Graduate Student Success

and Engagement:

COS Graduate Programs Report

Spring 2025

Contents

Introduction

The schools and departments in the College of Sciences (COS) offer a range of doctoral and Master's degrees as well as several certificate programs. Graduate student success is a central goal for the College of Sciences and the University, and we aim to support our graduate students in impactful ways as they are completing their degrees – including fellowships and assistantships, advising, and professional development opportunities. One aspect of supporting graduate student success is student engagement. Studies have consistently pointed to the importance of student engagement for student success and degree completion. In recent UCF graduate student satisfaction surveys, graduate students frequently mentioned that they are looking for engagement opportunities.

The graduate programs in COS offer a range of engagement opportunities where students can connect with their advisors, program faculty, and other students outside of the classroom and structured instruction. We have compiled an overview of the types of graduate student engagement opportunities offered by Ph.D. and Master's programs within COS. This report takes stock of the variety of engagement opportunities that currently exist in COS graduate programs.

Each program is unique within the College, as are the programs' opportunities for student engagement; what works for one program might not work for another one. At the same time, there may be successful approaches that might also be useful for other programs.

The goal is to provide information leading to an exchange of ideas regarding academic, professional, and social support of graduate students. We hope that sharing these ideas will enhance student and program success. Additionally, the customized overview we have compiled for individual programs may be a resource you can share with prospective and incoming graduate students if you are not already doing so; students may thus be encouraged to participate in a vibrant graduate community. As your programs evolve, it might be helpful to share updated summaries of engagement opportunities annually with graduate students – they may find a summary of what your program is offering helpful. Of course, you may already be sharing this information with your students in various ways.

The intent behind this report is to gather and share information of what programs are doing already to provide students with engagement opportunities. We hope that programs find this useful as they think about what works – and what doesn't – in their efforts to support their graduate students towards degree completion.

We are grateful to everyone who has shared information about their program's student engagement opportunities, which forms the basis of this report. We hope that the report will generate discussion and conversations about student engagement and student success.

Best wishes,

Vicky Pace

Kerstin Hamann

COS Faculty Fellow for Graduate Studies
Senior Lecturer, Department of Psychology

Senior Associate Dean and Pegasus Professor
College of Sciences

List of COS Graduate Programs (Ph.D. and Master's)

- **Department of Anthropology**
  - [Integrative Anthropological Sciences PhD](#)
  - [Anthropology MA](#)
- **Department of Biology**
  - [Integrative and Conservation Biology PhD](#)
  - [Biology MS](#)
- **Department of Chemistry**
  - [Chemistry PhD](#)
  - [Chemistry MS](#)
- **Nicholson School of Communication & Media**
  - [Strategic Communication PhD](#)
  - [Communication MA](#)
  - [Digital Media MA](#)
  - [Feature Film Production MFA](#)
  - [Interactive Entertainment MS](#)
  - [Corporate Communication Graduate Certificate](#)
- **Department of Mathematics**
  - [Mathematics PhD](#)
  - [Mathematical Science MS](#)
  - [Data Modeling Graduate Certificate](#)
  - [Financial Mathematics Graduate Certificate](#)
- **Department of Physics**
  - [Physics PhD](#)
  - [Physics MS](#)
- **School of Politics, Security, and International Affairs**
  - [Security Studies PhD](#)
  - [Political Science MA](#)
- **Department of Psychology**
  - [Clinical Psychology PhD](#)
  - [Clinical Psychology MA](#)
    - [Clinical Psychology MA, Applied Pre-Licensure Non-Thesis Track](#)
    - [Clinical Psychology MA, Research Thesis Track](#)
  - [Human Factors and Cognitive Psychology PhD](#)
  - [Industrial and Organizational Psychology PhD](#)
  - [Industrial and Organizational Psychology MS](#)
- **Department of Sociology**
  - [Sociology PhD](#)
  - [Sociology, Applied MA](#)
- **Department of Statistics & Data Science**
  - [Big Data Analytics PhD](#)
  - [Statistics and Data Science MS](#)

Graduate Student Success – Data and Resources

College of Graduate Studies

UCF provides several resources to support graduate student success. Many resources are listed on the College of Graduate Studies (CGS) [webpage](#), including funding opportunities, graduate policies, and training and professional development opportunities.

