



CMB • SINCE 1975

CMB HANDBOOK 2024-2025

WELCOME TO CMB!

FROM THE 2024-2025 CMBO LEADS

Dear incoming CMB students,

Welcome to Duke University! We are thrilled that you have chosen to join us as a PhD student in Cell and Molecular Biology program. CMB allows you to access a uniquely wide range of research topics and labs, and consequently attracts an exciting array of scientists from diverse research backgrounds. We can't wait to get to know each of you as you begin your graduate careers! As upper year students, we're also available to provide you with information about student life and advice on how to navigate through graduate school throughout your first year. Congratulations on your matriculation!

On behalf of CMB students,

Sophia Link and Floyd Rubonal (CMB Class of 2023)

FROM THE CMB DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Dear 2024 CMB Class,

Welcome to the Duke and CMB families! We're thrilled that you've chosen to join us. Starting a Ph.D. is a major milestone and an important step towards an exciting and fulfilling career as a scientist. As a CMB student, you have the freedom to explore labs across the University, so we encourage you to take full advantage of this and to think outside the box when choosing your rotations. Acclimating to the demands of graduate school might be daunting at times, but we believe in you and are completely confident that you will flourish at Duke. We're here to support you through this journey and to make sure you're successful. As the Director and Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) for our program, we're here to help you navigate life at Duke. To start, this handbook will be an important resource to help you thrive in CMB, and we're looking forward to seeing you all during the program orientation to help you begin your journey. Over the next two academic years, we'll also meet regularly in the CMB 764 colloquium class, and we'll have regular faculty and peer advising sessions in your first year at Duke. We'll also be following your progress through your rotations and will help you find your best lab home and Ph.D. mentor. Our doors are always open! Please don't hesitate to e-mail us if you have any questions or would like to set up one-to-one meetings. Congratulations and welcome to CMB!

Sincerely,



Mike Boyce, Ph.D.
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Department of Biochemistry
Nanaline Duke 208
michael.boyce@duke.edu
Web: <http://www.boycelab.org>
Twitter: @BoyceLab

Stefano Di Talia, Ph.D.
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Twitter: @ditalialab

LETTER FROM THE CMB PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Incoming CMB Students,

Welcome! I am excited to begin the new year with your class! I am here to assist you through your time at Duke and will work closely with you as you complete your rotations and affiliation. I will serve as a resource for you to answer any questions and serve as a liaison with the Graduate School and other agencies within Duke. I look forward to working with you!

Thanks,



Jodi Belanger
Administrative Coordinator jodi.belanger@duke.edu
919-452-2568

PROGRAM CONTACTS

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Jodi Belanger
Administrative Coordinator
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** **Note:** Mike is the primary point-person for CMB cohort matriculating in fall 2024. Feel free to contact Mike or Stefano with any questions.*

OFFICE OF BIOMEDICAL GRADUATE EDUCATION (OBGE) AND GRADUATE SCHOOL CONTACTS

Office of Biomedical Graduate Education Home page:

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/degree-programs-and-admissions/office-biomedical-graduate-education>

OBGE Contact page:

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/office-biomedical-graduate-education/contact-obge>

OBGE

Duke University School of Medicine
1260 MSRB-III | 3 Genome Court
Box 103855
Durham, NC 27710
obge@duke.edu

Graduate School Home page: <http://www.gradschool.duke.edu>

Graduate School COVID-19 information: <https://gradschool.duke.edu/student-life/pandemic-related-information-graduate-school-students>

Graduate Admissions

415 Chapel Drive
Box 90065
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 684-3913

Graduate Financial Aid

415 Chapel Drive
Box 90061
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 681-3247

Graduate Student Affairs

2127 Campus Drive
Box 90070
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 684-2056

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

CMB is strongly committed to promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) at all levels in the biological sciences. We strive to provide a safe and welcoming atmosphere for all students, faculty, and staff, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual or gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, nation of origin, political opinion, or other dimensions of identity. ***CMB does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any type by students, faculty, or staff.*** The STEM community at Duke values all our members and our broad spectrum of human experiences, and we aim to create an open environment that supports and enriches learning opportunities for everyone.

For more information on EDI programs and resources, please visit:

Graduate School Commitment to Diversity

<https://gradschool.duke.edu/about/commitment-diversity>

Office of Institutional Equity <https://oie.duke.edu>

School of Medicine Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

<https://medschool.duke.edu/about-us/equity-diversity-inclusion>

School of Medicine Multicultural Resource Center

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/health-professions-education-programs/learning-environment-well-being/multicultural>

School of Medicine IDEALS (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Advancement, and Leadership) Office

<https://medschool.duke.edu/about-us/diversity-and-inclusion/ideals-office>

CMB and Biochemistry education and support resources for racial justice

<https://tinyurl.com/yajo65gg>

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CMB INCOMING STUDENTS 2024

If you are interested in finding a roommate in the program, including upper-year students, you can contact Jodi Belanger (jodi.belanger@duke.edu). She will forward your e-mail to other students who may also be looking for roommates. You may receive emails from Jodi about upper-year students looking for roommates as well.

