

Answers to FAQs and Tips

Produced by: NU Chemistry
Grad Students

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Random Terms That You Might Hear

FAQs: Chemistry-Specific Grad Life

- *How and when do I choose a research advisor and begin research?*
- *What are my TA responsibilities? What are the different TA options?*
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FAQs: Chemistry -Specific Grad Life

How long does it take to complete a chemistry degree and begin research?

each?

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FAQs:

FAQs: Chemistry -Specific Grad Life

Who should I talk to about finding a research group?

Graduate Students (As many as you can find. Remember, not everyone will get along with their

FAQs: Chemistry -Specific Grad Life

FAQs: General Grad Life

What is a U - Pass and how do I get one?

A U

FAQs: General Grad Life

When should I file, and

General Tips to Survive Your First Year

- Don't spend all your time on classes (if you're struggling with homework, go to office hours! a lot of times this is where you really figure out what's going on. Don't waste time being lost). This may be a difficult switch from undergrad but it is a good one.
- Make your search for a research group a priority
- This will be the time to make and solidify relationship within your class. Enjoy this time and get to know the people around you. They will be your support group for the next 5 years!
- Don't stress too much about research. If it works, wonderful! If it doesn't, learn from it and move forward. Remember, "Ever tried, ever failed. No matter. Try again, fail again, fail better!"
- Everyone, EVERYONE feels stupid a lot of the time in lab. Don't let it make you doubt yourself. At the same time, make sure what you're doing is reaching some sort of end goal. What kind of questions are you trying to answer?
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General Tips on Picking a Research Group and Advisor

- Talk to graduate students!!!!
- Remember, not only do you have to consider who you want to work for, but you have to be selected by that group/advisor; meet them, appeal to them, read their papers
- Be prepared with questions for both the prof and the grad students! Ask about average time to graduate, authorship requirements (how many papers to graduate?), conference policy, vacation policy, exposure to advisor (weekly meetings? monthly? hands on or off?), standardized or individualized expectations (is everyone held to the same standard? is it project based? what ARE the standards, anyway?), career assistance (does the advisor have industry connections? academic connections? Will they use them to help you find a job? push you into a certain area? write rec letters for mon

General Tips to Survive the Rest of Grad School

- Think about what you *might* want to do after graduating. If it's not academia, talk to other graduate students about what you want to get out of your career (the sooner the better.. once someone graduates, it's a source of information that leaves!).
- Look around for other opportunities for learning (seminars, classes in other departments, summer programs).
- Get a hobby. Have something you are passionate about outside of lab. This is really helpful when research is not going well and you need a way to de-stress.
- Remember that grad school is a marathon, not a sprint. Don't get burnt out the first year or two. It's okay to take days off once in a while and definitely take vacations! You will come back feeling refreshed.
- Apply for external funding! Your advisor will be happy for you if you obtain it!
- Get Verizon. AT&T has no service in tech.
- Learn how to write short emails – professors tend to only read the first line of the email you send them.
- REMEMBER, your goal is to graduate by producing a thesis. Don't get caught up in useless details and forget why you are here.
- Start networking as soon as possible, regardless of what you want to do. It will only help you!