CGS also makes [data on graduate student progression and completion rates](#) publicly available. This supports programs' efforts to identify where they may have an opportunity to review curriculum and requirements, how successful their recruitment efforts are, and how their programs compare to others in COS and across the university.

College of Sciences

The College of Sciences has developed several initiatives to support graduate students. This includes: newly established fellowships (COS Dean's Doctoral Fellowship; COS Dean's Graduate Conference Travel Award; COS Dean's Feature Film Production Support Award; COS Dean's Stellar Doctoral Student Fellowship) and supplemental COS funds to add to the College of Graduate Studies funding (e.g. Dissertation Research Awards). These initiatives, along with COS financial support to increase doctoral assistantship stipends, help to support students financially. Additional College-specific and other resources are listed on the COS [Graduate Services website](#).

This report summarizes information regarding student engagement opportunities while acknowledging that students in different programs may be interested in and in need of different types of opportunities. Regardless of where a student is in their graduate career or interest level in engagement, we hope that sharing ideas may spur conversations and new ideas in your programs.

Student engagement is but one part in students' journey towards successful completion of their graduate degree. Many other factors matter and may be detailed in other resources or materials beyond this report. The aim of this report is to share information about what programs are already doing to support their students outside of structured instruction to support graduate student success.

Process for Compiling this Report

This report is based on information collected in several steps:

During Academic Year (AY) 2024-2025, Kerstin Hamann, COS Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, met with all Ph.D. programs to present information about program data and student success and discuss any concerns regarding the programs. COS also shared information about student engagement strategies that programs might find helpful; this information was compiled by Dr. Vicky Pace, COS Faculty Fellow for Graduate Studies.

During Fall 2024 and Spring 2025, Vicky Pace reached out to all PhD and Master's programs to ask for a list of engagement opportunities via email or during a meeting.

We are grateful for the information shared by the program leaders that forms the basis of this report, which includes all program responses in summary form.

We hope you find some of the opportunities provided across COS graduate programs of interest for your own program and students and we hope that this report is the beginning of a conversation and sharing of ideas across programs. If you develop additional opportunities for your students, we ask that you please share those with the Graduate Studies team to keep information updated as a College resource.

Graduate Student Success – Best Practices

Graduate student success is contingent on numerous factors, some of which programs have little control over. However, programs can identify some issues that might support student success and retention. Extent literature provides some guidance regarding best practices that may support graduate student success. Some examples of such strategies for programs to consider as they support graduate student success and retention include:

Student Inventory

- Understand the program's student population and specific needs
- Assess how they are prepared for success in the graduate program
- Determine what differentiates students who stay from students who leave

Advising

- Offer academic advising and New Student Programs
- Assign advisor for first year and inform the student who their advisor is
- Inform students on who advises students on what (research, academic progress, teaching etc.)
- Inform students about the process of changing advisors
- Provide a list of available advisors and their areas to students
- Provide thoughtful and constructive feedback through doctoral student annual review
- Establish a positive relationship with advisor, which is core for student success

Learning Support

- Offer a pre-semester readiness assessment and boot camp as appropriate
- Provide supplemental instruction
- Develop online courses in preparation of comp/qualifying exams and review sessions

Other Effective Practices

- Include students in Colloquia presentations (attendance and presenting research)
- Set expectations for student participation in unit activities (e.g. meet with job candidates, attend presentations)
- Encourage and credit internships as appropriate
- Issue an early alert for students who have one unsatisfactory grade or two incomplete grades (or one for more than one semester)
- Encourage community building (e.g. socials, coffee hour with faculty and graduate students, student associations)
- Form a graduate student advisory council to advise graduate program and unit leadership

- Encourage students to organize mock thesis or dissertation defenses with other students; mock "job talk" research presentations with other students

