These “Frequently Asked Questions” (FAQs) and the resources referenced in their responses are intended to connect Faculty Directors of Graduate Studies to Stanford’s resources to support graduate students and to help you as DGS. Your department or program and School Deans Office staff are also excellent sources for information and guidance:


Wellness & Health

Q: What do I do if I am worried about the mental health or some other behavioral problem of a grad student?
A: Trust your instincts that something might be wrong and call the Graduate Life Office (GLO) for assistance: glo.stanford.edu. For non-emergency advice, call: 650-736-7078. For 24/7 emergency assistance call or text: 650-723-7288 and enter ID #25085. You can also call Vaden’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) 24/7 on-call clinician for more urgent situations at 650-723-3785.

Q: What can I do to help a grad student in an untenable living situation or facing some other nonacademic problem, such as personal, family, or financial challenges?
A: GLO can help here, too, including information on emergency assistance funds. GLO staff are excellent problem-solvers and will connect you and your students to other resources on campus.

Q. How do I advise a student who reports a situation that may be sexual harassment or misconduct?
A. You are required by law to report all alleged incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct to the Title IX Office: titleix@stanford.edu. You should immediately inform the student of your responsibility to report such incidents, and also refer the student to the Title IX Office’s support resources: sexualviolencesupport.stanford.edu.

Academic Issues

Q: Where can I find University policies related to graduate students’ enrollment and degree progress?
A: Your student services staff have valuable experience with grad policies and milestones. The Graduate Academic Policy and Procedures handbook, a compilation of University policies, can answer many questions: gap.stanford.edu. The Graduate Degrees section of the Stanford Bulletin also states specific degree requirements: exploredegrees.stanford.edu/graduatedegrees/.

Q: What University resources are there for helping a grad student who is having academic problems?
A: Your first step may be to meet with the student to find out what’s happening. If a student’s academic problems are caused by a personal issue, GLO might help. The Center for Teaching and Learning’s Academic Skills Coaches can help with study skills, overcoming procrastination, time management, and the like: learningconnection.stanford.edu/academic-skills-coaching.

Q: How should I handle a situation where I suspect a student has engaged in some sort of academic or research misconduct or honor code violation or if a student or faculty member alerts me to such a situation?
Financial Issues
Q. What resources exist to help students with unexpected expenses such as medical fees or travel for a family emergency?
A. The Financial Aid Office oversees several grant and loan programs for graduate students facing unexpected financial issues, such as the Family Grant and Grant-In-Aid programs: financialaid.stanford.edu/grad/funding/index. Your school Dean’s office may also be able to help with emergency funds.

Immigration Issues
Q: Where should I refer a student with issues related to their visa or immigration status?
A: The Bechtel International Center is our primary campus resource for all immigration issues, including questions related to DACA or other federal policies: bechtel.stanford.edu. The University also maintains a website with resources and responses to immigration policies: immigration.stanford.edu.

Professional & Career Development
Q: What University assistance is there to help grad students, including native English-speakers, improve their professional writing and speaking skills?
A: The Hume Center for Writing and Speaking, the Oral Communication Program and the School of Engineering’s Technical Communication Program offer individual consultations, workshops, including video-recording and critiquing of practice talks. The Hume Center’s Dissertation Bootcamp provides a structured, supportive environment for major writing projects: undergrad.stanford.edu/tutoring-support/hume-center.

Q. Where can I direct students who want advice about different career paths?
A. You can refer your students to one of Stanford’s five career centers for coaching, workshops, and many other services. BEAM, Stanford Career Education serves students in Earth, Engineering and H&S; BioSciCareers serves students in medicine and the biosciences, including Bioengineering and Biology; and Business, Education, and Law each have a career center: vpge.stanford.edu/partners/career-centers.

Q: What University resources exist for helping a grad student develop the professional skills necessary for success in any career they might pursue?
A: Tell students to “Take the Wheel” which will guide them to the extensive University resources available for graduate professional development, including courses, workshops, and other resources related to six areas: Specific Content Knowledge & Skills, Teaching, Leadership & Management, Career Development, Personal Development and Communication: vpge.stanford.edu/professional-development/framework.

Teaching & Teaching Assistants
Q: Where can I send graduate students to improve their skills as TAs and as future teachers?
A: The Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) offer workshops, consultations, and a variety of teaching resources and policies: ctl.stanford.edu/ta-training-support.

Q: Can graduate students teach their own courses?
A: In many cases, yes, if the department approves and there is a faculty member who takes responsibility for the course and serves as faculty on record, ensuring it is of the appropriate quality academically and pedagogically. There are also many informal teaching opportunities on campus and in the community – a list is maintained by CTL: ctl.stanford.edu/graduate-teaching-opportunities.