Extended orientation for International Graduate Students

By Jeanna Parsons Leigh, Graduate Academic and International Specialist, Faculty of Graduate Studies

Every year I look forward to Graduate Orientation (GradO), the campus is buzzing with excitement and enthusiasm as new students join us to kick-off their first year at UCalgary.

This year, FGS is adding to the excitement by launching two very important orientation programs for international students: Transition Well and Our Learning Community. These are specially designed to support first year international graduate students who are transitioning to a life in Canada at the University of Calgary.

By attending these sessions, you will gain insight into the policies, values and expectations of our learning community, and how these will shape your work and experience at the university. Thesis-based students will further discover the ins and outs of working with a supervisor and life in the lab. We will also have strategies for you to stay healthy and happy as you deal with living away from home, mounting deadlines and long hours working on your own.

These unique orientation programs will be further extended to run throughout the fall term. You will have the opportunity to (re)connect with other first year grad students through a series of meetups and panel discussions on various topics specific to the international student experience. I will also be on hand, along with other specialists, to answer questions or concerns that might come up as the semester progresses.

Registration for GradO will be available online starting in August. You will receive an email inviting you to register. Please look for the Extended Orientation program when you sign up. If you have any questions about Graduate Orientation, please email me at graduate@ucalgary.ca, attn: Jeanna Parsons Leigh.

We look forward to seeing you there!

My GradSkills

Three things that will help you make the most of grad school

By Trisha Loehr, Communications & Events Coordinator, My GradSkills

Grad school can be tough. We’re here to help you get the skills you need to succeed in your program and get the job you want after graduation.

Here at My GradSkills we offer professional and academic development opportunities for all graduate students.

1. Free Resources: We have resources to help you get started in your graduate career and succeed through to the end. Find these tips and tricks for working with your supervisor, dealing with stress, getting teaching experience and more at ucalgary.ca/mygradskills/resources.

2. Workshops: We offer workshops and events to give you hands-on help with your academic program and research, and get the transferable skills you need to reach your career goals. All of our workshops have received academic oversight and are endorsed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. See the workshop calendar at ucalgary.ca/mygradskills/workshops. We’ll update the Fall Schedule in August so you can plan your term.

3. Career Guidance: If you’re not sure what you’re going to do with your graduate degree, we can help with that too. The Versatile PhD can help you identify, prepare for and succeed in non-academic careers. It’s free for you to use and will give you insights and real examples of PhDs working in the USA and Canada. Read more at ucalgary.ca/mygradskills/Versatile-PhD.

At My GradSkills, our goal is to give you tools to succeed during and after graduate school. Our focus is on building skills in eight key areas: communication, information technology, leadership, research, social awareness, teaching, wellness, and career-building. Go to our website to find resources and workshops to help you meet your goals.
Awards

When it comes to money, it’s never too early to start thinking about the years ahead. In fact, obtaining grants, awards and scholarships is an integral part of your job as a grad student.

International students have plenty of options available when it comes to awards. Our interactive graduate awards database is your best resource for finding awards. By selecting the options that match your program and status, you will find a list of awards that you may be eligible for. Make sure to print this out for planning your applications with your supervisor.

If you are a doctoral student, you may also be eligible to apply for the Vanier scholarship, the most prestigious funding for graduate students in Canada. To get the process started, review the terms for eligibility and if you qualify, fill out a Preliminary Assessment Form (PAF). Submit it to us by Thursday, September 3, 2015.

We recommend that you send us the PAF as early as possible to receive an invitation to our workshop.

Common Reading Program

Looking to practice your English? Pick up a great book and get to know your peers through the Common Reading Program, our community book club.

Every new student has the opportunity to share in this experience. We want you to talk to each other about the book, its ideas and themes. You can share its impact on you, how it connects to community, leadership, or even your role on a global stage.

This year’s Common Reading Program selection is Little Princes: One Man’s Promise to Bring Home the Lost Children of Nepal. Conor Grennan tells of his journey to Nepal, his dedication to reuniting trafficked children with their communities, and the founding of the nonprofit organization Next Generation Nepal.

Read a preview of the book: ucalgary.ca/orientation/common-reading/littleprinces_preview.

Want to be a part of the Common Reading Program? Sign up today at ucalgary.ca/orientation/common-reading.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **August 31** – International Student Orientation
- **September 1** – Fall Term begins
- **September 1-5** – Block Week
- **September 4** – Graduate Student Orientation
- **September 5** – Last day to withdraw from Fall Term Block Week courses
- **September 7** – Labour Day, no classes
- **September 8** – Fall Term classes begin