Adapted from an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* by Mary Morris Heiberger and Julie Miller Vick (<http://chronicle.com/jobs/news/2002/04/2002042201c.htm>)

Good Practices in Graduate Education

Advice and strategies to strengthen ethics in graduate education

KEY PRACTICES FOR INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH

INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES is based not only on sound disciplinary practice but also on a commitment to basic personal values such as fairness, equity, honesty and respect. The following guidelines are intended to promote high professional standards by everyone— faculty, staff and students alike.

Honesty in Proposing, Performing and Reporting Research

The foundation underlying all research is uncompromising honesty in presenting your own ideas in research proposals, in performing your research and in reporting your data. It means that you must keep detailed and accurate records of primary data as unalterable documentation of your research and that you will be truthful and explicit in disclosing what you did, how you did it, and the results you obtained.

Assignment of Credit

Research proposals, original research, and creative endeavors often build on your own work and on the work of others. Both published and unpublished work must always be properly credited. Reporting the work of others as if it were your own is *plagiarism*.

Fairness in Peer Review

The peer-review process involves the sharing of information for scholarly assessment on behalf of the larger disciplinary community. To be a fair peer reviewer, you must be impartial in your judgments and participate only when conflicts of interest have been revealed. Also, the integrity of this process depends on confidentiality until the information is released to the public. Therefore, the contents of research proposals, manuscripts submitted for publication, and other scholarly documents under review should be considered privileged information not to be shared with others, including students and

staff, without explicit permission by the authority requesting the review.

Collegiality in Scholarly Interactions and Sharing of Resources

Collegiality in scholarly interactions, including open communications and sharing of resources, facilitates progress in research and creative activities for the good of the community. At the same time, it has to be understood that scholars who first report important findings are both recognized for their discovery and afforded intellectual property rights that permit discretion in the use and sharing of their discoveries and inventions.

Balancing openness and protecting the intellectual property rights of individuals and the institution will always be a challenge for the community. Once you have published the results of your research or creative activities or otherwise communicated those results to the public, you are expected to share materials and information on methodologies with your colleagues according to the tradition of your discipline.

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest

The public looks to university research as an independent, unbiased source of information. There is real or perceived conflict of interest when a researcher has material or personal interest that could compromise the integrity of the scholarship. Because some university researchers also conduct research for private entities or have private interests in entities that contribute to research, the federal government, State of Nebraska and UNL require disclosure of these interests.

It is, therefore, imperative that you consider and act appropriately on potential conflicts of interest. It is the responsibility of all researchers to be aware of and comply with such requirements.

Protection of Human Subjects and Humane Care of Animals in the Conduct of Research

Research techniques should not violate established professional ethics or federal and state requirements pertaining to the health, safety, privacy and protection of human beings or to the welfare of animal subjects. While it is the responsibility of faculty to help students and staff comply with such requirements, it is the responsibility of all researchers to be aware of and to comply with them.

The [Human Subjects Protection Program](#) of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln provides appropriate protection to all volunteer subjects enrolled in

research through the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB reviews and approves all research involving human subjects before projects are initiated, and continually reviews and monitors approved studies. In this way, the university ensures that research is conducted in accordance with the ethical principles of autonomy, beneficence and justice as set forth in the Belmont Report, and in compliance with internal policies and federal regulations.

The [Institutional Animal Care Program \(IACP\)](#) at UNL ensures the humane care, use and health of animals used in the teaching, research and extension missions of the university. These goals are met through review and approval by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) of all research and educational activities involving vertebrate animals (including wild mammals and birds) before projects are initiated, to assure compliance with all laws, regulations and rules governing the care and use of animals, and continuing review and monitoring of approved studies.

Compliance with Institutional and Sponsor Requirements

As an investigator, you are granted broad freedoms in making decisions concerning your research. However, you are still guided – and in some cases limited – in these decisions by the laws, regulations and procedures established by the university and sponsors of research to protect the integrity of the research process and the uses of the information developed for the common good. Although the legal agreement underlying the funding of a sponsored project is a matter between the sponsor and the university, the primary responsibility for managing a sponsored project rests with you as the principal investigator and your academic unit.

Adherence to Fair and Open Relationships Between Senior Scholars and Their Co-workers

The relationship between senior scholars and their co-workers should be based on mutual respect, trust, honesty, fairness in the assignment of effort and credit, open communications and accountability. The principles that will be used to establish authorship and ordering of authors on presentations of results must be communicated early and clearly to all co-workers. These principles should be determined objectively according to the standards of the discipline, with the understanding that such standards may not be the same as those used to assign credit for contributions to intellectual property.

