

## Questions to Help Evaluate Program/Advisor Fit

To ask advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● What makes this graduate program unique from other graduate programs in the same discipline?</li><li>● What are the key strengths and weaknesses of this graduate program?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>The curriculum?</i></li><li>○ <i>The faculty, students, staff, facilities?</i></li></ul></li><li>● What are the core competencies that your program aims to provide to students?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>What key methodological competencies does the program aim to provide?</i></li><li>○ <i>What key theoretical competencies does the program aim to provide?</i></li><li>○ <i>What professional development skills does the program aim to provide?</i></li></ul></li><li>● What type of mentorship model does your lab use?</li><li>● How do students typically decide on research projects, professional development opportunities, courses etc?</li><li>● How are students in your lab typically funded? What are expectations/opportunities for student-led proposal writing?</li><li>● What qualities describe a successful student in your lab/your program?</li><li>● How do you and your lab engage in public outreach, science communication, and issues of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion?</li><li>● What do you love about what this program, university, area?</li></ul>
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<p>To ask current graduate students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● What do you like the most/least about this graduate program?</li><li>● What do you like the most/least about your advisor?</li><li>● What is your advisors mentoring style? How hands-on/off? How available/responsive?</li><li>● How is the work-life balance in the lab/graduate program?</li><li>● How are conflicts resolved in lab? How comfortable are you voicing your opinions/sharing issues?</li><li>● What organizations or groups around campus have you found to be good support systems?</li><li>● How supportive, connective, engaged is the graduate student community in this program?</li><li>● What is it like living in this area?<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>What housing options are popular with students?</i></li><li>● <i>How is the cost of living here relative to stipend?</i></li><li>● <i>What are the social, cultural, community options in the area for time outside of work?</i></li></ul></li></ul>
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<p>To ask potential advisor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can you describe your mentorship style? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>How do you typically work with students to help them meet major program milestones? (very hands off □□ very involved)</i></li> <li>○ <i>How willing are you to advise students whose research interests may differ from your own?</i></li> <li>○ <i>How often do you typically meet with your graduate students?</i></li> <li>○ <i>How would you describe your mentoring process for publishing scholarly work?</i></li> <li>○ <i>What skills might I develop or strengthen by working with you?</i></li> <li>○ <i>How do you feel about students working with other faculty (within and outside the department?)</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● What is your preferred form of communication?</li> <li>● What is your research/teaching philosophy?</li> <li>● How many students are you currently advising?</li> <li>● How often have you graduated Ph.D. students? Where do the students that you've mentored typically work?</li> <li>● How often do students co-author papers with you?</li> <li>● Would you be willing to provide feedback on a CV draft?</li> <li>● What does your funding situation look like for the next few years? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Would I expect to have the opportunity to work on your research team?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Are you currently working on any career milestones? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>If so, how might this impact your advising in the next 1-3 years?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● What are your expectations for a workday?</li> <li>● How do you envision the ideal role of academia in the community?</li> <li>● What is your idea of work life balance?</li> </ul>
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<p>Questions specific to first generation students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have you advised first generation students before? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>If so, what were some of the things you learned? If not, what challenges do you anticipate?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● How might your advising style shift when supporting first generation students? <i>(Or other relevant identities)</i></li> <li>● Who has experience with first generation graduate students in this program/dept that we could consult?</li> <li>● Do you know if there are currently first generation graduate students in the program?</li> <li>● How might you support conference preparation for someone new to conferences?</li> <li>● How might you support CV preparation for someone new to academia?</li> </ul>
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<p>Questions specific to international students</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Have you ever advised international students before? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>If so, what were some of the things you learned? If not, what challenges do you anticipate?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Who should I contact with questions as I consider the program?</li> <li>● Who has experience with international graduate students in this program/dept that we could consult?</li> <li>● Are there other international students in the program currently? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>If not, when was the last time there was an international student in the program?</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● What financial support differences are there for international students? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Am I eligible for the same types of funding support as domestic students?</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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