Duke University Program *in* Genetics *and* Genomics

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UPGG Graduate Student Handbook

Duke University
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UPGG LEADERSHIP

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CONTENTS

FIRST YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

- Responsible Conduct of Research-All Years in Program
- Coursework
- Registration
- Recruitment
- Laboratory Rotations
- Thesis Advisor
- Vacation Policy for 1st and 2nd Year
- Conference Travel Awards for 1st and 2nd Year
- Summer

SECOND YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

- Coursework
- Research
- Finances
- Preliminary Exam
  - *-Choosing the Committee*
  - *-Pre-prelim meeting*
  - *-Written Document*
  - *-Oral Defense*
- Graduate School Fellowships and Awards
- Summer

THIRD AND SUCCEEDING YEARS IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

- RCR requirement
- Courses
- Finances
- Research
- Time Off/Vacation
- Conference Travel Awards
- Working in the Lab and Being a Good Citizen
- Teaching Opportunities
- Summer Internships

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES

- Annual Committee Meeting
- Advisory Meeting
- Annual Student Retreat
- Preparing for the Future

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

FINAL YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

Requirements to graduate with a PhD in UPGG

-Credits
-Final committee meeting & Pre-Defense Checklist
-Publications
-Scheduling the defense
-Written document/thesis
-Oral presentation/defense
-After the Defense
-Forms
-Revision to the thesis document

OTHER INFORMATION

Terminal Master's Degree
Changing Labs
Students transferring to UPGG from other programs

UPGG STUDENT COMMITTEES

INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

FIRST YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

Welcome to UPGG! Your first year will give you the best opportunity to: 1) sample the diversity of laboratories in which you can ultimately pursue your dissertation research; and (2) build the course training that you need to become knowledgeable in Genetics and Genomics.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH: All Years in Program

ALL matriculating PhD students at Duke University are required to complete a total of 18 hours in RCR orientation. This reflects our expectation that every doctoral candidate will be well qualified to address the growing ethical challenges that arise when teaching or conducting research. Academic integrity and research ethics are fundamental to the practice of science. Duke created a rigorous program to train students in the highest standards for conducting research. All biomedical PhD students are required to participate in in-person and online RCR courses for a total of **18 contact hours**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5+
Fall	BIOTRAIN 750 (Orientation/RCR Intro)	1 DOSI-Asist Elective fall/spring	1 DOSI-Asist Elective fall/spring		2 RCR Forum Electives fall/spring
Spring	BIOTRAIN 751			BIOTRAIN 754	

Fall Semester: Introduction to RCR Concepts (BIOTRAIN 750): This one-day on-site event is required for all entering 1st year Biomedical PhD students during orientation prior to the start of classes in August. Topics of the interactive presentations may include: Expectations of a graduate student, Concepts in professionalism, Best practices for choosing a rotation and thesis mentor, Self-awareness and wellness, History of ethics and inherent bias, Data documentation and electronic lab notebooks, Understanding and reporting professional misconduct, and diversity, inclusion, and cultural awareness. Presenters typically include the Associate Dean for Research training, faculty and students from SoM graduate training programs and departments, the student ombuds, and the Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Diversity and Inclusion. **total RCR credit: 4 hours**

Spring Semester: The Responsible Scientist I (BIOTRAIN 751): This multi-day course offered in the Spring semester, and required for all 1st year students (Fall '20 matriculants or later), utilizes online lectures/modules, in-person lectures and small group discussions, and focuses on RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility topics for early-stage graduate students. Topics of this course typically include: understanding your research area, developing a research hypothesis, and designing your research study, as well as research misconduct, mentorship, conflict of interest, policies surrounding the use of human and animal subjects, and data acquisition and laboratory tools. Each topic is accompanied by a short assessment to evaluate learning mastery. Bi-monthly small group sessions centered on expanding the online/lecture material through discussion questions and case studies build community and encourage continual embedded dialogue about best practices in RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility. Small groups are led by training faculty representing each of the PhD training programs and departments, with teaching assistance from senior graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. **total RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility credit: 4 hours**

Online modules/self-paced mastery of RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility: DOSI-ASIST offers a selection of vetted RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility training modules through the Duke Learning Management System (DLMS). In Years 2 and 3, students are required to annually take one 60-minute online interactive module from a menu of topics, including laboratory notebook tools, execution, management, and documentation of experiments, as well as communication of research. Each module is accompanied by an assessment. **1 hour credit per module (total RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility credit: 2 hours)**

Spring Semester: The Responsible Scientist II (BIOTRAIN 754): This one-day plus monthly small group sessions course offered in the Spring semester, and required for all 4th year students, utilizes online lectures/modules, in-person lectures, and small group discussions, and typically focuses on RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility topics for advanced graduate students. Topics of this course include: data provenance and recordkeeping, data/resource ownership and sharing, research misconduct, mentorship, responsible authorship, publication, and peer review. Each topic is accompanied by a short assessment to evaluate learning mastery. Monthly small group sessions centered on expanding the online/lecture material through discussion questions and case studies build community and encourage continual embedded dialogue about best practices in RCR and R&R. Small groups are led by training faculty representing each of the PhD training programs and departments. **total RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility credit: 4 hours**

Two 2-hr RCR Forums: In Years 5+, students are required to participate in two electives RCR Forums. If a student graduates in Year 5, two forums must be taken in one year. A student planning to graduate in Year 6 may take one forum in Year 5 and the other in Year 6. Each forum is a 1 hr lecture followed by a 1-1.5 hr small group discussion on a variety of topics. Forums are held on campus and are open to all graduate students at Duke, including those from the humanities and social sciences. The topics for the RCR Forums vary and serve as "" in RCR training. Topics typically include copyright vs plagiarism, global bioethics, academic freedom and civil discourse, intellectual property, and communication. Because students from the humanities and social sciences participate in forums, these events provide a broader view of RCR than presented in the 1st - 4th year RCR courses. **2 hour credit/forum (total RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility credit: 4 hours)**

The Responsible Scientist Teaching Assistant: Students in Years 4+ may earn RCR/R&R credit replacing one RCR forum by serving as teaching assistants in BIOTRAIN 751. Participation includes distribution of questions/case studies prior to small group meetings and facilitating discussion with the faculty small group leader. **total RCR and Rigor and Reproducibility credit: 2 hours**

COURSEWORK IN THE FIRST YEAR:

Most major coursework requirements are pursued and satisfied in Years 1 and 2, except as specified. However, sometimes elective courses are taken beyond Year 2. All UPGG students must take and pass the following:

1. UPGEN 778A-F: *Genetic and Genomic Approaches to the Solution of Biological Problems* (fall semester in Year 1 & 2)
This modular course is required in Years 1 and 2 so that 12 modules in total are taken. Generally, six modules are taken per year. At least 8 of the total 12 modules must be from the UPGEN offerings. 4 modules may be taken from the CMB module course offerings to complete the course requirement.