It is the responsibility of the faculty to protect the freedom to publish results of research and creative activities. The university has affirmed the right of its scholars for first publication except for “exigencies of national defense.” It is also the responsibility of the faculty to recognize and balance their dual roles as investigators and advisers in interacting with graduate students of their group, especially when a student’s efforts do not contribute directly to the completion of his or her degree requirements.

Avoiding Misconduct in Research and Creative Activities

Federal and university policies define *misconduct* to include *fabrication* (making up data and recording or reporting them), *falsification* (manipulating research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data such that the research is not accurately represented in the record), and *plagiarism* (appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit). Serious or continuing non-compliance with government regulations pertaining to research may constitute misconduct as well. University policy also

defines retaliation against whistle blowers as misconduct. Misconduct does not include honest errors or honest differences of opinion in the interpretation or judgment of data.

The university views misconduct to be the most egregious violation of standards of integrity and as grounds for disciplinary action, including the termination of employment of faculty and staff, dismissal of students and revocation of degrees. No matter what your role – faculty, staff or student – you are responsible for understanding the university’s policy on misconduct in research and creative activities; reporting perceived acts of misconduct of which you have direct knowledge to the Research Compliance officer; and protecting the rights and privacy of individuals making such reports in good faith.

Adapted with permission from *Research Integrity*: A newsletter sponsored and presented jointly by The Graduate School and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Michigan State University, Vol. 7 No. 2 Spring 2004. Retrieved online from <http://grad.msu.edu/integrity.htm>.

Essential Connections

Critical information about the fundamentals of graduate study at UNL

UNDERSTANDING WHO OUR STUDENTS ARE

WORLD EVENTS HELP DEFINE THE COLLECTIVE identity of each generation. Baby Boomers came of age during the Civil and Women’s Rights Movements. Millennials, the current generation of undergraduates in college, have few or no memories of life without the Internet and they have always lived in a time when technology has been developing faster than they can learn about it.

The events that shape each generation of students are just a part of what makes them unique. But world events and in popular culture contribute to only a portion of your students’ collective identity. How well do you know your students? Do you know how many of them are new to Nebraska? Or even new to college? Do you know if the majority of your students are engineers or studying the arts?

Understanding the makeup of your classroom will help you decide how to set expectations for your students and how to approach your material. The following facts and figures pertaining to the fall 2008 semester are available on UNL’s [Institutional Research and Planning Web site](#).

The Undergraduate Population

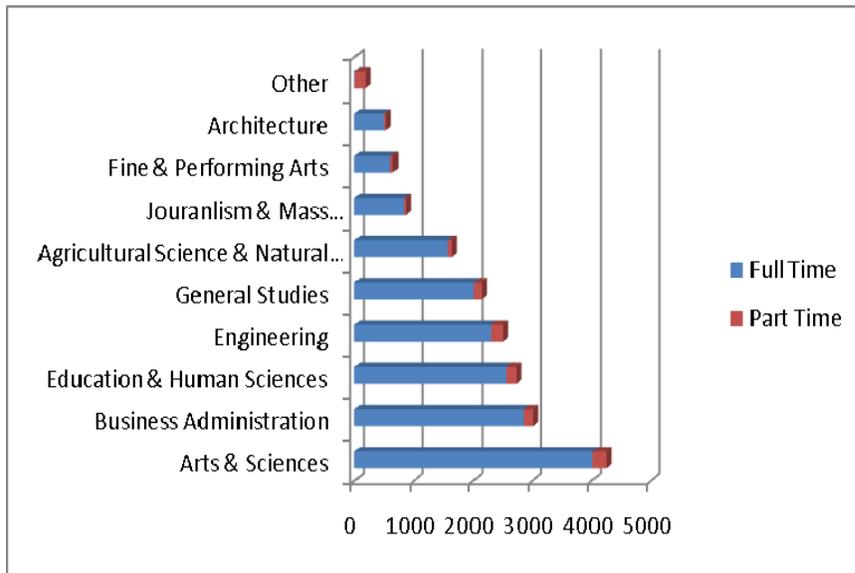
Of the 18,526 undergraduate students registered for the fall 2008 semester, 23% , or 4,200 students, were first time freshmen, attending college for the first time. Approximately 0.5%, or 1,002 students, were freshman who transferred or came back to UNL. The second largest group of students was the senior class with 5,018 students (27%). Sophomores made up 3737 (20%) of the student body and 4373 (23%) juniors registered for classes.

Academic Statistics

The average composite ACT score for the entering freshman class in the fall of 2008 was 25.03, the highest composite score of any entering freshman class at UNL. Five students with perfect ACT or SAT scores were admitted in fall 2008, another first.