FIRST YEARS

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	E-MAIL
Mennatallah	Abbas	Mennatallah.abbas@duke.edu
Konstantina	Akritidou	Konstantina.akritidou@duke.edu
Jake	Hira	Jake.hira@duke.edu
David	Lee	David.a.lee@duke.edu
Yechan	Moon	Yechan.moon@duke.edu
Isaac	Nelson	i.nelson@duke.edu
Quyen	Nguyen	Quyen.nguyen@duke.edu
Meredith	Stewart	Meredith.c.stewart@duke.edu
David	Tanner	David.a.tanner@duke.edu
Duc	Tran	Duc.tran@duke.edu
Andrew	Wang	Andrew.y.wang@duke.edu

SECOND YEARS

LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	E-MAIL
Anicka	AbiChedid	anicka.abichedid@duke.edu
Olivia	Conway	olivia.conway@duke.edu
Sabrina	DeStefano	Sabrina.destefano@duke.edu
Erin	Dickert	erin.dickert@duke.edu
Catharine	Dietrich	Catharine.dietrich@duke.edu
Boya	Gao	boya.gao@duke.edu
Alexandria (Lexie)	Hiestand	lexie.hiestand@duke.edu
Tyler	Lee	tyler.m.lee@duke.edu
Sophia	Link	sophia.link@duke.edu
Gabriel	Mesa	gabriel.mesa@duke.edu
Daniel	Panken	Danny.panken@duke.edu
Brenda	Pardo Loredo	Brenda.pardo@duke.edu
Sooyeon (Soo)	Park	sooyeon.park@duke.edu
Lauren	Parker	lauren.parker@duke.edu
Makenzie	Parmenter	Makenzie.parmenter@duke.edu
Floyd	Rubonal	floyd.rubonal@duke.edu
Mason	Schmidt	Mason.schmidt@duke.edu
Joshua	Silva	joshua.silva@duke.edu
Emily	Troutman	emily.troutman@duke.edu
Sydney	Versen	Sydney.versen@duke.edu
Zihan	Wang	zihan.wang@duke.edu
Jialin (Charlie)	Wu	charlie.wu@duke.edu
Yang	Yu	yy274@duke.edu

IMPORTANT EVENTS AND INFORMATION

COVID-19

*The COVID-19 pandemic, and the University's response to it, continue to evolve. The below information is current as of mid-August but may change. You will be kept informed by CMB, OBGE, the School of Medicine, and the University. **Please monitor your Duke e-mail address carefully.** You can also find the latest updates at the Graduate School (<https://coronavirus.duke.edu/guidelines-requirements/>) and the University (<https://coronavirus.duke.edu/>).*

All students, faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to be fully vaccinated (including any boosters you are eligible for) against COVID-19. Surveillance testing is not currently required at Duke. However, testing is available on a voluntary basis for all students, faculty, and staff.

Currently, students are not required to wear masks at most University-owned facilities. Masks may be required in some patient-care and clinical settings. Anyone experiencing COVID19 symptoms should wear a mask, not report to work/class, and get tested as soon as possible. Everyone is welcome to continue wearing a mask even when it is not required – all members of the Duke community should respect each other's compliant mask-wearing choices. More information on COVID-19 policies and testing can be found at the following link:

<https://coronavirus.duke.edu/>

BIOTRAIN 750 (MANDATORY)

OBGE'S BIOTRAIN 750 is a mandatory, one-day orientation course for all biomedical graduate program first-years on Monday, August 19 from 8:30 to 12:45 in the Trent Semans Center. Breakfast, coffee break snacks, and lunch are provided. OBGE will send complete schedule information to your e-mail. You should have registered for BIOTRAIN 750 already. If you have not, please register immediately using this [site](#): OBGE provided further details via e-mail to you on June 8.

CMB ORIENTATION (MANDATORY)

Mandatory CMB orientation will occur in person in Nanaline Duke 384 at 1:15 PM on Monday, August 19 in Nanaline Duke 384. We'll welcome you to Duke, do an icebreaker, provide CMB-specific information and answer any questions you have.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ORIENTATION

The Graduate Student Affairs office in the Graduate School organizes an orientation to provide new students with valuable information about University policies and resources. Optional but highly recommended! The Graduate Student Orientation Handbook can also be a useful future reference, providing information about student life, health insurance, and other topics. Graduate School orientation will be held Tuesday, August 20 from 10:00

to 12:00 and will be conducted online (see <https://gradschool.duke.edu/event/orientation-information-session-new-masters-and-phd-students/>). A graduate student resource fair will be held from 12:30 to 2:00 on August 20 at Brooks Field at Wallace Wade Concourse (see <https://gradschool.duke.edu/event/new-graduate-student-resource-fair/> and <https://maps.duke.edu/?focus=177>). The complete orientation schedule and updates can be found at: <https://gradschool.duke.edu/events/orientation-week/>

CMBO PONYSAURUS SOCIAL AND PEER ADVISING

CMBO (Cell and Molecular Biology Organization, a peer advising/support group within CMB led by second-year students) will host an optional social event at Ponysaurus (<https://www.ponysaurusbrewing.com>) from 5:30 to 8:30 on Thursday, August 22 and optional, drop-in, student-only peer advising for entering first-years on Wednesday, August 21 from 2:00 to 4:00 in Nanaline Duke 437. Upper-year CMB students will be on hand to discuss classes, rotations, adjusting to life at Duke and anything else. Contact the CMBO leads, Sophia and Floyd, with questions. .

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT ORIENTATION

The Duke International Student Center (DISC, formerly known as IHouse) offers programming and orientation activities for international graduate students. For details, check the DISC home page: <https://students.duke.edu/belonging/icr/disc/>

CMB PROGRAM ADVISING MEETINGS (MANDATORY)

Each CMB first-year will meet individually with Mike, Stefano, Jodi, and several other program faculty in **mandatory** meetings on Wednesday through Friday, August 21 through 23, to discuss your courses, rotations and any other questions you have. These meetings are casual and are purely for your benefit and to help you have a great start at Duke! Jodi will send scheduling details to your Duke e-mail.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

The purpose of the **required** Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training throughout graduate school is to discuss the principles of academic integrity, professional conduct, research ethics, and career development in science. BIOTRAIN 750, mentioned above, is the first RCR requirement at Duke.

