

University of Kansas (KU) School of Engineering
Graduate Education Newsletter
May 2012

Current News: <http://www.engr.ku.edu/>

EECS Professor wins International Engineering Award:
<http://www2.ku.edu/~kunews/cgi-bin/ku-associate-professor-wins-international-engineering-award>

EECS Professor to Serve as Editor of Prestigious Journal:
<http://www2.ku.edu/~kunews/cgi-bin/eeecs-professor-to-serve-as-editor-of-prestigious-journal>

Helpful Tips from a Current Engineering Graduate Student
Adam Cyr, PhD Student in Bioengineering

Contact Adam at kuengr@ku.edu

Profiles of ambassadors are available at <http://www.engr.ku.edu/prospective/graduate/>



1. What have you enjoyed the most about being a graduate student ambassador in the School of Engineering at KU?

"I have truly enjoyed the immersion I have had into my research, and all of the great people I have become friends with over the course of three years. My academics have brought me to a point where I am extremely excited to see what lies ahead. Outside of school, I have developed a strong friend base to share excursions to Kansas City with and travel around the Midwest."

2. What is one of the most common questions you receive as an ambassador, and what, typically, are your answers?

"There are two common questions I receive, typically from undergraduates of all levels. The first is: What can I do before I am ready to apply? I always advise future graduate students to be proactive. Even if you haven't applied to graduate school yet, go talk to professors who you have enjoyed learning from, and/or performing research you want to be involved in. Talk with current graduate students in those labs. Ask to attend lab meetings, such as days when they might be gathering data. See if you can get involved in helping a graduate student, or even get your own project. This sort of early commitment will give you great experience for joining a lab, help you hone what it is you are interested in, and potentially make you a shoe-in for the lab you are helping.

The second is: My grades aren't that great, and I don't think I'll get in. While grades are certainly part of the equation for the graduate application process, they aren't everything. Even if your grades aren't perfect, there are still opportunities to get into graduate school. For one, KU offers provisional status, which means you have an introductory period at the beginning of your program where you usually take prerequisite courses, and if you do well in these courses, you will begin your regular graduate courses with a good GPA. One more thing to remember – your undergraduate GPA doesn't carry over – you get a fresh start."

3. What are your plans after graduation, and how have you prepared to pursue these plans?

"I am at the point where I am planning my comprehensive examination, and am beginning my writing for my dissertation. While that means the end is 'in-sight,' it also means the 'real-world' is that much closer. I am interested in working in industry immediately upon graduation, but the prospect of teaching college-level courses is also interesting to me. I am planning for both of these options by becoming proactive in sending out resumes to companies I am interested in. Even if I am not quite done with my degree, the advice I have received tells me to get my name out into the world. Many companies maintain a registry of individuals who have applied, and look to that registry for potential matches to new job openings. I will also be the lecturer for an Introduction to Biomechanics course in the fall, which will give me some great teaching experience if I decide to rejoin academia."

4. What was one thing you wish you would have known before starting graduate school?

“If there was one thing I wish I was more comfortable with before starting graduate school, it would be my technical writing. I have learned a lot, but I lacked the practice and experience of submitting work to peer-reviewed conference proceedings and journal publications.”

5. What do you like to do when you're not studying, researching, or helping the KU School of Engineering recruit prospective graduate students?

“Outside of KU, I enjoy being outdoors. I play in a beach volleyball league with some friends out in Shawnee. I have grown an interest in training for a triathlon, and recently in rock climbing (KU's indoor wall makes that possible!).”

If you are interested in visiting the KU campus to find out more about graduate study in engineering, please contact the Engineering Graduate Student Services Office at kuengr@ku.edu or (785) 864-2932.

Check out the KU School of Engineering on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/kuengineering>

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