

# Graduate Student Handbook

PhD Program  
2016-2017

UC San Diego  
Biological Sciences

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## Overview of the Program

### *Mission of the Division of Biological Sciences*

The mission of the Division of Biological Sciences is to advance knowledge of basic biological sciences and to apply research discoveries in ways that improve human health, protect our environment, and enrich our economy. We strive to fulfill our mission by educating and preparing the next generation of scientists, physicians, medical researchers, and educators for twenty-first century careers, and by increasing public understanding of biology and encouraging scientific discovery among K-12 teachers and schoolchildren.

### *Goal of Graduate Education in the Affiliated Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences between the Division of Biological Sciences and the Salk Institute*

The goal of our program is to provide a supportive and stimulating environment with a wide range of opportunities to enable highly talented individuals to develop the skills and experience necessary to become successful world-class scientists. The instruction includes analysis of existing knowledge as well as multidisciplinary strategies and approaches to the acquisition of new knowledge. The program includes training in the writing of research papers and grant applications, the presentation of lectures, and the ethical conduct of research. These skills allow graduates to pursue a broad range of careers that involve the use of science to increase the quality of life everywhere.

### *Research Agenda of the Division of Biological Sciences*

- Expand the frontiers of knowledge about how living organisms develop, function, reproduce, interact and evolve
- Apply discoveries in the biosciences to solving global problems in the areas of health, the environment, and the economy

Our [research faculty](#) are at the forefront of scientific discovery in their respective fields. Their cutting edge research addresses some of the most perplexing and urgent issues of our time, from cures for cancer and diabetes to understanding neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's, from cleaning up the environment to protecting the world's food supply, from looking for biofuel alternatives to petroleum to understanding climate change and its effects on all forms of life. Each faculty member belongs to 1 of 4 [Academic Sections](#). Both our senior and junior faculty have distinguished themselves, receiving numerous [honors](#) from their peers and competing successfully for many top national awards, including Packard Fellowships, Searle Scholar Awards, Beckman Young Investigator Awards, and Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Research Fellowships. We are creating a community where the best scientists from every background are welcome. Our high-caliber and diverse faculty ensures that our [nationally ranked](#) research and educational programs will continue to grow in excellence. In addition to individual research programs, the division is taking the lead in establishing [major interdisciplinary research initiatives](#) focused on global health, environmental sustainability, and economic security. See [More News](#)

### [Cell & Developmental Biology Section](#)

Laboratories in the Section of Cell and Developmental Biology (CDB) are studying the mechanisms by which cells assemble and function, and how these cells are sculpted into multicellular organisms. CDB research in cell biology addresses fundamental questions common to all eukaryotic cells, including mechanisms of protein degradation, nucleocytoplasmic transport, and cell migration. In developmental biology we focus on understanding the formation of pattern in development, how differential gene expression affects cell fate, and

mechanisms that guide the morphogenesis of tissues, organs and organisms. Several laboratories investigate the basic biology of stem cells in development and regeneration, and the ability of cells and tissues to repair themselves. CDB labs have begun to address questions of cell and developmental biology at a systems level. Laboratories in the section use a vast range of eukaryotic model organisms to study these questions, ranging from yeast to mammals. Notably, CDB includes numerous laboratories studying plant development and physiology.

### [Ecology, Behavior & Evolution Section](#)

Research in the Section of Ecology, Behavior, & Evolution is focused on investigating ecological and evolutionary processes operating at the level of individuals, populations, species, and communities. Major foci include understanding the processes structuring the distribution and abundance of organisms, behavioral adaptations to environmental and social challenges, evolution of gene networks and development, mapping genotype to phenotype, the processes and patterns of evolutionary change, and the application of all of these areas to the understanding of biodiversity. Researchers in the EBE section use a variety of approaches, including molecular techniques for probing the structure and phenotypic consequences of genetic variation, phylogenetic techniques for estimating genealogical relationships among taxa, field and laboratory experiments for hypothesis testing, telemetry and satellites for assessing patterns in species distributions, paleobiological data for quantifying the history of biodiversity, experimental evolution, mathematical modeling, and computer simulations of evolving systems. Unlike other subdisciplines, which concentrate on a few model taxa, evolutionary biologists use data from many different organisms from all over the world to test hypotheses about biological diversity. The unifying theme underlying all of these studies is that an evolutionary approach is needed to solve most biological problems.

### [Molecular Biology Section](#)

Molecular Biology includes the study of genes and the control of their expression in the elaboration of cellular and organismal function. As a field, Molecular Biology has unraveled the essence of life on earth—DNA replication, gene expression, and the biochemical basis of phenotypic characteristics upon which evolutionary selection pressures act. UC San Diego Molecular Biologists pursue fundamental molecular concepts underpinning the seemingly fantastic diversity of life forms and biological adaptation. Faculty in the Molecular Biology Section study the burgeoning field of chromosome structure within the nucleus as well as DNA and histone modifications that govern gene replication, accessibility and messenger RNA transcription. There is also emphasis on the study of non-coding RNA molecules and other post-transcriptional regulatory mechanisms that determine how effectively mRNA is translated into proteins. In addition, there is a strong focus on intracellular signaling and the logic of gene regulation. Such interactions are also modeled and tested in synthetic gene networks that recapitulate the logic of feedback circuits governing natural programs of gene expression. Faculty in Molecular Biology study this wealth of processes in both single-celled organisms and complex metazoans. These concepts are further examined to understand complicated cellular functions, such as development and differentiation. In particular, faculty in Molecular Biology study stem cell biology and the co-evolved immune response to model infectious agents with a focus on molecular mechanisms guiding lymphocytic and myeloid differentiation and function.

### [Neurobiology Section](#)

The section of Neurobiology brings together a group of faculty who do research and instruction with the mission of understanding how nervous systems work. This task requires scientific approaches on different physical scales, from the level of single molecules to the level of the entire nervous system, and of different temporal scales from fractions of a millisecond to years. Faculty research is focused on analyzing brain circuits and neural networks, using genetics to understand sensory receptor function; sorting out the molecular



mechanisms of neurotransmitter release and neurotransmitter receptor regulation; imaging information transmission in functioning neurons; and making computational models of processes from the movement of molecules in membranes to the control of behaviors. Molecular and cell biological techniques, biophysical recordings using a variety of electrophysiological and optical techniques, and computerized analysis are providing great insights into the functioning of single nerve cells, as well as complicated networks of neurons. This multidisciplinary approach is yielding insights into the rich complexity of mechanisms that influence how we think, feel, and act.

## Diversity

### *Commitment and Inclusion*

Diversity is crucial to the academic excellence of our campus. To fulfill our institutional mission in a state as diverse and multi-ethnic as California, UCSD must be a campus where students, staff, and faculty from many different backgrounds and life experiences interact and learn from each other. Diversity and educational excellence are mutually beneficial.

The University promotes diversity in all its programs. In fostering such an environment, the campus seeks to encourage respect and understanding of all cultural traditions and promote greater diversity among faculty, staff, and students. The staff of the Graduate Division has an important role to ensure that a diverse population is recruited, admitted, educated, and graduated. The staff makes special efforts to insure that students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds are encouraged and supported in their educational efforts. For information about student diversity activities contact the Graduate Division Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, April Bjornsen, (858) 534-3871. To view an updated list of programs and events, you can visit [Graduate Division's](#) website.

### *UCSD Diversity Council*

The Diversity Council was established by the Chancellor to look at the status of UCSD's diversity efforts and to recommend ways to improve campus effectiveness. This is based on the belief that the University environment is greatly enriched by the presence of people with diverse backgrounds and cultural perspectives. In fostering such an environment, the Council seeks to (1) encourage respect and understanding of all cultural traditions; (2) promote greater diversity among faculty, staff, and students; (3) support campus diversity-related initiatives and communicate their results to the campus and the surrounding community.

### *Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Issues (CACLGBTI)*

Established in the fall of 1994, this committee's charge is to identify and analyze issues of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people at UCSD. By informing and educating the campus community about issues that detrimentally affect faculty, staff, and students, CACLGBTI can make recommendations on policies and procedures that would ameliorate conditions negatively impacting this UCSD community. In fulfilling its charge on the UCSD campus, CACLGBTI sponsors and co-sponsors programming and events supporting and increasing awareness of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgenders. For more information or a copy of the Resource Guide for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Students, Faculty, and Staff, visit the website <http://diversity.ucsd.edu/>.

### *Asian American Student Forum/Kamalayan*

The Asian American Student Forum is an informal discussion group where students can discuss academic, personal, and social issues. For information on times and dates, please call (858) 534-3755. Kamalayan is a socio-political interest group for Philipina/o American Affairs; UCSD faculty, staff and students help raise awareness of issues affecting the Philipina/o community. For more information on Asian American student groups and events, contact Nancy Magpusao at (858) 534-9689.

### *Cross Cultural Center (CCC)*

The Cross Cultural Center offers programs and services specifically designed to reflect UCSD's commitment to excellence, scholarship, and community through diversity and cross-cultural interactions. Among its services are faculty, staff, and student exchanges; educational materials; student outreach and retention programs; speakers and film series; community outreach; gender-related events; support and discussion groups; leadership development; international student activities; and more. The Cross Cultural Center is on the second

floor of Price Center East. For additional information please contact the CCC at (858) 534-9689, [ccccenter@ucsd.edu](mailto:ccccenter@ucsd.edu), or visit their web page at <http://ccc.ucsd.edu>.

### *Disabled Student Union (DSU)*

DSU is a student organization composed of both undergraduate and graduate students with and without disabilities. For additional information about the organization and events, call (858) 534-4382.

### *Women's Center*

[The Women's Center](#) provides support and education on gender issues for students, staff, faculty, and the community. Everyone is welcome to use the facility. Events include speakers, workshops, discussion groups, legal clinics, and other programs. The center's library includes a collection of books, videos, and magazines, including sections focusing on women in academia, women in science, parenting, health, lgbt, and multicultural issues. There is a small children's area that parents can use (children must be supervised at all times). The center has a quarterly calendar and runs two listservs (a general listserv and one specifically for women in science). The Women's Center is located in Student Center West between Mandeville Center and the Student Center. For additional information, contact the Women's Center at [women@ucsd.edu](mailto:women@ucsd.edu) or call (858) 822-0074.

### *Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center*

Located between Mandeville Center and the Student Center, the [LGBT Resource Center](#) at UCSD is a diverse, open and public space for all members of the University community to explore issues relating to sexual and gender identities, practices and politics. It develops student leadership, builds workplace equity, promotes academic research, and provides resources. The office challenges existing definitions of variant genders and sexualities by engaging in community building on- and off-campus. This office sustains and develops visibility, sense of community, and knowledge of diverse queer people. You can go to chat with friends, relax in their library/activity room, or use the Internet to check email via a student workstation. The office has a quarterly calendar of educational, cultural and social events. They provide information on campus events and resources, and a list of gender and queer academic courses offered at UCSD. For additional information contact the LGBTRC at [rainbow@ucsd.edu](mailto:rainbow@ucsd.edu) or call (858) 822-3493.

## Performance Standards / Expectations

### *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 Division 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, you must meet both our academic and technical competencies, with or without reasonable accommodation.

**Physical** - A graduate student must be capable of performing the experimental work 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.

**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.

## Expectations

### *Good Academic Standing*

Throughout your career as a PhD student you are expected to maintain *good academic standing*, which means that you meet the following standards:

- Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in upper division and graduate level coursework at UCSD.
- Do not accumulate more than eight units of unsatisfactory grades (U or F) overall.
- Be registered in at least 12 units of graduate-level coursework each quarter at UCSD, or be on an official leave of absence.
- Have a current annual evaluation on file.
- Make satisfactory progress in your course of study and research project as delineated in your annual evaluations, course grades and graduate instructional apprentice performance (see below: *Normal progress toward the degree, Time Limits, and Timeline to Degree*).
- Meet all required time limits as described below.

Failure to maintain these standards may place you on probation by the Biology Graduate Committee or by the UCSD Dean of Graduate Studies and could lead to dismissal from the program. Your continued financial support is also contingent on maintaining good academic standing.

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

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

Under normal circumstances, the standard established for the time period in which students are expected to complete requirements for the PhD is five years. It is called the *Normative Time*. The goal of the normative time limit policy is to encourage you to complete your PhD in a timely manner and to encourage your thesis advisor to provide sufficient guidance and intellectual support so that you can advance to candidacy and complete a high quality dissertation within the established time limits.

