Graduate Student Handbook

PhD Program
2023-2024

UC San Diego

SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

I. Overview of the Program

Philosophy and Goals of the Graduate Program

The philosophy of the PhD program is to provide world-class research training in the basic biological sciences to equip a diverse group of trainees for a variety of scientific careers ranging from academia and industry to education, communication, or policy. Core principles of the program are to be student centered and attuned to the goals of the trainee.
The core curriculum focuses on development of core competencies and transferable skills in critical thinking, communication, and leadership. The first year prepares students for the core of the PhD program, the development of intellectual independence and creativity through original thesis research, guided by a thesis advisor and committee. Students have a high degree of flexibility in choice of thesis advisor through the rotation program. Throughout the program, there is strong emphasis on engaged mentoring through regular committee meetings, annual reports and Individual Development Plans.
As a central hub of the thriving San Diego biosciences community, the program maintains strong partnerships with other campus units and programs through joint faculty appointments, organized research units, and research collaborations, enabling a wide range of interdisciplinary opportunities. The mission is to conduct leading edge research in both foundational and translational biological sciences. Major areas of emphasis currently include structural biology, cell biology, developmental biology, neurobiology, immunology, microbiology, virology, plant biology, ecology, and evolutionary biology. Research in the School has emphasized studies using model organisms or in vitro mechanistic approaches, with human studies and clinical research concentrated in other departments or in the Health Sciences. Current and future areas of growth include quantitative biology, data science, and the biological consequences of climate change.
The training philosophy embraces the following principles:

- Rigor, reproducibility, and responsibility as hallmarks of high-quality science
- Commitment to quality mentorships, student mental health, and well-being
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion as integral to program admissions and retention
- Open science practices valuing multiple research outputs and holistic assessment of scholarly excellence
- Communication and outreach as key aspects of scientific training

As a doctoral program embedded in a large undergraduate instructional unit, the program's approach incorporates substantial training in teaching methodology and best practices. The philosophy remains that teaching and research are interdependent facets of engaged scholarship.

Training Faculty

Program faculty, including Adjunct faculty at the Salk Institute, are members of 1 of 4 Academic Departments.

Cell & Developmental Biology
Ecology, Behavior & Evolution
Molecular Biology
Neurobiology

II. Key People

Faculty and Staff Contact Information

Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director
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Melody Bazyar mbazyar@ucsd.edu *Manager, Graduate Student and Instructional Services*	Daily operation, administration and management of graduate student and instructional services.
Valeria Spall vspall@ucsd.edu *PhD Program Coordinator*	Ph.D. student advising, Ph.D. thesis committees/defense, evaluations, first year rotations, graduate curriculum, student progress tracking.
Ileana Oseguera ioseguera@ucsd.edu *PhD Program Coordinator*	Ph.D. student advising, Ph.D. thesis committees/defense, evaluations, first year rotations, graduate curriculum, student progress tracking.
Trevor Guidinger tguidinger@ucsd.edu *PhD Admissions and Recruitment Coordinator*	Ph.D. recruitment and admissions, application inquiries and tracking, admissions analysis, participant in external outreach and recruitment events

Graduate Financial Support Contact Information

Student Employment and Financial Support

biogradsupport@ucsd.edu *Collaborative Team of Staff*	Graduate student support processing, student financial information, graduate student travel, verification letters/forms
biota@ucsd.edu *IA Program & Staffing Coordinator*	Oversight and administration of the Instructional Assistant program: TA, Tutor, UGIA, Reader.

III. Diversity

Commitment and Inclusion

In Chancellor Pradeep Khosla's Strategic Plan for UC San Diego, Diversity is listed as a top priority. The Plan cites as a goal:

Cultivating a diverse and inclusive university community that encourages respectful open dialogue, and challenges itself to take bold actions that will ensure learning is accessible and affordable for all.

In alignment with Chancellor Khosla and his vision for UC San Diego, the School of Biological Sciences considers Diversity as paramount to our success. It is a culture that creates a foundation of respect and provides for vision and innovation within our School. We believe that diversity and academic excellence are not divergent, but rather greatly depend on each other. The research taking place at UC San Diego in the life sciences and across STEM profoundly impacts the future of the School, UC San Diego, our community, and beyond. As envisioned in UC San Diego's Strategic Plan, we consider it critical to support communications, programs, and resources to build a COMMUNITY of INCLUSION and RESPECT that will drive innovation and excellence in academia and research. Through our collective efforts, the School is leading the way by example on the UC San Diego campus. We are pleased to offer various resources of empowerment by way of programs, initiatives, and people who are in place to help our community learn, teach, research, and engage with one another at the highest level.

I encourage you to stay involved with our efforts and contact our EDI Committee representatives with your ideas and insights.

Dr. Gentry Patrick
Director of the Center for Empathy and Social Justice in Human Health

School of Biological Sciences EDI Committee

The EDI Committee is composed of faculty representatives, staff representatives, postdoctoral scholars, and graduate student representatives. It is the central point for all diversity matters pertaining to undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff. The committee bears key responsibility in supporting the School of Biological Sciences in:

- Developing a shared and inclusive understanding of diversity
- Creating an environment characterized by equal access and respected participation of all groups and individuals regardless of cultural, ethnic, racial, gender, age, language, religious, differences, abilities and disabilities, socioeconomics, and sexual orientation.

International Students

The School of Biological Sciences shares the campus vision to cultivate an inclusive and globally-engaged University community where all international students achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals. This commitment is demonstrated in recruitment, with financial stewardship, in advising, and through initiatives designed to support the student experience and engagement. Biological Sciences seeks to be a campus leader in creating a welcoming community where all have the opportunity to thrive and to advance global education and research.

IV. General Expectations

UC San Diego Principles of Community

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. An international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UC San Diego community. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements. Each member of the campus community is expected to practice the UC San Diego Principles of Community, as individuals and in groups.

To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UCSD strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the university and the well-being of its constituents. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.

- We value each member of the UCSD community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the university.
- We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
- We value the cultural diversity of UCSD because it enriches our lives and the university. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures by both individuals and the university as a whole.
- We are a university that adapts responsibly to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.
- We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.
- We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.
- We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UCSD. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect.
- We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.
- We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles.

We represent diverse races, creeds, cultures, and social affiliations coming together for the good of the university and those communities we serve. By working together as members of the UCSD community, we can enhance the excellence of our institution.

Technical Abilities

Technical Abilities are the essential competencies required of all graduate students to matriculate, to progress through the curriculum and to meet the requirements for graduation from the School of Biological Sciences Graduate Program. The abilities need to be met by all students, with or without reasonable accommodations. The abilities are outlined below and include physical, cognitive, communication, interpersonal, and professional.

To be qualified for participation in the graduate program, students must meet both the academic and technical competencies, with or without reasonable accommodation.

Physical - A graduate student must be capable of performing the experimental tasks required by the graduate program to which he/she has applied or entered. The specific requirement will vary from program to program, and will vary according to the specific research area within a program.

Cognitive - A graduate student must have the critical, problem-solving skills required in the proposed field of study. He/she must have the ability to think independently and to reason, identify patterns, analyze, quantify, integrate, conceptualize, and synthesize data and ideas. He/she will approach problems effectively by recognizing ill-defined and well-defined problems and articulate problems clearly with colleagues and professors.

Communication Abilities - A graduate student must be able to communicate effectively with, and to receive communication from, members in his/her research group and fellow scholars in relevant academic fields. Students must develop and use appropriate and professional communication when interacting with each other, UCSD staff, and faculty.

Interpersonal Attributes - A graduate student must possess the maturity and self-discipline required for full participation in degree requirements and completion of the program of study. Candidates need to be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with colleagues and have the interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, ethnic backgrounds, and beliefs.

Professional - A graduate student needs to be able to consistently display respect for self and others, and show diligence, dedication and reliability. He/she needs to function effectively under multiple priorities and take responsibility for themselves and his/her behavior. He/she must abide by the code of ethics outlined by the University and the profession of study.

Student Conduct

UC San Diego students are subject to the policies applying to campus activities, organizations, and students. These policies and procedures are administered by the Office of Student Conduct, studentconduct@ucsd.edu. The Student Conduct Policies and Procedures articulate the University's expectations regarding standards of conduct in student life and community ethics. These regulations, which apply to both undergraduate and graduate students, are intended to resolve student conduct matters in an informal administrative setting consistent with due process standards. They apply to students as individuals, as members of organizations, and to the student organizations themselves, where appropriate.

Integrity of Scholarship

UC San Diego promotes and supports a culture of academic integrity. Students should review and adhere to the **UC San Diego Senate Policy on Integrity of Scholarship.**

To uphold academic integrity, students shall:

- Complete and submit academic work that is their own and that is an honest and fair representation of their knowledge and abilities at the time of submission.
- Know and follow the standards of the class and the institution.

Thus, no student shall engage in an activity that undermines academic integrity or facilitates academic integrity violations by others. This includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

a) No student shall procure, provide, or accept any material that contains questions or answers to any examination or assignment unless the student's possession of the material has been authorized by the instructor.
b) No student shall complete, in part or in total, any academic work (e.g., examination, assignment, paper) or obtain academic credit (e.g., attendance, participation) for another person.
c) No student shall allow any academic work or academic credit to be completed or obtained, in part or in whole, for themselves by another person.
d) No student shall plagiarize or copy the work of others and submit it as their own work.
e) No student shall employ aids in undertaking course work or in completing any exam or assignment that are not authorized by the instructor.
f) No student shall alter graded class assignments or examinations and then resubmit them for regrading without the instructor's permission.
g) No student shall submit substantially the same material more than once without prior authorization from the instructor, such as a paper that was written and submitted in another class.

Research Ethics and Integrity

As part of a community of researchers, students are expected to engage in the responsible conduct of science. The Research Ethics Program provides required training in the area of Scientific Ethics. Other University policies governing integrity of research can be found at http://adminrecords.ucsd.edu/ppm/docs/100-4.html. These address Research Misconduct, defined as Fabrication, Falsification, or Plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results. Some key points are:

- Any individual affiliated with UC San Diego has a responsibility to act if he or she suspects Research Misconduct has occurred. Appropriate actions may include raising questions, seeking perspective from peers or more experienced individuals (including campus ombudspersons), or making an Allegation of Research Misconduct to the Department Head or Research Integrity Officer.
- Individuals associated with UC San Diego are expected to cooperate with Research Integrity Officers and other institutional officials in the review of Allegations of Research Misconduct and the conduct of Inquiries and Investigations into such Allegations, including providing evidence or materials relevant to the Allegations. It is the policy of UC San Diego to respond fully and fairly to all Allegations of Research Misconduct and to comply with the reporting requirements of applicable funding agencies.

Other University policies govern research-related issues such as conflict of interest, export control, intellectual property, biosafety, and the use of human and animal subjects.

Research Safety Requirements

Safety is paramount for all graduate students in the program. Students, staff and faculty are each responsible for safe research practices and for compliance with School and campus safety policies.

The Safety Assistance pages are a resource for all School safety policies, practices, and guidelines. Please especially note:

- Graduate Student Checklist - This checklist describes 'first steps' in meeting safety training requirements for graduate students researching in a School of Biological Sciences research space and/or engaging in related activities.
- Research-Specific Requirements – Some research requires additional safety training. This includes use of vertebrate animals, biohazards, controlled substances, lasers, radiation, and other equipment. The required additional safety training should be scheduled well in advance of any planned experimental duties.
- Students researching and/or performing experiments in off-campus locations such as the Salk Institute are subject to additional local safety policies.

Service

The overall success of the Biological Sciences PhD program and the wider Biological Science community is only made possible through the dedicated service of faculty, staff, and students. All members of the Biological Sciences community are expected to serve in some capacity on various Biological Sciences or University-wide committees. As part of the holistic PhD training program, PhD students are also expected to serve in some capacity during their PhD training. These service roles provide valuable training in team-based decision making and overall organizational strategies that will be beneficial for nearly all career paths. It is notable each student has benefited from service by others (e.g. during recruitment visits). There are many opportunities to serve within Biological Sciences (e.g. serve on Admissions Committee, Recruitment Committee, serve as a student host during recruitment, participate in outreach programs, etc) or University-wide (e.g. GPSA representatives). Each student should identify a service role that fits their desired time commitment and interests. While the PhD program expects each student to serve in some capacity, it is not a program requirement and each service role is entirely voluntary. All service roles are performed with the knowledge that contributions toward establishing a stronger community are valued by all community members.

Student Computing Responsibilities

UC San Diego students are issued an official ucsd.edu email account, which requires knowing and adhering to Acceptable Use Policies. Failure to follow the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) may lead to the loss of student computing privileges. When signing the Statement of Intent to Register, students agree to follow the Acceptable Use Policies.

Follow these practices to protect accounts and equipment:

- **Take the required UC Cyber Security Awareness Fundamentals training.**
- **Use and protect ucsd.edu email account:**
- All official program and campus communication will be via email to the ucsd.edu address. Students are responsible to check their ucsd.edu email regularly.
- **Protect information:**
    - Update computers regularly.
    - Use Internet firewall and antivirus protection, including maintaining the following anti malware application on computers: https://ucsdcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/cybercertification/SitePages/Anti-Malware-and.aspx
    - Develop a daily file backup plan, such as UCSD supported OneDrive: https://blink.ucsd.edu/technology/file-sharing/onedrive/index.html
    - Keep account information, passwords, and network access private. Never share account information
    - Create safe passwords.
    - Read more about UC San Diego's network security standards.
    - Use UCSD accounts for class and personal work only.

Biological Sciences IT Services can provide additional support on network and device security.

Research Data Security

Data generated using University resources or using federal funding, may be subject to additional security requirements. Students are responsible to become familiar with and carefully execute

the data security protocols of the labs in which they are researching. Consultation with the Principal Investigator and Research IT Services (as needed), is encouraged.

Intellectual Property and UC Patent Acknowledgment

UC employees, persons not employed by the university but who use UC research facilities, and persons who receive gift, grant or contract funds through the university are all required to sign the University Patent Acknowledgment. This would include all students in the PhD program. The Patent Acknowledgment assigns inventions and patents to UC, except those resulting from permissible consulting activities without use of university facilities. Persons signing the Patent Acknowledgment agree to disclose promptly all potentially patentable inventions to UC.

Good Academic Standing

Throughout PhD training students are expected to maintain *good academic standing*, which means meeting the following standards:

- maintain a GPA of 3.0 or the equivalent in upper-division, graduate, and professional course work, and must not have accumulated more than a total of eight units of "F" and/or "U" grades overall, unless the student's graduate program specifies more stringent grade requirements
- complete a satisfactory annual spring evaluation (doctoral and MFA students)
- maintain satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements, as defined by the graduate program, the student's faculty advisor, and/or the student's committee (if applicable)
- satisfy examination and other program requirements, as defined by the student's graduate program
- identify an eligible faculty member who agrees to guide the student's research and to serve as chair of the dissertation/thesis committee, according to the time period specified by the student's graduate program
- advance to candidacy (if applicable) and complete the degree, within the established time limits specified by the student's graduate program
- comply with conditions set at the time of admission to the student's graduate degree program

Good Academic Standing is a requirement for:

1. Campus employment (e.g., GSR, TA).
2. Receiving fellowship, scholarship, or traineeship appointments.
3. Advancing to candidacy for a graduate degree.
4. Participating in UC Intercampus Exchange or SDSU exchange programs or Education Abroad Program (EAP).
5. Going on a leave of absence.
6. Obtaining a graduate degree from UC San Diego.

Graduate students who are not in good standing for any reason are subject to probation and/or disqualification from further graduate study. Academic disqualification is determined by the Dean of the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs in consultation with the student's graduate program. Refer to Academic Standing & Probation for more detail.

