Welcome! The Office of Student Affairs supports students throughout their Mason academic careers. We review and process all types of academic requests and exceptions to university policy: course substitutions and waivers, transfer of graduate credit, study elsewhere requests, and we verify that students have met their graduation requirements. Below are a few tips to ease your transition as a new Mason graduate student. Please feel free to contact us if we can assist you in any way!

Kimberly M. Holmes, Associate Dean for Student Affairs

Tips for Success

1. **Use your Mason E-mail Account.** Official communications from Mason are routed through your Mason e-mail account. Activate your account at masonlive.gmu.edu. Having technology problems? Contact ITU Support at itsupport.gmu.edu; 703.993.8870.

2. **Learn to Use Patriot Web – patriotweb.gmu.edu.** On Patriot Web you may register for Courses; drop and add courses; view your class schedule; make tuition payments; check grades and view your internal transcript; and use the degree-evaluation to track progress towards completing degree requirements.

3. **Important Policies – Read the Catalog for more detailed information - catalog.gmu.edu**
   Refer to the catalog handout for policies regarding:
   - Transfer of Graduate Academic Credit
   - Reduction of Credit
   - Repeating a Course
   - Requests to Study Elsewhere
   - Academic Overloads - 9 credits is full-time graduate status
   - Appealing Grades
   - The Honor Code
   - Time Limits
   - Academic Termination

4. **Use the Academic Calendar – registrar.gmu.edu/calendars**
   Each semester print out the academic calendar and be aware of the payment due date (first day of classes) and the last day to drop a class with no tuition liability. After the last day to drop a class a student may initiate a withdrawal from a class only for non-academic reasons, and must have the Assistant Dean’s permission.

   The academic calendar also lists the deadline to submit immunization records to Student Health Services; semester breaks; and final exam periods.

5. **Explore Mason’s Web Resources**
   **Registrar’s Website – registrar.gmu.edu**
   Forms, Academic Calendar
   Instructions on How to Run your **Degree-Evaluation** in Patriot Web
   Degree Conferral Instructions – How to Submit your **Graduation Intent Form**

   The College Website – chhs.gmu.edu
College news, free lectures and events
Departmental contacts, policies and procedures
Information for newly admitted students (Photo ID, Parking Pass, Mason Alert)

6. **Get to know your Academic Advisor**
   - Meet face-to-face
   - Discuss a semester-by-semester program plan
   - Review transfer of credit, course substitutions/waivers and the degree-evaluation
   - Seek career advice

7. **Having an Academic or Non-Academic Problem? Seek Advice and Assistance!**
   - Contact your professors, academic advisor, or graduate program coordinator and do not stop attending class.
   - Seek assistance from the CHHS Office of Student Affairs.
   - Take advantage of Mason’s student and academic support services.
     - Student Health Services
     - Counseling and Psychological Services
     - Writing Center
     - Math Tutoring Center
     - Career Services

8. **Strive for Balance – Get Involved on Campus!**
   - Working full-time? **Please do not register as a full-time student.**
   - Professional networking opportunities:
     - GAPSA – Graduate and Professional Student Association
     - Professional clubs and organizations through your department
   - Enjoy Mason’s Outstanding Cultural and Sporting Events
     - Center for the Arts – dance, music, theater, lectures
     - Campus Health and Fitness Centers
     - Mason Athletic Events – Go Mason!

9. **Use the Library Resources (library.gmu.edu)**
   - Learn Endnote or Zotero bibliographic software- they will help you keep your references organized and ready for your dissertation or seminar paper
   - Mason’s library has specialists for every discipline – the Health Sciences Librarian can help you find relevant articles and resources
   - You have free access to journals, training websites, and tools to improve your papers and presentations through the library – take full advantage!

10. **Create a goal list** (things to do before graduating)
    - Keep yourself motivated by setting academic and personal goals. Share with your advisor, friends, and/or family for support.

11. **Attend relevant research conferences in your field of study**
    - Talk to faculty in your program and/or professionals in your field to identify regional and national conferences that are relevant to your interests
    - Attend research presentations or submit a proposal to share your own work
    - Conferences are a great way to network in your field – follow up with people you meet – they will be your colleagues for the foreseeable future!