

University of Alabama at Birmingham

**CELL BIOLOGY
GRADUATE PROGRAM**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK
2008/2009**

CELL BIOLOGY
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2008/2009

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DESCRIPTION

The Department of Cell Biology is an active research unit at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The main goals of our Department are to sustain our excellence in research and graduate training, as well as to provide outstanding professional teaching. The research success of individual faculty members in our Department is reflected by the recognition that they have received both nationally and internationally. The faculty publish in highly respected peer-reviewed journals, and many serve on editorial boards and scientific study sections. Current funding in the department is over eleven million dollars. The primary and secondary faculty members are enthusiastic participants in the core Cell and Molecular Biology (CMB) first year graduate program and in the first year Graduate Training Program in Neuroscience for incoming graduate students. Graduate students may enter the Cell Biology Department through either of these feeder programs or the M.D./Ph.D. program, or alternatively through direct admission to the Cell Biology Graduate Program with appropriate faculty sponsorship. The Department of Cell Biology currently has 70 graduate students.

Cell Biology Faculty are housed in several research buildings that include the McCallum Basic Health Sciences Building, Tinsley Harrison Towers, Volker Hall, and the Kaul Human Genetics Center with a combined laboratory space exceeding 40,000 square feet. The laboratories are well equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, and are in close proximity to the Lister Hill Library. As a service to the scientific community at UAB, the Department of Cell Biology provides first-rate core capabilities in electron microscopy, light microscopy, and digital image analyses.

Cell biology has entered a new era in which recently developed techniques are rapidly beginning to unravel the basic principles of cell function. The aim of the Graduate Program in Cell Biology is to prepare a new generation of investigators who will contribute to this progress. First-year students participate in the Cellular and Molecular Biology (CMB) Program, a unified laboratory research, lecture, and seminar program staffed by faculty from the Departments of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics, Cell Biology, Microbiology and Neurobiology, as well as several clinical departments of the School of Medicine. Other students enter the Cell Biology Program through either the M.D./Ph.D. Training Program or the Program in Neuroscience. The Cell Biology curriculum emphasizes (a) the multidisciplinary and quantitative aspects of modern biomedical sciences; (b) a diversity of laboratory research training experiences; and (c) the development of skills in scientific literature appreciation, writing, and speaking. Advanced students are primarily engaged in research, but also take courses and tutorials in specialized areas of interest, participate in seminars, and have opportunities to gain teaching experience while satisfying other requirements of their doctoral programs. Students carry out their research in state-of-the-art laboratories occupied by the faculty. In addition, the department maintains core laboratories for light and electron microscopy, microspectrometry, tissue culture, biochemistry, graphics, and computer analysis.

Faculty research interests include cell motility; immunopathology; cellular and molecular immunology; mechanisms of endocytosis; epithelial cell biology; structure and function of cartilage, muscle, and ocular tissues; structure of extracellular matrix and its impact on gene expression and involvement in human genetic diseases; cytokine regulation of gene expression; transmembrane signaling; structure and function of the cytoskeleton; neuroimmunology; neurobiology of sensory and motor systems; cardiovascular regulation; developmental biology; signal transduction and oncogenesis; and oncogenes and tumor suppressors.

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NEW GRADUATE STUDENT INFORMATION***Appointment***

Alex Boles, the department financial officer, will appoint you as a graduate student at UAB. Please make arrangements to meet with her upon your arrival to UAB (for direct admits) or upon transferring to Cell Biology (CMB, Neuroscience and M.D./Ph.D. students). A valid driver's license and social security card are required to complete your appointment papers.

Foreign Nationals

Upon arrival to the U.S., you should visit the Center for International Programs at UAB. They will provide you with a temporary social security number. Please provide your social security number, a valid passport, visa and I-94 to Alex Boles. You should apply for a permanent social security number as soon as possible. A copy of your permanent number should be presented to Alex Boles and Rene Eubank when received from the Social Security Administration.

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1918 University Boulevard
Telephone: 205-934-6590

Contact: Lisa Scott, Center for International Programs
Location: Hill University Center, Room 318
1400 University Boulevard
Telephone: 205-934-3328

Orientation

UAB provides orientation for all new students at the beginning of each Fall Semester. You will be notified by campus mail as to the date and time. It is imperative that you attend this orientation. Paychecks will not be issued if health insurance and tax information is not provided along with the appointment papers to the Payroll Department.

