

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISING GUIDE

ACADEMIC CONCERNS

Keep in mind that there are many causes of academic difficulty including:

- Difficulty in course material, including socialization into a new field, difficulty balancing new roles of student and teacher/researcher, and limited experience writing for new scholarly audiences.
- Diagnosed or undiagnosed disability issues (attention deficit disorder, learning disability).
- Mental health concerns (depression, anxiety, etc.).
- Cultural, family, or personal concerns.

Many students appreciate an instructor taking the initiative to express concern about their academic performance. Faculty may be able to help a student with content-related difficulty, or may wish to refer to the resources below for these and other concerns.

Student Academic Success Services & Thesis Support Groups	The Graduate School	International Student & Scholar Services	Disability Services
University Counseling & Consulting Services 109 Eddy Hall (services also available at 199 Coffey Hall, St. Paul) Phone: 612-624-3323 Web: http://www.uccs.umn.edu/education/sass.htm	316 Johnston Hall Phone: 612-625-3490 Web: http://www.grad.umn.edu/students/	190 HHH Center Phone: 612-626-7100 Web: http://www.iss.umn.edu/	180 McNamara Alumni Center Phone: 612-626-1333 Web: http://ds.umn.edu/

PERSONAL CONCERNS

BE CLEAR about what you can and cannot do.

RESPECT the student's value system and culture.

Bear in mind: Resist the temptation to be a hero or savior.

- Recognize the limits of your role and refer to other professionals when needed.
- Refrain from making promises you cannot or may not be able to keep.
- If the student or others are in danger, you will need to act; so be cautious about promises of confidentiality.
- Doing something in response to a student's concerns is almost always better than doing nothing.
- Students may be in a new and potentially disorienting day-to-day cultural context while some students also feel disconnected from their normal support groups.

University Counseling & Consulting Services (UCCS)	Boynton Health Service Mental Health Clinic	Office for Equity and Diversity
109 Eddy Hall (services also available in 199 Coffey Hall, St. Paul) Phone: 612-624-3323 Web: http://www.uccs.umn.edu	4 th Floor Boynton Health Service Clinic: 612-624-1444 Urgent Counselor: 612-625-8475 Web: http://www.bhs.umn.edu	Phone: 612-624-0594 Web: http://www.academic.umn.edu/equity

CONCERNS RELATING TO THE ADVISING RELATIONSHIP

The relationship is dynamic and is defined by the expectations, needs, and interests of both student and adviser.

Conflict is often a part of the advising relationship. Engaging constructively in conflict can provide for diverse perspectives and positive outcomes.

Clarifying expectations early in the relationship can minimize misunderstanding.

Student Conflict Resolution Center (SCRC)	University Counseling and Consulting Services (UCCS)	Academic & Professional Development, Graduate School
<p>254 Appleby Hall <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-7272 <i>Web:</i> http://www.sos.umn.edu/</p>	<p>109 Eddy Hall (services also available in 199 Coffey Hall, St. Paul) <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-3323 <i>Web:</i> http://www.uccs.umn.edu/</p> <p>UCCS offers targeted programming (<i>e.g.</i>, thesis support groups) to help advanced graduate students complete their program successfully.</p>	<p>321 Johnston Hall <i>Phone:</i> 612-625-2809 <i>Web:</i> www.grad.umn.edu/professional-development/index.html</p>

EMPLOYMENT CONCERNS

Graduate assistant employment is often integrally related to a graduate student's success in the graduate academic program and to financial resources, such as tuition benefits. When things go wrong at work, there can be damaging ripple effects that can derail an academic career.

Graduate students are exploring new roles within the academic environment that can create frictional challenges.

Steps you can take to reduce conflicts during the semester for Graduate Assistants (TA/RA/Graduate Fellows) include:

- Communicate clearly before the semester about work responsibilities and the work relationship.
- Establish a method for mutually communicating throughout the semester about any adjustments, changes, or concerns that impact the workload, expectations, or relationship.
- Coordinate schedules at the beginning of the semester between work responsibilities and the graduate student's other responsibilities, e.g., academic deadlines and religious observances (e.g., Ramadan and Rosh Hashanah), ideally at the beginning of the semester.
- Consider in advance the professional development opportunities your graduate assistant will engage in to successfully function in their roles.