Program Strategies

- Track retention, progression, and completion data
- Identify courses with high failure/withdrawal rates
- Identify exams or areas of exams (qualifying, comprehensive) with low success rates
- Provide training for GTAs; training for teaching
- Offer grant-writing workshops
- Offer a professional development class
- Set clear expectations (as a member of a lab, GTA, etc.; advisors and mentors)
- Nominate students for awards, connect them with resources

Resources for Admissions and Student Success Data

Program data https://ikm.ucf.edu/graduate-program-stats-2/

Current Program Activities and Practices

The remainder of this report presents existing practices across COS graduate programs. The program overviews are based on the information provided by program leadership. We have included information on all programs that submitted responses. We hope that you find the practices shared here of interest and we encourage you to engage in conversations about practices that might be helpful for your programs.

Anthropology Ph.D.

Advising

- Summary of available advisors and their areas shared with students

Learning Support

- Semester graduate student meeting (first or second week) to review expectations and department/university updates
- Supplemental instruction
- Online courses for comprehensive/qualifying exams, review sessions

Program Strategies

- Department new graduate student orientations and GTA orientation at the beginning of fall semester
- Professional development class – Proseminar in Anthropology
- Tracking of graduate student progress
- Emails in advance of anticipated project milestones
- Use Teams to disseminate funding opportunities, training workshops, and other helpful resources (professional organizations within field, semester deadlines, processes for traveling and registration, etc.)

Other Opportunities

- Student presentations at department Lunch and Learn Seminars
- Transformations class symposium hosted by PhD students; many graduate and undergraduate students present (every other year due to minimal enrollment levels)
- Lunch with recent department PhD alumni
- Lunch with biannual Kent Family Speaker – external Anthropologist
- Participation in departmental job candidate interview visits
- Student grant funding program each year through internal endowed research fund
- Student participation on external faculty grants
- CCAMP – Local archaeological field school
- Other archaeological and biological field schools run globally
- Student participation in running faculty laboratories
- Student organizations GAA (Graduate Anthropology Association) and AMP (Anthropology Mentorship Program)
- Department leadership meet with GAA and HA (Hominids Anonymous – undergraduate student organization) leadership to see how department can help support both organizations

Information Submitted by Scott Branting

Anthropology M.A.

Advising

- Summary of available advisors and their areas shared with students

Learning Support

- Graduate student meeting early each semester to review expectations and department/university updates
- Supplemental instruction: Online courses for comp/qualifying exams, review sessions

Program Strategies

- GTA orientation at beginning of fall along with new graduate student orientations
- Professional development class – Proseminar in Anthropology
- Tracking of graduate student progress
- Emails in advance of anticipated project milestones
- Use Teams to disseminate funding opportunities, training workshops, and other helpful resources (program roadmap, professional organizations within field, semester deadlines, processes for traveling and registration, etc.)

Other Opportunities

- Student presentations at department Lunch and Learn Seminars
- Transformations class symposium hosted by PhD students; many of our graduate and undergraduate students present (every other year due to minimal enrollment levels)
- Lunch with biannual Kent Family Speaker – external Anthropologist
- Participation in departmental job candidate on-campus visits
- Student grant funding program each year through internal endowed research fund
- CCAMP – Local archaeological field school
- Other archaeological and biological field schools run globally
- Student participation in running faculty laboratories
- Student organizations GAA (Graduate Anthropology Association) and AMP (Anthropology Mentorship Program)
- Department leadership meet with GAA and HA (Hominids Anonymous – undergraduate student organization) leadership to see how department can help support both organizations
- Career Workshop for Anthropology Students – presented by alumni Katie East where graduate students could explore their career interests outside of academia and develop a plan to ensure their career success after graduation

Information Submitted by Scott Branting

Strategic Communication Ph.D.

Advising

- The graduate coordinator serves as temporary advisor to all students until they select a permanent advisor.

- Available advisors visit PhD introductory courses and discuss their research. Students are invited to contact them if they are interested in their research program.

