

*The University of Washington Survival Tips for Minority Graduate Students
Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Programs*

Welcome to the UW!!!!

The University of Washington (UW) is a world leader in graduate education. Congratulations on your enrollment to the UW! Seattle enjoys some of the nation's best health care, has one of the strongest entrepreneurial communities in the US, and convenient airline service to all parts of the country. This one-page survival guide will provide you with some tools and tips to help you make a successful transition to the UW and the surrounding Seattle community.

Is there a minority population in Seattle? Are there cultural activities in the surrounding community for me? Yes, there is a minority population in Seattle! And, there are tons of things to do! Some activities include SoulFest, UW Spring Pow Wow and the SeaFair Indian Days Pow Wow. Moreover, you can find soul food restaurants, African American churches, barber shops, and beauty salons.

How can I find a research advisor?

First, visit the faculty web pages for your department to find out about ongoing research projects. Next, send a brief email to the faculty member and try to schedule a brief meeting. This is a good starting point to help you narrow down your research focus. Meeting with faculty will also give you a chance to visit labs and meet fellow graduate students.

I am the only minority in my classes and/or research group. How can I adjust? Is there a support system for me on campus? Step outside of your comfort zone! It is EXTREMELY important that you socialize with your fellow graduate students. They are great resources for you. And, you may actually make a new friend!

In addition, there are minority-serving organizations (MSOs) at the UW. Examples of these organizations include the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), National Society of Black

Engineers (NSBE), and the Society of Hispanic and Professional Engineers (SHPE).

Graduate Opportunities & Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP)

An important support system for you on the UW campus is GO-MAP, a division of the UW Graduate School. GO-MAP is committed to serving the needs of students of color and those from other underrepresented groups, while simultaneously providing opportunities for all students to learn and develop through experiences rich in cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity. Want to find out more? Visit GO-MAP online.

<http://www.grad.washington.edu/gomap/>

Will I need to find additional funding?

NO! Graduate school is not like medical school. You do not have to pay to go! Most UW STEM graduate programs offer support to their students through TA (Teaching Associate) and RA (Research Associate) positions. Additional funding is not necessary. However, prestigious outside fellowships are offered through NIH (National Institutes of Health), NSF (National Science Foundation) and the GEM Consortium. GEM offers support to both M.S. and Ph.D. science and engineering students. Moreover, there are diversity fellowships offered through GO-MAP.

I would like to obtain some additional mentoring. Where can I find help?

The University of Washington Graduate School has published a mentoring guide, which provides some key tools and tips for you.¹ Another useful outside resource for your use is MentorNet (www.mentornet.net) which is an E-mentoring network.

¹Mentoring: How to Obtain the Mentoring You Need.(www.grad.washington.edu/mentoring/GradStudentMentor.pdf; accessed 8/07/06).