Office for Conflict Resolution	Center for Teaching and Learning
662 Heller Hall <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-1030 <i>Email:</i> conflict.resolution@umn.edu <i>Web:</i> http://www.umn.edu/conflictresolution/	Suite 400 University Office Plaza <i>Phone:</i> 612-625-3041 <i>Web:</i> http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR TAKING ACTION

1. **ENSURE PRIVACY** when you talk and choose a time when you are not preoccupied or rushed.
2. **LISTEN** to the student in a sensitive, non-threatening way.
3. **DEMONSTRATE** your understanding by repeating the essence of what the student has said. Try to include both the **CONTENT** (“So you are new to this campus...”) and the **FEELINGS** (“...and you are feeling overwhelmed”) as appropriate.
4. **ASK QUESTIONS** to get a better understanding of the scope and nature of the problem.
5. **EXPRESS CONCERN** in specific, nonjudgmental, behavioral terms. (“I noticed you haven’t been to class in three weeks,” not “Where have you been lately?”)
6. **COMMUNICATE HOPE** by reminding the student that there are always options, and things tend to look different with time.
7. **RECOMMEND RESOURCES** appropriate to the situation. Take the time to consult the resource ahead of time if you are unsure or would like more information on how they might be helpful in a particular situation. Remind the student that using resources is a sign of strength and courage, not weakness or failure.
8. **FOLLOW UP** in a reasonable length of time.
9. **CONSULT** with other professionals by contacting any of the offices listed above, especially if you are concerned about your safety or the safety of others.

SUCCESS FOR FACULTY MENTORS & GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

JANUARY 2010

THE NEED FOR EFFECTIVE AND MULTIPLE MENTORS

The work of the graduate faculty in preparing the next generation of scholars and professionals doesn't stop with classroom teaching. Advising, tutoring, supporting and supervising are all part of the faculty role as stewards of the profession and mentors to graduate students. Mentoring future professionals and professors, therefore, requires a commitment that goes well beyond the capacity of a single individual advisor. Best practices in graduate education indicate that graduate and professional students' multiple professional and personal development needs are most effectively met by a network of people.

THE MENTORING NETWORK

The Council of Graduate Schools has identified six primary areas in which graduate and professional students need mentoring. Typically an advisor and other graduate faculty along with staff members will work with graduate and professional students in several of these areas to provide this network of support. As mentoring takes place, it is shaped by the goal-setting responsibilities of the graduate student at the center of the network. The most common components of this mentoring network or constellation include:

Advising Giving counsel about degree program requirements; academic progress expectations; local dissertation standards, components, processes; and overall career planning considerations.

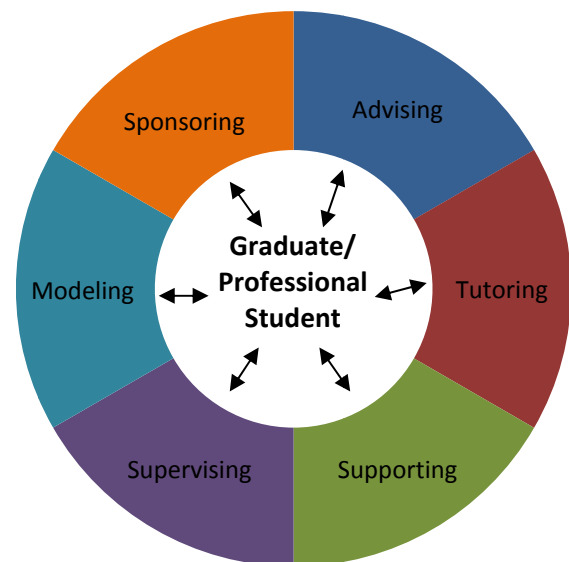
Tutoring Providing feedback on scholarly development; pointing out practices for seeking, prioritizing and using additional feedback.

Supporting Offering emotional support, practical resources related to academic, professional and personal concerns.

Supervising Offering training and feedback on employment related to teaching and research assistantships, internships, and project or program management.

Modeling Providing and pointing to authentic models of teaching, research, service and professional leadership to foster the career development of graduate and professional students.

Sponsoring Opening doors by providing information and coaching; playing a role in development of networks and sharing leads to professional opportunities across multiple career paths.



