

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook

M.S. in Life Sciences Communication

Approved by LSC Executive Committee on February 12, 2018

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I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Role of Handbook

The UW-Madison Graduate School is the ultimate authority for granting graduate degrees at the University. The Department of Life Sciences Communication (LSC) administers the Master's program under the authority of the Graduate School. The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures provide essential information regarding general University requirements. Program authority to set degree requirements beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the LSC program faculty.

The policies described in this handbook have been approved by the LSC Graduate Committee and the LSC Executive Committee. Degrees and course requirements may change over time. However, students must meet the degree and course requirements in effect when they entered the program. In addition, administrative procedures and processes can change over time.

Students are required to follow the procedures and processes listed in the current handbook. The information in this handbook should also be supplemented by individual consultation with the student's advisor and committee so that individual needs/interests and all degree requirements are met.

Learning Outcomes of an LSC M.S. Degree

Knowledge and Skills Learning Goals:

- Demonstrates knowledge of the theories, concepts, frameworks, empirical findings, and controversies in the field. Articulates research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, and practice within the field of study.
- Identifies sources and assembles evidence pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.
- Demonstrates understanding of the primary field of study in a historical, social, or global context.
- Selects and/or utilizes the most appropriate methodologies, tools, and practices.
- Evaluates or synthesizes information pertaining to questions or challenges in the field of study.
- Communicates complex ideas effectively across different audiences.

Professional Conduct Learning Goals:

- Recognizes, fosters, and applies principles of ethical and professional conduct.

II. ADVISING

Advisor / Advisee Roles:

Advisor:

The advisor serves a dual role: first, to assist the student in acquiring the highest level of knowledge and competence in the field that is possible; and second, to chair the committee that will determine whether the student has performed acceptably at each of their degree milestones. The chair of the committee must be an LSC graduate faculty member. Advisors play a role in tracking the student's progress toward degree completion, assisting with course selection and academic planning, and helping students identify possible research mentors, committee members, and opportunities.

Advisee:

Students should discuss roles and expectations with their advisors or prospective advisors. Both the student and the advisor have a responsibility to make their expectations clear to each other.

Advisor Selection:

Students are assigned an orientation advisor upon entry to the program. A student who later decides that a different faculty advisor would be a more appropriate fit should inform the student services coordinator. Selection of an advisor, or a change of advisors, should be based on the faculty member's ability to guide the student expertly into the chosen area of interest/research. Any updates to a student's advisor should be shared with LSC Student Services Coordinator, Tera Holtz. The student should also inform their former advisor of the change.

Advisory Committee:

In consultation with their faculty advisor, students will assemble a committee of three members including their advisor and two additional faculty members. The committee will meet at the thesis defense or course narrative (depending on the master's) to approve the thesis or coursework. LSC M.S. committees may consist of tenure-track faculty within LSC or in another relevant department. Academic Staff who hold a master's degree and an appointment of 50% or higher may be part of a master's committee but may not serve as chair. Requests for exceptions should be submitted in writing to the Graduate Committee.

Additional Advising Contacts:

Students should always first reference LSC's website (lsc.wisc.edu), this Handbook, the Graduate School's website (grad.wisc.edu), and the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/academic-policies/>) for answers on program-related questions. However, when students need further clarification on any of these policies or procedures, they should contact their faculty advisor.

III. MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Program Basics

The Life Sciences Communication Master's program has two tracks, a thesis-based M.S. and a professional M.S. Students who wish to switch from thesis to professional track or vice versa should submit a written request to the Graduate Committee along with a letter of support from their advisor. If approved, the student should communicate this to the Student Services Coordinator.

Thesis-based M.S.

The thesis-based master's degree requires 30 course credits, six of which can be LSC 990 thesis credits. Courses taken match the interests and needs of individual students. The degree also requires a thesis based on original research. All students must take a graduate communication theory course in LSC (LSC 625, LSC 720, LSC 860, LSC 902), a research methodology course (e.g. LSC 806, LSC 812, or JOURN 658), a graduate level statistics course (e.g. ED PSYCH 760 or SOC 361), and LSC 700: Colloquium in Life Sciences Communication. Per Graduate School policy, 50% of all coursework must be at the "graduate level." Note that a number of 400 and 500 level courses in LSC

have a graduate component and can therefore count towards the M.S. (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/minimum-grad-coursework-requirement/>).

