

August 1, 2007

Dear New and Returning Graduate Students:

On behalf of the Graduate School, I would like to welcome those of you who are new to graduate study and to greet those of you who are continuing your pursuit of an advanced degree. As Penn State graduate students, you are members of a large and diverse graduate student body.

The Graduate School promotes excellence in all aspects of graduate education. Toward that end, the Graduate School is committed to ensuring that all Penn State graduate students, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or other personal characteristics, are afforded opportunities to achieve their full potential as scholars and professionals. To enrich your educational experience, we offer various events and numerous programs.

**On August 23, the Graduate School will sponsor an orientation for new graduate students.**

This orientation will be held in the Music Building I and the Arts Building from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. To learn more about the orientation, click on <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/pr/2007/0516-1.html>.

**Also on August 23, we will welcome all graduate students to the new academic year by hosting a social in the lobby of Kern Building beginning at 5:00 PM.** The Welcome Reception is an opportunity to meet colleagues and members of the Penn State community and to explore the various services offered by University organizations that will be represented at the event. Among these are the Center for Women Students, International Student Council, Graduate Student Association, Career Development and Placement and more. This event is for all graduate students, so mark your calendars, bring a friend and join us on the 23rd.

The Graduate School sponsors professional development workshops on a range of topics from **“Work/Life Balance”** to **“Getting the Right Start in Graduate School,”** plus a series of workshops titled **“Grant Writing 2008.”** The later workshops feature prominent PSU faculty who are successful principal investigators. The workshops are divided into basic research fields: Physical Sciences, Medical Life Sciences, Life Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Humanities, Qualitative Social Sciences and Quantitative Social Sciences. For more information about all of the workshops and registration forms, please visit the web site <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/current/>.

Once a month, I host a morning **Coffee with the Dean**. This is an opportunity to talk about your research with me and other students who are conducting scholarly work in diverse disciplines. If you would like to receive an invitation, please e-mail Rhonda Perryman at [rdp3@psu.edu](mailto:rdp3@psu.edu).

If you would like to participate in a program to improve your teaching skills, the Graduate School awards the **Graduate School Teaching Certificate** to any graduate student who completes the five requirements of this self-paced, non-credit program. The requirements for the certificate may be found at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/go/tacert>.

Every March, the Graduate School sponsors the **Graduate Exhibition**. The Exhibition provides a platform for graduate students to showcase their research or artistic accomplishments to the public. The students' works are juried by alumni as well as volunteers from the University and local communities and cash prizes are awarded. The Exhibition contains three options: performances, visuals, and research posters. Information about the 2008 Exhibition may be found at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/exhibition/> .

I would also like to call your attention to the **Graduate Student Association (GSA)**, the body representing all graduate students. The GSA has direct access to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Vice President for Student Affairs. The GSA addresses issues of concern to graduate students, and elects members to sit on various shared-governance bodies of the University, including the University Faculty Senate and the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council oversees graduate education at Penn State. It consists of graduate faculty from each college, as well as five student representatives from the GSA. Students interested in serving on Graduate Council should join the GSA and make their interests known. See the GSA web site at <http://www.clubs.psu.edu/up/gsa/> for additional information.

Again, welcome and welcome back. I look forward to meeting you at the Welcome Reception on August 23rd.

Best wishes for a great year,

Eva J. Pell