2. **UPGEN 701:** *Topics in Genetics and Genomics* (required fall semester Year 1)
This class is limited to first year UPGG students and is conducted in a journal club style format with students leading discussions on a recent peer-reviewed manuscript from the following week's UPGEN 750 (Genetics Colloquium) seminar speaker. The course has three main objectives. First, the course prepares the students to have background knowledge of the seminar speaker's work such that they can confidently follow the seminar content. Second, by evaluating the scientific question in the paper, the experiments used to test the hypothesis and the conclusions, the students are developing their critical thinking skills. Finally, the course begins strengthening scientific communication by practicing public speaking in a comfortable environment, surrounded by first year classmates and two faculty.

3. UPGEN 700: *Critical Skills in Scientific Presentation* (required spring semester Year 1)
This class is also limited to first year UPGG students and further builds on their scientific

communication skills from UPGEN 701, as well as focus on professional development. The students have discussions regarding a variety of topics, including scientific storytelling, how to prepare for prelims and hear from former UPGG students about career paths. This semester-long course includes several exercises aimed at connecting with one's intended audience. At the end of the semester, each student gives an oral presentation regarding a rotation project of their choice. Our student topics of research span incredible breadth from field work on lemurs to fungal pathogens to immune cell signaling, and the goal is for the presenter to make their talk fully understandable to the entire audience in a way that promotes increased interest and discussion.

4. UPGEN 716: *Student Research Seminar* (required in Years 1 & 2). You will not be required to give a presentation in this course during your first year, but will listen to more senior UPGG students and provide critiques on their presentations. In Year 2, you will begin to give presentations. Generally, two students present each class, including one Year 2 student and one Year 3+ student. You are expected to present two times in this class, once in your 2nd year, and once beyond year 3.

5. UPGEN 750: *Tuesday seminar* and the *Distinguished Lecture Series* (required for Years 1 & 2). Students beyond year 2 are strongly encouraged to attend.

6. Electives: 6-8 credit hours in full-semester courses or mini-courses of any graduate level course that is relevant to biomedical research. Each year the Director of Graduate Studies, Director and administrator will help to determine which courses may be used to fulfill this requirement.

**By the end of the second year, all UPGG students should have a minimum of 24 graded credits for courses at the graduate level. They must earn a B- or higher in classes 1-4 above. The student advisory committee, which is composed of the DGS, Director and Administrator, has the authority to add or waive course requirements on an individual basis. If a student has previous coursework that might allow them to opt out of a required course, they must take the next higher related course in order to complete the UPGG requirement.*

REGISTRATION:

All first year students will meet with the student advisory committee prior to registering for classes for the first year. You will meet again with the advisory committee near the end of the first semester to choose spring semester courses.

To register for courses: You will be automatically registered for "Full Continuation" (CTN) for the fall and spring semesters, but *it is important that you verify this process has actually happened*. If you do not see "CTN" on your fall and spring list of courses, please contact the DGS/DGSA immediately. *If you do not register before the end of the add/drop period, you will be unable to fulfill your requirements*. **EVERY SEMESTER**,

registration for Continuation (CTN) will be required, ***including manual registration for Full Continuation (CTN) in summer.***

RECRUITMENT:

First year students are important contributors to recruitment of new students. All first years are expected to participate in recruitment weekends typically held in February. This involves working with the student recruitment committee and the admissions committee to plan recruitment activities, and later acting as host for a recruit.

LABORATORY ROTATIONS IN THE FIRST YEAR:

Purpose of rotations: It is important to take full advantage of these laboratory rotations. They fulfill several purposes by providing: 1) exposure to different types of research and scientific approaches; 2) practical experience that will help in deciding the laboratory in which you will want to pursue your PhD; and 3) provide the lab members and PI with an opportunity to consider a potential 4 to 5-year working relationship.

Choosing rotation labs: Students must perform *at least* **three** different laboratory rotations during the first year, each **8- 10 weeks in duration**. The dates of the rotations are typically aligned with the dates set by the Office of Biomedical Graduate Education. Students should only rotate with UPGG faculty members, unless permission is obtained from the Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies. Students are encouraged to explore areas of research within UPGG that they may not have considered prior to entering the program. Your classes during the first semester provide an important opportunity to meet different professors and to learn about research topics that might not be on your immediate radar screen. There are ~100 UPGG faculty representing a broad spectrum of rotation experiences. Once the rotation mentor and project have been identified, the rotation should be entered into the Trainee Tracking Tool (T3).

Rotation report: At the end of each laboratory rotation, you and your rotation mentor must submit a rotation evaluation form in T3, documenting the lab in which you performed your rotation and a description of the work you pursued and completed while there. **A Rotation Evaluation Form must be completed by you and the rotation mentor within 2 weeks after completion of each rotation.**

THESIS ADVISOR:

Students choose a thesis advisor after doing 3 or more rotations. This is usually by summer of year one. Students are welcome and encouraged to discuss affiliation choice with the UPGG leadership. In some cases, a student will do 4 or more rotations before choosing an advisor. All students must be affiliated with a lab by September of Year 2. Please refer to Statement of Financial Support Form that is on the UPGG website for required paperwork. ***The selection of a lab for one's PhD research must be discussed with the potential PI/faculty advisor and approved by the Chair and/or Business Manager of the department to which the PI belongs.***

VACATION POLICY:

Typically, graduate students can take 12 days of vacation over the course of the calendar year per the Duke Graduate School policy. Regardless of student status (rotation or affiliated) in a lab, the student should request and confirm approval with the advisor when they take vacation. There may be exceptions to the two weeks, but that is at the discretion of the advisor. Any extended period of time away from the program (more than 2 consecutive weeks) needs to be discussed with the DGS and may necessitate a formal leave of absence.

Please see the Duke Graduate School website for more details:

https://gradschool.duke.edu/policies-forms/duke-graduate-school-student-time-policy/

CONFERENCE TRAVEL AWARDS:

Students who are presenting a paper or poster at a conference may request a program travel stipend. Students are limited to one stipend per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Students must be in good standing with the graduate school and the program in order to be considered for this travel stipend. The Graduate School award provides 70% of the total expense, or $525 for domestic and $700 for international travel, whichever is less. Students who apply for the Graduate School award must have passed their prelim. The UPGG Travel award is $300 for students who have not completed their prelim. ***Please note-Students on academic probation are not eligible for this award.*** To apply for an award, please provide the program coordinator (DGSA) with the following information:

1. The name of the meeting and other relevant details (conference dates, location, etc.)
2. A copy of the submitted abstract
3. Documentation of approval for presentation of paper or poster at the conference
4. A letter of support from your faculty advisor in whose laboratory or group the accepted work was carried out

If you are applying for an award for the Graduate School, please send your completed application materials to the program DGSA.