Like all biomedical Ph.D. students, CMB students will take additional RCR courses throughout their time in graduate school. For complete information, see the OBGE RCR website: <https://gradschool.duke.edu/professional-development/programs/responsible-conduct-research/>

As an additional source of optional training in the related areas of rigor and reproducibility in research, see the NIH Reproducibility Training (<https://oir.nih.gov/sourcebook/ethical-conduct/responsible-conduct-research-training/instruction-responsible-conduct-research-postdoc-irta-crta-vf-research-0>) and NIGMS Clearinghouse of Training Modules

(<https://www.nigms.nih.gov/training/pages/clearinghouse-for-training-modules-to-enhance-data-reproducibility.aspx>) websites.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The University's 2024-2025 academic calendar is available here:

<https://registrar.duke.edu/2024-2025-academic-calendar/>

COURSEWORK AND REQUIREMENTS

***Important note:** In May 2022, CMB converted from an admitting-only program to a full degree-granting program. Students matriculating in fall 2022 and thereafter will remain in the degree-granting CMB program and receive a Ph.D. in Cell and Molecular Biology. Required courses for the CMB degree program are outlined below, and complete information on CMB courses, the prelim exam, thesis defense, and other topics is available in the CMB bylaws. **Please read the bylaws carefully.** Keep in mind that courses and requirements have changed with the degree-granting conversion, so some information you hear from advanced upper-year CMB students may not apply to you. Always feel free to ask Mike, Stefano, or Jodi when you have any questions.*

Coursework in CMB is designed to complement and extend your prior training while emphasizing hands-on, original research. You are required to register for all chosen courses each semester, including the core courses. **Registration occurs in DukeHub (<https://dukehub.duke.edu>) and can be accessed with your NetID and password.** Registration for the fall has concluded and classes will begin on Monday, August 26. Add/Drop for the fall semester is ongoing and ends Friday, September 6. Courses will be in-person and at normal (pre-pandemic) density within the classroom. Masking in class is optional.

All CMB first-years must enroll in the following three **fall 2024** courses:

Research 1-01 (1 ungraded credit/semester)

This is an ungraded class that provides credit for your lab rotations. CMB added Research 1-01 as a requirement in fall 2020 because the course satisfies any applicable US Immigration and Customs Enforcement requirements for international students to enroll in an in-person or hybrid course.

CMB 710 (1 graded credit/module)

Modular CMB core course (fall semester, first year). First-year students typically choose six modules, and each module runs two weeks. You must register for each module individually (one credit each). CMB students must take **six total modular credits** before graduation, up to two of which can be from the University Program in Genetics and Genomics (UPGG) modular course UPGEN 778. You may take both CMB and UPGG

modules during the same two-week period as long as the course meeting times do not overlap. The listed background reading should be completed for each module prior to the start of class. The list of fall 2024 modules has been sent to all CMB students and will be posted on the CMB program web site:

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/program-cell-and-molecular-biology/cmb-curriculum>

CMB 764 (2 ungraded credits/semester)

CMB 764 is a colloquium course that is required in the first and second years. This DGS-led class meets every Monday, during which a third-year student previews the upcoming Thursday Seminar given by a distinguished visiting scientist, and a fourth- or fifth-year student presents their own research. Some weeks will also feature presentations and discussion on topics in mentoring, equity/diversity/inclusion and professional development in science. **Attendance and participation are mandatory.**

In **spring 2025**, you must enroll in the following three courses:

Research 1-01 (1 ungraded credit/semester; see above)

CMB 764 (2 ungraded credits/semester; see above)

CMB 720 (3 graded credits)

CMB 720 introduces students to current techniques in several areas of cell and molecular biology, including light microscopy, mass spectrometry, genomics, cell biology, genetic engineering and advanced cell culture. Each area will provide an overview of key experimental approaches and will present examples of data acquisition, analysis and interpretation that will be complemented with problem solving and/or in-depth review by the students.

In **fall 2025**, you must enroll in the following course:

BIOTRAIN 720 (3 graded credits)

BIOTRAIN 720 is a grant-writing course for biomedical research students. Participants prepare an NIH-style grant proposal on their own research and refine the proposal based on peer review feedback and mock study sections composed of students and faculty. BIOTRAIN 720 builds strong science communication skills and provides excellent preparation for the CMB preliminary qualifying exam.

Beyond these required courses, CMB students have the freedom to choose from classes taught in the School of Medicine basic science departments and elsewhere to fulfill the total graded credit requirement for CMB. **All students should plan to complete 24 graded credits by the end of their second year (average of 6 graded credits per semester).** Note that Research 1-01 and CMB 764 do not provide *graded* credits. While only six CMB 710 and/or UPGG 778 modules are required, more can be taken for elective

credit. Lists of basic and biomedical science courses from across Duke are available here: <https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/office-biomedical-graduate-education/academics/basic-biomedical>

A special note about CMB/Neurobio/BME 733, “Experimental Design & Statistics for Basic Biomedical Scientists”: This popular class, taught by Professor Ted Slotkin, currently has a multi-semester waitlist. If you’d like to take the class *at any point during graduate school*, Professor Slotkin requests that you e-mail him as soon as possible so that you can be added to the waitlist: t.slotkin@duke.edu. Dr. Slotkin can advise on the earliest possible openings.

