****

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

**Graduate Student Handbook**

**September 2019**



“Believe you can and you're halfway there.” - T*heodore Roosevelt*

"All great achievements require time." - *Maya Angelou*

***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

[INTRODUCTION & EXPECTATIONS 3](#_30j0zll)

[YOUR ADVISOR & GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE 4](#_3znysh7)

[PROGRAM OF STUDY & ORAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS](#_tyjcwt) 5

[THESIS/DISSERTATION PREPARATION 6](#_1t3h5sf)

[PUBLICATION & PRESENTATION EXPECTATIONS](#_2s8eyo1) 7

[GRADUATION](#_17dp8vu) 8

[GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS](#_3rdcrjn) 9

PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE 11

[ETHICS GUIDELINES 1](#_lnxbz9)5

[ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR SOE STUDENTS 1](#_35nkun2)7

[UNIVERSITY OF MAINE NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE 1](#_1ksv4uv)7

LOGISTICS 18

***INTRODUCTION & EXPECTATIONS***

Introduction. We designed this handbook to acquaint you with the specific procedures, timelines, expectations, and requirements to be followed while you are a graduate student in the School of Economics (SOE). SOE also abides by UMaine [Graduate School policies](https://umaine.edu/graduate/about/guidelines-and-regulations/), procedures, and guidelines, which we expect you to read thoroughly and follow.. Although we make every attempt to ensure the SOE handbook’s information is consistent with the Graduate School, in the case of any inconsistency, Graduate School materials take precedence over this SOE handbook. It is your responsibility to make sure your progress is consistent with both SOE and Graduate School policies and procedures. Ecology & Environmental Science (EES) students also need to know and comply with EES program [requirements](https://umaine.edu/ecologyandenvironmentalsciences/graduate-programs/). We also encourage you to explore all of the resources available on the SOE website (https://umaine.edu/soe/), which is updated more frequently than this Handbook. If you have a question or comment on anything in this handbook or about any aspect of your academic pursuits, please do not hesitate to ask your advisor, the school's Graduate Coordinator, or other members of the SOE graduate faculty for guidance. We wish you well in your graduate studies and want you to be successful.

Graduate Student Expectations. You, as a graduate student, are an integral part of UMaine and SOE. While in graduate school, not only can you experience intensive personal and intellectual growth, you can also make a significant contribution to the scholarly development of other students and faculty. The inquiring minds of graduate students have produced numerous scientific advances in multiple fields of scholarship. In order to make the most of your graduate experience, we expect the following from you:

* **Hard work** – be willing to invest time and energy to advance your skills and knowledge and improve collective research output
* **Intellectual curiosity** – show enthusiasm for learning; be willing to ask questions, explore and develop new ideas; respectfully and constructively question others’ (students and faculty) methods, approaches, etc, to help all involved improve their own research
* **Independence** – think through and find solutions to problems efficiently and effectively on your own; identify areas where you need help and who to ask/where to find it
* **Collaboration** – work well with others: listen, have patience, be honest, flexible, and open-minded to new ideas, use constructive criticism from others to improve your work, provide constructive criticism (critiques that help find solutions) to others, make compromises to improve/advance your/others’ work
* **Professionalism** – be familiar with your degree program requirements (know what you need to do and when; do it well and on time), participate actively in all aspects of your program, meet deadlines, think before you act/speak, have patience and take time to do things right, be respectful (see more specific expectations in [Professional Etiquette](#rehuobfr05td))
* **Accuracy & rigor** – properly apply analytical skills and knowledge learned in courses and through research to answer research-related questions
* **Effective communication** – verbally, through email and through formal writing – think through what you want to say and communicate it clearly, concisely, and respectfully (see more specific expectations in [Professional Etiquette](#rehuobfr05td))
* **Attendance at all SOE-wide events** (e.g., Graduate Student Orientation each year on the Friday before classes start, **SOE seminar**, etc)
* Adherence to SOE [Ethics Guidelines](#xb6pjz5g84t9) (see p.) and all University and Graduate School policies, including but not limited to UMaines Policies on Academic Honesty and [Dishonesty](https://umaine.edu/studentlife/jad/academic-honesty-and-dishonesty/) and Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harrassment, Sexual Assault, Relationship Violence, Stalking and [Retaliation](https://umaine.edu/eo/policies-procedures/sex-discrimination-sexual-harassment-sexual-assault-relationship-violence-stalking-and-retaliation/).

Faculty Expectations. We, the faculty, hold ourselves to these same expectations, and you can also expect us to: show sincere and professional interest and provide meaningful and helpful guidance in your scholarly growth and development and pursuit of future career goals; communicate specific expectations about our own classes and research programs clearly and upfront; be fair and consistent in our expectations with all students; help create a friendly and supportive work environment; challenge you in class and through research to help you reach your goals.