Normal progress toward the degree, Time Limits, and Timeline to Degree

Normal progress toward the degree refers to the pace at which students are expected to move through a series of milestones necessary to obtain the PhD at a reasonable pace and at the level of performance described in the preceding section.

Under normal circumstances, the established time period in which students are expected to complete requirements for the PhD is five years. This is called the *Normative Time*. The goal of the UCSD Time to Doctorate Policy and associated time limits is to encourage completion of the PhD in a timely manner, and to stimulate thesis advisors and students to work collaboratively on ensuring that program requirements and other milestones are met.

To complete a dissertation within the *Normative Time*, students following general program requirements should adhere to the following timeline:

Summary Program Timeline:

The Academic Year is generally considered to include October 1 – June 30. A detailed timeline can be found in Section V. Academic Requirements for PhD Degree.

YEAR 1:

- Participate in Grad Launch - *(BGGN 208)*
- Complete Core Course Sequence, including CORE I, CORE II (2 courses), Bioinformatics, Biostatistics, and Communications.
- Complete BGGN 500
- Fulfill first of three Teaching Assistant Assignments
- Conduct Four Laboratory Rotations - *(BGGN 298*)
- Select Thesis Advisor and begin Thesis Research
- *Begin Comprehensive Exam by June 30 of Year 1*

YEAR 2:

- Continue Thesis Research - *(BGGN 299)*
- Participate and present in the Graduate Research Seminar - *(BGSE 205)*
- Complete Two Four-Unit Elective Courses
- Participate in the Scientific Ethics Course - *(BGGN 207)*
- Fulfill second of three Teaching Assistant Assignments
- Select Core Doctoral Committee ('Thesis Committee')
- *Schedule Thesis Proposition Examination by June 30 of Year 2*

YEAR 3:

- Continue Thesis Research - *(BGGN 299)*
- Participate and present in Graduate Research Seminar - *(BGSE 205)*
- Fulfill last of three Teaching Assistant Assignments
- *Select remaining members of Doctoral Committee and advance to Candidacy by June 30 of Year 3, OR:*
- *Conduct annual Evaluation Meeting with Core Doctoral Committee*

YEAR 4:

- Continue Thesis Research - *(BGGN 299)*
- Present a poster during the School Retreat

- Participate and present in Graduate Research Seminar - *(BGSE 205)*
- *If not advanced in Year 3, select remaining members of Doctoral Committee and advance to Candidacy by June 30 of Year 4, OR*
- *If advanced in Year 3, conduct annual Evaluation Meeting with Final Doctoral Committee*

YEAR 5:

- Complete Thesis Research
- Conduct Pre-Defense Thesis Evaluation Meeting at annual meeting with Final Doctoral Committee
- Prepare Doctoral Dissertation (written thesis)
- *Defend Thesis*

V. Academic Requirements for PhD Degree

Detailed Program Timeline

A program timeline is also available for review online.

First Year

The three major components of the First Year are designed to guide students to becoming an independent, creative researcher, emphasizing the six core competencies.

1. **Laboratory rotations**. A series of six-week rotations allows students to sample research across the biological sciences and obtain mentored training in general and specialized research methods and approaches. Laboratory research meetings and research seminars provide training in effective scientific communication, while also providing an introduction to the research community at UCSD and the Salk Institute, including advanced graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and prospective thesis advisors. Students will complete a minimum of four lab rotations, two in the Fall quarter and two in the Winter quarter. If necessary, students may conduct one or two optional additional rotations during the Spring quarter. Any rotations after rotation 6 are undertaken with the student on probationary status.
2. **Core curriculum.** Courses on critical thinking in molecular/cell biology and genetics/organismal biology, and on bioinformatics, biostatistics and scientific communication (or for EBE students, lectures in modern topics in Ecology, Behavior and Evolution) provide an advanced foundation in these fundamental disciplines and skills.
3. **Elective coursework** (taken Year 1 and/or 2). Flexibility to pursue individual interests is provided not only through rotations, but also through elective courses. It is recommended that elective courses be taken after choosing a thesis research topic.

Milestones of the First Year:

- Selecting a thesis advisor.
- Selecting the Core Thesis Committee: three faculty members who will be part of a network of advisors and mentors.
- Completion of First Year Core Curriculum and other curricular requirements.
- Fulfill first of three Teaching Assistant Assignments
- Passing the First-Year Comprehensive Exam.

Selecting an Advisor

Students should aim to select their thesis advisor by the end of rotation 4 or 5. It is very important that the thesis advisor be selected no later than the end of June (i.e., no later than end of rotation 6). Any student who has been unable to identify a thesis advisor by the end of June will enter probationary status and will need to petition with the Graduate Committee for permission to carry out an additional short rotation into July. Any student who has not successfully identified a thesis advisor by September 1 will be dismissed from the program. Please review the *Thesis Advisor* section for details.

Summer

During the summer months students will not be enrolled in courses. Students are expected to focus exclusively on thesis research.

Examination

All students are required to take a First-Year Comprehensive Examination. For details please go to the *Examination* section.

Second Year

Students will have selected a thesis advisor before the beginning of the second year. Additional requirements are the selection of the Core Thesis Committee (see more about this under the *Advising* section) and completing the Proposition Examination at the end of the Second Year.

The goals of the Proposition Exam are for students to both demonstrate general competence in their broad area of research, and synthesize a critical evaluation of the primary literature with deliverable research objectives to formulate a specific research plan. Students must demonstrate that they have identified an important, challenging, and tractable research problem of sufficient scope, and that they have a substantial command of the relevant literature.

Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters students will be actively engaged in *Thesis Research* (BGGN 299) and will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD 200).Students will also enroll in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205) for their specific research affinity. Additionally, students must complete elective requirements (at least two 4-unit elective courses), which they may have initiated in Year 1.

Students in the second year must complete training in the responsible conduct of research, by enrolling in *Scientific Ethics (BGGN 207)*, offered during the Spring quarter. This course covers topics such as research misconduct, data management, social responsibility, and whistleblowing.

Depending on the chosen curricular path, students may have to complete additional formal courses. Furthermore, the thesis advisor may recommend that a student deepen their knowledge and understanding of certain academic fields by taking additional formal courses.

Summer

During the summer months students will not be enrolled in courses, and are expected to focus exclusively on thesis research.

Examination

Last, but not least, students are expected to complete the *Second Year Proposition Exam* by June 30. For details, please go to the *Examination* section, and for details about the committee composition, please see the *Policies* section.

Third Year

If research progresses well, students should be able to advance to candidacy by the end of the Third Year. It is possible to postpone advancement to candidacy and constitution

of the full committee, but students must minimally schedule the annual meeting with the Core Thesis Committee. This will allow the student and committee to review and assess the status of research and work together to develop a research trajectory for the following year.

Coursework
Throughout all three academic quarters students will be actively engaged in *Thesis Research* (BGGN 299) and will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD 200). In addition, students should expect to fulfill a second quarter of *Apprentice Teaching* and should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

Summer
During the summer months students will not be enrolled in courses, and are expected to focus exclusively on thesis research.

Advancement to Candidacy (Qualifying Exam) or Annual Evaluation Meeting
Students may complete the qualifying exam by advancing to candidacy by the end of the Third Year, June 30. In this qualifying exam students should present a research proposal that has the potential to make original contributions to their chosen field. Students should have gathered sufficient preliminary data to establish the feasibility of carrying out the proposed research within normative time limits.

Advancement to Candidacy (Qualifying Exam) requires constitution of the Final Doctoral Committee of at least 4 faculty members.

In view of the unpredictable rates of research progress, students have until June 30 of the Fourth Year to advance to candidacy. If opting to not advance by the end of the Third Year, students must schedule their Annual Evaluation meeting with the Doctoral Committee (minimally the Core Thesis Committee) instead. For further details on the Doctoral Committee and the Annual Evaluation process see the *Annual Evaluation and Examination* section and *Academic Policies* section. Note: International students are required to Advance to candidacy by the end of their third year.

Fourth Year

During the Fourth Year, students are required to advance to candidacy if they have not done so already.

Fourth year students are required to present a poster at the School Retreat in the Fall. This is a condition of receiving the annual travel/professional development allowance in the fifth year and beyond. See the *Professional Travel Opportunities* in the *Financial Support* section for details.

Coursework
Throughout all three academic quarters, students will be actively engaged in *thesis research* (BGGN 299) and will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD 200). In addition, students should expect to fulfill a third quarter of *Apprentice Teaching* and should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

Summer

During the summer months students will not be enrolled in courses, and are expected to focus exclusively on thesis research.

Examination

If Advancement to Candidacy occurred at the end of the third year, students must schedule the annual meeting with their Doctoral Committee. If a fourth year student has not yet advanced to candidacy, they must do so by the end of the fourth year (June 30).

Fifth Year

The Fifth Year of PhD training should be the culmination of the graduate career. Students should have produced a body of original research that represents substantial new contributions to their chosen field and which will be publishable in a high quality peer-reviewed journal. Students must present their thesis research in writing (the Doctoral Dissertation), and demonstrate the ability to communicate research via a public thesis defense (Final Examination).

Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters, students will be actively engaged in *Thesis Research* (BGGN 299), and will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD 200). In addition, students should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

Summer

During the summer months students will not be enrolled in courses, and are expected to focus exclusively on thesis research.

Examination

By the end of the fifth year, students should be ready to prepare, defend, and file a doctoral research thesis. The written thesis dissertation is prepared in strict accordance with policies and procedures established by the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA): Dissertation and Thesis Submission. Additional information can be found in this handbook.

Program Requirements

Overview

Doctoral students in the Biological Sciences PhD Program must complete prescribed coursework, laboratory training, independent thesis research classes, seminars, ethics training, and participate in college level teaching in order to fulfill all requirements for a PhD degree. Through their graduate student career, students must make *normal progress* and must maintain *good academic standing*.

Although the specific prescribed coursework is contingent on the selected curricular path, all students are expected to complete the following:

Grad Launch

Grad Launch (BGGN 208) is an intense seminar/laboratory course that runs for about two weeks—just before the regular classes begin in the Fall quarter. The purpose of Grad Launch is to introduce students to biological concepts, research, and critical thinking at the graduate level. It will cover fundamental issues graduate training in the biological sciences, including campus resources, research design, ethical issues in research, scientific publishing and review, career planning, and grant preparation.Furthermore, the course will allow students to get to know their fellow classmates and will acquaint them with many faculty members.

- Other required courses (see below)
- BGGN 207 – Scientific Ethics (Spring Year 2)
- BGSE 205 – Graduate Research Seminar (Enroll Year 2 and beyond)
- BGGN 298 or BGGN 299 – Rotation Laboratory Projects or Thesis Research (All Years)
    - BGGN 298 is taken during the Rotation Laboratory Projects Laboratory (four) during the Fall and Winter quarters of the First Year (except for students admitted through the Direct Admit program), with up to two in the Spring of the first year if needed
    - BGGN 299 is completed during Thesis Research, after Advisor selection
    - BGRD 200 – Research Discussion accompanying BGGN 299
- Two 4-unit elective courses during the First or Second Year
- BGGN 500 – Introduction to College Biology Education (Winter Year 1)
- Three total Teaching Assistant assignments, one in support of a teaching laboratory class
- Annual Meetings with the Doctoral Committee ('Thesis Committee').

The requirement for Rotation projects (BGGN298) is waived for Direct Admit students or for students entering from the Medical Scientist Training Program.

Students are expected to pass all courses with a grade of "B" or better. In consultation with the First-Year Advisor or Thesis Advisor and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director, students may elect to take additional graduate courses or seminars in particular areas. Some students may also be advised to take additional undergraduate courses for remedial purposes. In the First Year Exam students will be expected to demonstrate graduate level knowledge and critical thinking skills in the areas of the Core Curriculum, namely Cell and Molecular Biology, Genetics and Organismal Biology, Bioinformatics, and Biostatistics. It is expected that students will acquire this through reading of scientific literature and by going to seminars, in addition to participating in core classes.

Graduate Courses

Students are expected to attend all sessions of graduate courses. Any personal travel during the academic year should be scheduled to avoid missing classes.

Graduate courses are listed in the Schedule of Classes in the 200 series; they may be conducted in any of several ways:

- as advanced lecture courses,
- as seminars in which faculty and students present critical studies of selected problems within the subject field,
- as independent reading or study courses under faculty supervision, and
- as research units

Description of Coursework Requirements

During the first year, all entering students pursue a rigorous academic program consisting of a sequence of graduate core courses ('core curriculum').

BioSci PhD Program (General)

Most students in the program follow the general program requirements:

Required Core Courses

- BGGN 208 – Biological Sciences Grad Launch
- BGGN 205 – Communicating Science to the Public
- BGGN 206A – Concepts of Reasoning and Experimentation (CORE) I
- BGGN 206B – Concepts of Reasoning and Experimentation (CORE) II
- BGGN 207 – Scientific Ethics
- BGGN 213 – Foundations of Bioinformatics
- BGGN 216 – Biostatistics
- BGGN 298 or BGGN 299 – Rotation Laboratory Projects or Thesis Research
- BGGN 500 – Introduction to College Biology Education (Winter Year 1)
- BGSE 205 – Graduate Research Seminar (Year 2 and beyond)

Elective Courses (at least two 4-unit elective courses)

- Complete years 1 or 2; preferably after joining a thesis lab
- Any 4-unit BGGN course open to doctoral student enrollment will automatically apply as an elective (other than required courses)
  - Not all electives are offered each year. Refer to the Tentative Course Offerings page.
  - Note that some BGGN courses restrict enrollment to students in MS major codes.
  - Other 4-unit, graduate level courses subject to Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director review

BioSci PhD Program (EBE)

Those admitted as EBE students will take two elective courses in the first year; BGGN 204 is recommended as one.

Electives are drawn from the advanced graduate courses and undergraduate elective courses. EBE students should consult their First-Year Advisor and Department Chair to determine the

most appropriate courses to take the first year. The following are excluded as electives: BGGN 200, 205, 208, 297, 298, 299, 500, and any BGJC, BGRD, or BGSE course.

Required Courses

- BGGN 207 – Scientific Ethics (Year 2)
- BGGN 208 – Biological Sciences Grad Launch
- BGGN 298 or BGGN 299 – Laboratory Projects or Thesis Research
- BGGN 500 – Introduction to College Biology Education (Winter Year 1)
- BGSE 205 – Graduate Research Seminar (Year 2 and beyond)

Elective Courses

- BGGN 203 – Topics in Ecology, Behavior and Evolution
- BGGN 204 – Topics in Community and Population Ecology
- Other graduate level or undergraduate level courses as recommended by faculty advisor

Students should also refer to the EBE PhD Program Guidelines in ***Appendix 1*** of this handbook. Students may elect to take the courses of the general program as additional coursework.

Quantitative Biology (qBio)

Quantitative Biology refers to the use of quantitative approaches, both experimental and theoretical, to discover the organizational principles of living systems. The goal is to establish a quantitative, predictive understanding of the physiological behaviors of biological organisms in terms of the molecular parts.

Students are admitted through their home program (Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences, Chemistry/Biochemistry, Physics, or BioEngineering) then request admission to the qBio Specialization upon advancement to candidacy.