CMB curriculum at a glance (from the CMB bylaws):

Course	Description	Credits/hrs	Semester
CMB 710: Cell and Molecular Biology Modules	Six modules required, up to two of which can be replaced with UPGEN 778. Additional modules can be taken if desired.	6 graded	Fall Y1
CMB 720: Modern Techniques in Cell and Molecular Biology	Experimental design and statistics; microscopy; analysis of proteins and metabolites; analysis of nucleic acids, etc.	3 graded	Spring Y1
BIOTRAIN 720: Grant Writing for Biomedical Sciences	Development and writing an NIH-style research proposal; peer and faculty critique of the written proposal	3 graded	Fall Y2
Elective courses	Fulfilled with additional modules or full semester courses	12 graded	Y1-Y2
CMB 764: Seminars in Cell and Molecular Biology	Held weekly with DGS; paper discussions, research presentations, mentoring, EDI, professional development	4 ungraded	Fall/spring of Y1 & Y2
Research 1-01: Laboratory Rotations	At least three 8-week rotations	2 ungraded	Fall/spring of Y1
BIOTRAIN 701	RCR (Responsible Conduct of Research)	4 hours	Fall Y1

BIOTRAIN 751	RCR	4 hours	Spring Y1
BIOTRAIN 753	RCR	3 hours	Y2-Y3
BIOTRAIN 754	RCR	4 hours	Y4
RCR forums	Two must be completed before graduation		

BOOKS

No books are required – most courses are taught from research papers and other primary sources. However, *Molecular Biology of the Cell* by Alberts may be useful for your CMB 710 assigned reading and background information. If you don't already have a copy of Alberts, upper-year students may be willing to lend you one. E-mail Sophia and Floyd (the CMBO leads) to ask for borrowing opportunities before purchasing a book.

ROTATIONS

During the first year, you must rotate in at least three research labs, and most CMB students choose to do four or five rotations. The purpose of rotations is to give you the opportunity to try out a lab and see if it will be a good fit for you and for your dissertation research. During each rotation, you will learn different scientific topics and techniques, meet new people and get a feel for the projects and working environment in each lab.

Rotations in AY24-25 will be eight weeks, starting and ending on the following dates:

- 1) August 26 to October 18
- 2) October 21 to December 13
- 3) January 6 to February 28
- 4) March 3 to April 25
- 5) April 28 to June 20

Rotations are in-person. Changing rotation dates is allowed **ONLY** under extraordinary circumstances and with express permission from Mike or Stefano.

How do you find a rotation lab? To start, check out the CMB faculty directory for descriptions of faculty research interests:

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/program-cell-and-molecular-biology/cmb-faculty-directory>

CMB faculty can also create online videos describing their research and labs, which students can view any time through the Trainee Tracking Tool (T3) platform, developed by OBGE: <https://obge.lollet.com/accounts/login>. You can log into T3 using your NetID and password to browse faculty research descriptions, mentoring philosophies and rotation availability and to view faculty videos.

CMB offers a great deal of options in choosing your dissertation lab. Once you find labs that you're interested in, e-mail the principal investigator (PI) to begin a conversation about rotations. It's a good idea to schedule in-person or video meetings with multiple PIs to discuss rotations before you decide – you may not be interested after talking with someone. To make this clear, you can say in your initial e-mail that you'd like to meet because you're discussing potential rotations with a small number of PIs who interest you. **In your conversation, be sure to ask whether the PI plans to accept students permanently into her/his lab this academic year before you commit to a rotation.**

Although you should plan your first rotation now, many students prefer to wait until later in the first semester to commit to a second rotation or beyond because your interests may change as you meet new students and faculty and are exposed to new areas of science. For more information on choosing a lab, see "Considerations of a Rotating Student..." written by CMB students, at the end of this document, and refer to the guidelines and advice from OBGE. Always feel free to talk with Mike, Stefano, Jodi or CMBO leads to discuss rotation strategy.

At the beginning of each rotation, you'll be required to complete a short registration form about the lab and a brief description of your rotation project in T3. The purpose of this registration is to make sure the expectations of the student and PI are aligned with respect to rotation projects and responsibilities. At the completion of the rotation, a confidential evaluation form must be filled out in T3. Your comments about the PI and lab will be visible to the Director and DGS but *not* the PI. CMB leadership appreciates your candid feedback about your rotation experiences.

Important: You are strongly encouraged to rotate only in labs affiliated with CMB. If you want to join a non-CMB lab for your dissertation research later, either the PI will have to join CMB (requires an application and service duties), or you will have to transfer out of CMB into another graduate program, which may trigger additional course and prelim requirements.

CMB SYMPOSIUM

The annual student-organized CMB Symposium is a day-long scientific conference, planned and executed as a component of CMB 764. All first- and second-year students are required to participate in the Symposium. Each year, first-years are divided into teams to pitch potential Symposium topics and propose sample speakers and formats. The

Symposium topic is chosen through a friendly competition, in which each team presents its idea to the CMB community, and the audience votes. After the topic is selected, the entire cohort plans the Symposium together, and it occurs in the next academic year. Attendance by CMB students at the Symposium is **mandatory during the first two years** and strongly encouraged thereafter. This year's Symposium topic is "Novel Cancer Therapeutics: Beyond Cut, Poison, Burn," scheduled for November 21, 2024.

CMBO

CMBO is a student group that runs a series of student-led, informal, social and advising events designed to acclimate incoming students to graduate school and life in Durham. CMBO attendance is expected (and required for recruitment-centered meetings), as it is a great way to learn the ropes of the program, get advice on scheduling and joining labs and broaden your social and scientific network. The current CMBO leaders are second-year students Sophia Link (sophia.link@duke.edu) and Floyd Rubonal (floyd.rubonal@duke.edu).