SUMMER: Be sure to register for full continuation (CTN) over the summer.

SECOND YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

During the second year (third and fourth semesters at Duke), UPGG graduate students complete the remaining course requirements. The highlights for this year include:

- Selection of advisor
- Selection of preliminary exam/thesis committee members by December of Year 2.

- Pre-prelim committee meeting held before the preliminary exam.
- Preliminary Examination taken between the start of the 4th semester (SPRING, 2nd year) and before the end of the 5th semester (FALL, 3rd year).

COURSEWORK:

By the end of the 2nd year, every UPGG student should have a minimum of 24 graded credits. In addition to CTN, second-year students are required to register and enroll in:

- **UPGEN 778**: Genetic and Genomic Approaches to the Solution of Biological Problems (fall semester, 6 modules)
- **BIOTRAIN 720:** Writing Grant Proposals (full semester, fall of year 2) or **Bio 706:** Grant Writing
- **UPGEN 716:** Wednesday student research seminar. You will be required to give a presentation during Year 2 or at the Annual Student Retreat.
- **UPGEN 750:** Tuesday seminars and the Distinguished Lecture Series
- **Elective:** Any elective you choose that is part of the biomedical graduate program offerings. The elective offerings will differ from semester to semester and year to year.

RESEARCH:

It is expected that all second-year PhD students will establish and pursue dissertation-related research in their selected laboratories. This research should be both novel and at least somewhat independent. If you have concerns about your chosen lab, first talk with your advisor. If you are unable to resolve the concerns, then see the DGS. ***The selection of a lab for one's PhD research must be discussed with the potential PI/faculty advisor and approved by the Chair and/or Business Manager of the department to which the PI belongs.***

FINANCES:

For guidance regarding your financial package, including tax guidance, please see: https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/financial-policies-forms-and-resources

PRE-PRELIM MEETING: (Required)

Students hold a pre-prelim meeting typically completed in semester 3, and must occur before the actual preliminary exam. The intent of this meeting is to sort out questions about the specific aims of the preliminary exam proposal. **This meeting should last no more than 1 hour, and the student should provide a 1 or 2-page written synopsis of their specific aims for the research proposal and an updated CV.** The student may also wish to present a PowerPoint presentation (15-20 minutes long) outlining the proposal, but this should NOT be an exhaustive seminar. The pre-prelim will enable your committee to see a first draft of your ideas and offer suggestions and comments on the general concept of the proposal. The committee will not "grill" you at this meeting. This is a friendly meeting/discussion. The intent is for the group to

offer suggestions about the specific aims to help focus the proposal and to identify areas of knowledge for which the student should enhance before the actual prelim exam. Once the general outline is approved, students should begin preparing the document.
UPGG does ask students to submit a one-page summary and the pre-prelim meeting form (located on the UPGG website under "Commonly Used Forms") through T3, prior to the meeting. Similarly, the committee chair will complete a form in T3 documenting the meeting has occurred.
*Please note - There is absolutely no expectation on behalf of the program or the faculty that the committee should be provided with refreshments at this meeting, nor at the prelim exam/subsequent thesis committee meetings. Students need only be focused on/prepared with their presentation.

PRELIMINARY EXAM:

Choosing the Committee: Second year students must select a preliminary exam/thesis committee. This committee should be confirmed before your pre-prelim. You will need to select a minimum of four and maximum of five faculty members, including your advisor. At least three of the committee members must be UPGG faculty. The Chair must be a UPGG faculty, but cannot be your advisor. The selection of the "minor area" member merely represents the faculty member whose research expertise overlaps the least with the prelim/thesis project area. Please note that the minor area faculty cannot also be the chair of the committee. Students may wish to include one committee member who is not part of the UPGG program, or Duke. In such cases, a CV and other materials from the external faculty will need to be provided to the DGSA in order to formally add them to the committee. However, additions of individuals who are not already Duke graduate faculty should be reserved for rare and extenuating circumstances. A student's preliminary exam committee may be different than the thesis committee if the project warrants addition or exclusion of certain faculty members based on expertise or development of the project. Please note that any committee changes must be approved by the DGS and Graduate School, and must also be approved for 30 days prior to the preliminary exam or dissertation defense. Committee change forms are submitted through the administrative coordinator.

Preliminary exam/thesis committees must be chosen by **December** of the 2nd year (the third semester in the program) in order meet Graduate School deadlines that will permit prelims to be held starting in January of the fourth semester. UPGG requires that students take preliminary exams **during the second semester of the 2nd year and no later than the end of the first semester of the 3rd year**. Exceptions should be justified by the student in writing and will require approval by the DGS and the Graduate School.

Timing of Prelim: The **preliminary exam** should be taken between the start of the fourth semester (spring of the 2nd year) and no later than end of the fifth semester (fall of the 3rd year) in graduate school. The exam must be registered in the T3 system (the student should work with the program DGSA to ensure this). The exam must be taken between the first and last class days of the semester, and not between semesters. It is important then to have one's committee selected by December of the 2nd year (third semester) and one's prelim date

scheduled for some time in the fourth or fifth semester. The preliminary exam consists of a specifically focused written proposal and a general oral exam. Extensive amounts of preliminary data are NOT required.

Purpose of Prelim: A key point for all to remember is that *the preliminary exam is more about the student and less about the document.* The prelim is an important measure of a student's ability to think logically and to exhibit their knowledge gained from coursework and rotations in the 1st and 2nd years. The examination committee will determine if the student is adequately prepared to advance to PhD candidacy and to embark on novel research under the guidance of the advisor/mentor. *If a student has generated preliminary data from their thesis project at this point, it is considered a bonus, but not an absolute requirement.* During the prelim, the student will be tested on the ability to think clearly and logically, to articulate knowledge of genetics and genomics in a professional and coherent manner, and to present reasonable ways of approaching and investigating various scientific problems and concepts, both in a written and oral context.

Committee Approval Prior to Exam: The Graduate School requires that the Committee Approval form be submitted and approved at least **one month** before the scheduled preliminary exam. Please keep in mind that this process is not instantaneous, so it is important to email your committee composition to the program coordinator at least **two** months before the preliminary exam. To ensure that all students meet the deadlines for committee approval through the Graduate School, **the committee should be selected and the committee approval form submitted by December of the 2nd year (the third semester).** The DGS must be notified if a student is unable to meet the deadline. The DGS will approve the electronic form and submit it to the Graduate School. Preliminary exams ideally occur in person, but if needed, can be conducted virtually. This must be indicated in the T3 milestone entry.
The Graduate School has declared that there will be no exceptions to this rule, and preliminary examinations held in violation of this policy will be declared invalid and need to be repeated.

