

# How to Effectively Recruit and Advise Graduate Students

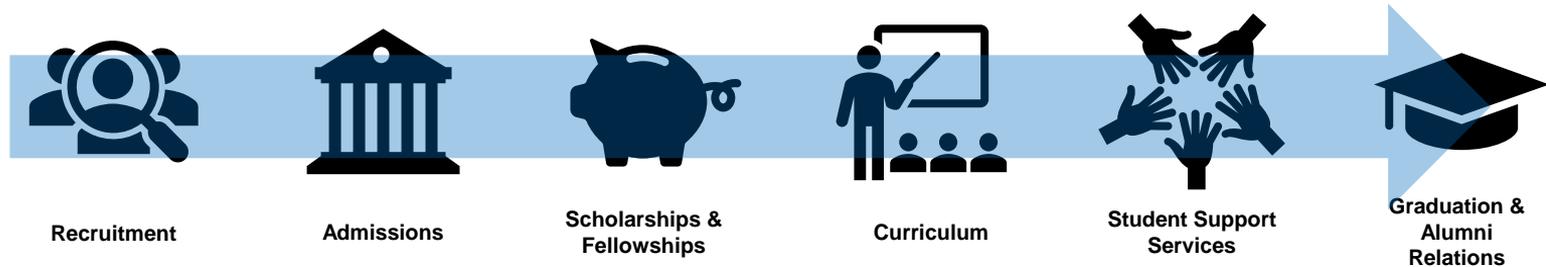
Jill Higginson & Louise Bank  
COE Graduate Affairs



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
ENGINEERING



**Mission:** To inform and provide best practices in **recruitment, retention and training** of graduate students and post-doctoral researchers in engineering and computer science



# RECRUITMENT

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# Efforts will be impacted by unanticipated events...



## A Democratic-Controlled Senate ‘Will Change Everything’ but ‘Guarantee Nothing’ for Higher Ed

By *Eric Kelderman* | JANUARY 7, 2021



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

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ABOUT UD | PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS | CURRENT STUDENTS | FACULTY & STAFF | ALUMNI & FRIENDS | ACADEMICS | RESEARCH & INNOVATION | ATHLETICS