More information on the Quantitative Biology Specialization

The expected course sequence is:

Year 1 – Required Courses

- BGGN 205 –Communicating Science to the Public
- BGGN 206A – Concepts of Reasoning and Experimentation (CORE) I
- BGGN 206B –Concepts of Reasoning and Experimentation (CORE) II
- BGGN 208– Biological Sciences Grad Launch
- BGGN 213 –Foundations of Bioinformatics
- BGGN 216 – Graduate Biostatistics
- BGGN 298 – Laboratory Projects in Biology
- BGGN 500- Introduction to College Biology Education (W)

qBio

- PHYS 254 – qBio seminar (F, W, S)
- PHYS 259A – Reading in Methods for Quantitative Biology (F)
- BGGN 259 – Reading in Quantitative Physiology (W, S)
- BGGN 214 – Introduction to Quantitative Biology (Can be taken Year 1 or 2)
- PHYS 270A – Experimental Techniques for Quantitative Biology (S)

Year 2 – Biology Required Courses

- BGGN 207 – Scientific Ethics (S)
- BGGN 299 – Thesis Research in Biology (Every quarter)
- BGSE 205 – Graduate Research Seminar (Every quarter)

Year 2 – qBio Elective Courses (two required electives from below or upon approval)

- BGGN 212 – Introduction to Quantitative Evolutionary Biology
- BENG 235 – Molecular Imaging and Quantitation in Living Cells
- BNFO 284 – Nonlinear Dynamics in Quantitative Biology (alternate years)
- PHYS 239 – Spatiotemporal dynamics in Biological Systems
- PHYS 273 – Information Theory and Pattern Formation in Biological Systems
- PHYS 275 – Fundamentals of Biological Physics
- PHYS 276 – Quantitative Molecular Biology
- PHYS 277 – Physical Biology of the Cell
- MAE 263 – Mechanics Inside the Cell

Bioinformatics

Currently unavailable, pending curriculum updates.

Multi-Scale Biology

Students who select the interdisciplinary Specialization in Multi-Scale Biology must satisfy the requirements for both the School of Biological Sciences and the UCSD Interfaces Graduate Training Programs.
Interested Biological Sciences Ph.D. students must first complete the program's General or EBE requirements, then complete the Multi-Scale Biology course requirements.
UCSD Interfaces Multi-Scale Biology Program Requirements

Anthropogeny

A transdisciplinary graduate specialization in Anthropogeny is available for Ph.D. students in the Biological Sciences and other disciplines. Information on requirements for this specialization is available through the Center for Academic Research and Training in Anthropogeny (CARTA). The specialization provides students an opportunity to specialize in research and education on the origins of humans. Top areas include:

- Human and Primate Genetics and Evolution
- Paleoanthropology and Hominid Origins
- Mammalian and Primate Neurosciences
- Primate Biology and Medicine
- Language and Cognition
- Nature-Nurture Interactions in Explaining Language and Cognition
- Human and Primate Society and Culture
- Comparative Developmental Biology of Primates
- General Theories for Explaining Humans

Interested Biological Sciences Ph.D. students must first complete the program's General or EBE requirements, then complete the Specialization in Anthropogeny's course requirements.
Information on the UCSD Specialization in Anthropogeny

Interdisciplinary Environmental Research (PIER)

A graduate specialization in Interdisciplinary Environmental Research (PIER) is available for select doctoral students in biology. Students in the Program for Interdisciplinary Environmental Research seek solutions to today's environmental challenges.
The PhD specialization is designed to allow students to obtain standard training in their chosen field and an opportunity to interact with peers in different disciplines throughout the duration of their doctoral projects. Such communication across disciplines is key to fostering a capacity for interdisciplinary "language" skills and conceptual flexibility.

Specialization Requirements

- Complete all coursework, dissertation, and other requirements of the biological science doctorate
- 16-unit interdisciplinary boot camp (summer, SIO 295S–295LS)
- 8 units from a secondary field (outside the home department)
- 6 units (3 quarters) Interdisciplinary Environmental Research Forum (SIO 296)
- At least one chapter of the dissertation will be broadly related to environmental research and will be interdisciplinary in nature.

Students are advised to begin PIER in their second year upon completion of core biology course requirements.
Interested students should contact the program via cmbc@ucsd.edu.

Immunology

As part of the Program in Immunology, the graduate specialization in Immunology promotes an immersive educational experience in immunology that includes participation in immunology coursework, seminars given by renowned speakers, biweekly research presentations by peers, a weekly journal club, and a yearly area-wide immunology conference. Biological Sciences students may apply to enroll in the Specialization in Immunology after entering the program or at the conclusion of the first year with rotations complete. Interested students should contact the PhD Program Coordinator who will facilitate a connection with the Program Administrator at La Jolla Institute for Immunology.

Specialization Requirements

- Complete all coursework and other requirements for the biological science doctorate, including participation in the Immunology section of BGSE 205
- Completion of 2 of the following 3 courses, which will apply toward BioSci program elective requirements:
- BGGN 225 (Graduate Immunology)
- BIOM253 (Pathogens and Host Defense)
- BGGN 232 (Innate Immunity)
- Completion of a Bioinformatics for Immunologists course
- Enroll in BGJC 204 - Journal club in Immunology
- Thesis research must be completed in an approved immunology laboratory

Medical Science Training Program (MSTP)

First Year

- BGGN 208 – Biological Sciences Grad Launch
- BGGN 299 – Graduate Thesis Research
- One elective class – selected from ~15 electives offered
- BGGN 500- Introduction College Biology Education
- Qualifying exam taken at the end of the first year

Years 2-4

- BGGN 299 – Graduate Thesis Research
- BGSE 205 – Graduate Research Seminar
- BGGN 207 – Scientific Ethics (Year 1 or 2)
- Two Quarters of Instructional Apprenticeship – One academic quarter each in years 1 and 2.

Laboratory Rotation Program (BGGN 298)

The primary goal of the Rotation Program is to aid in the choice of laboratory and advisor for thesis research. The choice of labs for rotation should be guided not only by affinity with their research area but also whether the lab is likely to take additional PhD students at the end of the rotation period.

Rotations may also be taken with the goals of gaining expertise in particular technical skills, however this should be agreed with the host lab in advance. Rotations should not be solely designed around technical training or data production, but should develop conceptual understanding and broader research skills under the supervision of the Principle Investigator and existing laboratory staff.

General guidelines

- Students must enroll in and complete at least **four six-week rotation project**s (BGGN 298: Laboratory Projects in Biology) **with four different Biological Sciences faculty** during Fall and Winter quarter of the First Year.
- The four required rotations must be completed with faculty members of the *Affiliated Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences between the School of Biological Sciences at UCSD and the Salk Institute*.
- Rotation choices must be submitted online to be verified as eligible and recorded by the PhD program coordinator.
- Students who wish to rotate with a faculty member who is not a member of the Biological Sciences graduate program may do so after completing the four mandatory rotations. Only UC San Diego ladder-rank faculty are eligible to serve as rotation advisors.
- Students may not repeat a rotation with a faculty member until they have completed the required four rotations.
- All four rotations must be completed before formally identifying a thesis advisor and joining a lab. If students are unable to identify a thesis advisor after four rotations, it is possible to participate in up to two additional rotations. It is important to identify a thesis advisor no later than June 30 (end of rotation 6). If a student is unable to identify a thesis lab by June 30, they enter probationary status and must petition for permission to perform additional rotation(s) to identify a thesis lab as soon as possible. Any student who has not selected a thesis advisor by September 1 will be dismissed from the program.

Establishment of Rotation Assignments

First year PhD students select the labs in which they will rotate by the following procedure.

1. A list of faculty accepting students in rotation is provided to incoming students in the summer.

2. Students begin contacting faculty approximately one month prior to the beginning of fall quarter to arrange *the first rotation only.*
3. Upon identifying a lab for rotation, students submit a request to rotate via the online tool. Requests are automatically routed for approval of the proposed faculty member.
4. Rotation assignments are available for viewing by all students via web application.
5. For subsequent rotations, students will submit a formal request via the rotation tool 2-3 weeks before the start of the next rotation.
6. Students can contact PIs to inquire about possible rotations in advance of the 2-3 window prior to the subsequent rotation. However, any arrangements made between the student and faculty member are not considered formal agreements and rotations will only be confirmed within the 2-3 week time window prior to the start of the next rotation.

It is essential that students meet with those faculty members with whom they wish to complete a rotation project to ensure that a viable project is available, and that the lab is 'in principle' taking new PhD students. Not all faculty are able to host rotation students every year. A lab's capacity for new students may change during the course of the year so regular communication with prospective labs is recommended.

Rotation Evaluation

Performance in each rotation will be evaluated by the rotation faculty member. Prior to submitting the evaluation, the rotation faculty member will meet with the student to discuss their assessment of accomplishments, potential for scientific research, and ability to communicate ideas. The evaluation will also include the rotation faculty's suggestions concerning future research contribution in the program, and a one-paragraph summary of their evaluation, which students will be asked to review. A sample copy of the rotation evaluation is available from the Graduate Coordinator.

These rotation evaluations, together with performance in the formal coursework and in the First Year Comprehensive Examination, allow the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director to assess students' academic progress during the First Year.

Lab Reviews

Students are asked to provide a written review of each rotation ('lab review'). Part of the review will be shared with the Rotation Advisor. Students may also include comments that will be reviewed in confidence by the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director. The Biology Program uses this information to monitor the effectiveness of each Advisor in providing a meaningful rotation experience.

Summer Rotations

Prior to the First Year

In the interest of ensuring equitable opportunities for students who are attempting to secure rotation slots, and in order to safeguard the requirement to participate in Grad Launch, Summer Rotations are not permitted, organized, or financially supported by the program. The doctoral program commences with the start of Welcome Day, followed by the Grad Launch. All rotating students will begin rotations at the start of the first rotation period, at the beginning of Fall quarter.

After the First Year

By exception, the program provides financial support for students to complete additional rotations. If a student is unable to identify a thesis lab by June 30, they enter probationary status and must petition to the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director for permission to perform additional rotation(s) to identify a thesis lab as soon as possible. Any student who has not selected a thesis advisor by September 1 will be dismissed from the program. Requests can be routed through the Graduate Coordinator.

Teaching Experience

A primary goal of the School's PhD program is to provide graduate students with training and mentorship in research and teaching. Introducing students to the teaching of science at the collegiate level provides them with a complete set of research and instructional skills required for a successful academic career. The School expects that all students, regardless of career path, will develop a high regard for excellence in teaching as well as research. To that end, all students will complete the BGGN 500, Introduction to College Biology Education, course in the winter quarter of their first year.

In an effort to also provide each student with significant practical experience in college level instruction, the program requires each student complete three assignments as a Teaching Assistant, one of which must be in a laboratory course. This experience will increase a student's ability to convey ideas accurately and persuasively in a variety of contexts as it hones the skills required to make presentations with poise and impact.

Students are expected to assist in three classes; typically, a lecture course during the first year, a laboratory course in the second year, with choice of a lecture or a laboratory course in the third year of the program.

Students complete an application for TA positions in the early summer preceding years 1, 2, and 3, in preparation for the assignment in the upcoming academic year. Final assignments are made with consideration to the student's preferred class assignment, the class instructor's preferences, the number of available positions in the class, and Graduate Student Representative recommendations. Assignments are confirmed in late summer for the upcoming academic year.

VI. Enrollment, Registration, Grades

TRITONLINK, Web-Registration, and Enrollment

Students should be familiar with the TRITONLINK website. This portal provides access to the quarterly UCSD Schedule of Classes, plan a course schedule, enroll in classes, add and drop classes (within posted deadlines), and change units or grading options (within posted deadlines). Students can also review grades, check enrollment and registration status, check billing statements, generate an unofficial transcript or order official transcripts.

To access TRITONLINK, students must use a Personal Access Code (PAC). Students should contact the registrar for questions related to their PAC.

Students are responsible for knowing the deadlines for enrollment, registration, leaves of absence, and withdrawals. Students are expected to pay any fees or tax withholdings assessed as a result of missing deadlines. Deadlines for Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters are listed in the *Academic Calendars* on TRITONLINK.

For the first quarter in the graduate program, please note the Registrar's enrollment and registration deadlines for new graduate students; in subsequent quarters, follow the deadlines for continuing graduate students.

WEBREG via TRITONLINK is used to enroll in classes. A student is *officially registered* at UCSD when they have *enrolled in classes and all required fees and tuition each quarter have been paid*. Students who do not register are considered withdrawn from the program unless they are on an approved leave of absence.

Students will be charged a late fee of $50 if they have not enrolled in courses by the published enrollment deadline. Enrollment after the second week of classes requires a special request and approval. Additionally, late enrollment will trigger late payment of fees. This means that late enrollment results in a $50 late enrollment fee plus $50 late payment fee, for a total of $100 late fees. Students are responsible for late fees; they cannot be paid by the program.

Enrollment will be canceled if all mandatory registration fees have not been paid by the end of the second week of classes.

Finally, failure to register by the deadlines could result in suspension of financial support. (see Financial Support section)

Summer

There is no official Summer quarter. Students will not enroll in courses during the summer terms.

Grading Policy and Procedures

Biological Sciences students are expected to complete coursework with a grade of A or B in courses with letter grade evaluation format and an S (Satisfactory) for the non-letter grade courses. Receiving a C grade or a U (Unsatisfactory) is considered unsatisfactory performance for a graduate student.

Students should give particular attention to the policies and procedures relating to the following grade options: Incomplete (I), In Progress (IP), and No Report/No Record (NR). Failure to follow grading policies and procedures can lead to unnecessary hardships, such as jeopardizing continued financial support at UCSD. Official grading policy information can be found at https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/exams-grades-transcripts/grades/about.html

The No Report/No Record (NR) Grade

If a blank appears on the transcript, it means that the Registrar did not receive a grade for the student on the grading sheet submitted by the instructor. Some reasons for this are (1) the grading options for the course did not correlate with the grade that the instructor assigned, (2) the student may have entered an incorrect course code on the enrollment request, thus, he/she is enrolled in the wrong course, or (3) the instructor did not report a grade.

It is the student's responsibility to remove a No Report/No Record (NR) grade before the end of the following quarter or it lapses to an F or U grade. Be sure to seek assistance from the PhD coordinator to make certain an NR grade is cleared.

Grade Appeal Procedures

Students may find procedures for appealing grades at http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Regulations/502 and in the *Conflict Resolution and Student Appeals* section of this handbook.

Registration Holds

Students who are unable to register for classes will not be able to maintain eligibility to receive financial support. Students are strongly encouraged to pay attention to notices regarding enrollment and financial obligations, to avoid having registration holds placed on their account. Holds are always posted to a student's record via TritonLink: **Holds:** detail about holds, and how to get them removed. Holds may be placed for academic or non-academic reasons.

Non-Academic Holds

After suitable warning, a student may be barred from further registration for a variety of nonacademic reasons, including failure to comply with official notices, to settle financial obligations when due, to provide final undergraduate transcripts, or other related matters.

Academic Holds

Academic holds and disqualification are determined by the Dean of the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) in consultation with the student's department, and normally relate to unsatisfactory academic performance, e.g., failure to maintain a grade-point average of 3.0 or better; failure to meet departmental criteria of performance; failure to advance to candidacy or complete the degree within established time limits; accumulation of more than eight units of F or U grades; or failure to comply with conditions set at the time of admission to a graduate degree program.

VII. Advising

Many sources of advice and mentorship are available, including faculty advisors, program staff, and student peer mentors:

1. Faculty Advisors
    a. *First-Year Advisor*
    b. *Thesis Advisor (Doctoral Committee Chair)*
    c. *Evaluation Head of Doctoral Committee (Committee member who will lead <u>all</u> thesis committee meetings)*
    d. *Doctoral Committee members*
    e. *Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director*
    f. *Graduate Committee Vice Chair*
2. Staff Advisors in the Student and Instructional Services Office
    a. PhD Program Coordinators
    b. Manager of Graduate Student and Instructional Services
3. Peer Mentors

First-Year Advisor

Role

The *First-Year Advisor* provides guidance and support — especially during the critically important time when choosing a thesis advisor! They will be familiar with the graduate program requirements as well as the student's stated research field of interest. Students should meet with their *First-Year Advisor* during the first or second week of the Fall quarter to discuss their prior course record and other relevant experiences in experimental biology. On the basis of this discussion, the advisor might make recommendations regarding possible rotation laboratories and coursework.