RECRUITMENT

Participation in CMB interviewing and recruitment events is **mandatory for all first- and second-year students**. In AY24-25, we expect to hold virtual interviews in January/February and in-person campus visits for admitted applicants primarily in March (precise dates to be announced). Interviews and recruiting visits are designed to give prospective graduate students a sense of what it's like to be in CMB and to allow applicant assessment by current faculty and students. These events highlight the exciting research opportunities offered by CMB and provide recruits with ample time with faculty and current students. Student roles may include serving as a one-on-one Zoom or campus guides for interviewees as they meet with faculty and attending group activities. The current recruitment committee roster is: Anicka AbiChedid, Olivia Conway, Erin Dickert, Boya Gao, Lexie Hiestand, Tyler Lee, Sophia Link, Gabe Mesa, Soo Park, Floyd Rubonal, Joshua Silva, Emily Troutman, Charlie Wu, Yu Yang, Natalie Thomas and Huarui Zhou. Interested first-year students can volunteer to serve on the recruitment committee for additional responsibilities. More information about the logistics of recruitment will be discussed during the **mandatory** CMBO recruitment meeting in January.

INTERNSHIPS AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

From OBGE: If you are considering a future summer internship ***after passing your prelim exam and with the support of your PI***, plan to enroll in 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 Ph.D. students to explore specializations and career paths

outside academia and prepare them to make more informed career 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 Ph.D., and provide tools and skills to navigate the process of finding and successfully completing an internship as part of the Ph.D. course of study.

Course Schedule: Last six weeks of Fall or Spring semesters (Thursday mornings in the Fall or Tuesday mornings in the Spring)

Course Credit: 1 Semester Hour

Registration: DukeHub

Questions: Contact Kristin Russell in OBGE (kristin.russell@duke.edu)

VACATION

Graduate students at Duke are allowed 12 business days of vacation time per year, in addition to designated University holidays (see <https://gradschool.duke.edu/policies-forms/duke-graduate-school-student-time-policy/>).

Any additional time off during your first year must be discussed with and approved by the Director or DGS. An extended absence may result in temporary withdrawal from the Graduate School, with re-admission according to their guidelines. Graduate student schedules are tied primarily to the lab, not the classroom, and lab work often continues even when classes are not in session. While you're doing rotations, any planned vacation time should be discussed with and approved by both your PI and your Director or DGS. Once you join a lab, vacation plans must be discussed in advance and approved by your PI according to her or his lab-specific policies.

STIPEND

Paychecks are issued on the last working day of each month. Stipends are typically paid via direct deposit (i.e., automatically deposited in your bank account). Jodi can assist with any questions about direct deposit paperwork and other payroll matters.

The stipend for first years will be distributed over a period of 13 months instead of 12, so that incoming students can be paid earlier and not have to wait for a month after arriving in Durham. As a result, your monthly stipend will be slightly higher in your second year and beyond, in which the same total dollar amount is distributed over a period of 12 months.

CMB and Duke cannot provide specific tax advice to individual students, but the following general information may be useful. Graduate student stipends are **taxable income**. Graduate students are 1099 non-compensatory for the first year, while you're being paid through institutional funds. After the first year, you'll be classified as a W-2 employee and will be paid through your lab. **Duke Payroll will not withhold taxes from your**

paychecks unless you file the appropriate paperwork. If you want to choose withholding, be sure to complete and submit both the NC-4 and W-4 Forms (“Employee’s Withholding Allowance Certificate”) as soon as possible. These and other tax forms will be accessible to you when you join a lab and begin receiving W-2’s via the secure Duke@Work web site

(<https://work.duke.edu/irj/portal/MyInfo>). Be sure to double-check your first few pay statements to verify that taxes are being withheld correctly. If not, it may be necessary to resubmit your forms. Jodi can assist with questions or concerns about withholding.

These web sites offer additional useful information and general advice about money and taxes:

Duke Financial Services

<https://finance.duke.edu/payroll/tax>

Personal Finance@Duke

<https://personalfinance.duke.edu>

The Graduate School Financial FAQs

<https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/financial-faqs>

Duke International Student Center Living Essentials

<https://students.duke.edu/belonging/icr/disc/living-essentials/>

PARKING

Students who wish to park on campus must register for a permit from the Parking Office.

HOW TO REGISTER

Information for registering for a graduate student parking permit can be found here:

[Graduate & Professional Student Permits | Parking & Transportation | Duke.](#)

Most CMB students park in the Science Drive Garage. Students previously could join waitlists for the Research Drive garage that is closer to the research buildings on the School of Medicine campus, but this is no longer an option. The cost for the annual permit for graduate students is currently \$273. The link above provides the necessary information and links to access your parking account to be able to purchase permits.

AFTER-HOURS PARKING

After hours (5:00 pm - 6:59 am) on weekdays and all day on weekends, any Duke parking permit will give you access to almost all campus lots and garages. If you purchased a parking permit for any lot, it will also work as your after-hours permit with no additional

registration necessary. If you decide not to purchase a parking permit, you can still park for free after hours but only in certain lots and you must register on the Duke parking website. Information and instructions on the after-hours permit are available here:

[After-Hours Permit \(Night Permit\) | Parking & Transportation | Duke](#)

ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION METHODS

BIKE COMMUTERS

Many people bike to campus. If you decide to do so, you can register as a bike commuter to receive benefits, such as two free parking passes per month for days that you have to drive. The link below has a helpful map provided by parking services that designates bike-friendly roads around campus. Bike racks are available outside most buildings on West Campus and showers are available in several buildings on campus.