MENTORING – IDEAS FOR ACTION

Advising

- Assist in the selection of student's schedule of courses
- Explain accurately department/college academic policies and progression
- Assist the student in the exploration of possible research areas
- Foster graduate student participation in the department
- Assist the student in planning academic conference participation

Tutoring

- Assist student by providing honest assessment of academic strengths and weaknesses, including planning for improvement
- Model writing as an integral and on-going part of the research process
- Set clear and fair expectations regarding the ownership and use of data and regarding authorship and joint authorship arrangements prior to beginning research projects
- Provide fair and timely assessment and feedback on work products

Supporting

- Guide the student to appropriate campus resources for personal, academic, career and community support and development as needed
- Encourage student's increased independence as future presenters and teachers through on-campus professional development opportunities
- Assist students in generating an effective, respectful, practical problem-solving protocol for when interpersonal conflicts emerge within a cohort
- Direct student to career development resources for multiple career paths

Supervising

- Provide clear, realistic, achievable expectations in relation to teaching and research roles; agree to measures and evaluation procedures
- Know and guide student in navigating departmental, university, and external funding and award opportunities
- Ensure student understands compliance issues for proposed research

Modeling

- Model respectful interactions and shared decision making
- Provide the student with opportunities to discuss norms and expectations within department, university, field of study and other academic settings
- Showcase your own current collaborations and past multiple mentoring relationships with internal and external professional colleagues

Sponsoring

- Provide information regarding expansions and contractions in the field of study, subfields and interdisciplinary alliances
- Assist students in the development of a comprehensive portfolio, from vita/resume to cover letter to documenting teaching and research to gathering information in advance of campus interviews

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

“MENTORING VS. ADVISING” – UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS

<http://grad.uark.edu/recruit/orientation/>

Offers a quick review for addressing key questions: What is “good mentoring”? What differentiates mentoring from advising? What are fair expectations and ways of clarifying responsibilities? What are challenges mentors & mentees face?

“MENTORING GUIDELINES” – UC, DAVIS

<http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/gradcouncil/mentoring.pdf>

http://www-eve.ucdavis.edu/eve/pbg/Program_Mentoring_Guideline.html

“Faculty mentoring is broader than advising a student as to the program of study to fulfill coursework requirements and is distinct from formal instruction in a given discipline. Mentoring encompasses more than serving as a role model.” The Davis Faculty Council overviews practices for guiding student through: degree requirements, dissertation research and professional development. Two pages featuring key steps & best practices.

“MENTORING: HOW TO OBTAIN THE MENTORING YOU NEED” – UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE

<http://www.grad.washington.edu/mentoring/GradStudentMentor.pdf>

“When it comes to academic success and persistence, there is no substitute for a healthy relationship between you and your mentors.” So notes the introduction to this helpful and comprehensive document. The guide begins with a useful set of definitions and advocates for students to expand their networks of helpers as they progress through their graduate careers. Later sections detail common concerns for students and discuss issues of diversity that may affect an individual’s experience. Worksheets are included to help students chart goals and implementation steps year by year.

“HOW TO GET THE MENTORING YOU WANT: A GUIDE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS” AND “HOW TO MENTOR GRADUATE STUDENTS: A GUIDE FOR FACULTY” – UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf>

<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/Fmentoring.pdf>

This set assists both student mentee and faculty mentor. The mentor can find examples of best practices across disciplines, suggestions from students, and action steps to avoid problems in the relationship. Students can find strategies on building the relationship and recognizing the needs and position of the mentor.

“BEST PRACTICES FOR FACULTY MENTORING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS” – BROWN UNIVERSITY

<http://www.gradschool.brown.edu/go/mentoring>

This succinct discussion of advising and mentoring includes useful templates for graduate students and post docs to use in charting their academic progress and in clarifying responsibilities in an advising relationship. The individual development template includes a useful delineation between long term and immediate goals, and the advising agreement provides a forum to discuss potentially awkward issues such as constructive counsel, authorship, work hours and so on.

Keys to S.U.C.C.E.S.S. for Graduate / Professional Students and Faculty Mentors

A Graduate / Professional Student is encouraged to...

A Faculty Mentor is encouraged to...

Set clear expectations for academic relationships.

Advisees who have a clear idea of how the advisor and other mentors can help them achieve their educational and career goals will get the most out of relationships with mentors and advisors. Create a plan to guide you as you work with mentors to complete your degree.