The student meets with their advisor during the first semester of the program to outline a general course trajectory for the next two years. In consultation with their advisor, the student assembles a committee of three faculty members. The student defends their Master's thesis in front of the committee at the end of their program.

Coursework can include classes in substantive areas other than communication. For example, a student wishing to become an environmental reporter might take courses in environmental studies. A student interested in health communication might take a nutrition or preventive medicine course. However, the complete program must have coherence and focus, and students should discuss all courses with their advisor prior to enrollment.

Professional M.S.

The professional M.S. is a course-based master's degree (30 credits total) designed to prepare students for professional careers in life sciences communication and related fields. Students in this track will usually not pursue a Ph.D. program in the future. In fact, many graduate programs (including LSC) do not accept a non-thesis master's as a criterion for admission to their Ph.D. program.

All students must take a graduate communication theory course in LSC (LSC 625, LSC 720, LSC 860, LSC 902), a research methodology course (e.g. LSC 806, LSC 812, or JOURN 658), a graduate level statistics course (e.g. ED PSYCH 760 or SOC 361), and LSC 700: Colloquium in Life Sciences Communication. Students fill their remaining credits with courses of interest after consulting with their advisor. Per Graduate School policy, 50% of all coursework must be at the "graduate level." Note that a number of 400 and 500 level courses in LSC have a graduate component and can therefore count towards the M.S. (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/minimum-grad-coursework-requirement/>).

The student meets with their advisor during the first semester of the program to outline a general course trajectory for the next two years. In consultation with their advisor, the student assembles a committee of three faculty members. The student presents a course narrative to the committee at the end of their program. This narrative should summarize all courses taken towards the degree, reasons for taking each course, and how the courses they have taken will contribute toward their future professional goals. The committee meets to approve the narrative and completed coursework.

Sample Timeline

Semester One:

- Plan your general coursework trajectory for your Master of Science and have it approved by your advisor (You should update your plan every semester).

Semester Two:

- Check in with your advisor regarding your progress and any intended changes to your course plan.

Semester Three:

- Check in with your advisor regarding your progress and any intended changes to your course plan.
- In consultation with your advisor, form a three-person committee made up of your advisor and two additional graduate faculty members.
- If you are doing the thesis option, firm up your thesis idea with your advisor. Once you have or will have completed 24 credits of coursework, you may enroll for three credits of thesis research (LSC 990) with your

advisor. A total of six credits of LSC 990 can be used toward the 30-credit requirement for thesis track students.

- If you are doing the professional option, complete 30 credits of coursework determined in consultation with your advisor. Keep in mind that you will write a course narrative before you graduate that explains the coherence and purpose of each class that you take.

Semester Four:

- If you will have completed your requirements by the end of the semester, notify the Student Services Coordinator.
- In your final semester, plan well ahead with your advisor and committee to schedule a thesis defense date or a course narrative defense date (if professional option).
 - Work backwards from your defense date to plan earlier deadlines, such as dates for submitting a first draft of your thesis to your advisor (remember to allow time for your advisor to give feedback and for you to do revisions) and the date for delivering final drafts to the committee.

IV. ENROLLMENT

Enrollment Requirements

Fall/Spring Enrollment

enrollment Types	MS
domestic unfunded	2 credits minimum*
international unfunded	8 credits minimum (unless you have an exception from ISS)
RA or fellowship in LSC	8 credits minimum
33.33% TA/PA in LSC	6 credits minimum
50% TA/PA in LSC	4 credits minimum
funded through another department/program	check with that department
other	check with LSC Student Service Coordinator Tera Holtz

*this does not qualify as "full time enrollment," full time enrollment when "unfunded" is 8 credits minimum

The maximum enrollment is 15 credits. Students should only enroll in 15 credits with their advisor's approval. A maximum of 12 credits is recommended. A typical enrollment load for a TA/PA/RA is 6-9 credits per semester.