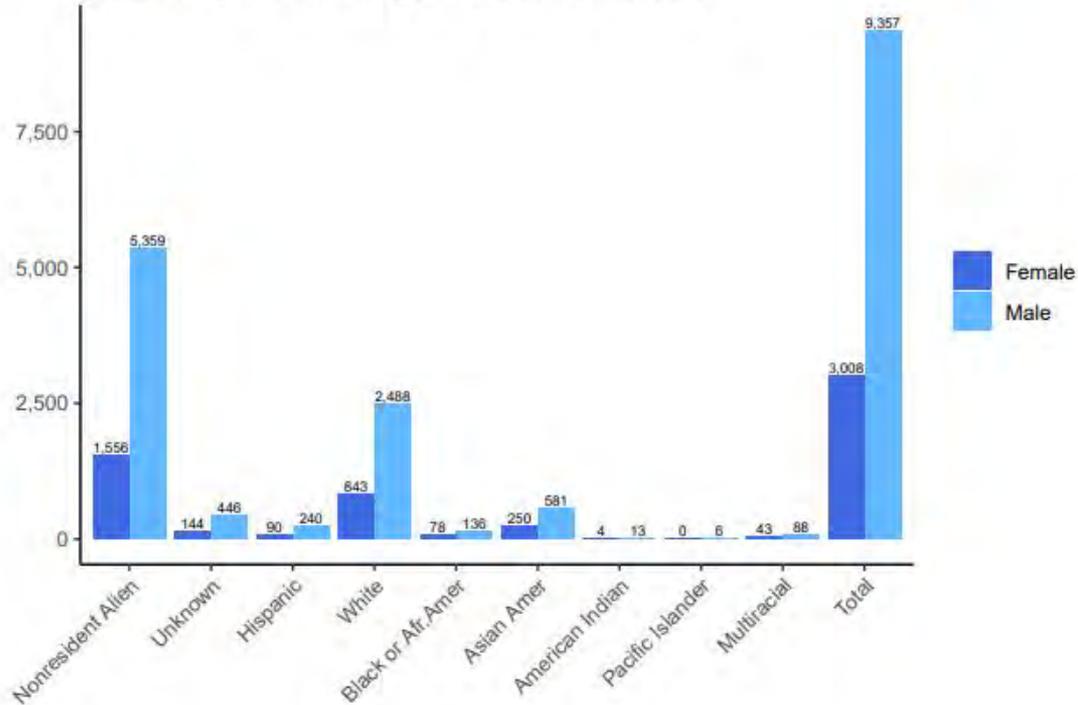
UD Home / Coronavirus

### CORONAVIRUS: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



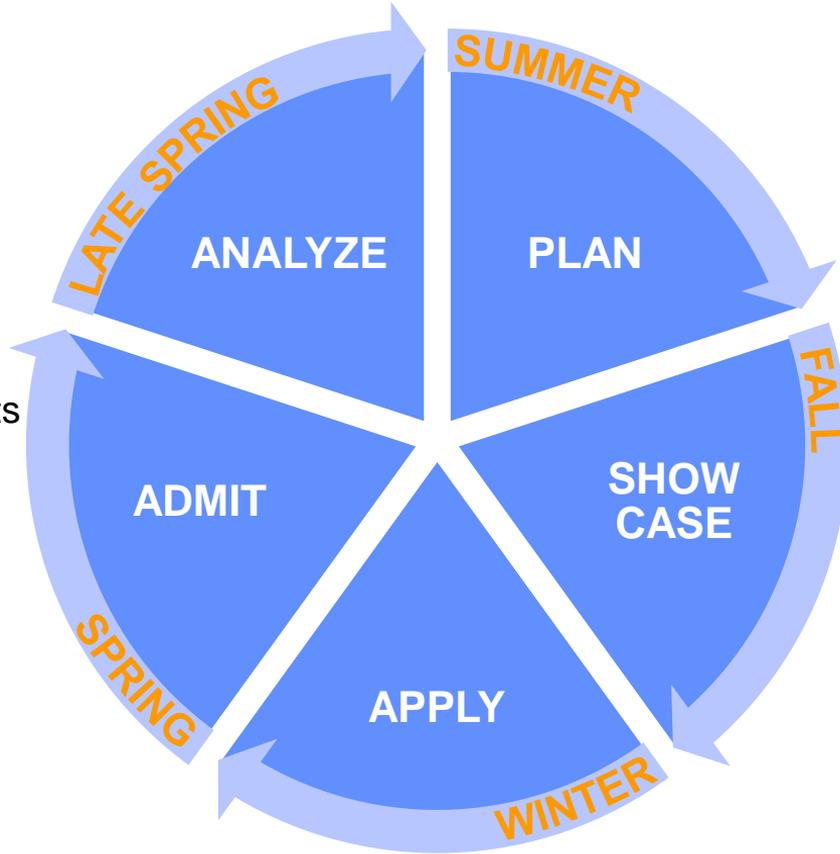


**Doctoral Degrees Awarded by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender**





- Communicate with admits
- Host visit days
- Make early offers
- Use holistic reviews



- ✓ Expand diversity sources
- ✓ Prospective graduate student landing page
- ✓ Plan communications campaign
- ✓ Attend recruitment events
- ✓ Facilitate name share databases (ENGINE, GEM, NNE, REUs, etc.)
- ✓ Host COE info session



# What is effective recruitment?

## What does an annual plan contain?

- Annual department graduate recruitment plan contains
  - Key statistics (% funded, stipend rates, summer support, tuition rates, diversity of enrollments, retention rates, time to completion, graduate placement and student's ROI)
  - Acknowledges main competitors for same profile, as compared with above data.
  - Has a budget and leverages both internal and external financial awards
  - Involves students and alums
  - Has operational clarity on the Inquiry to Enrollment (I-E) process.
  - Is revisited and revised annually

