FAQ for SoM PhD Programs
OBGE Best Practices and Information for Fall '20 Planning

T32 Program Directors, Directors of Graduate Studies, and Program Administrators are the key liaisons between students, faculty, and OBGE. They are asked to communicate the following information with their training faculty. This FAQ will be updated if additional guidance becomes available.

Duke University and School of Medicine leadership have been monitoring health system data, local and national trends, and consulting with leading infectious disease experts, and research lab activities have reopened under a controlled model of density coupled with heightened safety and hygiene practices. Guidelines for lab re-opening and returning to campus can be found here: https://medschool.duke.edu/research/reopening-research-laboratories and https://returnto.duke.edu/.

New students should arrive in Durham two weeks prior to the start of classes and closely monitor their health during this period.

1. COVID-19 TESTING
Classes will start August 17th, and incoming students should be in the Raleigh-Durham area for 14 days prior to coming on to campus. All 1st year students will be enrolled in the symptom screening testing system that is linked to Employee Health and Student Health.

Update July 2020: All incoming students are required to take a COVID-19 test. COVID-19 testing for PhD students is currently scheduled for the week of August 16th. No incoming (new) student should physically come to campus prior to being tested. Instructions and logistics for testing, which will occur on campus and coordinated with Student Health, will be forthcoming. Once a COVID-19 test is administered, the student must self-quarantine at their Durham/RDU-area residence until results have been received. Any student who tests positive will be advised of next steps by Student Health.

2. GATEWAY GROUPS
We know that programs and departments already have plans to build community within their cohorts. OBGE Gateway Groups will serve as another way in which first year students can engage with one another across program and departmental borders. Each Gateway Group will consist of 10 students led by a faculty mentor. *These groups are (and always were) planned to be delivered remotely in Fall '20.* A monthly virtual Professional Development Series focused on mentoring, communication, and resilience will be linked to virtual Gateway Group discussions facilitated by the faculty leaders. In July, faculty leaders will have the opportunity to receive online mentoring training through Duke's Office of Research Mentoring, and their participation in Gateway Groups will be a mentoring activity that can be reported in T32s and progress reports.

2.1 Communication with 1st year cohort: Communication of training program leaders with their students is especially important for the Fall semester, and OBGE encourages programs to hold regular check-ins with their students during the Fall to address concerns and offer advice. OBGE will also share feedback or concerns articulated by students in Gateway Group discussions to help the training programs remain responsive to their students. Programs should remind students of resources such as the OBGE Integrated Health and Wellness Coaching Program, CAPS, and the IDEALS Office that can help them if they need additional assistance.

3. CLASSES

3.1 Core graduate courses: Due to a massive effort by the Registrar to recreate the registration system to incorporate classes and classroom spaces that can accommodate the new academic calendar, course schedule, and COVID-19 safe practices, the Provost's Office has asked all schools, departments, and units to consider their courses that focus on essential or core elements for Fall '20 delivery. Each SoM PhD program should define the core classes to be offered within their program and after submission to the Registrar, share their list with OBGE (OBGE@duke.edu). Courses should be reported to the registrar by June 26th (see excel worksheets from the Registrar organized by course code). Requests for F2F course delivery should be sent to OBGE or the Associate Dean for Research Training who will partner with the Provost Office and Registrar to ensure appropriate class spaces are available for the few F2F courses that will be offered.

3.2 Infrastructure and resources for virtual teaching: The University realizes that faculty across all of its schools will need support in pivoting in person classes to hybrid or fully online. The Provost has expanded the Duke Learning Innovation (DLI) unit (https://learninginnovation.duke.edu/) that offers resources, ideas, and best practices for faculty to reconfigure their courses to online delivery for Fall. Although OBGE does not have the infrastructure to support online teaching resources, the Program Assessment Manager, Dr. Emtiaz Ahmed, will be accessible to advise faculty on resources for online teaching. The Associate Dean for Research Training will continue to communicate with DLI and the SoM Educational Technology team as they provide new information on resources.

We encourage program leaders to direct their faculty to a helpful suite of tools including technology, cameras, microphones, how-tos for recording:
http://flexteaching.li.duke.edu/
https://medschool.duke.edu/education/student-services/medical-education-administration/meded-it/multimedia/educational-technology-resources

For pre-recorded lectures, SoM recommended technologies are:
Powerpoint - recording for audio with slides saved as an mp4 (no talking head)
Loom and Screencast-O-Matic - for combined presentation and talking head
Or easiest - start a Zoom meeting and hit record - you will receive a shareable link if you save to the cloud (selected in zoom settings).

