

Graduate Advising & Mentoring Guidelines for PSM Students

Effective graduate student advising and mentoring is the joint responsibility of School of Freshwater Sciences faculty, students, and staff.

We provide resources and work collaboratively to help you achieve academic and professional goals. The following sections outline responsibilities of the student, advisor, and staff during your academic career.

Graduate Student responsibilities

- Take initiative, show dedicated effort, and devote a sufficient amount of time and energy to gain the knowledge and skills needed to successfully meet your professional goals.
- Demonstrate maturity, civility, integrity, and professionalism in all educational activities and while interacting with other members of the University community.
- Follow disciplinary and scholarly codes of ethics and practice uncompromising honesty and integrity in course work and research.
- Learn and adhere to procedures and policies applicable to graduate study including University and program requirements for degree completion.
- Complete all academic documents and forms as appropriate for your degree program.
- Work with your advisor to complete and update a Plan of Study at least once a year.
- Communicate in a timely manner your progress toward degree completion, to your advisor. While your advisor is required to be reasonably available for consultation, it is your responsibility to keep in touch with them.
- Take the initiative to discuss internship opportunities and requirements.
- Find a supportive mentor and community through a student group or external organization.
- Attend and present at seminars, workshops, and conferences to enhance your professional development and expand your professional network.

SFS Graduate Representative responsibilities

- Provide advice on course selection until a permanent faculty advisor is selected.
- Facilitate selection and/or changes of a faculty advisor.

Faculty Advisor responsibilities

- Review requirements, policies and procedures of the graduate program.
- Advise students of available resources
- Help students develop a program Plan of Study, to include course work and internship activities.
- Provide regular feedback on student progress toward degree completion, based on completed Plan of Study, and constructive criticism if progress does not meet expectations.
- Provide training and oversight in professional integrity.
- Encourage students to stay informed of cutting-edge ideas and literature.
- Share responsibility with Academics Program Office in fostering professional development including establishing professional networks and exploring career options.
- Provide feedback on application materials for fellowship, scholarship, award, internship and job opportunities and write letters of recommendation as appropriate.
- Help students develop professional skills in writing grant proposals, making professional presentations, and evaluating manuscripts and papers.
- Share oversight of internships with external organizations.



Water sampling on the R/V Neeskay in Lake Michigan

SFS Associate Dean for Academics responsibilities

- Coordinate with faculty curricular committee to ensure required courses are scheduled on a regular basis, enabling graduate students to make timely progress in their program.
- Approve independent study course requests.
- Work toward fair resolution of conflicts between graduate students and faculty.
- Conduct exit interviews for all graduated students.

SFS Academic Programs Office responsibilities

- Update and distribute the graduate student handbook.
- Organize orientation sessions for incoming graduate students.
- Serve as initial advisor until a faculty advisor is identified.
- Share responsibility with faculty advisors in fostering the professional and career development of graduate students.
- Provide general student support services for prospective and current students
- Communicate internship and job opportunities.
- Maintain student files and related academic forms and graduation documents.

Checklist for PSM Students

I have met and discussed with my major advisor:

- Applying for scholarships and awards
- Availability of work space
- Timelines and major milestones including anticipated completion time
- Nature of guidance
- Frequency and style of meetings
- Methods of informal communication
- Internships and group projects
- Professional development opportunities
- Turnaround time for major questions
- Industry involvement, patents
- Seminar attendance
- Academic requirements
 - Required courses
 - Electives and special courses
 - Internship requirement

Prepare to be part of the next generation of scientists, committed to exploring, protecting, and preserving one of our most vital natural resources.

Additional Resources

University of Michigan: How To Get the Mentoring You Want: A Guide for Graduate Students:

<http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf>

Chronicle of Higher Ed: What I Learned About Surviving Graduate School

<http://chronicle.com/article/What-I-Learned-About-Surviving/131247/>

Contact Information

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