A valid enrollment minimum **does not count** the following types of courses

- courses numbered below 300
- courses taken pass/fail
- audited courses

Summer Enrollment

Students must be enrolled at UW-Madison in the summer if they are using university facilities, including faculty and staff time.

enrollment types	minimum enrollment for full-time status summer term (8-week DHH session)
RA more than 33%	2 credits
TA/PA 33%	not required unless receiving a summer degree, if receiving a summer degree enroll for minimum of 2 credits
TA/PA 50%	not required unless receiving a summer degree, if receiving a summer degree enroll for minimum of 2 credits
International Student (F-1/J-1)	follow policies for RA/TA/PA appointments outlined above. If not completing summer degree and not RA/TA/PA, then no summer enrollment required
If none of the above	not required unless receiving a summer degree, if receiving a summer degree enroll for minimum of 4 credits

The above information was taken from the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures website which can be found online at: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/enrollment-requirements/>

Steps to Graduation

Thesis M.S. students:

- Set regular meetings with your advisor and other committee members to track your thesis progress.
- Get your advisor's approval to set thesis defense date.
- Set a defense date with your committee. Allow at least 4 weeks to submit warrant request and receive warrant prior to defense.
- Defenses are public meetings, i.e., students, faculty, staff and members of the public are welcome to attend the presentation of your thesis and research. Guests will be asked to leave the room during the closed session portion of the defense.
- In consultation with your advisor, submit a draft of your thesis to all members of your committee. Be sure to follow guideline outlined by the Graduate School: <https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/masters-guide/>.

Professional M.S. students:

- Write your course narrative and submit to your advisor (see Student Services Coordinator for examples).
- Get your advisor's approval to set course narrative presentation date and create a presentation for your course narrative.
- Set a presentation date with your committee. Allow at least 4 weeks to submit warrant request and receive warrant prior to presentation date.

- After approval by your advisor, submit your course narrative to all members of your committee.

ALL MS students:

- Schedule a conference room for your defense/presentation with assistance from the LSC front desk personnel or the Student Services Coordinator.
- In consultation with your advisor, submit a final copy of thesis/course narrative to your committee at least 1 week prior to your defense.

Defense Day/Final Steps

- Defend your thesis/course narrative to your committee (bring defense warrant and other relevant documents to the defense). Return warrant to Student Services Coordinator immediately after.
- If you pass, take feedback from your committee and implement edits/changes in consultation with your committee. Re-submit to your advisor and all committee members who have requested to see the revised version.
- Arrange for two printed copies to submit to LSC (Brennan Porter) for binding on “thesis-quality” paper.
 - *student receives one copy and one copy stays with the thesis collection in the LSC reading room. If more copies are desired, student pays cost of additional binding.*

Thesis copies cannot be printed at LSC
- Pick up signed warrant from the Student Services Coordinator and deliver warrant to the Graduate School (warrants are not released until required copies of your thesis are turned in to LSC).

V. SATISFACTORY PROGRESS – ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Graduate students in LSC are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher every term. If a student fails to meet this threshold, they should contact their advisor immediately. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirement will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee and may be placed on probation. The student may be suspended if they are not able to raise their GPA to the minimum level over the course of the next semester. The same holds true if a graduate student carries two or more incomplete grades over more than two semesters.

Continuation in the Graduate School is at the discretion of a student's program, the Graduate School, and the LSC Graduate Committee. Students may be disciplined or dismissed from the graduate program for any type of misconduct (academic, non-academic, professional, or research) or failure to meet program expectations regardless of their academic standing in the program. Concerns about infractions of professional conduct expectations may be effectively handled informally between the student and the advisor/faculty member. However, if a resolution is not achieved, the issue may be advanced for further review by the program and – if necessary – other channels in the university. Examples of disciplinary actions could include, but are not limited to written reprimand, imposition of reasonable terms and conditions on continued student status, removal of funding, probation, restitution, removal of student from an in-progress course, suspension, or dismissal.

Graduate School's information on satisfactory progress: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/satisfactory-progress/>

LSC 990 Thesis Credit Enrollment Limit Policy

Students who pursue the thesis-track master's degree will have a limit of four semesters (including summer semesters) of LSC 990 thesis credit enrollment. The four semester limit starts with the first semester a student takes 990 credits, whether or not in conjunction with other courses. Students will not be allowed to take leave once their 990 enrollment commences. Students who do not produce and defend a thesis at the end of the four semesters but are in good standing and have otherwise fulfilled the credit requirements of a non-thesis master's will be issued a professional track degree.