4. ROTATIONS
The decision regarding rotations was carefully considered within SoM as well as at the highest levels of leadership at Duke. A few SoM PhD programs articulated concerns that starting rotations too late in the semester or academic year could potentially disadvantage our students in finding thesis lab homes in the event of a second wave of COVID-19 in late 2020/early 2021. Several factors influenced confidence in planning for condensed and synchronized Fall '20 rotations, including:

a. low incidence (zero) of COVID-19 in the research labs during crucial work in April and May and as labs have reopened;
b. strict symptom-monitoring system (REDCap, soon to be an app) linked to Duke Employee Health and Student Health;
c. data and best practices from our colleagues in SoM Medical Education and School of Nursing where students have already returned to active learning;
d. advice and data from our infectious disease experts.

4.1 Number of rotations: The plans that were shared last week focused only on the Fall, outlining two 6 week rotations in Fall. Spring rotations were always intended and expected to occur, with the possibility for up to four 6 week rotations.

4.2 Delivery of Fall rotations: It is understood that some students and faculty may have concerns about in-person rotations while others may not. The delivery of the first (Aug 31-Oct 9) and second (Oct 12-Nov 20) rotations – either in person or virtual - should be agreed upon by the PI and student, clearly communicated to the DGS and DGSA of each program, and registered in T3. Rotations 3 and 4 will occur in Spring 2021. The rotation schedule should remain the same as originally articulated (i.e. starting on August 31st), but programs and faculty may consider flexible options within the 6 week timeframe such as, but not limited to:

Option 1: 2 weeks virtual, 4 weeks in the lab/F2F
Option 2: 3 weeks virtual, 3 weeks in the lab/F2F
Option 3: 6 weeks completely in the lab/F2F
Option 4: 6 weeks completely virtual

It is important to maintain equity across programs during rotations so that no student perceives they are missing out on an opportunity that others have or, alternatively, feel forced into an experience that makes them uncomfortable. *Clear communication between faculty, students, and program leaders and administrators is key*. Program leaders (DGS/ Director) should remind their training faculty that students engaged in F2F rotations should be included in the faculty member's department-approved lab plan.

4.3 Density of rotation students: Faculty are advised to host one rotation student per lab in a given rotation period. Strong scientific and safety justifications should be made for having more than one rotation student per lab. Faculty must incorporate rotation students into their lab plans that are approved by departmental leadership.

4.4 Best practices for rotations: Key factors in limiting the spread of COVID-19 and protecting each other are: a) wearing face masks, b) maintaining physical distancing, c) hand washing, and d) not coming to work/lab if one is experiencing symptoms or is ill. Based on data and guidance from our colleagues in SoM Medical Education, the School of Nursing, and Duke's COVID-19 infectious disease testing team, hands-on training and active learning *is* safely achievable by bearing in mind key principles:

> a. Six feet physical distancing between one masked and one unmasked individual limits the spread of infection.
> b. Two masked individuals that are 6 feet apart even more greatly lowers the risk of infection.
> c. For demonstration of new techniques or protocols, close contact of two masked individuals for <10 minutes keeps the risk of infection low.
> d. For prolonged (>10 minute) demonstration of techniques or protocols, face masking PLUS FACE SHIELDING provides a low risk of infection.

For more guidance see the SoM web site: https://medschool.duke.edu/research/reopening-research-laboratories

4.5 Faculty Research Series: To aid students in finding rotation labs and DGSs in advising students on identifying rotation mentors, OBGE created a repository faculty training profiles offering a brief scientific introduction or biography, research description, and state their mentorship philosophy. Faculty can

upload videos in T3, through the Research Training Profile menu. They should specify all PhD training programs to which they officially belong and select keywords that match their research area(s). Faculty should also indicate rotation availability (Rotations 1-4). Students will be able to access the searchable repository prior to registering rotations and rotation projects in T3.

An OBGE Duke Box folder with additional information on these and education-related topics is accessible to T32 Directors, Directors of Graduate Studies, and Program Administrators. Please check the folder (https://duke.box.com/s/g9fd6hoh58kl5elljpr4bd95oai66ecw) regularly for new or updated guidance and resources.