



The Graduate School Mess: What Caused It and How We Can Fix It

Leonard Cassuto

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It is no secret that American graduate education is in disarray. Graduate students take too long to complete their studies and face a dismal academic job market if they succeed. *The Graduate School Mess* gets to the root of these problems and offers concrete solutions for revitalizing graduate education in the humanities. Leonard Cassuto, professor and graduate education columnist for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, argues that universities' heavy emphasis on research comes at the expense of teaching. But teaching is where reforming graduate school must begin.

Cassuto says that graduate education must recover its mission of public service. Professors should revamp the graduate curriculum and broaden its narrow definition of success to allow students to create more fulfilling lives for themselves both inside and outside the academy. Cassuto frames the current situation foremost as a teaching problem: professors rarely prepare graduate students for the demands of the working worlds they will actually join. He gives practical advice about how faculty can teach and advise graduate students by committing to a student-centered approach.

In chapters that follow the career of the graduate student from admissions to the dissertation and placement, Cassuto considers how each stage of graduate education is shaped by unexamined assumptions and ancient prejudices that need to be critically confronted. Written with verve and infused with history, *The Graduate School Mess* returns our national conversation about graduate study in the humanities to first principles.

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