Health Insurance

Students are required to have health insurance, which is paid for by the mentor. You must go to UAB's Health Office and complete health insurance enrollment forms. If you currently have insurance, you must take verification of that policy to the Student Health Office for exemption from UAB's health insurance.

Contact: Brooke Tedder
Location: Community Health Services Building, Room 301
933 South 19th Street
Telephone: 205-934-3580

Payroll

W-2 and W-4 income tax forms must be completed at the Payroll Department. Direct deposit slips can also be obtained at this office. Alex Boles will provide you with an exemption form for city and state taxes. Your paycheck will be processed after all tax forms, health insurance and personnel appointment papers have been submitted.

Contact: Payroll Department
Location: Administration Building, Room 280
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UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

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RECORDS AND REGISTRATION

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CELL BIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CELL BIOLOGY

1. A mentor will be identified, usually during the summer following your first academic year at UAB. A Change of Program form can be obtained from the CMB, Neuroscience or Cell Biology Graduate Program offices. This must be signed by the Director of your current program, the Director of the Cell Biology Program and by yourself and brought to the Cell Biology Graduate Program office (MCLM 350).
2. In consultation with the mentor (and with the advice of the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director, if desired) the curriculum for the second academic year will be decided upon. In Fall and Spring semesters throughout the graduate program, the student will be required to enroll for a total of 12 hours including 1 hour of an appropriate journal club and 1 hour of Cell Biology Seminar. In the Summer term, the student should register for 9 hours. The remainder of the hours not mandated will include any make-up courses required, advanced courses, and either non-dissertation research (CB 798) (prior to passing your qualifying examination) or dissertation research (CB 799) (after the qualifying exam). The Graduate School requires that the student take a minimum of two terms after passing the qualifying exam before he/she can graduate.
3. The Cell Biology Department requires all of its students to achieve grades of "B" or better in all the CMB core courses (for those admitted through CMB or directly into Cell Biology) or in all the Neurosciences core courses (for those admitted through the Neurosciences program). Failure to complete this requirement by the end of the second year will be grounds for dismissal, although exceptional circumstances will be considered. Additional advanced courses that are appropriate for the student's goals are required (see below). The decision as to which courses would most benefit you should be decided upon in consultation between the student, mentor and/or committee.
4. All Cell Biology students must take three advanced courses, at least one of which should be offered by the Department of Cell Biology. Additional courses are not limited to those offered by the Cell Biology Department. In addition, it is required that all Cell Biology students remain an active participant in the departmental seminar series and a journal club through his/her graduate studies. The journal club need not be offered by the Cell Biology Department, but must be a registered course. It is also required that students take the course "The Principles of Scientific Integrity" (GRD 717). At some point after passing the Qualifying Exam, the student must also present data in the Cell Biology student seminar series.
5. In collaboration with your mentor, a committee responsible for judging your qualifying examination must be named during your second year. Provide the names of the committee members and a title for your research to the CB Graduate Program office. Shortly after the committee has been formed and approved by the Graduate School, an initial committee meeting must be held. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the student's research objectives, and to

decide if the student is ready to proceed with the qualifying examination. If the committee is in agreement that the student is ready, an approximate date for the qualifying examination should be agreed upon. The membership of the committee must include your mentor and at least four other graduate faculty members. Three of the five committee members will have primary or secondary appointments in Cell Biology. For those who entered through the Neurosciences program, at least three of the members must be affiliated with that program. The committee is subject to approval by the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director (Dr. Collawn) and Dean of the Graduate School (Dr. Noe).