[Bicycling | Parking & Transportation | Duke](#)

CARPOOL PASSES

Duke encourages carpooling by offering discounted parking passes and priority lots for those who register as carpool commuters. Details can be found here:

[Carpool | Parking & Transportation | Duke](#)

BUS PASSES

Students can get a free GoPass from Duke, which allows for unlimited rides on all GoTransit buses in the area, including GoDurham, GoTriangle, and GoRaleigh. For information on Duke and municipal bus systems, see: <https://parking.duke.edu/buses>

MOTORCYCLES AND MOPEDS

If you ride a motorcycle or scooter to campus, you can purchase a parking pass for significantly less than parking passes for cars. This pass allows you to park at any bike rack on campus or other designated motorcycle/scooter parking locations. Visit [Motorcycles & Mopeds | Parking & Transportation | Duke](#) for details.

DUKECARD

The DukeCard is your student ID card and will allow you to enter buildings on campus, the gyms, attend sporting events, and can help you access parking if you hold a permit. For more general information about DukeCard, including the mobile version on your smartphone, visit <https://dukecard.duke.edu>. Most campus buildings are locked after 6:00 pm during the week and all day on the weekends, and most School of Medicine buildings are locked 24/7. The mobile version of DukeCard will not provide access to School of Medicine buildings; therefore, always carry your physical card with you.

There is an option to use your DukeCard as a flexible spending account, allowing you to purchase food on campus free of tax. Duke also provides a DukeCard printing allowance of 2 cents/page, with a \$35 limit per semester. Printing is available in the Perkins Library, the Medical School Library, and any e-print station on West Campus.

In addition to providing on-campus benefits, a DukeCard can come in handy for getting discounts at some local grocery stores and other businesses. For example, Harris-Teeter offers a 5% discount after registering at the listed locations (<https://www.harristeeter.com/pr/college-rewards>) and The Fresh Market offers a 10% discount at some of their stores. Many other local businesses provide student discounts, so be sure to ask!

STUDENT HEALTH, HEALTH INSURANCE, AND IMMUNIZATIONS

Home page: <http://www.studentaffairs.duke.edu/studenthealth>

INSURANCE

Every student at Duke must have medical insurance. Duke sponsors the Student Medical Insurance Plan (SMIP, BlueCross BlueShield), and the Graduate School will pay your premiums for SMIP. If you prefer, you may acquire your own private medical insurance separately. However, you must provide proof to the Bursar's Office that you are covered by an adequate policy. The Graduate School will pay a modest stipend supplement (~\$600) if you waive the SMIP by September 14, 2024. For more information, see <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/studenthealth/health-insurance>.

As of fall 2022, graduate students also receive dental insurance. For information and updates, please see: <https://gradschool.duke.edu/financial-support/medical-and-dental-insurance/#:~:text=Duke%20provides%20a%20dental%20insurance,D>

IMMUNIZATIONS

June 15 was the deadline to submit immunization documentation forms. If you have not done so, it is *vital that you submit forms as soon as possible*. If proof of immunization is not properly submitted, your enrollment may be blocked or delayed. See: <https://students.duke.edu/wellness/studenthealth/immunizations/>

It's strongly recommended that you be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, including any boosters you are eligible for. For information on free vaccines and to check your Duke vaccination record status, see <https://covidvaccine.duke.edu>.

In the fall of each year, Duke offers flu shots free of charge to all students and staff. All students and workers in all School of Medicine departments are required to receive annual flu vaccines and everyone else is strongly encouraged to do so. For details, visit <https://flu.duke.edu/vaccination>.

WELLNESS RESOURCES

Duke offers outstanding recreational facilities, and CMB students are encouraged to take advantage of these, as virtually any form of exercise promotes well-being and a relief from daily stresses. Facilities and opportunities, in addition to traditional gym resources, include aquatics, group fitness classes, personal training, intramural sports, outdoor adventures and sports clubs. The Graduate School pays for Ph.D. students' access to Duke recreational facilities during their first five years of study. See <https://recreation.duke.edu> for more information.

The Student Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/wellness>) is located in the heart of the Duke Campus. The Center provides individual and group outreach services and serves as a hub for information on wellness. It also provides resources for drug education and harm reduction, as well as sex education. Within the Student Wellness Center are Student Health Services, DuWell, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), DukeReach, Nutrition Services, a pharmacy, a dental office, a mindfulness garden, and other resources. Many services are also available online (see individual web sites below for details).

Student Health Services (<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/studenthealth>) provides a wide range of health care services, and many of these are covered by the student health fee. It can serve as the primary care physician for students and, if needed, provide referrals to specialists in the Duke Medicine network. Additional services include an allergy clinic, an international travel clinic, laboratory work, nutritional services and physical therapy.

DuWell (<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/duwell>) promotes individual wellness through a holistic approach that integrates many areas of life: financial, social, spiritual, intellectual well-being, mind-body, and environmental. DuWell sponsors many “Moments of Mindfulness” classes and activities that include Koru mindfulness, guided meditation, tea ceremonies, drum circles, paint nights, tai chi, yoga, and more. Koru mindfulness (named for the Māori word for an unfurling fern frond, which symbolizes balanced growth) deserves special mention as an evidence-based program that was developed at Duke specifically for students. The program teaches mindfulness and meditation as effective way to manage stress and anxiety.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/caps>) has a staff of over 20 and manages issues that are best addressed in collaboration with a trained mental-health professional. Services are covered through the student health fee and include confidential assessment and individual, group and couples

counseling and therapy. An initial assessment can be done on a walk-in basis, and recommendations are made as to whether continued treatment at CAPS, at another Duke resource, or in the community is most appropriate.