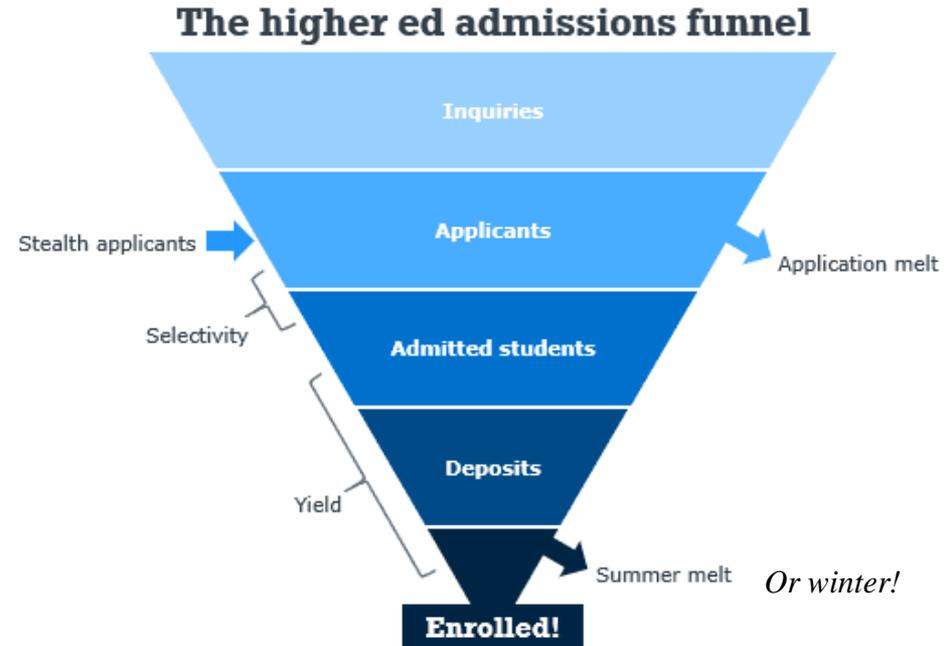
## Common pitfalls

- Being unaware of your program's current and aspirational positions in the "marketplace"
- Recruiting for a funded program when the research area of interest has no openings.
- Failing to recognize that some efforts are part of long term goals, which may not show results for years.



# Stages of “the funnel”

- STAGE 1: Annual planning
- STAGE 2: Venue and Engagement
- STAGE 3: Admits, declines and yield
- STAGE 4: Analyze and revise



# Stage 1: Mini-annual planning exercise

**Degree for which I am currently recruiting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**The student profile for this degree is:**

Tuition? Stipend?

- Yes, four years
- Yes, one year
- Targeted fellowships (URM, etc.)
- Student comes with external source of funding
- No, student self paying
- No, student using employer reimbursement

Delivery is:

- Campus (typically daytime)
- Campus (typically evenings, weekends or hybrid/online)
- Online (synchronous)
- Online (asynchronous)

\*Profile:

- International
- Domestic
  - URM
  - Female
- Other:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Program can be completed:

- Full time
- Part time

*\*Profile may require unique pipelines*

# Stage 1: Mini-annual planning exercise cont'd

**Degree for which I am currently recruiting:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Key information I need to be aware of:**

Where are my declines going?