Subsequently, students should meet with the *First-Year Advisor* once per quarter throughout the first year to discuss progress in coursework and in the rotation program. Students should also feel free to discuss possible changes in research interest and how those changes affect course and rotation selections.

The *First-Year Advisor* will be encouraged by the program to contact their assigned students before the beginning of the Fall quarter to set up the first meeting, but students should also make sure to take initiative to reach out to their *First-Year Advisor* to have these meetings.

Selection

The Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director assigns a *First-Year Advisor* to each incoming student. If necessary, students may request to change advisors. This request is to be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

Thesis Advisor

Role

Selecting the *Thesis Advisor* to supervise PhD thesis research and to chair the doctoral committee is a crucial step in the graduate student career. Students are advised to enter into the student/advisor relationship carefully and only after they have given considerable thought to

their own advising needs. Students should have selected a thesis or doctoral advisor by the end of June of the first year.

Students will collaborate with the thesis advisor to set up a program of formal research and courses that will develop the student's depth of knowledge in the area of the dissertation project and to give the student necessary breadth for a wide range of careers in the biological sciences. This should include:

- Guidance in the selection of a feasible research project, with an emphasis on its potential for independent and original research.
- Ensuring that the student is making progress in meeting all program requirements.
- Ensuring that the student develops their ability to communicate ideas through journal clubs and group research meetings, the school seminar program, and through participation as a graduate instructional apprentice in appropriate courses.
- Serving as chair of the student's Doctoral Thesis Committee.

A student should agree on a process of regular communication with the Thesis Advisor, and it is recommended that such communications be documented. To guide in progression through the program, students will receive an annual evaluation from the thesis advisor and committee, but evaluations are not restricted to this format. The annual evaluation will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director and it will become part of the student's academic file. For detailed information, please see the *Annual Evaluation and Examination* section of the handbook.

Selection

Selecting the PhD Thesis Advisor is a crucial step in the graduate student career. It is one of the most important elements in maintaining normal progress toward the PhD degree. The Thesis Advisor assumes responsibility for guiding research and for progress in meeting degree requirements. Some criteria students may wish to consider:

- The prospective advisor's research interests and expertise
- Compatibility of work style and personality
- Availability of the advisor for regular meetings and timely communication
- Track record in training previous PhD students

When selecting an advisor, students are strongly encouraged to have several conversations with the faculty member to determine if the relationship is a good match. Students should also talk to other students who have interacted with the advisor, weighing their judgment carefully, as personality and work styles differ among students. Peers can be a good resource for learning more about the potential advisor's approach to communication, problem solving, time management, and conflict resolution.

The Thesis Advisor may be any ladder rank (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor Series) faculty member of the School of Biological Sciences, a participating Adjunct faculty member of the Salk Institute, an adjunct member of the School of Biological Sciences, or any ladder-rank member of the UCSD faculty. As described before, it is expected that students will have selected a PhD Thesis Advisor by the end of June.

Co-Advisors / Co-Mentors

Establishing a co-mentorship arrangement may be beneficial depending on the nature of the thesis research project. Co-mentorship can be considered if a substantial portion of the thesis research will take place in two research labs and both faculty members plan to actively participate in student mentorship and project oversight. Co-mentorship is also appropriate if two faculty members share financial responsibility for the student. Establishing a collaboration with another research lab would normally not justify co-mentorship.

If a student wishes to be jointly advised by two faculty members, it is recommended that a clear co-mentorship plan be established. This plan should set clear expectations for time management, meeting schedules with each faculty member, and lab meeting/presentation expectations.

If a student is jointly advised by two faculty members, one of these advisors must be designated as the primary mentor, and their Core Thesis Committee must be comprised of two additional faculty members (four total with the co-advisors) according to the thesis committee composition rules. Students should consider many of the same criteria when choosing a co-advisor, and should work closely with the program coordinator to ensure compliance with School and campus policies surrounding committee composition.

Students who select a Non-Salk Adjunct as Thesis Advisor must also identify a faculty member in Biological Sciences to serve as their co-advisor.

Thesis Committee Membership and Selection

Note that for the purposes of this Handbook, 'Thesis Committee' means 'Doctoral Committee'.

Committee Evaluation Head

Role

Students will select a member of the thesis committee to serve as *Evaluation Head.* The Evaluation Head, **not the primary thesis advisor**, will lead all thesis committee meetings and examinations. This will encourage an objective review of student performance and of the research project. The faculty serving as the Evaluation Head will be an additional mentor to turn to during the graduate career.

The *Committee Evaluation Head* leads the annual committee meeting and prepares the evaluation. The annual evaluation is a written (online) report, due within a week after the annual meeting with the thesis committee, addressing the following key issues:

- Research progress
- Key suggestions of the committee
- Concerns (if any)

Selection

In consultation with the advisor, students will select the *Doctoral Committee Evaluation Head* by the time of the second-year proposition exam. Only faculty with a Biological Sciences appointment may serve as Evaluation Head

Doctoral Thesis Committee Members

Role

The Doctoral Thesis Committee ('Thesis Committee') is charged with advising on and evaluating research progress throughout the remainder of a student's graduate studies. Students will meet with the Thesis Committee at least once a year (every Spring quarter) to review research progress. During these meetings, the committee evaluates progress, provides feedback, and contributes to the annual evaluation. The committee should also provide input on the appropriate end point for thesis research. Committee members are available as sources of advice, including confidential advice in situations where conflict may arise with a thesis advisor. Students are encouraged to build strong professional relationships with each committee member and to communicate with them regularly.

Selection of Core and Final Thesis Committee Members

During the second year students will select a Core Thesis Committee of at least three faculty members, including the Thesis Advisor. If co-advised, a minimum of four faculty members (2 faculty in addition to the Co-Advisors) is required to constitute the Core Thesis Committee. The Core Thesis Committee conducts the Proposition Examination (2nd year exam).

During the Third or Fourth year, students will select additional faculty, to form the Final Doctoral Thesis Committee. The Advancement to Candidacy, or Qualifying Exam, (3rd or 4th year) and the Thesis Defense require participation of all the members of the Final Doctoral Committee.

No later than the Fourth Year, and at least three weeks prior to Advancement to Candidacy, students should confirm the membership of the Final Doctoral Committee. Committee members should have research expertise relevant to the student's thesis topic and should be able to provide impartial expert advice on the student's research. The student's Thesis Advisor should be actively consulted during the process of committee constitution. Questions regarding the specific details of committee eligibility and selection should be directed to the Biology PhD program coordinator.

Doctoral Committee Composition Guidelines

University requirements are listed on the GEPA website.

- Committees must be comprised of at least four UC San Diego faculty members.
- At least two members must be from the student's home department/program.
- At least one member is tenured or emeritus.
- At least one member must have their primary appointment in a different department than the committee chair. Note: faculty with evenly split appointments still have a primary appointment.
- Students can look up UC San Diego faculty titles to assist with determining eligibility to serve on committees here: https://a5.ucsd.edu/tritON/profile/SAML2/Redirect/SSO?execution=e2s1

In the Biological Sciences Program these regulations are implemented via the following Doctoral Committee guidelines:

- Every Biological Sciences student doctoral committee must include only regular and adjunct UC San Diego faculty and have at least 4 members.
- Every doctoral committee must have at least 1 non-School of Biological Sciences UCSD faculty member. An outside member is defined as having their primary appointment in a different department than the committee chair.
- Every doctoral committee must have at least one member who is tenured or emeritus.
- Every doctoral committee will have at least two School of Biological Sciences faculty (including School of Biological Sciences adjunct faculty). Faculty participating in the Biological Sciences graduate program are listed in the Faculty Directory.
- Only faculty with a Biological Sciences appointment may serve as Evaluation Head.
- A doctoral committee may include no more than one adjunct faculty unless the adjuncts are from the Salk Institute. In those cases, the committee can have up to two adjunct members.
- Non-Salk Adjuncts serving as Thesis Advisor/Committee Chair require a ladder rank faculty member serve as a co-chair.
- Any number of additional members can be added to the committee, though no more than six members are advised for ease of scheduling, collecting signatures, etc.

This decision tree and the Committee Membership Eligibility table from the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) may be helpful resources.

Biological Sciences requests approval for the appointment of the doctoral committee by the Dean of GEPA. The Dean reviews nominees, gives the final approval of the committee, and issues letters of confirmation.

At any time, a student may request a change in the composition of the doctoral committee as long as the change is within the general guidelines listed below. The student should submit a written (email) request to reconstitute the doctoral committee to the PhD Program Coordinator, who will submit the request for review and approval of the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director and GEPA.

Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee oversees all academic aspects of the Graduate Program and is responsible for the development and implementation of School-specific policies; policies regarding program funding and other resources are decided in consultation with the Dean's office. The Graduate Committee consists of faculty representatives from the four Departments in the School, at least one faculty from the Salk Institute, and three PhD students elected as the senior GSA representatives. The committee also includes staff representatives from the Graduate Student and Instructional Services office.

The Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director is responsible for the organization and activities of the committee, which include not only the evaluation and continued improvement of existing programs and policies, but also the creation of new programs. In addition, the Chair serves as an advisor to the graduate students for general issues as well as any specific individual needs of the students.

The Chair also serves as the official Faculty Program Director and liaison with the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA). Acting in this capacity, the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director signs all program-related correspondence with the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA). This includes everything from routine petitions, such as Advancement to Candidacy forms, to requests for exception to policy. While requests may be initiated by the Thesis Advisor, they will not be accepted unless accompanied by an endorsement from the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director.

Staff Advisors: Graduate Student and Instructional Services

The Graduate Student and Instructional Services Staff, located in Pacific Hall first floor, are available to assist with clarifying program requirements, navigating policy and procedure, and connecting with campus resources. Do not hesitate to reach out to them with questions or concerns. Contact information is available on the website http://biology.ucsd.edu/administration/units/sis/index.html and in the *Key People* section of this manual.

VIII. Annual Evaluations and Examinations

Annual evaluations are intended to provide critical assessment and encouragement throughout the program, working together with the student to ensure progress to degree according to the program timeline.

Annual Evaluations ('Spring Evaluations')

All students are required to receive written annual evaluations. At the end of the first year the Thesis Advisor, with input from the First-Year Advisor, will conduct the evaluation.

From the second year on, students are required to have an Annual Evaluation Meeting with the doctoral committee (see *Doctoral Committee* for details*)* during the Spring quarter or early summer, no later than the last day of the Spring quarter.

Students are responsible for scheduling the Annual Evaluation Meetings; it is recommended these be scheduled as far in advance as possible.

Note: In the second year, the Proposition Exam feedback informs the agenda of the annual evaluation meeting. The Qualifying Exam (Advancement to Candidacy) takes the place of the annual meeting for the year in which it is conducted.

Annual evaluation meetings should provide genuinely informative and useful feedback, highlighting progress and challenges, and should result in an agreed plan for the upcoming year. Annual Evaluation meetings serve to evaluate research accomplished, and to define and refine goals and expectations, aiding as milestones along the path to degree.

The assessments of Thesis Committee Members and the Evaluation Head are an important component of the official annual evaluation. The Program Director and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director review all evaluations before they are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Having current annual evaluations on file is one of the requirements for maintaining good academic standing.

To help facilitate annual meeting discussion, the meeting should be informed by the following guidelines and reporting forms:

- Second Year Thesis Proposition Exam
- Advancement to Candidacy
- Other Annual Meetings

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

In addition to preparing for the committee meeting portion of the Annual Evaluation, all students in the program (2nd year and beyond) will work with their thesis advisor to develop an **Individual Development Plan (IDP)**. These are meant to help define career goals and identify skills that need to be developed to help a student be successful in graduate school and beyond.

Several templates are available:

- UCSD IDP form (https://postdoc.ucsd.edu/training/idp.html)
- AAAS & Science IDP (http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/)

- Biological Sciences form (http://biology.ucsd.edu/_files/education/grad/GSIS_Forms/Grad_IDP.pdf)
- EBE students should consult with their advisor regarding appropriate format or alternative

Students should finalize their IDP and meet with their mentor(s) (which could include the thesis advisor and others) **before the Annual Evaluation committee meeting**. An IDP is required for all trainees supported by US federal funds, which effectively means all students. Students are not required to share the IDP with the committee, but the Thesis Advisor will need to verify that the IDP is complete on the online annual evaluation form.

Annual Committee Meeting

Please refer to the Annual Committee Meeting Instructions corresponding to year in the program.

The Committee Evaluation Head will lead the Annual Evaluation meeting. Although the thesis advisor is a member of the committee, they have the option of not attending the research presentation portion of the annual meetings in order to foster student independence. If the advisor opts to attend the research presentation, they should not answer questions or otherwise comment. If the advisor doesn't attend the yearly research presentation, it is expected that they will consult with the committee and student immediately afterward.

The Committee Evaluation Head will use the appropriate feedback form (see above) to summarize the committee's suggestions, note any issues, and provide an overall assessment of the student's progress. The written evaluation will be submitted via the online Evaluation Tool after the meeting. The evaluation will be available to students for review and comment. Both the Thesis Advisor and the student will be excused from the meeting, so that each may, in turn, have a private audience with the committee.

Students should notify the PhD Coordinator prior to the Annual Evaluation Meeting to ensure proper documentation with the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA).

Note:

If a student advances to candidacy between January and March, the candidacy exam will replace the annual meeting for that year.

Program Guidelines for Presence at Committee Meetings:

UC-San Diego Senate Regulation 715, Requirements for the PhD Degree at San Diego, requires that the doctoral committee conduct the qualifying examination and final oral examination (the dissertation defense). Biological Sciences has additional requirements for annual committee meetings. The preferred means to conduct committee meetings is when all members of the doctoral committee are physically present. The Biological Sciences doctoral program does not permit fully remote committee meetings. Hybrid committee meetings are permitted only when the following criteria are met:

- The student has agreed to a hybrid format.
- The committee chair, or one co-chair, must be physically present.
- No more than one committee member is telepresent (synchronously remote).

- If an unavoidable situation arises that affects a committee member's ability to participate synchronously and/or physically present, the committee chair (or co-chairs) and student may decide how to proceed. There must be sufficient expertise among present members to examine the student.
- If a committee member must be absent for the scheduled exam, it is permissible for one absent committee member to examine the candidate on a separate date.
- The Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director is available to consult on any proposed ad hoc deviations from this policy.

First Year Comprehensive Exam

All students are required to take a First Year Comprehensive Examination. The exam tests general knowledge and skills in biological sciences with emphasis on material covered in the core curriculum. Performance on the exam, along with performance on rotations and in the core courses, will be used to determine a student's ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically.

In some cases, after evaluating a student's first year performance (coursework, laboratory rotations, and comprehensive exam), the Graduate Committee may place the student on a probationary status. Removal of probationary status may require activities such as retaking the exam, defending an oral proposition, additional IA responsibilities, coursework in areas in need of improvement, or other measures the Graduate Committee deems necessary. Unsatisfactory performance in multiple areas of the first year curriculum may result in dismissal.

Students (except EBE) will complete this exam by writing a 2-page research proposal, in a format akin to an NIH specific aims page. In addition to the 2-page proposal, a summary figure and a statistical appendix will also be required. Students will select 2-3 research papers as the foundation for the proposal and will use this as a springboard to generate an interesting next research question and an experimental strategy. Students are encouraged to seek feedback on their proposal prior to submission from a variety of sources including; thesis advisors, rotation advisors, graduate student peers, lab colleagues, and/or instructors/proctors for the exam.