DukeReach (<https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/dukereach1>) is a good starting point if students are unsure of where to turn for health, well-being or safety resources, either for themselves or for fellow Duke students. DukeReach also provides services for faculty, staff, parents or peers who are concerned about the well-being of a student. Case-management services include coordination, advocacy, referrals, and follow-up services for students experiencing difficulties related to physical health, mental health and/or psychosocial adjustment. Resources are available during regular business hours and a dean-on-call is available in the case of emergencies.

Blue Devils Care (<https://app.timelycare.com/auth/login>) is a no-cost mental telehealth service (TalkNow) that is available for students 24/7. This resource provides immediate access to a qualified mental health professional to discuss a wide range of issues, such as stress, anxiety, depression and grief and loss.

Coaching: OBGE offers free wellness and professional development coaching to all biomedical Ph.D. students. This form of coaching is about the whole person: your values, goals, work, balance, fulfillment, and life purpose. Any concern that gets in the way of achieving optimal well-being is the perfect subject for beginning coaching (for example: stress, exercise, rest, communication, relationships, writing your thesis, career planning, physical space, professional development). Coaching effectively motivates and supports goals through a structured partnership between the client and coach. The licensed OBGE coach helps individual students develop and realize their optimal vision through inquiry, personal discovery, and accountability. Many students have said it helps just to be able to talk things through. For general information on OBGE wellness resources, see <https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/office-biomedical-graduate-education/trainee-development/o2>. For coaching services, see <https://medschool.duke.edu/education/biomedical-phd-programs/office-biomedical-graduate-education/trainee-development/obge-phd>

GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDENT GOVERNMENT (GPSG)

The Duke Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG) is a great resource for graduate and professional students throughout their time at Duke. GPSG has forums and classified ads (a good place to look for housing) on their website, organizes numerous committees across campus and hosts frequent social events. The GPSG website is a great resource: <https://gpsg.duke.edu>. **CMB is looking for a representative to GPSG for the 2024-2025 academic year!** If you're interested, contact Mike, Stefano, Jodi or the

CMBO leads. Additionally, any graduate or professional student is welcome at GPSG meetings.

GRADUATE STUDENT UNION

In August 2023, the National Labor Relations Board held an election to determine whether Duke Ph.D. students who hold teaching and/or research appointments (including CMB students) wish to be represented by the Southern Region Workers United (SEIU) labor union. A majority of the ballots were cast for union representation, and since that time, a team from the university has been meeting regularly with a team from the SEIU and participating Ph.D. students to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. At the time of this writing (August 2024), the collective bargaining agreement is not finalized. More information on the graduate student union will be provided during the Graduate School's orientation session on August 20 – another good reason to attend!

MEN'S BASKETBALL SEASON TICKETS

In past years, GPSG has hosted a **Campout** over a weekend in September or October (2024 details are still to be announced), where, graduate students camp out in tents or RVs for the weekend to enter a lottery for basketball season tickets. Usually, CMB students form a large group to enter the lottery together, then share any tickets they win after successful completion of the weekend. Please refer to the below websites for details and updates on the 2024 Campout as they become available.

<https://basketball.gpsg.duke.edu>

<https://goduke.com/sports/2022/9/20/student-tickets-mens-basketball.aspx>

HOUSING AND RECREATION

HOUSING

These web sites may be useful in finding local housing options:

<https://www.nearduke.com/housing>

<https://dukelist.duke.edu/>

(Like Craigslist for Duke student/employees, with housing opportunities, furniture and other needs.)

www.apartmentratings.com

www.apartmentguide.com

THINGS TO DO

Some ideas for exploring Durham and the Triangle!

<https://www.brightleafdurham.com/>

*Restaurants and shops in downtown Durham

www.americantobaccohistoricdistrict.com

*Restaurants, concerts, etc. in downtown Durham

<https://www.ncparks.gov/eno-river-state-park/home>

*Eno River is the state park in north Durham

www.streetsatsouthpoint.com

*Nearby mall

<https://www.discoverdurham.com/>

*Official visitor and newcomer information site

<https://twitter.com/carpedurham?lang=en>

*Info about restaurants and bars in Durham

www.dpacnc.com

*Durham Performing Arts Center website. This venue is the largest in Durham for all sorts of great performing arts shows. Be sure to look for student or group deals too.

<https://www.fullsteam.ag/>, <https://www.bullcityciderworks.com/>,
<https://www.motorcomusic.com/>, <https://urbanaxes.com/durham/>,
<http://theboxcarbar.com/durham/>, etc.

*Various bars in downtown Durham

SPORTS

www.milb.com/durham

*Home of the Durham Bulls baseball team

www.nhl.com/hurricanes/

*Official site of the Carolina NHL hockey team

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A ROTATING STUDENT – THOUGHTS, OPINIONS, AND ADVICE FROM CURRENT AND FORMER CMB STUDENTS

The most important decision students make their first year of graduate school is choosing a thesis lab. Thinking carefully about all aspects of your personality, interests, goals and work habits throughout each rotation will help in making an informed decision as to which professor and lab will provide the best fit for your graduate training. Most CMB students choose to do four or five rotations, and you should not hesitate to do more than three if it will help you to find the best lab for you. It is better to take your time to find the right lab than to rush to join a lab that is a bad match for you or to switch labs later. The following are three major areas a student should consider during rotations.