Additional Information

Links for additional information regarding Academic Misconduct:

- Graduate School Policy & Procedure: Misconduct, Academic: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-academic/>
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 14: Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/14.pdf

Links for additional information regarding Non-Academic Misconduct:

- Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Misconduct, Non-Academic: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/misconduct-nonacademic/>
- Dean of Students Office: Non-Academic Misconduct: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/nonacademic-misconduct/>
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 17: Student Non-Academic Disciplinary Procedures: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/17.pdf
- University of Wisconsin System: Chapter UWS 18: Conduct on University Lands: https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/code/admin_code/uws/18.pdf

Links for additional information regarding Research Misconduct and Responsible Conduct:

- Graduate School Policies & Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/responsible-conduct-of-research/>
- Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education's - Office of Research Policy: Introduction & Guide to Resources on Research Ethics: <https://research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/>
- Graduate School Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Reporting Misconduct: <http://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34486>
- Graduate School Office of Research Policy: Policies, Responsibilities, and Procedures: Responsible Conduct of Research Resources: <https://kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/search.php?cat=2907>

VI. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES & REPORTING MISCONDUCT AND CRIME

Grievance Procedures

If a student feels unfairly treated or aggrieved by faculty, staff, or another student, the University offers several avenues to resolve the grievance. Students' concerns about unfair treatment are best handled directly with the person responsible for the objectionable action. If the student is uncomfortable making direct contact with the individual(s) involved, they should contact the Director of Graduate Studies (Dr. Bret Shaw, brshaw@wisc.edu), the Student Services Coordinator (Tera Holtz, tholtz@wisc.edu), or LSC Department Chair (Dr. Dominique Brossard, dbrossard@wisc.edu). For more information see the Graduate School Academic Policies & Procedures: Grievances & Appeals: <https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>

Procedures for proper accounting of student grievances:

1. The student is encouraged to speak first with the person toward whom the grievance is directed if appropriate to see if a situation can be resolved at this level.
2. Should a satisfactory resolution not be achieved, the student should meet with their advisor who will determine appropriate next steps. If the advisor cannot satisfactorily solve the issue, the student should contact the Director of Graduate Study (Dr. Bret Shaw, brshaw@wisc.edu) or – if the grievance involves the Director of Graduate Studies – LSC Department Chair Dominique Brossard (dbrossard@wisc.edu).
3. University resources for sexual harassment, discrimination, disability accommodations, and other related concerns can be found on the UW Office of Equity and Diversity website: <https://oed.wisc.edu/>.
4. Other campus resources include
 - o The Graduate School - grad.wisc.edu
 - o McBurney Disability Resource Center - mcburney.wisc.edu
 - o Employee Assistance Office - eao.wisc.edu
 - o Ombuds Office - ombuds.wisc.edu
 - o University Health Services – uhs.wisc.edu
 - o UW Office of Equity and Diversity - oed.wisc.edu/index.html
5. If the issue is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student can submit the grievance to the Graduate School Director of Academic Services, Michelle Holland (michelle.holland@wisc.edu) in writing, within 60 calendar days of the alleged unfair treatment (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>).

Reporting Misconduct and Crime

The campus has established policies governing student conduct, academic dishonesty, discrimination, and harassment/abuse as well as specific reporting requirements in certain cases. If you have a grievance regarding unfair treatment towards yourself, please reference the procedures and resources identified above. If you learn about, observe, or witness misconduct or other wrongdoing, you may be required to report that misconduct or abuse. Depending on the situation, it may be appropriate to consult with your advisor, Student Services Coordinator, Department Chair, or other campus resources (such as the [UW Office of Equity and Diversity](#), [Graduate School](#), [Mc Burney Disability Resource Center](#), [Employee Assistance Office](#), [Ombuds Office](#), and [University Health Services](#)).

Research Misconduct Reporting

The University of Wisconsin-Madison strives to foster the highest scholarly and ethical standards among its students, faculty, and staff. Graduate students are among the most vulnerable groups when reporting misconduct because their source of financial support and the progress in their careers may be at risk by raising questions of wrongdoing. They are also often the closest witnesses to wrongdoing when it occurs and therefore must be appropriately protected from the consequences of reporting wrongdoing and be informed of their rights. Please find full details at research.wisc.edu/respolcomp/resethics/

Academic Misconduct Reporting

If you know a classmate is cheating on an exam or other academic exercise, notify your professor, teaching assistant or proctor of the exam. As a part of the university community, you are expected to uphold the standards of the university. Also, consider how your classmate's dishonesty may affect the overall grading curve and integrity of the program.

Sexual Assault Reporting

UW-Madison prohibits sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. These offenses violate UW-Madison policies and are subject to disciplinary action. Sanctions can range from reprimand to expulsion from UW-Madison. In many cases, these offenses also violate Wisconsin criminal law and could lead to arrest and criminal prosecution.