Professional Opportunities. To ensure each graduate student has the opportunity to reach his or her full potential and to provide graduate programs that offer solid preparation for your future pursuits, we maintain a professional and open-minded environment conducive for idea development and sharing, and provide many forums for collaboration and interaction: classroom discussion, regular seminars in which each student can (and should) participate as a discussant and a presenter, meaningful participation in ongoing research projects, and a flexible “open-door” approach to faculty-student interaction. **All students are expected to attend SOE seminars** even if the topic seems outside your main interest. If you cannot attend. make sure to alert the seminar coordinator prior to the seminar date. Many aspects of applied economic thinking and methods cut across topic areas – so you may learn something useful even though the topic is outside your area. Many of our seminar speakers send the article upon which they will speak prior to the seminar; professional courtesy indicates you should have completed this reading in advance of the seminar. Aside from the intellectual benefit to you, your seminar attendance signals to your colleagues that you are interested in developing your skills and are an active member of the school's research community. We will take attendance at SOE seminars to track participation. All students (thesis and non-thesis) are also expected to present their research at least once in the school's seminar series to get feedback from SOE faculty and graduate students.

***YOUR ADVISOR & GRADUATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE***

Advisor. Upon enrollment, all graduate students, regardless of degree program, are assigned an academic advisor who will chair their graduate advisory committee and assume primary responsibility for guiding thesis research (thesis students only) and guiding a program of study consistent with the student’s scholarly and professional career goals. Students should thoroughly discuss their intended program of study with their advisors as early as possible in their graduate studies and meet regularly with their advisors throughout their degree program. Your advisor should always be your first point of contact for program and research questions. If students wish to change their assigned advisors, the school attempts to accommodate these requests. Reassignment of students’ major advisors is done with the consent of the school's Graduate Coordinator.

Graduate Advisory Committee. In the second semester of enrollment, all graduate students (including non-thesis students), regardless of degree program, must select a Graduate Advisory Committee, comprised of the academic advisor and at least two other members of UMaine’s graduate faculty. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to ask faculty members to join your committee. However, discuss your ideas with your academic advisor beforehand and then select a committee who has complimentary research skills and interdisciplinary expertise, knowledge of and interest in your research area, and the time to work with you throughout your program. Once your advisor and you have agreed on your committee selection and your invited committee members have accepted, you will submit a Program of Study form (see below) with your committee’s signatures to the Dean of the Graduate School (upon the advice of the Graduate Coordinator of your degree program) who will formally appoint your advisory committee. Consult with your advisor to develop strategies for keeping your full committee informed of your goals and progress and setting meetings with them to seek their advice and skills. Staying in regular contact with committee members (often through e-mail updates) will help you develop a strong, well-rounded research project, and will help the committee stay abreast of your research agenda and progress.

*M.S. and M.A. Advisory Committees –* includes at least three members, of which two (including the committee chair/academic advisor) must be from SOE. The third and any additional members may be from graduate faculty from other units within UMaine. Individuals from outside UMaine can serve on thesis committees in an adjunct status, after approval by the SOE graduate faculty. See EES [website](https://umaine.edu/ecologyandenvironmentalsciences/graduate-programs/m-s-degree-in-ecology-and-environmental-science-requirements/) for additional guidelines for EES M.S. Advisory Committee.

*Ph.D. Student Advisory Committees -* Students enrolled in a UMaine Ph.D. program (e.g., EES, I-Ph.D.) and advised by a SOE faculty member must assemble their committee following the specific guidance of their Ph.D. program and the Graduate School.

***PROGRAM OF STUDY & ORAL EXAM REQUIREMENTS***

Program of Study (POS). In the second semester of enrollment (prior to registering for third semester courses), you will work with your advisory committee to prepare a Program of Study (https://umaine.edu/graduate/students/program-info/), a form listing all of the courses you have taken to date and the courses you plan to take for the remainder of your degree program. The POS is a signed document that is filed with the Graduate School and serves as an official agreement between you, your advisory committee, the Graduate Coordinator for your degree program, and the Graduate School, of the courses to count toward your degree requirements. Once filed with the Graduate School and SOE, the POS becomes your required curriculum. Minor changes to an approved POS require only the approval of your advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Major changes to an approved program and exceptions to policy, require the additional approval of the SOE Graduate Faculty. Failure to file your POS (and any subsequent changes) with the Graduate School and SOE may result in a delay in graduating from the University, and in some cases, lead to additional fees.

**Although the Graduate School may allow a minimum grade of C in all courses listed on the POS, SOE requires a B or better in all core courses of the school's master's degree programs (and any substitutes for these courses) and B- or better in all other courses.** All students are expected to plan their coursework with input from their academic advisor. Course selection and minimum/ maximum course loads must be consistent with the guidelines of the Graduate School and your official degree program. Specific credit hour requirements for all degree programs are listed on the degree program website and Graduate [Catalog](http://gradcatalog.umaine.edu/); make sure to select your specific matriculation year). Please note, graduate assistantships only pay for 9 credit hours per semester, which is the normal graduate student course load. If you are a graduate assistant, you may not register for more than twelve credit hours per semester.

Oral Examination: SOE requires all students (thesis and non-thesis) to pass an oral exam. Refer to the Graduate School website for specific requirements, timeline and forms. The exam will be comprehensive in nature and will include knowledge in your major area of concentration and your thesis (in the case of thesis degree candidates). You will schedule the oral examination in consultation with your advisory committee. SOE requires that at least one month (30 days) elapse before a student who fails an oral examination for a graduate degree be permitted to retake the examination.