To complete a dissertation within the *Normative Time*, a student in the standard track curriculum should adhere to the following timeline:

#### *Timeline to Degree:*

##### **YEAR 1:**

- Participate in Boot Camp (*BGGN 208*)
- Participate in the Transition Seminar “Graduate School Fundamentals” (*BGGN 200*)
- Complete Formal Coursework: Core Sequence (3 courses); elective courses (2)
- Conduct Four Laboratory Rotations
- *Take Comprehensive Exam by June 30 of Year 1*

**YEAR 2:**

- Select Thesis Advisor and begin Thesis Research
- Participate and present in the Graduate Research Seminar (*BGSE 205*)
- Participate in the Scientific Ethics Course (*SOMI 226*)
- Fulfill first of three Apprentice Teaching Experiences (*BGGN 500*)
- Select Core Doctoral Committee
- *Schedule Thesis Proposition Examination by June 30 of Year 2*

**YEAR 3:**

- Continue Thesis Research
- Participate and present in Graduate Research Seminar (*BGSE 205*)
- Fulfill second of three Apprentice Teaching Experiences (*BGGN 502*)
- *Conduct annual Evaluation Meeting with Core Doctoral Committee, or – some cases-advance to Candidacy by June 30 of Year 3*

**YEAR 4:**

- Continue Thesis Research
- Present a poster during the Divisional Retreat
- Participate and present in Graduate Research Seminar (*BGSE 205*)
- Fulfill last of three Apprentice Teaching Experiences (*BGGN 504*)
- Select remaining members of Doctoral Committee
- *Advance to Candidacy meeting at Annual Meeting with Doctoral Committee by June 30 of Year 4*

**YEAR 5:**

- Complete Thesis Research
- Conduct Pre-Defense Thesis Evaluation Meeting at annual meeting with Doctoral Committee
- Prepare Thesis
- *Defend Thesis*

Please refer to the *Academic Degree Requirements* section described in the *Policies* section of the handbook for further details.

***Academic Conduct***

As a UC San Diego student you are subject to the UCSD Conduct Code. These policies and procedures are administered by the Office of Student Policies and Judicial Affairs (858) 534-6225, ([studentconduct@ucsd.edu](mailto:studentconduct@ucsd.edu)). The Code of Student Conduct articulates the University's expectations regarding standards of conduct, both academic and with respect to the rights of others. 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.

## Academic Requirements for PhD Degree

### *Detailed Trajectory of Academic Progression*

Please refer to the *Detailed Description of the Formal Coursework* section in the next portion of the handbook for details. A [program timeline](#) is also available for review online.

### **First Year**

The three major components of the First Year are designed to guide you to becoming an independent, creative researcher. Each component will train you in the application of modern methods of biological research, in the generation of informed opinions on scientific findings, and in the discussion and communication of research results.

1. **Laboratory rotations.** A series of six-week rotations allows you 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 introducing you to the research community at UCSD and the Salk Institute, including advanced graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and prospective thesis advisors.
2. **Core curriculum.** Lectures in molecular biology, cell biology, and genetics (or for EBE track students, lectures in modern topics in Ecology, Behavior and Evolution) provide an advanced foundation in these fundamental disciplines. Lectures are complemented by small group discussions with faculty moderators focused on the critical evaluation of the primary scientific literature.
3. **Elective coursework.** Flexibility for you to pursue your individual interests during the first year is provided not only through rotations, but also through elective courses.

### Milestones of your First Year:

- Demonstrating comprehension of current ideas, thoughts, and concepts of modern biology, and an ability to critically evaluate data via the Comprehensive Exam.
- Selecting an advisor who will guide your research, assure that you progress in a timely manner, and assume fiscal responsibility for your support.
- Selecting your Core Thesis Committee, faculty members who will be part of your network of advisors.

### Coursework

You must take a core course sequence and a minimum of two electives, complete at least four lab rotations, and take a qualifying exam. After enrolling in the Biological Sciences Boot Camp, you will participate in the Orientation Seminar “Graduate School Fundamentals.” You are required to take the *First Year Core Curriculum* as specified for your chosen track (as described under **Academic Requirement for PhD Degree**). Each course provides in-depth coverage of current topics in biology and provides you with an opportunity to learn to critically read and evaluate primary scientific literature. Each course requires approximately 6–9 hours per week of work throughout the quarter. The format of the courses varies and includes lectures, discussion groups, and student-led seminars.

You also must enroll in at least two *Elective Courses*. During each academic quarter (fall, winter, spring) you are expected to have full-time student status, i.e., you must be enrolled in courses and rotations that together constitute at least 12 units of course credits. You must earn 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. It denotes a clear and unacceptable deficiency.

In addition, you must complete at least four *Laboratory Projects (Rotations)*, two in the Fall Quarter and two in the Winter Quarter (except for students admitted through the Direct Admit program). If necessary, students can conduct one or two additional rotations during the Spring quarter. If you wish to conduct additional rotations, you need to request an extension through the Biological Sciences Graduate Committee.

### Selecting an Advisor

It is very important to select a thesis advisor by the end of June of your first year, but no later than September 1. Please review the *Selecting an Advisor* section for details.

### Summer

During the summer months you will not be enrolled in courses. You are expected to focus exclusively on your thesis research.

### Examination

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

## **Second Year**

You should have selected your thesis advisor by the beginning of your second year. Additional requirements are the selection of your Core Thesis Committee (see more about this under the *Advising Structure* section, page and conducting your Proposition Examination at the end of the Second Year.

Through the Proposition Exam, you will demonstrate your general competence in the broad area of your research, and your ability to synthesize the factual information and training techniques absorbed through coursework and seminar research. You must demonstrate that you have identified an important, challenging, and tractable research problem of sufficient scope, and that you have a substantial command of the relevant literature.

### Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters you will be actively engaged in your *Thesis Research* (i.e., enrolled in BGGN 297 and BGGN 299) and you will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD course). In addition, you will carry out your first *Apprentice Teaching Assignment* (BGGN 500) and should enroll in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205) for your specific research affinity.

Finally, you are required to complete Ethics Training, which is formal training in science ethics and the responsible conduct of research, by enrolling in [Scientific Ethics](#) (BGGN207/SOMI 226), organized by Dr. Michael Kalichman. The course is offered during the Spring Quarter.

Depending on your chosen track, you may have to enroll in additional formal courses. Furthermore, your thesis advisor may recommend that you deepen your knowledge and understanding of certain academic fields by taking additional formal courses.



### Summer

During the summer months you will not be enrolled in courses. You are expected to focus exclusively on your thesis research.

### Examination

Last, but not least, you are expected to complete your *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 your research progresses well, you should be able to advance to candidacy by the end of the Third Year. You may, however, postpone your advancement to candidacy and therefore schedule your annual meeting with your Core Thesis Committee. This will allow you and your committee to review and assess the status of your research and together you will develop the trajectory of your research for the following year.

### Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters you will be actively engaged in your *Thesis Research* (i.e., enrolled in BGGN 297 and BGGN 299) and you will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD course). In addition, you should expect to fulfill a second quarter of *Apprentice Teaching training* (BGGN 502) and should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

### Summer

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

### Candidacy Examination or Annual Evaluation Meeting

You could advance to candidacy and complete your qualifying exam by the end of your Third Year. However, because of the variability of research progression, you have until the end of your Fourth Year to advance to candidacy. If you opt for not completing your qualifying exam by the end of the Third Year, you must schedule your Annual Evaluation meeting with your Doctoral 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.

## **Fourth Year**

During your Fourth Year, you should complete the membership of your Thesis Committee and need to have advanced to candidacy by the end of the year. In the Advancing to Candidacy meeting (qualifying exam) you should demonstrate a clearly laid out thesis that will make significant contributions to your field of research. You should have significant and substantive findings that will likely lead to a first author paper.

Fourth year students are expected to present a poster at the Divisional Retreat in the Fall. Failure to present at this event will cause you to forfeit your annual travel allowance in your fifth year and beyond. See the *Professional Travel Opportunities* in the *Fiscal Section* for details.

### Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters you will be actively engaged in your *thesis research* (i.e., enrolled in BGGN 297 and BGGN 299) and you will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD course). In addition, you should expect to fulfill a third quarter of *Apprentice Teaching training* (BGGN 504) and should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

### Summer

During the summer months you will not be enrolled in courses. You are expected to focus exclusively on your thesis research.

### Examination

If you advanced to candidacy at the end of your third year, you must schedule your annual meeting with your Doctoral Committee. If you did not advance to candidacy by the end of your third year, then you must present a definitive research proposal to your Doctoral Committee by the end of your fourth year (June 30).

## **Fifth Year**

The Fifth Year of your graduate education will likely be the culmination of your graduate career. You should have produced a thesis that represents substantial new contributions to the biological sciences and will be publishable in a reputable, peer-reviewed journal. You must present your research in writing, and demonstrate your ability to communicate your research to a wider audience via the Thesis Defense.

### Coursework

Throughout all three academic quarters you will be actively engaged in your *Thesis Research* (i.e., enrolled in BGGN 297 and BGGN 299), and you will participate in *Lab Research Meetings* (BGRD course) and *Journal Club* (BGJC course). In addition, you should be enrolled in the *Graduate Student Seminar* (BGSE 205).

### Summer

During the summer months you will not be enrolled in courses. You are expected to focus exclusively on your thesis research.

### Examination

By the end of your fifth year, you should be ready to prepare, defend, and file a doctoral research thesis. The thesis is prepared in strict accordance with policies and procedures established by the Graduate Division and is outlined in [Dissertation and Thesis Submission](#). Additional information can be found in the *Policies* section of this handbook.

## *Detailed Description of the Formal Coursework*

### **Overview**

As a Doctoral student in the *Affiliated Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences between the Division of Biological Sciences at UCSD and the Salk Institute*, you must complete formal coursework, laboratory training, independent research, seminars, ethics training, and college level teaching in order to fulfill all requirements for a PhD degree. As stated before, throughout your graduate student career you must make *normal progress* and you must maintain *good academic standing*.

Students have the option to participate in more specialized training tracks. Tracks in Ecology, Behavior & Evolution, Quantitative Biology, and Bioinformatics are currently available.

Although the specific course sequence depends on your selected research track (described below), you are expected to complete the following:

- Division of Biological Sciences Graduate Boot Camp
- Orientation Seminar: “Graduate School Fundamentals”
- Three-quarters of a core sequence (Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, and Genetics) and two elective courses during your First Year
- Laboratory rotations (four) during the Fall and Winter Quarters of the First Year (except for students admitted through the Direct Admit program)
- Graduate Instructional Apprentice duties (three courses, equivalent to one year)
- Scientific Ethics training
- Annual Graduate Student Seminar course starting in your second year
- Journal Clubs
- Annual Meetings with your Doctoral Committee

You are expected to pass all your formal courses with a grade of “B” or better. You may select, in consultation with your First-Year Advisor and the Chair of the Graduate Committee to take additional graduate courses or seminars in particular areas. You may also be advised to take additional undergraduate courses for remedial purposes.

At the time of your first-year exam you will be expected to demonstrate graduate level knowledge of Cell, Molecular, Developmental Biology, and Genetics. It is expected that you will acquire this through reading of scientific literature and by going to seminars, in addition to participating in formal classes.

### **Detailed Description of Courses**

During the first year, all entering students pursue a rigorous academic program consisting of a sequence of graduate core courses (aimed at providing up-to-date coverage of three large subject areas) and a minimum of two electives.

### ***Boot Camp***

Boot Camp is an intense seminar/laboratory course (BGGN 208) that runs for about two weeks—just before the regular classes begin in the Fall Quarter. The purpose of Boot Camp is to introduce you to an array of computational and quantitative methods and to increase your insight into the strengths and limitations of quantitative approaches in biological research. Furthermore, the camp will allow you to get to know your fellow classmates and will acquaint you with many faculty members.

### **Orientation Seminar: “Graduate School Fundamentals”**

The quarter-long orientation course (BGGN 200) will cover fundamental issues in academia including campus resources, research design, ethical issues in research, scientific publishing and review, and grant preparation.