Students who experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking have many options and services available to them on and off campus, including mental health counseling, victim advocacy and access to the criminal and campus disciplinary systems. For a list a confidential support and reporting options, please visit <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/prevention/violence-prevention/resources/>.

Faculty, staff, teaching assistants, and others who work directly with students at UW-Madison are required by law to report first-hand knowledge or disclosures of sexual assault to university officials for statistical purposes. In addition, disclosures made to certain university employees, such as academic advisors or university administrators, may be forwarded to the campus Title IX coordinator for a response. For more information, please visit <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/sexual-assault-dating-and-domestic-violence/>.

Child Abuse Reporting

UW-Madison employees (under [Wisconsin Executive Order #54](#)) are required to immediately report child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement if, in the course of employment, the employee observes an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, or learns of an incident or threat of child abuse or neglect, and the employee has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur. Volunteers working for UW-Madison sponsored programs or activities are also expected to report suspected abuse or neglect. Please find full details at <https://oed.wisc.edu/> (midway down, right hand side).

Reporting and Response to Incidents of Bias/Hate

The University of Wisconsin-Madison values a diverse community where all members are able to participate fully in the Wisconsin Experience. Incidents of Bias/Hate affecting a person or group create a hostile climate and negatively impact the quality of the Wisconsin Experience for community members. UW-Madison takes such incidents seriously and will investigate and respond to reported or observed incidents of bias/hate. Please find full details at <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/services/bias-reporting-process/>.

VII. FUNDING AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Overview: Funding Landscape

Financial support is often available for graduate students in LSC. Historically, nearly all of our graduate students have been funded through assistantships — either in our department, working under the direction of one of our faculty members, or in one of numerous other departments and programs that regularly look to LSC to provide them with students with strong communication skills.

Assistantships

Most graduate students who receive support serve as teaching, research, or project assistants. Assistantships are typically part-time positions that pay a monthly stipend. Additionally, positions that are 33.33% or more (based on a 40-hour work week) provide tuition remission for the student and make the student eligible for comprehensive health insurance coverage (a benefit worth approximately \$4,200 annually).

Fellowships

The department also nominates competitive graduate applicants for the [Advanced Opportunity Fellowships \(AOFs\)](#), which provide full tuition and funding to qualified underrepresented minority applicants.

The department also nominates current students for [Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowships \(WDGF\)](#), which are awarded by the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

All nominations are approved and forwarded by the LSC Graduate Committee.

Scholarships

LSC uses the “Common Scholarship Application” through CALS to award departmental scholarships. CALS announces the scholarship application “open date” every fall, and the deadline is typically early February. Students *must* complete the application to be considered for any scholarships; students are then eligible to be considered for both LSC-awarded and CALS-awarded scholarships. <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/graduate-students/scholarships-fellowships/>.

Financial Aid

Students who are U.S. citizens or Permanent Residents can apply for Federal Stafford Loans (subsidized and unsubsidized) and for Federal Work-Study through the [Office of Student Financial Aid \(OSFA\)](#). Eligibility is based on financial need. OSFA also offers information on the cost of attendance.

[Short-term loans](#) are available on a limited basis. They are given only to assist in unanticipated emergency situations and must be repaid within the semester in which they are borrowed.

Hourly Employment

Other employment opportunities are available both on campus and in the community. Openings for full and part-time jobs for students are listed on the [Student Job Center website](#).

Travel and Professional Development Grants

Graduate students in LSC can apply for financial support from the department for travel to academic conferences. Pending availability of funds, students can apply for up to \$1,000 for international travel and up to \$500 for domestic travel per academic year. In order to be eligible for these awards, students need to fulfill all of the criteria. For more information and a list of the criteria see this [guide](#).

External Funding/Fellowships

We encourage all students to seek out and apply for funding from sources external to the university (e.g., federal agencies, professional organizations, private foundations). The Graduate School supports selected federal/private fellowships through the provision of tuition support and health insurance, a list can be found at kb.wisc.edu/gsadminkb/page.php?id=34761.

