



The holidays are a time for celebration, but it's also common to experience depression at this time of year. The Graduate Division can help you when you're concerned about a student or postdoc who may be in distress.

Student of Concern Committee

Have you found yourself concerned about a student's health or well-being but unsure of how best to support them? UCSF's Student of Concern committee is here to help you assist your students through difficult or complicated situations.

Student of Concern is an *ad hoc* committee that is assembled quickly when needed, bringing in student support services to provide expert advice tailored to the circumstances and the student's and your needs. The Committee includes leadership from the Graduate Division, Student Life, and Student Health & Counseling Services (SHCS). **Your point of contact for this committee is Associate Dean for Graduate Programs [Liz Silva](#)**, who will assemble the Student of Concern Committee to assess the situation and determine the best course of action. Please [download the new "Act Swiftly" guide](#), which contains relevant contact information, and keep it within easy reach.

Here are some red flags to watch for:

- A student's behavior changes suddenly, including being withdrawn or absent, disheveled or non-communicative
- Personal issues seem to be impeding the student's academic progress, e.g., financial issues or familial obligations
- The student is experiencing interpersonal issues, e.g., a conflict with a colleague or classmate

In the spring, SHCS will be conducting workshops for faculty on how to promote student mental health. You'll receive a separate invitation before the end of the year. In the meantime, please mark your calendar or register for one of these lunchtime sessions on either [March 4 \(Parnassus\)](#) or [March 18 \(Mission Bay\)](#).

Postdoc of Concern Committee

Many of you also mentor postdocs. The Office for Postdoctoral Scholars, part of the Graduate Division,

will support you when a postdoc is in distress. If you are concerned about a postdoc's mental well-being, your first point of contact should be Assistant Dean for Postdocs [Chris Des Jarlais](#), who – in consultation with the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) – will bring together the Postdoc of Concern Committee.

Since they are technically university employees, postdocs are not eligible to use SHCS or other student services; however, postdocs *may* use the FSAP and they have access to mental health care through the Postdoctoral Scholar Benefits Plan.

Encourage Students to Enter Grad Slam

Grad Slam is a great way for students to get practice talking about their research. Sadly, some students tell us they don't think their mentor wants them to take the time to participate. Say it isn't so! Here are a few reasons you should encourage students to enter:

- Winning the contest (or even being a finalist) looks great on their CVs or resumes.
- They may not be aiming for a science/research communications career, but everyone has to talk about their research – in a job interview, in a classroom, at a conference, with researchers outside of their field, or with potential funders. Grad Slam helps them think about how to tailor their talk to a specific audience.
- Students who can talk about their research make their mentors, and UCSF, look good.
- All students who declare intent to enter will get expert training in giving such a talk.
- The top prize is now \$4,000; 2nd place – \$2,000, 3rd – \$1,000, and people's choice – \$750.

Students must declare their intent to enter Grad Slam, using the short online form at tiny.ucsf.edu/gradslam19, by midnight on January 8.

Remember to mark your calendar for the live Grad Slam final on March 21, 4 p.m. in Byers Auditorium. (The event will also be livestreamed to Parnassus, where there will be an equally lavish reception afterwards.)

Need to hire a postdoc (or other researcher) for your lab?

The UCSF Office of Career and Professional Development has launched its new and improved job board. You can [post openings in your lab for free at opportunities.ucsf.edu](http://post.openings.in.your.lab.for.free.at.opportunities.ucsf.edu).

Expect better organized meetings with students

PhD students Tess Veuthey and Samuel Thompson (Neuroscience and BMS, respectively) published a column this September in *Nature*, advising students to bring an agenda to meetings with advisors to make the most of their conversations with you and to broach difficult subjects when the need arises. Please [share the article with your students](#) and encourage them to take Tess and Sam's advice! (It may help you too.)

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).