### **Standard Track**

If you are a student in the Standard Track you will take:

- BGGN 208 – Boot Camp (prior to the beginning of Fall Quarter instruction)
- BGGN 200 – Orientation Seminar: Graduate School Fundamentals (Fall Quarter)
- BGGN 220 – Graduate Molecular Biology (Fall Quarter)
- BGGN 222 – Graduate Cell Biology (Winter Quarter)
- BGGN 223 – Graduate Genetics (Spring Quarter)

In addition, you will enroll in at least two of the following electives (*note that these courses may not be offered every year*):

- BGGN 214 - Introduction to Quantitative Biology
- BGGN 216 - Graduate Biostatistics
- BGGN 224 – Graduate Neurobiology
- BGGN 225 – Graduate Immunology
- BGGN 226 – Graduate Virology
- BGGN 227 – Graduate Plant Systems Biology
- BGGN 228 – Graduate Developmental Biology
- BGGN 229 – Graduate Oncogenes
- BGGN 230 – Graduate Signal Transduction
- BGGN 231 – Current Concepts in Stem Cell Biology
- BGGN 238A – Integrative Microbiology I
- BGGN 238B – Integrative Microbiology II
- BGGN 242 – Graduate Cancer Biology
- BGGN 249B – Basic Neuroscience II (must have taken BGGN 224)
- BGGN 249C – Basic Neuroscience III (must have taken BGGN 224)

### **Ecology, Behavior & Evolution (EBE) Track:**

If you are a student in the EBE Biology Track, please consult the EBE PhD Program Guidelines. You should consult with your EBE probable Thesis Advisor and your Initial Assessment Committee in your first year or your Doctoral Committee in subsequent years. You can read the EBE PhD Program Guidelines in **Appendix 1** of this handbook.

### **Microbiology Track**

Students who choose to focus on Microbiology will follow the following sequence of courses:

- BGGN 220 – Graduate Molecular Biology in the Fall Quarter
- BGGN 222 – Graduate Cell Biology in the Winter Quarter
- BGGN 223 – Graduate Genetics in the Spring quarter
- BGGN 238A – Integrative Microbiology in the Winter Quarter
- BGGN 238B – Integrative Microbiology II in the Spring Quarter.

Students are welcome to take any of the offered electives if they choose, but none are required:

- BGGN 216 - Graduate Biostatistics
- BGGN 224 – Graduate Neurobiology
- BGGN 225 – Graduate Immunology
- BGGN 226 – Graduate Virology
- BGGN 227 – Graduate Plant Molecular Biology
- BGGN 228 – Graduate Developmental Biology
- BGGN 229 – Graduate Oncogenes
- BGGN 230 – Graduate Signal Transduction
- BGGN 231 – Current Concepts in Stem Cell Biology
- BGGN 242 - Graduate Cancer Biology
- BGGN 249B – Basic Neuroscience II (prerequisite is BGGN 224)
- BGGN 249C – Basic Neuroscience III (prerequisite is BGGN 224)

### **Quantitative Biology Specialization**

qBio is the power of math-based reasoning and advanced instrumentation from physics and engineering harnessed to discover fundamental principles of living systems. Students admitted to the qBio specialization will take additional qBio laboratory courses and theory courses through their second year. More information is at the [qBio website](#). A sample sequence includes:

#### YEAR 1:

- BGGN 208 – Boot Camp (prior to the beginning of Fall Quarter instruction)
- BGGN 200 – Orientation Seminar: Graduate School Fundamentals (Fall Quarter)
- BGGN 220 – Graduate Molecular Biology (Fall Quarter)
- BGGN 222 – Graduate Cell Biology (Winter Quarter)
- BGGN 223 – Graduate Genetics (Spring Quarter)
- BGGN 214 – Introduction to Quantitative Biology (Fall Quarter)
- PHYS 270A – Experimental Techniques for Quantitative Biology
- PHYS 270B – Quantitative Biology Laboratory
- BENG 235 – Molecular Imaging and Quantitation in Living Cells

#### YEAR 2: (Theory courses by track selected)

##### *BASIC CONCEPT TRACK*

- BNFO 284 – Nonlinear Dynamics in Quantitative Biology
- BENG 226 – Foundation of Biomechanics

##### *QUANTITATIVE MICROBIOLOGY TRACK*

- PHYS 275 – Fundamentals of Biological Physics
- PHYS 276 – Quantitative Molecular Biology
- PHYS 277 – Physics of the Cell

##### *QUANTITATIVE CELL BIOLOGY TRACK*

- PHYS 275 – Fundamentals of Biological Physics
- MAE 263 – Mechanics Inside the Cell

- CHEM 220 – Signaling Circuits in Cells

*ADVANCED THEORY TRACK*

- PHYS 275 – Fundamentals of Biological Physics
- PHYS 273 – Information Theory and Pattern Formation in Biological Systems
- PHYS 274 – Stochastic Processes in Population Genetics

**Bioinformatics Specialization**

If you are a student in the Bioinformatics Track, you are expected to complete your coursework within the first two years of graduate school. Please consult the following website for more information:

<http://www.bioinformatics.ucsd.edu/students/curriculum.htm>.

You are expected to take the following core sequence:

- BGGN 220 – Graduate Molecular Biology during the Fall Quarter
- BGGN 222 – Graduate Cell Biology during the Winter Quarter
- BGGN 223 – Graduate Genetics during the Spring Quarter

One of the following elective courses must be completed:

- BGGN 216 – Graduate Biostatistics
- BGGN 224 – Graduate Neurobiology
- BGGN 225 – Graduate Immunology
- BGGN 226 – Graduate Virology
- BGGN 227 – Graduate Plant Molecular Biology
- BGGN 228 – Graduate Developmental Biology
- BGGN 229 – Graduate Oncogenes
- BGGN 230 – Graduate Signal Transduction
- BGGN 238A – Integrative Microbiology I
- BGGN 238B – Integrative Microbiology II
- BGGN 242 - Graduate Cancer Biology
- BGGN 249B – Basic Neuroscience II (must have taken BGGN 224)
- BGGN 249C – Basic Neuroscience III (must have taken BGGN 224)

You must complete the Bioinformatics required core courses:

- BENG 202 / CSE 282 – Bioinformatics II
- BENG 203 / CSE 283 – Bioinformatics III
- MATH 283 – Bioinformatics IV
- BNFO 285 – Statistical Learning in Bioinformatics

*Laboratory Rotation Program (BGGN 298)*

The Rotation Program represents a major part of the educational efforts of your first year. Its success depends on thoughtful and conscientious participation by you, the faculty members you rotate under, and your first-year advisor.

The goals of the Rotation Program are to introduce you to our research community, the depth and richness of its ongoing research programs, and to provide you with an introduction to a variety of research methodologies and conceptual approaches. A key outcome of the Rotation Program is to provide you with an opportunity to

explore potential thesis research projects and advisors. Rotation projects are not just technical exercises designed solely to produce data. Each rotation project is designed to introduce you to new concepts and should allow you to organize and conduct creative experiments.

### General guidelines

- You must enroll in and complete at least **four six-week rotation projects** (BGGN 298: Laboratory Projects in Biology) **with four different faculty** during Fall and Winter Quarter of your First Year.
- The four required rotations must be done with faculty members of the *Affiliated Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences between the Division of Biological Sciences at UCSD and the Salk Institute*. You will find the names of those faculty members on our website: <http://biology.ucsd.edu/research/academic-sections/index.html>.
- If you wish to rotate with a scientist who is not a member of our graduate program (e.g., Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UCSD School of Medicine, etc.), you can do so after you complete the four mandatory rotations. All four rotations must be completed before you can formally identify a thesis advisor and join his/her lab.
- If after four rotations you have been unable to identify a thesis advisor, you are allowed to do a limited number of additional rotations. Spring Quarter and summer rotations are optional, but students will continue rotations until they have joined their thesis lab.

### Establishment of Rotation Assignments

First year PhD students select the labs in which they will rotate during group meetings of the entire class. The meetings are held approximately one week before the rotation period begins. The first meeting will be held after the Boot Camp course concludes, usually during the third week in September. Rotation labs are selected for the upcoming rotation period only. Future rotations are identified in subsequent meetings. You are strongly encouraged to **consult with those faculty members with whom you wish to complete a rotation project to ensure that a viable project is available**. At the group meeting, students announce their selection of a rotation lab.

### Rotation Assignment Conflicts

If more than one student wishes to rotate in a lab at the same time, and negotiations among classmates fail to resolve the issue, then the affected students should consult with the Graduate Student Representatives and the Graduate Committee Chair. On rare occasions, the Chair of the Graduate Committee may allow two graduate students to rotate together in the same lab. In those cases, the students must have received permission from the rotation faculty advisor before the rotation period begins.

### Rotation Evaluation

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

These rotation evaluations, together with your performance in the formal coursework and in the First Year Comprehensive Examination, allow the First-Year Advisor to measure your academic progress during the First Year.

### *Graduate Instructional Apprenticeship Experience*

A primary goal of the Division'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 college level provides them with a complete set of research and instructional skills required for a successful academic career. The Division expects that all students, regardless of career path, will develop a high regard for excellence in teaching as well as research. Review [Graduate Instructional Apprenticeship](#) for information about assignments, training and professional development, evaluations, awards, and resources.



## Enrollment and Registration

### *TRITONLINK and Web-Registration and Enrollment*

You should familiarize yourself with the [TRITONLINK](#) website. From there you can access 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). You can also look up grades, check enrollment and registration status, check billing statements, pull up unofficial transcript or order official transcripts, and access a directory of UCSD students. Many other options are available and more are in the planning stages.

To access TRITONLINK, you must use a Personal Access Code (PAC). PACs are distributed to you at the general welcome session. The PAC code does not change during the duration of your residency. If you forget or lose your PAC number, you must go in person to the Registrar with a photo ID in order to obtain a new one.

You are responsible for knowing the deadlines for enrollment, registration, leaves of absence, and withdrawals. You 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, you must meet the Registrar's enrollment and registration deadlines for new graduate students; in subsequent quarters, the deadlines are those for continuing graduate students. WEBREG via TRITONLINK is used to enroll in classes. You are officially registered at UCSD when you have enrolled in classes and all required fees and tuition each quarter have been paid. If you do not register, you are considered withdrawn from the program unless you are on an approved leave of absence (see below).

You will be charged a late fee of \$50 if you have not enrolled in courses by the published enrollment deadline. Enrollment after the second week of classes requires a special request and approval. Furthermore, late enrollment will trigger late payment of fees. Therefore, late enrollment results in a \$50 late enrollment fee plus \$50 late payment fee, for a total of \$100 late fees.

Your enrollment will be canceled if you have not paid all mandatory registration fees by the end of the second week of classes.

Finally, if you do not register by the deadline during the academic year and possibly Summer Session you may be subject to up to 8.95% tax withholding from each stipend payment that quarter (see Financial Support section).

### ***Summer***

There is no official Summer Quarter. You will not enroll in courses during the summer terms.

## Advising Structure

The Affiliated Doctoral Program in Biological Sciences between the Division of Biological Sciences at UCSD and the Salk Institute has a clearly defined advising structure:

### 1. Faculty Advisors

- *First-Year Advisor*
- *Thesis Advisor (Committee Chair)*
- *Evaluation Head of Doctoral Committee (Committee member who will lead all thesis committee meetings)*
- *Doctoral Committee members*
- *Chair of the Graduate Program*
- *Associate Dean for Education*

### 2. Staff Advisors in the Student and Instructional Services Office

#### *First Year Advisor*

##### **Role**

Your *First-Year Advisor* provides guidance and support for you—especially during the critically important time when choosing a thesis advisor! He or she is familiar with the graduate program requirements as well as your stated research field of interest. You should meet with your *First-Year Advisor* during the first or second week of the Fall Quarter to discuss your prior course record and other relevant experiences in experimental biology. On the basis of this discussion, your advisor might make recommendations regarding possible rotation laboratories and coursework.

Subsequently, your *First-Year Advisor* will meet with you at least once per quarter throughout your first year to discuss your progress in coursework and in the rotation program. You should discuss possible changes in your research interest and how those changes affect your course and rotation selections.

Your *First-Year Advisor* will contact you before the beginning of the Fall Quarter to set up the first meeting.

##### **Selection**

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

#### *Thesis Advisor*

##### **Role**

Selecting your *Thesis Advisor* to supervise your PhD thesis research and to chair your doctoral committee is a crucial step in your graduate student career. You should have selected your thesis or doctoral advisor by the end of June of the first year, no later than the beginning of the second year (September).

You and your thesis advisor should set up a program of formal research and courses that is designed to develop your depth of knowledge in the area of the dissertation project and to give you the breadth necessary for a career in teaching and research 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 critical research.
- Ensuring that you are making progress in meeting all program requirements.

- Ensuring that you develop your ability to communicate ideas through journal clubs and group research meetings, the divisional seminar program, and through participation as a graduate instructional apprentice in appropriate courses.

You and your thesis advisor should meet on a regular basis. To guide you in your progression through the program, you will receive an annual evaluation from your thesis advisor and committee. An evaluation form has been created to support and provide a possible structure for your annual evaluation. The annual evaluation will be reviewed by the Chair of the Graduate Committee and it will become part of your file. For detailed information, please see the *Annual Evaluation and Examination* section of the handbook.

