Get Involved with the Graduate Student Organization!

It is the belief of all graduate faculty and staff at Utica College that the education of people is not confined to the classroom. Utica College encourages graduate students from all backgrounds to meet, exchange ideas, experiences, concerns, and cultures in the collegiate environment. This includes social, professional, and studious activities. "Research has shown that student involvement fosters better grades, satisfaction with college experiences, success in academic programs, and marketability to employers." The Graduate Student Organization offers a terrific opportunity to get involved outside of the classroom, connect with other graduate students, and make a difference.

The Graduate Student Organization (GSO) was originally founded in 2010 under the name Graduate Student Association. While the name has changed the purpose remains the same. The GSO acts as a liaison between graduate students, UC administration, and faculty by advocating for the needs of graduate students. The GSO provides students with the opportunity to voice concerns, communicate, network, attend social events and workshops, publicize events that other graduate students may be interested in, and ensure that graduate student academic needs are met.
The **Graduate Student Organization** wants you to become a member! Every matriculated student in a graduate program at UC is eligible. Students can connect with the GSO on the [Facebook page](https://facebook.com). The first event of the year with be a meet and greet / social hour on Thursday, January 23, 2014 from 9-11pm in the pioneer pub. Sponsored by the [Office of Alumni and Parent Relations](https://mail.google.com), the event will include two free drinks, and entertainment. Entertainment for the night will feature **The Rick Short Band**, a local rock band, who has played at events such as the Boilermaker, and the New York State Fair. Attendance does not mean you are required to join so please stop by, check out the band, learn more about the GSO, and meet fellow Graduate Students!

Please send your RSVP to ogs@utica.edu so that we can have an idea of headcount and send reminders. RSVP's are welcome up until Wednesday, January 22, 2014 (the day before the event). We look forward to seeing you there!

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**The Write Idea:**

My Top 5 Tips for Writing as a Graduate Student

By Mary Hayes Gordon

Four years of hard work, late nights, early mornings, and unlimited coffee are finally ending December 26, 2013, so when I saw the call for writing tips in last month’s Grad Connect I started thinking about what I have learned throughout this process that I wish I'd known at the beginning. I write daily for my work, and receive few complaints from my boss, co-workers, or funders who read the grants I submit, but writing academically can be a humbling experience. In the spirit of collegiality, I share a few lessons that may prevent you from having to brew yet another pot of coffee in order to stay awake and fix your paper.

1. **Note the source of everything!** One of my most frustrating writing experiences was deleting information I wanted to use because I could not find the source again.

2. **Use the citation style you are most comfortable with, or have the most experience with.** If you have been using Chicago style, but are expected to write you thesis or capstone project in MLA style, the change will make everything more difficult. Many advisors will be flexible in this area, as long as you use one style consistently, and correctly.

3. **Contact the Office of Graduate Studies** early and often. This office literally exists just for us, and is staffed by some of the most helpful

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The **Graduate Catalog** for the 2013-2014 calendar year is now available. The graduate catalog outlines the guidelines and policies that all graduate students, distance and campus-based, must abide by. The catalog includes information regarding policies, program specifics, financial aid, academic requirements, and academic calendars for both distance and campus-based programs. Due to the information housed in the catalog, it is important for students to familiarize themself with the **Graduate Catalog**. The most current version can be found [here](https://mail.google.com).

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**Did You Know?**

The [Office of Student Financial Services](https://mail.google.com) (SFS) offers a Book Line of Credit (BLOC) which allows aid eligible students to use aid to help pay for their textbooks. The BLOC is available to online and graduate students who have financial aid, and completed all requirements. Campus based students can request a BLOC for Fall and Spring terms, online students can request a BLOC for all terms. To request a BLOC, students need to fill out the [Excess Funds Request Form](https://mail.google.com) for Books - BLOC for Online and Graduate Students. Campus based students should request a BLOC about two weeks before the start of term, online.
people I have ever worked with. Plus, Tracy Balduzzi is a whiz with formatting! (Speaking of formatting; if you plan to use APA style there is a template available on the Graduate Studies webpage.)

4. More eyes equal better vision. By this I mean let other people read your work with an editing eye. This is one of the humbling experiences of academic writing.

5. Use a service that checks for plagiarism, such as turnitin.com. Nothing is more frustrating than having your originality of thought, or your integrity, challenged. In the same vein, when in doubt, cite!

For many of us, graduate student is only one of the titles we hold; we are employees, parents, caregivers, spouses, soldiers ... with limited time to devote to the extensive writing demands of graduate school. These are my tips to make writing a little less stressful. I would love to hear yours.

students should request a BLOC about a month before the start of term. When ordering books from the bookstore’s website there will be an option upon checkout to use a BLOC. If purchasing books in person you can specify that you have BLOC and the funds should be accessed from your account. For more information about BLOC contact the Office of Student Financial Services.

If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to be on the regular mailing list, please click on the button below:

Office of Graduate Studies
Utica College
124 White Hall
1600 Burrstone Road
Utica, NY 13502-4892
Voice: (315) 792-3335
Fax: (315) 792-3170
ogs@utica.edu
utica.edu/ogs

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