Academic Distribution

Of the 18,526 students enrolled, 7% were studying part time and 93% were full time. Arts & Sciences experienced the highest number of students enrolled full time, while Engineering had the highest number of part time students.



Geographic Origins

Nebraska residents made up 82% of UNL's undergraduate population, while 18% of the student body came from out of state during the fall 2008 semester. Of our nonresident students, 590 were international students, with China (100) and Japan (57) accounting for the largest number of international undergraduate students.

Ethnicity

During the fall 2008 semester, 1728 (.09%) students identified themselves as students of color. Hispanic students made up the largest minority population with 650 students, followed by Asian students (502), African American students (447) and Native American students (129).

WHAT DID YOU PUT IN YOUR SYLLABUS?

ONE WAY TO REACH STUDENTS EARLY is to put in writing, and then discuss in class, course policies, requirements, tests and assignments. If your syllabus is already written, use this checklist to test its adequacy. Give yourself one point for each element you have included.

- Your name, title, office number, office telephone, office hours, e-mail address and Web page address.
- Course by number, section, title, meeting days and times, room and building.
- Pre-requisite(s) for the course.
- Description of the course (use the course description from the current UNL undergraduate catalog).
- Course goals or objectives.
- Required purchases (texts, supplies).
- Due dates for major assignments; place, date, time of final exam. Explain your test make-up policy, if you intend to allow make-ups.

- Topics and assignments to be covered in sequence with dates.
- Laptop and cell phone regulation (for example, turn off your cell phone at the start of class).
- Grading criteria.
- Policies regarding attendance, tardiness.
- Policy regarding late assignments.
- Accommodations for students with disabilities.
- Definition and consequences of plagiarism.

Scoring your syllabus:

14-15: Great.

12-13: Good job.

10-11: What did you leave out?

9 or lower: Do you want a major overhaul?

Find the [UNL Syllabus Policy](#) online or on [page 16](#) of this newsletter.

Teaching Tip

Create a Positive First Impression

First impressions matter in most situations and especially in the classroom. As a TA, you might be concerned about your role as an authority figure. Can you effectively lead discussions, interact with students in a positive manner, and handle difficulties that may arise? The first few classes will help shape how your students view you during the next 15 weeks. Speak clearly and confidently, establish your credentials within the discipline, show evidence of organization and preparation, and take steps to start the semester with firm, but gracious control of your classroom.

The first class meeting is extremely important for establishing your relationship with students and making sure they understand exactly what you expect of them – and what they can expect of you. Make sure you:

- Come early to class and welcome students.
- Introduce yourself; start to learn names.
- Distribute your course syllabus.
- Explain contents of each syllabus section as needed.
- Survey students for more information on their course subject knowledge and experience levels.

Let your students know you are there to enhance their learning. You will guide them through the material, but you are neither a crutch nor a substitute for their hard work. Reflect upon those role models whose teaching you admired and consider how you could adapt the positive aspects of what impressed you while still being yourself.

Source: [UCSD Center for Teaching Development](#),

Professional Development Network

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

WHERE TO LOOK – AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR – IN ACADEMIC JOB POSTINGS

SEARCHING FOR AN ACADEMIC POSITION takes work. In fact, you might consider it a “job” without the fringe benefits. To a certain degree, your field of study and the type of position you’re searching for will determine when you start the process. But it’s safe to say that if you’re in the process of writing your dissertation, it’s never too early to start looking. Which begs the question: Where might you look? And how do you decipher the job posting? Generally, key information included in the announcement will help you determine if the position is a good fit.

Where to Look for Posted Positions

The majority of tenure track positions are announced nationally while non-tenure track, part-time and community college positions are more likely to be advertised locally. For the nationally advertised positions, check out these online resources.

The [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) is the most common resource used in the academic job search. An annual subscription is required in order to receive the weekly print version and/or online access to all articles and resources. However, the Chronicle Careers section of the Chronicle is available online to non-subscribers. The Chronicle also features a job alert service through which you may sign up to receive weekly e-mail messages when the Chronicle has posted jobs in the field or fields that interest you. Sign up at <http://www.chronicle.com/jobs/notify.htm>.

[Inside Higher Education](#) is another online source for higher education jobs. The site includes listings for faculty and administrative jobs as well as for positions in public policy, publishing and government.

[Higher Ed Jobs](#) has one of the largest job databases focused exclusively on open positions in higher education, and it usually has thousands of postings for positions for tenure track and adjunct faculty, staff, and administrators. It posts positions for four-year colleges and universities as well as community colleges.

[Academic 360](#) is much more than a job search tool. It is a compilation of a vast number of scholarly organizations, listservs, and other discipline-specific resources. Conveniently organized by area of study, Academic 360 can help you identify numerous sites where academic jobs—and some relevant non-academic jobs—are posted.

