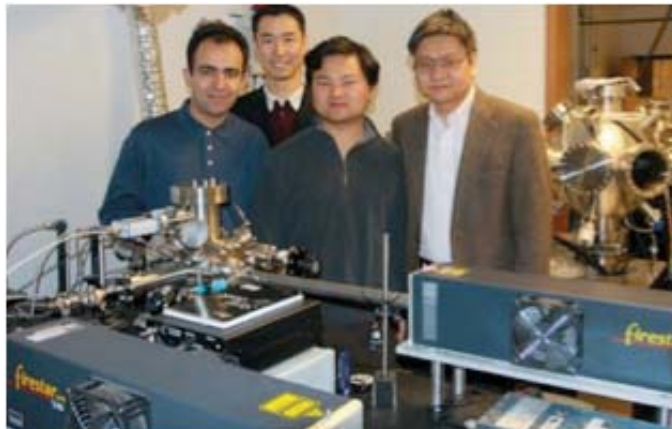


Alumni News



Masoud Mahjouri Samani, his mentor Dr. Yongfeng Lu, and other co-authors from UNL Electrical Engineering and Physics Departments, have published their research entitled, “Self-aligned growth of single-walled carbon nanotubes using optical near-field effect”. Their article was featured in the January 2009 Nanotechnology journal. Masoud, 2006-08 McNair Scholar, is a current electrical engineering Ph.D. student at UNL.

How to Be a Successful Graduate Student Panel



How to be a Successful Graduate Student – Panelists included: (from left to right) Malcolm Tassi, physics; Bill Bauer, philosophy; Jenny Green, statistics; and Emily Haferbier Trotter, sociology.

This spring, McNair Senior Scholars met with a panel comprised of both new and experienced graduate students who offered their advice on how to be a successful graduate student.

Malcolm Tassi, a first-year physics graduate student, told the scholars that “there is no way to prepare for the intensity of graduate school, but the rewards are profound.” Asked how graduate school is different from undergraduate studies, Tassi said, “Graduate school changes your perspective. It makes you look at things in a different way.” He encouraged scholars to draw from the passions and excitement of fellow graduate students.

Emily Haferbier, a first-year sociology student—and former McNair scholar—said she was most surprised at the amount of work in graduate studies. She advised scholars to “expect much more work than you have as an undergraduate.” She also described how she often felt like an imposter, like she didn’t belong, but she assured scholars that “everyone feels this way at the beginning.” (Her fellow panelists all agreed.) Emily found a network within the department to support her. She offered one final word of advice, “Don’t get caught up in department politics.”

Jenny Green, a fifth-year doctoral student in statistics, encouraged scholars to look to the advanced graduate students for mentoring. “Experienced graduate students,” she said, “are there to support you. They know the unwritten rules and can be extremely helpful as you navigate your first year.” She also advised scholars to “take breaks from studies and enjoy time away from school. Don’t be afraid to ask for help. Remain open-minded and seek opportunities that interest you.”

Bill Bauer, an advanced doctoral student in philosophy, advised scholars to keep and maintain a goals matrix, and update it each semester. He also noted that successful graduate students keep a “research and ideas” journal to keep track of ideas that you’d like to further explore. On the following page, Bill offers his tips for graduate school success.