- Penn State
- University of Pennsylvania
- Drexel
- NC State at Raleigh
- UC Davis
- Rowan
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

My program's current strengths are:

- Competitive funding package and other financial incentives
- Placement rates / starting salaries
- Training and professional development
- Convenience of schedule
- Climate, culture and advisement
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

My program's current weakness are:

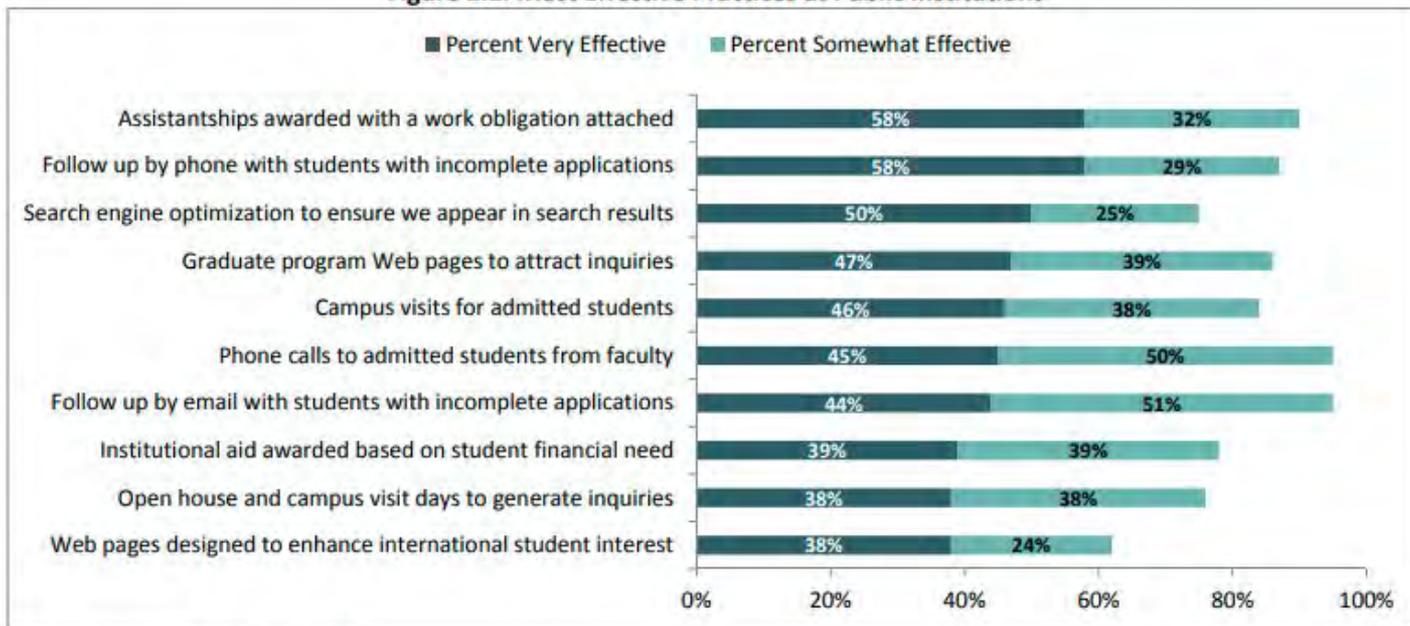
- Competitive funding package and other financial incentives
- Placement rates / starting salaries
- Training and professional development
- Convenience of schedule
- Climate, culture and advisement
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# How do I attract these students?

Hanover Research | August 2014

**Figure 1.1: Most Effective Practices at Public Institutions**



Source: Noel-Levitz<sup>4</sup>

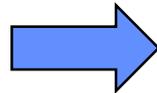
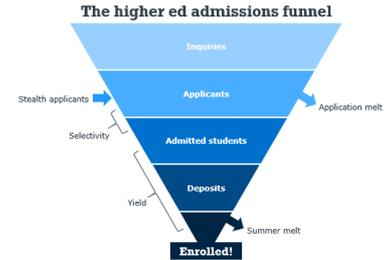


# Stage 2: Venue and Engagement

STAGE 1: Annual planning

STAGE 2: Venue and Engagement

- Undergraduate institutions
- Industries where your alums are working
- Attend URM conferences and develop pipelines (includes REUs too)
- International pipelines
- Conference participation and presentations (AIChE, ASCE, BMES, etc....)
- Passive recruitment through your (online) professional presence