[Education Week](#) is a useful tool for individuals seeking jobs within various segments of education. Education Week posts relatively few higher education positions, instead featuring larger numbers of primary and secondary school postings. However, it is a comprehensive tool, providing information about a multitude of positions, and it may be particularly useful to administrators, curriculum designers and

consultants in primary/secondary education and not-for-profit organizations.

[Academic Position Network](#) is an additional resource for the job search. While it does not feature as many postings as the Chronicle, consulting it will make your search more comprehensive.

[Academic Careers Online](#) includes faculty, research, post doc, adjunct, administrative and senior management positions at colleges, universities and research institutions around the world. Applicants also may sign up for free e-mail notification of new job postings.

[Colleges.com](#) provides a fairly comprehensive list of colleges and universities in the United States, Canada and numerous other foreign countries, with links to each institution's home page. This list may be useful if you want to explore job opportunities at specific institutions. Many universities will post academic positions on their own Web sites.

In addition, you should pay close attention to the information networks within your discipline. Job postings often are announced in the newsletters and journals of scholarly organizations and made available online and even through regular e-mail alerts of major scholarly organizations.

Historians

[American Historical Association](#)
[Organization of American Historians](#)

Psychologists

[Social Psychology Network](#)
[APA Online Career Center](#)

Modern Languages

[Modern Language Association Job Information List](#)

Scientists

[Web Site for Job Seekers in Science](#) (biology, biotech, chemistry, pharmaceuticals, physics, life sciences)
[Science Careers from the journal Science](#)
[National Postdoctoral Association Job Board](#)
[New Scientist Jobs](#)

Also, check for postings at conferences. Sometimes the first notice about an available position is made at a national conference, and current faculty may be there to begin the candidate screening process.

What to Look For in an Academic Job Posting

When you find a position announcement that may be a good fit, read it carefully. If you look closely, you'll find information that will help you determine if the position is a good match to your interests and skills. Specifically, pay attention to the following:

Institution type

Is this college or university a private or public institution? Is it a primarily undergraduate institution (PUI) or a research-intensive institution? Does the announcement emphasize specific elements of teaching (e.g., writing-intensive, educational technologies, etc.) or research? Based on the job announcement, you should be able to determine the institution's primary mission (research or teaching) and the focus of the work for this position (teaching, research and service).

Specialization and rank

What type of scholar is the institution looking for? Someone with an emphasis in a particular sub-field or someone who can teach a broad range of courses? Is the position a one-year, fixed-term appointment, a full-time non-tenure track position, or a tenure-track appointment?

Also, pay attention to the advertised *rank*. If the institution is advertising for an associate professor and you've just received your Ph.D. and have very little experience in academia, it's likely you're not qualified. Dr. Ralph De Ayala, chair of UNL's Department of Education Psychology, advises, "If a position is advertised as 'assistant/ associate' or as an open rank (i.e., assistant, associate, full) position, then new Ph.D.s (regardless of level of experience) would likely be considered. In these cases, the department is casting a big net to see if an established scholar is willing to move (including an advanced assistant), but also is willing to entertain entry-level scholars. New Ph.D.s should apply for any positions for which they feel they meet the qualifications and in which they are seriously interested."

Read the posting to determine if you reasonably fit the position requirements and if you have qualifications necessary to fulfill the job responsibilities. When in doubt, e-mail the department and ask whether the university might be interested in your background. Don't waste their time and yours with a full application.

Credentials

What are the minimum educational requirements for the position? Some announcements will note that the position requires a Ph.D. in hand, while others may note that an A.B.D. will be considered if near completion. If you are still finishing your dissertation, can you reasonably be done by the advertised deadline?

Materials and deadlines

Postings will include a request for specific materials such as a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, samples of written work or a teaching statement. De Ayala notes that these materials “should be sent together; the only materials that should be sent under separate cover are the reference letters.”

Also, note if the ad indicates whether additional materials (such as a teaching portfolio) will be requested at a later date.

Announcements should indicate the date that review by the search committee will begin. It’s possible, as well, that potential candidates may be interviewed at a national conference.

Other

A recent job posting described the successful candidate as someone who will be “expected to perform service activities, committed to excellence in teaching” with “experience developing undergraduate research projects.” These embedded descriptions for work expectations provide key information related to the position, and will help you determine what information to highlight in your cover letter, vita, or additional materials.

For example, if the position requires “active participation in campus and community life,” you

should list your campus service activities on your vita. Likewise, if the position calls for someone who can help “strengthen an undergraduate research program,” you will want to describe—either in your cover letter, teaching statement, or research statement—your experiences supervising and mentoring undergraduate researchers.

