



2024 Field of Dreams Conference

Panel, Guided Conversation, and Workshop Descriptions

Friday, November 8th

Panel 1: How to Pick a Graduate Program [Audience: Undergraduate]

We discuss how to find a graduate program that fits you. We explore funding opportunities, how to look for research opportunities that match your interests, and how to assess any support systems the program has in place. Bring your questions for the Q&A.

Workshop 1: Maximizing Productivity During Graduate School [Audience: Early Graduate]

Graduate students discuss balancing learning immense amounts of material in a short period of time, teaching courses, conducting research, and your personal life. In this session, we will encourage a group discussion where we all share our successful techniques for maximizing productivity, while prioritizing our mental, emotional, and physical well-being, in order to complete and excel in a graduate program.

Workshop 2: Preparing for Your First Professional Position [Audience: Late Graduate]

Embarking on your first professional position after earning a graduate degree is an exciting yet daunting transition. This workshop is designed to equip graduate students with knowledge on navigating the job market and leveraging their current skills and academic experiences to ensure success in their new positions.

Panel 2: Preparing Your Students for Careers Outside of Academia [Audience: Faculty]

Join our panel of experts from government and industry for an insightful discussion on preparing students for successful careers outside of academia. Learn about the skills and qualities employers seek when hiring and gain valuable tips on how to best equip your students for the job market.

Panel 3: Careers in Government and Industry [Audience: All Students]

Panelists will discuss the many career opportunities available to PhDs in the mathematical sciences outside of academia. Bring your questions for the Q&A.

Guided Conversation 1: Mentoring and Advising Alliance Scholars [Audience: Faculty]

Faculty mentors and potential faculty mentors of Math Alliance Scholars discuss how best to help students apply to appropriate programs based on their academic performance and preparation, what makes a strong application, etc. What are graduate faculty looking for in applications? What are mentors looking for as they help place students?

Panel 4: Fields of Success [Audience: Everyone]

Math Alliance Scholars who have completed their PhD discuss how the Math Alliance has influenced their careers.

The Kathryn Chaloner Memorial Lecture in the Statistical Sciences and their Applications [Audience: Everyone]

This lecture, in memory of Kathryn Chaloner, will continue to remind us of her dedication to the principles of the Math Alliance and her enduring work to promote statistical sciences within the structure of the Math Alliance.

Panel 5: A Day in the Life of a... [Audience: All Students]

What does a typical day look like for a professor? A statistician? An actuary? A data scientist? How do our career choices affect life outside of work and our families? We discuss how to find a fulfilling career in the mathematical sciences.

REU and Professional Societies Fair [Audience: Everyone]

Dinner – Celebration of Doctoral Students [Audience: Everyone]

Saturday, November 9th

Panel 6: Getting into a PhD Program [Audience: Undergraduate]

We discuss preparing for and applying to PhD programs. This includes undergraduate coursework, elements of the applications, as well as bridge and research programs that can prepare you for graduate work.

Workshop 3: Session on Navigating Graduate School and Self-advocacy [Audience: Graduate]

We discuss navigating through various aspects of graduate school and overcoming initial challenges. What has helped you succeed in graduate school so far? We discuss choosing an adviser or mentor, finding funding for travel, advocating for yourself, and more.

Guided Conversation 2: You Might Be Surprised to Learn that... [Audience: Faculty]

A frank discussion of what undergraduate programs realistically can offer with limited resources and what graduate programs expect their incoming students to have completed before arrival. We discuss how, as a community, we can support students as they transition from undergrad to graduate programs with varying expectations.

Panel 7: Finding Your Community in Graduate School [Audience: Undergraduate]

We discuss how to find support in grad school. We'll consider questions such as: How can I find community within my cohort and how should I seek out mentors from faculty and senior grad students? Who can I turn to if I'm feeling overwhelmed? What resources exist to help me prepare for qualifying exams or attend conferences?

Panel 8: It's OK to Say No, and When to Say Yes [Audience: Graduate]

We discuss how to prioritize, and make the most of, the volunteer and outreach opportunities you choose to participate in, and when and how to say "no" when appropriate. We'll also explore the unequal service burdens often experienced by women and minorities in academia and discuss strategies for ensuring your service contributions are acknowledged by your institution.

Guided Conversation 3: Supporting Future Ph.D. Students Post- Covid [Audience: Undergraduate Faculty]

Faculty members will discuss the evolving landscape of graduate education post-Covid and how to adapt mentorship practices to better support the transition of students from undergraduate to graduate studies in a post-pandemic world.

Guided Conversation 4: Building Flexibility into Requirements for the Ph.D. [Audience: Graduate Faculty]

Flexible requirements for graduate degree completion often encourage equity and allow students from different backgrounds to achieve program requirements at their own pace. Join us for a group discussion about your experiences building flexibility into your programs or to learn more about what other programs have tried and implemented.

Panel 9: The Doctoral Experience [Audience: All Students]

This panel will share best practices on how to succeed in a doctoral program in the mathematical sciences. This panel is geared for predoctoral and doctoral students. Math Alliance graduate students will tell their stories, the good and the bad. This panel is open to Math Alliance scholars only.

Regional Alliance Meetings [Audience: Faculty]

Faculty members of a regional alliance are encouraged to use this time for face-to-face meetings with their fellow members. Potential new members are welcome to attend. Those participants who do not have a nearby regional alliance are encouraged to join a separate discussion about what regional alliances are and how to create one.

Math Science Talk [Audience: Everyone]

Graduate Fair Warm Up [Audience: All Students]

We discuss top things to ask/look for when visiting tables during fair, ways to show interest, etc.

Graduate Fair [Audience: Everyone]

Dinner and Banquet Keynote Address [Audience: Everyone]