**Collect names, emails, program  
and entry year for Slate.**



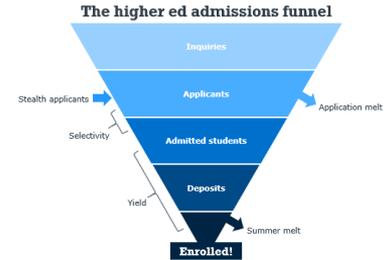
# Stage 3: Admits, declines and yield

STAGE 1: Annual planning

STAGE 2: Venue and Engagement

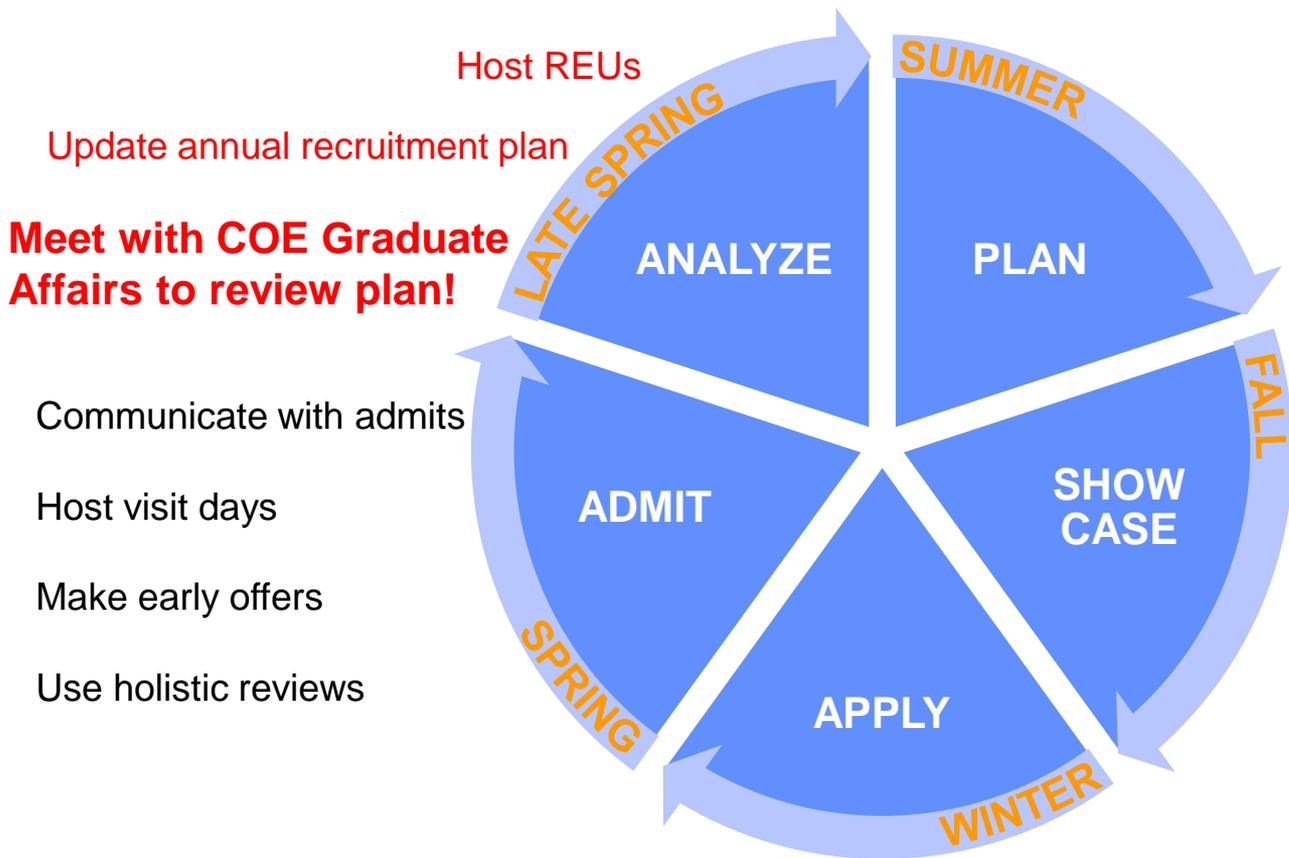
STAGE 3: Admits, declines and yield

- Reference holistic review process presented at Graduate Admissions Workshop by Graduate College December 15, 2020.
- Arrange a call/zoom with an admit. Answer questions they may have about your offer. A call from a graduate student also helps.
- As soon as admit declines, put through a backup admit. Continue rolling out offers each time a decline is received. Do not wait to do second wave in groups.
- Host campus and/or virtual visits
- Encourage interaction with current students





# Stage 4: Analyze and revise!



- ✓ Expand diversity sources
- ✓ Prospective graduate student landing page  