Think of the job posting as a professional version of the Clue Game, where the aim is to infer details about the advertised position that may not be explicit in the announcement. Information in the position description will help you tailor your cover letter, vita, and other portfolio documents to the needs and culture of the institution to which you are applying.

However, don’t stop with just the job posting. Do your homework. Research the institution, department and faculty thoroughly. The more information you have, the more successfully you’ll be able to present yourself as the candidate who will best meet their specific needs.

Source: Adapted from [“The Academic Job Search Process.”](#) Graduate College Career Services Office, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

For more information on the academic job search, see these Web sites:

[The Academic Job Search, Rice University Career Services Center](#)

[The Academic Job Search, Career Center, University of California, Berkeley](#)

[The Academic Job Search Survival Handbook: Especially for Graduate Students](#), Career Services Center, University of California San Diego

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Fall Campuswide Workshops 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 sends out weekly announcements of funding opportunities, several of which relate to fellowships in a wide variety of fields of study. If you are interested in receiving these announcements, you can subscribe to the listserv by sending an e-mail to Nathan Meier at nmeier2@unl.edu. Funding announcements archives also are available at <http://research.unl.edu/sp1/oldfa.shtml>.

AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION DISSERTATION GRANTS

AERA INVITES EDUCATION POLICY- AND PRACTICE-RELATED dissertation proposals using [NCES](#), [NSF](#), and other national databases. Dissertation grants are available for advanced doctoral students 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: 9/1/2009, to be reviewed in October;
1/6/ 2010 to be reviewed in February;
3/16/2010 to be reviewed in April

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

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

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HISPANICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION OUTSTANDING DISSERTATIONS COMPETITION

THIS COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ANYONE WHO HAS completed a dissertation that focuses on Hispanics in higher education **or** to any Hispanic who has completed a dissertation in the social sciences between June 1, 2007 and Aug. 1, 2009. Dissertations are eligible if they are in domains related to the Educational Testing Services (ETS) corporate mission, including education, linguistics, psychology, statistics, testing, and so forth. Dissertations in the humanities, sciences,

technology, engineering and mathematics are **not** eligible.

Deadline: 09/7/09

Award amounts: \$5,000, \$2,000, and \$1,000

www.aahhe.org/OutstandingDissertationsCompetition2008.aspx

FORD FOUNDATION DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS

THE FORD FOUNDATION DIVERSITY FELLOWSHIPS seek to increase the ethnic and racial diversity of the nation's college and university faculties, to maximize the educational benefits of diversity, and to increase the number of professors who can and will use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of all students. Fellowship awards are made at the predoctoral, dissertation and postdoctoral levels to

students who demonstrate excellence, a commitment to diversity and a desire to enter the professoriate.

Deadlines: 11/2/09 (predoctoral); 11/9/09 (dissertation)

Award amounts: \$20,000 (predoctoral); \$21,000 (dissertation)

<http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/fordfellowships>

AMERICAN WATER WORKS ASSOCIATION ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

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

Deadline: 10/1/09

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

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

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIPS IN EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES will offer support for writing dissertations in East European studies in all disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences. Funding is offered for two types of support: research fellowships for use in Eastern Europe to conduct fieldwork or archival investigations and

writing fellowships for use in the United States, after all research is complete, to write the dissertation.

Deadline: 11/11/09

Award amount: up to \$18,000

<http://www.acls.org/grants/Default.aspx?id=532>

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

ACLS INVITES APPLICATIONS for the fourth annual competition for the Mellon/ACLS dissertation completion fellowships for graduate students in the humanities and related social sciences. Applicants must be prepared to complete their dissertations within the period of their fellowship tenure and no later than August 31, 2011.

Deadline: 11/11/09

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

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

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

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

Deadline: 11/11/09

Award amount: \$25,000

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

EWING MARION KAUFFMAN FOUNDATION DISSERTATION FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

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

Deadline: Sept. 23

Award amount: \$20,000

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

\$2,500 ENERGY SCIENCES FELLOWSHIP

WATCH FOR ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION DETAILS in the next edition of *Graduate Connections* for the \$2500 energy sciences fellowship for 2010-11. The application deadline is expected to be in early 2010. This fellowship is made possible by Blackhills Energy Corporation, and the recipient is selected by the Nebraska Center for Energy Sciences Research. The fellowship is awarded to a graduate student who has

the potential to make an impact in the energy sciences (including all science and engineering disciplines, economics, policy and architecture) through graduate research projects and course work. Previous recipients were graduate students in the departments of biological systems engineering and electrical engineering.

