



**Kathleen Hutnik, Ph.D.**

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*Office of Graduate Student Life*

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## **GRADUATE GENERAL ORIENTATION, TEACHER ASSISTANT TRAINING, AND LAB SAFETY INFORMATION**

**Tuesday, August 16th and Wednesday, August 17th**

Dear New Graduate Student,

Congratulations on your acceptance into Lehigh University and welcome to the community of 2,000 graduate students! We are eagerly preparing to help you with your transition to graduate school and excited to help you thrive as you begin your studies. There's a lot of information in this memo, so I suggest you take the information step by step.

The Graduate Life Office will assist you with concerns about living and learning at Lehigh. We are here to provide general advice, consultation, and information. We can direct you to academic, professional, and other support services, and we facilitate the building of a strong community among graduate students across the University.

Please mark your calendars for the dates mentioned above. We will offer an in-person general graduate orientation on Tuesday, August 16th and TA training on Wednesday, August 17th. Please register for General Orientation [HERE](#). There is a non-refundable fee of \$25 which includes welcome materials and several meals. If you will be a TA, register for TA training [HERE](#).

We will share details with you about orientation at a later date. Conditions look promising and we hope to create a vibrant welcome for you so that you can learn about life as a graduate student at Lehigh and get to meet us and each other!

Please read below for some specific information that might be relevant to you.

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**INTERNATIONAL TA:** If you are a TA, you may need to take and pass the [TOPSS](#) test or an OPI (Oral Proficiency Interview). Please contact your department Coordinator for more information.

**LAB SAFETY TRAINING:** If you'll be working in a physical lab, you'll be required to attend a virtual Lab Safety Training. The training will be Friday, August 19th from 9am-10am. The link for registration for [Lab Safety Training can be found here](#). The training must be completed before you work in your Lehigh lab. We expect that additional training will be required regarding safe practices due to Covid-19. We will keep you informed.

**GRADUATE PRE-ORIENTATION PROGRAM:** G-POP aims to empower underrepresented graduate students by fostering community and reducing barriers to their success. Graduate students entering their first year at Lehigh who self-identify as BIPOC, first-gen, low-income and/or coming from an underrepresented minority are invited to participate. Students will take part in a two-day pre-orientation program on August 13th and 14th



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that engages administrators, faculty, staff, and more senior students and will continue to be supported through programming throughout their first year at Lehigh. If you are interested in joining this program, please sign up [here](#) by July 31st.

**LEHIGH GRADUATE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM:** Transitioning to graduate school can be difficult! This program pairs incoming graduate students with established graduate student mentors to ease their transition to graduate school. If you would like to be matched with a mentor, please sign up [here](#) by July 15th. You will need to create an account through Lehigh Connects, which will also connect you with our network of wonderful alumni! Matches will be shared in early August.

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**HOUSING:** Please check out the [Lehigh Graduate Housing](#) for information and advice on finding on or off-campus housing. We also suggest checking out [Places4Students](#) and joining the [Lehigh Graduate Student Life Facebook group](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

**COMPUTING ACCOUNTS:** New graduate students must establish their Lehigh computing account through the [Lehigh graduate application](#). Click on "View Your Decision" Letter and follow the link under "Next Steps."

**ID CARDS:** Your Lehigh ID card provides you with access to several important services, such as access to academic buildings, the Fitness Center, the Health, Wellness, and Counseling Centers, athletic events, bookstore discounts, and library borrowing.

**\*\*ID Photo Submission Information\*\*** You must submit a photo of yourself in advance, to be used on your ID card. The picture must be a color, head-and-shoulders photograph of you facing the camera with a plain background. We cannot accept photos where you are wearing sunglasses, hats, or anything that would make it difficult to determine your identity.

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**HEALTH AND WELLNESS:** Please click [here](#) to learn more about required health information for incoming students, especially Covid-19, TB testing, forms, and the Pennsylvania State Law mandating either the [meningitis vaccine](#) or required declination form for students living on campus. Click here to stay up-to-date regarding Lehigh's actions, policies, and procedures in light of the [COVID-19 Pandemic](#). We will communicate with you closer to the start of the spring semester regarding requirements upon arrival on campus.

**HEALTH INSURANCE:** Lehigh University offers high-quality [student health insurance](#) at a reasonable cost. **All graduate students must enroll in Lehigh's insurance plan or waive coverage** by confirming they have insurance of their own. Please click [here](#) to see if you qualify or are required to purchase this plan (all F-1 and J-1 visa holders are required to purchase this plan. Please consult with the Office of International Students and Scholars for exceptions.) If you are a funded full-time graduate student, you will be eligible for a 50% subsidy in your May paycheck. Please click here for more information on the [Graduate Student Health Insurance Subsidy](#).



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## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- You can expect to also have a program or departmental orientation. If you are an international student, you will also have orientation sessions pertinent to you.
- For questions regarding academics, course choices, and assistantships, please contact your program.
- If you are an international student and have questions about immigration-related issues, please contact the [Office of International Students and Scholars](#).
- Check out the [Grad Education + Life](#) website for information and activities this summer.
- Please join our [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) pages. For Facebook, Twitter and Instagram follow LehighGLO. This will be a great chance to find out what's going on and to ask questions to your fellow graduate students.
- Please refer to the [Lehigh COVID Information Center](#) for the latest information. In particular, we invite you to read the Question and Answer page especially for graduate students.
- Please do not hesitate to reach out to us - Kathleen Hutnik, Associate Deputy Provost for Graduate Education at [kaha@lehigh.edu](mailto:kaha@lehigh.edu) or Jess Joseph, Assistant Director for Graduate Life at [jlj217@lehigh.edu](mailto:jlj217@lehigh.edu) or call 610-758-4722.

You will be hearing from us again soon. And, please be aware that things are subject to change!

Stay well, travel safely.

We can't wait to meet you!

Kathleen and Jess