**Peer pipeline**
- ✓ Plan communications campaign
- ✓ Attend recruitment events  
**Recruit at scientific meetings**
- ✓ Facilitate name share databases (ENGINE, GEM, NNE, REUs, etc.)
- ✓ Host COE info session  
**Host dept info session**  
**Follow up inquiries**



**American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) 2019 Edition Engineering & Engineering Technology by the numbers**

<https://ira.asee.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Binder1.pdf>

**Council for Graduate Schools (CGS) (<https://cgsnet.org/>)**

**National Association of Graduate Admissions Professionals (NAGAP) (<https://nagap.org/> )**

## Questions?

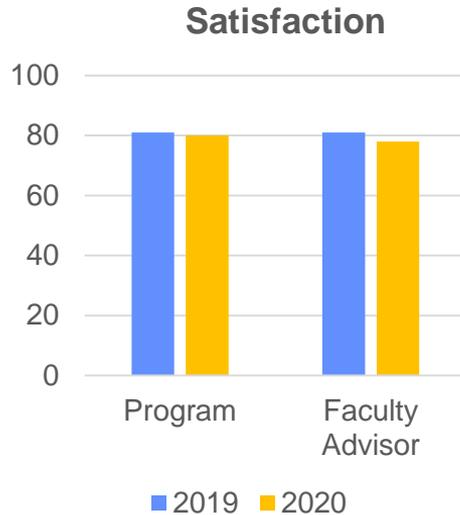
# ADVISEMENT

Jill Higginson

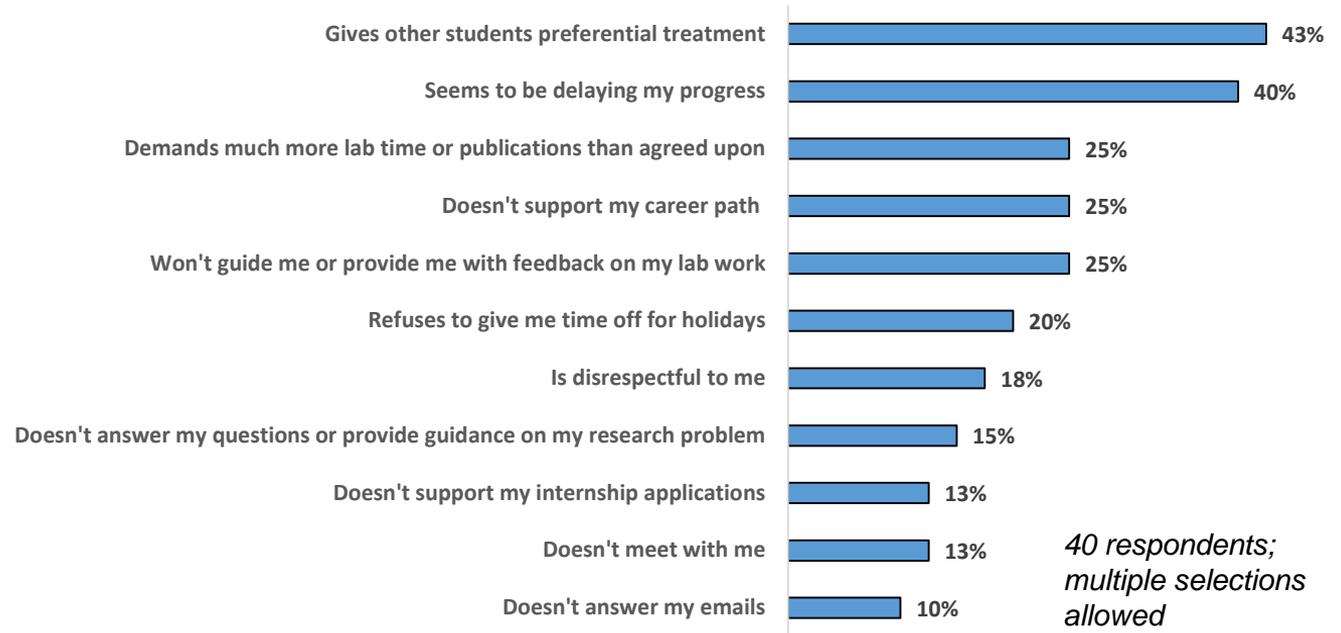
Associate Dean, Graduate and Post Graduate Education  
College of Engineering