Events

Campus activities and other events of interest to graduate students

19TH ANNUAL FALL CAMPUSWIDE WORKSHOPS FOR GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS, AUGUST 18

THE ANNUAL FALL CAMPUSWIDE WORKSHOPS for Graduate Teaching Assistants, sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies, are scheduled for Tues., Aug. 18 in the Nebraska Union on City Campus. The program will feature a variety of concurrent sessions and topical interest groups. This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Chris Sorensen, distinguished professor of physics and chemistry at Kansas State University.

Check-in and continental breakfast begin at 7:30 a.m. and the welcome is at 8:15 a.m. You can see the complete schedule and pre-register at the [Office of Graduate Studies Web site](#).

Anyone who registers and attends will receive a T-shirt, an aluminum water bottle, and a bag filled with gifts and resources from the Office of Graduate Studies.

At various points throughout the day, we'll be awarding door prizes, including an 80 GB iPod Touch, a 500 GB external hard drive, \$50 book store gift cards, as well as other prizes.

Only students who pre-register (and are in attendance at the drawing) **will be eligible for door prizes**. In order to ensure that there are enough materials for all participants, please pre-register by August 13.

Registration is FREE and includes a complimentary continental breakfast and buffet lunch, sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies.

About the Keynote Speaker. . .



The world of physics fascinates Dr. Christopher Sorensen, University Distinguished Professor of physics and chemistry at Kansas State University. And so does student learning.

Named Outstanding Doctoral and Research Universities Professor of

the Year in 2007 by the CASE/Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Dr. Sorensen was described by one student as deeply devoted to his craft: teaching physics. He has both a passion for his field and for his students.

Over the course of his faculty career, Sorensen has created, developed and taught undergraduate courses for Kansas State's physics department, where he makes "physics come alive." He also created and teaches a summer experimental science and

engineering workshop for teenage girls and supervises high school student research.

Dr. Sorensen has been recognized for his many teaching accomplishments. Besides being named U.S. Professor of the Year, he has received a Stamey Teaching Award (twice), the Commerce Bank Undergraduate Teaching Award, the Presidential Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching and

the Commerce Bank Distinguished Graduate Faculty Member Award.

Dr. Sorensen is a native of Omaha, Neb., and received a bachelor's degree in physics from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. He received both his master's and doctorate degrees in physics from the University of Colorado.

NEW STUDENT WELCOME, AUGUST 21

MEET FELLOW STUDENTS and learn more about the resources available at UNL and in the community to help ease your transition into graduate school. Scheduled on Aug. 21 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the

Nebraska Union on City Campus, the New Student Welcome features a resource fair, a complimentary lunch and door prizes. [Pre-register online now.](#)

FALL 2009 GRADUATE ORIENTATION FOR NEW AND TRANSFER INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS, AUGUST 21

FALL 2009 ORIENTATION for new and transfer international students takes place Friday, Aug. 21, at the Nebraska Union on City Campus. Check-in runs from 8 to 10 a.m., with various presentations and orientation activities to follow, including the new student welcome sponsored by the Office of Graduate Studies. (See above.)

The day includes several small-group information sessions, a campus tour, picnic and other evening social activities. More information is available from [International Affairs](#).

DOCTORAL GRADUATION INFORMATION SESSIONS, SEPTEMBER 15, 16 & 24

FOR STUDENTS PLANNING TO GRADUATE in December or May, the Office of Graduate Studies is offering information sessions to provide guidance that will help ensure that “all your ducks are in a row.”

You will learn about the necessary forms, where to find them and when to submit them in order to graduate on schedule. We’ll “walk” you backward 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 about the process for applying for graduation, the graduation ceremony and other graduation-related topics.

Some comments from the sessions held last February indicate just how valuable the sessions are:

I didn't know anything and now I feel like I know exactly what I need to get done.

The information provided was very helpful to me because I had not considered how to plan for my

graduation. I know that I will have more questions as I work through the process and feel that I now have people I can go to with them.

This session was really helpful. I now understand the rest of the graduation process and budget for the rest of the expenses.

I would definitely recommend this session to others and I'll be sure to mention it to my adviser.

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

Tues., Sept. 15, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Nebraska Union, City Campus; refreshments served

Wed., Sept. 16, noon-1 p.m., Nebraska East Union; lunch (pizza) served

Thur., Sept. 24, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Nebraska Union, city Campus; dinner (pizza) served

For more information, contact Eva Bachman at 472-8669.

Announcements

News of note for graduate students

REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL AID

IF YOU ARE USING FINANCIAL AID, know the implications of not being registered appropriately. If you need to withdraw from any courses, you may be required to repay financial aid sooner than anticipated. To view more information about financial aid, visit the [Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid Web site](#).

