

Things I wish I had asked before I went to Grad School!

Admin.

- What is differential tuition?
- What is the student health insurance like?
- Are there graduate advisors and how easy is it to meet with them?
- What is the average time for graduation?

Advisor - Funding/Project

- How will I be funded? What research grant am I on and how long does the grant go for?
- What part of this project will I be working on?
- What is your track record for grant funding?
- Will I have to TA? If so, how long?
- Can I do an internship during my Ph.D.?

Advisor - Management

- Are there established lab or individual meetings? Frequency of meetings?
- How frequently do you communicate with your graduate students?
- What is your preferred means of communication?
- How much of my research will be my thesis vs assisting others or fulfilling grants?
- What will my first paper be and what timeline do you expect for completing it?
- How is on-boarding in your lab? How will you train me?
- Do you give last-minute project assignments?
- What skills will I learn in your lab?
- What mental health resources are available?
- Average time to graduation?

Advisor - Relationship

- Do your students feel comfortable providing you with feedback?
- What is your expectation for working hours and work-life balance?
- Have you ever had a student quit? Why and how did you handle the conflict?
- What jobs have your previous students gotten?
- **Request contact information for past students!** These students will provide you with the most useful and accurate information.

Current and Past Students

- Average time to graduation?
- What is the lab culture like?
- How often do you meet with your advisor?
- Number of previous students?
- Why did you join this lab?
- What do you like about your advisor? What don't you like?
- What was your salary and what were your expenses?
- What is the department culture?
- Do you have friends in the lab? What about outside of your lab?
- Does your PI prioritize mental health? Are they comfortable talking about it?
- What was the hardest part of your PhD/MS?

Salt Lake City

- Do you like living in Salt Lake City?
- How is skiing in Utah?
- How does Salt Lake compare to other places that you've lived?
- Can I buy alcohol in Utah?
- What is fry sauce?
- How do you say Tooele?