***THESIS/DISSERTATION PREPARATION***

Graduate students pursuing a thesis degree will work closely with their academic advisors to prepare their thesis/dissertation. A thesis/dissertation typically begins in outline form, with initial guidance from your advisor and committee. As soon as the research idea has been sufficiently formulated, you will circulate a proposal (a brief written draft of your project idea) to your committee, covering the following points: (a) definition of the problem, (b) brief review of literature, (c) hypotheses to be tested, (d) objectives of the study, (e) methods of data collection, and (f) procedures for analysis of data. You will then set a meeting with your committee to get feedback on this proposal and ensure all committee members have the same expectations for your thesis research. Detailed information on thesis/dissertation preparation, timeline, and requirements for completion can be found on the Graduate School’s website. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these requirements. You advisor will expect a full draft of your thesis/dissertation about one month prior to the oral examination, and your committee will expect a draft at least 2 weeks prior to the oral examination.

Writing should be a primary focus for thesis students. It is easy to let immediate pressures (papers, tests, work, etc.) take up large chunks of your time, ultimately letting weeks and months go by without writing your thesis or dissertation. This is a mistake. You cannot do this overnight, so you need to schedule time each week to plan, organize, share ideas, write, and do research. A good rule of thumb is to dedicate at least 1-2 days a week your first year and multiple days a week your second year to writing (in addition to data collection/analysis). Set goals and make timelines to help you stay on task - writing and analysis are best done in an iterative fashion. And, remember, your advisor is engaged in multiple scholarly activities, so it will take time for him/her to review your writing. To make the most out of your advisor’s review, always submit your best work (thoroughly pre-edited by yourself and others) and allow at least 2-3 weeks for your advisor to review each iteration of thesis/dissertation chapters/sections.

Writing well is an essential skill in your graduate program and to your career success. To help you develop your writing skills, your advisor, advisory committee members, and course professors will edit your writing – sometimes heavily. Do not take the editing personally, but see it as part of your professional development and an important aspect of collaborative work. Make sure to thoroughly review all edits and learn from each correction to improve future writing. Repeating writing mistakes in future drafts will distract your professors from being able to fully attend to your research ideas and methods. Please do not use your advisor or other faculty for basic grammar, sentence structure and typo editing. Proofread your documents, and use fellow grad students to review first drafts. Typos signal a lack of attention to detail and can distract readers from taking your ideas seriously. Never discount the support and assistance of your fellow graduate students and friends. Your peers are excellent resources, and important members of your support network. We encourage you to meet regularly with other graduate students to increase both individual knowledge and overall team camaraderie, and strengthen peer relationships.

At this point in your academic career, you are writing for your classes and for scientific journals – two different types of writing that faculty will help you understand. There are many resources available to help you with your writing skills. Some classic texts offer useful guidance on general (e.g., Strunk and White's *The Element of Style*), economics (McCloskey's *Economical Writing*; Thomson's *A Guide for the Young Economist*; Greenlaw's *Doing Economics*), scientific (Day and Gastel's *How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper*), and research-oriented (Ethridge's *Research Methods in Applied Economics*; Booth et al. *The Craft of Research* Writing) writing. Find additional resources that work for you at Fogler Library or on-line (e.g., Purdue University has an excellent writing center). Consider visiting the UMaine Writing Center (http://umaine.edu/wcenter/) or joining an official thesis or dissertation writing workshop. You can even start a writing club among your peers to share ideas, best practices, writing samples, faculty edits, and edit each others’ work.

***PUBLICATION & PRESENTATION EXPECTATIONS***

Publications and presentations allow research ideas to be communicated broadly. You are expected to present and publish work that stems from your research. Although your thesis or dissertation may only have your name on it, the journal articles you publish should in most cases have your advisor (and possibly other committee members) listed as co-authors, depending on their level of contribution to the submitted manuscript. Your advisor is the person with whom you are working most closely, who likely brought in funding to support your research, and who is guiding your research throughout your program. Therefore, you should initiate an authorship discussion with your advisor (and possibly other committee members) early in your degree program. The more transparency there is to this process, the fewer problems will arise. It is in your interest to publish your research - you want your ideas to reach a wide audience.

It is also in your interest to share your research with others by making presentations. Work with your advisor to submit abstracts and papers to appropriate conferences and workshops. Try to present your research at least once in your first year and once a semester in future years. Conference presentations allow students to get constructive comments on their work, while also getting access to professional networks. Your advisor and committee can give you guidance about specific conferences. Because travel is often costly, you want to select events carefully and make the most of presentation opportunities. Watch for opportunities to present on campus or in Maine, including the UMaine Student [Symposium](https://umaine.edu/umss/): Research & Creative Activity, which happens every April; SOE, EES, and Mitchell Center [seminar](https://umaine.edu/mitchellcenter/) series; Maine Sustainability & Water [Conference](https://umaine.edu/mitchellcenter/news/maine-water-conference/); Maine Economics Conference, and others.

Keep in mind your advisor’s career and research are tied, in part, to your work as a graduate student and researcher. Publishing is critical to a professor’s career and the school's productivity. Respect these relationships by producing quality research, writing, and presentations, and bolster your own professional development at the same time.

There are many resources available to help you improve your presentations and draft manuscripts for publication. Ask your advisor and other professors for a list that reflects their presentation/writing expectations, and carefully incorporate best practices from these resources into your work. In general, remember that Powerpoint presentations should include visual slides with very few words. Practice what you plan to say, and use reports/papers/manuscripts to back up these presentations with the more lengthy and complicated details. Papers should be concise, informative, directed at the intended audience, and include citation & reference styles, units of measurement, and formatting appropriate for the specific field and journal/publisher. Use carefully constructed, clearly labeled and numbered tables and graphs to draw attention to key data inputs, results and other important information difficult for the reader to pick out in lengthy text.