Note: Your thesis advisor also assumes fiscal responsibility for you, which includes payment of all fees and tuition and your stipend.

### ***Selection***

Selecting your PhD Advisor is a crucial step in your graduate student career. It is one of the most important elements in maintaining normal progress toward your PhD degree. Your advisor assumes responsibility for guiding your research and assures that you progress in meeting degree requirements. Because of this, you need to follow a specific advisor selection process.

The thesis advisor may be any ladder rank (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor Series) faculty member of the Division of Biological Sciences, a participating faculty member of the Salk Institute, an adjunct member of the Division of Biological Sciences, or any ladder-rank member of the UCSD faculty. As described before, we expect that you will have selected your PhD Advisor by the time you have completed your first-year comprehensive examination, i.e., by the end of June or by September 1, at the latest.

(The Orientation Seminar will have a specific section on how to choose a thesis advisor. In addition, we recommend the following resource in the CAPS web page: <http://caps.ucsd.edu/online/grad/advisors/>

### ***Committee Evaluation Head***

#### ***Role***

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

The *Committee Evaluation Head* is responsible for facilitating the annual committee meeting and preparing your annual evaluation. The annual evaluation is a report, written within a week after your annual meeting with your thesis committee meeting, addressing the following key issues:

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

The graduate program will supply a form with these categories to the *Evaluation Head* each year.

### **Selection**

In consultation with your advisors, you will pick your *Doctoral Committee Evaluation Head* by your second-year proposition exam.

### *Doctoral Committee Members*

#### **Role**

The Doctoral Committee (Thesis Committee) is charged with monitoring your research progress throughout the remainder of your graduate studies. You will meet with your Doctoral committee at least once a year (every Spring Quarter) to review your research progress. During these meetings the committee evaluates your progress, provides feedback and contributes to your annual assessment narrative. The committee also assists in fixing an end-point for the dissertation. All committee members are available to assist you if you encounter difficulties at any time during research. We encourage you to build strong professional relationships with each committee member and to communicate with them regularly.

#### **Selection**

Initially, you will have selected a so-called Core Thesis Committee. It is composed of at least three faculty members, including your Thesis Advisor. The Core Doctoral Committee also will conduct the Proposition Examination. The Qualifying Exam and the Dissertation Defense requires the presence of all the members of your Final Doctoral Committee. Your final Doctoral Committee will consist of at least five faculty members, including your thesis advisor, who will serve as the Chair of the Doctoral Committee. (Please see *Policies* section for details. You should have identified your final Thesis Committee composition during your Fourth Year, i.e., before you advance to candidacy).

### *Chair of the Graduate Program and Graduate Committee*

The Chair of the Graduate Committee 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 Divisional Graduate Committee oversees all academic aspects of the Graduate Program and is responsible for the development and implementation of the division-specific educational policies of the graduate program. The Committee works closely with the Division's Associate Dean for Education, the Council of Chairs, and the Dean of Biological Sciences. It consists of faculty representatives from the four Sections in the Division, at least one faculty from the Salk Institute, and two senior Biology doctoral students elected each year by the graduate student body. The committee also includes staff representatives from the Dean's office, the Business office, and the Student and Instructional Services unit.

### *Associate Dean for Education*

The Associate Dean for Education is the official liaison with the Graduate Division. Acting in this capacity, the Associate Dean for Education signs all correspondence sent by the Division to Graduate Division. This includes everything from routine petitions, such as Advancement to Candidacy forms, to requests for exception to policy. While your requests may be initiated by your Thesis Advisor, they will not be accepted unless accompanied by an endorsement from the Associate Dean for Education.

### *Staff Advisors: Student and Instructional Services*

The Student and Instructional Services Staff, located in Pacific Hall first floor are available to help you through the administrative red tape. Don't hesitate to call on them if you have questions or problems. You will find

their names and their area of expertise on the website <http://biology.ucsd.edu/administration/sis/index.html> and in the *Key People* section of this manual.

The staff advisors in the Division of Biological Sciences strive to develop personal and caring relationships with students and to help all students achieve educational, career, and life goals.

Advisors are here to provide academic guidance and encouragement, help you feel part of the biology/university community, develop personal and career goals and to help you contribute to the global body of scientific knowledge.

## Annual Evaluations and Examination

The division has developed a multi-tiered evaluation system to carefully and consistently assess your progress so that your average time to degree will be approximately five to five-and-a-half years.

### *Annual Evaluations*

All students are required to receive annual official narrative evaluations. At the end of your first year your Thesis Advisor, with input from your First-Year Advisor, will conduct this assessment.

From your second year on, you are required to have an annual meeting with your doctoral committee (see *Selection of Doctoral Committee* in the previous section for details) during the Spring Quarter or during the early summer, but no later than July 31.

Your annual evaluations should provide you with genuinely informative and useful feedback, highlighting strengths and weaknesses, and should include a roadmap describing the agreed-upon next steps for the upcoming year. The Annual Evaluation meetings are formal meetings to evaluate your research accomplished so far and to redefine goals and expectations. The purpose of these meetings is to help you plan your research and to give you effective feedback and support, and to make sure that you stay on track and make normal progress toward your PhD degree.

Your committee's assessments are a component of the official written evaluation that your Evaluation Head prepares annually and discusses with you. The Program Director and the Graduate Committee Chair review all evaluations before they are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Having current annual evaluations on file is part of demonstrating good academic standing.

Prior to each annual meeting, you need to provide each committee member with a written report (3 pages or more) of your research progress/prospects. The report should contain:

- A discussion of any changes in goals, specific aims, or experimental design
- A concise description of studies conducted, the results obtained, and their significance to the field (included should be negative results or technical problems that may be important).
- Specific objectives for the coming year

The Committee Evaluation Head will lead the meeting. Although the advisor is a member of the committee, he or she has the option of not attending the research presentation part of the yearly meetings as some faculty believe this will foster student independence, engagement, and clearly highlight areas for improvement. If present, the advisor is not expected to answer questions or otherwise comment during the research presentation. If the advisor doesn't attend the yearly research presentation, it is expected that he or she will consult with the committee and student immediately afterward.

The Committee Evaluation Head will take notes on suggestions that are made. He or she will, in writing, summarize the committee's suggestions, note any issues, and provide a final overall assessment of your progress. The written evaluation will be turned in to Student and Instructional Services staff. A copy of the evaluation will be available to you for review.

You should notify the Graduate Coordinator prior to your Annual Examination meeting to ensure proper tracking of paperwork.

Note:

- If you advance to candidacy between January and March, your candidacy exam will replace the annual meeting for that year.
- The second-year Proposition Exam and the Qualifying Exam (Advance To Candidacy) fulfill the requirement for this annual meeting during the years these exams are conducted.

### *First Year Comprehensive Exam*

All students are required to take a First-Year Comprehensive Examination. The exam tests general knowledge in biological sciences with emphasis on material covered in the core curriculum. It is a qualifying exam, which means that performance on the exam, along with performance on rotations and in the core courses, will be used to determine your ability to synthesize ideas, interpret facts, and think logically.

In some cases, after evaluating a student's performance (class work, rotations, and exam), faculty may ask a student to leave the program or place the student on a probationary status. The probationary period may involve activities such as retaking the exam, defending an oral proposition, additional TA responsibilities, coursework in deficient areas, or other measures the Graduate Committee deems necessary.

Students in all Tracks (except EBE) take an open-book, take-home exam, administered over a five-day period. You will have access to all resources that any scientist has in pursuing a problem except collaboration with others. The division has chosen to use an open book exam to ensure that you will not be simply examined about your ability to recall facts, but that you demonstrate your ability to interpret and synthesize information and integrate your knowledge to arrive at logical solutions.

You must answer a total of five questions: one in each of the required sections (Molecular Biology, Cell Biology, and Genetics), one in an elective area, and one in any area. In this way, you will be accountable for the majority of the areas covered in the First-Year curriculum, but you can focus on two areas of special interest or expertise.

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*

The Proposition Examination will focus on your dissertation proposal and include both a written report and an oral defense. It will take place in lieu of your annual meeting with your thesis committee.

The principal aims of this exam are for you to demonstrate proficiency in the background literature relevant to the field in which you plan to carry out research and to present a defensible dissertation proposal with a summary of the general experimental approaches to be used.

Your Core Thesis Committee members will assess your ability to use your knowledge and understanding of the fundamental facts and principles of modern biology for solving current problems in the area of your thesis research and in allied fields. You should have developed sophisticated communication skills to explain your research question(s) clearly and succinctly in writing and verbally. You should demonstrate to the committee that you are able to think incisively and critically about your experimental approach, including developing a reasonable timetable, recognizing potential difficulties with your experimental approach, and identifying

possible solutions for how to overcome them. It is important for your Core Thesis committee to recognize your intellectual independence, and, that although the research project is clearly your project, you and your advisor are in agreement about the scope and the general direction of your work.

One week prior to the examination, you need to submit a written proposal to the committee for their review.

Format: The format of the written portion of the exam will be that of an NIH NRSA individual pre-doctoral fellowship proposal. As such, you and your advisor can use this as a basis for submitting an actual proposal to NIH. The proposal should be 10 pages maximum and include the following sections:

- Specific Aims (to have the scope of several years' work, i.e., much of a thesis)
- Background/Significance
- Research Design and Methods
- Literature Cited (titles, all authors; not counted as part of the 10 pages)

For additional information on preparing and submitting an NRSA application for individual fellowships to NIH, the student and/or mentor should access the following sites:

- General requirements: <http://grants.nih.gov/training/nrsa.htm>

### *Advancement to Candidacy Exam (Qualifying Exam)*

The goal of the Advancement to Candidacy or Qualifying Examination is to demonstrate that you have made substantial progress on the thesis research and that you can chart a coherent course to the completion of the research. You should have significant and substantive findings that will likely lead to a first-author paper.

You can advance to candidacy and complete your qualifying exam by the end of your third year, but you **must** complete it no later than the end of the fourth year. All five members of the doctoral committee must be present. Prior to the meeting, you must submit to the committee members a written report focusing on research accomplished (preliminary results) and the experimental approach you will use to accomplish the specific goals of your dissertation (the Methods section), and a timetable for the completion of their dissertation. This report will be defended orally before the committee.

If a student changes labs and thesis advisors, they will be expected to form their new doctoral committee and advance to candidacy again (if they have already advanced with their former committee). Students in this situation should consult the Graduate Committee Chair to discuss the timeline for advancing to candidacy with their new committee.

### *Pre-Thesis Defense Evaluation*

When you have essentially completed your thesis research, a Pre-Thesis Defense Evaluation Meeting is held. This meeting involves a review of research performed since the Advancement to Candidacy exam. The committee decides whether there is sufficient material for you to begin writing the thesis.

### *Dissertation Defense*

You are required to summarize your research in a thesis and to defend your data and conclusions via a dissertation defense. The dissertation thesis must be organized and written in a form approved by the doctoral advisor and the UCSD Dean of Graduate Studies. The Defense is an examination required by the Dean of Graduate Studies. It consists of two parts: (1) a meeting with your Thesis Committee, (2) a formal presentation



of the research in a public divisional seminar. The individual meetings, referred to as the “Pre-Defense Meeting,” should be completed 4–6 weeks prior to the public defense.

You are expected to circulate copies of the last dissertation draft, complete with figures and tables, to all members of the committee at least three weeks before your scheduled formal presentation. You should arrange private meetings with each committee member so that you can discuss any questions or criticism. Each committee member should indicate his/her approval of the dissertation before the formal presentation is scheduled.

### *Dissertation Embargo*

Once your dissertation is approved and ready to be submitted to the UC San Diego Graduate Division, it will be officially submitted electronically. In digital form, your graduate student work is made available not only to the UC community but also to scholars worldwide. When submitting your dissertation to the Graduate Division, you will be required to submit a release form stating your preference for releasing your dissertation. It can be released immediately or it can be embargoed for a specified amount of time. In many cases, students and their advisors request the dissertation be embargoed in order to have data published in another publication before the dissertation is made public. If an extension of an embargo is required, it is the responsibility of the faculty advisor to contact the Graduate Division to request the extension.

## Financial Support

### *Annual Stipend*

The Division of Biological Sciences supports all PhD students by providing an **annual stipend**. The sources of the stipend are funds received through Federal and State grants and private sources. The stipend is provided in the form of research and teaching assistantships, fellowships, and NIH training grant appointments. Because foreign students are not eligible for support from Federal training grant funds, resources available to support foreign students are limited.

