



MANAGING YOUR GRADUATE DEGREE WITH CAREER PLANNING FROM THE START

Jacqui Brinkman, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
acqui.brinkman@ubc.ca | @jaqbrink
 Danielle Barkley, Centre for Student Involvement & Careers
danielle.barkley@ubc.ca | @DanielleBarkle4

January 4, 2023

Common Life Issues for Graduate Students



- Managing relocation and transition to graduate program
- Doubts about ability to succeed – am I smart enough?
- Effectively managing multiple demands
- Staying connected to family and community
- Building social support and healthy relationships
- Addressing personal + professional identity issues
- Managing mental and physical health issues

Be Proactive – take responsibility for your grad school experience

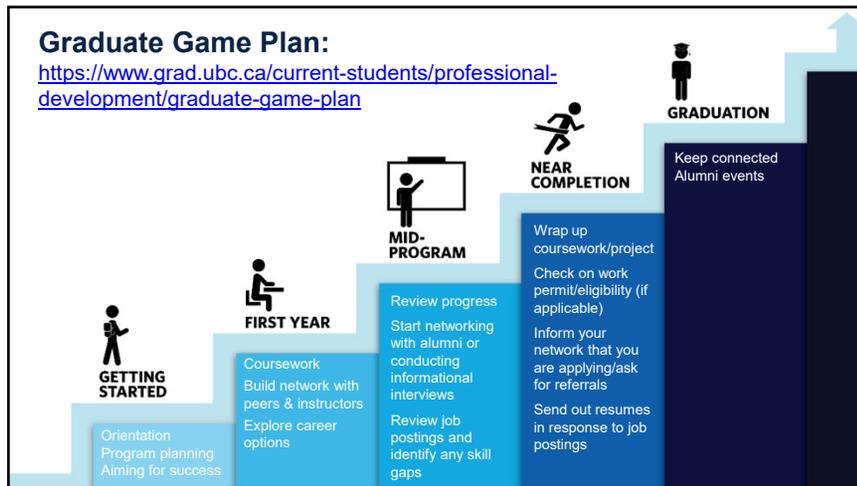
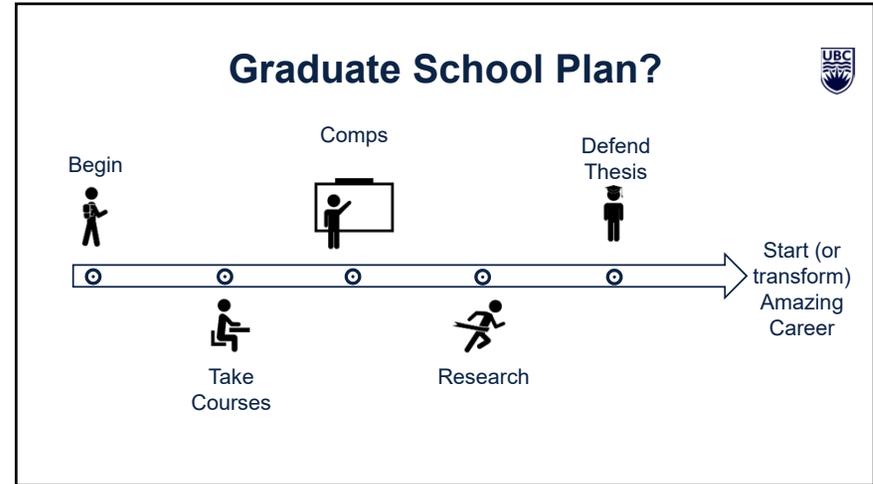
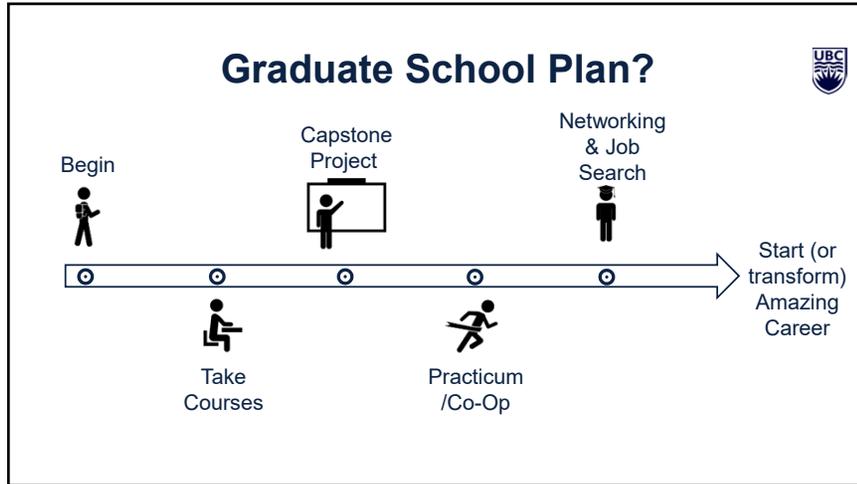