***GRADUATION***

Graduation requires meeting degree program, SOE, and Graduate School requirements. There are specific deadlines that vary by year and by whether you plan to graduate in May, August or December; these deadlines are clearly identified in the Graduate School's graduation checklists. Deadlines and forms change year to year. Please visit Graduate School's website for the most up to date information. **It is YOUR responsibility** (not your advisor’s) to know the specific deadlines for your graduation timeline and make sure everything is completed and submitted on time. Although filing the Completion of Requirements (COR) Formis the responsibility of the Graduate Coordinator; it is YOUR responsibility to ensure the Graduate Coordinator has all of the proper forms and you have met all of the requirements that feed into the COR: (a) a completed and up-to-date POS form that matches your course transcript; (b) complete copies of all other graduate school forms (e.g., thesis completion/oral exam forms); (c) all course and grade requirements are met; (d) all thesis and research requirements are met; and (e) residency requirement is met.

General Timetable to Graduation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Deadline** |
| Meet with Advisor to discuss initial degree program/thesis plans | Early in 1st semester |
| Develop thesis proposal (thesis students only) | End of 1st semester/beginning of 2nd semester |
| Select Graduate Advisory Committee | 2nd Semester (prior to 3rd semester enrollment) |
| Submit POS | 2nd Semester (prior to 3rd semester enrollment) |
| Apply for Degree/Graduation | Final semester; Date changes each year (see Graduate School website) |
| Schedule Oral Exam | Final semester; Consult with your Advisory Committee to set a date that works for you, them, and meets the Graduate School deadline |
| Submit full draft of thesis/dissertation to Advisor | One month prior to oral exam |
| Submit full draft of thesis/dissertation to Advisory Committee | 2 weeks prior to oral exam |
| Notify Graduate School (submit form) and SOE students, staff and faculty (send email) of Oral Exam | 2 weeks prior to oral exam |
| Submit Tentative Thesis/Dissertation and Tentative Acceptance Form to Graduate School | see Graduate School website for specific timeline |
| Pass Oral Exam - obtain Advisory Committee signatures on appropriate forms (print and bring these forms to your exam) | on previously agreed-upon date |
| Revise your thesis and obtain final approval (based on committee feedback at oral exam & Graduate School revisions) | see Graduate School website for specific timeline; usually plan for at least 1 month to make revisions and submit final revisions to Advisor at least a week before graduation deadline |
| Work with Graduate Coordinator to make sure your Completion of Requirements Form is complete | see Graduate School website for specific timeline |

***GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS***

Graduate Research and Teaching Assistants (RAs and TAs, respectively) are part-time employees of SOE. RAs are normally 12-month appointments, while TAs are normally 9-month appointments. Appointments for graduate assistants (GA) are updated annually; however, continuation of any appointment depends upon **maintaining good standing in the graduate school and satisfactory performance of duties as a GA**. Generally, reappointment is not made beyond the second year.

Administrative Responsibility**.** Administrative responsibilities for GAs rest with the SOE Director, who collaborates on administrative decisions with the Graduate Coordinator and the graduate faculty. GAs are assigned to a specific research project or to instructional responsibilities by the Graduate Coordinator and Director. Each GA is under the immediate supervision of, and is responsible to, a member of the SOE faculty in carrying out their duties. Depending upon school needs, GAs may be asked to assist on research projects in addition to the one to which they are assigned. GAs, when serving as TAs, work in support of a teaching faculty member. Typical responsibilities are grading homework and exams, leading discussions and help sessions, etc.Some RAs are funded through outside grants which have specific research expectations, outcomes and deadlines that must be met. You are a critical part of meeting these expectations; you have a responsibility to your research team and to the funder to complete your research.

Working Hours***.*** As a general guideline, GAs devote an average of 20 hours per week to GA duties. However, given the specific needs of research projects and teaching duties, GAs are expected to be flexible in the number of hours they work in any given week. GAs work less than 20 hours per week during some especially busy academic times and often more than 20 hours per week during University breaks (e.g., summer, spring breaks, etc). Please note, these weekly hours are **in addition** to your thesis or dissertation research. Your GA duties may or may not align with your thesis or dissertation goals. Whether they do or not, think of the 20 hours per week you spend on GA duties as a separate commitment from the amount of time you budget for your thesis/dissertation research and writing (additional 5-20 hours per week or more, depending on where you are in the program). You receive course credit for your thesis/dissertation work. You are paid for your GA time. As employees of the school, GAs are expected to be available during regular office hours; please work with your advisor to establish regular, in-person office hours. During the summer, GAs are expected to work except during their vacation (see vacation below). We also expect that all **GAs are not working elsewhere as this may lead to poor academic or work performance. Any GA must file paperwork about outside employment with their advisor/work supervisor, the Graduate Coordinator and the School Director. Sometimes small jobs may be approved but longer/larger jobs (e.g., a paid summer internship that is not tied to your work duties) may lead to a reduction or elimination of your assistantship during the time of the outside employment.**

A large part of the research you complete as an RA will contribute to your thesis/dissertation. However, as part of a team of researchers, you may be completing work that does not directly contribute to your thesis/dissertation. You must be willing to work on projects outside of your own research, and complete tasks that may not be particularly stimulating (e.g., stuffing envelopes, transcribing interviews, or entering survey data). Since SOE often matches funds, it is common to also have you perform some administrative or tutoring functions even if you are funded with outside grants.