### 2016/2017 Student Support Summary

Stipend:	\$ 33,000.00 ( <i>non-EBE students</i> )
Stipend:	\$ 26,500.00 ( <i>EBE students</i> )
Resident fees:	\$ 16,630.77
Non-resident fees:	\$ 16,630.77
Non-resident supplemental tuition:	\$ 15,102.00

### *Residency*

The Program will only 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 out-of-state tuition in subsequent years. The Program will pay the non-resident tuition for international students until they advance to candidacy when tuition no longer applies. (For more details see *Establishment of California Residency* in the *Policy* section.)

### *Fellowships*

You are expected to apply for extramural predoctoral fellowships such as the *National Science Foundation*, *Ford Foundation*, *HHMI*, etc., in addition to those that are administered by the University. More information on possible fellowships can be found at the [Graduate Division website](#).

If your efforts are successful and you receive outside funding (outside of UCSD) in the form of a fellowship (e.g., AHA, NIH, Merck, Ford Foundation, Home country) that provides stipend and/or fee support, then you may be eligible for a bonus of up to \$3,000 above your standard Biology graduate stipend. The bonus would be awarded during each year you receive the outside funding. For details on the bonus payout structure please refer to the *Fiscal Policies* Section.

### *Grant Writing Resources*

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 Travel Opportunities/Conferences*

The Division of Biological Sciences encourages students to travel to scientific meetings and considers such meetings an important educational experience. However, travel can be supported only when adequate funding is available.

In general, the Division's travel policy is as follows:

- Second-year students receive \$300, or \$500 if they are presenting
- Third-year students and beyond are eligible for travel support of \$500

Any above amount that exceeds the maximum allowance is the student's and/or their advisor's responsibility. The annual allowance DOES NOT carry forward to the next academic year (July 1–June 30). In addition, the next year's allowance cannot be used to pay current year expenses. For details review the *Fiscal Policies* Section.

## **Policies**

### *Academic*

#### **Graduate Courses**

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.

#### **Academic/Student Conduct**

All students are subject to the UCSD Conduct Code. For the full description of the code go to <https://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/student-conduct/regulations/22.00.html>.

#### **Academic Standing**

Good standing is a requirement to

- retain academic and staff appointments
- retain fellowship, scholarship, or traineeship appointments
- advance to candidacy for a graduate degree
- take a leave of absence
- receive a graduate degree from UCSD
- participate in the University Extension Complimentary Enrollment Program

To maintain good academic standing, a student must:

- Be registered in at least 12 units of graduate level coursework each quarter at UCSD, or be on an official leave of absence.
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in upper division and graduate level coursework at UCSD.
- Not accumulate more than a total of eight units of unsatisfactory grades (U or F) overall.
- Have a current annual evaluation on file in the graduate Student and Instructional Services office.
- Make satisfactory progress in their course of study and research project as delineated in their annual evaluations.
- Meet all required time limits as described in previous sections.

Students who do not maintain these standards may be placed on probation by the Biology Graduate Committee or by the UCSD Dean of Graduate Studies, or may be dismissed from the program. Financial support is contingent on maintaining good academic standing.

#### **UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Research**

The policies listed on the website <http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2> apply to academic course work for all graduate students. A separate policy exists governing integrity of research, which can be found at <http://adminrecords.ucsd.edu/ppm/docs/100-4.html>.

## **Grading Policy and Procedures**

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 Incomplete (I) Grade**

If a student is doing passing work in a course, but is unable to complete the work at the end of the quarter for legitimate reasons (circumstances beyond the student's control), the instructor may assign the Incomplete (I) grade. Legitimate justification for petitioning for the I grade is illness or family crisis. Unacceptable reasons are lack of time, research too lengthy, and other controllable circumstances. To receive an I grade, a student must file a Request to Receive Grade Incomplete and Removal of Grade Incomplete petition prior to the end of the final week in the quarter in which the course is taken. Students should obtain forms from their graduate coordinators. Without the petition, the I grade cannot be assigned.

In order to remove the I grade, the required work must be completed and a grade assigned prior to the end of the final week of the following quarter. It is the student's responsibility to get the work completed and submitted to the instructor on time. In addition, the student should check with the departmental graduate coordinator to ensure that the grade has been assigned.

In truly extenuating circumstances, a General Petition to extend the Incomplete for another quarter may be filed. The petition for extension must indicate the reason for the extension, and be signed by the instructor and the chairperson of the department. The petition must be submitted to the Graduate Division for consideration by the Dean prior to the end of the final week of the quarter following that in which the first petition was filed.

If an I grade is neither removed nor extended prior to the end of the final week of the following quarter, the I grade will lapse to a Fail (F) or Unsatisfactory (U) grade. Extensions on I grades will not be made retroactively.

If a student takes a leave of absence, he/she must still remove any outstanding Incomplete grades before the end of the first quarter of leave. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that all proper forms have been completed.

### **The In Progress (IP) Grade**

If a sequence course has been approved for an In Progress (IP) grading option, the IP grade may be assigned until the work is completed for the sequence. If an IP grade has not been replaced by a final grade at the time of graduation, the IP grade will remain on the student's records. If the entire sequence is not completed, the instructor may assign grades and unit credit for what has been completed. Courses graded IP are not used in calculating a student's grade point average until graduation. At that time, course units still graded IP must be treated as units attempted in calculating the GPA; thus, units graded IP will have the same effect on the overall GPA as an F or U.

### **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. Filing a Correction of Grade Caused by Clerical or Procedural Error form may do this. An NR grade, which has lapsed to an F or U grade, cannot be changed. Be sure to seek assistance from the graduate 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.

### **Degree Requirements**

As you go through the steps required for completion of the PhD degree, you may find it useful to pay close attention to the requirements below. All the necessary forms are available, and must be initiated, in the Student and Instructional Services office. Each form has specific instructions. Be sure to read each carefully.

#### **Time Limits**

Each PhD program has four time limits:

1. Normative time (5 years) - This is the standard established for the time period in which students, under normal circumstances, are expected to complete requirements for the PhD. The goal of the normative time limit policy is to encourage students to complete their PhD in a timely manner, and to stimulate faculty to guide their students so they can advance to candidacy and complete dissertations of high quality within the established time limits.
2. Pre-candidacy time limit (PCTL) (4 years) - Maximum registered time in which a student must advance to PhD candidacy. Because the normative time limit in Biological Sciences is five years, we expect our students to advance to candidacy **by the end of their third year**.
3. Support time limit (SUTL) (7 years) - Maximum registered time during which a doctoral student may receive financial support.
4. Total registered time limit (TRTL) (7 years) - Maximum registered time in which a student must complete all PhD requirements.

If you have not advanced by the expiration of your pre-candidacy time limit you will not be permitted to register. You will not be permitted to receive UCSD-administered financial support after the expiration of the support time limit. You may not register after the expiration of the total registered time limits. All unexpired time limits can be extended for a maximum of three quarters for an approved leave of absence or period of withdrawal.

For more information on the time to Doctorate Policy, see <http://grad.ucsd.edu/progress/index.html>

### **Doctoral Degree Requirements**

1. Appointment of the Doctoral Committee: Biological Sciences requests approval for the appointment of the doctoral committee by the Dean of the Graduate Division. The Dean reviews nominees, gives the final approval of the committee, and issues letters of confirmation. Consult the departmental graduate coordinator or the academic affairs staff at the Graduate Division for further details.
2. Report of the Qualifying Examination and Advancement to Candidacy: Biological Sciences prepares the form which must be presented to the Central Cashier's Office along with the

candidacy fee. After validation by the cashier, the form must be filed at the Graduate Division where it is then reviewed for approval.

### **Doctoral Degree Filing Requirements**

The Report of the Final Examination and Filing of the Dissertation is a form initiated by the Student and Instructional Services office, signed by members of the doctoral committee and the chair of the Graduate Committee. The report and the signature page for the dissertation are usually signed at the time of the dissertation defense. For detailed information regarding the submission and formatting of the dissertation, refer to [Preparation and Submission Manual for Doctoral Dissertations and Master's Theses "Bluebook"](#).

### **Leave of Absence**

Graduate students are eligible for a maximum of three quarters of leave with departmental approval. 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 chair of the Graduate Committee. Leave of Absence forms can be obtained from the Biology Student and Instructional Services Office 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 mailed to the Biology Student and Instructional Services Office, c/o Graduate Coordinator. Graduate students are eligible for a maximum of three quarters of leave. For more information on LOA, see:

<http://grad.ucsd.edu/resources/general/academic-policies/leave-of-absence.html>

### **Foreign Students on a Leave of Absence**

Under normal conditions, a foreign student is not permitted to go on a leave of absence. Immigration regulations require that the student must be enrolled in a full-time course of study for the duration of the student's stay in the United States. Exceptions may be granted under the following circumstances. All requests for a leave of absence for foreign students require International Center approval prior to the Graduate Division consideration. The usual requirements of departmental approval and campus regulations apply.

Students who have advanced to Master's or PhD candidacy may apply for a leave for research or employment related to their research purposes. The International Center requires a copy of the Graduate Division approved advancement form and a letter from the department stating the purpose of the leave prior to consideration of the leave request.

If the student is leaving the country, International Center approval is usually automatic and the student does not need a department letter.

### **Parental Leave of Absence**

A graduate student who is bearing a child or who has primary responsibility for the care of an infant or young child immediately following the birth or adoption of a child under age five is eligible for up to three (3) quarters of parental leave. During the quarter in which the childbirth or adoption occurs, the graduate student may, with departmental approval, continue to register as a full-time student and retain eligibility for support, reduce to part-time status (less than twelve units) and be eligible for up to 25% time employment on campus, or take a leave of absence and request a one-quarter extension of all unexpired time limits. Students are entitled to no more than three quarters parenting leave, regardless of the number of children.

### **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 comprehensive 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.

### **Master's Degree**

The Division of Biological Sciences does not admit students to the Graduate Program with the intention of awarding a Master of Science degree. However, on occasion, a student who has completed the following requirements may petition for a Master's Degree:

1. Minimum residency of six quarters.
2. Satisfactory completion of the core curriculum.
3. Satisfactory completion of the lab rotation schedule.
4. Satisfactory completion of the Proposition Examination.
5. 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.

### **Disqualification from the Program**

Failure to maintain stated standards may place you on probation by the Biology Graduate Committee or by the UCSD Dean of Graduate Studies or it may lead to dismissal from the program. Your continued financial support is also contingent on maintaining good academic standing.

### **Bar from Registration/Nonacademic**

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.

### **Bar from Registration/Academic**

Academic disqualification is determined by the dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the student's department, and normally relates 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.

### *Conflict Resolution and Student Appeals*

Occasionally interactions between students, staff, and faculty result in misunderstandings, disputes, and/or differences of opinion. In the majority of instances these differences can be resolved as a result of an informal discussion between the persons involved. UCSD encourages students to promptly pursue informal action first. In instances where informal resolution is unsuccessful, students have various formal avenues for complaint resolution. Graduate students are encouraged to contact the Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs in the Graduate Division 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.
- Attempt to resolve the matter immediately.
- Try to be rational and objective. Do not allow emotions to interfere with finding a resolution.
- Know your desired outcome. Be objective in this assessment.
- Keep complete and accurate notes of the situation and the steps you have 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.

### **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 Appeal" section in the UCSD General Catalog <http://www.ucsd.edu/catalog> and Academic Senate Regulation 502, <http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/manual/Regulations/PartI/502.htm>, 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 Graduate Studies 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.

A student's appeal of a grade or his or her challenge of any other academic action based on an alleged failure to provide an OSD approved accommodation for a documented disability in accordance with the UCSD Academic Senate's Policy on Students With Disabilities and Steps for Academic Accommodation must be lodged in accordance with Student Grievance procedures as outlined in the next section.

### **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 written appeal to the dean of Graduate Studies, 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 for Student Affairs in the Graduate Division for assistance with the appeal process.

### **Employment Appeals**

A student holding an academic appointment, such as a Graduate Student Researcher, may appeal an action relating to his or her employment in accordance with appeal rights described in Academic Personnel Manual Policy 140, which is available online at <http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-140.pdf>. An appeal by a teaching assistant, reader, or tutor is covered by the ASE/UAW contract. The UC Personnel Policy Manual, which is available online at <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/4010417/PPSM-70>, covers appeals by graduate students holding non-academic appointments on campus.

### **Other Appeals**

Grievances concerning violations of student rights are covered by the [Student Grievance Procedures](#). Examples of violations of students' rights include those affecting rights to privacy or protection from discrimination. These grievances are handled by the Office of Student Policies and Judicial Affairs, (858) 534-6225, [studentconduct@ucsd.edu](mailto:studentconduct@ucsd.edu).