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

1. Whether the research question is interesting and well-defined
2. Whether at least two alternative possibilities are outlined for how the investigated process might work
3. Whether the proposed experiments are clearly described
4. Whether different possible experimental outcomes are delineated and what different outcomes would mean in terms of a model for how the process works are explained
5. Whether the proposal figure is clear and helps provide insight into points (2) - (4) above

The **EBE First Year Exam** is a qualifying exam used to determine the student's ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically. The exam will have both written and oral phases. Please consult the EBE PhD Program Guidelines in ***Appendix 1*** for details.

Second Year Proposition Examination Detail

Please refer to the Annual Committee Meeting Instructions corresponding to the second year in the program as well as the Second Year Thesis Proposition Exam Guidelines and Reporting Form

Advancement to Candidacy Exam (Qualifying Exam)

The goal of the Advancement to Candidacy or Qualifying Examination is to demonstrate substantial thesis research progress and coherent and achievable future research objectives that will culminate in at least one first author peer-reviewed publication. Advancing to candidacy means the student has completed all coursework and any other program requirements and is ready to research and write a dissertation (this stage is sometimes referred to as "all but dissertation" or ABD). Students at this stage should have significant and substantive findings that will result in a peer reviewed publication.

Students are encouraged to advance to candidacy (complete the qualifying exam) by the end of the third year. Students **must** advance to candidacy no later than the end of the fourth year.

All four members of the doctoral committee must be present for the Advancement to Candidacy Exam (Qualifying Exam).

If a student changes labs and thesis advisors, they will be expected to form a new doctoral committee

Advancing in the Winter or Spring quarters will satisfy campus requirements for the Spring Evaluation for that year.

Please refer to the Annual Committee Meeting Instructions corresponding to third or fourth year in the program, as well as the Advancement to Candidacy Guidelines and Reporting Form

All other Annual Meetings

From the second year on, students are required to have an Annual Evaluation Meeting with the doctoral committee during the Spring quarter or early summer, no later than the last day of the Spring quarter.
Please refer to the Annual Committee Meeting Instructions corresponding to the appropriate year in the program, as well as the Other Annual Meeting Guidelines and Reporting Form***.***

Pre-Thesis Defense Evaluation Meeting

A Pre-Thesis Defense Evaluation Meeting is conducted when students have begun the writing process and are ready to begin preparing for defense. This meeting is most valuable when held 4-6 weeks in advance of the defense date. This meeting should be held approximately one to three months before the planned defense date, and involves a review of research that will be included in the dissertation and thesis defense. No program paperwork is required for this meeting, but a written outline of the proposed content of the chapters of the dissertation should be presented, along with a preliminary thesis defense presentation. The draft may be shared with the committee in advance of the meeting. The committee decides whether there is sufficient material for the student to proceed with defense of the thesis.

If completing the pre-defense meeting during Spring quarter or summer (regardless of year in program), this meeting will serve as both the pre-defense meeting and the annual spring evaluation meeting. Please refer to the Annual Committee Meeting Instructions corresponding to the appropriate year in the program.

Written Doctoral Dissertation and Oral Thesis Defense ('Final Examination')

Students are required to document their thesis research in a written Doctoral Dissertation, and to defend data and conclusions via an oral Thesis Defense. The final version of the Dissertation must conform to the format and procedures outlined in UCSD's *Preparation and Submission Manual for Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses "Bluebook"*, found here: https://grad.ucsd.edu/academics/preparing-to-graduate/dissertation-thesis-submission.html

Students are expected to circulate copies of a complete draft dissertation, including all figures and tables, to all members of their Thesis Committee **at least two weeks** before the scheduled Thesis Defense. Failure to submit the draft dissertation at least two weeks before the scheduled defense could result in delays to the final examination. Students should arrange to meet with each committee member in order to discuss and address any questions or criticism prior to the public Defense to help ensure that each committee member agrees that the student is prepared for Final Examination.

The Thesis Defense, also known as the Final Examination, is an oral examination conducted by the Final Doctoral Committee (Academic Senate Regulation 715). Thesis Defenses must be announced publicly. The format of the Defense will normally consist of a public lecture followed by a closed meeting of the Thesis Committee with the candidate.

Doctoral Degree Filing Requirements

The Report of the Final Examination is a form initiated by the Student and Instructional Services office, signed by members of the doctoral committee and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director. The Dissertation/Thesis Signature Page is initiated by the student, concurrent with the final report. The report and the signature page for the dissertation are usually signed at the time of the dissertation defense. Both are signed via DocuSign.

Dissertation Embargo

Approved Dissertations are submitted to the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA). The final version of the Dissertation is made available to the University of California community and to scholars worldwide via the UCSD Libraries. When submitting the final dissertation to GEPA, students are required to submit a release form stating their preference for the timing of the release of the dissertation, which can be immediately or after a period of embargo (typically 1-2 years). In many cases, students and advisors request that the dissertation be embargoed in order to have data published before the dissertation is made public. **It is the responsibility of the Thesis Advisor to contact GEPA to request any extension of the embargo**. Written endorsement by the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director will be required for approval of any extensions.

Thesis Titles and Abstracts - Please note: during the embargo period the citation and abstract of thesis work will be available through ProQuest and through the UC California Digital Library (eScholarship).

Degree Conferral

The PhD diploma will be dated as of the last day of the quarter in which all requirements, including any current coursework, are satisfactorily completed. If a student wishes to participate

in Commencement ceremonies, they should refer to deadlines posted by Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA). Diplomas are mailed by the Registrar's Office four to six months after degree conferral. A Letter of Completion, which confirms that all degree requirements have been met, will be available within two weeks of filing the final paperwork for the doctoral degree provided that there are no grades pending.

Alumni

Biological Sciences alumni are invited to connect and engage with fellow alumni and friends of the University, via the Biological Sciences Alumni Network and the broader campus Graduate Alumni community. With tools such as Alumni Email for Life and the myriad of online professional networks, it has never been easier to stay connected to the UC San Diego network, explore student achievement data, review program outcomes, and more.

IX. Financial Support

Annual Financial Support

The School of Biological Sciences provides an annual financial support package which includes tuition, fees, health insurance, and an appointment as a GSR or TA. Students may refer to their admissions letters and quarterly appointment notification letters for more details.

Graduate student support requires full time enrollment as a student in a minimum enrollment of 12 units, corresponding to 36 hours per week engagement in academic activities.

Health Insurance

UC SHIP, the Student Health Insurance Plan, is provided for enrolled students. Please refer to Student Health Services for plan details.

Establishment of California Residency

The Biological Sciences Program will pay one year of non-resident tuition for US citizens who are non-California residents. It is the responsibility of the non-resident student to become an official resident of the State of California at the end of their first year in order to be exempt from non-resident tuition in subsequent years.

Students who do not establish California residency will be responsible for their nonresident tuition (currently $15,102/year). **Students should begin the process to establish residency immediately following arrival to California**. To qualify for residency, the student must demonstrate that he/she has resided in California for at least one year. Residency is established by severing residential ties with other states and creating them with California: getting a California driver's license and/or registering a car with the state; establishing a residence; registering to vote; and/or paying California taxes. For detailed information please see Residence for Tuition Purposes. Questions regarding the application should be directed to the Residence Deputy at residencedeputy@ucsd.edu.

The UC Residency Policy and Guidelines currently provide that students must be physically present within California for a year prior to the Residency Determination Date (RDD) and that absences of six weeks or more in a one-year period disqualify a student from receiving in-state status.

The School covers non-resident tuition for international students until they Advance to Candidacy. Students will receive a 100% reduction on NRST beginning with the first quarter following advancement for a maximum of three consecutive years. Program policy requires international students to advance by the end of their third year.

Fellowships

Students are expected to apply for pre-doctoral fellowships either from extramural (non-UCSD) agencies or from intramural sources. Information on fellowship opportunities is at the GEPA website. Biological Sciences' student award recipients, as well as calls for nominations for select awards can be found on the Graduate Student Awards page.

Training Grant Support

Students may be supported through one of several federal training grants. The main training program for Biological Sciences students is the Pathways in Biological Sciences (PiBS) NIH training program; others include QBio, Genetics, Cancer Biology. Details of current training grants are on the program web site.

- Training Grant support is typically for 2 years (usually years 2 and 3)
- Students on a training grant that provides travel and/or research funds for trainees will receive the appropriate allowance. Under NO circumstances are tablets/smartphones acceptable purchases on a training grant allowance.
- The PIBS Training Program Directors invite eligible trainees at the end of their first year, after they have joined a dissertation lab. To be eligible, per NIH regulations, trainees must be US citizens or permanent residents and have joined a dissertation lab with a PI that is affiliated with PiBS training program (students that join a lab outside of the School of Biological Sciences are ineligible). Trainee selection is based upon academic performance and rotation evaluations in the first year. Other predoctoral training grant application deadlines and procedures may vary.
- Training grant support typically involves additional training components, in addition to BioSci Program requirements.
- Only US citizens or permanent residents are eligible for federal training grant support.

Grant Writing Resources

Proficiency in writing grant applications is an essential skill for all PhD trainees and is covered in the Scientific Communication first year core course.

UCSD's Office of Contract and Grants Administration (OCGA) offers tools to both faculty and graduate students to help them in the grant writing process. Please visit the OCGA website for more information.

Professional Development and Travel Opportunities

The School of Biological Sciences encourages students to seek out professional development opportunities which includes travel to scientific meetings. The PhD program considers attending and presenting at scientific conferences an important educational and professional development experience. Travel to conferences and other professional development opportunities can be supported when adequate funding is available. This travel/professional development allowance can and should be used for a wide array of professional development opportunities. This includes covering part of fees associated with taking relevant online courses/workshops, such as the microMBA program at the UCSD Rady School of Management or advanced courses in bioinformatics. The program encourages students to utilize these funds for professional development activities and should contact the PhD Coordinator and/or the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director with inquiries regarding how the travel/professional development allowance can be used for identified development activities.

In general, the School's travel/professional development allowance for students is as follows.:

- Second-year students may receive up to $300, or up to $500 if they are presenting at the conference.
- Third-year students and beyond are eligible for travel/professional development support of up to $500.

Any amount exceeding the maximum allowance is the student's and/or their advisor's responsibility. The annual allowance DOES NOT carry forward to the next fiscal year (July 1–June 30). In addition, the next year's allowance cannot be used to pay current year expenses.

- Students with fully funded outside awards (NSF, for example) may receive an additional allowance if outlined in the award. These students are also eligible to receive the School allowance.
- Students on a training grant that provides travel and/or research funds for trainees will receive the appropriate allowance.
- All international travel must be pre-approved.

A student is NOT eligible for the annual travel/professional development allowance ($500) for the fifth year and beyond if that student does not present a poster at the School Retreat during their fourth year. If a student misses presenting a poster at the School Retreat during their fourth year, that student can participate during their fifth year to regain eligibility for full travel allowance for the sixth year, if applicable.

Pre Travel Procedure:

To request travel fund reimbursement, students must email **biogradsupport@ucsd.edu** **or the appropriate Faculty Assistant *prior to booking the trip***:

Students traveling on a *combination* of PI/Advisor funds and School/Training Grant/Fellowship funds should email the advisor's Faculty Assistant. Students traveling exclusively on School/Training Grant/Fellowship should email biogradsupport@ucsd.edu. Prior to travel, students must provide:

1. Description of trip (conference invitation, brochure, pamphlet listing your name, etc.)
2. Written/email PI approval of trip
3. Completed and signed Student Certification for Business Related Travel form

More information is available here: Bio Grad Student Reimbursement

Students on federal training grants:
If on a federal training grant, students must provide a copy of the brochure or flyer that stipulates whether or not food will be served at the conference they are attending.

Airfare – Use US carriers (when possible) - even for international travel. Students must submit their airfare receipt even if they charged airfare to the University. The receipt from the passenger ticket booked is the airfare receipt. Email confirmation (for e-ticketless travel) is also acceptable as long as the itinerary and airfare total are included.

Receipts – Receipts are submitted via upload through Concur.

All expenses for each trip must be accounted for on one travel voucher. The same person should be in charge of preparing all paperwork for the entire trip.

Students must not share expenses with other graduate student travelers. Students should only pay for the expenses that they incur; otherwise, there may be a delay in receiving reimbursement.

For questions regarding travel, please contact the School's Graduate Financial Assistant.

Employment Status

While students will receive financial support in the form of employment, student status while in the PhD program is always first and foremost, that of a student. As such, thesis research and other work leading to the award of credit hours are recognized as academic activities, in accordance with the University's credit hour policy.

Outside Employment

Students receive public funds in the form of a stipend/salary and tuition/fee support to allow full time pursuit of their thesis research. Additional employment is strongly discouraged.

Tax Information
https://ucpath.ucsd.edu/benefits-payroll/payroll/w2-statements.html

Short-Term Student Emergency Loan

All registered students who are not currently receiving need-based financial aid (Federal Perkins Loan, University Loan, Minimum Grant, or Opportunity Grant) are eligible to apply to this short-term emergency loan. Limited funds are loaned in small amounts to help students in critical short-term emergencies, and usually must be repaid within thirty days. There currently is a service charge of $20.00 per emergency loan, and students must be enrolled in at least six units. Applications and further information are available from the Financial Aid Office.

Financial Aid and Scholarships Office

Student Services Center, 3rd Floor North: https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-aid/

The Student Financial Solutions team administers all need-based financial aid for graduate students. This includes Federal Stafford loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized) and Graduate Opportunity grants.

All students interested in need-based financial aid must submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) electronically at the FAFSA website. The financial aid application deadline for UCSD funding is March 2 prior to the academic year. Students applying after the deadline are still eligible for Federal Stafford loan consideration. See the Financial Aid Timeline for Graduate Students at https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-aid/applying/timelines/graduate.html.

X. Conflict Resolution, Appeals, Probation, Lab Transitions

Conflict Resolution and Student Appeals

Occasionally interactions between students, staff, and faculty result in misunderstandings, disputes, and/or differences of opinion. Differences of opinion and occasional conflicts or misunderstandings in interpersonal relationships are an inevitable part of interactions and do not necessarily constitute bullying or abusive conduct.

In the majority of instances these differences can be resolved as a result of an informal discussion between the persons involved. Students are encouraged to approach program staff, peer mentors, or faculty advisors (e.g. Graduate Committee members) to discuss such issues in confidence and to facilitate informal conflict resolution. Professional and respectful communication is expected when communicating difficult issues to any grad program staff member or faculty advisor.

In instances where informal resolution is unsuccessful, students have various formal avenues for complaint resolution. Graduate students are encouraged to contact the Biological Sciences Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director, Vice-Chair and/or Associate Dean. Students may also wish to reach out to the Assistant Dean, Graduate Student Affairs in the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) for information and assistance with the resolution of conflicts.

Important Points:

- Attempt to resolve the matter informally at first. Most disputes are the result of poor communication and/or misunderstandings.
- Attempt to resolve the matter immediately.
- Try to be rational, objective, and assume good faith. Do not allow emotions to interfere with finding a resolution.
- Be solutions-focused. Effectively communicate desired outcomes. Be objective in this assessment and direct in any requests.
- Keep complete and accurate notes of the situation and the steps taken to find a resolution. Develop a file for these documents.
- Avoid being aggressive or accusatory. This only hinders the process.
- Know the appropriate policies. Consult the departmental handbook, UCSD General Catalog, or campus policies.

Mediation Services

All good researchers and health professionals know that when it comes to humans, there are lots of variables. If a student has hit a rough patch with a mentor or colleague, they are encouraged to get help through campus resources.

The Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director and other faculty members of the thesis committee may also be able to provide useful advice. Note that staff and faculty are considered by the University to be "responsible employees." As such, they are unable to receive "unofficial" reports. Instances that are reported to staff may not be kept anonymous, and the information will be shared with appropriate offices, faculty leadership, etc.