Remember your assistantship is a professional position, which means that you need to consider, among other things, being respectful of co-workers and fellow graduate students, being punctual, dressing appropriately when representing SOE or your research team (e.g., meetings with stakeholders), giving ample time for others to review documents (1-2 weeks), and meeting deadlines. Time management will be key to fulfilling your assistantship duties, course work, your own research activities, and other academic commitments.

Vacation time. As UMaine employees, GAs are allowed to take off during the Holiday Schedule posted on the Office of Human Resources [website](http://www.maine.edu/about-the-system/system-office/human-resources/holiday-schedule/). Please note, this schedule does not include longer University breaks such as winter break, spring break, summer break, etc. In addition to the official Holiday Schedule, **GAs are allowed up to 10 business days of vacation per year.** It is generally expected that part of that time will be taken during the period between the end of the Fall semester and New Year’s Day. Many students find that they make more progress on their research during University breaks than they do when classes are in session. Take advantage of these breaks as opportunities to pursue your research in large, uninterrupted time blocks. Most faculty work through University breaks, so **do not assume that school breaks mean vacation time. In fact, your advisor or work supervisor needs to approve all vacation time. All leave/vacation requests should be made to your work advisor at least two-weeks in advance of the requested time off.** The Graduate Coordinator should be informed of all student leaves.

Progress Reports**.** Each semester, the Graduate Coordinator will send a brief questionnaire to each GA advisor asking about the GA’s work performance. If the GA advisor has substantial concerns with the quality of the GA’s work, s/he will express these concerns in the progress report and the Graduate Coordinator, GA, and Advisor will meet immediately to develop a plan for performance improvement. If the GA does not meet the terms of the performance improvement plan, GA funding may not continue.

Office Supplies and Equipment**.** The school provides office supplies and equipment needed to fulfill some graduate assistant duties. The use of school supplies for class work is not permitted. Students should not ask administrative support staff when they need supplies; all students are in charge of getting their own supplies from the closet. The photocopy machines are not for personal use; TAs and RAs should have a code for assistantship-related copying, which they should obtain from their advisor.

University Vehicle Use**.** University Motor Pool cars can be used by GAs on University business for approved projects. Requests for cars are made on an official “Requisition for Motor Vehicle” form well in advance of the proposed trip. The School Director or the GA’s supervisor must approve the request before it is sent to the Motor Pool dispatcher at the University garage. Reimbursement for use of personal cars for University business is based on the current University mileage rate and must be pre-approved in the online Concur system prior to travel.

Travel***.*** All university employees are eligible for travel insurance ($100,000 accidental death benefits), while on business travel. The coverage is provided automatically once a travel request has been submitted. All graduate students (including those not on an assistantship) traveling in-state on university-related business must submit a travel request in the online Concur system, which must be approved by the school Director one week prior to making the trip. The requirement applies to all individual trips.When necessary, a travel advance may be obtained to meet trip expenses. Advances must be requested on the trip request in Concur. See the administrative assistant in the school’s main office for procedures in initiating a travel request in Concur and processing an advance request. As in every case, expenses must be accounted for when a travel advance is involved (i.e., keep all of your receipts!). Unused funds must be returned within 48 hours.

***PROFESSIONAL ETIQUETTE***

Email[[1]](#footnote-1). As students, you should realize that your emails to fellow students, faculty, staff, stakeholders, and other colleagues help shape their professional opinion about you. Also, please recognize that faculty (and other professionals) often receive hundreds of emails a day, so only send emails when necessary and allow a couple of days for a reply.

