

Dear New and Returning Graduate Students:

On behalf of the Graduate School, I would like to welcome those of you who are new to graduate study and to greet those of you who are continuing your pursuit of an advanced degree. The Graduate School promotes excellence in all aspects of graduate education and offers various events and programs to enrich your educational experience. Below are a few we would like to mention.

On August 19, the Graduate School will sponsor an Orientation Program for new graduate students. The orientation will be held in Room 100, Thomas Building from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Sessions during the program will cover important topics such as plagiarism, graduate student life, and health insurance. To learn more about the Orientation Program, visit http://gradsch.psu.edu/pr/2009/Orientation_Welcome_Reception.html.

Immediately following the Orientation Program, we will welcome all graduate students to the new academic year at a **reception in the lobby of Kern Graduate Building beginning at 5:00 p.m. on August 19.** The Welcome Reception is an opportunity to meet colleagues and members of the Penn State community and to explore the various services offered by the University organizations that will be represented at the event. Among these are: the Center for Women Students, International Student Council, Graduate Student Association, Career Development and Placement and more. This event is for all graduate students, so mark your calendars, bring a friend and join us.

Throughout the fall semester, the Graduate School sponsors several professional development workshops that cover a range of topics from “**Networking with Practitioners**” to the “**The Academy Is Not The Only Option,**” plus a series of workshops titled “**Grant Writing 2009,**” which feature prominent Penn State faculty who are successful principal investigators. The grant writing workshops are divided into the following basic research fields: Physical Sciences, Medical Life Sciences, Life Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Humanities, Qualitative Social Sciences and Quantitative Social Sciences. For more information about the workshops, visit <http://gradsch.psu.edu/current/grantwriting.html>.

Also, once a month I host a morning coffee. This is an opportunity to share elements of your scholarly experience with me and other students who are working in diverse disciplines. If you would like to receive an invitation to a **Coffee with the Dean**, please e-mail Rhonda Perryman at rdp3@psu.edu.

If you would like to improve your teaching skills, the Graduate School offers a self-paced, non-credit program and awards the **Graduate School Teaching Certificate** to any graduate student who completes the five requirements. The requirements for the certificate may be found at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/current/tacert.html>.

During the spring semester, the Graduate School also sponsors the annual **Graduate Exhibition**. The Exhibition provides a platform for graduate students to showcase their research or artistic accomplishments to the public. Students' works are juried by alumni and volunteers from the University and local communities, and cash prizes are awarded. The Exhibition contains three options: Performances, Visual Arts, and Research Presentations. The 25th Annual Graduate Exhibition will be held March 26 & 28, 2010. More information about the Graduate Exhibition can be found at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/exhibition/>.

Lastly, I would like to call your attention to the **Graduate Student Association (GSA)**, the body representing all graduate students. The GSA has direct access to the Dean of the Graduate School and the Vice President for Student Affairs. The GSA addresses issues of concern to graduate students, and elects members to sit on various shared-governance bodies of the University, including the University Faculty Senate and the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council oversees graduate education at Penn State. It consists of graduate faculty from each college, as well as five student representatives from the GSA. Students interested in serving on Graduate Council should join the GSA and make their interests known. See the GSA Web site at <http://gsa.psu.edu/> for additional information.

Again, welcome and welcome back. I look forward to seeing you at the Orientation Program and to meeting you at the Welcome Reception on August 19.

Best wishes for a great year,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eva J. Pell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eva" being the most prominent.

Eva J. Pell