University of Pennsylvania

From the SelectedWorks of Demetri L. Morgan

Spring March 8, 2015

A Black Males' Guide to Thriving In a Doctoral Program

Cameron C. Beatty, Iowa State University
Kourtney P. Gray, Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College
Cameron J. Harris, Indiana University - Bloomington
Vincent T. Harris, Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College
Jonathan A. McElderry, University of Missouri, et al.

Available at: http://works.bepress.com/demetrilmorgan/4/
A BLACK MALES' GUIDE TO THRIVING IN A DOCTORAL PROGRAM
ACPA Conference - Tampa, FL
March 8, 2015

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Overview of Session

• Introduction of Panelists

• Relevant Statistics

• Discussion Topics

• Audience Engagement

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Introduction of Panelists

Dr. Cameron C. Beatty - Iowa State University

4th Year/ Candidate: Jonathan A. McElderry - University of Missouri

3rd Years/ Candidates: Kourtney P. Gray - Louisiana State University
Vincent T. Harris - Louisiana State University

2nd Year: Demetri Morgan - University of Pennsylvania

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Relevant Statistics

Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2012) *Digest of Education Statistics*
EDUCATION DOCTORAL DEGREES CONFERRED TO BLACK MEN IN LAST 5 YEARS

- 2007-2008: 383
- 2008-2009: 432
- 2009-2010: 447
- 2010-2011: 460
- 2011-2012: 505

Academic year
Doctoral Degrees in Education Conferred in 2012

- Total: 9,990
- Women: 6,775
- Men: 3,215
- Black Women: 1,396
- Black Men: 505
2008-2009 Education Doctoral Degrees Conferred by Institution Type

- Public, 4 Year: 57%
- Private, Non-Profit, 4 Year: 43%
- Private, For-Profit, 4 Year: 0%
2011-2012 Education Doctoral Degrees Conferred by Institution Type

- Public, 4 Year: 57%
- Private, Non-Profit, 4 Year: 30%
- Private, For-Profit, 4 Year: 13%
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Open Discussion Topics

Transitions
- First-year/Coursework
- Candidate Status/Committee Development
- Dissertation
- Job Search

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Transition

- First-year Coursework
- Transition to new environment
- Must do's in first-year

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Coursework/Committee

- Coursework to Candidate Status
- Committee Development
- Developing Research Plan

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Dissertation

- Arriving at a Dissertation Topic
- Proposing the Dissertation
- Best practices for Dissertating
- Defending the Dissertation

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Transition Post PhD

- Job Search (Administration/ Faculty)
- Publishing the Dissertation
- Back to a Sane Mind

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OPEN FORUM

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE FOR THE PANELIST?

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Take Aways....

A Black Males Guide to Thriving in a Doctoral Program

Organization: BlackMalesGuide

Let’s Work Together!

1. Talk to your advisors and mentors.
2. Identify your strengths and weaknesses.
3. Identify resources and opportunities that align with your interests and goals.
4. Create a support network.
5. Establish a research plan.
6. Stay organized and keep track of deadlines.
7. Seek feedback and be open to constructive criticism.
8. Attend conferences and workshops.
10. Stay committed and persistent.
11. Celebrate your achievements.

Writing & Research:

1. Develop a clear and concise thesis statement.
2. Use strong verbs and active voice.
3. Use citations and references properly.
4. Stay organized and keep track of your sources.
5. Stay focused and avoid distractions.

Build Your Brand:

1. Develop a strong online presence.
2. Stay active on social media.
3. Attend conferences and workshops.
4. Stay organized and keep track of your sources.
5. Stay focused and avoid distractions.

Prezi

Available online at: https://www.prezi.com
Tips handout QRV
Tips for Black Male Doctoral Success

1. Start with the end goal in mind. Identify opportunities that align with your future career interests and gain experiences in those areas.

2. Identify and connect with others (within your institution and outside) who are interested in the same research topics. Find ways to collaborate and share ideas.

3. Create writing accountability groups. Writing accountability groups can help with goal setting, creating realistic research timelines, and offering/receiving developmental feedback regarding writing.

4. When reading for class or for your own research, ALWAYS keep notes on your own reflections regarding readings. Attempt to make connections across readings or how information fills a gap or leaves a void in the overall literature.

5. Ask For Experienced Help. The good thing about being a PhD student is that numerous individuals have been in your shoes, so seek out those individuals once you arrive. Ask 2nd year & 3rd year graduate students in your program including those in the dissertation process for their past notes from class, tips on how to interact with the professor, and help on how best to organize your papers.

6. Set a Personal Deadline to decide a Dissertation Topic within year One. Although you will not need your dissertation topic until the end of year two, I find it best to have decided no later than the end of year one. Knowing your topic will help you plan out your elective
3. Ask For Experienced Help. The good thing about being a PhD student is that numerous individuals have been in your shoes, so seek out those individuals once you arrive. Ask 2nd year & 3rd year graduate students in your program including those in the dissertation process for their past notes from class, tips on how to interact with the professor, and help on how best to organize your papers.

6. Set a Personal Deadline to decide a Dissertation Topic within year One. Although you will not need your dissertation topic until the end of year two, I find it best to have decided no later than the end of year one. Knowing your topic will help you plan out your elective courses, avoid unnecessary research, and it allows you to begin the literature review and bibliography process early.

