Welcome to CSE 590X!

How to PhD

Thriving in the Allen School's PhD Program

Who Are We?

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Why Take This Course?

Increase your inspiration and motivation to do great research

- **Hard work**, passion, tenacity, intense focus, **hard work**

Develop the skills needed to thrive in an academic environment

- Communication skills, time management, …
- Applicable beyond a PhD program, generally applicable to others etc.

Avoid common pitfalls

- Learn from the mistakes of those who came before you
- Imposter syndrome

Course Feedback

We love feedback – it's an opportunity for us to make this seminar better!

- **Email** any of us
  - Also anonymous feedback: https://feedback.cs.washington.edu/
- **Send a message** on EdStem

Rules of Engagement

It is the expectation that everyone is respectful of each other

- **Respect** for *all*
- **Inclusion** for *all*
- **Kindness**

Our discussions assume confidentiality

- Be comfortable **sharing**
- Be **honest**
- Address the **good** and the **bad**

The people in this room are not your competition

Developing Research Ideas (first module, 3 weeks)

- Week 1 (Oct 1): introductions, brainstorming, feedback
- Weeks 2 and 3 (Oct 8 and 15)
  - Feedback on documents
  - Panel with people who won a fellowship
- Homework for week 2 (Oct 8):
  - Write a 1-2 page research proposal
  - Write a 1-2 page personal statement
  - Could be the same as for your application,
    but, is that still what you want to do?
- Homework for week 3 (Oct 15): revise your documents

You did this to apply to grad school.
Practice is valuable.
Can use for fellowship applications.

Schedule for today

Get a duck

Introductions

Project proposals: practice and iteration

- What makes an excellent project proposal?

Personal statement: practice and iteration

- What makes an excellent personal statement?

Introductions

Explain your research vision or proposal or project

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

What makes an excellent research proposal?

What is the purpose of a research proposal?

Heilmeier Catechism

- What are you trying to do?
  Articulate your objectives using absolutely no jargon.
- How is it done today, and what are the limits of current practice?
- What is new in your approach and why do you think it will be successful?
- Who cares? If you are successful, what difference will it make?
- What are the risks?
- How much will it cost?
- How long will it take?
- What are the mid-term and final "exams" to check for success?

Explain your research vision or project

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

Personal statement: explain your research journey

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

What makes an excellent personal statement?

What makes an excellent personal statement?

- Tell a story
- Be specific (no vague superlatives)
- Show, don't tell
- Express enthusiasm
- Express your research personality

Personal statement: explain your research journey

Form groups of 3.

Each person presents for 2 minutes.

Each person gets feedback for 3 minutes.

Homework:

Submit Your Duck ID on Canvas

Write a 1-2 page research proposal

Write a 1-2 page personal statement