

An invaluable guide for
scholars stifled by the
traditional academic route

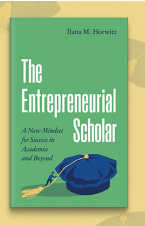


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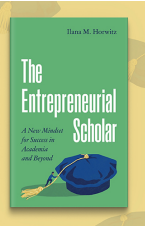
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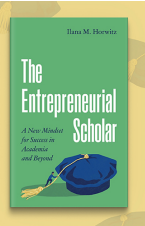


HANDOUT#1: THE ENTREPRENEURIAL SCHOLAR DIAGNOSTIC

A Framework for Auditing Graduate Program Elements

Use this tool to assess program structure through three questions:

Program Element	Current State Assessment	Opportunity for Change
ADMISSIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (GPA/GRE focus) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (evidence of initiative/creativity) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (select compliant students) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (select self-directed students) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (perfect credentials) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (diverse paths valued)	What could we change in our rubric or essays to select for entrepreneurial qualities?
FIRST-YEAR ORIENTATION	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (here's what to read) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (here's your first research task) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (here are the rules) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (what problem will you solve?) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (here's the one path) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (here are many paths)	What message could we send in week 1 that says "you're a scholar, not a student"?
COURSEWORK STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (read and synthesize literature) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (create original analyses) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (complete assigned readings) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (pursue questions you care about) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (master the canon) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (use lit strategically for your goals)	What's ONE assignment type we could change to require knowledge production?

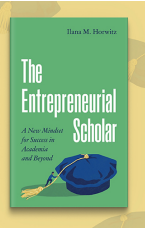


ADVISING MEETINGS	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (receive advisor feedback) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (bring work in progress) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (wait for advisor direction) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (bring agenda and proposals) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (seek approval for each step) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (make decisions, seek consultation)	Could we require students to bring written agendas to every meeting?
QUALIFYING/COMP EXAMS	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (prove you've read everything) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (demonstrate you can create) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (answer questions posed to you) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (design a study/write a proposal) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (show mastery of known info) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (show strategic thinking)	Could we offer alternative exam formats that require knowledge production?
DISSERTATION STAGE	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (literature review takes years) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (start research in year 2-3) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (wait for advisor approval each step) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (set own timeline, make decisions) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty ("perfect before I finish") <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty ("good enough to graduate")	What explicit "good enough" language could faculty use? Could we add milestone deadlines?
CAREER/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer (attend optional workshops) <input type="checkbox"/> Producer (build portfolio of experiences) <input type="checkbox"/> Passive (wait for job market to happen) <input type="checkbox"/> Agentic (create opportunities through action) <input type="checkbox"/> Certainty (aim for one job type) <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainty (explore multiple paths)	Could we integrate career exploration into required milestones/IDPs?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR YOUR TEAM:

1. Where do we see the biggest gaps between current practice and entrepreneurial approach?
2. What's ONE change we could pilot this semester that costs nothing?
3. What structural changes would require faculty discussion/approval?

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HANDOUT#2: FACULTY INTERVENTIONS

From Consumer to Producer | From Passive to Agentic | From Certainty-Seeking to Uncertainty-Navigating

HOW TO USE THIS:

1. **Pick ONE** intervention to try this month
2. **Observe** the impact on student mindset/behavior
3. **Share** what worked with colleagues
4. **Scale** successful interventions across your program

SHIFT 1: CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE PRODUCERS

Action #1: The Week-1 Problem Statement

- **What:** In your first class or advising meeting, have students write one paragraph on "a problem I want to solve through my work"
- **Why:** Establishes producer identity from day one
- **Time investment:** 10 minutes in class/meeting

Action #2: Research Before Literature Review

- **What:** Assign a small original data collection or analysis BEFORE comprehensive literature review
- **Why:** Prevents "consumption paralysis"; students experience themselves as creators
- **Example:** Interview 3 people, code 10 social media posts, analyze 5 historical documents

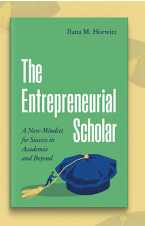
Action #3: Reframe Assignment Language

- **What:** Change syllabus from "paper" to "original analysis" or "knowledge contribution"
- **Why:** Language signals expectations
- **Time investment:** 15 minutes of editing

Action #4: "Good Enough" Dissertation Conversation

- **What:** In your next advising meeting with ABD students, explicitly say: "Your dissertation is your first book, not your best book. Good enough is the standard."
- **Why:** Counters perfectionism that keeps students stuck

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- **Time investment:** 30 seconds

Action #5: Create-Don't-Consume Syllabus Audit

- **What:** Review your syllabus. Calculate % of assignments that require consuming others' work vs. producing original work. Shift the ratio.
- **Why:** Aligns activities with producer identity
- **Time investment:** 30 minutes