Support your student's goals and career plans.

Advisors who listen to graduate and professional students' goals, share ideas and additional possibilities, and ask future-looking questions will help their advisees to find and create their own appropriate career paths. Take care to distinguish between your hopes and their hopes.

Understand your rights and responsibilities.

Advisees have a right to be treated with respect; this includes the right to study in a harassment-free environment, have equal access and opportunity in all educational programs without individual or systemic barriers, and seek religious and disability accommodations. Advisees are expected to contact appropriate offices to request accommodations, seek advocates and mediation.

Understand your roles and responsibilities.

One of the key roles an advisor plays is that of a mentor. As a mentor, the advisor might help the advisee assess their academic strengths and weaknesses as well as assist in course selection and exploring possible research areas. In addition, an advisor also has a responsibility to treat advisees with respect and to ensure that the advisee is able to pursue their academic work in a harassment-free environment with access to any needed accommodations.

Communicate with advisor/mentors regularly.

The success of any effective relationship is dependent on communication. Advisees need to make sure they communicate with faculty mentors regularly, not just when facing a crisis. Communication includes sharing successes, asking questions and seeking feedback in problem solving, which allows an advisor to provide effective, timely support, and can help prevent a crisis.

Communicate timely feedback respectfully and constructively.

Direct and honest feedback will help students assess errors and move forward when it is informational, specific, constructive, timely, positive, personal and differential. Faculty mentors, especially dissertation advisors and workplace supervisors, are expected to refrain from engaging in intimidation and humiliation in workplace and professional interactions with students whatever the University setting or context.

Connect with resources to nurture your well-being.

Pursuing a graduate or professional degree can be stressful, and it is important for advisees to connect with resources that will nurture their emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual well-being - whether individuals, student services programs, or interest/affinity groups. Putting personal interests on hold while in school often creates stress, which hinders rather than helps progress to degree. If your advisor does not appear to have your best interest at heart, you have a right consult other mentors and to seek a new advisor.

Create a safe environment for your graduate student.

Advisee will experience highs and lows: exhilaration, fear, possibility, frustration, joy, anger. Ideally, an advisor will hear and talk about these experiences and be equipped to provide appropriate guidance, including referrals. Not "just" students, RAs or TAs, advisees have full, complex lives; therefore, advising includes learning about/ creating an environment free from racism, sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice, intolerance, or harassment. Because students are also *future* colleagues, it is critical that advisors understand and respectfully navigate current power dynamics.

Establish milestones to reach degree completion.

Take time to develop an Individual Development Plan in order to know, understand, address and update progress with your specific writing, teaching, research and professional development goals. Review with peers and mentors. Reflective practice allows you to plan for success.

Expect and elicit on-going progress to degree completion.

To create effective annual student progress reviews, schedule regular short meetings each term: a first discussion establishes goals with steps/suggestions/resources for meeting them; a mid-term email exchange allows for updates and adjustments; a term-end review provokes mapping out next big steps/stages and goal setting.

Spend your time wisely.

Graduate and professional school success is highly dependent on how well students manage their time and that of their advisor. Learning effective time management skills is a start, using them is a necessity for personal development and for interacting regularly and effectively with advisors.

Serve as a resource and provide networking support.

When a faculty or staff member commits to serving in a mentoring role, that person is an on-going contributor to the success of the student. Talking through ideas, linking students to appropriate resources and suggesting ways to broaden or deepen the student's network are essential components of this role.

See yourself as part of a community.

Show up at departmental events *and* invite faculty to your events, offer to be part of new student recruitment, set up resource sharing for teaching assistants, enroll in professional development programs to improve skills and deepen networks. Engaged students report increased satisfaction and progress.

See yourself as part of a community.

Create opportunities for informal socializing within department events and support student groups in their events. Know your local university resources for graduate student professional development and bring this information to your department. Talk with peers across institutional types to help students understand multiple career paths.

WORST PRACTICES

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Hostile, intimidating, or offensive behavior on the part of an adviser or mentor can seriously interfere with their students' ability to be successful. Such behavior can harm students in multiple ways, even causing them to consider leaving the University. Most importantly, this type of harassing behavior harms current students in terms of their progress and successful completion of their degrees.

