

# First Year Seminar Program at The University of Iowa Grad School—is it for you?

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# Inspiration for the seminar:

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- UG surveys: >80% students appreciate UI's stature as a Research I institution
- > 100 graduate programs (74 doctoral)
- Professional programs: JD, MD, DDS, PharmD, MBA, DNP, DPT, AuD, MSW, MPH, etc.
- UG student success is a UI priority---- engaged student learning, retention, degree completion
- Grad Education pipeline issue-----grad ed seminars in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> year----earlier?


# Grad School—is it for you?

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- 3<sup>rd</sup> year, started in 2009
- Fall semester offering
- 13-16 students per semester (total 45 so far)
  - 12 men
  - 33 women
  - 11 URM students
- Sample post-baccalaureate interests:  
medicine, dentistry, law, pharmacy,  
film/video, psychology, math ed, political  
science, journalism

# Course organization:

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- 1 x week, 50 minute sessions (1 sh credit)
- Weekly on-line readings 
- 1-3 sentence discussion board postings on “gut-response” to question
- Short 1 page web research papers on topical question
- Each session: 10 min review of readings, student led-discussions
- 5 page final paper on key aspects
- Letter grades assigned based on submitted papers, attendance, class participation, final paper

# Pedagogical Strategies:

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- Shared discussion board postings: students relate weekly topics to their own goals and experiences
- One page research papers: students explore weekly topics through on-line research
- Class discussions: cues from instructors promotes self-guided discussion
- Small group discussions: share & compare ideas
- Student, faculty and admission advisor panels: students assess and apply concepts through Q&A

# Topics: Part 1

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- Why graduate school?
- Differences between graduate and professional programs
- Admissions requirements for programs of interest
- Choosing a specific graduate program
- Choosing a university/program
- Timetable for applying
- Building your background
- Statement of purpose
- Financing your graduate education

# Topics: Part 2

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Based on student interests:

- Student Panel
- Faculty Panel
- Admissions advisor Panel
- Final wrap-up session

# Sample Comments:

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“I’m so far ahead of classmates in getting involved on campus and how to prepare for my future”



“I wish I would have had a course like this during undergrad!”  
(guest panelist)

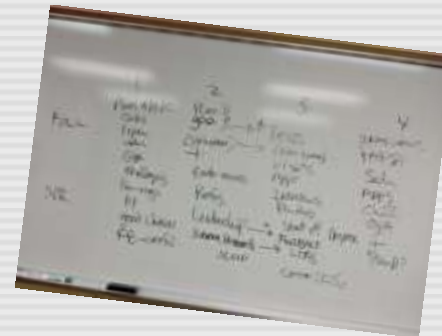




# Student Learning Outcomes:

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- Student maturation, growth
- Students self-exam their academic goals and aspirations
- Learn how to match interests with viable career paths
- Broaden students' awareness of career options
- Understand career choice as an evolving process, not a one-time decision
- Foster faculty relationships, additional mentors
- Students develop an outline of what to do when ---  
4 year plan
- Realization that time is short!



# Sample Comments:

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“I learned that the faculty and deans are easy to talk to — you’re real people too!”

