

CS697 – Graduate Research Skills Seminar – Coordinator: Prof.  
Robin Cohen  
Mondays 12:30–1:50pm MC5158

This is a credit/no-credit course that has no credit weight. It covers research and life skills that can offer new insights to graduate students. The course features guest speakers and panel discussions, as well as a few in-class exercises by students. We begin with a panel on what graduate studies is really all about, a session referred to as the Graduate Unhandbook. We then move on to discuss time management and stress management skills. Next we cover some of the academic skills involved in graduate studies. We begin with a view of creative thinking, towards more effective research. We then move on to discuss the communication skills of speaking and writing. Students in the class will have the option of practicing a very brief talk for the class, in order to receive valuable feedback, during two of our weekly sessions. We will also learn more about what constitutes plagiarism and other academic integrity issues, of value when writing academic papers, with a visit from the Dean of Graduate Studies. We continue with a presentation about DC library resources. We then look to the future with a panel on academic vs. industry jobs. This is followed by a wrap-up of the course, reflecting on the lessons learned, together with an entertaining talk by Dan Berry on how to successfully complete a PhD degree.

### Tentative Schedule

Sep 11 Inside view of graduate studies -- The Grad Unhandbook  
Panel of faculty members and graduate students

Sep 18 Time Management Skills  
Linda Mackay, Counselling Services

Sep 25 Stress Management Skills  
Karen Rittinger, Counselling Services

Oct 2 Creative Thinking  
Richard Holmes, Philosophy Department

Oct 9 Thanksgiving -- No Class

- Oct 16 Speaking Skills  
General advice and discussion, with examples
- Oct 23 Presentations by Students
- Oct 30 Presentations by Students
- Nov 6 Writing skills  
General advice and discussion, with examples
- Nov 13 Academic Integrity  
Ranjana Bird, Dean of Graduate Studies
- Nov 20 DC Library Resources  
Jim Parrot, DC Librarian  
\*\* Note for this date only room change: MC1078
- Nov 27 Academic vs. Industry Jobs  
Panel of academic and industrial members
- Dec 4 Wrap-up of Course  
plus: Dan Berry, Computer Science Professor  
on "PhD Student Life: How to Finish that Damn PhD"