



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL PRESENTS

THE FALL 2021 TIMELY TOPICS SERIES

Timely Topics is a series of opportunities to engage with subject matter experts on topics relevant to those who support and advise graduate students and programs. We offer two tracks for this series: one designed for faculty and one designed for faculty who hold an administrative role and staff, however every session is available to anyone interested in joining. All sessions will be held as a WebEx meeting. Links for each meeting will be sent directly to registrants and follow up materials will be posted on our website. Slides, recordings, and resources from past sessions can always be found at The Graduate School's [Timely Topics webpage](#).



If you have any questions or topic suggestions, please contact Megan Petsa at megan.petsa@uconn.edu.

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ADMINISTRATIVE TRACK

GA Leave, Academic Leave, or Time Off?

This session will cover the differences between GA leave (including medical), academic leave of absence, and GA time off requests and which is the most appropriate for different circumstances. We will discuss policies and procedures, contractual obligations, and supervisor obligation in determining approvals. We will use case scenarios to explore best practices, implications of each on student and employment status, and other surrounding factors and options.

Date: Wednesday, September 8, 2021
Time: 1-2pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitators: **Alison Cutler**, Labor Relations Associate, Labor and Employment Attorney, Office of Faculty & Staff Labor Relations
Megan Petsa, Director of Graduate Student Administration, The Graduate School
Megan Stimson, Leave Administrator, Human Resources

FACULTY TRACK

Career Outcomes for PhDs & Implications for PhD Training

The PhD has traditionally been seen as preparation for tenure track faculty position, even though well more than half of the PhDs in the United States are employed outside of colleges and universities. The recent emphasis on “alt-ac” careers has been reframed as a focus on career diversity, because for many PhD students a tenure track position is the alternative, not the norm. In spite of this shift in emphasis, training in most PhD programs remains similar to what it was when most students pursued tenure track careers. In this session, we will discuss the variety of career paths that PhD students pursue and new approaches to PhD training that retain the fundamental focus on research training and prepare students for success in many different careers.

Date: Tuesday, September 14, 2021
Time: 11am-12pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitators: **Kent Holsinger**, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School
Kay Kimball Gruder, Assistant Director, Graduate Student & Postdoc Career Programs and Services, Center for Career Development (Storrs)



ADMINISTRATIVE TRACK

Graduate Admissions Forum

Join the Graduate Admissions and GradSlate teams to learn about updates and changes regarding the 2022 admission cycle in Slate and to discuss best admissions practices. Some topics that will be included are a new and improved tab for test scores in the Reader, the new Slate Road Map, changes to Reader Review Forms, and the new Application Cover Sheet tab in the Reader. We will also revisit Slate reports that programs may find useful for admission stats, documentation, presentations from 2020 & 2021, and future trainings. Please bring your observations, questions, and items for your “wish list”.

Date: Wednesday, September 22, 2021
Time: 1pm-2pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitators: **Anne Lanzit**, Graduate Admissions Manager; **Holly Brunette**, Graduate Admissions; **Meg Drakos**, Graduate Admissions; **Shirley Fiasconaro**, Graduate Admissions; **Kim Lachut**, Slate Core Team; **Marie LeBlanc**, Slate Core Team; **Lisa Pane**, Slate Core Team



FACULTY TRACK

Writing Effective Reference Letters for NSF GRFP Applicants

Reference letters are a key component of a strong application package. The most effective letters provide detailed and specific information about how an applicant meets the NSF merit Review Criteria of Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. This webinar will target key strategies on what faculty can do to help prospective applicants by way of reference letters.

Date: Thursday, September 23, 2021
Time: 11am-12pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitator: **Rowena Grainger**, Assistant Director, Enrichment Programs, Research and Fellowships, Office of National Scholarship & Fellowships
Panelists: **Alfredo Angeles-Boza**, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry
Kent Holsinger, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School

FACULTY TRACK

Supporting Graduate Students with Disabilities

The Graduate School and the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) are teaming up to share information about how faculty can support graduate students with disabilities. This session will discuss how CSD can be a resource for faculty, as well as students. We will also address the difference between accommodations and academic exceptions, the importance of ensuring all accommodations based on disabilities go through CSD, and when faculty can make exceptions on their own.

Date: Wednesday, October 6, 2021
Time: 1pm-2pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitators: **Cinnamon Adams**, Director of Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Support, The Graduate School
Jennifer Lucia, Associate Director, Center for Students with Disabilities



FACULTY TRACK

From Expectations to Evaluations: The Importance of Timely Feedback

Please join us for a special Timely Topics session with Provost Carl Lejuez, designed especially for faculty advisors. After setting expectations with an advisee, the ability to provide timely and constructive feedback is critical. In this session, we will discuss the importance of feedback from advisors in student productivity and success, how to provide it with grace and empathy, how best to elicit feedback from your advisees, and what to do with the information you get. We will share templates that advisors may adapt for their own use.

Date: Wednesday, October 20, 2021
Time: 1:30pm-3pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitator: **Carl Lejuez**, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs



FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRACK Using Annual Reviews to Help Graduate Students Succeed

Providing feedback to graduate students is a vital part of ensuring their success. As part of our ongoing effort to foster good graduate student mentoring and facilitate communication between graduate advisors and advisees, The Graduate School has developed resources to help departments and advisors use annual reviews for doctoral and MFA students. The resources include a template that programs can use as a guide and modify to meet their specific needs. This Timely Topics session will discuss why annual reviews are important to graduate student success, review The Graduate School Annual Review template, and provide guidance on conducting annual reviews.

Date: Wednesday, October 27, 2021
Time: 1-2pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitators: **Kent Holsinger**, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School
Kathy Segerson, Associate Dean of The Graduate School

ADMINISTRATIVE TRACK Updating Your Catalog Copy and using the GPAR System

The [Graduate Catalog](#) is the official place for documenting UConn's graduate programs and their requirements. Programs should review their catalog language at least once a year to determine if any changes need to be made. This Timely Topics session will review the process and deadlines for making changes to the Graduate Catalog through the online [GPAR system](#). It will also discuss how the GPAR system can be used for other program changes, including approvals of new programs and other program modification (e.g., changes in names, areas of concentrations, pathways, delivery modes, locations).

Date: Wednesday, November 10, 2021
Time: 11am-12pm
Register: Through [this link](#)
Facilitator: **Kathy Segerson**, Associate Dean of The Graduate School

FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRACK Fellowships Process and Updates

This session will provide updates and opportunity for discussion on several parts of the fellowship nomination, review, and award process for The Graduate School's internal fellowships (Harriott, Crandall, and Jorgenson). The topics we will be discussing include Fellowship Committee faculty representation, division of the fellowship application process into two processes (master's and doctoral) and timeline for submission, division of the fellowship nomination process into two stages with different deadlines for the applicant and department, removal of the faculty nomination stage, and the potential for departments to work with applicants on their diversity statements.

Date: Tuesday, November 16, 2021

Time: 11am-12pm

Register: Through [this link](#)

Facilitators: **Stuart Duncan**, Director for Programming and Diversity Recruitment, The Graduate School

Kent Holsinger, Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of The Graduate School