- Instructors of the PhD Doctoral Colloquium meet with students weekly as a group and individually for consultation with all students.

- Doctoral students are reminded by the graduate coordinator about the requirements of their first-year review and then meet with the coordinator to discuss their progress.

Learning Support

- Incoming doctoral students whose applications do not indicate a strong background in research, or who have not studied research methods in at least 10 years, are approached by the graduate coordinator to get an in-depth understanding of their current research expertise and typically are recommended to take the master's level Introduction to Research Methods course.

- The program has, in the past, offered a free summer tutorial synchronous online research bootcamp for doctoral students who felt the need for additional training in basics of research methods. We will do so again if the need arises.

- Doctoral students meet with their advisors to jointly determine their dissertation committees. Committee members provide students with a study guide and suggested readings to prepare for the question they each have authored.

Program Strategies

- All new GTAs are provided with a day-long training in teaching in general, and teaching SPC 1608/1603 Public Speaking. They are provided with the textbook, course shell, lesson plans, and a range of possible in-class exercises. The faculty member who runs the training also sends them weekly hints and resources throughout the semester as they are teaching.

- Doctoral Seminar regularly provides information from across campus for first year students including library skills, CV writing, workshop on AI in university instruction, introduction and tour of the resources at the UCF Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, the Faculty Multi-Media Center, and CDL resources.

- Students have developed an awards process for graduate student awards that is conducted in late fall semester. Currently, awards are given for teaching and research/creative work.

Other Opportunities
• The program hosts the annual International Crisis and Risk Communication Conference in March every year at the downtown Marriott. Students get free conference registration if they volunteer at the conference. They regularly submit posters and papers to the conference.
• Students have the opportunity to practice conference presentations to get feedback from fellow students and faculty in special November colloquia.
• Graduate colloquia on special topics are regular scheduled, such as teaching in the community college context, preparing for work outside of academia, etc.
• Doctoral students are required to develop a community engagement project or complete an internship.
• Graduate socials are typically held at the beginning end of the academic year, either on campus or at a nearby restaurant.
• A new graduate student advisory council has been developed to provide student input on curricular and other graduate policy changes.
• The program provides support for international students in locating housing, furniture, household items. We are partnering with UCF Global to maximize our resources for these students.

Information Submitted by Ann Miller

Communication M.A.

Advising

- First-year students are assigned a temporary advisor until they determine whether they will complete a thesis, an applied project, or comprehensive exams as their culminating experience. They are given an assignment in the ProSeminar class in which they meet with a faculty members whose research area is of interest to them to get to know them and their research better.

- Available advisors visit MA introductory courses and discuss their research and invite students to contact them if they are interested in their research program.

- Instructors of the MA Proseminar meet with students weekly as a group and individually for consultation with all students.

Program Strategies

- All new GTAs are provided with a day-long training in teaching in general, and teaching SPC 1608/1603 Public Speaking. They are provided with the textbook, course shell, lesson plans, and a range of possible in-class exercises. The faculty member who runs the training also sends them weekly hints and resources throughout the semester as they are teaching.

- Students have developed an awards process for graduate student awards in teaching and research/creative work that is conducted in late fall semester.

Other Opportunities

- The program hosts the annual International Crisis and Risk Communication Conference every March. Students get free conference registration if they volunteer at the conference. They regularly submit posters and papers to the conference.

- Students have the opportunity to practice conference presentations to get feedback from fellow students and faculty in special November colloquia.

- Graduate colloquia on special topics are regular scheduled such as teaching in the community college context, preparing for work outside of academia, etc.

- Master's students have the option of doing up to 6 credit hours of internships or directed research with faculty.

- Graduate socials are typically held at the beginning and the end of the academic year.

- A new graduate student advisory council has been developed to provide student input on curricular and other graduate policy changes.

- We provide support for international students in partnership with UCF Global.

Information Submitted by Ann Miller

FIEA Interactive Entertainment M.S.