The following are some sources of information on external funding:

1. Major external fellowships: <https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/fellowships/> (bottom of webpage).
2. The Grants Information Collection (GIC) on the 2nd Floor of Memorial Library grants.library.wisc.edu/

The GIC is a great collection of print and online resources to help students find external fellowships and scholarships. You can learn how to set up a personalized profile on several online funding databases, and get regular notices of relevant funding opportunities. PLEASE REMEMBER: the timetable for identifying, applying for and receiving such external funding is generally quite long; plan on 9-12 months between the time you start your search and the time you may receive funding.

VIII. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CAREER PLANNING

UW-Madison offers a wealth of resources intended to enrich your graduate studies and enhance your professional skills. Starting your very first year on campus, it is expected that you will take full advantage of the career and professional development resources that best fit your needs and support your goals. Since our alumni thrive not only in academia but also in industry, corporate, government, and non-profit arenas, we strive to be in-tune, holistic, and innovative in our approach to meeting the diverse professional development needs of our students. By actively participating in these professional development opportunities, you will build the skills needed to succeed academically at UW-Madison and to thrive professionally in your chosen career.

Campus-wide Resources for Professional Development

In addition to opportunities at the local level, the **Graduate School Office of Professional Development** provides direct programming in the areas of career development and skill building, and also serves as a clearinghouse for professional development resources across campus. The best way to stay informed is to watch for the weekly newsletter from OPD, **GradConnections Weekly**, and to visit the webpage <https://grad.wisc.edu/uw-events/> for an up-to-date list of events. For example, typical topics covered throughout the year are:

- Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- Planning for academic success
- Dissertation writing support
- Communication skills
- Grant writing
- Teaching
- Mentoring
- Research ethics

- Community engagement
- Entrepreneurship
- Career exploration: academic, non-profit, industry, government, etc.
- Job search support
- Pursuing postdoctoral training

Individual Development Plans

The Graduate School webpage (<https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/individual-development-plan/>) offers a collection of Individual Development Plan resources to support graduate students.

As you begin your Graduate School career, an Individual Development Plan (IDP) is an essential tool to help you:

- 1) Assess your current skills and strengths
- 2) Make a plan for developing skills that will help you meet your academic and professional goals
- 3) Communicate with your advisors and mentors about your evolving goals and related skills.

The IDP you create is a document you will want to revisit again and again, to update and refine as your goals change and/or come into focus, and to record your progress and accomplishments. It also serves to start – and maintain – the conversation with your faculty advisor about your career goals and professional development needs.

The onus to engage in the IDP process is on you, although your mentor, PI, or others may encourage and support you in doing so. The IDP itself remains private to you, and you choose which parts to share with which mentors. Through the IDP process, you may decide to identify various mentors to whom you can go for expertise and advice.

Below are some available IDP tools. Each tool will include a self-assessment of skills, interests, and values; goal-setting guidelines; and reference to skill building and career exploration resources.

- UW-Madison IDP template, which includes instructions and examples, is flexible and appropriate for all disciplines. <https://grad.wisc.edu/professional-development/individual-development-plan/>
- ImaginePhD: A career exploration and IDP tool for the humanities and social sciences. <https://www.imaginephd.com/>
- DiscoverPD: A competencies framework and planning tool with resources specifically geared toward UW-Madison graduate students. <https://my.grad.wisc.edu/DiscoverPD>

IX. STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS

UW-Madison has a holistic resource for all things wellness called “UWell”. The site includes information and opportunities for wellness for your work/school, financial, environmental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and community. Go to uwell.wisc.edu/.

Students who pay segregated fees are eligible for University Health Services (uhs.wisc.edu/services/counseling/). There is no charge to students for many basic services including counseling sessions, because services are paid through tuition and fees. Personal health and wellness services are also available in addition to medical services.

Disability Information

Students with disabilities have access to disability resources through UW-Madison's McBurney Disability Resource Center. As an admitted student, you should first go through the steps to "Become a McBurney Client" at mcburney.wisc.edu/students/howto.php.

Additional non-academic disability campus resources (not found through the McBurney Center) can be found at mcburney.wisc.edu/services/nonmcburney/index.php.

The UW-Madison Index for Campus Accessibility Resources can be found at wisc.edu/accessibility/index.php.

Mental Health Resources On and Off Campus

University Health Services (UHS) is the primary mental health provider for students on campus. UHS Counseling and Consultation Services offers a wide range of services to the diverse student population of UW-Madison. They offer immediate crisis counseling, same day appointments and ongoing treatment. Go to uhs.wisc.edu/services/counseling/ or call 608-265-5600.