**Q. At the present time, how satisfied are you with:**



**Q. Generally, what are your concerns about your faculty advisor?**



23 "Other" responses received; almost half were generally positive and no common themes emerged



# What does the mentor do?

- Know your mentee!
- Model and guide excellence in research, teaching, service
- Establish effective communication
- Demystify graduate school
- Facilitate professional development
- Assist with finding other mentors (network)
- Model professional responsibility
- Support mental health and well-being

## UPCOMING...

1. Terms of contract
2. Advisor tools
3. Policies
4. Accountability
5. Resources



# Graduate Student Contractual Responsibility Form

- Students who are awarded a fellowship or an assistantship for the fall and/or spring semester assume a contract with the University and are expected to give their full-time attention to graduate study in those semesters. (RA/TA/GA/Fellow)
- On contract if:
  - ≥ 50% UD minimum stipend in fall/spring
  - ≥ 50% tuition scholarship (no stipend) in fall/spring
  - ≥ 100% UD min stipend in summer
- Guidelines
  - Min # credits
  - 20 hrs week (includes winter session)
  - No outside employment if 100% stipend
  - Continuation/renewal contingent on satisfactory performance of duties assigned, academic eligibility (GPA ≥ 3.0), availability of funds, etc.
  - Contract start/end date

**GSCRF**



- **Communicate expectations**
  - Is funding guaranteed?
  - What are terms of contract (start/end dates, # hours)?
  - Gauge progress and intervene as needed
- **Outside employment**
  - OK iff  $\leq 100\%$  stipend (e.g. part-time students, no summer contract, minor jobs)
  - Requires Dean's permission (and Mary Martin)
  - COI management plan
- **Student fees (per semester):**
  - Health insurance: ~ \$200 annual (subsidized by UD)
  - Well-being fee: \$352
  - Recreation fee: \$43
  - Student Center fee: \$119
  - International student fee: \$170



- Graduate Students Advising Resources > Advising Tools
  - Student advisor expectation scales
  - Research group expectations / lab policy
  - Weekly/biweekly individual meetings + progress reports
  - Individualized development plan (IDP)
- Department guidelines
  - UD orientation (canvas)
  - Department Program Policy
  - Department Handbook (BME, CBE, CIEG)
  - COE Handbook (WIE)



# International students

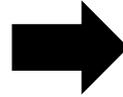
Acclimation to US culture, UD culture, department culture

Interpersonal interactions (especially faculty)

Social stresses (homesick, family issues, socializing)

Lack of linguistic proficiency

Lack of knowledge about US academic system



Ask about background / interests (Don't make assumptions!)

