Adjusting to Graduate School

Graduate school is an amazing opportunity to deepen your education in an area of study that interests you, to develop your professional identity and to meet others with similar interests. However, the graduate student experience is also a period of adjustment, and along with these very positive experiences, there are challenges as well.

The adjustment to graduate school differs for each individual, however; there are some common hurdles which many graduate students express. Many graduate students...

- Were a star student as an undergraduate, whereas in graduate school they are now surrounded by peers who are as smart as them.
- Experience "imposter syndrome", which refers to the sense that it was a mistake that you got into graduate school and that someone might discover that you are not qualified to be in here.
- Struggle to transition to a new learning environment that is very different from college or an 8-to-5 job. This includes learning how to interact with their cohort, which can feel both rewarding and competitive at times.

UNC has many supports for graduate students, most notably the Graduate Student Center [1] and Graduate School’s Diversity and Student Success [2] program.

Please use Counseling and Psychological Services [3] for support if and when you need us.

Source URL: https://campushealth.unc.edu/health-topics/academic-success/adjusting-graduate-school

Links
[1] https://gradschool.unc.edu/studentlife/resources/gsc/
[2] https://graddiversity.unc.edu/events/