SHIFT 2: CULTIVATE AGENCY

Action #6: Student-Driven Agendas

- **What:** Require students to submit written agenda 24 hours before advising meetings. You respond to THEIR priorities.
- **Why:** Shifts power dynamic; students practice ownership
- **Time investment:** Zero (saves you agenda-setting time)

Action #7: The "Opportunities Through Action" Assignment

- **What:** Require students to initiate 2 professional contacts this semester (informational interviews, conference connections, collaboration inquiries)
- **Why:** Teaches that opportunities come from action, not waiting
- **Time investment:** Add to IDP/milestone requirements

Action #8: Decision Documentation

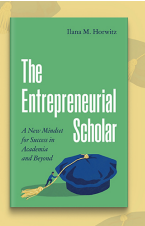
- **What:** When students face choices (topic, methods, career path), have them write: "Here's my decision and why"
- **Why:** Teaches strategic thinking; builds confidence in decision-making
- **Time investment:** 5 minutes to assign, builds student capacity

Action #9: Self-Set Timeline Exercise

- **What:** Have students propose their own dissertation timeline with rationale. You negotiate from THEIR proposal, not impose yours.
- **Why:** Ownership of timeline predicts completion
- **Time investment:** 15 minutes to review their proposal

Action #10: Celebrate Autonomy

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- **What:** In meetings, ask: "What decisions have you made this week about your work?"
Make autonomy visible and valued.
- **Why:** Reinforces agentic identity
- **Time investment:** 2 minutes per meeting

SHIFT 3: CULTIVATE UNCERTAINTY NAVIGATION

Action #11: Fail-Forward Reflection Protocol

- **What:** After setbacks (rejected paper, failed exam), require students to write: "What I learned + My next action"
- **Why:** Reframes failure as data; teaches resilience
- **Time investment:** 10 minutes to create template

Action #12: Multiple-Path Exposure

- **What:** Invite 3 alumni with diverse careers (inside + outside academia) to speak this semester
- **Why:** Normalizes multiple paths; reduces anxiety about "the one right way"
- **Time investment:** 3 emails to alumni

Action #13: Early Dissemination Requirement

- **What:** Students must present work publicly (conference, blog, public talk) by year 2-3—before it's "perfect"
- **Why:** Teaches iterative improvement; builds confidence
- **Time investment:** Add to program milestones

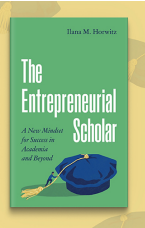
Action #14: Structured Milestones

- **What:** Set clear deadlines: Proposal by [date], Data collection by [date], Defense by [date]
- **Why:** Removes timeline uncertainty; reduces procrastination
- **Time investment:** 30 minutes to establish with student

Action #15: "Strategic Action Under Ambiguity" Conversation

- **What:** When students say "I need more information before I decide," respond: "You'll never have perfect information. What decision can you make with what you know now?"
- **Why:** Teaches that action creates clarity
- **Time investment:** 30 seconds in conversation

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HANDOUT#3: FACULTY MEETING DISCUSSION GUIDE

PURPOSE:

Introduce a framework for assessing and redesigning graduate program elements to better prepare students for diverse career paths while maintaining academic rigor.

OPENING PROMPT

"I recently attended a plenary at the Council of Graduate Schools on entrepreneurial mindsets. Before I share what I learned, I want to hear from you:

Question for faculty: Think about our most successful recent graduates: those who've gone on to meaningful careers, inside or outside academia. What mindsets or behaviors did they have in common?"

INTRODUCE THE FRAMEWORK

"What you just described aligns with research on entrepreneurial scholarship. It's not about 'selling out' or abandoning academic values—it's about three key mindset shifts:

1. **Consumer** → **Producer**: Seeing oneself as a knowledge creator from day one, not just a knowledge consumer
2. **Passive** → **Agentic**: Taking ownership of decisions, timelines, and opportunities rather than waiting for direction
3. **Certainty-Seeking** → **Uncertainty-Navigating**: Learning to act strategically despite incomplete information

These mindsets predict completion, career satisfaction, and resilience—regardless of career path."

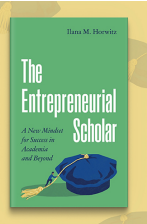
DIAGNOSTIC ACTIVITY (15 minutes)

"Let's audit one program element together. I'm going to hand out a diagnostic tool. Let's look at [choose one: advising structure, qualifying exams, first-year experience]."

[Distribute Handout 1 - Diagnostic]

Questions to discuss:

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1. Where does our current structure fall on the consumer/producer spectrum?
2. What messages are we accidentally sending about agency?
3. How are we preparing students to navigate uncertainty?

BRAINSTORM INTERVENTIONS (10 minutes)

"What's ONE small change we could make to this program element that would shift students toward more entrepreneurial thinking?"