**Please follow these email guidelines**:

* Always include a brief and meaningful **subject line** – if there is a deadline associated with the content of the email, include that date in the subject line.
* Always include a courteous **greeting** (e.g., Hello, Dear, etc) and **closing** (e.g., Thank you, Cheers, I look forward to hearing from you, Take care, Best regards, etc). Avoid making your email seem demanding or terse. Be polite and professional. Make sure the “tone” of the email is positive and respectful.
* Address the recipient with the appropriate level of **formality** for the situation and make sure you spell their name correctly. For example, if it is the first time you are contacting someone, always include Dr. or Professor in front of the last name of faculty and Mr. or Ms. in front of the last name of other professionals. Most faculty and staff in SOE prefer to be on a first-name basis with graduate students, but it is always best to check beforehand, and faculty in other units may prefer a more formal greeting.
* Be **concise** and to the point. Do not make an email longer than it needs to be. Faculty and other professionals often have to skim emails quickly in between other responsibilities, so keep sentences short (e.g., less than 20 words); use proper structure & layout (short paragraphs with blank lines between paragraphs); be clear about the specific action you are requesting as a result of the email and requested deadline (e.g., please read my draft chapter by XXX date); use lists/bullet points where appropriate; and highlight or bold important dates.
* If you are replying to a previous email, make sure to answer all questions, and pre-empt any further questions. This will reduce further emails regarding unanswered questions and avoid wasted time and frustration for all.
* Use proper **spelling, grammar & punctuation**. Proofread all professional emails (including, and especially, the ones to your advisor)! Emails with typos may not be taken seriously.
* Only attach files when necessary; it is much easier and quicker to read text in the email itself than to download and open an attachment. If your advisor/professor uses a shared Google Drive or Box folder with you, put large documents in there and refer him/her to the specific file location and/or include the specific excerpt in the email that you want him/her to pay attention to.
* Do not overuse the high priority option because it will lose its impact when you really need it.
* Do not write in CAPITALS, SINCE IT LOOKS LIKE YOU ARE SHOUTING.
* When you reply to an email, make sure to **reply to the original email thread** and not change the subject unless necessary; this will save the recipient time and frustration by allowing them to respond in the context of prior conversations.
* Read the email before you send it. In addition to checking for spelling and grammar mistakes, reading your mail through the eyes of the recipient will help you send more effective messages and avoid misunderstandings and inappropriate comments.
* Only use Reply All if you really need your message to be seen by each person.
* Take care with abbreviations as the recipient might not know their meanings.
* Never make, send or forward any libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist, obscene or sexist comments in emails. Even forwarding one can lead to you and the School facing a lawsuit.
* Just because someone doesn't ask for a response doesn't mean you ignore them. Always acknowledge emails from those you know in a timely manner. If you cannot respond to an email promptly, at the very least email back confirming your receipt and when the sender can expect your response.
* Never expose your friends’ or contacts’ email addresses to strangers by listing them all in the To: field. Use BCC:!
* Make sure when using BCC: that your intentions are proper. Do not use BCC: as a way of talking behind someone's back.
* When forwarding email, if you cannot take the time to type a personal comment to the person you are forwarding to--then don't bother.
* Don't forward anything without editing out all the forwarding >>>>, other email addresses, headers and commentary from all the other forwarders.
* If you must forward to more than one person, put your email address in the TO: field and all the others you are sending to in the BCC: field to protect their email address from being published to those they do not know. This is a privacy issue.
* Formality is in place as a courtesy and reflects respect. Assume the highest level of formality with new email contacts until the relationship dictates otherwise. Refrain from getting too informal too soon in your email communications.
* If you are angry or frustrated at the time of writing an email, save the draft for later and return to it once you calm down to ensure it includes the tone and content you really want to convey. In these situations, it may be helpful to have a friend or co-worker read the email before sending it.

Faculty and other professionals receive considerable email that needs answering – some are extremely time dependent; others are not. Hence, do not expect immediate responses to your emails.Email is a great way to share questions with faculty and other colleagues, but do realize they may not be able to answer until they have time and they may not have immediate access to information about your question; 72 hours is a reasonable window for a response during the work week, longer if the recipient is on travel.

Telephone**.** Students are provided access to telephones for work use. Long distance access codes are available by arrangement with your advisor. The use of long distance access codes for other than official University business is prohibited. When making a professional call, make sure to announce yourself at the beginning – e.g., "Hello, this is X, a graduate student, in the School of Economics at the University of Maine. May I please speak to Y?" Please be sure to observe the same etiquette when answering a phone in a common area (ex: graduate quads or lab) and write down and deliver a detailed message to the intended recipient of the call (if necessary). To leave a professional voice-message, make sure you clearly state your first and last name, provide a brief message and then repeat your name and number at the end of the call. When using speaker phone always tell the person on the other line that you put them on speaker and mute your phone when people on the other line are presenting information. When on a video-conference call, always mute your speaker when not speaking to reduce feedback, and dress professionally.

Homework Assignments. Students are expected to follow faculty instructions for submitting assignments. Do not assume that a faculty member wishes to receive your assignments via email. While it may save students time and money to email their assignments, it typically creates extra work for faculty. Follow the guidance set by the faculty - some prefer email submission, others do not.

Meetings[[2]](#footnote-2). During your graduate study, you will be asked to attend, organize, and run meetings of colleagues. Strive to plan and run these meetings professionally so you can maximize the returns from these meetings. Many of your colleagues, including faculty, are very busy managing classes, grants, employees and other deadline-dependent activities. If you, or they, call a meeting then you should do your part to make the meeting successful and efficient. Below is an edited compilation of meeting rules that help you do just that. Most of these rules apply for video-conference meetings (e.g., Zoom, Skype, etc) as well.

**When you call on someone in their office** (this includes the main office) then you are a guest. As a guest, you should:

* be punctual
* be prepared by bringing note-taking materials, data, books etc.
* not make yourself more comfortable than the host.
* not take over their space.
* not overstay their welcome or their scheduled meeting time.
* If you are going to ask the professor a question and you need to refer to your notes or a book, have them within easy reach, with the relevant pages marked. Don't waste time searching.
* If the person is dining al desco, an activity typically done to save time on a busy day, don't ask, "Are you busy?" The answer is yes. Ask instead, "Do you have a few minutes to talk, or should I come back at a better time?"