Advising

- Students typically meet with Faculty weekly (individually)
- Students have access daily to FIEA Graduate Student Services Coordinator
- Students have access to FIEA Industry Relations Manager (by appointment)
- Students have access to FIEA Executive Director (by appointment)

Learning Support

- Students have periodic reviews each semester with formal presentations and industry reviewers
- Art & Level Design students have twice a semester industry reviews and critiques
- Programming students build individual games in Assembly and C – reviewed and judged by industry reviewers
- All Art students have 8 weeks in first semester (boot camp) in each area of art specialization (3D Art, Technical Art, Animation) to help determine area of focus
- All Capstone teams are assigned a faculty and industry advisor
- All students have 24/7 access to the facilities and their Cohort Lab

Program Strategies

- All students attend multiple "FIEA Days" with regional studios to learn more of the industry and those specific companies
- All students receive resume and portfolio advisement from Faculty, Industry Relations, and regional studio HR and Education personnel
- All students are invited to alumni events – usually two per year
- All students participate on a capstone production that many times is launched on a commercial platform for easy access for industry talent acquisition teams to review

Other

- All students participate on a GameLab production in coordination with Subject Matter Experts (SME), typically in non-entertainment simulation and training
- All students are eligible for a paid Internship in the 4th (final) semester – they must apply for and obtain the internship individually and faculty often provide references
- All students (not on internship) will participate in a Digital Venture Practicum course where they experience what a start-up company entails, including legal, financial and contractual matters

Information Submitted by Benjamin Noel

Physics Ph.D. – Physics Track

Advising

- Academic Advising and First-Year Programs:
  All first-year students meet individually with the program director prior to their first semester on campus to establish an IPOS (Individual Plan of Study) and determine transfer credit requests. General advice falls into one of three categories, depending on whether the students have transfer credit from previous graduate work, are coming in without transfer credit, or might need some remedial work (specific to Bridge program students). Additional meetings are scheduled on an as needed basis depending on instructor/student feedback during the first year.

- Summary of available advisors and their areas shared with students:
  This is done informally on a case-by-case basis during orientation meetings. We also hold faculty showcases to help students pair up with suitable faculty based on overlapping needs and interests.

Learning Support

- Pre-semester readiness assessment, boot camp:
  We establish baseline preparedness using our qualifying exam as an entrance pre-test diagnostic. Results aid in preliminary decisions and IPOS planning.

- Supplemental instruction:
  Students preparing for our qualifying exams are offered supplemental support from select faculty familiar with different elements of the qualifying exam and associated coursework on an as needed/as requested basis.

- Online courses for comp/qualifying exams, review sessions

Program Strategies

- Provide training for GTAs; training for teaching:
  GTA's receive training "crash courses" upon entry into the program prior to placement into classroom settings.

- Grant-writing workshops:
  The PhD includes a thesis proposal element, which is designed to mimic many of the components common to an NSF grant proposal.

- Nominate students for awards, connect them with resources:
  We do this based on award availability and student suitability. Much of this is left up to advisors and students after enrollment (we simply pass along relevant information). The admissions committee puts forward a full roster of suitable applicants every Fall admissions cycle.

Other Opportunities

- Colloquia presentations and student participation in unit activities (meet with job candidates, attend presentations, students present, etc.): Students are expected to participate in conferences and colloquia during their Ph.D. process. Passing a thesis proposal defense is a prerequisite for full PhD candidacy, but several additional opportunities exist and are leveraged both internally and externally for students to

participate in additional speaking opportunities (subject-specific journal clubs, student research showcases and symposia, etc.)

- Community building (socials, alumni interaction, coffee hour with faculty and grad students, student associations, etc.):
  The department has hosted past alumni for department visits (including time dedicated for networking with students), and has regular "tea-times" and "unwind Fridays" social gatherings.

- Graduate student advisory council to advise graduate program and unit leadership. Major in-unit committees typically reserve seats for student leadership participation (these include, but are not limited to committees such as, graduate recruitment, undergraduate life, academic programs, etc.).

Information Submitted by Bill Kaden

Physics Ph.D. – Planetary Track

Advising

- Academic Advising and First-Year Programs:
  All new grad students are matched with research advisors to set up research mentoring in their first year.