This destructive type of behavior damages the reputation of the University—with prospective students, alumni, employers of our graduates, and the public at large. It also dampens the morale of the members of the University community who observe such behavior or experience the consequences.

Faculty members often develop close professional relationships with students, especially advisees, and a vibrant and engaged relationship between faculty and students is often mutually beneficial. Faculty should, however, be sensitive to the power differential in these types of relationships, which can be intimidating to students.

Since faculty/student interactions often include situations that are ambiguous, included below are examples to consider. It is the responsibility of the faculty member to set and observe appropriate boundaries. Although you may not be directly involved in these types of situations, you may know of faculty members who are. Any faculty member can advocate for a student and encourage best practices by fellow faculty members.

THINGS TO AVOID IN FACULTY/STUDENT INTERACTIONS

- **Using inappropriate comments or questions.** Remember that “academic freedom” is not license to simply say anything you choose. Think carefully before making jokes or telling stories to students. Comments or jokes pertaining to sex, gender, or a student's home country or culture might be considered harassment. Asking a student about his or her “love life” or making comments about a student's appearance or religious practice can be inappropriate and unwelcome. Students may not feel empowered to speak up about such comments despite feeling uncomfortable about them.
- **Threatening, intimidating, or shaming,** even when used in a joking manner, can create a hostile environment for students. Be careful when using sarcasm or teasing since it can be demeaning or degrading for the student.

- **Remaining silent in the face of inappropriate or abusive behavior.** If you have knowledge of inappropriate or abusive behavior but remain silent, this sends the message that you condone such behavior, and also allows for the potential of further harm to students. In the bigger picture, the result of such silence is an unhealthy campus community.
- **Making a student the target in a faculty dispute.** Placing a student in the middle of a dispute can hinder the student's academic success. For example, it is not appropriate to withhold comments on papers or projects, or otherwise delay academic progress because of disputes you may have with another faculty member.
- **Asking a student with an RA or TA appointment to work extra hours or late hours.** Students should be expected to work the hours for which they are paid. Students may volunteer to work extra hours to gain more experience (e.g., grant writing), gain authorship on a paper, or help meet a deadline, but you should not automatically expect a student to work these extra hours. Please remember that international students should be treated with the same consideration regarding work schedules.
- **Encouraging students to engage in unhealthy behaviors.** It is important to remain aware of the messages conveyed within the context of the advisee/mentor relationship. Informal gatherings outside of class can help build a sense of community, and mentors should give appropriate consideration to propriety within such contexts. For example, it is never appropriate to pressure students to drink alcohol. Similarly, being drunk in the presence of students does not send a good message about what is considered suitable behavior by a faculty member.
- **Violating Board of Regents policy: *Nepotism and Personal Relationships*,** which provides guidelines to members of the U of M community involved in familial, romantic, and intimate relationships. The full policy can be found at <http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/Nepotism&Personal.pdf>.
- **Asking an advisee to housesit, take care of your children or pets, help you move, or do other errands.** While some students may not mind assisting with such tasks, others may only agree to do these jobs because they feel obligated or worry that saying no will somehow have a negative impact on their relationships with faculty members. To avoid problematic situations, a faculty member may consider posting a flyer requesting assistance, for pay, to help ensure that respondents really want the job and that they are fairly compensated.
- **Asking a student to drive you somewhere, including the airport, home, or to meetings.** Such a request does not fall under a student's duties. A situation when this may be acceptable is when the student has the same destination.

WE CAN ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Faculty members or students who have questions or concerns about their own or their colleagues' interactions with students may consult their department's internal resources, such as the Director of Graduate Studies, department head, or program chair.

For additional information or guidance in dealing with such situations, the following offices can provide confidential services:

Office for Conflict Resolution	Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action	Student Conflict Resolution Center
<p>662 Heller Hall <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-1030 <i>Email:</i> conflict.resolution@umn.edu <i>Web:</i> www.umn.edu/conflictresolution Assists students, faculty, and staff with employment-related conflicts.</p>	<p>274 McNamara Alumni Center <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-9547 <i>Email:</i> eoaa@umn.edu <i>Web:</i> www.eoaffact.umn.edu Assists with matters of harassment and discrimination based on membership in a protected class.</p>	<p>254 Appleby Hall <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-7272 <i>Email:</i> sos@umn.edu <i>Web:</i> www.sos.umn.edu The SCRC ombudsman provides information and support for those involved in campus-based conflicts.</p>

IMPROVING ADVISING AND MENTORING OF GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Advising is a key component in the successful completion of a graduate degree. A good advising relationship correlates positively with student achievement, retention, and satisfaction. A successful advising process ultimately reflects well on the department and the institution and helps to build the program, attract high-quality students, recognize faculty contributions in this critical area, and conserve scarce departmental resources.

