Science Societies

Capitalizing on the Resources Offered by the Societies

A Pathway to Graduate Student Success

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Participants attending the Leadership Workshop organized by the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA (ACS) Graduate Student Committee during the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Annual Meeting, Baltimore, 2022.

Navigating through a graduate school presents its own set of challenges, particularly when you want to acquire skills necessary to kickstart your professional career alongside excelling in research. While advisers and the graduate school can undoubtedly offer guidance, it's crucial to seek opportunities beyond the school to maintain a competitive edge. Graduate student members of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA have a wide selection of resources and opportunities to tap into. Following are some of those opportunities.

Leadership

The ASA, CSSA, and SSSA (ACS) Graduate Student Committee is composed of graduate students from around the world who volunteer to serve on the committee and work year-round to plan for activities garnered towards all graduate student members of the Societies. If you want to develop your leadership prowess, you can nominate yourself to be considered for the committee role. Feel free to reach out to any of the committee members to learn more about what the committee does and how you can be involved! In the meantime, you can also apply for various leadership events and opportunities the Societies offer such as collaborating with the committee on authoring a *CSA News* magazine article.

We partner with various committees and departments within our Societies to coordinate a range of workshops at the Annual Meeting focused on teaching skills

necessary for graduate student success. These workshops encompass diverse subjects, including support for early career scientists and guidance for transitioning after graduate school.

Webinars

Webinars offered through the Societies and the ACS Graduate Student Committee are useful resources for graduate student members. They offer flexible access, allowing students to participate from anywhere and at any time as they are often recorded, thus negating geographical and temporal constraints. Webinars feature top experts in agronomy, crop science, and soil science, including graduate students and early career scientists, providing vital insights and perspectives on diverse topics. Covering the latest research and practical skills relevant to these disciplines, they ensure graduate students stay at the forefront of their field. Moreover, these webinars facilitate interactive learning experiences, fostering collaboration and engagement among participants. They also provide valuable information on maximizing graduate school resources, building professional skills, and navigating grad school.



First webinar of 2024 organized by the ASA, CSSA, and SSSA(ACS) Graduate Student Committee, presented by Dr. Leo Bastos, University of Georgia.

To get frequent updates on our webinars, follow us on our social media on X (formerly twitter) at @ACSGradStudents or Facebook (ACS.gradstudents). To view our past

webinars, visit us on any of these pages: agronomy.org/gradstudents/webinars, crops.org/gradstudents/webinars, and soils.org/gradstudents/webinars.

Also, some cool webinars are on YouTube too, so check them out: youtube.com/@ScienceSocieties!

Awards and Scholarships

The Societies offer scholarships and awards throughout the year. You can nominate yourself or a colleague. See crops.org/awards/view#graduatestudentopportunities.

The ACS Graduate Student Committee created the Graduate Student Travel Scholarship to help talented students overcome the financial costs linked to attending the Annual Meeting, enabling them to engage in networking and professional development opportunities. The program launched in 2020, and since then, the committee has awarded up to $750 in grants to at least 10 deserving students every year.

Nominations for the Graduate Student Travel Scholarship open around late March, and final nominations are due late July before the Annual Meeting. For the 2024 application cycle, final nomination initiations and submissions are due July 25. All graduate student members of the Societies can and are encouraged to apply at:

- **ASA: agronomy.org/awards/view/218**
- **CSSA: crops.org/awards/view/218**
- **SSSA: soils.org/awards/view/218**

The travel grant recipients will be notified prior to the Annual Meeting's early registration deadline, with priority given to students presenting their research, so it is advised to submit an abstract to be considered for the grant.

Graduate Student Events at the Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting in the fall is the premiere event of ASA, CSSA, and SSSA. It brings together around 4,000 stakeholders from across the United States and the globe. This includes researchers, scientists, policymakers, government employees, students, industry representatives, and others. The meeting provides ample opportunities for presenting your work and networking. If you have something to present, submit an abstract. If you don't, consider registering for the mega event as it is a great place to make connections and develop professional skills. The conference includes many sessions and workshops on the latest discoveries and important issues in agronomy, crop science, and soil science. It's also a place where collaborations are formed to drive innovation and advance scientific knowledge in these fields.



Graduate students and mentors participating in the Networking Session at the 2023 Annual Meeting.