WRITTEN DOCUMENT:

Students are encouraged to begin writing after formation of the committee, as the proposal should be written while simultaneously being productive in the lab. Part of the learning process is determining how to balance writing while also working at the bench. Suspending lab work for several weeks to months in order to write one's prelim document is discouraged.
The written proposal focused on the topic of the student's thesis research should be handed out to the thesis committee two weeks before the oral exam date. Committee members often serve on up to 25 different prelim and thesis committees, so remember to be courteous and submit the document to T3 **at least 2 weeks before the exam date**.

CONTENT OF PROPOSAL: The written proposal could be in the format of an R01 or NRSA-like NIH grant (10-12 pages long, single spaced, excluding Literature Cited) or an NSF grant proposal (8-12 pages long, single spaced), as appropriate based on the topic

area. As is typical in a research grant proposal, the major content areas could include Specific Aims, Approach (including Significance and Innovation), Research Design and Methods (including Preliminary Data), timeline, and Literature Cited. The purpose of utilizing this format is to give students an opportunity to organize their thoughts in a manner that will have practical ramifications for them throughout their career; specifically, the students will gain experience in the logical, written presentation of their work. Thus, writing style, i.e. the clear and orderly presentation of material as well as adherence to acceptable standards of written English, is a key component of the proposal. All UPGG students are required to take BIOTRAIN 720 (Grant Writing) to gain experience in writing an NIH-style proposal. The written proposal will be the student's own work within the framework of the existing broader project in the PI's lab, but it will no doubt reflect discussion and planning between the student and his or her thesis advisor. The student is encouraged to send drafts of their written proposal to their PI for feedback prior to disseminating the document to the rest of the committee. The written proposal should also be uploaded to T3.

ORAL DEFENSE:

The oral portion of the preliminary exam will consist of a presentation (minimum of 30 minutes) by the student, general questions, usually arising from but not limited to the material on the written proposal, and in-depth discussion with the student on the research proposal. The student and advisor should identify a chair for this oral exam.

CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE: The thesis advisor will be present as an observer but cannot serve as chair or ask leading questions during the oral exam. The thesis advisor will participate in the deliberations regarding the committee's evaluation and recommendations and will also participate in the vote in T3 to determine the decision.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE EXAM: Preliminary exam oral sections typically take a few hours. The format of the oral portion is at the discretion of the advisor and committee members and should be established at the pre-prelim meeting or at the start of the preliminary exam. A typical format starts with a brief presentation (15 minutes) by the student of the proposed research, perhaps including visual aids. The committee will then ask questions both related to the proposed work and questions of which you should be knowledgeable as a scholar in your chosen field of study. The preliminary exam is an important measure of a student's ability to think logically and to exhibit knowledge gained from coursework and rotations in the 1st and 2nd years. Its ultimate purpose is to define the limits of understanding of the student, so do not panic if you do not know the answers to some of the questions asked. While sometimes perceived as stressful, these exams are intended to be constructive, in that areas of strength are highlighted and areas of weakness are identified so that they can be remedied. The examination committee will determine if the student is adequately prepared to advance to PhD candidacy and to embark on novel research under the guidance of the

advisor/mentor. The student should expect to leave the room at both the beginning and end of the exam. The student should also expect to have the opportunity to speak frankly to the committee about the advisor and their relationship with the advisor in the room at the beginning of the meeting.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER THE EXAM: After the exam, each committee member will evaluate the student in the T3 system with respect to several important concepts and skills. The student will be able to view the average scores from the committee and identify areas of both strengths and weaknesses.

CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT: Should the thesis committee decide that modifications of the written proposal are required, the student should seek editing assistance from the thesis advisor, thesis committee members, and/or other appropriate personnel (e.g., more experienced students, post-doctoral fellows, etc.).

At the end of the prelim, the committee will complete the official assessment/progress form in T3 to offer feedback on the student's written and oral abilities and aims and scope of the proposed research. Similarly, at subsequent committee meetings, the committee will also provide feedback via T3. The student and advisor should meet privately to discuss the comments from the committee and determine an action plan for the coming year. Within one week after the meeting, this evaluation form should be submitted.

GRADUATE SCHOOL FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS:

The graduate school offers many fellowship and awards to continuing graduate students. Use the link to find details on funding opportunities. Please follow the application directions found on the website. https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/find-funding

****Pay careful attention to the application requirements****

1. Some of these awards require a letter or approval by the DGS. Thus, all students who would like to apply to a particular award must request that they be nominated or have a letter of support no less than 1 week prior to the deadline for the particular fellowship.

2. In some cases, the program is limited to the number of individuals that we can nominate for a particular award. In those instances, the priority will be given to the student who has requested to be nominated first, as long as that student meets the eligibility criteria.

Feel free to contact the program DGS or coordinator with any questions about the fellowships.

SUMMER:

Be sure to register for full continuation (CTN) over the summer if in the UPGG Track.

THIRD AND SUCCESSIVE YEARS IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

Graduate students who enrolled through the UPGG program will focus on pursuing research in the third and succeeding years. *All students must complete the preliminary examination by the end of the fifth semester* (FALL OF THE THIRD YEAR).

- **RCR REQUIREMENT**: Remember to register for and complete the mandatory 3rd year RCR training.

- **COURSES**: Although students past the second year are not required to register for UPGEN 716 (the Wednesday student research seminar) and UPGEN 750 (which includes attendance at Tuesday seminars and the Distinguished Lecture Series), they are expected to attend and participate in these regularly. All students must continue to register for CTN.

- **FINANCES:** When starting your third year, you will change from "non-comp" payroll to faculty staff payroll. A letter will be sent to you, your advisor and your departmental payroll representative. Please contact your departmental business manager to discuss and learn about your payroll status. You are free to consult with the UPGG Program Coordinator to verify that you are being paid properly.

- **RESEARCH**: After passing the prelim, the student's priority is performing high-quality research and being productive at the lab bench. Becoming an excellent scientist requires focus, motivation, determination and resilience, but most of all, it requires time and commitment to the lab and the research project. Labs usually are funded by multiple agencies or funding sources that demand accountability for the money given to support salaries, stipends, and research activities. This accountability extends from the P.I. to *every member of the lab, including students*. Thus, UPGG students are expected to be productive and to contribute scientifically to their lab group and more broadly to the respective research areas/fields. Expectations of the advisor should be discussed regularly so that the student is aware whether they are meeting expectations. This can also be delineated in the student-mentor compact (see the section on annual committee meetings).

