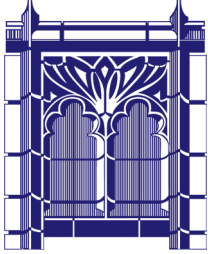


Working with Your Temporary Adviser



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL **mentor memo** AUTUMN QUARTER 2009

This Mentor Memo, part of a series, responds to graduate students' requests for advice about navigating graduate studies successfully.

The series also addresses topics in career preparation and professional development. For more information and to suggest topics, contact Graduate School Dean Jerry Baldasty at baldasty@u.washington.edu.

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Temporary adviser: A faculty member who has agreed to help incoming students navigate their initial months in graduate school.

Students often worry about how to talk to faculty outside the classroom, but talking—even informally—can help facilitate transitioning to life in the department. Below are some topics of conversation you definitely want to cover with your temporary adviser.

Who?

Who does research in my area? Who should I be reading? Who's this person coming to speak at the department colloquium?

What?

What classes should I be taking? What requirements are necessary for the MA/PhD program? What other departments should I consider for classes outside the department or external committee members?

When?

When do I need to register? When do I need to submit my program of study? When do I need to start thinking about my thesis or dissertation topic?

Where?

Where's McMahan Hall? Where can I go to find help with my writing? Where can I go on campus for cheap eats?

Why?

Why do I need to take this methods course? Why should I consider courses in this other department? Why are my students behaving the way they do?

How?

How do I make the most of my graduate career at the UW? How do I manage my time? How can I achieve a balance between school and my personal life?

The bottom line: first-year students have many questions that range from issues of scheduling to longer-term concerns. Feel free to ask these questions! Temporary advisers may have different interests from their graduate students, but they generally know who on the faculty is doing what, and what is happening in the department. Temporary advisers also serve as "permanent" advisers,

there's more... ►

so they will they know the answers to these questions regardless of your research interests. If your temporary adviser doesn't know the answer, he or she can point you to someone who does. Faculty members are happy to share their views and advice with graduate students. Remember that they were once graduate students too!

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