The only confidential campus resources are CARE at SARC and Office of the Ombuds. Because the Office of the Ombuds is confidential (to the extent allowed by law) and does not keep

formal records, this office may be able to provide first-steps mediation. https://ombuds.ucsd.edu/

The Division of Graduate Education's guidance on Conflict Resolution and Student Appeals provides additional guidance and resources.

Non-Responsive Students

Close communication with thesis advisors, faculty leadership, and graduate program staff is an integral part of participation in an independent research program. In order to ensure timely communication of important information, deadlines, etc., students can generally expect a reply from staff within two business days. Students are also expected to respond to official university communication (@ucsd email) within two business days and to inform their PI when they will be out of communication for any length of time.

Failure to reply to communication in a timely fashion can result in a number of outcomes with undesirable academic and/or financial consequences. When a student has not communicated with their PI or program staff for a period of two weeks or more, the student can be administratively placed on a Leave of Absence which will result in cancellation of any current enrollments, suspension of financial support, and ineligibility for campus benefits and resources.

Probationary Policy

The overall goal of this mechanism is to address concerns regarding unsatisfactory student progress towards degree completion in a timely manner to help the student achieve program milestones and successfully navigate the path to graduation.

Informal resolution:

If the thesis advisor has concerns regarding student academic progress, the first step is to engage in a professional and reasoned conversation to re-establish expectations and to identify a path to resolve ongoing concerns. Timely engagement is helpful. Important considerations are outlined by the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) Conflict Resolution and Student Appeals page.

- Start by asking questions and making sure you understand all of the relevant information about the situation from the student's point of view.
- Attempt to resolve the matter informally with clear communication.
- Know your desired outcome and be objective in this assessment.
- Keep complete and accurate notes of the situation and steps you have taken towards resolution.
- Discuss your concerns in a calm manner and allow time for the student to consider what is being said and respond. If the conversation becomes emotionally charged, agree to adjourn the meeting, and schedule another time to talk.
- Know the appropriate policies. Consult the departmental handbook, UC San Diego General Catalog, or campus policies.

After the meeting, the student and advisor should follow up with an email exchange that rearticulates the action items and identifies a future date for a follow up meeting. This documentation will be helpful during future discussions should the issue(s) persist.

Probationary status:
If attempts to address concerns regarding student progress are unsuccessful, the advisor and student will separately meet with either the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director or Graduate Committee Vice Chair to discuss the possibility of placing the student on academic probation due to unsatisfactory progress towards their degree. The goal of this mechanism is to provide a clear path for the student to achieve program milestones and to successfully navigate the student towards graduation.

Probationary status guidelines:
After meeting with graduate program leadership, written notification to the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director is required to place a student on probationary status. The student will be notified of their probationary status at this time. This written notification will include relevant background information detailing concerns regarding student progress. An in-progress thesis committee meeting will be scheduled to occur no later than two weeks after initiation of probationary status. The goal of the committee meeting is to establish a progress improvement plan, in consultation with the advisor and the student, with clearly articulated objectives and milestones to be achieved within 10 weeks. This 10-week timeline begins after the in-progress committee meeting or upon generation of the progress improvement plan and does not include the holiday campus closure (the week between Christmas and New Years) or stated university holidays. The progress improvement plan will detail the steps to be taken to correct the stated issues and return the student to good standing. If a full committee meeting cannot be convened, a progress improvement plan will be generated and agreed upon between the student and the advisor which will be circulated to the thesis committee for comment and approval. After ten weeks, in which the advisor is expected to regularly meet with the student, the student will document their progress in achieving the stated objectives and milestones and distribute this document to the thesis advisor and committee members. If the committee finds that the student has successfully achieved or made reasonable progress toward the stated milestones, the student will be taken off probationary status and be subject to standard program expectations and timelines.

Should the committee find that the student has failed to reach stated milestones or make reasonable progress towards achieving stated milestones, the student will either be advised to seek a new thesis advisor or be terminated from the doctoral program. Lab transitions will only be facilitated for students that have not completed their 4th year in the PhD program. Students will not be eligible to change labs after completion of their 4th year in the PhD program.

If the student has already transitioned to a second thesis advisor, failure to successfully exit probationary status after 10 weeks will result in program dismissal.

If the student is non-responsive to their advisor or program requests regarding probationary status or there is a failure to agree upon a progress improvement plan, the student will either be advised to find a new thesis advisor or be terminated from the doctoral program.

Should the student elect to transition to a new thesis advisor, the following guidelines should be considered:

Guidelines for establishing a new thesis advisor.

Transitional Support

In cases of irreparable misalignment of goals and expectations between a student and thesis advisor, students are encouraged to reach out to and meet with the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director or Graduate Committee Vice Chair as soon as possible to discuss the situation. The Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director or Graduate Committee Vice Chair will assess the situation and advise the student on options for next steps which could include a cooling off period, third party mediation, and/or transition to a new thesis advisor if the student is eligible for a lab transition (e.g. before their 4th year in the program is completed). This conversation will be kept confidential to the full extent possible, but note that any disclosures of sexual violence, sexual harassment or other prohibited behavior involving students will have to be reported to the Office of Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD).

Transitions to a new thesis advisor are not rare events and can be the best path to successful completion of doctoral degree requirements. However, a careful consideration of options is highly recommended as having a thesis advisor to mentor and financially support the student is an essential part of the doctoral program. Lab transitions are not a mechanism to avoid academic probation or other consequences for failure to make sufficient academic progress. Students will not be eligible to change labs after completion of their 4th year in the PhD program. Should a student enter a transition period, they will be placed on probationary status with a clear established timeline to identify a new thesis advisor. Once a student identifies a new thesis advisor, probationary status will end. If a student decides to leave their thesis lab and is unable to secure a new thesis advisor within 12-weeks, the student will be subject to program dismissal.

Upon joining a new thesis lab, a detailed research plan with clearly stated project milestones and deadlines should be generated within two months of joining the new thesis lab. This research plan will be communicated to the Graduate Program staff and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director. Further, the student, in consultation with the thesis advisor, should establish a new doctoral thesis committee within two months of joining the new thesis lab as per committee membership guidelines. It is required that the student convenes a full committee meeting within six months of joining their new thesis lab to obtain guidance on stated research objectives detailed within the research plan and expectations for successful completion of the program. Note that if student academic progress concerns persist in the new thesis lab, transitioning to a third lab is only permitted in highly extenuating circumstances and probationary procedures (as outlined above) will be initiated.

Failure to identify a new thesis advisor may result in the student leaving the program with a terminal master's degree if the student has fulfilled all other program requirements.

Academic Appeals

Department and program faculty have primary responsibility for maintaining the excellence of graduate programs, and are in the best position to judge their students' academic performance. A student may appeal a final exam result or course grade only if he or she believes that non-academic criteria that were not directly reflective of academic performance in the course were used in determining the result. As detailed more completely in the "Grade Appeals" section of the Academic Senate Regulations, a student appeal of an academic performance decision should first be made to the individual faculty member or instructional assistant who made the decision, and should be made within one month of the decision or within the first month of the following regular academic quarter. If this does not result in a resolution that is satisfactory to the student, he or she may appeal to the department or program chair.

Within twelve months of action by UCSD with which the student disagrees, such as denial of a right to withdraw, dropping or adding a class, or other decisions related to the student's transcript, a student may petition the Dean of Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) for review. Petitions pertaining to matters that occurred in excess of twelve months in the past shall be presented directly to the Committee on Educational Policy of the UCSD Academic Senate, available at the Academic Senate Office noted above.

Non-Academic Appeals and Grievances

A student may appeal an action or inaction of his or her department, program, individual faculty member, or UCSD administrator. Examples include those actions taken on grounds not relating to a student's academic performance that affects a student's educational status, program of study, financial support, or access to services. Generally, non-academic decisions may only be challenged if due process was not followed in arriving at the decision or the decision was motivated by personal prejudice.

A non-academic appeal may be submitted to the department or program chair, individual faculty member, or administrator within one month of the date of learning of the action or the date that the student should have reasonably known of the action.

If an appeal to an individual faculty member or administrator is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, he or she may then submit a written appeal to the department or program chair, who shall attempt to adjudicate the case with the faculty member or administrator and the student within two weeks.

If the appeal is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, he or she may then attempt to resolve the matter through a written appeal to the Dean of Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA), who will attempt to adjudicate the case within two weeks. The Dean may take the appeal to the Graduate Council for review, which may extend the time required to reach a final resolution.

The student's request for the Dean's review should include a written statement describing the nature of the grievance, along with copies of any and all documents in his or her possession supporting the grievance. Students are encouraged to contact the Assistant Dean, Graduate Student Affairs, GEPA for assistance with the appeal process.

Other Appeals

Grievances concerning violations of student rights are managed by the Office for Student Conduct. Examples of violations of students' rights include those affecting rights to privacy or protection from discrimination.

As with other appeals, a complaint should be made promptly to the decision-maker, if known to the student. If an appeal to an individual faculty member or administrator is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, he or she may submit a written appeal to the appropriate committee, governmental body, unit manager, supervisor or designated representative for review and disposition. Such appeal must be made not later than one hundred (100) calendar days from the date of the incident causing the grievance. If the appeal at this level is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the appeal may be continued as described in the Student Conduct Code procedures.
Appeal and other rights for students accused of violating UCSD policies and procedures are outlined in the UCSD Student Conduct Code.

Disqualification from the Program

Graduate students who are not in good academic standing for any reason, or who fail to complete program milestones and make satisfactory academic progress, are subject to probation and/or disqualification from further graduate study. A student's continued financial support is also contingent on maintaining good academic standing.

XI. Additional University and Program Policies & Procedures

Email

The University has established electronic communication as the recognized and official means by which University officials may, at their discretion, communicate with students. Every student is expected to establish an account, regularly monitor the account for official communications, and take action as needed. Notices from departments, programs, the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA), the Financial Affairs Office, Bursar's Office, and other campus entities are considered to be delivered and students are considered notified when emails are posted to students' UCSD email accounts.

UC San Diego now offers alumni Email for Life, a new and improved email service that allows alumni to send and receive @ucsd.edu messages to their personal or business mailbox of choice after graduation.

English Language Proficiency Testing

All international graduate students at UC San Diego are required to demonstrate a high level of oral and aural competence in the English language before they may be appointed as an instructional assistant (IA). This is a UC San Diego GEPA policy, established in compliance with the California English Proficiency in Higher Education Act**.**

The English Language Institute in the Division of Extended Studies helps international graduate students establish their linguistic readiness to function as instructional Assistants (IAs) and assists them in developing their teaching skills by administering the English language proficiency test and offering language proficiency courses and workshops.

The **English Language Certification Exam (ELCE)** is a 15-minute live interview and teaching simulation. Please note that students with a TOEFL speaking score of 22 or below will need to complete preparatory instruction in order to qualify to take the exam.

Details on qualifying and preparing for the exam can be found here:
https://extendedstudies.ucsd.edu/international-programs/courses-and-programs/elce-international-grad-students

FAQs are here:
https://extendedstudies.ucsd.edu/international-programs/courses-and-programs/elce-international-grad-students/elce-frequently-asked-questions

Biology students who need to take the ELCE will be notified by the program coordinator who will also facilitate the scheduling of the exam. Students are required to earn a Pass on the English Language Certification Exam by the end of Spring quarter of their first year.

Leaves of Absence (LOA)

Graduate students are eligible for a maximum of three quarters of leave, with departmental approval. The leave policy applies to leaves taken for medical or personal reasons, without distinction. A student who leaves the University for no more than three quarters with the

intention of resuming study during a later quarter must file a formal Leave of Absence, Extension and/or Withdrawal form prior to leaving the campus.

Graduate students must have completed at least one quarter of academic residence and be in good standing (GPA 3.0 minimum or equivalent and no more than eight units of U or F grades) to be granted a leave. A student on leave of absence status cannot make use of University facilities or faculty time, be employed at UCSD, UCSD Medical Center, or UC Extension, or hold a fellowship, traineeship, assistantship, or similar appointment at UCSD.

A student who must leave the graduate program for a specific period of time with the intention of resuming study later may do so only with the approval of his/her advisor and the Graduate Committee Chair/Program Director. Leaves of Absence should be coordinated with the Graduate Student & Instructional Services team, and must be processed through that office prior to leaving campus.

Individuals returning from a leave of absence must notify the Graduate Committee in writing of their intention to return one quarter in advance. This letter should be emailed, c/o Program Coordinator. Graduate students are eligible for a maximum of three quarters of leave. Refer to the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) for more information on Leave of Absence/Withdrawal.

Leave of Absence and Filing Fee

If a student is on an approved leave of absence and has completed all requirements except the final reading of the dissertation, thesis, or the final examination, he/she is eligible to petition to pay a filing fee in lieu of registering and paying all required fees in the final quarter. The filing fee applies to both residents and nonresidents. The student is required to file a General Petition for this purpose.

International Students on a Leave of Absence

International students are discouraged from taking Leaves of Absence. International students may wish to consider a Reduced Course Load. International students in F and J visa status who will take a leave of absence from UC San Diego for one or more quarters are required to report their LOA to the International Students & Programs Office (ISPO) prior to their proposed leave, and a failure to do so will have a negative impact on immigration status. All requests for a leave of absence for international students require ISPO approval prior to the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) consideration. The usual requirements of departmental approval and campus regulations apply. Please refer to the International Students & Programs Office more details.

Master's Degree

The School of Biological Sciences does not admit students to the PhD Program with the intention of awarding a Master of Science degree, and an MS en route is not permitted. However, on occasion, a student who has completed the following requirements may petition for a Master's Degree:

i. Minimum residency of six quarters.
ii. Satisfactory completion of the core curriculum.
iii. Satisfactory completion of the lab rotation schedule.
iv. Satisfactory completion of the Proposition Examination.

v. Acceptance of a thesis or approved write up of completed research. The nature of the written work is to be determined by the advisor. The written work is evaluated by the thesis advisor.

The Master of Science degree is awarded as a terminal degree.

XII. Support Services

Campus Safety

Campus safety is everyone's responsibility. From personal to group safety, students will find excellent resources here:
https://students.ucsd.edu/campus-services/campus-safety/index.html

- If someone is in immediate medical danger or is a threat to themselves or others – call 911 or 858-534-HELP
- Campus Emergency Contacts
- Emergency Status Website
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 24/7 crisis counseling 1-800-273-8255.
- Biological Sciences Safety Assistance
- Safe Rides and Escorts

Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA)

Student Services Center, 4th Floor North
http://grad.ucsd.edu/
The UC San Diego Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) provides a wide range of services to prospective and existing UCSD graduate students and campus departments on all graduate education matters including diversity outreach and recruitment; graduate admissions; enhancing the quality of graduate student life; student financial support, fellowships, and traineeships; graduate student advising and advocacy; retention programs; development and oversight of graduate degree programs; interpretation and application of policies and common standards of high quality in graduate programs across campus; collaboration with Graduate Council and Graduate Student Association; administrative oversight of the Teaching and Learning Commons; and coordination of graduate commencement activities.

Grad Life

Grad Life is a resource hub for all UC San Diego graduate students, managed by current graduate students.

Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination

The University of California, San Diego, is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons who participate in university programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation.

The full UC San Diego Nondiscrimination Policy Statement, as well as other related Policies & Procedures for Students, may be obtained from the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination or online through http://ophd.ucsd.edu/.

Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination

The Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD) provides education to the entire UCSD community and provides assistance in investigating and resolving complaints. If a student or someone they know has a question about harassment or discrimination of any kind, including sexual violence or harassment, please contact OPHD. Students may leave a confidential voicemail at (858) 534-8298, email *ophd@ucsd.edu,* or visit them at 201 University Center on the main campus at the corner of Gilman Drive and Myers Drive. OSHPP office hours

are Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. Emphasis is on prevention and early resolution. Visit ReportBias.UCSD.edu for more information.