7. Guard your time. Understand intimately how you work best to get the job done. This includes workspace, groups, study habits, etc. The game changes at this level. Understand the art of saying “NO” to new projects when clearly your plate is already full. You will always have a full plate by the way.

8. Identify a mentor, and do it soon. This person outside of your major advisor or favorite professor will help with the crazy world you are in. Use this person as a confidant, sounding board, and support system. This person is extremely important because they will help you understand the outside academic world apart from your campus. They can connect you with other doctoral students, and faculty/administrators in the field.

9. Serve as a mentor to someone else. EACH ONE, REACH ONE, TEACH ONE. It may sound cliché, but serving as a mentor helps you with understanding your own path as well.

Take advantage of opportunities offered to you. You never know how the experience may advance your professional and educational career.
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10. Take advantage of opportunities offered to you. You never know how the experience may advance your professional and educational career.

11. When seeking a mentor or colleagues to bond with, don’t just look within those circles of people that look like you. Some of your greatest mentors and colleagues within the field can be people outside of your race.
Take Aways....

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Let's Know Your Anti AI (Artificial Intelligence)...

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<th>Organization</th>
<th>Grad School Tips for Students</th>
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<td>2. Ask Questions about On-Campus Opportunities, Networking, Internship, Emerging Research, etc...</td>
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<td>3. Stay Focused on Data to Succeed in the Impact of Your Program, Dr. Stedman, Harvard University</td>
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<td>4. Make It Work to Make It Work for Your Program, Dr. Stedman, Harvard University</td>
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<td>5. Build Your Brand: Personal Branding with You</td>
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Some key takeaways from the document:

1. Apply to diverse doctoral programs to find the right fit.
2. Ask questions about on-campus opportunities, networking, internships, emerging research, etc.
3. Stay focused on data to succeed in your program.
4. Make it work to make it work for your program.
5. Build your brand through personal branding.

The document also includes a table with tips for students, but the specific details are not clearly visible in the image.
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Resource Dashboard
ACPA 2014

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<td><strong>Organization:</strong> Set Yourself Up for Success</td>
<td><strong>Writing &amp; Research:</strong> Work Smarter NOT Harder</td>
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1. **Apps to Download:** Merriam Webster Dictionary, Google Drive, Dropbox, Evernote

2. **ASK! ASK! ASK!** Ask the grad school about unlisted fellowships, travel stipends, conference waivers, etc…

3. **SimpleWash:** App that clears the unflattering words, post, or pictures you posted via your social media sites

4. **Make 20hr Work for You:** Which government funded programs are you eligible for (i.e. SNAP), Create or join a writing accountability: this is a link with a helpful resource guide for developing writing

5. **Find Cloud services to store research materials:** RefWorks.com, citationmachine.net, Drop Box, GrammarGirl.com

6. **Papers (Mac):** An Apple App used for managing research literature
**Organization:** Set Yourself Up for Success

1. **Apps to Download:** [Merriam Webster Dictionary](http://example.com), [Google Drive](http://example.com), [Dropbox](http://example.com), [Evernote](http://example.com)

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4. **Make 20hr Work for You:** Which government funded programs are you eligible for (i.e. [SNAP](http://example.com)),

5. **Relax:** The Gym, jogging, playstation, movies, eating habits
Writing & Research: Work Smarter NOT Harder

1. Volunteer for Research Teams!!!

2. Find Cloud services to store research materails: RefWorks.com, citationmachine.net, Drop Box, GrammarGirl.com

3. Papers (Mac): An Apple App used for managing research literature

4. Create or join a writing accountability: this is a link with a helpful resource guide for developing writing strategies as a graduate student from ASHE

5. Every Semester Needs A Plan: This resource guides you through developing a plan for each semester
CourseWork: Do What Works for You

1. **How to read for class in grad school:** We all know how to read. But reading effectively for a doctoral course is a different style of reading. Follow the link for strategies to engage for reading in graduate school.

2. **Develop a semester plan for coursework, writing, and research**

3. **Form a dissertation committee:** Start to think about faculty that can serve on your dissertation committee and what role you would like for them to play.

4. **How to Write a Lot**

5. **Use on Technology Centers:** Tape Recorders, SPSS, Garage Band (Mac), Olympus (etc..), Build your own presentation toolbox (adaptors, clickers..etc)

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**Building Your Network**

1. **Present Yourself:** Find small ways to present to build your network.

2. **Network:** Connect through Black Graduate Student Network.

3. **Vistar:** Engage with others who don’t want to network.

4. **Be Moonlighting:** Find ways to connect with others.

5. **Follow Through:** Build your network by following through a month.
Build Your Brand: Personal Branding Starts with You

1. Present at Local Conferences: Have the conference gitters? Find small conferences in your area of study located near you and present to gain experiences

2. Networking: Create a virtual contact card in your phone, join Black Grad Student Associations

3. VistaPrint: Print your own Business cards for less than $15, don’t wait on your office/department

4. Be Mindful: Get to know your advisor, be aware of connections you make

5. Follow Up 101: Set Calendar reminders to network, (i.e. once a month, on special occasions), Utilize your mentor’s networks, Build new networks through your mentee’s
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