- Take **initiative**
- Look for (or create) **opportunities**
- **Where/how** can I contribute?
- Continue the mental **transition** from waiting for direction to charting your own course

Develop Project Management Strategies



- Know your program requirements
- Set a “Master Plan” with **deadlines**
- Develop a **regular work (and life) schedule** that works for you
- Stay focused on your **goals**, revisit periodically as goals **shift**



Breaking down a goal

Writing a literature review

- Define Topic and Audience
 - Develop research question
 - Discuss with advisor
- Search and Re-search the Literature
 - Tracking reading
 - Identifying relevant sources
 - Taking notes
- Writing the Review
 - Creating a logical structure
 - Create sections, slot sources into sections
 - Writing section 1
- Revising and editing
 - Send to a peer/supervisor for critique
 - Assess and Incorporate feedback

Calarco, J. A field guide to grad school p 352 + Presentation with EArnaud, University of Guelph.
<https://guides.library.ubc.ca/litreviews> ; <https://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1003149#s2>

Create a timeline



Goal	Task	Jan 3-6	Jan 9-13	Jan 16-20	Jan 23-27	Jan 30 - Feb 3	Feb 6-10	Feb 13-17	Feb 20-24
Define Topic and Audience	Develop research question								
	Discuss with advisor								
Search and Re-search the Literature	Tracking reading								
	Identifying relevant sources								
	Taking notes								
Writing the Review	Creating a logical structure								
	Create sections								
	Writing section 1								
Revising and editing	Send for critique								
	Assess, Incorporate feedback								

Prepare a weekly schedule



	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
	17	18	19	20	21
6 ^{AM}					
7					
8	Walking the dog	Walking the dog	Walking the dog	Walking the dog	Walking the dog
9					
10	Class 1	Work on Presentation	Class 1		Class 1
11					
12 ^{PM}					
1	Shift at work	Group Study			Distinguished Lecture Series
2					
3		Class 2		Class 2	
4					
5			Yoga		

Establish Positive Relationships within Your Program Faculty and/or with your Supervisor



- Seek **regular contact** with your program advisor/supervisor, faculty members, or your committee. Act as a “**junior colleague**”
- Get to know faculty/instructors in your program: do they have connections/can they refer you to employers where you might want to work in the future?
- **Follow up** on items discussed in meetings – keep others informed of your progress and challenges, ensure mutual understanding of advice/requests
- **Deal with problems** sooner rather than later.

Establish Positive Relationships with Peers



- Get to know the students in your program:
 - Seek senior student and/or postdoc mentorship
 - What did they study, where have they worked in the past? Your peers will become the core of your professional network
- Look for alumni of your program; consider adding them on LinkedIn or conducting informational interviews

Embrace the wider community



- Don't isolate – **reach out** to find collaborators and community.
- **Get out there!** Consider meet-ups and networking events (Graduate Student Travel Fund: <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/awards/graduate-student-travel-research-dissemination-fund>)
- Get involved with activities **beyond** your own work (and beyond the university?)

Plan for Various Career Paths



- Explore your **many options**
- Consider your **interests, values, and strengths**
- Develop both specific and diverse **competencies**
- Seek **Professional Development** opportunities
- Develop a **network** of contacts; build **your** community
- **Engage** with the wider UBC + Vancouver communities

Career Building Options



- **Informational Interviews (network building)**
 - ✓ People with jobs you want (including junior faculty members), program alumni
- **Review job postings and notice trends**
 - ✓ Potential skill development based on these trends (courses, certificates, Pathways to Success, etc.)
 - ✓ Academic jobs: participate in hiring committees and review the CVs of individuals getting hired in your discipline
- **Start a list of prospective employers**
- **(Possibly) test and try out (collaborations, consulting, internships, post-docs, etc.)**

Gaining Experience



- You may or may not be able to gain formal related work experience while enrolled in a full-time research program
- Look for opportunities to gain related experiences and skills *within* your degree
- Skills + network are a form of “experience”
- **Possibilities to consider**
 - ✓ Mitacs
 - ✓ Sustainability Scholars
 - ✓ Work Learn roles
 - ✓ Public Scholars Initiative (PhD)
 - ✓ PhD Co-op (some programs in the Faculty of Arts)
 - ✓ GSS committees, student government
 - ✓ Joining the board of relevant not-for-profits/organizations
 - ✓ Personal projects/portfolio development

