



Welcome and Tips for Success as a Graduate Student

Welcome

Thank you for choosing the University of Idaho as your institution for a graduate education. We do not take your decision lightly. You have made a commitment to us and now we are making a commitment to you. We value you as a student and look forward to the start of your journey toward a degree from the University of Idaho.

We welcome you to the University of Idaho as a student who is enrolled in your academic discipline and as a student in the College of Graduate Studies. As a graduate student at the University of Idaho, the **College of Graduate Studies is your Dean's Office.**

To help you become acquainted with the College of Graduate Studies, the services we offer, the policies you need to know, and the information that will lead to a successful completion of your degree, we have developed a series of brochures to assist you through every stage of your program. While we hope you will find these written materials helpful, we want to encourage you to stop in, call, or email us with any questions you may have. We appreciate the opportunity to assist you.

Following is a list of Tips for Success which we hope you will find useful.

Tips for Success as a Graduate Student

Communication with Your Major Professor.

Communication between you and your Major Professor is very important. He or she will guide you through your program, offer academic and professional advice, and probably be your best reference as you move forward in your career. In some units, you are assigned a Major Professor either prior to or at the time of your arrival. In others, you will make the choice after you have become acquainted with the faculty in your area. While this should be a well thought out decision, it must also be made early in your program.

Establishing the method and timing of communication with your Major Professor and doing it early is integral to your relationship with this person. Does he/she want weekly or monthly meetings? Does he/she prefer face-to-face meetings or the use of email? Are you to keep a journal of your work and meet only at a significant time? Who calls for a meeting? All are issues that should be settled early in your program.

Be Proactive and Responsible. Adjusting from undergraduate to graduate work involves a transition from being given specific directions to complete a task to determining for yourself what needs to be done and figuring out a way of doing it. It is very important to have a clear understanding of the expectations others have of you. Know what the goals are, how you can contribute to meeting them, and set benchmarks for assessment. If

you have questions, search out the answers using authoritative sources.

Understand the Rules. The University General Catalog outlines the academic rules and regulations that affect all UI students. The catalog is available at www.uidaho.edu/registrar. The University's Graduate Faculty established the policies that affect graduate students and are implemented by the College of Graduate Studies. Your academic administrative unit may have policies they apply to the graduate students in your area. At times, it can become difficult to know what policies apply to a specific situation. **The staff in the College of Graduate Studies can assist you!**

Know the Deadlines. For almost everything you want to do, there is probably a rule, a form, and a deadline connected to it. Every educational institution has different policies. Do not make the assumption the UI may do something the same way it was done at a previous institution. Deadlines should be taken very seriously. Once a deadline passes, you may be blocked from what you want to do unless you are able to successfully petition a faculty committee for special permission. It is always best to plan ahead to avoid any last minute issues that may prevent meeting a deadline.

Websites and Email. It is important to become familiar with all areas of the UI website. The College of Graduate Studies website address is on the cover of this brochure. Please **bookmark our website** address and check it often. We post new information all the time. Many of the forms you will need are on that site as well as other items from assistantship information to financial possibilities to research opportunities. Please become familiar with the site and let us know if there are other helpful items we should add.

One of the first things you will learn at UI is that we can send email **only to your UI email address**. If you use another kind of email address, you will not receive information that may benefit you.

Research Protocol. Prior to beginning any research projects, protocol approval may be required by one of the following committees, depending on your research area:

- Human Assurance Committee
- Animal Care and Use Committee

- Biohazards Committee
- Radiation Safety Commission Idaho Research Foundation
- University Research Office
- Sponsored Programs

Reduce Stress. Here are a few ideas to reduce stress:

- Start off on the right foot. Be organized! Keep a calendar of assignments and appointments.
- Be purposeful about making time for family and friends.
- Enjoy the Student Recreation Center or dive into the pool at the Swim Center.
- Get out of your building and become acquainted with the entire campus and our wonderful community.
- Join an organization that provides personal or professional fulfillment.
- Become active in the Graduate and Professional Student Association.
- Attend an art, musical or theatrical presentation offered by our internationally recognized artists.
- Take advantage of cultural events sponsored by our international students.
- Participate in many of the wonderful activities in the Moscow community.

Enjoy your Successes and Survive your Failures. Some days you will feel like you have made a great contribution to your field. Other days you may wonder why you decided to work toward a graduate degree. It is vital that you keep all your work in a proper perspective. By being here, you have made the commitment to advance yourself both personally and professionally. It is worth it!

You are not alone. The goal of the faculty and staff at the University of Idaho is do all we can to help you succeed. The **Writing Center** has a staff member who is available to specifically assist graduate students with paper, thesis, or dissertation writing. The **Statistical Assistance Center** will answer questions regarding the statistical needs of your research. The **Student Counseling Center** is staffed Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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