- **CONFERENCE TRAVEL AWARDS**: Any graduate student enrolled in a Ph.D. granting program who has passed all parts of the preliminary exams and is actively participating in a conference (i.e., presenting a paper or poster, or leading a discussion) is eligible for

the grad school conference travel award. Students are limited to one conference travel fellowship per fiscal year (July 1-June 30). Students attending conferences during the academic year must be registered at the time of the conference. For summer conferences, students must be registered for the upcoming fall semester and also must have been registered for the previous spring semester. No exceptions will be made. *Terms of the Graduate School Award*: The Graduate School will provide 70% of the cost of registration fees, primary travel, three nights lodging, and meals for four days (up to $25 a day); the maximum amount to be paid by the Graduate School is $500. The student's primary department will contribute 30% or a maximum of $300 toward the award. All remaining expenses will be self-pay or PI funded https://gradschool.duke.edu/sites/default/files/documents/conftrav.pdf **All conference travel applications must be signed and submitted through the student's primary department. Please contact the UPGG program coordinator with any questions.**

- **WORKING IN THE LAB AND BEING A GOOD CITIZEN**: When joining a lab, the student is now a vital part of the lab mission and operation. Each student should make a concerted effort to become integrated into the lab workings and to contribute positively to the lab productivity and daily procedures. Students who simply "occupy" a lab – those who give little thought or interest to those around them, and from the lab experience diminish opportunities to grow and mature as a scientist and eventual group leader. Students are encouraged to purposely look for and undertake actions/activities that will benefit the lab operations and establish the student as an exemplary lab citizen. Remember, postdoctoral mentors are quite interested in the lab behaviors exhibited by potential candidates, and these qualities are often included in letters of reference written by PhD mentors.

- **TEACHING/TA OPPORTUNITIES**: TA experience is intended to be a quality educational experience in which the student does actual teaching in addition to other course-related activities, such as creating and/or grading homework, problem sets, exams, or other written assignments. For those students who are interested in gaining additional teaching experience beyond the TA, there are a number of teaching options available. Naturally, these experiences require more time and effort and should not detract from the student's research time. **Students are encouraged to discuss teaching objectives with their mentor/advisor and to design a mutually acceptable plan to incorporate training in teaching while simultaneously maintaining high research standards and productivity. Be aware that teaching hours during the workday will likely necessitate extra hours in the laboratory at night or on weekends.** Duke University offers more formal training that goes beyond the typical TA experience of grading exams and holding review sessions. In addition, a more involved TA experience is possible in a number of undergraduate introductory labs. Please contact individual instructors for more details about a TA-ship. Click here for more Professional Development Resources

- **SUMMER INTERNSHIPS**: The UPGG offers its students an array of internal and external educational experiences. These opportunities may include an externship with private industry partners that provide our student body with a non-academic research experience. While these opportunities can provide valuable training for UPGG students, they require some administrative consideration before they are undertaken, including:
  1. The student must first get approval from the advisor for the externship.
  2. The student must notify and provide details of the externship to their thesis committee.
  3. The student needs to provide the program (UPGG) with a detailed summary of the externship, specifying how the experience will contribute to their area of research and further their PhD degree. Additionally, it is important to address any financial conflicts of interest during the externship. For example, if a student is usually financially supported by a grant, they will likely need to be removed from the grant support during the externship. Often, the externship provides a stipend in lieu of the grant coverage.
  4. Domestic students do not need to be registered for an externship course; **however** international students will need to take a summer externship class because of their visa conditions.
  5. If a student wants to continue working in their lab at Duke while working an externship, they must be registered for continuation and pay the tuition remission for that semester.
  6. Registered PhD students who continue to work in the lab during summer can work a maximum of **19.9 hours a week** in the externship.

OBGE offers BIOTRAIN 898 and 899 for summer internships.

BIOTRAIN 898: Gateway to Internship and Experiential Learning
This internship preparation course will serve as a companion course to BIOTRAIN 899 Internship and Experiential Learning to begin the process of allowing Biomedical PhD students to explore specializations and career paths outside academia and prepare them to make more informed career path decisions. The course will encourage students to plan a practical path for pursuing a career outside of academia, address benefits and challenges of participating in an internship during the PhD, and provide tools and skills to navigate the process of finding and successfully completing an internship as part of the PhD course of study.
Course Availability: Last six weeks of Fall and Spring semesters
Course Credit: 1 Semester Hour
Registration: DukeHub

BIOTRAIN 899: Internship and Experiential Learning
A majority of PhD-level biomedical trainees now choose non-academic-tenure-track careers after completion of the PhD (CBE Life Sci Educ. 2018 Spring; 17(1): ar16.). This internship course will allow Biomedical PhD students to explore specializations and career paths outside academia and prepare them to make more informed career path decisions. They will have an opportunity to experience non-academic work settings, build their career networks, gain

additional mentorship, enhance leadership, communication, and teamwork skills, and explore interests and specializations not available to them in their on-campus training.
Prerequisite: BIOTRAIN 898 Gateway to Internship and Experiential Learning
Course Availability: Summer term only
Course Credit: 1 Semester Hour
Registration: T3 Professional Development Tab

*It's best to contact the program DGS **prior** to embarking on an externship opportunity.*

ONGOING REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES:

ANNUAL COMMITTEE MEETING:

Students are responsible for scheduling and holding yearly meetings (September-May) with their thesis committees. Failure to do so could put a student in jeopardy of making adequate progress to degree and will put a student on program probation. Please see the program coordinator if you have additional questions about the annual meeting requirement. Two to five days prior to the committee meeting, the student upload to T3 a one-to-three-page written summary/progress report that states: the Specific Aims of the project; any changes to the Aims from the previous Aims (as articulated at the prelim or a previous committee meeting); progress made under each aim; and the experimental plan for the coming year. Progress should not simply be a list of experiments that were done, but an interpretation of the data and what it means in the larger context of the project. In addition, all students should submit to the committee an updated CV that contains publications, presentations at meetings, fellowships applied for and received, an IDP, and other appropriate accomplishments from the past year. All of these things should be provided in T3.

Students should also present their research progress via a PowerPoint presentation (15-20 minutes), leaving ample time for the committee to ask questions and offer suggestions for future work. Note, the PowerPoint presentation should not be done in lieu of a written document. Within one week after the meeting, a committee report/evaluation form should be submitted in T3. The student and advisor should meet privately to discuss comments from the committee and agree on an action plan for the coming year.

Students should register each annual committee meeting in T3 (please work with the program DGSA). At each meeting, committee members will provide feedback through T3 for the student. Additionally, ahead of the committee meeting, UPGG students are encouraged to upload a completed annual mentor-mentee checklist found here:
https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/university-program-genetics-and-genomics/academics/current-0
Please note that the mentor-mentee checklist requires a discussion with your mentor. If there are any items of concern for the student, in addition to submitting the form, the student is encouraged to reach out to the program DGS.

ADVISORY MEETING:

You are encouraged to meet with both the DGS and Program Coordinator informally at least once per year. This is a good way of getting an "outside perspective" on progress, programmatic issues, and getting some additional career advice. In addition, it allows program leadership to stay abreast of each student's progress and to offer help or advice as needed.