LinkedIn Learning

<https://students.ubc.ca/career/career-resources/make-most-linkedin/linkedin-learning>



“Start where you are” – Burnett,
Evans, Designing Your Life

“Given both my future goals and the
information currently available to me,
what is my best decision right now?” –
Berdahl, Malloy in Work Your Career

Career Navigation at UBC

Home	>
Career Development Plan	^
How Does It Work?	>
Step 1: Where Am I Now?	>
Step 2: Where Do I Want to Go?	>
Step 3: How Will I Get There?	>
Step 4: Who Can Help?	>
Celebrate Your Success - Next Steps	>
Success Stories	>
Resources	>

Career Development Plan

UBC is a large diverse organization; it can be difficult to navigate your way across campus let alone the vast number of careers to choose from.

The creation of a [Career Development Plan](#) (DOCX) is considered a fundamental step before deciding on how to move forward in navigating your career at UBC.

The creation of a career development plan is seen as a **4-step process** – The steps are outlined on this website and you may wish to follow these by clicking on each step sequentially and following the process outlined in each step. If you do not wish to follow the individual steps you may wish to print the [Career Development Plan](#) (DOCX) template and complete it answering the questions below.

The career development plan template provided on this site addresses the following steps:

- **Step 1 – Where Am I Now?** (what skills do you already possess?)
- **Step 2 – Where Do I Want to Go?** (what do you want for your career?)
- **Step 3 – How Will I Get There?** (what steps do you need to take to get there?)
- **Step 4 – Who Can Help?** (what resources might you use?)

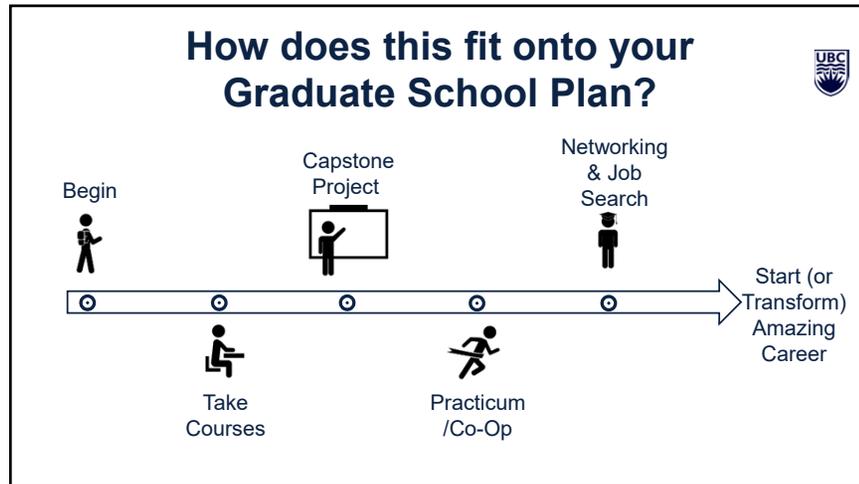
A [Career Development Plan](#) (DOCX) template is available – this template will assist you to set some goals in regards to your career planning. These goals should be the next steps you need to take to move forward.

From <https://hr.ubc.ca/>

At UBC, professional development for graduate students is a key priority to ensure the success of our graduates. It is a shared responsibility of a number of offices and academic units and includes a variety of workshops, services and resources.

SUBSCRIBE
GradUpdate Newsletter

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/current-students/professional-development>



Seek Balance and Support in Your Life

- Maintain a nutritious, balanced diet
- Exercise daily
- Get enough sleep
- Minimize and manage stress
- Stay connected with family and friends, and build new friendships
- Seek support! – staff, faculty, peers
- Set boundaries
- Keep grad school in perspective – **be a finisher!**

Prevent + Deal with Problems

Problem	Prevent	Resolve
Academic progress	Clarify expectations early; set and stick to plan	Reflect on goals, seek help early from your Graduate Advisor, faculty members, or senior peers
Financial	Plan ahead; make a budget	Seek help from program or an Enrolment Services Advisor
Personal	Good self-care; connect with others; watch for early trouble signs	Reach out to those who care; Counselling Services
Academic misconduct	Learn about plagiarism & research integrity, get support when feeling pressured https://academicintegrity.ubc.ca https://responsible.research.ubc.ca/	???

- ### Summary
1. Be proactive – take responsibility for your grad school experience
 2. Develop project management strategies
 3. Establish positive relationships
 4. Embrace the wider academic (or broader) community
 5. Plan for various career paths from the start
 6. Seek balance and support in your life
 7. Prevent and deal with problems