6. The student must form his/her thesis committee by the end of their 2nd year in Graduate School. It's recommended that the qualifying exam be taken before the end of the 2nd year as well, but this will be left to the discretion of the mentor and the thesis committee as to whether or not the student is ready.
7. After passing the qualifying examination, the student must meet at least once a year with the dissertation committee. This committee can be the same as that for the qualifying examination, but can be changed, in consultation with the mentor. Notification of any changes must be sent to the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director, and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. The composition of the committee should be as above. The student should prepare a brief written summary to include specific aims (approximately 1 page), background (approximately 1 page) and work in progress (approximately 3 pages). In addition, the student should have an updated C.V. indicating publications and meetings attended as well as a copy of his/her most recent transcript. Copies of all of the above should be distributed to all committee members one week prior to the meeting as a basis for the meeting, and a copy forwarded to the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director following each of these meetings. The mentor must submit a brief summary of the major points arising from the meeting to the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director. These committee meetings are mandatory. It is especially important for the student to keep his/her committee members current on his/her research since the committee members, in conjunction with the mentor, will determine when the student is ready to graduate. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Cell Biology Graduate Program Office of the date of the committee meetings. This information is needed to track the student's progress.
8. If after completion of the qualifying exam and 3 advanced courses, a student can leave the Ph.D. program and obtain a master's degree in Basic Medical Science. This is not a degree from the Cell Biology program, but rather a degree from the graduate school, and is only awarded under unusual circumstances. Furthermore, this degree will only be awarded to students who have completed the above requirements, and who also have approval from the Cell Biology Chair, Program Director, mentor, and the thesis committee.
9. In general, a student should have two first-author publications (either in press or submitted) prior to the thesis defense. Exceptions to this rule may be justified by the thesis committee.

10. Once a student enters into a Cell Biology Laboratory (after completing the core curriculum) and officially becomes a Cell Biology Graduate Student, he or she will receive 5 years of support by the mentor. The stipend is not an entitlement and will be evaluated on a yearly basis for research progress and thesis committee evaluation. After 5 years (6 years total in graduate school), the student will have to petition their Graduate committee for an extension of their graduate stipend. Both the Graduate committee and Drs. Collawn and Benveniste will have to approve this extension. The extension will be for 1 year and must be re-approved each subsequent year. Obviously, this does not insure that the student will complete their thesis during this timeframe, but may mean that the student will have to complete their thesis work without benefit of a stipend. Exceptions to this rule include maternity leave or an extended illness. Those students that transfer to another laboratory during their thesis work would be evaluated based on the recommendations of their new thesis committee and with the approval of Drs. Collawn and Benveniste.
11. Rules for the final preparation of your dissertation and graduation requirements are available from the Graduate School and may be obtained from the Graduate School website under the UAB website (<http://main.uab.edu/>).
12. Once a “final” version of the dissertation has been completed, copies should be distributed to all committee members two weeks prior to a “private defense”. At that meeting, the dissertation will be defended by the student in an oral presentation. A form prepared by the Graduate School (available through the UAB website) should be requested at least five days prior to the defense. This form, signed by all committee members to confirm successful defense, must be copied to the Cell Biology Graduate Program Director. One copy should be retained by the student. A date will then be set for a public defense, which should be scheduled at the time of the Cell Biology Seminar on a Wednesday at 3:00 PM. Please check the schedule for Cell Biology Seminar, available on the UAB website under the Department of Cell Biology to determine available dates. Contact Maxine Rudolph (ext. 4-4182) to schedule the date for your public defense; then notify the Graduate Program Director’s office, which in turn will notify the Graduate School and arrange for publication of the defense. The Graduate School must be notified at least ten days prior to the public defense.

**PLAN I GRADUATE SCHOOL
GRADUATION DEADLINE DATES
FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING A THESIS/DISSERTATION**

The following dates are subject to change. Check this schedule each semester for any changes to the posted dates. Also check with your department. Some programs have earlier deadline dates for the application for degree.

SEMESTER	DIPLOMA DATE	DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION FOR DEGREE	LAST DAY FOR FINAL DEFENSE	DEADLINE FOR DOCUMENT SUBMISSION*
Spring 2008	May 3	January 25	March 28	2 weeks following public defense
Summer 2008	August 9	June 6	July 7	2 weeks following public defense
Fall 2008	December 13	September 5	November 7	2 weeks following public defense
Spring 2009	May 9	January 30	March 27	2 weeks following public defense
Summer 2009	August 8	June 5	July 6	2 weeks following public defense

*Request for Approval Forms must be submitted online no later than 10 days before your public defense date.

**It is your responsibility to submit your completed thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School for review no later than 2 weeks (10 working days) after your public defense. You do not need an appointment. Leave your completed manuscript and all required forms (included in the packet with your approval forms) with Jan Baird, HUC 511. Failure to meet this deadline may result in delayed graduation.