UHS service costs are covered for students through tuition and fees.

There are many mental health resources throughout the Madison community, but UHS Counseling and Consultation Services is the best resource for referrals to off-campus providers. Call 608-265-5600 for assistance in finding an off-campus provider.

X. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

The Graduate School maintains a checklist for new graduate students at <https://grad.wisc.edu/new-students/> (midway down).

You should also work on:

Activate your NetID

You will need your NetID and password to access the My UW-Madison portal at my.wisc.edu. To activate your NetID, click on the ACTIVATE NETID button from the My UW Madison login screen. Enter your 10-digit student campus ID number and birthdate. The NetID you create and password you enter are keys to your access to the MyUW portal, so make a record of it and keep it private. If you are unsure about your NetID and password, contact the [DoIT Help Desk](#) at 608-264-4357.

Enroll for classes using the Guide (guide.wisc.edu) and Student Center. For general enrollment information and assistance with enrollment see the "Enrollment Information" page on the Office of the Registrar's website at registrar.wisc.edu/enrollment_information.htm or call the Registrar's Enrollment Helpline at 608.262.0920, Monday through Friday, 7:45 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Please note: you'll receive information about enrollment via the Graduate School and you'll be notified via email when your enrollment time (the day and time you're first able to enroll) is posted in your Student Center.

- For specific course availability, permission to enroll, and wait lists, contact the academic department offering the course (listed with each course in the Schedule of Classes). For courses offered in Life

Sciences Communication, contact Tera Holtz, our Student Services Coordinator, at tholtz@wisc.edu or 608.262.1241.

- For enrollment deadlines, see the Office of the Registrar's website at registrar.wisc.edu.
- Ensure you're enrolled for the required amount of credits.

Get your UW Photo ID Card (Wiscard)

Get your UW ID card - Wiscard - photo taken at the Wiscard Office (wiscard.wisc.edu/contact.html) in Union South, room 149, M-F 8:30 am - 5:00 pm. You must be enrolled and have valid identification, such as a valid driver's license, passport, or state ID, to get your photo ID.

Update your contact information. You can view and update your address and telephone information through your MyUW/Student Center. For more information or instructions, go to wisc.edu/directories/corrections.php. You will need your NetID and password to access MyUW. You are responsible for maintaining appropriate billing, home, and mailing addresses at all times.

Understand your right to privacy with your information by reviewing **FERPA guidelines for students** http://www.registrar.wisc.edu/ferpa_overview.htm.

Secure adequate health insurance coverage. Graduate students who hold an appointment as an assistant of 33.33% or more or who have a fellowship may be eligible for health insurance and other benefits. *If you have been hired with an assistantship in LSC*, contact Sandra Bennett, our department's staff benefits and payroll coordinator, at skbennet@wisc.edu or 608.262.9928, to select one of several health care plans within 30 days of your hire date.

- Grad students without an assistantship or fellowship who are currently enrolled can use the services of University Health Services (UHS), the campus health clinic. Many services are provided at no extra cost, including outpatient medical care during regular business hours, Monday through Friday. UHS is located in the Student Services Tower at 333 East Campus Mall, 608.265.5000. For more info, visit the UHS web site at uhs.wisc.edu.
- Prescription medications, emergency room visits and hospitalization are not included in UHS benefits. Therefore, supplemental insurance covering these drugs and services is recommended for all students and is required for international students. The UHS Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) is an excellent option for many students. Contact the SHIP office at 608.265.5600 for more information.

Pay your tuition and fees. Tuition and fee bills are sent out one week before the semester starts and are due the second week of classes. If you do not receive an invoice, contact the Bursar's Office, 608.262.3611. For current tuition account information, check MyUW. Your tuition balances will be under the 'Account Summary' box. For more information and instructions regarding ePayments, go to busssvc.wisc.edu/bursar/tuiteck.html.

- Graduate students that have an assistantship of at least 33.33% are eligible to receive remission of full tuition. Check with LSC's department administrator, Sandra Bennett (skbennet@wisc.edu), to determine your eligibility. **All teaching, project, and research assistants are responsible for paying their segregated fees (funds dedicated to supporting various student service programs and organizations).** Direct tuition remission questions go to the Registrar's Tuition Assessment Section, 333 East Campus Mall, room 10301, 608.262.4031, or tuition@busssvc.wisc.edu.
- If you have been notified that you will receive financial aid, your financial aid award will automatically be applied to your student account to pay tuition and fees. The Bursar's Office will send any remaining

amount in the form of a check to your mailing address. Contact the Bursar's Office at bussvc.wisc.edu/bursar/ with any additional questions.