The ACS Graduate Student Committee organizes numerous events for graduate students. For example, some of the events scheduled for this year's Annual Meeting include:

- **Texas Gardens and Spirits Tour**

- **Graduate Student Social**
- **Graduate Student Networking Session**
- **Graduate Student Leadership Workshop: Sharpening Skills to Strengthen Your Grad School Experience and Beyond**
- **Life After Graduate School—Transitioning to Early Career**

Find more about the Annual Meeting by visiting: acsmeetings.org

Engaging in Science Policy Advocacy

The ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Science Policy Office actively advocates for the needs and priorities of Society members to policymakers in Washington, DC. Graduate students can take advantage of this by participating in the Scientists Engaging and Educating Decision Makers (SEED) Ambassador leadership program and/or Congressional Visit Day (CVD) to advocate for food, agriculture, and natural resources research funding.



ASA, CSSA, and SSSA graduate students and leaders on a Congressional Visit Day to advocate for agricultural policy and increased funding for agricultural research.

Learn more on how to get involved: agronomy.org/science-policy/get-involved/.

Feature in Society Podcasts

The *Field, Lab, Earth* podcast (https://fieldlabearth.libsyn.com/) provides a platform for graduate students to spotlight their research work and career aspirations in the field of crop and soil sciences. If you're a student member and want to appear on the podcast student spotlight segment, you can do so by filling out this form to be on the show: https://ow.ly/Mvn950Ros3e.

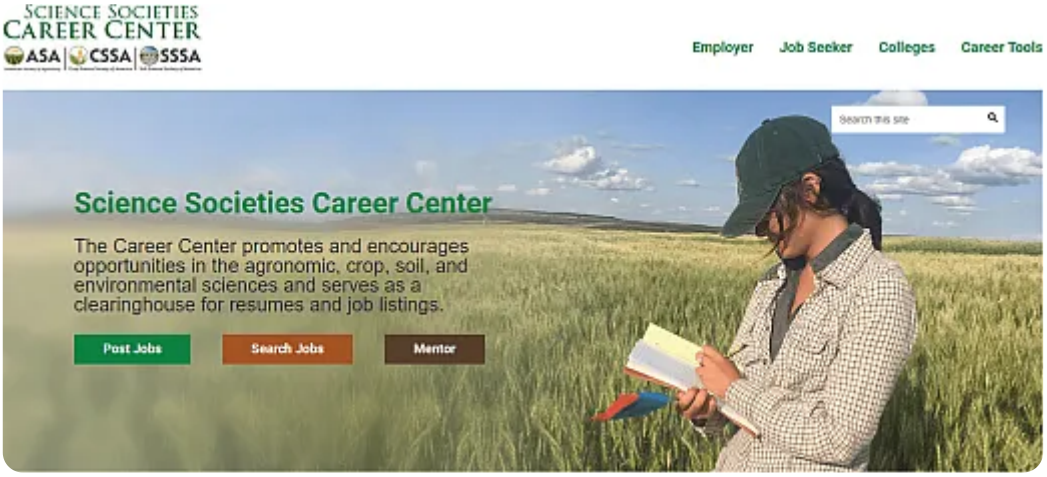
Professional Certifications

Professional certifications offered through ASA as a Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) or SSSA as a Certified Professional Soil Scientist (CPSS) set the standard for professionalism in the field. Earning certification brings you credibility, opportunity, motivation, ability, and validation. Once certified, you can maintain your certification by earning continuing education units (CEUs) through various educational activities such as self-study quizzes, webinars, workshops, and conferences—many of which are offered through the Societies. Learn more at soils.org/certifications/become-certified and certifiedcropadviser.org/become-certified/.

Job Search and Next Steps

Graduate students who are nearing graduation (or have graduated) with their M.S., Ph.D., or professional degrees should be plugged into the Science Societies Career Center (careerplacement.org/). This website provides job listings and opportunities in the fields of the agronomic, crop, soil, and environmental sciences. It also serves as a place where you can store your resume and apply for positions to make the next step

in your career. Uploading your updated CV when you're ready to apply for a position would put you in great shape to land your dream job!



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Conclusion

By actively engaging with these resources and opportunities, graduate students can broaden their skill sets, expand their professional networks, and enhance their overall academic experiences. Embracing such avenues outside of graduate school can significantly enrich their journey toward becoming well-rounded professionals in their respective fields.

Connect With Us!

If you would like to give us feedback on our work or want to volunteer to join the committee to help plan any of our activities, please reach out to Ariana Lazo (alazo@purdue.edu), the 2024 Chair of the committee! If you would like to stay up to date with the ACS Graduate Student Committee, watch your emails and connect with us on X (formerly Twitter) at @ACSGradStudents, Facebook at

ACS.gradstudents, or visit:

agronomy.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members,

crops.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members, or

soils.org/membership/committees/view/ACS238/members.

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