ANNUAL UPGG STUDENT RETREAT:

Students are expected to attend and participate in the yearly retreat, organized by a committee of students and held over a weekend usually in fall at either the beach or the mountains. **The retreat is a privilege extended to the students and is intended to provide the UPGG student community with an opportunity to showcase student research projects and progress, as well as to strengthen scientific and social interactions amongst the group.**

Format of the retreat: The retreat includes several scientific sessions composed of multiple 15-minute talks given by students ranging from all years in the program (with the exception of first year students). Social activities are interspersed among the scientific sessions. The retreat is an excellent opportunity for the first year students to become acquainted with the larger student body and vice versa. The student committee typically will invite three faculty members to attend the retreat. These can be either **new or established** UPGG faculty members with whom the students wish to become more familiar or to have additional interactions.

OTHER RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

PREPARING FUTURE FACULTY: This is a part of a national initiative to help prepare students for an academic career. Students must apply to the program as only 25-30 fellows are accepted each year and preference is typically given to students who have already taken a teaching class. Requirements include mentorship, site visits, workshop attendance, self-evaluation, and teaching portfolio.

CERTIFICATE IN TEACHING BIOLOGY: This program is part of the Biology Department and has a goal of enhancing professional development for a variety of academic careers. Requirements include mentorship, coursework, practical teaching experience, teaching evaluation, and teaching portfolio.

TEACHING IDEAS WORKSHOPS: These workshops range in topics from active classroom learning to technology in the classroom. They are offered throughout the academic year and usually require advance registration. Pay close attention to emails throughout the year as the program administrator often sends out information about these opportunities.

COURSEWORK**:** There are numerous teaching courses available at Duke. Some are offered only in the spring or fall so plan accordingly.

CERTIFICATE IN COLLEGE TEACHING: This program requires coursework, teaching experience and observation, and an online teaching portfolio.

CENTER FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION: For those students who are interested in engaging the community in science education, the center provides resources and advice for designing and implementing outreach projects.

Duke Graduate School https://gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development/programs

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE:

It is important to remember that your ultimate goals in graduate school are: 1) to complete an independent and significant body of research, 2) to become a knowledgeable scientist and lab citizen, and 3) to prepare yourself for the next steps in your career. For the third step, you should constantly challenge yourself to think of what your desired next steps will be and how best to prepare for them well ahead of time, and participate in professional development activities that will prepare you for this next step (networking, workshops on jobs in academia, industry internships, etc.). Each year, please complete an individual development plan (IDP) form:

https://careerhub.students.duke.edu/resources/individual-development-plan-idp-template-for-biomedical-phds/

and upload this to the T3 record associated with your annual committee meeting. Make sure that you discuss your career plans with your committee during each annual meeting.

For those who choose to follow an academic career path, you should present your research at national and international conferences, which presents an opportunity to meet scientists in your field(s) of interest. Beginning in the 4th year, students should take the initiative to identify and contact potential postdoctoral mentors. Setting one's future plan (postdoc, teaching, other career choice) should be done **one year** before the intended graduation time, hence allowing sufficient time to formulate and develop competitive postdoctoral fellowship proposals (e.g., NIH, NRSA). It is not unreasonable, and is in fact encouraged, to have a postdoctoral position /post-graduation employment lined up 6-9 months prior to graduation. You should talk OFTEN with your PhD advisor, committee members, and the DGS for guidance in both identifying potential postdoctoral opportunities and how best to take advantage of them. The 4th year committee meeting is an excellent time and setting to discuss future plans with 4-5 well-established scientists who all have gone through this process themselves. Some of these individuals may be willing to write letters of reference, so establishing a plan sooner rather than later demonstrates a student's longer-term vision (at least for the next 3-4 years).

If you are seeking a career in industry, you should also make many contacts and seriously consider how your research relates to the mission/aims of the industry you seek. Students may find the Duke Career Center https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/ to be a valuable resource for discussing and developing one's transition from graduate school to the workforce.

FINAL YEAR IN THE UPGG PROGRAM

Most students complete and defend their thesis research between years 5 and 6. The expectation is that most UPGG students will graduate in 5.5 years. The Graduate School rule is that the thesis defense occurs 2-4 years after the preliminary exam. Graduate credits have a time limit; those students still in the program 6 years past the date of the prelim are required to re-enroll in classes. This is a Graduate School requirement to which all training programs must adhere. The effective completion of one's PhD work is the oral defense and submission of final dissertation. There are several rules that must be followed well in advance of the defense date, as outlined below:

REQUIREMENTS TO GRADUATE WITH A PHD FROM UPGG:

Credits: Completion of a minimum of 30 credits, 24 graded credits and all UPGG required coursework.

Final committee meeting: By the start of the 5th year, students should have had a final committee meeting in which the committee has evaluated the student's progress and given approval for the student to begin writing the thesis document.

Publications: In order to graduate students must have a minimum of one 1st author manuscript of **original and scholarly** work published (or *in press)* in a peer-reviewed journal. Review articles (even if peer-reviewed) do not count towards this requirement. *The manuscript must be officially accepted and/or in press before the committee can give a student permission to schedule the student thesis defense.* Knowing this requirement, students should aspire to publish before the 5th year and should discuss publications regularly with their advisors. Publications reflect your productivity and make you a strong candidate for the next step in your career.

In rare circumstances, prolonged manuscript review may potentially inhibit the progress of the student towards their degree. In such extraordinary circumstances, students can apply for an exemption to the publication requirement to their thesis committee. Students should NOT schedule a defense in these circumstances without permission from the Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies.

To apply for a defense scheduling without a publication, the student should submit a letter to the chair of the thesis committee requesting a review of the submitted manuscript by the thesis committee. This is exceedingly rare. If the thesis committee agrees that the manuscript represents a publishable piece of work, and that the review process is impeding the students' progress towards a degree, then a brief statement from the committee chair describing the thesis committee's findings along with the student's description of the circumstances should be

submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies. The UPGG leadership team will review the documents and determine whether an exemption to the publication requirement is warranted.

Committee chair: The thesis advisor ***does not*** serve as chair of the final examination committee. At least two months before your final exam, your final exam committee must be approved by the Graduate School, even if it is the same committee you had for your prelim. This form (located on the UPGG website under "Commonly Used Forms") is submitted by the Program Coordinator and DGS and approved by the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. As with the preliminary exam, please remember this is not an instantaneous process, so please submit this paperwork an additional month ahead of time.

Required Forms: To make sure you are ready to defend, please review the UPGG pre-defense checklist (located on the UPGG website under "Commonly Used Forms"). A form titled "Intention to Receive Degree" form must be submitted to the Graduate School in January, for the May commencement, in July for September commencement, and in November for December commencement. However, these deadlines can change without warning, so please consult the Graduate School Bulletin. The necessary form is online (https://gradschool.duke.edu/academics/preparing-graduate) If you do not graduate at the anticipated time, there is no penalty. However, you must submit a new form for the next commencement date. This form is submitted via the web. ** Please, SEND A NOTE OR EMAIL to the UPGG Program Coordinator indicating that you have submitted your commencement form. **

Scheduling the defense: Please contact the DGSA two months prior to your dissertation so that we may arrange a time and location for you. The UPGG admin will help with the scheduling your defense and with distributing information about it to UPGG students and faculty. If you joined UPGG from another admitting program (e.g. DSCB or MSTP), please notify the UPGG program office at least one month prior to your seminar so that we may confirm that all requirements have been met. ***At least two weeks before your defense***, you must 1) have your advisor initiate the milestone in T3, 2) confirm your title with DGSA, and 3) upload the electronic copy of your dissertation into T3 and ProQuest.

