Understanding the Academic Process
Graduate Student Roles and Responsibilities

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Workshop Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop the participants will ....

• be able to describe the roles and responsibilities of the graduate student within their own academic journey.

• be able to identify the strategies and best practices of a successful graduate student.

• Get feedback on this pilot workshop
Introductions

- Introduce yourself and the faculty you belong

- Share with the group one question you would like answered from this workshop

Cohort Study

A cohort study assessing the ten year outcomes of 66% of the graduate students admitted to Canadian universities in 1992 has shown that both graduation rates and times to completion are problematic in certain institutions and in certain disciplines (Crago, 2002; Berkowitz, 2003).

Cohort Universities

- UBC
- Alberta
- Western
- Waterloo
- McMaster
- Toronto
- Queen's
- McGill
- Montreal
- Laval

Master’s Times

[Bar charts showing Master’s Time to Completion and Master’s Time to Leaving in semesters for different fields of study (Humanities, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, Life Sciences).]
Group Activity

- Break into four person groups
- Each group has a stack of 17 cards. Each card describes either a role or a responsibility.
- Choose one person to read each card out loud.
- After each card is read the group decides who is responsible, either the student or NOT the student.
- If the card is NOT the students responsibility, write down the card number for later reference.
- Group provides oral report of those items NOT the students responsibility.

Score the results

Σ

For what are we least responsible?
For what are we most responsible?
Roles and Responsibilities

- Meeting all deadline dates and regulations
- Development of expertise and scholarship
- Develop awareness of information resources (financial and otherwise)
- Become informed of the guidelines for teaching assistantships
- Staying informed about safety regulations
- Being aware and proactive regarding conflict
- Attending meetings and keeping schedules
- Ensuring ongoing and informed communication
- Provide input to yearly reports
- Complete thesis of quality and scholarship
- Discussing intellectual property issues
- Avoiding situations of pressure and exploitation

Adapted from http://www.mun.ca/sgs/responsibilities.pdf

Group Activity: Step One

- Break into four groups where each group is stationed at a stage of graduate studies
  1. GETTING STARTED
  2. PROPOSAL WRITING \ COURSEWORK
  3. CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH
  4. NEAR COMPLETION
- Identify at least five issues that slow or stop completion present within each stage.
- Write the issues on the chart paper.

Note: count off students 1 through 4, have groups assemble with others of same number.
Group Activity: Step Two

- Stay with your current groups
- Discuss and record strategies for successfully overcoming issues present within each stage.
- Write strategies on chart paper.
- **Everyone** should be prepared to present the issues and strategies to the whole workshop group.

Group Activity: Step Three

- **Within** each group count off 1 through 4
- Shuffle groups into new groups by same number
- Have groups move around the room to each station.
- Person(s) who participated in discussion for particular stage describe to the group what was discussed.
Q & A

Next Step

Understanding the Academic Process
- Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor / Graduate Relationships
2. Finding a supervisor
3. Establishing strong communication
4. Identifying your learning style
5. Realizing your boundaries
6. Dealing with Conflict
7. Research Ethics
8. Securing and Managing Finances

Completing the Research
9. Planning and Time Management
10. Utilizing Resources
11. Writing the Thesis
12. Plagiarism
Handouts

• Responsibilities of Supervisors and Graduate Students
• The Road to Academic Success – An Interview with Hart Brasche, Ph.D.
• The Completion of Graduate Studies in Canadian Universities