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 referenced to above.

Appeal and other rights for students accused of violating UCSD policies and procedures are outlined in the UCSD Student Conduct Code at [http://ugr8.ucsd.edu/judicial/22\\_00.html](http://ugr8.ucsd.edu/judicial/22_00.html).

## Fiscal

### **Financial Aid and Scholarships Office**

Student Services Center, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor North

<https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-aid/>

The graduate division of Student Financial Services administers all need-based financial aid for graduate students. This includes Federal Stafford loans (Subsidized and Unsubsidized) and Graduate Opportunity grants. All other financial support for graduate students is detailed in Section V, Graduate Student Financial Support.

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 helpful Financial Aid Timeline for Graduate Students at

<https://students.ucsd.edu/finances/financial-aid/applying/timelines/graduate.html>.

### **Professional Travel Opportunities/Conferences**

The Division of Biological Sciences encourages students to travel to scientific meetings and considers such meetings an important educational experience. However, travel can be supported only when adequate funding is available.

Only students in their second year and beyond are eligible to receive an annual travel allowance. Any amount that exceeds the maximum allowance is the student's and/or their advisor's responsibility. The annual allowance DOES NOT carry forward to the next academic year. (July 1–June 30) In addition, the next year's allowance cannot be borrowed from to pay current year expenses.

The Division applies the following guidelines:

- Students in their second year receive \$300 toward travel expenses if they are attending a conference.
- Students in their second year receive \$500 toward travel expenses if they are presenting at a conference.
- Students in their third year and beyond receive \$500 toward travel expenses if they are presenting or attending.
- Travel by students with fully funded outside awards (NSF, for example) is supplemented by the award. These students also receive their Division allowance.
- First year students on a training grant (CMG, IGERT) that provides travel for trainees will receive the appropriate allowance.
- All international travel must be pre-approved.
- Students with fully funded outside awards (NSF, for example) may receive an additional allowance if outlined in the award. These students also receive their Division allowance.

- First year students on a training grant (CMG, IGERT) will not receive a travel allowance, however they may receive a research/supplies allowance.
- Under NO circumstances are iPods/iPhones acceptable purchases on a training grant allowance.

***NOTE: (Change to policy effective August 2016):***

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

***Pre Travel Procedure:***

Contact the advisor's Faculty Assistant. If the advisor is an Adjunct Professor (Salk, Scripps) or from a non-Biology lab, contact the Division's Fiscal Assistant (Donna Aizuss) [daizuss@ucsd.edu](mailto:daizuss@ucsd.edu).

You will be given a Travel Event Number to use if you opt to book your travel arrangements through a campus travel organization. This eliminates out-of-pocket costs for airfare or registration.

Advances may be requested to pay the vendor directly (airfare, registration, hotel deposit). You must allow at least 10 working days for a check to be generated.

Car Rental - When using a rental car, remember that the Division does not reimburse for any type of insurance or for additional drivers. You will be reimbursed for rental fees, sales tax, gas, and other mandatory expenses. Rental cars cannot be prepaid.

Meal Allowance - Rates are as follows: you will be reimbursed for the amount of your ITEMIZED receipts up to \$64.00 per day. Please note: the University reserves the right to deny reimbursement for meal expenses in the case of insufficient justification. If travel lasts less than 10 hours or is a local trip, meals will not be reimbursed. Alcohol charges are not reimbursable per University policy.

***Students on federal training grants:***

If you are on a federal training grant you must provide a copy of the brochure or flyer that stipulates whether or not food will be served at the conference you are attending.

Airfare – Use American carriers (when possible) - even for foreign travel. You must submit your airfare receipt even if you charged your airfare to the University. The receipt from your passenger ticket book is your airfare receipt. Email confirmation (for e-ticketless travel) is also acceptable as long as the itinerary and airfare total are included.

Receipts - When turning in receipts, please provide an original receipt for everything you are claiming. If the University has provided advances to pay expenses such as registration and airfare, you still need to provide a receipt when you close your trip. Your name badge from the conference is also required as proof of your attendance. Please submit your ITEMIZED receipts within 10 days of your return. Be sure to include your name on your receipts and attach them to an 8.5x11 sheet of paper.

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.

Please do not share expenses with other graduate student travelers. Only pay for the expenses that you incur; otherwise, there may be a delay in receiving your reimbursement.

For questions regarding travel, please contact Donna Aizuss at 858-534-0641, [daizuss@ucsd.edu](mailto:daizuss@ucsd.edu).

### **General Tax Statement**

The Tax Reform Act of 1986 changed the tax code so that most graduate student support is taxable income. Students appointed as teaching assistants and graduate student researchers (fully taxable income) will complete the W-4 Tax Withholding Allowance Certificate to indicate the amount of federal and state taxes to be withheld from monthly salary payments. For students with fellowships (providing a monthly stipend and usually full fees), any stipend funds used for registration fees, or for books, supplies, and equipment required for courses of instruction are non-taxable. All remaining fellowship stipend funds are taxable. For students who are US citizens or permanent residents, taxes are not withheld from stipend payments and students should submit quarterly tax payments for federal (1040 ES) and state (540ES) taxes. For International students receiving salary or stipend payments, federal tax withholding is mandatory unless the provisions of an income tax treaty cover the income. Tax treaties apply to federal but not California State taxes. All fee and tuition payments from scholarships, fellowships, traineeships, research assistant tuition and fee remission, teaching assistant health insurance/fee remission and in-candidacy fee offset grants are non-taxable.

Graduate Student Tax Information <http://grad.ucsd.edu/resources/general/tax.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.

### **Establishment of California Residency**

The Program will only 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 out-of-state tuition in subsequent years. For more details see the *Policy* section. The Biology Graduate Coordinator will email first year students to remind them of this requirement periodically.

Students who do not establish California residency will be responsible for their nonresident tuition (currently \$15,102/year). **You should begin the process to establish residency immediately following your 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 registering your 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 your application should be directed to the Residence Deputy at [residence deputy@ucsd.edu](mailto:residence deputy@ucsd.edu).

The Division will continue to cover non-resident tuition for international students until they "advance to candidacy." Students will receive a 100% reduction on non-resident tuition beginning with the first quarter following advancement for a maximum of three consecutive years.

**Fellowship Policies**

Students who bring in their own fellowship (stipend, tuition, or fee support) will be paid a “bonus” based on the amount of the award. The “bonus” will be paid by the student’s faculty advisor or the Division if the student is in rotation.

<b><u>Fellowship amount</u></b>	<b><u>Bonus amount</u></b>
\$10,000–\$24,999	\$1,500
>\$25,000	\$3,000

*Note:*

- The maximum stipend a student can receive is \$34,000 unless the fellowship award specifically calls for a higher stipend.
- Awards / Fellowships that are generated by the Division as opposed to the student do not qualify for the “bonus” or any additional support. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Cota Robles and San Diego Fellowships.
- Certain awards are paid directly to the student and are given on top of existing support, such as the Summer Graduate Teaching Fellowship.

**Working Outside of Graduate School**

Students are discouraged from working another job outside of their graduate research. Students receive tuition/fee support and a stipend to provide for basic cost of living expenses in order to focus on their academic studies and research. Students who feel it is necessary to find outside work must receive permission from their doctoral advisor and Chair of the Graduate Committee.

## Programmatic

### English Language Proficiency Testing

Graduate Students who do not speak English as a native language are required to take and pass an English Language Proficiency Examination by the end of their first year. Students are contacted by a representative from Biological Sciences Student and Instructional Services office during their first year to schedule the examination. Most often, this is the TA Coordinator. **NOTE: Non-native speakers who hold a BA or BS from a US institution do not need to take the English Proficiency Test.**

An oral exam is administered by a linguist from the [Teaching + Learning Commons](#) and a Biological Sciences teaching faculty. There are three possible outcomes:

1. Students who earn a Pass have met the English Language Proficiency Requirement and are eligible to TA. However, sometimes they are asked to attend an English and Communication class (see below).
2. Students with a Provisional Pass have not met the proficiency requirement. They must attend an English Class (see below). They may be able to TA in the upcoming quarter. In the eighth week of the quarter, they take the Proficiency Examination again. For Provisional Pass students who did TA, teaching evaluations will be taken into consideration in the grading of their Proficiency Examination.
3. Students with a Fail have not met the proficiency requirement and are not eligible to TA. They must attend an English class (see below) in the upcoming quarter. In the eighth week of the quarter, they take the Proficiency Examination again.

Doctoral students who do not earn a Pass on the Proficiency Examination by the end of Spring quarter of their first year of graduate study are reviewed by the Graduate Committee and may be dismissed from the program.

The [Center for Engaged Teaching](#) (CET) offers the [English Language Program for International Instructors](#) (ELP-II) to develop and improve language skills for non-native speakers. Following is an overview of the program components.

#### **Summer Language Seminars**

To help prepare prospective TAs for the test, the ELP-II has created a special seminar for any international graduate student who is scheduled to participate in a departmental screening. The seminar can be an intensive one-week course or a series of two-hour workshops offered prior to the start of the Fall Quarter. The seminars focus on language, public speaking, and cross-cultural training.

#### **Language Classes and Private Tutorials**

Those international graduate students who have not successfully passed the screening are given the opportunity to improve their language skills by attending [language classes](#) and/or private tutorials. The classes and tutorials entail a disciplined and detailed program of instruction including ESL proficiency, accent reduction, public speaking, classroom management, and cross-cultural training. When warranted, private tutorials are scheduled on an individual basis by the coordinator of the English Language Program for International Instructors.

#### **Teaching Simulations**

In order to help international graduate students prepare for the rigors of the classroom, the English Language Program for International Instructors organizes a series of teaching simulations. These are

actual classroom forums wherein the international graduate student prepares and presents a lesson to a class of undergraduates so as to determine communicative strengths and weaknesses. The undergraduates listen to the lesson, participate when appropriate, and finally critique the performance of the prospective instructional assistant. This is particularly useful for international graduate students whose language is acceptable but who have trouble in other areas of teaching, such as communicative style.

### **Audio and Videotaping**

International graduate students are audio taped and videotaped to help them better understand their language and teaching skills. Taping is conducted during class time so that student responses are included in the assessment, or in private so as to concentrate more on the linguistic and pedagogical skills of the international graduate student.

### **Diploma Conferral**

The PhD diploma will be dated as of the last day of the quarter in which all requirements, including current course work, are satisfactorily completed. Spring degree candidates wishing to participate in commencement must have all paperwork processed one week before the last day of the quarter. Diplomas will be mailed by the Registrar's Office four to six months after the close of the quarter in which the degree was conferred. 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 is no coursework to be completed.

### **Doctoral Research Advisors (Thesis Advisor)**

Selection of the doctoral research advisor is an integral step in the student's academic career. The advisor, who serves as chair of the student's doctoral committee, will guide the student through his/her doctoral research to completion of the degree. 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 are expected to have selected their Thesis Advisor by the end of Spring quarter of their first year.

Several criteria may be used for selection of an advisor. It is best if a student thinks out his/her expectations of an advisor before approaching the faculty member. The faculty member's intellectual and academic interests should closely match the student's. The work style and personality of the advisor also needs to be compatible with the student's. Students who want frequent contact with their advisor need to choose a person who is readily available. Some professors with greater status tend to have less discretionary time. The trade-off for working with them may be that the student must work more on his/her own than preferred. Conversely, professors with greater status also have more contacts, both on and off campus and may be particularly helpful when it comes time for job placement.

When selecting an advisor, a student should have several conversations with that faculty member to determine if the relationship is a good match. The student also should talk to other students who have the same advisor, weighing their judgment carefully, as personality and work styles differ among students. Find out how problem solving, time, and conflict resolution have worked out with this advisor.

### **Doctoral Committees**

A doctoral committee consists of five or more officers of instruction, no fewer than four of whom shall hold professorial titles of any rank. The committee members shall be chosen from two or more departments. At least two members shall represent academic specialties that differ from the student's field and one of these two must be a tenured UCSD faculty member from another department.



Selection of a committee needs to be made in close consultation with the Thesis Advisor. Selection of members should be from faculty who have similar research interests to the student's, and who will understand the research and be able to make positive contributions to it. UCSD Graduate Council policy states that the graduate research advisor should guide the search for other faculty to serve on a student's doctoral committee. In many instances, however, students seek committee members on their own. The student's advisor recommends the proposed committee to the Graduate Committee Chair, who, in turn, recommends appointment of the committee to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Once approved, the student and the committee members will receive written confirmation. The Graduate Committee Chair may disapprove a doctoral committee.