Please note that you must be an enrolled and active student in the semester in which you graduate. Thus, if you do not make the deadlines set by the Graduate School for the fall semester, even if you defend the beginning of December, you must be enrolled in the Spring semester in order to officially graduate. The deadlines for the Graduate School are early. Please plan ahead.

WRITTEN DOCUMENT/THESIS:

Students are required to give committee members a complete draft of the dissertation **three weeks ahead of the defense date**. This allows the committee members enough time to

read the entire dissertation and to contact you with major changes to the document that can be addressed in a revised document before the defense. Ensure that the dissertation is submitted to the advisor and committee for comments, and then to both T3 and Pro Quest electronically before the defense. Some revisions may occur afterwards but it will save you time if you have some of these changes in hand before the defense so that revisions can be easily attended to in the week between the defense and re-submission of the revised document. Bear in mind that proper planning can alleviate much of the stress that inevitably leads up to the thesis defense. Format of document: The Graduate School has a booklet called "Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations" https://gradschool.duke.edu/academics/theses-and-dissertations which sets forth requirements concerning the dissertation format (page layout, type style, footnotes, etc.), submitting the dissertation for preliminary approval, binding, copyright procedures, etc. **In addition, UPGG leadership has requirements and expectations for the content of the written thesis document. The general outline is as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction. This should include background information that is relevant to the subsequent data chapters. In general, it should define the research area, the research problem, the gap in knowledge, and summarize the main points of the thesis.

Chapters 2+: Data. These chapters should describe the distinct studies that make up the body of thesis research. These chapters are often from published papers. While the published document can provide a framework for the chapter, the student should ensure that figures follow the formatting and numbering of the thesis. In addition, sufficient background, justification, and experimental detail that might not be included in a published paper should be included in the thesis chapter(s) so that committee members can thoroughly evaluate the work.

The title pages of the chapters that are linked to published papers should indicate the publication somewhere on the page. Doing so highlights that the work was reviewed and deemed acceptable by the scientific community and also highlights other co-workers who might have contributed to the study. Since the thesis is an evaluation of a student's body of research, it is important for a student to emphasize in the thesis chapters the work s/he did herself versus that done by collaborators.

An example of a chapter title page that includes published data is provided below:

Chapter 2: Analysis of Centromeric Activity in Robertsonian Translocations: Implications for a Functional Acrocentric Hierarchy
Chapter 2 was modified from a manuscript (of the same title) published in Chromosoma 103: 459-467 (1994). The authors were Beth A Sullivan, Daynna J Wolff, and Stuart Schwartz.

Last chapter: Discussion and Future Directions. **The last chapter of the thesis document is not to be an afterthought, and in fact, is one of the most important chapters of the**

entire thesis. The Discussion/Future Directions chapter is the place in which the student puts their thesis work in a broader biological/medical/translational context and expands on the future possibilities for the work. This chapter should easily be more than 10 pages (double-spaced) and should reflect the imprint of the student's own thoughts. What are the implications of your work to your specific field and more importantly, to biology in general? How have you contributed a vertical step in knowledge to the field? If you could stay in the lab for 5 more years, describe the next experiments you would do. What would be the predicted results of those experiments, what would they mean, and in which direction could that then lead the project?

ORAL PRESENTATION/DEFENSE:

All UPGG students are required to give a dissertation seminar. This seminar is open to the public. A "closed session" with the committee begins after the seminar.

Format of the dissertation seminar: The dissertation presentation should be conducted as a **professional seminar** in which the student presents their thesis research, including background, gap in knowledge, goals of the thesis, experimental approaches, and resulting data. Importantly, rather than presenting the data as a laundry list of experiments, the student should strive to tell a scientific story. What was the research question, how did you test the question (or existing paradigms), interpret the results, and how does your data fit into existing or new models? Students should view the dissertation seminar as a way to showcase their growth into a more mature scientist, public speaker, and scientific communicator. The defense seminar is typically scheduled for one hour, whereby the student presentation lasts approximately 45 minutes with 15 minutes for questions.

* Students should keep in mind that the public thesis defense is a seminar presentation to be conducted in a professional manner, similar to a postdoctoral job talk. However, the program recognizes that the acknowledgment section for this presentation may be expanded to also include friends and family. As a guideline to maintain an overall sense of professionalism, the thesis acknowledgments made during the public defense should not exceed 3-5 minutes. Please note that additional acknowledgments can also be made at celebrations occurring after the seminar and defense.

Oral (private) defense: Questions asked on the final examination should concern the candidate's dissertation and related matters. The examination is oral and normally extends for two hours, but not more than three. After the examination, the candidate will be excused from the room, and the committee will discuss the dissertation, oral presentation, and answers to questions both in the public and private defense. **After the completion of the final examination the committee will complete the evaluation**

within T3 and an average score of 4 or better is required to pass.
Assuming all members score appropriately and the student passes, the results will be sent through T3 to the DGS for approval. Once the approval is complete the Administrative Coordinator will send the exam card to the graduate school.

AFTER THE DEFENSE:

Forms: T3 will generate a signed final examination certificate. This will be sent to the graduate school.

Revisions to the document: The student then has the lesser of **30 days** or **until the semester deadline** to complete all corrections for the dissertation. If the committee requests additions or changes to the document, revision deadlines should not be used as an excuse to submit an incomplete or unsatisfactory document. Remember, giving the document to the committee 3 weeks before the defense date will provide ample time to receive and make major changes to the written document.

OTHER INFORMATION:

TERMINAL MASTER'S DEGREE:
In the event that a student leaves Duke or UPGG before completing the Ph.D., a Terminal Master's Degree may be an option.

1. The regulations in the Graduate School Bulletin on "Degree Regulations--The Master's Degree," and "Additional Master's Regulations" will apply. Note, although there is no specified number of course units required for the Ph.D., the A.M and M.S. program requires a minimum of 30 units of degree credit, at least 24 of which must be graded coursework, and the preliminary examination or a final examination administered by the student's A.M or M.S committee.

2. Forms
    a. Committee approval form
    b. Intention to receive degree form. This form is online through the Graduate School
    c. Thesis format--see the requirements in the booklet "Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations."
    d. Final examination certificate--signed by your committee members and returned to the graduate school after the exam.