**In larger meetings**:

* Be punctual or even better turn up a bit early. If you turn up late, step in quickly and quietly while taking your seat. The less interruption you create the better.
* If you require your laptop or smartphone in the meeting, announce that you'll be taking notes on it (and only do that); do not open other apps or check email. People will notice that you're not paying attention.
* Be prepared and organized. You should come to the meeting with all of the materials (handouts, PowerPoint slides etc.) you will need and an understanding of the meeting topic.
* Being unprepared is disrespectful and wasteful. Prepare (write out) questions and comments ahead of time as much as possible.
* If your phone rings or buzzes, don't take it unless it's an emergency. If you have to take it, step out of the meeting room.
* Avoid side conversations; it's distracting.
* Don't repeat what someone else in the meeting has already said; it's a time-waster.
* Be attentive to the topic at hand. Don't let distractions get in the way, whether you're running or attending the meeting. Listen carefully to what the speaker is addressing, the attendees' questions and the answers provided. You surely don't want to ask a question that has already been asked.
* When invited to a meeting, be sure to reply if a reply is requested.
* Don't fidget, tap your pen, play with your fingers, read materials not concerning the meeting or do any other act that might distract other attendees.
* Attend the entire meeting, unless it is absolutely necessary or you have prior permission to leave earlier. Leaving earlier is disruptive to other attendees and inconsiderate to the speaker.
* Dress and conduct yourself professionally.
* Be brief when speaking and make sure what you say is relevant to the specific topic being discussed and specific goals for the meeting. Communicate side topics and tangent ideas afterword to specific people in person or via email.

**If you are running a meeting** (and you should consider yourself running all regular advisor-advisee research meetings unless your advisor says otherwise):

* Set a time limit for the meeting, communicate that ahead of time, and end on time!
* Create an agenda and make sure you distribute it to all participants beforehand. Stick to only what is on the agenda.
* Reserve a room for the meeting (if necessary) and communicate the location to all parties involved (including directions and a campus map, if necessary, with location marked clearly).
* If the meeting goes off topic, remind the attendees of the agenda at hand and suggest that unrelated matters be addressed at another time.
* If the meeting is likely to discuss problems, make sure you think about some solutions to offer.
* Keep eye contact 80 - 90 % of the time.
* Save the last 5 minutes of the meeting for reviewing progress toward agenda goals and summarizing specific action items, including people responsible and deadlines associated with these action items. If meeting is recurring, always set the date, time, and location for the next meeting at the end of the current meeting.
* Once the meeting is over, follow up with all participants. Circulate a list of action items, resolutions and issues that remain open, and a reminder for the date, time, location, and purpose of the next meeting if applicable. Don't forget to thank people for attending the meeting and request feedback.
* If you wish to get high-quality feedback from a faculty or committee member on a written document, distribute the document at least 2 days in advance of the meeting to these individuals (longer if the document is long – a good guideline is 2 days in advance for a 2-3 page document; 1 week for up to 15 pages, and 2 weeks or longer for longer documents); then the substance of your in-person meeting can be about feedback.

Students can often make valuable contacts by interacting with peers, staff, and faculty on campus. Don't forget your meeting etiquette in these less formal settings. It is rude not to greet people when you first enter an office (including the main office). Make it a habit to smile and say “good morning” and you will help make the workplace a more pleasant environment.

Finally, always dress and conduct yourself professionally. In general, universities are a relatively casual environment; however, part of your graduate experience is to develop yourself to work in a professional setting. Your dress can be casual (especially in the summer); however, always try to be neat and clean, and do not show too much skin or your undergarments. You are in a professional work environment – not at the beach or at a club. Whenever you are doing a formal presentation of your work (whether in class or at a meeting or conference) or attending a professional conference, always dress professionally (as you would for a job interview).

Winslow Lab. The school provides a computer lab cluster for use of all SOE students on the third floor of Winslow Hall. Graduate students are welcome to use this facility during the day and at night. The computer lab can get quite busy; we have been fortunate to have graduate students who have been cooperative and polite regarding their computer use. A few reminders that can keep it that way: do not camp out at a computer; it is not ‘your’ space. If you need to leave for a few minutes it is ok to keep your space occupied but be considerate – if you are leaving for an hour or more, clear out your space. Work together to maintain a neat, professional, and stimulating lab space. Keep conversations quiet and to a minimum in this space and in the graduate office space so others’ can focus on their work. Move louder or lengthier conversations outside or to one of the conference rooms. Also, report and document computer issues so that Professor Louis Morin and his staff can address these issues systematically. The computer lab historically has assumed an important role for cohorts of graduate students. We encourage you to take advantage of this space and maintain its vitality.

***ETHICS GUIDELINES***

This section is adapted from the Code of Ethics for the American Association for Public Opinion Research and outlines SOE’s minimum standard for ethical research. Some of our research includes human subjects, and there are additional University, Federal and professional standards that need to be met. If you are working with human subjects (e.g., collecting data using surveys, focus groups, interviews etc.) then you must discuss and understand these additional requirements with your advisor prior to beginning research.

SOE pledges to maintain high standards of scientific competence, integrity, and transparency in conducting, analyzing, and reporting our work; establishing and maintaining relations with survey respondents and our clients; and communicating with those who eventually use the research for decision-making purposes and the general public. We reject tasks or assignments that would require activities inconsistent with these principles.