Questions regarding the specific details of committee eligibility and selection should be directed to the Biology graduate coordinator (Cathy Pugh) or to the academic affairs staff at the Graduate Division.

### **Doctoral Committee Composition Guidelines**

No later than your Fourth Year you should complete and finalize the membership of your Doctoral Committee. The committee must consist of at least five faculty members, including the thesis advisor. Your doctoral thesis advisor will serve as the Chair of your Doctoral Committee. In consultation with your advisors, you will pick your Doctoral Committee members and you will identify the committee member who will serve as the Evaluation Head. The Evaluation Head is responsible for facilitating the annual committee meeting and preparing the student's annual evaluation as described below.

Specifically, the following Doctoral Committee composition guidelines apply:

1. The committee will consist of three faculty from the Biology graduate program\* and two outside faculty **OR** four faculty from the Biology graduate program\* and one outside faculty.  
*\* Note: Faculty participating in the Biology graduate program are listed on the Biology website.*
2. Every doctoral committee must have at least one outside tenured member (non-adjunct faculty at UCSD with tenure who is not a member of the Division of Biological Sciences graduate program). The outside tenured member cannot serve as the Chair of the doctoral committee.
3. If a committee is composed of four faculty from the Biology graduate program and one outside tenured member, at least one of the four Biology members must be from a Biology Academic Section other than the Section in which the student's advisor is appointed.
4. Doctoral committees can have only one adjunct member, unless the student's Chair is from the Salk Institute. In those cases, the committee can have at most two adjunct members.
5. Any number of additional members can be added to the committee.
6. Students may choose to delay selecting the outside tenured member until they are ready to advance to candidacy. In this case, the student will schedule his/her annual meetings with the other four members of the committee until the Candidacy Examination. To successfully advance to candidacy and for all meetings after the candidacy exam, the student must meet with the full, five-member committee.

Students should formally nominate their full committee at least three weeks before they advance to candidacy. To nominate the doctoral committee, students should contact the Biology Graduate Coordinator with the names and titles of their proposed committee members. The Graduate Coordinator will submit the proposed committee to the UCSD Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. 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 above. The student should email a request to reconstitute the doctoral committee to the Biology Graduate Coordinator who will submit the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## UC- and UCSD-wide policies

### **Email**

The University sends official notices to students thru email. Every student is expected to establish an account and regularly monitor the account for official communications. Notices from departments, programs, 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.

All graduate students are entitled to a free email account. Notices from the Graduate Division are sent to students at their UCSD email address. Many graduate students find email essential to their research and for communication with their department. Students can make an email request for books or copies of journal articles to be sent to their campus office or department. Email accounts may be obtained from Academic Computing Services, located on the first floor of the Applied Physics and Mathematics Building, Muir College, (858) 534-4060, <http://www.acs.ucsd.edu>.

### **Sexual Harassment Prevention and Policy**

The University of California, San Diego, is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which all persons who participate in UCSD programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation, including sexual harassment. Every member of the UCSD community should be aware that UCSD will not tolerate sexual harassment and that such behavior is prohibited both by law and by UCSD policy. Retaliation against a person who brings a complaint of sexual harassment is also strictly prohibited and may result in separate disciplinary action. It is UCSD's intention to take whatever action may be needed to prevent, correct, and if necessary, discipline inappropriate behavior, which violates this policy. All members of the UCSD community, including faculty, students and staff, are responsible for ensuring an environment free of sexual harassment.

The full UCSD policy on sexual harassment can 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 you or someone you know has a question about sexual harassment, please contact OPHD. You may leave a confidential voicemail at (858) 534-8298, email [ophd@ucsd.edu](mailto: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](http://ReportBias.UCSD.edu) for more information.

### **Resolution**

Because complaints are most effectively resolved at the earliest possible stage, UCSD encourages those with concerns or complaints regarding sexual harassment to seek advice as early as possible by contacting OSHPP. There are many options for addressing such concerns, depending on the circumstances and you can get advice without filing a complaint. Informal resolution may include educational programs for targeted campus units or for particular individuals, or mediation between the parties. An informal resolution does not require a written complaint and it does not involve disciplinary procedures. Where informal resolution is unsuccessful or inappropriate, a request for a formal investigation may be filed with OSHPP. Such a request requires a written complaint. Records

of complaints, reports, and subsequent action are maintained in accordance with privacy requirements.

### **UCSD Principles of Community**

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UCSD community. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

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.

## 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**

<http://www.linkedin.com/groupsDirectory?results=&sik=1250898479201&pplSearchOrigin=GLHD&keywords=UCSD+Biology+Alumni>

#### **grAdvantage**

<http://grad.ucsd.edu/gradlife/gradvantage/>

#### **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](http://www.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=4917)

#### **Re-envisioning the Ph.D.**

<http://depts.washington.edu/envision/index.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?

### *UC San Diego Extension*

#### **Complimentary Enrollment of Graduate Students in University Extension Courses**

University Extension provides the Graduate Division with a limited number of vouchers for graduate students to enroll in complimentary University Extension courses.

#### **Requirements**

- Good standing (cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above, no more than 8 units of U and/or F).
- Registered as a full-time student (12 or more units) in the quarter in which the course is to be taken.
- Not had a complimentary extension course in the 2 quarters preceding the request.

- Only one course can be taken with each voucher.
- The cost of the course must be between \$45 and \$270. The student must pay the balance if the course exceeds \$270.
- The following are courses not available through complimentary enrollment: food, wine, horsemanship, non-credit physical education courses, travel and tour classes.

#### **Procedures**

- Student must personally pick up a complimentary enrollment voucher at the Graduate Division during the open enrollment period. Open enrollment is usually two weeks prior to the start of the quarter (students should contact the department coordinator for specific dates).
- The student obtains a department stamp and signatures from the department chair and graduate advisor.
- The voucher must be returned to the Graduate Division with signatures no later than 3 days after the voucher was picked up. Once this is done the student takes the voucher to the UCSD extension office and registers for the course.

#### *UC San Diego Business Cards*

Doctoral students can order official UCSD business cards from the campus IMPRINTS shop. The link with more information is:

<http://blink.ucsd.edu/facilities/services/imprints/printing/customized.html#Business-cards-and-stationery>

Interested students must obtain a letter from the program that states they are authorized to have a UC San Diego Business Card. Students can obtain this letter from the Biology Graduate Student & Instructional Services Office (GSIS).

To order cards, visit the link about and fill out the on-line form if one is an Imprints customer and has a user ID. If not, one can fill out a hardcopy form and take it in to Imprints.

The program does not pay for the cost of business cards, though, so interested students will have to pay from their own funds. It takes approximately 5-7 days to get receive the cards.

## **Events and Activities**

### *Annual Retreat*

The Division organizes a retreat each fall that fosters interactions among program faculty, postdoctoral researchers and students. The retreat is typically held off campus over several days and features lectures, discussion groups, and social events.

### *Seminars*

The Division 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.

### *Division Socials*

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

## Grad to Grad: Student Support and Resources

### *Graduate Student Representatives*

Each year, biology graduate students are elected to serve as graduate representatives. Two graduate representatives are selected by the students to act in a leadership role within the division. The representatives are invited to attend 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.

### *Senior Year Reps Responsibilities:*

- Serve on the Biology Graduate Committee. This committee oversees matters concerning our graduate program. It's composed mostly of faculty and staff; the two senior reps are the only student representation. This is the best way to voice student concerns on a variety of topics that students deal with (e.g., thesis committee structure, rotation issues, coursework, etc.).
- Distribute TA assignments.
- Procure money for biology student events (e.g., happy hours).
- Listen to concerns of the biology graduate student population and act on these concerns when necessary (e.g., at a graduate committee meeting).

### *2nd and/or 3rd Year Reps Responsibilities:*

- Listen to concerns of the biology grad student population and keeping the senior reps informed of issues that they might not be aware of.
- Organize and plan happy hours and other social activities. Get the new class of 1st year students to help set them up so they can be involved and meet people.

### *Graduate Student Association*

Price Center West, Room 404

<https://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/gsa/index.html>

**The Graduate Student Association (GSA)** 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.

### *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 division at Art of Espresso (details will be provided on how to access this benefit).

- Attendance at an introductory dinner, this year on Tuesday, September 8th (location TBA) for mentors and mentees to meet.
- Mentors will be encouraged to attend each Boot Camp 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, we will have a social event such as a happy hour 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 your 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 Emergency Resources***

- If someone is in immediate medical danger or is a threat to themselves or others – call 911.
- Suicide hotline: 24/7 crisis counseling; English: 1-800-SUICIDE or 1 (800) 273-TALK; Spanish: 1 (888) 628-9454.



## Support Services

### *Graduate Division*

Student Services Center, 4th Floor North

<http://grad.ucsd.edu/>

The UC San Diego Graduate Division 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.

### *Student Health Services Center (SHS)*

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. For students who are interested in performing summer rotations, please ensure that you are covered by your own health insurance during the summer.

### *Wellness Program*

LiveWell 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:

<http://wellness.ucsd.edu>

#### *What is Wellness?*

Wellness is an expanded idea of health. Wellness is the pursuit of optimal health, encompassing physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, occupational, financial, social, and environmental well-being. Below is a short description of the eight areas of wellness.

#### *The 8 Dimensions of Wellness*

1. Emotional Wellness

*Having high self-esteem and confidence, satisfying relationships, a support network, and staying optimistic.*

2. Environmental Wellness

*Learning and contributing to the health of the planet and a sustainable lifestyle. The ability to recognize our responsibility for the quality of the air, the water and the land. The ability to make a positive impact on our environment, be it our homes, our communities or our planet. Helping to eliminate or reduce or protect one's self from exposure to toxic chemicals.*

3. Financial Wellness  
*Maintaining a balanced budget for expenses while also practicing money-saving techniques.*
4. Intellectual Wellness  
*Getting the most out of classes and education by asking questions, being open to new ideas, learning new skills, and studying effectively.*
5. Occupational Wellness  
*The ability to get personal fulfillment from our jobs or our chosen career fields while still maintaining balance in our lives. Our desire to contribute in our careers to make a positive impact on the organizations we work in and to society as a whole.*
6. Physical Wellness  
*Maintaining optimal health by getting enough sleep, eating healthy, exercising, and avoiding unhealthy habits.*
7. Social Wellness  
*Having a supportive social network, contributing to society, and valuing cultural diversity.*
8. Spiritual Wellness  
*Knowing one's purpose in life, finding joy in everyday life, practicing honesty, and seeing beauty in life.*

#### *Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS):*

Galbraith Hall (Revelle College), Room 190

<http://caps.ucsd.edu/grad.html>

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.

#### *Office for Students with Disabilities*

University Center 202

<http://disabilities.ucsd.edu/about/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*

<http://www.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 adheres to The International Ombudsman Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice which may be found on our 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://libraries.ucsd.edu>

The UCSD libraries consist of Geisel Library, with its research collections in the Social Sciences and Humanities Library (SSHL); the Art and Architecture Library; the Music Library; the Film and Video Library; the Mandeville Library of Special Collections; and the Science and Engineering Library (S&E). Other libraries include the Biomedical Library and the Medical Center Library, the Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library (SIO), the International Relations and Pacific Studies Library (IR/PS), and the Galbraith Hall Library.

Collectively, their mission is to support the campus programs of instruction, research and public service. While each library may have varying rules, all are open to members of the UCSD community. Library Services online (<http://libraries.ucsd.edu>) lists library hours, locations, and services in addition to providing access to online databases.

### **Reference Services**

Major academic research libraries like UCSD's are complex and evolving information systems. Reference services are available at each library to provide assistance to students and faculty 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.

### **Class Reserves Services**

Class reserves for graduate level courses are available at each library. Class reserves for upper division courses (paper and CD ROM material) in the social sciences and humanities are housed in SSHL in the Geisel Library. Music, film and video, and slide formats are housed elsewhere in Geisel Library. SSHL does not house material for graduate level courses in science and engineering, upper division biology or biochemistry. Biology upper division courses are available at the Biomedical Library.

### **Instructional Services**

Through its Instructional Services Program, the library offers a variety of orientations, instructional, and consultation opportunities. Individual and group tours of the libraries may be arranged. Contact the library of interest and ask for the instructional coordinator.

### **Electronic Resources Training**

The library offers group sessions and one-on-one consultations to help students make the most efficient use of all the electronic information resources available to them. These electronic resources can be used in the library and are increasingly becoming available remotely from home, lab, or the office.

The Library also offers many other computerized resources, from databases on compact disc such as Biological Abstracts and Philosopher's Index, which are self-service, to commercial online databases such as Chemical Abstracts, which librarians can search for UCSD students for a fee. Contact the reference department of the library of interest for more information on this service.

