



Special  
Points of  
Interest

- Working with Optometry Students
- Book Review
- Workshop Suggestion
- Learning Strategy

PLEASE GIVE US YOUR  
FEEDBACK!!

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# Beyond the Baccalaureate

## Graduate & Professional Student Success SIG

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### Working with Professional Students-Optometry by Laura Heidel, Ph.D.

When working with optometry students there are several things I try to keep in mind. First, these students are in an intense academic atmosphere, usually for the first time. They need to spend almost every waking moment engaged in studying. Organizing how they will spend their time is key. These are some strategies I attempt to teach them in my role as Learning Strategies

Counselor:

1) How to memorize material more effectively. For some material mnemonics work best, for anatomy using tracing paper to label pictures works well, and for concepts, using concept maps works best (see our previous newsletter for more on concept maps).

2) Actively working on learning the material is a better strategy than being passive. For exam-



ple, if a professor gives power points, it is not enough to simply listen to the lecture. The student should write extra notes to themselves on the power point handout or turn the heading of the power point into a question and then quiz themselves on the material.

3) After each chapter it is a good idea to write a summary of that chapter AND write 5-10 multiple choice questions for yourself on the material. This gets you to "think like the professor". You can trade questions with a study partner for further review.

4) For problem solving courses like Optics (which is similar to physics) it is best to work out as many problems as possible before the test, so you can become an "expert problem solver" and can solve anything that is thrown at you.

### Book Review- ADD Friendly Ways to Organize Your Life by Kolberg and Nadeau

Sometimes, graduate and professional students with whom we work have attention deficit disorder. I have a read a great book recently that offers suggestions both to the student, and to you, the professional, about how to organize time, organize papers, organize the environment, and organize life in general. Being in graduate school is hard enough, but those with ADD face additional challenges. These are some of the areas that this book focuses on:

1) How to make a daily and weekly schedule for how to spend your time

- 2) How to organize your daily routine, by having a place near your front door where you keep keys, umbrella, purse or wallet, and other important items so that they don't get lost
- 3) How to make to-do lists that are ADD friendly
- 4) How to get places on time
- 5) How to deal with distractions when studying or doing other things that require intense concentration
- 6) How to STOP hyperfocusing on studying when you need to
- 7) How to sort paperwork

related to classes or other areas of life, such as bill paying

One of the nice things about this book is for each skill they offer ways that the student can work on this skill alone, and how they can work on this skill with you, the professional.

This is a book that everyone who works with graduate and professional students should read. With persons with ADD making up at least 4 percent of the population, chances are you will come across someone who will benefit from this book.

## SIG Purpose & Student Needs



### What is the purpose of our SIG?

For those of us who **PROVIDE SERVICES** to graduate/professional students on our campuses, to share IDEAS about programming and marketing. (If you don't currently serve graduate/professional students, but would like to, we can help you with that as well.)

To give **SUPPORT** to each other in working with this often underserved population

To **EXAMINE** best practices and current research in working with this population

### What are the needs of graduate and professional students and how do they differ from undergraduate needs?

- Students are balancing school and life issues,
- They are understanding how to be more self-motivated than they were as undergrads,
- They are learning how to study in (perhaps) a new discipline and learning the corresponding cognitive schemas that go along with that discipline,

- They are learning how to manage a sometimes overwhelming amount of material,
- Students are not the "top dog" anymore,
- They are learning how to deal with professors on a collegial level as opposed to putting them on a pedestal as they may have done previously,
- They are dealing with career issues such as postponing earning an income for several years and learning how to market themselves effectively.

## Workshop Suggestion—Giving Effective Presentations

*Each semester we will focus on a particular suggested workshop that our SIG members could implement on their own campuses.*

I will summarize my workshop for graduate students entitled "Giving Effective Professional Presentations". If you would like a copy, please write to Laura Heidel at [lheidel@uh.edu](mailto:lheidel@uh.edu). I begin with a self-assessment of their current speaking abilities. We address how to speak clearly, and I recommend practicing using a tape recorder. We address the importance of body language during a professional presentation. Use of technology is important to address since most presenters use technology. To control nervousness we discuss the importance of using diaphragmatic breathing which stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system to relax the body. Finally I discuss the format of a thesis/dissertation proposal or defense talk, with a sample outline of such a talk and how to anticipate and answer questions from the audience. Even if the student is just doing a class presentation and not a research talk, this workshop is valuable and students evaluate it highly.

## Learning Strategy— Using a Scale to Discuss Time Mgt.

Think about how you spend your time— there are certain activities you want to spend more time on, certain activities you spend just the right amount of time on, and certain activities you spend too much time on.

I use this picture to help students think about these categories— the arm of the scale that is high represents those things that the student is not spending



enough time on and the arm that is lower represents those things that the student is spending too much time on. Usually one of two things happen: the student is spending too much time on studying and not enough on fun, or the student is spending too much time on fun and not enough time on studying. Either way, this can begin a conversation between you and the student about changes they want to make.