*Principles of Professional Practice in the Conduct of Our Work*

* We exercise due care in developing research designs and instruments, and in collecting, processing, and analyzing data, taking all reasonable steps to assure the reliability and validity of results.
* We employ only those tools and methods of analysis that, in our professional judgment, are well suited to the research problem at hand.
* We do not knowingly select research tools and methods that yield misleading conclusions.
* We do not knowingly make interpretations of research results that are inconsistent with the data, nor do we tacitly permit such interpretations. We ensure any findings we report, either privately or publicly, are balanced and accurate portrayals of research results.
* We do not knowingly imply that interpretations should be accorded greater confidence than the data actually warrant. When we use samples to make statements about populations, we shall only make claims of precision that are warranted by the sampling frames and methods employed.
* We do not knowingly engage in fabrication or falsification.
* We accurately describe research from other sources that we cite in our work, in terms of its methods, content, and comparability.
* We describe our methods and findings accurately and in appropriate detail in all research reports, adhering to the standards for disclosure specified below.

*Standards for Disclosure.* Good professional practice imposes the obligation upon all researchers to disclose certain essential information about how the research was conducted. When conducting publicly released research studies, full and complete disclosure to the public is best made at the time results are released, although some information may not be immediately available. When undertaking work for a private client, the same essential information should be made available to the client when the client is provided with results.

***ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURES FOR SOE STUDENTS***

Graduate students who wish to appeal academic rulings, including (but not limited to): a) results of oral comprehensive exams; b) evaluation of teaching and research assistant duties; c) acceptability of written theses; and d) completion of all requirements for graduation from the program, should follow the established Graduate School procedures posted on the Graduate School website. Students are encouraged to first try and resolve any disputes with his or her immediate supervisor, be that a course instructor or advisor. If a resolution cannot be reached, the student should notify, in writing, the Graduate Coordinator, who will consult with the SOE Director. If an acceptable resolution to the dispute cannot be reached by consensus of the parties involved, the Graduate Coordinator will bring the matter to the graduate faculty for a ruling. The graduate faculty will meet to discuss the written appeal. The student is entitled to make a brief presentation to the graduate faculty at this meeting. The graduate faculty will make a final SOE decision on the appeal by majority vote. A written decision to the appeal will be sent to the student. All appeals need to be made in a timely manner. In the very rare case where the dispute is not resolved by a vote of the full SOE graduate faculty, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Graduate School (see Graduate School website for more information). This is done only after all other appeals have completed.

***UNIVERSITY OF MAINE NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE***

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran’s status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. For more information or inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: see the Director of [Equal Opportunity](https://umaine.edu/eo/), 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME  04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).

***LOGISTICS***

Building and Room Keys**.** The SOE Director authorizes issuing of keys to the outside door of Winslow Hall and will provide office keys as needed. It is the responsibility of each person having keys to maintain proper security of the premises. Assigned keys must be returned to the Director’s office upon termination of the graduate assistant’s appointment, when the graduate student is in an “on-leave” status, or has completed degree requirements. The administrative assistant in the school’s main office controls the keys.

Room Reservations. If you need to reserve a conference room in Winslow Hall, see the SOE Administrative Assistant in the SOE main office for 3rd floor rooms and the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture (NSFA) Administrative Assistant in the NSFA main office for 2nd floor rooms.

Other. Office supplies, photocopiers, printers, University vehicles, and travel resources are reserved for students funded through Graduate Assistants for work specific to their paid assistantships. See below for more information. There are several trainings you will need to complete upon enrollment in person and online; these change year-to-year, so check in with the SOE Administrative Assistant for specifics. Make sure to keep a copy of all training certificates for yourself and send one to your advisor and SOE Administrative Assistant.

****

*Graduate students must be leaders, who take the initiative to succeed. There are numerous resources available at the University to assist your research, your coursework, and to help achieve your personal goals. We hope your time with School of Economics results in tremendous personal and intellectual growth and makes significant contributions to the school, the University and the world. We are excited to have you here and look forward to all that you will achieve.*

1. *Adapted from:* [*https://teamwork.jacobs-university.de:8443/confluence/display/APS/Email+etiquette*](https://teamwork.jacobs-university.de:8443/confluence/display/APS/Email%2Betiquette)

[*http://science.kennesaw.edu/~hmattord/email.htm*](http://science.kennesaw.edu/~hmattord/email.htm)

[*http://www.emailreplies.com/*](http://www.emailreplies.com/)

[*http://www.sequoiaschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\_1027020/File/Documents/Sequoia\_Schools\_email\_etiquette.pdf*](http://www.sequoiaschools.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_1027020/File/Documents/Sequoia_Schools_email_etiquette.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Adapted from:* [*http://chronicle.com/article/A-Scientists-Guide-to/49080/*](http://chronicle.com/article/A-Scientists-Guide-to/49080/)

[*http://blog.verticalresponse.com/verticalresponse\_blog/2012/06/business-meeting-etiquette-8-pet-peeves.html*](http://blog.verticalresponse.com/verticalresponse_blog/2012/06/business-meeting-etiquette-8-pet-peeves.html)

## [*http://smallbusiness.chron.com/10-rules-proper-business-meeting-etiquette-2857.html*](http://smallbusiness.chron.com/10-rules-proper-business-meeting-etiquette-2857.html)

## [*http://tips.nuvvo.com/lesson/2779-30-tips-on-business-meeting-etiquette*](http://tips.nuvvo.com/lesson/2779-30-tips-on-business-meeting-etiquette)

 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)