Graduate Student Support: An Open Forum for Discussion
Teresa Crease, Francesco Leri, Leigh West, Sarah Cahill, Chris Donaldson, and Jacqueline Hamilton
July 14th, 2020
Agenda

10:30 – 10:45 – Welcome & Overview of Graduate Student Supports (main room)

10:45 – 11:00 – Breakout sessions introduction (breakout rooms)

• Staying connected with graduate student virtually
• Helping graduate students pivot their research
• Supporting virtual graduate classes

11:00 – 11:40 – Open form (breakout rooms)

11:40 – 11:55 – Debrief breakout sessions (main room)
Grad Pathways

• Hub of academic and professional skills development opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows

• Hub is organized by core competencies:
Grad Pathways Skills Development Certificate

- Students participate in a select number of virtual workshops and submit mini assignments
- To register for the Certificate, complete the registration survey
- Send questions to gradpath@uoguelph.ca
Aurora by Beyond the Professoriate

• E-learning platform providing career advice to graduate students and postdocs
• Over 70 hours of on-demand videos, and 120 interviews with PhDs are available on this site
• UoG graduate students and postdoctoral fellows have access until January 2021
Mitacs Training

- Cross-Cultural Team Communications (online)
- Communicating Your Research (online)
- Managing Project Timelines (online)
- Practical Tips for Growing Your Network (online)
- Time Management (online)
- Writing Effective Emails (online)
- Writing Strategic Business Reports (online)
LinkedIn Learning

- A video-based training library
- Videos are created by industry professionals and provide content on a large variety of topics
- UoG Staff, Faculty and Students have free access to content
Discussion Notes: Staying connected with graduate student virtually

- **Challenges**
  - More difficult to stay connected and keep graduate students engaged
  - The stress of the pandemic caused a loss in productivity and some found graduate students avoided meetings.

- **Best Practices**
  - Being intentional, strategic, and thoughtful when considering how to connect with graduate students.
  - Ask them how they want to virtually connect. Some platforms discussed were:
    - Zoom
    - Microsoft Teams
    - WebEx
    - Slack
    - Trello
  - Include time during virtual meetings for social connection and conversation.
  - Check in with students about mental health and wellbeing.
  - Create a faculty community of practice.
Discussion Notes: Helping graduate students pivot their research

• **Challenges**
  • Volume of virtual work can lead to physical challenges (e.g. eye strain, headaches). Recognition of a need to work smarter, not harder.
  • Can face-to-face research be moved online? Lack of clarity from REB about what is required to move in-person research online.
  • Implications on the integrity of doctoral degrees.

• **Best Practices**
  • Explore special calls for COVID related research from journals.
  • REB moves quickly on new COVID related research projects.
Discussion Notes: Supporting virtual graduate classes

• Challenges
  • Planning for what to do with international students if they cannot get study permits. Time zone challenges if student decide to study remotely.
  • Graduate classes can be in-person, but how can we support and accommodate students with health concerns or anxieties about meeting in-person.
  • Students want all content recorded, but concerns this will limit students’ virtual engagement.

• Best Practices
  • Review OpenEd’s support for remote teaching and learning.