[Collect ideas; aim for 3-5 concrete suggestions]

NEXT STEPS (5 minutes)

"I'm going to share a set of Faculty Action Cards with you after this meeting—concrete 30-day interventions other programs are trying. I'd like us to:

1. **Pilot:** Each of us picks ONE intervention to try this semester
2. **Observe:** Notice the impact on students
3. **Report back:** Share what's working at our next meeting
4. **Scale:** Implement successful interventions program-wide

ADDRESSING LIKELY OBJECTIONS:

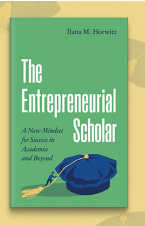
"This lowers academic rigor" → "Producing knowledge is harder than consuming it. This raises rigor. Which is more rigorous: memorizing 200 articles or designing an original study?"

"Students should figure this out themselves" → "We explicitly teach methods, theory, and writing. Why wouldn't we explicitly teach agency, resilience, and strategic thinking?"

"We don't have resources" → "These are structural changes to existing program elements. Most cost nothing—just reframing what we already do."

"Not all students will go into academia anyway" → "Exactly. These mindsets serve students wherever they go. And they make better academics too."

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HANDOUT#4: ADVISING CONVERSATION GUIDE

Cultivating Agency, Ownership, and Resilience in Graduate Students

USE THIS GUIDE: In first-year advising, annual check-ins, or when students seem stuck

SECTION 1: FROM GOOD STUDENT TO GOOD SCHOLAR

Opening: "You've been a successful student for many years—that's why you're here. But now we're asking you to make a shift from 'good student' to 'good scholar.' Let me explain what I mean."

Questions to explore:

- "What made you successful as an undergraduate?" [Listen for: following directions, completing assignments, getting good grades]
- "What do you think makes someone successful as a graduate student and scholar?" [Guide toward: asking questions, taking risks, creating knowledge]

Key message to convey: "As a good student, your job was to master what others knew. As a good scholar, your job is to create new knowledge. That requires a different mindset: more autonomy, more risk-taking, more ownership."

SECTION 2: FINDING YOUR PROBLEM

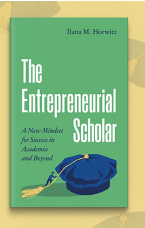
Opening: "The most successful scholars I know have a clear problem they're trying to solve. Not just a topic—a problem they care about."

Questions to explore:

- "What problem in the world keeps you up at night?"
- "If you could change one thing through your research, what would it be?"
- "What question, if answered, would make a real difference?"

Key message: "Your problem will evolve, and that's okay. But having a problem you care about, not just a topic you've been assigned, is what will sustain you through challenges."

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SECTION 3: TAKING OWNERSHIP

Opening: "I want to be clear about our roles. My job is to guide, advise, and open doors. But YOUR job is to own your work, your timeline, and your decisions."

Questions to explore:

- "What's a decision you need to make about your work right now?"
- "What timeline makes sense for you for [milestone X]?"
- "What do you need from me vs. what can you figure out on your own?"

Key message: "I'm here as a consultant, not a manager. You're the CEO of your dissertation. That means you set the agenda, make strategic decisions, and take ownership of outcomes. I'll help you think through those decisions."

SECTION 4: NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY

Opening: "Academia is unpredictable. Job markets, funding, publication timelines—there's a lot you can't control. But you CAN control how you respond to uncertainty."

Questions to explore:

- "What's uncertain right now that's causing you stress?"
- "What would it look like to take action despite that uncertainty?"
- "What's a 'good enough for now' decision you could make?"

Key message: "You'll never have perfect information. Successful scholars act strategically anyway. They make decisions, gather feedback, and adjust. Waiting for certainty is waiting forever."

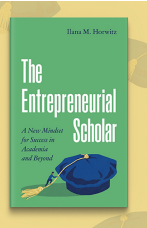
SECTION 5: BUILDING YOUR COMMUNITY

Opening: "Scholarship is a community sport. No one succeeds alone."

Questions to explore:

- "Who are 3 people you could talk to this month about your work?"
- "What would it look like to build relationships with scholars outside this department?"

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- "Who could give you feedback on [specific challenge]?"

Key message: "I want you to have multiple mentors, multiple perspectives, multiple sources of support. Don't rely on just me. Build a network now."

SECTION 6: SHARING YOUR WORK

Opening: "When do you think you'll be ready to share your work publicly (at a conference, in a publication, on a blog)?"

If they say "when it's perfect" or "not yet": "Here's what I've learned: Sharing early, even when work is incomplete, makes you a better scholar. You get feedback, you build confidence, you create opportunities."

Key message: "I want you to present your work publicly by [timeframe]. It doesn't have to be perfect. In fact, it shouldn't be perfect because then you can't benefit from feedback."

CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTIONS (End of Meeting)

1. "What's one thing you're going to do differently this semester based on our conversation?"
2. "What's one decision you're going to make this month that you've been putting off?"
3. "Who's one person you're going to reach out to for support or feedback?"