A green light to greatness.

UNT

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS™
How To Succeed as a Competitive Grad Student

Joseph R. Oppong, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Research and Professional Development
Challenges for Graduate Students

- Prepare and plan for an exciting adventure

*Failing to plan is planning to fail*
How do I pay for my education?
A green light to greatness:
MOVE BACK HOME?!... KIDS TODAY ARE SO LAZY AND IRRESPONSIBLE! YOUR MOTHER AND I STARTED OUT WITH NOTHING!...

FIVE-FIGURE STUDENT LOAN DEBT

TRUST ME, I WOULD’VE LOVED STARTING OUT WITH NOTHING!...
1. Anticipate and Understand Student Attitudes

When taught by an instructor close to their own age, students may:

- Be disappointed or even angry
- See you as a “peer.”
- Anticipate more lenient treatment
Anticipating Student Attitudes

• Appearance counts – be professional
  – Avoid casual dress.

• Ask your students to refer to you with the appropriate title (Mr., Ms)

• Be positive and confident
  – You are in charge
2. Prepare in Advance for Your Mistakes

• Students will:
  – expect you to make mistakes
  – ask difficult questions

• You may deviate from the schedule in your syllabus.

• Your attempts to foster discussion in the classroom may be unsuccessful.
Get someone else to pay for your education

• Look for grants, fellowships and opportunities

• Apply for everything you are eligible for

If you don’t apply, you won’t be considered
3. Take Advantage of Available Resources

Know available grants and resources

• Don’t start from scratch

• Creatively use available tools and technology.
Superior Resources for Graduate Students

Workshops offered by the Graduate School have included:

- Preparing for job interviews
- Thesis and Dissertation Boot Camp
- Developing your written credentials
- How to give an award-winning talk
- Time management

Also available online
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4. Know How to Take Advice

When colleagues offer teaching advice:

• Consider the wisdom of experienced teachers.
  – You don’t have to accept all of it.

• Have confidence in the decisions you make.

The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery
Mark Vandoren
5. Avoid Acting

- Do not imitate a successful teacher
- Find your own voice.
  - involves trial and error.

*Your teaching style will ultimately be unique to your personality and strengths.*

“BE YOURSELF. EVERYONE ELSE IS TAKEN.”

OSCAR WILDE
6. Manage Time Wisely

• Create a schedule for teaching and other responsibilities.
  
  – Plan about 4 minutes of preparation for each minute of lecture
  
  – Designing a syllabus, writing exams, and grading consume time at a similar rate.

• Work your schedule
  
  – Keep teaching duties to the designated times.
7. Make It Fun

- Be enthusiastic.
- Students can be forgiving of mistakes.
- Have fun, it makes the job easier.
- Move away from the traditional lecture format.
Engage the students

Keep it fun
UNT Scholarship for Externally Funded Doctoral Students

• ...sponsored by Vice President for Research and Economic Development, Toulouse Graduate School and UNT – International

• $1,000 competitive scholarship for new, externally funded doctoral students

• Increase quality and quantity of students through relationships with sponsored programs

• Professional Development workshop provided
Graduate Research and Fellowship Program (GRFP)

- GRFP selects, trains and supports graduate students to apply for competitive grants and fellowships.

- On successful completion (submission of proposal after comprehensive vetting) students receive a check, currently $500.00.

- 7 of the 8 graduate students in the 2011 class had submitted 12 proposals by end of February.
Beth Neely Clauser – Fulbright Award

To conduct research in Brazil for six months, beginning in March 2013.

*Beth did not apply for a Fulbright when she worked with our team 2 years ago, but she later refined that proposal for purposes of Fulbright competition. Beth has let me know how very helpful the seminars of two years ago were to allowing her eventually win a Fulbright.*

– Jim Duban
Graduate Student Travel Grants

• All graduate students in good standing are eligible.

• Year round online submissions

• Review Deadlines: October 1, February 1, and June 1

• Award amounts: Up to $500

• Budget and minimum departmental match of $100 is required

• New requirement: student must attend or watch 3 workshops
Conclusion

• Success in the classroom starts with confidence.

• Confidence comes from preparation and practice.

• Be professional.

• Stay focused.
Timely, Debt-free Graduation

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