Please be aware of drop and add deadlines. All enrollment instructions and drop/add deadlines with the refund schedule are posted on the [Registration and Records Web site](#).

THE UNL HEALTHY OPTION STUDENT INSURANCE PLAN

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE that a well-baby benefit has been added to student insurance coverage beginning with the 2009 academic year. Coverage information and frequently asked questions are noted below. You can find more information at the [Graduate Studies Web site](#).

Coverage Highlights

- Medical expenses for accidents or illnesses up to a total of \$250,000 are covered from August 14, 2009 to August 13, 2010.
- A well-baby benefit of \$250 per policy year has been added when a child is covered by this policy.
- Medical evacuation and repatriation benefits are included in this policy without additional cost.
- Dental care is a covered service.
- Prescriptions are covered by the UHC prescription program.

Premium Costs

The total cost of the insurance premium is \$1,363 (\$536 fall; \$827 spring/summer). Graduate assistants will contribute about 21% (\$287) of the total annual cost.

	Fall	Spring/summer	Annual
Student pays	\$113	\$174	\$287
University pays	\$423	\$653	\$1076
Total	\$536	\$827	\$1363

Enrollment

You can enroll through WAM. If you're a graduate assistant or an international student you will be automatically enrolled. However, if you have dependents, you'll need to complete an enrollment form available at the Health Center.

Waivers

If you have your own insurance and wish to opt out of the plan, be sure to complete a Waiver Request form by Sept. 11, 2009, for fall or by Feb.1, 2010, for spring/summer. A printable PDF of the form is available on the [UHC Web page](#). NOTE: Waiver requests must be filled out each semester and returned to the University Health Center. If the form is not received by the published deadline, your student account will be charged.

For more information

- Health insurance brochure: www.aetnastudenthealth.com
- Dental insurance brochure: www.ameritasgroup.com/students/unl
- For in-depth questions about insurance coverage and enrollment forms, contact insurance coordinator Bev Heiserman at 472-7507.
- For questions about graduate assistant eligibility, contact Jane Schneider at jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu or 472-8670

CALL FOR AWARD NOMINATIONS

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

Graduate Recognition Awards

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

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

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

[Graduate Award nomination forms](#) are available online.

Folsom Distinguished Thesis and Dissertation Awards

The annual Folsom Distinguished Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation Awards recognize the outstanding research and creative accomplishments of UNL graduate students. These awards are made possible through a generous gift from the family of

Lowe R. and Mavis M. Folsom to the University of Nebraska Foundation.

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

We are grateful to the Folsom family and the University of Nebraska Foundation for providing this opportunity to showcase the important scholarly contributions made by our graduate students.

[Folsom Award nomination forms](#) are available online.

We ask your help in making your students and your colleagues aware of these awards. Please post the Call for Nominations in a prominent place, and please consider nominating the work of outstanding graduate students in your program or department.

Award recipients will be honored at a reception in the spring semester. Point your browser to the [Office of Graduate Studies Web site](#) for a list of past recipients.

Deadline for submitting nominations is Oct. 7.

Supporting materials due from nominees and peer faculty may be submitted online. For more information about award nominations, contact Jane Schneider at 402-472-8670 or send e-mail to jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN SYLLABUS† POLICY‡

Approved by the Academic Senate, April 3, 2007 and by ASUN, March 21, 2007

In accordance with Regents Bylaw 4.1, all faculty are required to "inform students concerning the requirements, standards, objectives and evaluation procedures at the beginning of each course." The University of Nebraska–Lincoln requires that this information be conveyed to students either in writing or by written electronic means at the beginning of each course.

Course documentation should be disseminated, on paper or on the World Wide Web (i.e., Blackboard, course Web page), to students by the end of the first week of class.

Documentation for courses taught in a traditional classroom setting must include the following information about the course:

- Instructor's name, office location, contact information (telephone number and/or email address), office hours
- Required materials, including any texts and personal equipment such as calculators
- Course prerequisites
- Attendance policy, if any
- Special policies for the course, if any (e.g., a policy that collaboration is permitted on take-home work; a policy that calculators can be used on exams; penalties for late work.)
- A list of papers, exams, and other assessments that will contribute to the students' grades, along with the exact or approximate value of those

assessments, either in points or percent of total grade. Repeated small assessments, such as homework or quizzes, can be considered as one item in the list of assessments.

Other useful information, where applicable, may also be included at the instructor's discretion:

- Time and location of final exam

- Projected schedule of assignments, quizzes, tests and other course work
- Information about how student work will be graded
- An exact or approximate grading scale, for courses that are graded on a point system

†Dictionaries define the word “syllabus” to mean a list or outline of topics, but students think of the word as indicating a list of rules and policies. To avoid confusion, this document uses the term “course documentation.” The document is called a “syllabus policy” so that the title will be meaningful to students.

