



Best Advising Practices: Strategies for Graduate Student Success

Best practice	Student's and adviser's joint responsibility	Adviser's responsibility	Student's responsibility
<p>Establish milestones for academic and research progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 60 days: Discuss and agree upon milestones to track student progress • By 2nd semester for M.S. student and no later than 2nd year for Ph.D. student: Establish advisory and/or exam committee(s) (program dependent) and develop a course work plan • Annually: Document and review student progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate expectations with respect to independence, and how student is to function in the fairly unstructured graduate school environment • Clarify availability of continued funding (e.g., Assistantship or Fellowship) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly understand your own motivations for going to graduate school! • Seek alternative or supplemental funding, as needed • Consult Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Plan Level Coordinator (PLC) to ensure that program requirements are met on time
<p>Maintain open lines of communication and provide timely feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss an optimum meeting frequency and meet regularly • Establish written expectations and schedules; update as necessary as the degree program progresses, or with changing circumstances • Consider completing an agreed upon Scholarly Work Agreement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on student's work (reports, draft posters, seminar presentations, manuscripts, etc.) typically within 30 days • Communicate developments that may impact degree progress (e.g., planned absences or sabbaticals, or termination of funding) • Understand cultural differences that might affect communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit progress reports, draft posters or seminar presentations, manuscripts, thesis drafts and other research work in a timely manner • Inform adviser of changes in schedule, including any paid or unpaid leave • Seek help from adviser or from other sources (see next page) to resolve difficulties
<p>Understand the terms and conditions of Graduate Assistant employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that offer letters and terms of employment are understood • Comply with business practices of the department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand graduate student rights (see next page) • Provide a safe work environment free from intimidation, humiliation, or harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete any required training (e.g., safety, responsible conduct of research, ethics) in a timely manner
<p>Develop research ideas and graduate student career goals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree on the scope and sequence of thesis research (thesis proposal) and engage at all stages • Clarify expectations for multiple tasks (e.g., teaching, work/life balance) • Develop student career goals; revisit and revise periodically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give constructive feedback on student's research ideas • Mentor students as they apply for jobs and advise on effects to their degree plan • Understand students may choose careers outside of academia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a journal of research ideas and activities • Seek professional development opportunities
<p>Connect with the larger campus and professional community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and respect cultural differences • Seek opportunities for leadership and professional development skills such as: public speaking, research ethics, working across differences, collaboration, conflict resolution and data management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help students network with colleagues at other institutions • Support student participation in professional conferences, campus seminars and on committees within the U of M and your department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend campus seminars and events • Serve on committees within the U of M and your department • Participate in graduate student orientation and recruitment activities • Participate in professional conferences (find external travel funding, as needed)



Graduate Student Rights

- An academic environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation, and harassment
- Working within the number of hours appropriate for your appointed position. This work requirement is in addition to time spent on coursework and/or thesis work.
 - The standard 50% assistantship requires an average of 20 hours of work per week at the discretion of the faculty advisor during the term of your appointment (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, UMN Graduate Assistant Employment Policy - policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment)
- Timely review and return of manuscripts and thesis drafts (i.e., 30 days)
- Paid and unpaid leaves (i.e. parental, holiday, sick, bereavement, military, court appearance, jury duty, voting) (Policy: policy.umn.edu/sites/policy.umn.edu/files/appendix/gradstudentemployment_appf.pdf)
- Leave of absence in emergency situations (Policy: policy.umn.edu/education/gradstudentleave)
- Reasonable religious and disability accommodations (Policies: policy.umn.edu/hr/religiousholidays and regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/DisabilityServices.pdf)
- Assistance when dealing with difficult situations, without concern for retaliation or punishment

Additional Help for Students

Use available resources if you have concerns about your academics, faculty adviser, or work environment. Do not wait to seek help. In case of an emergency, call 911 or UMN Police (612-624-2677).

- Speak to your faculty adviser first if you are comfortable doing so; address problems directly and honestly.
 - To discuss a matter confidentially, please contact the Student Conflict Resolution Center.
- When you feel it is inappropriate to contact your faculty adviser, consult your Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), Program Level Coordinator (PLC), College Coordinator, or the Student Conflict Resolution Center for assistance. Use your best judgment in deciding which course of action is right for you.
- International students should consult with International Student and Scholar Services when dealing with conflicts or concerns.

Counseling and Mental Health Services:

Student Counseling Services
Boynton Mental Health Clinic

www.uccs.umn.edu/ (612) 624-3323
www.bhs.umn.edu (612) 624-1444

Disability Resource Center

www.diversity.umn.edu (612) 626-1333

Graduate Assistant Employment Services

www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae (612) 624-8647

Graduate Student Services and Progress Office

www.grad.umn.edu/current-students/gssp (612) 625-3490

International Student and Scholar Services

www.iss.umn.edu/ (612) 626-7100

Student Conflict Resolution Center

www.sos.umn.edu/ (612) 624-7272

Reference Guides available at: <http://www.sos.umn.edu/resources-dignity-project>

Keys to S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
Worst Practices: Advising and Mentoring
Tips for Dealing with Difficult Behavior
Preparing for a Difficult Conversation
Resources for TAs/RAs & Supervisors