- Regularly scheduled meetings with advisors:
  Exists, though not formalized. In addition, new graduate students set up a 'supervisory committee' of 3 faculty (advisor plus two additional members) by the end of their first spring semester, allowing for broader advice on research, academics, etc. early on in their graduate career; meetings are at least once per year, and often more frequently.

- Other efforts to build positive relationships between advisors and graduate students:
  Many faculty have outings/events/social gatherings for their entire research group, in addition to the usual periodic work meetings.
  Most, if not all, faculty incorporate graduate students into their research collaboration networks (getting them integrated into the field, e.g. introducing them to colleagues, taking them to conferences, going on research trips).

Learning Support

- Supplemental instruction:
  Incoming students are occasionally advised to take some upper-level undergraduate courses prior to enrolling in graduate program core courses.
  Some faculty run optional recitation sections for their graduate courses to provide additional help to understand concepts, problem sets, etc.

Program Strategies

- Grant-writing workshops:
  Although not a separate formal course, all students eventually get experience writing such proposals (e.g. advisor encouragement and help). Also, some core courses have assignments to write proposals for telescope time.

- Nominate students for awards, connect them with resources:
  Most students apply for some of the fellowships offered by NASA and NSF. Several students also apply for other prestigious fellowships (e.g. Hertz). There is a culture among graduate students to help subsequent cohorts with these proposals.
  The department has awards for graduate students, and Planetary track students have been nominated and won them in the past.

Other Opportunities

- Colloquia presentations:
  A weekly planetary-science seminar/journal club is largely run by the graduate students themselves and students are the primary presenters. It allows them to get practice reading the journals, condensing/summarizing the results, and presenting to their peers. The faculty participate in this too, but prefer to take a back seat so that the students can be in charge and lead discussions.
  Graduate students meet with job candidates during a specified time slot.

- Community building:
  Regular social tea-time at 11 a.m. every Friday and a (approx.) biweekly after-work decompress time on Fridays, allowing for interaction between students and faculty. Outreach events are coordinated by the campus observatory, Robinson Observatory, and graduate students can and do help out with these, providing the opportunity to practice informal education.

- Graduate student advisory council advising graduate program and unit leadership:
  Students elect two ombudspeople to attend the group faculty meetings once a month. This allows them to deliver concerns and ask questions (programmatic, research, and university issues), and faculty are able to communicate back to the students.
  The graduate program director holds "grad director office hours" once a week where graduate students can drop by and chat about issues of concern.

Information Submitted by Yan Fernandez

Security Studies Ph.D.

Advising

- The graduate coordinator meets with every student (all cohorts) once per semester and advises on courses, objectives, study plans, potential roadblocks, progress towards the dissertation, time-management, etc.
- From the second year, students also meet with their committee chair (preliminary or final) to discuss progress and course planning. Hence the advisors include the students' committee chair and the graduate coordinator.

Learning Support

- Pre-semester workshop (for first-year students) covers administrative items. The workshop also includes a boot camp for quantitative methods.
- The program offers a 3-hour introduction for GTAs.
- The program requires two professional development seminars – one for academic and one for non-academic career preparation.

Program Strategies

- Opportunities, such as job or funding opportunities, are shared with the students.
- The program and faculty regularly nominates students for awards.
- The program established the CRANE (Collaborative Research Network and Exchange) working group. Students are encouraged to attend but it is not mandatory. During meetings the group discusses progress towards dissertation but also shares experiences in research as well as brainstorming research ideas that, ideally, will be converted into manuscripts to submit for publications.

Other Opportunities

- This year the program is planning to organize a research symposium in May to encourage students, alumni and faculty to share their latest research in order to incentivize ideas exchange as well as collaboration.

Information Submitted by Jacopo Baggio

Psychology Ph.D. – Clinical

Advising

- First year orientation – program orientation meeting prior to classes starting for each incoming cohort of students to orient them to program policies and answer questions.