‡This document is intended to provide guidelines for instructors to follow in communicating to students about their courses. Violations of this policy shall not be the basis for any grade appeal.

2009-2010 UNL GRADUATE STUDIES BULLETIN

THE 2009-2010 UNL GRADUATE BULLETIN is available online at <http://bulletin.unl.edu>. If you need help

navigating the bulletin, please contact Jane Schneider at jschneid@unlnotes.unl.edu or 472-8670.

Interactions

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

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

THE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION is looking forward to an exciting year! Here are just a few of the things we have going on.

NAGPS Conference

We are hosting the annual conference for the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students, Nov. 14-18. The conference gives us the opportunity to show off our campus and our GSA. Find out how you can get involved.

Web site

We have revamped our Web site to include more detailed information about the GSA and what we do.

There are sections on our social events, our legislative meetings and ways you can get involved on campus – within and outside of the GSA. Check it out at <http://www.unl.edu/gsa>.

Seeking GSA LA Representatives

Every department on campus is entitled to identify a representative graduate student to be a voting member of our Legislative Assembly. Is your department represented? If you are unsure, feel free to check out our Web site or ask your department.

Did You Know?

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA–LINCOLN has been home to many legendary figures, including the literary naturalist Loren Eiseley, geneticist George Beadle, artists Aaron Douglas and Weldon Kees, social researcher Alvin Johnson, investor Warren Buffett, comedian Johnny Carson, diva Barbara Hendricks, artist and engineer Harold Edgerton, soldier John J. Pershing, authors Willa Cather and Mari Sandoz, and many others. Today, as a UNL graduate student, you are building on this legacy through your research involvement in your field of study. Will your name one day appear on this list?

Learn more about UNL at <http://www.unl.edu/ucomm/aboutunl/>.

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 DATES AND DEADLINES

Aug. 18	Annual Campuswide Workshops for Graduate Teaching Assistants
Aug. 21	New Student Welcome and New International Student Orientation
Sept. 15, 16 & 24	Doctoral Graduation Information Sessions
Oct. 7	Deadline to submit graduate award nominations

DEGREE DEADLINES

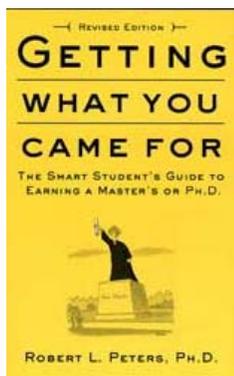
DATE	MASTER'S DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED DEC. 2009	DOCTORAL DEGREES TO BE CONFERRED DEC. 2009
Sept. 25	Application for advanced degree	Application for advanced degree
Nov. 5	Submit final exam report (or four weeks prior to oral); Incomplete grades must be removed	
Nov. 12		Application for final exam report; incomplete grades must be removed
Nov. 19	Submit preliminary copy of thesis (or two weeks prior to oral); File results of written comprehensive exam and/or option II paper	
Dec. 3	Final day for oral examination	Final day for oral examination
Dec. 4	Deposit thesis and final examination report form; pay binding fee	Deposit dissertation; dissertation grades submitted; final fees; final forms due
Dec. 18	Commencement	Doctoral hooding and commencement ceremony

Readers' Corner

Interesting reading for graduate students

GETTING WHAT YOU CAME FOR: THE SMART STUDENT'S GUIDE TO EARNING A MASTER'S OR PHD

By Robert Peters
Farrar Strauss and Giroux, 1992, revised 1997



FROM THE DAY YOU APPLY to the day you receive your diploma, graduate school offers a wide variety of challenges. While many “how to” books for graduate students focus on a single part of the process, such as the dissertation or the academic job search, Dr. Robert Peters tackles all of these challenges and more in *Getting*

What You Came For. Based on interviews with career counselors, graduate students and professors, *Getting What You Came For* is packed with real-life experiences.

Peters covers traditional topics such as finding an adviser and surviving comprehensive exams. But he also includes issues that seem intuitive – like building your credentials for admission, building a reputation

and setting up your office. While Peters writes from the perspective of a traditional student, he makes a point to discuss special issues for nontraditional students, women and underrepresented and international students.

Getting What You Came For has all the advice you will need not only to survive but to thrive in graduate school, including instructions on applying for admission to a graduate school and for financial aid; how to excel on qualifying exams; how to manage academic politics; and how to write and defend a top-notch thesis. Most important, it shows you how to land a job when you graduate.

Whether you are just starting out in graduate school or nearing the end, *Getting What You Came For* has something for everyone.

Find out more about this book at Macmillan.com.

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