The following easy-to-implement process can help ensure that high-quality advising is a part of your graduate programs.

Clarify Expectations

Colleges and programs often have different understandings of advising and mentoring and it is becoming increasingly common to use advising teams. Clarifying expectations in your unit is an important first step in promoting best practices in advising relationships. Take steps to ensure that students in their programs receive high-quality advising and mentoring; programs may wish to designate a person to coordinate this effort. The following checklist offers suggestions to consider:

	We have not discussed this in our program.	We have an informal understanding.	We have a written policy.
How often are advisers expected to meet with their advisees?			
What are the key functions of an adviser?			
What are the boundaries of the relationship between an adviser/advisee?			
What challenges do faculty face in providing high-quality advising?			
How do conflicts between students and advisers get resolved?			

A useful resource, SUCCESS for Faculty Mentors and Graduate/Professional Students, is available at <http://www.sos.umn.edu/staffaculty/SUCCESSMentors.pdf>.

Provide Orientation

Once you have determined standards for your department, you may want to develop written documents for faculty and an orientation program for new students. Providing an orientation for students—and new graduate faculty—will support students and their advisers as they work to establish a mutually beneficial collaborative relationship.

In developing an orientation program:

- Determine the information that students need within your department. Things to consider:
 - Academic requirements
 - Criteria for satisfactory progress
 - Culture
 - Successful adviser-advisee relationships
 - Survival strategies
- Customize by level:
 - Years 1-2: stronger focus on academic plan and GA/TA/RA expectations
 - Year 2-3: focus on research and career
 - Year 4 and on: focus on career
- Integrate existing resources, including the [Graduate Student Virtual Commons](#).

Utilize experienced students in planning, evaluating, and delivering orientation sessions. Remember that orientation need not be a one-time event; you may wish to offer shorter sessions on various topics throughout the year. Consider other methods of delivery, such as online.

Evaluate Process and Outcomes

Satisfaction with advising, both on the part of the student and of faculty, is also important to assess. The [Council of Graduate Students \(COGS\) survey](#) is a good place to start. Reports are available by unit for those with large enough populations.

You may also want to conduct your own assessment of advising. Collecting baseline data and establishing quality indicators can help provide a snapshot of your advising program and identify areas for continued development.

Indicators to consider are:

- Number of students who graduate each year, noting Ph.D. track students who “master out”
- Number of, and circumstances regarding, students who withdraw each year
- Number of, and circumstances regarding, students who change advisers
- Feedback from faculty on their advising roles
- Feedback from students on the advising relationship

Below is a sample template of the type of evaluation form that can be used to gather feedback from students. Please feel free to modify this template to fit your individual program needs and take steps to ensure that the students in your program feel comfortable sharing information on their advising experience. Specifically, if your program departs significantly from the “one adviser” model, or if students do not have an assigned adviser, be sure to edit the questions to accurately reflect the advising practice used by your program. If there are very small numbers of students in the program, consider reporting the results in a larger aggregate summary.

Consultants from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) can help you design an assessment plan that will be confidential, appropriate to your program, and simple to implement. They also work with programs to promote the best use of findings.

Finally, review annually with faculty any data that has been collected to get their feedback, review expectations, and consider ideas for improvement of current practice.

Resources	
<p>Center for Teaching and Learning Suite 400 University Office Plaza 2221 University Avenue S.E. <i>Phone:</i> 612-625-3041 <i>Email:</i> teachlrn@umn.edu <i>Web:</i> http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/</p>	<p>The Graduate School 322 Johnston Hall 101 Pleasant Street S.E. <i>Contact:</i> Karen Starry <i>Phone:</i> 612-625-2815 <i>Web:</i> http://www.grad.umn.edu/</p>

Graduate Student Adviser Evaluation

Thank you for taking this survey, which seeks to gather information about your experience over the past year about your advising relationship. This important feedback will be used to help improve the quality of advising—a critical function of programs. Please answer as many questions as you wish, and return the form to (location) by (date). Your adviser will not see this form; the faculty in your program may be informed of the summary of responses.