- Faculty advisors – each student is assigned to a faculty advisor when they begin program. This advisor primarily helps supervise research for the student, but also advises students on clinical, ethical, and professional issues as needed. This usually involves weekly individual meetings throughout their time in the program (although frequency during last year reduced due to internship). If the student elects to be an instructor of record, this advisor also supervises that teaching. Students can elect to switch mentors during their time in the program.

Learning Support

- Proseminar series – twice a month on average (Fall/Spring). All students are required to attend; all faculty are invited. Internal and external speakers present on various topics related to clinical and research domains. This has been in handbook but not as a course – however, starting in Spring 2025 it will be a zero-credit course that can be repeated.

- Preparation for applying for internships. All students must apply for and complete a predoctoral clinical internship during their last year of the program. A program faculty subcommittee helps the students prepare for these applications and interviews starting around five months prior to application deadline. This includes a series of meetings, review of application narratives, mock interviews, among other things.

Program Strategies

- Director cohort meetings – each Fall and Spring semester, the Director and Associate Director of the program meet with each cohort of students individually to get their thoughts on how things are going and answer questions. Concerns are then presented to the program faculty to determine possible solutions.

- The program nominates some students from each cohort for available UCF fellowships and program faculty nominate students for awards, both within and outside of UCF.

- Student climate survey – each year the students complete an anonymous comprehensive survey about program functioning and interactions. The faculty review this survey and discuss possible solutions to any noted problems.

Other Opportunities

- All students have opportunities to present their research at professional conferences and publish research in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The student's assigned mentor is the primary source for these opportunities, but students can also collaborate across labs.

- The program typically hosts social events between the faculty, staff, and students twice a year.

Information Submitted by Jeff Bedwell and Amie Newins

Clinical Psychology M.A.

Advising

- Each student is assigned a faculty advisor at the start of the program. Thesis-track students have their mentor serve as advisor. Pre-Licensure track students are matched with an advisor who has similar interests when possible (while also aiming for faculty to have approximately equal numbers of advisees). Students are expected to schedule at least one meeting per semester with their advisor but are encouraged to speak with their advisor or any other faculty member more often as needed. The faculty advisors also write a review letter for each advisee after the end of each semester (with input from all faculty); during the meeting each semester review letter is discussed to provide progress feedback to the student and clarify expectations.

- We have a "Big Sib" program that is run entirely by the students. Each summer, the rising second-year cohort is provided with names and contact information of the new incoming cohort. Each incoming student is assigned a "Big Sib" from the second-year cohort, who acts as a resource to help the incoming student as they transition into the program. That connection remains throughout the students' time in the program.

Program Strategies

- Classes on 2 days per week so that students and faculty are all on campus at the same time. This allows more opportunities for informal interactions outside of class.

- Practicum and Internship clinical experiences are both required for students in the Pre-Licensure track; Practicum is an optional elective for students in the thesis track. Many Pre-Licensure students are offered jobs at their internship sites after graduation.

- The program does not have a formal professional development class; however, the class that is linked to the internship for the Pre-Licensure students covers topics such as searching for jobs, negotiating salaries, and how to apply for professional licensure.

- The program nominates students for GTA positions or other awards as applicable.

- Students who are active in research (Thesis track students and any interested Pre-Licensure track students) are encouraged to submit to the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA) conference and typically several students attend and present posters each year.

Other Opportunities

- A classroom in the program's building has been converted into a "Student Lounge" for students from our program. This gives the students a space to hang out and interact with each other outside of classes.

- As this is an MA program, not all students will have GTA positions or plan to teach in the future. While the program itself does not provide teaching, interested students are referred to university resources such as the "Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program" through FCTL.

- The program campus (Sanford/Lake Mary) has a chapter of Psi Chi, the Psychology National Honor Society. Students are encouraged to join and participate.

- The student organization Psy Squared is specifically for students in the Clinical Psychology MA program. This organization organizes and runs the "Big Sib" program, fundraises for conference attendance, and engages in other activities to support and engage students in the program.