CHANGING LABS:

Success in a research lab rests on the interests, motivation, and abilities of the student in addition to interactions between the student and advisor. Occasionally, a change is desired on the part of the student or the faculty mentor or both. The reasons for changes are variable and typically, after the fact, all parties agree that changes were for the better.

Faculty and/or students must inform the DGS and the Program Directors as soon as possible of the desire for a change in research lab, even prior to making a firm decision on the matter. **Confidentiality will be assured.** * We would especially request that the person initiating the change (student or faculty) inform us prior to discussing it with the other. * This allows us to actively participate in the process from the start, should that be determined to be the best course of action. We can help guide the previous mentor, the future mentor, and the student in the process. The sooner the UPGG leadership is informed of potential issues or a desire to change labs, the better, as this will allow us to present all available options to the student and the mentor.

UPGG leadership wants to support the students *and* the faculty during those rare occasions when a change is requested. When a student informs the administration ahead of time of concerns or problems, the leadership can be of much more help and offer as many solutions as possible for a given situation. If a lab change is made, you must complete a new affiliation form and submit it to the Program coordinator.

<u>STUDENTS TRANSFERRING FROM OTHER PROGRAMS</u> (e.g., DSCB, MSTP) WHO AFFILIATE WITH UPGG:

If you entered Duke Graduate School through non-degree granting programs, you will need to affiliate with a degree-granting program/department at the end of your first year. If your PI is affiliated with UPGG, you have the option to join UPGG. To join UPGG, you must complete the application form (before September 1st of the 3rd semester) and schedule an in-person interview with the DGS. If you are accepted into the program after this, you must fill out a Thesis Lab Affiliation Form (found on the UPGG website, other program websites, or with the Program Office of your specific program), have it signed by your advisor, the UPGG DGS, and the chair or business manager of the PIs department.

It is necessary that you fulfill ALL of the UPGG requirements described elsewhere in this handbook (but see below). As a result of this rule, you may have to take classes in your second and third years if previous classes taken in the other umbrella program did not cover the material in required UPGG courses. It is a good idea to review your transcript with UPGG's DGS when you meet to have them sign your Affiliation Form, to ensure that you have everything in order.

There are only a few exceptions to the above: those who join UPGG after the first year *from other programs* are not required to take UPGEN 701 or 700 (these courses are for 1st year UPGG students only). Enrollment in UPGEN 716 and UPGEN 750 is not required for third year or later, but students are strongly encouraged to attend the seminars. Students should be aware

that they will be called upon to present their research in UPGEN 716, starting in the 2nd year until they graduate. Enhancing students' public presentation skills is a major training goal of UPGG. Throughout your graduate career, the original of all future documents (Committee Approval Form, Prelim form, Committee Meeting evaluations/reports, etc.) should be given to the UPGG office. A copy of these forms will be provided to your departmental program office if necessary. Moreover, do not forget to complete the requirements of your original program (example: attending certain seminars).

All students who transfer from other programs are expected to meet the performance expectations, requirements, and deadlines of UPGG. This includes selecting one's committee, scheduling the preliminary exam, and adhering to other UPGG guidelines and requirements. At the end of your second year, your funding will transfer from your program's funding to one supported by your lab. Contact your program coordinator for information about this new source of funding. It is your responsibility to set up your payroll through your department.

UPGG STUDENT BODY COMMITTEE:

Mission Statement:

The student body has a primary commitment to academic performance and scientific productivity, but it also participates in organizing UPGG student activities. The student body leadership operates under the purview of the graduate program leadership and communicates directly to the program coordinator, program director, co-director, and DGS.

Description and Role of Student Body Leaders:

All leadership positions will be filled at the "Annual UPGG Student Body Meeting" at the beginning of the new school year in the fall.

The following are some of the current activities for which leadership opportunities are available:

1. Recruitment
2. Annual Retreat
3. GPSG representatives
4. Distinguished Lecture Series
5. DOinGG
6. A/V Committee
7. UPG750 (Tuesday seminar committee)
8. Social Events (Opening Picnic, Christmas Party)
9. Curriculum Committee
10. DEI&A Committee

INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Services for International Students:

1) International Office:

This office will process your I-20 Certificate of Eligibility. **The I-20 or the DS-2019 is issued only *after* you have been offered admission, returned the on-line enrollment form, provided verification of the necessary funds, and returned the Request for Temporary Visa Form.** If you are an international student currently attending a U.S. institution and planning to transfer your visa to Duke, your current school must transfer your visa record to the Duke University International Office. It is your responsibility to submit the request to their current school. Only one visa eligibility form will be issued per student. Once you arrive on campus, you will have to register with the International Office. There is usually a mass registration at the end of the Graduate Student orientation, and you should be ready to present all your documents at that time. (You should get information directly from them regarding what is needed). This is also the office you would have to contact in case you want to go back home for a visit. You will have to get your I-20 stamped from them, prior to your visit. You can visit their website: https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/international-students

2) International House:

This is **different** from the office, and helps you to settle into your new surroundings socially. The people working here are really helpful, and will guide you about housing, groceries, banks, phones, cars, driving permits, taxes, getting a SSN and ITIN (see below) etc. Attending the special orientation for new International Students, a few days before the Graduate School orientation, is highly recommended. Additional information can be found at their website: https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/ihouse

3) Finances

If you are an international student, you will be paid for the first two years by a fellowship from the Graduate school directly, and *not by NIH training grants*. However, you will receive exactly the same amount of pay (gross) as your fellow students. In the subsequent years, you will be supported by TA-ships/ project grants from your lab.

4) Applications to be filled:

1) When you enter, you will need to file for an "International Tax Payer's ID number (ITIN)". This is required for you to receive any payment, and is especially meant for international students on a non-compensatory income (such as a fellowship). This can be done at any major bank, such as the main branch of Wells Fargo on Broad Street or the Duke Federal Credit Union on Main Street. You can **contact the International House**, or visit their website, for queries. This will be valid for your first two years.

2) After your second year, once you are on the payroll of your laboratory, you will have to apply for a "Social Security Number (SSN)". For this you will need to visit the Social Security office, along with the required documents. The International House also arranges trips, and you can visit their website for details.

***5) Taxes**:*

Taxes will be deducted at source for all the payments you receive from the graduate school. Certain countries have treaties with the US, and these students will not pay tax. If you are eligible for no taxes, you should contact the Bursar's office and file for exemption. However, if you do pay taxes, you will file tax returns at the end of the academic year. ***You can contact the International House, or visit their website, to learn more about this process.***

Other Important Information:

Health Insurance: It is mandatory for all students on a F1 / J1 visa to be under the Duke Health Insurance scheme. This will be covered by your fellowship. You will have to accept this scheme on Duke Hub.

Vaccinations: Remember to get all your immunizations, and fill them online prior to arrival. You will NOT be allowed to register for classes on Duke Hub if this is incomplete.

Contact Duke Health for any queries about the immunizations. See also: https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/health-and-wellness

Updated 5/21/2024