CARE at the Sexual Assault Resource Center
CARE at SARC is the UC San Diego confidential advocacy and education office for sexual violence and gender-based violence (dating violence, domestic violence, stalking).
https://care.ucsd.edu/

CARE provides violence prevention education for the entire UCSD campus and offers free and confidential services for students, staff and faculty impacted by sexual assault, relationship violence and stalking.

Professional Development

Career Services Center
CSC helps UCSD graduate students fulfill their career goals through a variety of services and resources including career advising, job listings and job fairs, on-campus recruiting, reference materials, and career consultants. Electronic resources include the Center's Online Career Lab where students can access career information on the Internet and CSC's web site at http://career.ucsd.edu/. Online registration is required to use CSC. CSC also sponsors workshops designed especially for graduate students on topics such as alternative careers, job talks, CV writing, interviewing, and networking.

Preparing Future Faculty
http://www.preparing-faculty.org/

Teaching + Learning Commons
http://commons.ucsd.edu/

UCSD Biological Sciences Alumni LinkedIn Group
https://www.linkedin.com/groups/2319549/

grAdvantage
https://gradlife.ucsd.edu/academic-professional/grAdvantage/index.html

Links to Outside Source Information
Science - Next Wave: The career development resource for scientists
http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/

On Being a Scientist: Responsible Conduct in Research: A publication from the National Academy of Sciences
http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=4917

Re-envisioning the Ph.D.
https://depts.washington.edu/envision/project_resources/concerns.html
A website sponsored by the University of Washington and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts designed to answer the question How can we re-envision the PhD to meet the needs of the society of the twenty-first century

Student Health Services Center (SHS)

Located on Library Walk across from the Price Center
http://studenthealth.ucsd.edu
Comprehensive primary health care is provided without charge or at low cost during the academic year and summer for all full time students who have paid registration fees. Student Health Services is fully accredited by AAAHC. Students are encouraged to seek advice on any health problem. Professional and confidential attention is assured. **Most services require an appointment.** There are same-day appointments available for urgent needs. Advanced appointments are available for routine care. Consult the website for current hours.

Incoming students will not be covered by UCSD Health Insurance until September 1 of the year they are entering the program.

Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS):

Galbraith Hall (Revelle College), Room 190
https://caps.ucsd.edu/
Counseling & Psychological Services provides individual, group, couples, and family psychotherapy to registered undergraduate and graduate students, including students of the Medical School and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Services are free of charge to currently enrolled students who have paid their registration fees. During the summer, students who were enrolled the previous Spring quarter and are intending to return in the Fall quarter are eligible for services.

Appointments and After-Hours Assistance: (858) 534-3755

A staff consisting of counseling and clinical psychologists, a social worker, and a consulting psychiatrist provides assistance to students who may be experiencing academic, psychological, marital, family or vocational problems. Individual and group counseling, psychotherapy, marriage or relationship counseling, family therapy, interpersonal, dynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and hypnotic techniques are available. Groups focusing on issues such as stress management, test taking anxiety, sexuality, procrastination, ethnicity, assertiveness, and social-skills building are formed throughout the year. A variety of support groups designed specifically for graduate students is also offered and announced quarterly.

Wellness Program

UC San Diego supports students in achieving a more balanced and healthy lifestyle in the areas of intellectual, physical, occupational, emotional, social, spiritual, financial, and environmental wellness: https://studentwellbeing.ucsd.edu/

Students with Dependents (Parents and Caretakers)

There are a variety of resources available to assist students with finding affordable care for children and other dependents, as well as a childcare reimbursement program for qualified students. Fellow student parents are also often a good source of information. The Student Council and GSA Representatives are available to assist with connecting students to other student parents and lists of resources.

General Resources:

https://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/wellness-resources/student-parents/index.html
https://grad.ucsd.edu/financial/employment/benefits/support-for-student-parents.html
http://blink.ucsd.edu/go/babysitting
https://worklife.ucsd.edu/babysitting/
https://www.healthforcalifornia.com/

Office for Students with Disabilities

University Center 202
https://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/disability-services/index.html

The primary objective of the Office for Students with Disabilities is to integrate these students into general campus programs and activities, and encourage their independence within and outside the campus community.

The following services are available to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities:

- Disability management advising
- Academic support coordination: readers, interpreters, note takers, lab/library assistants
- Equipment repair service
- On-campus transportation
- Special parking coordination
- Special on-campus housing coordination
- Registration/enrollment assistance
- Test-taking arrangements
- Resource library
- Liaison with the California State Department of Rehabilitation
- Referrals to resources, services and agencies
- Campus accessibility map (CAM)

Documentation of disability will be required for the delivery of most of these services.

Office of the Ombuds

https://ombuds.ucsd.edu/
The UCSD Office of the Ombuds provides confidential, neutral, and informal dispute resolution services for the UCSD community. The office is available to assist faculty, staff, students, non-Senate academics, postdoctoral trainees, and employees of UCSD Healthcare (UCSD Medical Center and related facilities) who seek guidance with the resolution of academic or administrative issues and disputes. Its services supplement, but do not replace, other administrative processes at the University. The office works to facilitate communication and assist parties in reaching mutually acceptable agreements in order to find fair and equitable resolutions to concerns that arise at the university.

The Ombuds Office also reports general trends of issues and provides feedback throughout the organization, and advocates systems change when appropriate without disclosing confidential communications.

The Ombuds Office operates independently of ordinary line and staff structures. The office reports to the Chancellor's office for administrative and budgetary purposes, but not regarding the substance of matters discussed in the office. Its services supplement other administrative processes and formal grievance procedures available at the University. When providing services, the Ombuds staff adhere to The International Ombudsman Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice which may be found on the website.

Contact the office by phone at (858) 534-0777 or (619) 471-0777 to schedule an appointment to meet with an ombudsperson.

Housing

http://hdh.ucsd.edu/arch/pages/
Housing, Dining and Hospitality operates several housing complexes open to graduate students. Visit the website for an overview of the various options and to apply for housing. To be eligible for a housing lease, a student must be enrolled in a university recognized, degree granting program, and carry at least twelve (12) units per quarter.

Off-Campus Housing
Visit Commuter Resources for information on off-campus housing.

University Libraries

http://library.ucsd.edu
The UCSD libraries consist of the Geisel Library and the Biomedical Library.

Graduate Student Resources
The library offers a wide range of resources to help graduate students make the most efficient use of all the electronic information resources available to them. An overview of resources is available at https://library.ucsd.edu/ask-us/grad-students.html#resources.

Access to electronic journals
UCSD Libraries provide access to most electronic journals via the California Digital Library. Many journal articles are open-access, or can be accessed via PubMed Central or equivalents. Off-campus access to pay-walled resources requires use of the campus VPN.

Course Reserves
Course reserves for graduate level courses are available at each library and online. Visit https://library.ucsd.edu/borrow-and-request/course-reserves/for-students.html for more information.

Reference Services
Reference services are available at each library to provide assistance to students with course needs and research activities. Reference service is generally available during weekday hours; availability of weeknight and weekend reference service varies among campus libraries.

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) Services
The purpose of Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is to provide support to UCSD faculty, students, and staff by borrowing books, journal articles, government publications, technical reports and

other materials not owned by the UCSD libraries from other libraries, both within UC and throughout the world. Requests may also be made in person, by phone, by email, or by campus mail. UCSD faculty, students and staff are also eligible for direct borrowing privileges at other UC campuses and at most Stanford libraries. Please contact the Library Information Desk, (858) 534-2528, or visit the Interlibrary Loan website at https://library.ucsd.edu/borrow-and-request/interlibrary-loan/index.html for more information.

Library Copy Services
As a companion to Interlibrary Loan, the library also offers copies of articles in journals owned at UCSD but not available electronically in full text. Information can be found at https://library.ucsd.edu/borrow-and-request/borrowing.html#Scan-Articles-and-Book-Chapters.

Transportation Services

Parking on the UCSD campus, like most other universities, can be a problem; there is a shortage of parking spaces and tickets are regularly issued to all illegally parked vehicles. Parking permits are required for all motor vehicles, including motorcycles and mopeds, parked on University property (including quarter breaks and other times when classes are not in session). Visit Transportation Services for information on parking and alternative transportation, campus shuttle services, and more.

XIII. Other Services/Centers/Resources

Box Office

Located in the Price Center, the UCSD Box Office sells tickets for events both at UCSD and off-campus. Discount tickets to area theaters and local attractions are also available. Tickets can be purchased in person or online.

Print Services

Several printing services are available on campus. Imprints, the University provider for copies, poster and other printing services, manages over 700 photocopiers on campus. Imprints has various full-service locations on campus with varying hours. Call (858) 534-3020 or see their website at http://imprints.ucsd.edu.

Student Legal Services

Student Legal Services provides assistance to students regarding legal issues. Any UCSD student anticipating or currently facing a legal problem, such as personal injury, hate crimes, family law, bankruptcy, landlord/tenant and property damage, immigration, or any other type of legal problem, is entitled to free services. SLS offers individual appointments, group counseling/workshops, and academic legal resources. Visit the website for detailed information.

Postal Center

The Mailing Center at The Trove is a full-service postal annex for all shipping and mailing needs.

UC San Diego Passport Office

U.S. Passports are available at one of two locations on the UC San Diego campus. Hours and services vary by location. See link for details.
https://blink.ucsd.edu/facilities/services/general/personal/passports.html

University Bookstore

The University Bookstore makes available an extensive selection of books, including textbooks required for UCSD courses, supplementary reading materials, paperback books, technical reference books, medical books, and a wide variety of general-interest trade books. In addition, the bookstore carries a full line of sundries and gifts, including personal items, magazines and newspapers, clothing, posters, school supplies, electronic calculators, computers, software, and art and engineering supplies. For bookstore hours, call (858) 534-7323 or visit https://ucsandiegobookstore.com.

Recreation Facilities

UCSD Recreation offers students, faculty, and staff a broad scope of recreational, instructional and competitive programs designed to promote a lifestyle of health and fitness. Whether interested in aquatics, intramural sports, master's running, swimming, or triathlon, there are programs and opportunities for everyone. See the website for classes, programs, and more.

Automobile Registration

Students in the process of becoming a California resident must register their vehicle. If the car is registered in the student's name and they are a resident of the state in which the car was purchased, license plates will generally continue to be valid until the expiration date, but for no longer than one year from the date first used in California. This is true even though the license plate may be valid for more than one year in the home state. For further information on vehicle registration contact the Department of Motor Vehicles at http://www.dmv.ca.gov.

Driver's License

Students who drive a vehicle and establish residency in California, must obtain a California driver's license within ten days after arrival in San Diego. Proof of Auto Insurance is also required in San Diego. Visit Department of Motor Vehicles for locations and information.

Voting

To register, US citizens must be at least eighteen years of age and a resident of San Diego County for one day or more with a permanent address. For further information on voting, visit the Registrar of Voters website at www.sdvote.com. Students who plan to establish California residency should first consult with the residency deputy in the UCSD Office of the Registrar prior to making arrangements to vote by absentee ballot in their home state. Students are strongly encouraged to actively participate in the community; voting is one way to do so.

California Voter Registration and Election Information

XIV. Grad to Grad: Student Support and Resources

Graduate Student Representatives

Each year, up to three representatives are elected by the students to act in a leadership role within the school and to represent the school in the Graduate & Professional Student Association. The representatives are invited to attend Biology Graduate Committee meetings, and may be asked to gather and present information on graduate student opinion on a range of issues, including graduate program policy and decisions. The graduate representatives also organize departmental social events and seminars. Current representatives may be reached at biogradreps@ucsd.edu.

Graduate Student Representative Responsibilities:

- Attend bi-weekly GPSA meetings
- Announce and forward GPSA events to students via emails and social media
- Assist in recommending IA/TA assignments (early to mid-July)
- Assist in reviewing applicants to OAR^2 Graduate Internship
- Attend BioSci meetings and functions (e.g., Graduate Committee, Retreat, Picnic)

GEPA OAR^2 Graduate Interns

Part of GEPA's Graduate Intern Programs. Climate and Community Interns primary goals are to strengthen the sense of community and increase the sense of belonging amongst graduate students at UC San Diego.

Climate and Community Interns Responsibilities:

- Plan and promote events to build community, create a culture of inclusion, and sense of belonging for graduate students
- Coordinate events each quarter, with an emphasis on inclusive community building, professional development and retention.
- Organize speakers, logistics, and monitoring event budgets
- Promote events within the BioSci doctoral community to ensure broad reach
- Assess effectiveness of events through various assessment methods
- Write an end-of-year report about impact of activities
- Participate in Biological Sciences marquee events, such as retreat
- Collaborate with faculty program directors to inform event planning

Biology PhD Graduate Student Council (BPGSC)

BPGSC aims to characterize, vocalize, and advocate for the rights, concerns, and objectives of students enrolled in the School of Biological Sciences' PhD Graduate Program at UC San Diego. The BPGSC will facilitate communication between the student body and the faculty and administration of the School, with the goals of improving accountability and transparency and increasing PhD graduate student access to social, personal, academic, and professional resources. The BPGSC is charged with collecting input from the PhD program's graduate student body, conveying suggestions and concerns to the Biology Graduate Committee, managing student funds, providing social, academic, and professional programming, and maintaining an institutional record of policy changes relating to graduate students.
All representatives are listed here: https://biology.ucsd.edu/education/grad/phd/student-reps

Peer Mentoring

What is the Mentorship program all about?

The Biology Graduate Student mentorship program matches an incoming first year Biology PhD student with an upperclassman mentor. The goal is for mentors to help guide their mentee through the first year of the PhD program by listening to the mentee's concerns and questions as well as providing another student perspective and opinion.

What is the time commitment for participants of the mentorship program?

- Mentors and mentees will be required to meet monthly for the first year and quarterly thereafter. They will be treated to coffee courtesy of the school at Art of Espresso (details will be provided on how to access this benefit).
- Attendance at an introductory dinner for mentors and mentees to meet.
- Mentors will be encouraged to attend all Grad Launch social events.
- Mentors will be strongly encouraged to attend the Biology retreat to get to know their mentee at these events.
- Attendance at two more program-wide social events later in the year will be encouraged for mentors and mentees. In November, a social event such as a happy hour is planned to encourage discussions about rotation planning and how coursework/social life is progressing. Late in the following April, a second event will be held for mentors and mentees to focus on advising lab choice.

The mentorship program IS…

- a chance to get to know other students in the program and network between the classes
- an informal setting in which to discuss issues relating to the first year of grad school – rotations, classes, choosing a lab, etc.
- an opportunity to make new friends and have fun

The mentorship program is NOT…

- meant to provide official university advice regarding the PhD degree or replace academic advising
- a substitute for medical services or advice
- a substitute for professional mental health services, such as counseling
- meant to provide legal advice

Campus Graduate & Professional Student Association

Price Center West, Room 404

The Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA) represents the interests and concerns of UCSD graduate and professional students at campus, systemwide, local, state, and national levels. GSA also sponsors social activities and other campus events.

XV. Events and Activities

Annual Retreat

The School organizes a retreat each fall that fosters interactions among program faculty, postdoctoral researchers and students. It is expected that invited students will attend the retreat each year and participate in all of the scientific sessions. Students are required to present a poster at the retreat in their fourth year. The retreat is typically held off campus over several days and features lectures, discussion groups, and social events.

Seminars

The School holds seminars throughout the academic year that encourage peer support, and give students a chance to develop skills, such as public speaking, lab skills, or to promote a health and well-being.