Information submitted by Jessica Waesche

Psychology Ph.D. – Industrial/Organizational

Advising

- Academic Advising and First-Year Programs:
  All students are assigned an advisor when they begin the program.

- Summary of available advisors and their areas shared with students:
  We assign initial interim advisors as part of the admissions process. Then we ask students to visit the various faculty labs and decide by the end of the first semester if they would like to stay with the initial advisor or switch.

- Regularly scheduled meetings with advisors:
  This is between the student and the advisor; the program is not involved

- Preparations for doctoral student annual review:
  Students fill out the annual review, the faculty meet to the discuss the students, and then the students meet with their advisors to discuss the review and feedback.

Learning Support

- Preparation for comprehensive/qualifying exams:
  The program hosts meetings to share information and help with exam preparation. Students rather than the program organize review sessions. Students can set up individual meetings with faculty if they have questions.

Program Strategies

- Provide training for GTAs; training for teaching:
  The program offers a teaching class when possible

- Professional development class:
  Students take the professional development class in their first semester.

- The program nominates students for awards and connect them with resources as information becomes available; students receive emails about opportunities.

Other Opportunities

- Colloquia presentations – student participation in unit activities:
  All students are expected to attend the weekly speaker series. These discuss for career information and professional development. Once or twice a year, students can share early research ideas and get feedback. Students have to give a research presentation to the program in each of their first three years in the program (new requirement). Students can also practice their presentations before the annual conference. Students also participate in job searches, including meeting with candidates and attending job talks.

- Internships:
  Doctoral students are encouraged to wait until post-comps to take an internship. Students need to find their own internship sites although program shares relevant announcements/postings.

- Community building:
  The student association includes doctoral, master's, and undergraduate students. At least one social event is held each semester for all students and faculty, including a kickoff picnic and a reception at our annual conference. Alumni have a large presence at that reception and are also regularly invited to be speakers.

- Graduate student advisory input:
  A student representative to be involved with working with the faculty on any student concerns and to help to disseminate information to students.

Information Submitted by Mark Ehrhart

Sociology Ph.D.

Advising

- The program requires Proseminar course in the first semester where all faculty come in to meet the students and discuss their areas of research. This allows the students to identify a suitable advisor.

- Beginning in Spring 2025 the graduate director meets with every student individually to review their doctoral student annual review and to ensure that they have selected an advisor.

Learning Support

- The program has been revised to include a required course to prepare students for their qualifying exams.

Program Strategies

- The graduate program coordinator sends out a weekly email which includes all opportunities (fellowships, call for papers, etc.) to the PhD students.

- The graduate director nominates students for all college and university awards.

Other Opportunities

- When job candidates visit, the programs ask a group of graduate students to attend the candidate's talk, have lunch with the candidate, and complete a survey sharing their feedback.

- Students can complete an internship as part of their program. Typically, two or three 2-3 students per semester complete an internship.

- Sociology has a Graduate Student Association (SGSA). SGSA has a leadership board including a liaison who attends faculty meetings; they also plan social events and maintain a social media presence.

- At the end of the spring semester, the program host an awards event where graduate students are honored for their accomplishments. Faculty and alumni are involved.

Information Submitted by Amy Donley

Sociology M.A.

Advising

- Proseminar course required in the first semester where all faculty visit to meet the students and discuss their areas of research. This allows the students to select a an advisor in their area of interest.

Program Strategies

- Our graduate program coordinator sends out a weekly email which includes all opportunities (fellowships, call for papers, etc.).
- The graduate director nominates students for all available college and university awards.

Other Opportunities

- Groups of graduate students are asked to attend job candidates' presentations, have lunch with the candidate, and complete a survey sharing their feedback to help evaluate the candidates.
- Students can complete an internship as part of their program. Typically have 2-3 students per semester complete an internship.
- Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA): SGSA has a leadership board including a liaison who attends faculty meetings. They also plan social events and maintain a social media presence.
- At the end of the spring semester, the department hosts an awards event where graduate students are honored for their accomplishments. Faculty and alumni are involved.

Information Submitted by Amy Donley