It is the student's responsibility to see that the above deadlines are met. Students cannot be cleared for graduation until all paperwork has been processed, all grades have been finalized, and all applicable fees have been paid: binding, copying, and if applicable, microfilming and copyrighting.

Note: Failure to meet these deadlines will require the filing of a "NEW" Application for Degree Form (reorder) and registration for course hours for the following semester. The new application for degree form (approved at the departmental level and submitted to the Graduate School) must be submitted by the deadline posted above.

**GUIDELINES FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION LEADING TO ADMISSION TO
CANDIDACY FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE
IN CELL BIOLOGY**

Before the end of the second year of graduate study each student will be given an examination, which, if passed, shall lead to his/her admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. This exam will consist of two parts:

- Part 1: A written proposal describing a detailed research plan. The student should formulate an original hypothesis, detail specific questions to be studied, provide preliminary data if available, and describe the general experimental approaches that will be used.
- Part 2: An oral examination during which the examining committee will question the student on the research proposal, and general knowledge in the broader areas of cell biology. Student should bring a copy of his/her latest transcript.

I. Timetable.

- i. During the second year of graduate school, each student must, with the mentor, have formed an examining committee. After approval of the committee by the Dean of the Graduate School, an initial committee meeting must be held shortly thereafter. At this meeting the student should present plans for the content and timing of the qualifying examination.
- ii. The student should plan to take the qualifying examination before the end of the second academic year. While it is recommended that students should take the qualifying exam by the end of the 2nd year, this will be left to the discretion of the mentor and the thesis committee. It is imperative, however, that the thesis committee be formed prior to the end of the second year.
- iii. Not less than two weeks prior to the examination, the completed research proposal should be submitted to each member of the examining committee. At this time, notification of the pending examination date and venue should be submitted to the Department of Cell Biology Graduate Program Director.

II. The Examining Committee

The student's research proposal will be judged by five faculty members, including the student's mentor. One of the committee members (not the mentor) will serve as the examining committee's chairperson. The faculty members serving on the committee will be chosen by the student in

consultation with his/her mentor and should be knowledgeable in the area of the research proposal. Of the five faculty, three should have primary or secondary appointments in Cell Biology. For those who entered through the Neurosciences Program, at least three of the members must be affiliated with that program. The other examiner(s) must be a member of the graduate school faculty at UAB.

Subject to approval by the Department of Cell Biology Graduate Program Director, it is also possible to include on the Committee an examiner who holds a comparable rank at an institution other than UAB.

III. The Written Proposal

The topic chosen for the research proposal may form the basis of (but is not limited to) the student's planned dissertation research. It is the responsibility of the student and the mentor to ensure that the proposal, although possibly drawing on the mentor's work, contains original thought and composition. The student is encouraged to obtain copies of actual NIH, or NIH-style, proposals written by members of his/her committee in order to learn what is expected in writing a research proposal. Students may also obtain copies of other students proposals for organizational information. This proposal shall conform to NIH R01 guidelines with regard to organization. In addition, the total length should be limited to 25 pages (including figures).

IV. The Oral Examination

The student will present an oral summary of the research proposal. This presentation should be no longer than 30 minutes in length, and should proceed without interruption. The student is permitted to use both prepared visual aids and the blackboard to illustrate important points of the proposal. After this presentation, the student will be questioned by each member of the committee (except the mentor) regarding the content of the proposal and general scientific knowledge relevant to the research area. The chairman of the committee will be the arbiter in determining the time and extent of each line of questioning. The mentor will not be an advocate for the student, who will be expected to respond independently to the questions raised.

V. Evaluation of the Examination

In order to pass the examination a student should have:

1. Identified a significant and original scientific problem;
2. Formulated a testable hypothesis;
3. Written a clear and concise experimental design that addresses the problem;
4. Defended his/her ideas orally in an effective manner before the examining committee;

5. Demonstrated an understanding of the background to the problem in its widest sense, including an ability to critically read and evaluate current scientific literature.

The student will be evaluated in three areas:

1. Quality of the written proposal;
2. Quality of the oral presentation;
3. Breadth and depth of knowledge in research area and relevant areas.