PROFESSOR

The professor or principal investigator (PI) is a significant source of influence for their students. The PI will help you design your thesis project and shape the scientist you will become. During the rotation you and the PI should develop an understanding for each other's expectations upon joining the lab. Carefully consider any potential concerns that may develop during your rotation in the lab and discuss these issues in advance of joining. Below are some points you may want to consider.

1. What is the PI's mentoring style? The student should examine their own personality/experience/work style and find a PI whose mentorship style works well with the students. Different labs will be good fits for different students.
2. How much freedom does the PI allow a student in designing their own thesis project and experiments?
3. How accessible is the PI? Is the PI often away, providing little opportunity for facetime?
4. What is the PI's view on work-life balance? How does the PI administer the Graduate School's vacation policy for Ph.D. students?
5. Does the PI encourage participation in activities outside bench work in which a student may be interested? For example, taking non-required courses, teaching assistantships, or extracurriculars.
6. How does PI manage the lab environment? Can they recognize and solve interpersonal conflicts?

LAB ENVIRONMENT

The atmosphere of your lab environment is very important, since this is the place where you will spend the majority of your time while in graduate school. Make sure it is a place where you can be happy and productive. However, do not put too large an emphasis on the current lab members, as these people will turn over as you progress through your degree. Questions to ask yourself include:

1. Are you interested in the area of research?
2. How big is the lab?
3. What resources (tech, equipment, funding, etc.) are available?
4. Do you get along well with the people in the lab?
5. What is the “lab spirit?”
6. Is there collaboration both within the lab and with other labs?
7. How are the relationships between the PI and current lab members?
8. Is the PI’s mentoring style suited for you (i.e., hands-on vs hands-off, frequent meetings, etc.).

YOUR FUTURE

You need to make sure that the lab you choose will prepare you well for your chosen future career. Some points to consider include:

1. Is the lab accepting graduate students? How many? Sometimes PIs allow rotations even though they are not going to have space or funds to recruit students that year. It’s a good idea to ask PIs whether they expect to accept permanent students into their lab this year **before** you agree to a rotation.
2. Can the lab fund you and your research?
3. Is the PI willing to help you apply for your own fellowships, if you are eligible?
4. Is your professor tenured or untenured? This can affect the mentoring style of a PI.
5. What is the average time to graduate from the lab? National average is ~5-5.5 years.
6. What kind of jobs/post-doc positions have lab alumni received?

Remember, talking to other graduate students in the lab, or previous rotation students, is one of the best ways to get a feel for the lab. However, these are individual experiences and opinions and cannot always be generalized. Try talking to multiple people about their experiences, and then filter that information through your own individual perspective, strengths, weaknesses, preferences, goals, etc. In addition, feel free to discuss your concerns with your CMB program Director and DGSs, as they have a longstanding memory about the program and know first-hand which labs students have thrived or struggled in. Good luck!

SECOND-YEAR LABS AND AFFILIATIONS

Affiliation labs are in **bold**.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Email</i>	<i>First rotation</i>	<i>Second rotation</i>	<i>Third rotation</i>	<i>Fourth rotation</i>	<i>Fifth rotation</i>
Anicka AbiChedid	Anicka.abichedid@duke.edu	Nicole Calakos	Nick Heaton	Kris Wood	Chris Counter	
Olivia Conway	Olivia.conway@duke.edu	Beth Sullivan	Chantell Evans	Li Lan		
Erin Dickert	Erin.dickert@duke.edu	Don Fox	Zhao Zhang	Beth Sullivan		
Boya Gao	Boya.gao@duke.edu	Li Lan	Ashley Chi	Zhou Lee		
Lexie Hiestand	Lexie-hiestand@duke.edu	Stefano Di Talia	Steve Haase	Bradley Goldstein		
Tyler Lee	Tyler.m.lee@duke.edu	Lucia Strader	Xinnian Dong	Sheng-Yang He		
Sophia Link	Sophia.link@duke.edu	Ming Chen	Terry Lechler	Huanghe Yang		
Gabriel Mesa	Gabriel.mesa@duke.edu	Nicole Calakos	Kris Wood	Chris Counter		
Soo Park	Sooyeon.park@duke.edu	Xinnian Dong	Lucia Strader	Sheng-Yang He		
Lauren Parker	Lauren.parker@duke.edu	Nenand Bursac	Howard Rockman	Andrew Landstrom	Ravi Karra	
Floyd Rubonal	Floyd.rubonal@duke.edu	Chantell Evans	Debby Silver	Ravi Karra		
Josh Silva	Joshua.silva@duke.edu	Dan Kiehart	Don Fox	Matt Hilton		
Emily Troutman	Emily.troutman@duke.edu	Mari Shinohara	John Rawls	Maria Ciofani		
Zihan Wang	Zihan.wang@duke.edu	Raluca Gordan	Ken Poss	Purushothama Rao Tata		
Charlie Wu	Charlie.wu@duke.edu	Jeremy Kay	Jorg Grandl	Andrew West		
Yang Yu	Yy274@duke.edu	Masa Onishi	Xiaoping Zhong	Xiao-Fan Wang	Xunrong Luo	

AGREEMENT TO TERMS & CONDITIONS OF CMB HANDBOOK AND CMB BYLAWS

By signing, I affirm that I have read and understood the information outlined in **both** the CMB Handbook **and** the CMB bylaws, and I agree to the terms and conditions laid out.

Please sign this page and return it electronically to the Administrative Coordinator (Jodi Belanger, jodi.belanger@duke.edu) by 5:00 PM on Friday, August 23.

Printed name

Signature

Date