Introduce to peers with similar experience

Know the rules (travel, outside work, funding)

Not always true! (Don't make assumptions)

Call on students to stimulate discussion



	F-1	J-1
WHO?	Most students obtain an F-1	Exchange program students, students fully funded by their government and visiting scholars usually obtain a J-1
FORM	I-20 Form	DS-2019 Form
STATUS	Maintain full-time status every semester	Maintain full-time status every semester
WORK	<p>On-Campus Employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eligible to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during the Fall &amp; Spring semesters, and up to 40 hours per week during the Summer.</li> <li>Before accepting any type of employment, students must confirm if the opportunity is valid.</li> </ul>	<p>On-Campus Employment</p> <p>Employment must be approved in advance and in writing for up to 12 months at a time.</p> <p>Eligible to work on-campus up to 20 hours per week during the Spring semesters, and up to 40 hours per week during the Summer.</p>
TRAVEL	If student is traveling abroad, students must have their I-20 signed by OISS before they leave. If documents do not have a recent signature, students must be turned away at the US border. Go to OISS 30 days before departure from the U.S.	If student is traveling abroad, students must have their DS-2019 signed by OISS before they leave. If documents do not have a recent signature, students must be turned away at the US border. Go to OISS with DS- 2019 at least 30 days before departure from the U.S.
EXPIRES	Have 60 days after the completion of program end date. May no longer continue and/or complete exchange activities, nor work, during the grace period. May not re-enter the U.S. to record or change educational levels.	Have 30 days after the completion of program end date. May no longer continue and/or complete exchange activities, nor work, during the grace period.
EXTENSION	If degree is not completed by the date on the I-20, students need to go to OISS 30 days before expiration of their I-20 so OISS can extend it.	If degree is not completed by the date on the DS-2019, students need to go to OISS 90 days before expiration of their DS-2019 so OISS can extend it.

**Contact OISS!**  
**[oiss@udel.edu](mailto:oiss@udel.edu)**



- **Vacation / Time Off (under consideration by Graduate Council)**
  - Two-weeks of vacation in a 12 month contract period + University holidays in accordance with the procedures to request time-off and as stated by the research advisor.
- **Leave of absence and parental accommodation ([UD catalog](#))**
  - Inform advisor ASAP when considering a potential leave of absence. It may be possible to continue academic work without requiring a leave of absence.
- **Changing advisors ([MSEG](#))**
  - After 1+ semester, student contacts Graduate Program Director and approaches potential new advisors (if on contract, student is expected to continue research progress)
- **Student dismissal ([MSEG](#), [Graduate Catalog](#))**
  - Advisor must provide written notice to the student about concerns and how they can be remedied (i.e. a performance improvement plan) at least 3 months before the proposed dismissal date (document)
- **COI Management Plan** **WORK IN PROGRESS**
  - All graduate students on contract are required to self-disclose any outside employment or business activities and interests that could interfere with or represent a conflict of interest.



*Do I encourage prospects  
to interact with current students?*

- Bidirectional evaluations (IDP)
- Anonymous feedback form ([here](#))
- Department culture of mentorship
  - Solicit ideas/feedback from colleagues
  - Promote successful mentoring practice
- Faculty appraisals?
  - Reward effective mentoring



# What faculty advisors can do!

- Know the terms of contract
- Plan ahead
  - funding lines, graduation dates, remediation plans
- Communicate expectations regularly
  - class / lab / dept / UD
- Conduct IDP annually
- Refer to policies
- Contact us with questions!



- Resources

- COE / Current / [Graduate Student Support](#)
- Mental Health: [Center for Counseling & Student Development](#)
- [Graduate student writing center](#)
- Office of Equity & Inclusion: [incident report](#)
- Emergency funding:
  - Emergency Loans (requires cost share)
  - [Student Crisis Fund](#) for housing and food
- Office for International Students & Scholars (<http://www1.udel.edu/oiss/>)
  - Faculty / Students / OPT-CPT
  - [OISS 101](#)

# COE Graduate Affairs

[enr-gradsupport@udel.edu](mailto:enr-gradsupport@udel.edu)



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