1st Generation Graduate Students and Navigating the Academy

Ana Romero & Danny Meza
Where are you coming from?

One question about Santa Barbara or graduate school
Interactions with advisors
- Should inherently establish expectations
- But also where/how to develop the necessary skills

Other graduate students
- Student realities
- More advanced students
- Your own cohort

Handbooks and other department materials
- Specific requirements/timeframe
- Talk explicitly with advisor
- Familiarize yourself with dept culture
Funding Grad School & Life

- UCSB Gradpost - CHECK IT OUT!
- Campus jobs/w fee remission
- TAships/GSR/Fellowships
  ▪ http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/financial

International Peer: Karen Simeng Li

Funding Peer: Noreen Balos
Funding Grad School & Life

Campus Teaching/Research Jobs

- Teaching Assistant (TA)
  - Salary of about $5600/quarter
  - Covers almost all of quarterly tuition and health insurance
  - “Partial Remission”
  - Check with department

- Graduate Student Researcher (GSR)
  - Similar funding and remission to TA

- Other Campus Jobs for Grad Students
  - Check GradPost
  - Some with “partial fee remission”
Funding Grad School & Life

- Summer Funding
- Travel Funding
  - GSA
  - Departments
  - Professional Orgs.
  - Fellowships
- Other Resources
  - AS Food Bank
  - CalFresh/WIC
  - Financial Crisis Response Team
  - GSA
    - Emergency Relief Fund/Child Care Grants
  - Social Work Services
Feeling as though you do not belong in graduate school
  • Trouble internalizing accomplishments
  • Fear of being exposed

Comparison to others

Academic Shame
  • Other students’ experience

Research suggests that about 70% of all people experience IS
Reframing idea of “failing”
- You are here to do research, experiment, try-out ideas and approaches
- Accept and embrace your own development
  - Record your accomplishments regularly
  - Reflect on what brought you to grad school
- Talk to other graduate students about the “realities”
  - Learning when and where to concentrate your efforts
CONFLICTS with ADVISORS

- Step 1: Talk to advisor
  - Document, document, document
  - Be specific
  - Discuss mentoring style

- Step 2: Talk to your GPA, Graduate Division (Ryan Sims or Diversity Peers), or Office of Ombuds
  - [https://ombuds.ucsb.edu/](https://ombuds.ucsb.edu/)

- Remember!
  - Stay Calm
  - Put in perspective
  - Know when to move on...e.g. changing advisors, teams, projects
  - Find Allies

([https://grad.uw.edu/conflicts-with-advisor/](https://grad.uw.edu/conflicts-with-advisor/))
What brought you to grad school?
Family, Friends, & Partners

- Ph.D./M.A. can be a “title” to some
  - Relating experiences to family
- Other friends in working world
- Financial responsibilities beyond grad school
- Partners not in graduate school
- None of this means you cannot have a family in grad school
  - Child care
  - Family housing
  - Non-traditional student center
- Ryan Sims: Graduate Counselor
Transitioning to Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara

- Smaller, non-urban environment
  - Running into students in public
  - High cost of living
- Nature/Outdoors
- Food and Wine
  - Tasting rooms/trips
  - Tri-tip and Tacos
- Travel options
  - Bike
  - TAP Meter
  - Trips to LA, SF, etc.
    - Ride shares
    - Amtrak
    - Airbus
Time to Degree

- Each program has its own time-to-degree
- Example: 5/8 year plan
  - 5 to advance to candidacy
  - 8 to earn Ph.D.
- Anything outside of this time frame for both milestones is considered OTD or “over-time to degree”
  - This results in your department having to justify offering you TAships when your degree schedule is behind
  - No fellowships
  - Also results in possible academic monitoring and probation
“P” Status

- **P1:** Before you advance to candidacy
- **P2:** After you advance to candidacy, last for 9 quarters
- **P3:** After 9 quarters of P2, no longer can receive block grant or fellowships (can still be employed and have TAships, but possibly OTD and need approval)
Other Helpful Information

- **In Absentia**
  - Out of state
  - Reduced tuition
- **Leave of Absence**
  - Medical/Health
  - Parenting/Pregnancy
  - Family emergencies
  - Military Duties
  - Filing (one-quarter)
Other Helpful Information

- **Registration/Pass Times**
  - Check GOLD and set reminders
  - Each quarter there is a fee deadline to register (usually a few weeks before; $50)

- **Consult department about courses**
  - Check course schedule too
Time Management Strategies

- Use a calendar system
- Use multiple to do list
  - Schedule things in
  - Prioritize
- Know how you work
- Manageable tasks
- Get a study buddy
- Be honest w/ your advisor
- Learn to say NO
- Turn off your phone
Resources

- **Academic**
  - Writing Peer: Kyle Crocco
  - Academic Counselor: Ryan Sims
  - Research Assistance

- **Diversity**
  - Multicultural Center
  - Diversity Peers
  - Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD)
  - Black Grad Student Association
  - American Indian Graduate Student Alliance
  - Indian Association of Santa Barbara
  - Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science
  - Graduate Students for Diversity in Science
Student Organization Contacts

- Black Graduate Student Association
  - Jamaal Muwwakkil: jamaal@umail.ucsb.edu
- Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity
  - Dolan: christine.dolan@sa.ucsb.edu
- India Association of Santa Barbara
  - Vivek Adarsh & Sruthi Swami: ia.main@gmail.com
- American Indian Graduate Student Alliance
  - Alesha Noice: aleshanoice@yahoo.com
  - Margaret McMurtrey: sbmargaret@gmail.com
- Chinese Students & Scholars Association (CSSA)
  - http://www.ucsbcssa.org
- Chinese Students Association (CSA)