School Socials

School socials give students and faculty a chance to socialize in a casual setting. They are held throughout the academic year and sponsored by the school, the Graduate Student Association (GSA) or individual labs.

Connections

Connections, organized by the EDI Committee, is an informal gathering of students, postdocs, faculty, and staff, designed to facilitate getting to know one another better and promote a stronger sense of community within the School.

XVI. Appendix 1: EBE Ph.D. Program Guidelines

FIRST YEAR

The general policies and procedures in the School of Biological Sciences are available at: https://biology.ucsd.edu/education/grad/phd/requirements/index.html and in the **School of Biological Sciences Graduate Student Handbook (Bio-GSH)**. However, there are some differences, which are tailored to the needs of EBE students. Please read the Bio-GSH first and then this description of the EBE requirements. *Unless otherwise stated in this document, all aspects of the EBE PhD program conform to School policies described in the Bio-GSH.*

Goals for the EBE First Year: Demonstrate to the faculty that the student has sufficient and appropriate academic depth and breadth to conduct a superior research program.

Probable Thesis Advisor: Each First Year EBE student has a probable Thesis Advisor. The student should contact this advisor at the start of Orientation in September.

Initial Assessment: *Before the start of the Fall quarter,* each First Year EBE student will meet with their probable Thesis Advisor to review the student's academic and research achievements, discuss goals, and formulate a first year training proposal (including coursework requirements and potential rotations). Each student will formulate a first year plan with their probable Thesis Advisor and other members of their Initial Assessment Group. This plan will be sent to the EBE chair and a copy will be placed in the student's file with the probable Thesis Advisor.

Required Components of the First Year: The process will be completed by *June 30*. Students who do not complete these components may be placed on probation by the Biology Graduate Committee (or the Dean of Graduate Studies), lose their financial support, or be dismissed from the program. Any petition for delay must be pre-approved by the School and by the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA). Please see the Bio-GSH for details.

1. Students will rotate by enrolling in BGGN 298 (Laboratory Projects in Biology) in Fall and Winter quarters and notify the PhD Graduate Coordinator of which lab they are rotating in. At a minimum, students must complete **four 6-week rotations in at least two laboratories**). The goal of rotations is for the student to receive mentored training in general and specialized research methods that will be useful for the student's research. During a rotation, laboratory research meetings and research seminars also provide training in effective scientific communication and introduce students to the research community at UCSD, including advanced graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers. The student's probable Thesis Advisor must approve all rotations
2. The first four rotations can be with any UCSD or Salk faculty, but at least one rotation must be with the probable Thesis Advisor. The first rotation is set during the Initial Assessment. Subsequent rotations can be set during the Initial Assessment or as the year progresses. Rotations should be completed before the student begins preparations for their First Year Exam.
3. In their first year, students must take a minimum of two graduate courses that are not on the list of excluded courses. **Excluded courses: BGGN 200, 205, 208, 297, 298, 299, 500, and any BGJC, BGRD, or BGSE course.**
4. Students must regularly attend the weekly EBE seminar series.
5. If items 3 and 4 would severely compromise a student's research or training, the student may request a limited exemption from the Initial Assessment Group, justifying how their alternative activity is more useful to their goals. This exemption cannot completely release the student from all coursework and seminar attendance requirements during their first year.
6. Complete the First Year Exam.

Optional First Year Components: These options may be mandated at the student's Initial Assessment Group. They supplement, but cannot replace, required components.

1. Taking specific undergraduate courses for letter grades to acquire desired expertise.
2. Serving as a Graduate Instructional Apprentice or a Teaching Assistant. *EBE students may also teach for financial support,* ***but this teaching for support follows a different set of guidelines (see EBE Graduate Program Support****).*

Fellowships & Grants

All students are encouraged to apply for fellowships and grants, beginning in their First Year.

THE EBE FIRST YEAR EXAM

All students are required to take a First Year Comprehensive Examination. Along with performance on rotations and in required courses, exam results will be used to determine the student's ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically. It will also assess the student's knowledge and scientific background in the *basic tenets of their field(s)*. The nature of the First Year Exam may vary with the student depending on their scientific maturation. The exam will have both written and oral phases.

Exam committee: The student must assemble a three-person First Year Exam committee consisting of the student's proposed Thesis Advisor and at least two regular (not adjunct or emeritus) EBE professors. As specified by School rules, *the committee will be chaired by an Evaluation Head who is not the proposed Thesis Advisor*. The Evaluation Head gives the student written instructions on the written portion and fills out evaluation paperwork.

Written portion: The First Year Exam will include a written piece of original scholarship on a topic or topics set by the First Year Exam committee. The purpose of the written portion is to assess depth, critical thinking and creativity and to facilitate the student's thesis research plans. All work must be completed within six weeks or within a realistic deadline set by the committee. The nature of the written portion (review, grant proposal, theoretical model, etc.) and its length will be specified in advance. Preparation for the First Year Exam does not excuse the student from participating fully in the other First Year duties (i.e., coursework, rotations, seminar attendance, etc.).

Oral exam: The oral exam will not be more than 3 hours long. Its purpose is to assess the student's overall breadth and depth in their stated areas of interest. The First Year Exam will require students to exhibit *broad general knowledge of their field, including key, foundational concepts*. Topics will be identified by the committee members and given to the student at least three months in advance. Students may also request that committee members suggest topics or readings prior to the exam. All committee members must be present (physically or via video or teleconferencing) during the exam.

The disciplines within EBE are diverse, and the Thesis Advisor and First Year Exam Committee may therefore tailor a different set of guidelines for the First Year Exam. However, all First Year Exams must have written and oral components that test a student's knowledge of foundational concepts and the ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically.

Scheduling of the First Year Exam: The First Year Exam may be completed between March 1 and June 30 of the student's first year. The student and their probable Thesis Advisor will consult on the best time. The exam must be completed before June 30 to satisfy university reporting requirements.

Timeline: Students must first meet with each member of their First Year Exam committee well ahead of the potential exam date to determine each committee member's required exam material. The student must submit their completed written portion by a realistic deadline set by the committee (typically within six weeks). The oral exam will be held within the following two weeks to give Committee members time to read and evaluate the paper before the Exam. An example timeline is shown in **Table 1**.

Results of the First Year Exam: At the conclusion of the oral exam and in the presence of the student, the committee members will each assess the student's overall performance as **satisfactory** or **unsatisfactory**. Students will **pass** the First Year Exam if they receive two or more **satisfactory** assessments. Students receiving two or three **unsatisfactory** assessments will subsequently meet with the EBE Graduate Program Committee member and the EBE chair to decide on a course of action. Occasionally, an exam may be "continued" for a short period of time to allow a student to address a specific academic weakness. The Evaluation Head must file the necessary exam report with the Graduate Program Chair of the School of Biological Sciences.

In some cases, after evaluating a student's first year performance (coursework, laboratory rotations, and comprehensive exam), the Graduate Committee may place the student on probationary status. Removal of probationary status may require activities such as retaking the exam, defending an oral proposition, additional IA responsibilities, coursework in areas in need of improvement, or other measures the Graduate Committee deems necessary. Unsatisfactory performance in multiple areas of the first year curriculum may result in dismissal.

Who is the exam chair?
For the EBE First Year Exam, the primary thesis advisor is the chair of the committee and signs on the line marked "chair".

Table 1. Suggested timetable for the First Year Exam. The First Year exam must be completed before June 30th.

Date	Action
February 15th	First Year Exam Committee membership finalized.
March 1st	Students meet with the First Year Exam Committee to receive instructions on exam format and general topics.
April 1st	Student receives topics for the written portion
May 15th	Written portion due (committee members have 2 weeks to evaluate the written portion)
June 1st	Oral exam

EBE PhD Program Guidelines
FIRST YEAR INITIAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Student's name: **Date:**

Faculty members of the Initial Assessment Group:

Goals for the First Year: (1) to demonstrate to the faculty that the student has sufficient academic breadth and is capable of conducting a superior research program in EBE at UCSD and (2) to identify areas in which student skills and knowledge can be strengthened.
*Means of achieving goals **may** include:*

1. Taking specific undergraduate courses for letter grades to acquire desired expertise.
2. Taking a minimum of two graduate courses (other than BGGN 200, 208, 297, 298, 299, 500, or any BGJC, BGRD, or BGSE course) in their first year.
3. Rotating through labs (minimum of four 6-week rotations).
4. Taking the First Year Exam.
5. Serving as a Graduate Instructional Apprentice or a Teaching Assistant

All students must complete 3 and 4 unless a special, limited exemption is granted

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Undergraduate courses:
Graduate courses:
Required courses
BGGN 200: Graduate School Fundamentals, Grad Launch II (2 units, Fall quarter only)
BGGN 208: Biological Sciences Grad Launch I (4 units, Fall quarter only)
BGGN 298: Laboratory Projects in Biology (rotations: 12 units recommended per quarter, register Fall, Winter, and Spring)[1]
*[1]Consult with the probable Thesis Advisor to determine the appropriate number of units**.** Hours per week correspond to the total time required for a given course, including study, preparation, etc. First year students should not take BGGN 299, BGSE 205, or the Ethics Course series. **Students must take a minimum of 12 units per quarter.***

Additional courses **(cannot include BGGN 200, 205, 208, 297, 298, 299, 500, or any BGJC, BGRD, or BGSE course).**
Suggestions:
BGGN 203 (Topics in Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution, 3 units)[2]
BGGN 204 (Topics in Community and Population Ecology, 3 units)[2]
[2]Not necessarily offered each quarter

Rotations (four rotations in a minimum of two labs)
1.

2.

3.

4.

Rotations 2-4 are tentative assignments that may be changed with the agreement of the probable Thesis Advisor

Other recommendations:

IA assignments:

Exemptions (with justifications, attach sheets as necessary):

Each Initial Assessment group will specify the individual student's first year requirements in writing. ***Copies of this form are given to the student and their advisor and placed in the student's file.***

EBE FIRST YEAR EXAM ASSESSMENT FORM

Student's name: **Date:**

Members of the First Year Exam Committee:

The First Year Exam is a qualifying exam. Along with performance on rotations and in required courses, it will be used to determine the student's ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically. It will also assess the student's knowledge and scientific background in the *basic tenets of their field(s)*. The nature of the First Year Exam may vary with the student depending on their scientific maturation. The exam will have both written and oral phases. ***The thesis advisor will summarize the comments of the exam committee.***

Comments on the written exam
(attach additional pages if necessary)

Comments on the oral exam
(attach additional pages if necessary

Satisfactory / Unsatisfactory

_____

Thesis Advisor signature / Print Name Date

S/U_____

Committee member signature / Print Name Date

S/U_____

Committee member signature / Print Name Date

S/U_____

Committee member signature / Print Name Date

S/U_____

Committee member signature / Print Name Date

S/U_____

Committee member signature / Print Name Date

_____

Student signature / Print Name Date

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM CHAIR OF THE SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

EBE PhD Program Guidelines
SUBSEQUENT YEARS

Please refer to the Bio-GSH for topics not covered here. Unless otherwise stated in this document, all aspects of the EBE PhD program conform to the School's policies as described in the Bio-GSH

Coursework

Once the student has formally selected a Thesis Advisor, they will actively engage in thesis research (enroll in BGGN 299 and BGRD 200 each quarter) and participate in lab research and/or discussion meetings (enroll in BGRD course(s) specified by their Thesis Advisor). All EBE students are expected to attend the weekly EBE seminar series and enroll in BGSE 205 (Graduate Research Seminar) on a regular basis unless they are away from campus. Students typically fulfill the Bioethics Training requirement during the second year by taking Scientific Ethics (BGGN 207) in spring quarter. In the second year and beyond students must enroll in BGSE 205 in each quarter.

It is very important for students to enroll in the correct course to avoid a permanent F or U grade on their transcripts. Errors must be corrected before the drop deadline. Petitions cannot eliminate or change grades due to student negligence. Failing grades can lead to the loss of financial aid or changes in visa status, where applicable. Please see the Bio-GSH and the UCSD Graduate Student Handbook (http://grad.ucsd.edu/academics/index.html) for more details.

Teaching

Students must fulfill three Apprentice Teaching Experiences (as a Graduate Instructional Apprentice enrolled in BGGN 5xx courses) during their first four years. This is the minimum requirement for all students in the School of Biological Sciences PhD program. ***EBE students may also teach for financial support, but this teaching for support follows a different set of guidelines (see EBE Graduate Program Support).***

Annual Exams

Beginning in the second year, students must hold an annual meeting with their doctoral committee, typically May or June but no later than July 31. **Table 2 gives an example timeline**. *Failure to hold this meeting and submit the committee's assessment to Student and Instructional Service staff will result in termination of financial support*. Details are described in the Bio-GSH.

Second Year EBE students are expected to complete the **Second Year Proposal Exam** by July 31 (a graduate school deadline). The principal aims of this exam are for the student 1) to present a defensible dissertation proposal with a summary of the general experimental approaches to be used and 2) to demonstrate proficiency in the background literature relevant to the field in which they plan to carry out research. This exam is conducted by the student's Core Doctoral Committee (see Bio-GSH), which is composed of the student's Thesis Advisor and at least two other faculty. The Thesis Advisor will fill out the evaluation paperwork. The written and oral components of this exam will consist of a student research proposal ***written in an appropriate grant proposal format and presented orally*****.** The oral exam will not exceed 3 hours.

If a student's research is sufficiently developed, they are encouraged to use the Second Year Proposal Exam or their third year annual exam to satisfy the requirements of the university's **Advancement to Candidacy Exam. Please see the Bio-GSH for rules and all details. Paperwork must be filed in advance.** The thesis advisor and Core Doctoral Committee shall determine with the student if advancement to candidacy is appropriate. The Advancement to Candidacy exam must be passed no later than the end of the student's 4th year and requires the formal constitution of the entire Doctoral Committee (a process that takes several weeks) and scheduling through the School's Graduate Student & Instructional Services office. Please contact the PhD graduate coordinator for details. Students should consult their Thesis Advisors to determine the best time for Advance to Candidacy. For international students, advancing to candidacy in their second year can have implications for their support, particularly if they exceed the normal 5 years. Please consult with the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs (GEPA) for details.

Who is the exam chair?

For the following exams (first year, third year, advancement to candidacy, etc.), the primary thesis advisor is the chair of the committee and signs on the line marked "chair". **For the 2nd year exam form and this form alone, the thesis advisor signs on the line marked "thesis advisor" but cannot be the evaluation head**. The evaluation head must be a different member of the committee.

Table 2. Suggested timetable for the Second Year Exam. The Second Year exam should normally be completed before July 31st.

Date	Action
May 15th	Core Doctoral Committee membership finalized.
June 1st	Students receive instructions on the exam.
July 15th	Written portion due (committee members have 2 weeks to evaluate the written portion)
July 31st	Oral exam.

Need Help?

Never hesitate to seek help from the EBE Graduate Committee representatives (student and faculty) or the EBE Chair for advice on policies and regulations; they are all here to help students succeed. The student will obtain all necessary forms by contacting the PhD Graduate Coordinator.

Contacts 2023-24

EBE Graduate Committee member: Andrew Barton (adbarton@ucsd.edu)
EBE Chair: Jonathan Shurin (jshurin@ucsd.edu)
PhD Graduate Coordinator: Ileana Oseguera (ioseguera@ucsd.edu)
PhD Graduate Coordinator: Valeria Spall (vspall@ucsd.edu)
Biological Sciences Graduate Program Chair : Eric Bennett (e1bennett@ucsd.edu)
Biological Sciences Graduate Program Vice Chair Justin Meyer (jrmeyer@ucsd.edu)
IA Program & Staffing Coordinator: (*biota@ucsd.edu*) *for questions about serving as an Instructional Assistant*