### **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 <http://sshl.ucsd.edu/services/interlibrary.html> for more information.

### **Library Photocopy Services**

As a companion to Interlibrary Loan, the library also offers photocopies of articles in journals owned at UCSD but not available electronically in full text. A small fee is charged to cover handling costs (typically \$3.50 per article). Requests can be submitted directly from most California Digital Library databases (such as Medline, INSPEC, BIOSIS or Current Contents) using the *Request* feature. Students also may send requests via Library Express by using the *G* command in line mode or the *Request* button in the web version, or by calling or emailing the Interlibrary Loan unit that supports their discipline.

### **Library Express (LX) Services**

Library Express pages library materials from the UCSD collections and delivers them to any UCSD library for pick-up at the circulation desk. Currently available to UCSD graduate students and academic and staff employees, LX also delivers materials to undergraduates who are registered with the Office for Students with Disabilities. For more information, contact Library Express at (858) 534-5351, at [libexp@ucsd.edu](mailto:libexp@ucsd.edu), or visit their website at <http://libraries.ucsd.edu/services/ill-dds>.

### **Email Reference Services**

Some UCSD libraries have set up mechanisms to receive and answer brief reference questions by electronic mail. Generally these services are limited to UCSD staff, faculty, and regularly enrolled students. Questions by email should normally be relatively brief and simple: a fact, statistic, biographical note, verification of an incomplete citation, advice on a starting strategy for research, etc. More complex and lengthy questions normally cannot be answered in this way, and will be referred to a subject specialist.

Students should include their full name and email address for replies. Although email is checked regularly, reference librarians are not actually standing by their terminals, and replies may take one or two working days. If an answer is needed immediately, call the Library Information Desk at (858) 534-3336 for either an answer or referral to the appropriate desk. The answers to many questions may also be found through the library's Frequently Asked Questions page (<http://libraries.ucsd.edu/services/faq.html>) or its Electronic Reference Shelf (<http://libraries.ucsd.edu/refshelf.html>).

### **Biomedical Library**

Located on the School of Medicine campus next to the Biomedical Sciences Building, the Biomedical Library (BML) has an extensive collection of journals and manuscripts in biology, medicine, molecular biology, neuroscience, and related fields. While this library should meet most students' needs, additional titles are available from the BML branch library at the UCSD Medical Center in Hillcrest, from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) Library, and from other libraries on the main campus. Volumes not available at any of UCSD's libraries can be requested from one of the UC system's other libraries without charge. UCSD's journal and manuscript catalogs (Melvyl and Roger) can be searched at BML or remotely by users with UCSD e-mail accounts.

(858) 534-1201, <http://scilib.ucsd.edu/bml>

### *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**

Students, faculty, and staff can ride free [campus shuttles](#) that serve campus, medical centers, and key points off campus. Be prepared to show your campus ID to the driver upon request.

#### **Disabled Parking Spaces**

UCSD maintains hundreds of [Disabled Parking](#) (DP) spaces. A DP plate or placard can be used in metered parking (with no fee), and in DP spaces without a UCSD permit. DP placards must be displayed.

## **Other Services/Centers/Resources**

### *ATMs*

ATMs are available at [various locations](#) on campus including the Price Center, the USE Credit Union, and the Student Center.

### *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.

### *Banking*

A number of established financial institutions are located nearby in La Jolla Village Square Center on Nobel Drive and Villa La Jolla Drive. There are also several other ATM machines in the vicinity, located on the UCSD campus in the Price Center and the Student Center, in the Costa Verde Shopping Center, University Towne Center, and throughout the city of San Diego.

#### **Credit Union (USE)**

UCSD is also home to a branch office of USE (University and State Employees) Credit Union, a full-service financial institution that provides services to all faculty, staff, and students at UCSD. The UCSD Branch Office of USE Credit Union is located in the Gilman Drive Parking Structure, (858) 453-5620. Check out the USE website at [www.usecu.org](http://www.usecu.org).

Graduate students employed by the University (i.e., TAs, GSRs) may become members of the University and State Employees Credit Union (USE). After becoming a member, there are several different accounts available. Joining the credit union may prove to be a valuable component for acquiring a credit history and obtaining loans. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.usecu.org>.

### *Duplicating Services*

Several duplicating services are available on campus. Imprints, the University provider for copies and 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 [UCSD Postal Center](#) is located on campus in the Price Center. Visit the website for available services and hours of operation.

### *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 <http://bookstore.ucsd.edu>.

### *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 your interest is in aquatics, intramural sports, master's running, swimming, or triathlon, there are programs and opportunities for everyone. The Recreation Magazine is widely available on campus and publishes current schedules and complete program information.

### *Sports Facilities*

There is no fee to students for recreation facilities open-hours use during the academic year. Recreation sports facilities include RIMAC, with its 12,000 sq. ft. weight room, racquetball and squash courts, activity rooms, gym and 5,000 seat arena; Canyonview athletic complex with outdoor swimming pool, weight room, racquetball court, and indoor climbing center; the Main Gym with a complete weight room, indoor natatorium and main and recreation gyms for informal rec basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, indoor soccer, and more; playing fields; tennis and sand volleyball courts; all-weather track and field stadium; fitness trail and parcourse; and nearby, the oceanfront aquatics facilities of Mission Bay Aquatic Center.

Outback Adventures located in Pepper Canyon, across from Canyonview, offers students low-cost recreation trips and a complete rental service offering camping and sports equipment. Outback Adventures Indoor Climbing Center is located at the Canyonview Athletics Complex and is available for individual and group climbing. Necessary equipment and instruction are available.

Sports Clubs Teams compete against other universities. Teams include alpine skiing, ballroom dance, cycling, equestrian, ice hockey, men's and women's lacrosse, rugby, sailing, and surfing. Low-key activity clubs open to the entire campus community include archery, ballroom dance, bodyboarding, fencing, SCUBA, table tennis, and wrestling.

Recreation has a very popular Personal Wellness Program for students, in which 60 students are selected each quarter to participate in a 10 week fitness program in a small group setting with Recreation personal trainers at RIMAC. The program is free to students and is offered as a service to introduce and promote a lifestyle of wellness.

UCSD Recreation  
General Information (858) 534-4037  
Department Administrative Offices - 4th floor RIMAC  
Recreational Sales Desk (for class sign ups) - Lobby, RIMAC  
<http://recreation.ucsd.edu>

### *Automobile Registration*

If you are in the process of becoming a California resident, you must register your vehicle. If the car is registered in your name and you are a resident of the state in which you purchased it, 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 your home state. For further information on vehicle registration contact the Department of Motor Vehicles at (800) 777-0133 or visit their website at [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov).

### **Driver License**

If you drive a vehicle and establish residency in California, you must obtain a California driver license within ten days after your 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](http://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.



## Key People

### *Biological Sciences Student and Instructional Services Office*

Pacific Hall, First Floor

Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 am – 12 pm and 1 – 4:30 pm

Closed: Tuesday, 8 am – 1 pm

Phone: (858) 534-0557; Fax: (858) 534-4459

### **Graduate**

Suzi Harlow

[sharlow@ucsd.edu](mailto:sharlow@ucsd.edu)

*Manager, Graduate Student and Instructional Services*

(858) 534-2580

Oversight of graduate student and instructional issues including graduate admissions and recruitment.

Marifel Alfaro

[maalfaro@ucsd.edu](mailto:maalfaro@ucsd.edu)

*PhD Program Coordinator*

(858) 534-0181

PhD student advising, thesis committees, thesis defense, evaluations, 1st year rotations, graduate curriculum, graduate recruitment, graduate grades, graduate course scheduling.

Brandon Keith

[brkeith@ucsd.edu](mailto:brkeith@ucsd.edu)

*Graduate Admissions and BS/MS Coordinator*

(858) 534-8983

Graduate Admissions, application requests, publications, student advising, BS/MS program coordinator.

### **Graduate Financial Support**

Lien Ngo

[lnngo@ucsd.edu](mailto:lnngo@ucsd.edu)

*Financial Analyst*

(858) 822-0292

Graduate student support planning and analysis, student and faculty financial advising, training grant coordination

Donna Aizuss

[daizuss@ucsd.edu](mailto:daizuss@ucsd.edu)

*Financial Assistant*

(858) 534-0641

Graduate student support processing, student financial advising, graduate student travel, verification letters/forms

Natalie Noles

[biota@ucsd.edu](mailto:biota@ucsd.edu)

*Instructional Analyst*

Responsible for the leadership, oversight and administration of the Instructional Assistant program.

*Graduate Representatives*

Graduate Student Association Reps for 2016–2017 are:

Senior Reps:

[John Lubin](#)

[Mai Tran](#)

Social Coordinators:

[Laura Chipman](#)

[Anna Guzikowski](#)

*Peer Mentorship Program Student Coordinators 2016–2017*

[Samuel Lin](#)

[Clare Quirk](#)

*Graduate Committee Chair*

Jens Lykke-Andersen

Chair of the Graduate Education Committee

(858)822-3659

[jlykkeandersen@ucsd.edu](mailto:jlykkeandersen@ucsd.edu)

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

### First Year

The general policies and procedures in the Division of Biological Sciences are available at:

<https://biology.ucsd.edu/education/grad/phd/requirements/index.html> in the **Division 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 Division 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 Division and by the Graduate Division. 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 the lab in which they are rotating. 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. Duration 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 student's probable Thesis Advisor. The first rotation is set during 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, 502, 504 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

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.

**Exam committee:** The student must assemble a three-person First Year Exam committee consisting of the student's probable Thesis Advisor and at least two regular (not adjunct or emeritus) EBE professors. As specified by Division rules, *the committee will be chaired by an Evaluation Head who is not the probable 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. 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 Division's graduate student services office.

**Table 1.** Suggested timetable for the First Year Exam. The First Year exam must be completed before June 30<sup>th</sup>.

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

## 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 UC San Diego 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) 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 (2 units, Fall quarter only)

BGGN 208: Biological Sciences Graduate Boot Camp (4 units, Fall quarter only)

BGGN 297 (or equivalent): Research Conference (1-3 units, each unit corresponds to 3 hrs/week of work)<sup>1</sup>

BGGN 298: Laboratory Projects in Biology (3-12 units, each unit corresponds to 3 hrs/week of work, 6 units recommended)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Consult with your probable Thesis Advisor to determine the appropriate number of units. Hours of work per week correspond to the total time required for a given course, including study, preparation, etc. First year students should not take BGGN 299.

**Students must take a minimum of 12 units per quarter.**

**Additional courses (cannot include BGGN 200, 205, 208, 297, 298, 299, 500, 502, 504 or any BGJC, BGRD, or BGSE course).**

Suggestions:

BGGN 203 (Topics in Ecology, Behavior, and Evolution, 3 units)<sup>2</sup>

BGGN 204 (Topics in Community and Population Ecology, 3 units)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>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:**

**TA 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.***

## 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 Division'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 297 and BGGN 299 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 on a regular basis unless they are away from campus. Students typically fulfill the Bioethics Training requirement during the second year by taking either Scientific Ethics (BGGN 207/SOMI 226) or Professional Ethics in Science (SIO 273). Second year students must enroll in BGSE 205.

**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 [Resources for Current Students](#) on the Graduate Division website.**

### Teaching

Students must fulfill three Apprentice Teaching Experiences during their first four years. This is the minimum requirement for all students in the Division of Biological Sciences PhD program. **EBE students may also teach for financial support after they have completed the required number of apprenticeships, 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 Proposition 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 Division's Graduate Student Services office. Please contact the Biology PhD graduate coordinator for details. Students should consult their Thesis Advisors to determine the best time for Advancing to Candidacy.

**Some fellowship opportunities require students to have already advanced to candidacy** (i.e. the National Science Foundation's Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant). For this reason, students are encouraged to advance to candidacy in their second year.

**Table 2.** Suggested timetable for the Second Year Exam. The Second Year exam must be completed before July 31<sup>st</sup>.

Date	Action
April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Core Doctoral Committee membership finalized.
May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Student receives instructions on the exam.
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Written portion due (committee members have 2 weeks to evaluate the written portion)
July 1 <sup>st</sup>	Oral exam.

**Need Help?**

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

**Contacts (2016-2017)**

*EBE Graduate Committee member:* Lin Chao [lchao@ucsd.edu](mailto:lchao@ucsd.edu)

*EBE Chair:* James Nieh [jnieh@ucsd.edu](mailto:jnieh@ucsd.edu)

*PhD Graduate Coordinator:* Marifel Alfaro [maalfaro@ucsd.edu](mailto:maalfaro@ucsd.edu)