1. About how many times have you met with your academic adviser in the current academic year?

0 1 2 3 4 5 more than 5

2. Have you talked with your adviser about any of the following topics? Please check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Progress to date | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic course planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Funding | <input type="checkbox"/> Your career goals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing | <input type="checkbox"/> The job search process |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attending conferences | |

3. My adviser is available when needed.

Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

4. My adviser has a thorough understanding of my overall progress.

Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

5. My adviser listens to my concerns and questions.

Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

6. My adviser provides constructive feedback.

Strongly Agree 1 2 3 4 5 Strongly Disagree

Please indicate your year of study:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more than 7

Please use the back of this sheet for any comments you wish to make.

ORIENTATION PLANNING GUIDE: GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

Overview

A successful orientation program establishes a welcoming and supportive departmental culture for students, and provides them with the information, tools, contacts, and confidence to thrive academically, professionally, and personally. Orientation can begin prior to your students' arrival on campus, and continue as they move through each stage of their academic careers.

Orientation provides departments with the opportunity to:

- ❖ Welcome and invite students to join your community of scholars;
- ❖ Foster an environment in which students feel empowered to ask questions, express concerns, and seek assistance; and
- ❖ Provide information about the department's expectations for satisfactory degree progress, as well as realistic strategies for navigating through the graduate/professional student experience.

Orientation provides students with the opportunity to:

- ❖ Establish connections with departmental faculty, staff, and students;
- ❖ Learn about both the official requirements and unofficial expectations/cultural nuances of the department;
- ❖ Identify departmental, collegiate, and university support services, as well as informal avenues for assistance; and
- ❖ Ask questions and/or express concerns.

Planning Your Orientation Program

- ❖ Ensure that your department's expectations for satisfactory degree progress are clearly articulated and easily available to your students.
- ❖ Empower your current students in the planning process. Consider asking the following questions:
 - How would you describe a successful orientation experience?
 - What information was most crucial for you to know upon entering the program in order to thrive during your first year?
 - What is the most effective orientation format for sharing that information with students?
- ❖ Consider incorporating one or more of the following best-practice elements into your orientation:
 - *Peer mentoring*, which provides structured opportunities for experienced graduate/professional students to meet with and assist new students.
 - *Small-group discussions*, to share information about how graduate/professional students fit into the academic culture, and about their new role(s).
 - *Recognition of your students' diversity of cultures, values, and experiences*, and how this diversity may, for example, inform their sense of belonging in an academic environment, and how they best interact with faculty, staff, and other students.
 - *Ongoing formal and informal opportunities* for peer and faculty interactions, throughout the students' first and subsequent years, that address their ongoing needs. Sessions for more advanced students might focus on research methods, thesis/dissertation writing, funding, and career options.

Delivering Your Orientation Program

Prior to students' arrival on campus:

- ❖ *Send a welcome letter to your incoming students*, if your department does not already do so. The letter could include information about important dates, funding and appointments, selected readings on academia and/or personal and professional development, information on the necessities (parking and transit options, local food, housing), and contact information for students if they have any questions.
- ❖ *Take advantage of the MyU Portal for admitted students*, which provides university-wide information, and (for most departments) a cell for you to provide program-specific information, such as orientation date(s), links to faculty bios, links to student organizations, and links to program pages for Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Early in the first semester:

- ❖ Provide an initial orientation session that incorporates any/all of the elements described above, as well as any elements you identify as important for your students.

Programs to Partner with in Orientation Delivery		
<p>Boynton Health Services <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-1444 (Clinic) <i>Web:</i> www.bhs.umn.edu</p>	<p>Center for Teaching and Learning <i>Phone:</i> 612-625-3041 <i>Web:</i> www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/</p>	<p>University Counseling and Consulting Services <i>Phone:</i> 612-624-3323 <i>Web:</i> www.uccs.umn.edu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academic counseling ○ Personal counseling ○ Dissertation support group
<p>University Libraries <i>Web:</i> www.lib.umn.edu</p>		Other sources, as appropriate