

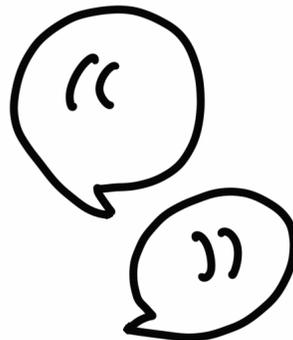


**Oregon State University**  
**Graduate School**

## **Grad Success News for Faculty and Staff**

**FALL 2020**

Welcome to the first issue of a new quarterly newsletter focused on graduate student success. This newsletter, geared toward graduate faculty, graduate program directors, their allied staff, and college administrators, is a place to share innovative ideas and best practices among the graduate advising community. We hope it keeps you informed about tools and resources to help support your graduate students' academic success and well-being.



### **Community Conversations**

**Weekly check-ins support students and build community in Public Policy**

*Brent Steel and Hilary Boudet from the Public Policy graduate program talk about their weekly group check-ins as a way to connect with each other and promote wellness among their students.*

**Q. How and when did you decide to implement weekly check-in meetings with Public Policy students?**

Our program had started periodic check-ins with students about two years ago as a way to try and create a cohort and personal experience for our on-campus and new Ecampus grad students. We wanted to try and introduce and integrate the Ecampus students with our Corvallis based students. As the pandemic hit Oregon last February, we decided to have the check-ins on a weekly basis. We conducted a poll of all our graduate students in the Ph.D., MPP, Ecampus MPP, and new Executive MPP programs to find the best day and time.

**Q. What is the format and structure of these weekly meetings?**

Both myself as director of the graduate program and my new associate graduate director Professor Hilary Boudet set up a weekly Zoom meeting early Wednesday evenings. The weekly check-ins usually last an hour or so and are completely informal. Sometimes we make announcements, sometimes answer questions about the programs. Most of the time, we talk about life and current events. Many of our international students participate in the check-ins and often inform the group of events in their countries, including politics, COVID, family updates, and the sort. Often other policy faculty log into the check-in and participate in whatever students want to talk about.

**Q. How many students usually show up?**

Depending on the week, it ranges from about five to forty students. When there are troubling events such as wildfires and smoke, participation runs higher. When the university announced that winter quarter would be mostly online, there was another high turnout.

**Q. How do you know that this practice is making an impact among your students?**

At the end of Winter Quarter 2020, we sent out a Doodle poll to see if students wanted to continue the weekly check-ins Spring Quarter, and the overwhelming response was yes. Same at the end of spring quarter when we asked the students if they wanted to continue over the summer quarter, and so on. When Hilary and I have one-on-one Zoom sessions with students for advising, they often comment that the check-ins contribute to a more positive mental health situation for themselves as they miss the social interaction. Similarly, our Ecampus graduate students feel a stronger attachment to the program and to our Corvallis-based students.

**Q. Do you have any tips for other faculty or graduate program directors who want to start doing weekly check-ins?**

I know that other graduate programs are also having weekly check-ins, such as Environmental Sciences, so these interactions are having a positive impact. There are also more exclusively student-organized meetings motivated by COVID, the current political environment, and climate events like wildfires, hurricanes, etc. We have also had some student drop-ins from other OSU programs and have had increasing numbers of potential applicants also attending a check-in to get a feel for program culture.



Brent Steel, Professor and Director of the Public Policy Graduate Program



Hilary Boudet, Professor and Associate Director of the Public Policy Graduate Program

Do you have an innovative practice you would like to share? Please get in touch with us!

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## What's new

**New graduate recruitment resources** - We've recently published a [Graduate Recruitment Toolkit](#) on our website. In the toolkit, you'll find a materials request, a recruitment representative training video, best practices, and more. Contact [Lindsay Loebig](#) with questions or comments.

**Professional Development Award increase** - The award amount has increased from \$250 to \$500. Students engaged in activities to support their learning are encouraged to [apply](#). Recent recipients have paid for webinars, training, and professional memberships.

**Scholarly Presentation Award** - Designed to provide domestic or international graduate students with financial support to cover part of the costs associated with registering, attending and presenting their scholarly work at prestigious virtual conferences. [Learn more.](#)

**New degree level webpages for current students** - Our website has been completely revamped for [current students](#). Degree completion information

is now organized by degree type with the most relevant content on a single page.

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## Student Support Resources

*Each issue, we feature student professional and personal development resources and how to incorporate them into your support activities.*

### Workshops

Graduate advisors are not only content experts, but you also help students navigate the university and the overall graduate experience. Let us help you by [inviting us](#) to facilitate a workshop with your students. Our workshops cover a variety of topics on writing and academics. With sessions geared toward both students and faculty, most workshops are 30-50 minutes in length and can be customized to meet your group's needs.

**How to incorporate a Graduate School workshop in your program:** Visit our [workshops page](#) to find a session relevant for your students. Or, contact us with an idea! Then, invite us to speak at your winter term seminar course or group meeting. Timely topics for winter term include:

Writing Dissertations or Theses - Dissertations and theses take specific forms and accomplish similar purposes. However, these forms and purposes can vary by program, committee, and even the nature of the research or project itself. Hosted by the Graduate Writing Center, this workshop covers common strategies and considerations for planning the dissertation or thesis writing process.

Finishing Your Degree - In this workshop, students nearing degree completion will learn everything they need to know about academic milestones, requirements, resources, and strategies to complete their degree.

### Video

If you are looking for a faster way to share the essential steps to degree completion with your students, please share our [Completing your Degree](#) video with your advisee group and follow up with a discussion about your own program's degree requirements. [See all of our videos.](#)

### **Nominate a student speaker for Grad Inspire 2021**

Co-hosted by the Graduate School and KBVR's Inspiration Dissemination radio show, Grad Inspire is an annual event providing a unique opportunity for graduate students to combine scholarship communication with their personal narrative. Offered virtually this year, we will see a glimpse of not only how graduate students do their work but also the motivations and commitment that drive their effort. Grad Inspire introduces the phenomenal breadth of research, teaching, and discovery undertaken by graduate students at Oregon State. Nominate your student to be a speaker at Grad Inspire 2021 by emailing [Karen Hanson](#) or [Inspiration Dissemination](#).

### **Career development online**

Did you know that [Aurora](#) by Beyond the Professoriate is available through an institutional membership for all graduate students? This video-based online learning platform prepares graduate students for their professional job search for careers in either faculty or professional tracks.

**How to incorporate Aurora by Beyond the Professoriate in your program:** Fall is an ideal time to develop resumes, CVs and other application materials. Ask your seminar students to visit the Preparing Application Documents videos within Aurora. Then, have them prepare their application documents and submit them for peer review in your class.

Visit our website to find more resources and information:

- [Current students](#)
- [Funding](#)
- [Recruitment](#)
- [Student success](#)
- [Faculty resources](#)

Karen Hanson  
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