Check out these important resources—which link you to your new community as an LSC grad student:

- **Watch for e-mails from lsc_gradprog@lists.wisc.edu.** This listserv is used to reach all of the LSC graduate students as a group. Important announcements including funding opportunities, student job announcements, special events, critical deadlines, and more, are all sent via the listserv. Inform Student Services Coordinator, Tera Holtz of any desired changes to your preferred email address for the listserv. Please note that all official correspondence from the university will be sent to your wisc.edu address so you should still check it regularly or forward it to an e-mail you do check regularly.
- **Follow LSC on social media**
Facebook [Facebook.com/UWMadisonLSC](https://www.facebook.com/UWMadisonLSC)
Twitter [@UW_LSC](https://twitter.com/UW_LSC)
Instagram [uwmadison_lsc](https://www.instagram.com/uwmadison_lsc)
- **The College of Agricultural & Life Sciences (CALs) Office of Graduate Studies and Professional Development** maintains a website with information on graduate programs, scholarships and fellowships, professional development, and ethics in research: <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/graduate-students/>.
- UW-Madison News provides stories indexed under 'Life Sciences Communication': <https://news.wisc.edu/?s=life+sciences+communication>.

Plan for your upcoming semester(s) by referencing the UW-Madison Academic Calendar

<https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/>.

Fill out an application form for a College of Agricultural & Life Sciences scholarship. Completing this application will establish your eligibility for a number of scholarships, awards, and internships including those that are exclusively for students in the Department of Life Sciences Communication. ***Applications are opened to students in November and reviewed once a year in February.*** For more information and instructions, go to <https://cals.wisc.edu/academics/graduate-students/scholarships-fellowships/>.

Pick up your free Madison Metro bus pass

As a UW student, you can pick up a bus pass at no charge at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Visit the ASM Web site for more information on Madison Metro bus services:

<https://www.asm.wisc.edu/resources/buspass/>.

Prerequisite: You must be enrolled.

Attend the New Graduate Student Welcome, hosted by the Graduate School

This event provides a great opportunity to mingle with Graduate School deans and staff, hear from a panel of current students about grad student life, learn about the many campus and community resources available to you, and meet other new graduate students from across campus. Learn more and register here:

<https://grad.wisc.edu/new-students/>

The Guide to Graduate Student Life

The Guide is published annually by the Graduate School and contains a wealth of essential information for new graduate students. It covers information about the city of Madison, student services, finances, employment, housing, transportation, shopping, local services, recreation, and healthy living. Check it out at <https://grad.wisc.edu/new-students/>.

XI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student Services (ISS)

International Student Services (ISS) is your main resource on campus and has advisors who can assist you with Visa, social and employment issues. Visit their website for more information at iss.wisc.edu or to schedule an appointment.

Student Visas

The Graduate School Office of Admissions issues the federal I-20 form for initial F-1 Visa procurement. Initial J-1 Visa document (DS-2019) is handled by [International Student Services](#) (ISS). The Graduate Admissions office sometimes must collect financial information for the DS-2019, which is then forwarded to ISS. After the student is enrolled, all Visa matters are handled by ISS.

Documents required of new international students

Many students are admitted with a condition that they submit their final academic documents after arrival on campus. Please submit your documents to the admissions office at 232 Bascom Hall. The admissions requirements page <https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/> has a drop-down menu under “degrees” which lists the documents required for each country.

Students with ESL requirements

Any student who was admitted with a TOEFL score below 92, or an IELTS score below 6.5 will be required to take the English as a Second Language Assessment Test (ESLAT) and will need to enroll in any required English course during their first semester. Details can be found here: <https://esl.wisc.edu/international-students/>.

Funding for International Students

International students are eligible for Teaching, Project, and Research Assistantships on campus as well as university fellowships through the Graduate School. They may not be employed more than 20 hours per week on campus while enrolled full-time.

New international students with assistantships should work with International Students Services to obtain a social security number. New students with fellowships and no other appointment types are not considered employees and are not eligible for social security numbers. These students should work with ISS to obtain an International Taxpayer Identification Number. More information can be found on the ISS website: <https://iss.wisc.edu/>