After the oral examination the committee will evaluate the student's performance, then reach a consensus to determine whether the student has:

1. Passed without condition;
2. Passed with condition; or
3. Failed the examination.

If the student has passed with condition, it is the responsibility of the committee to specify to the student the remedial conditions required for admission to candidacy. These may take the form of additional course work, a directed readings course with a faculty member whose expertise lies in an area of the student's identified weakness, more seminar courses to sharpen the student's oral presentation skills, or re-writing parts of the proposal. If the student fails the examination, another proposal examination may be scheduled by the committee but the decision as to whether or not a "failed" student is given the opportunity to be retested or is asked to leave the graduate program is the province of the examining committee in consultation with the Graduate Program Director in Cell Biology. The student is allowed to appeal a decision for dismissal to the Graduate Program Director and/or the Chairman of the Department of Cell Biology.

**Department of Cell Biology Graduate Program
Qualifying Examination Evaluation**

Student: _____
Mentor: _____
Date: _____
Committee Member: _____
Chair: _____

Evaluation of Qualifying:

A. Written Proposal

B. Oral Presentation

C. Breadth and Depth of Knowledge in Research Area and Relevant Areas of Cell Biology

Recommendation:

Pass

Pass with condition

Fail

Registration

Students should register for a total of 12 hours for the Fall and Spring terms and 9 hours for the Summer term. Memos regarding registration are sent to you each term approximately three-four weeks prior to the final day of registration. It is imperative that you register for your classes on time. If you know that you will be away during the class registration period, contact the Graduate Program Director prior to your leaving so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Late registration requires the signature of your advisor and the instructor of the class and cannot be done over the phone. If you do not register on time, FICA taxes will be deducted from your paycheck for the entire term.

GRADUATE CURRICULUM IN CELL BIOLOGY**(for CMB and direct admit students)**

YEAR 1	Fall	CMB 1: Biomolecules	CMB 713	4 h
		CMB 2: Genes	CMB 720	4 h
		CMB 3: Cells	CMB 730	3 h
		Methods and Logic	CMB 712	1 h
		Laboratory Methods (3 hr biweekly)	CMB 790	1 h
		Non-Dissertation Research (Direct Admit)	CB 798	1 h
	Spring	CMB Modules (Choose 1 Class per Module)		
		Module 1: (1/5/09 – 1/30/09)	CMB 4	3 h
		Module 2: (2/2/09 - 2/27/09)	CMB 5	3 h
		Module 3: (3/2/09 - 3/27/09)	CMB 6	3 h
		Module 4: (4/6/09 - 5/1/09)	CMB 7	3 h
		Non-Dissertation Research (Direct Admit)	CB 798	3 h
	Summer	Non-Dissertation Research	CB 798	9 h

APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT MENTOR**(for Neuroscience students)**

YEAR 1	Fall	Biomolecules	NEUR 700	4 h
		Genes	NEUR 701	4 h
		*Introduction to Neurobiology	NEUR 704	4 h
		Cells	NEUR 705	3 h

CELL BIOLOGY

	Lab Rotation I	NEUR 715	3 h
	Seminar I	NEUR 780	1 h
*Class is taught prior to Fall Semester			
Spring	Cellular & Molecular Neuroscience	NEUR 702	3 h
	Signaling	NEUR 703	3 h
	Integrative Neuroscience	NEUR 710	5 h
	Lab Rotation II	NEUR 717	3 h
	Seminar II	NEUR 781	1 h
Summer	Lab Rotation III	NEUR 717	10 h

APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT MENTOR

YEAR 2	Fall	Principles of Scientific Integrity	GRD 717	3 h
		Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h
		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	7 h
		Journal Club	_____	1 h
Spring		Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h
		Journal Club	_____	1 h
		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	___
		*Advanced Course	_____	___
Summer		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	9 h

APPOINTMENT OF GRADUATE COMMITTEE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION/ADVANCE TO CANDIDACY**

YEAR 3	Fall	Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h
		Journal Club	_____	1 h
		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	___
		*Advanced Course	_____	___
Spring		Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h
		Journal Club	_____	1 h
		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	___
		*Advanced Course	_____	___
Summer		Non-dissertation research	CB 798	9 h
YEAR 4	Fall	Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h

CELL BIOLOGY

	Journal Club		1 h
	Dissertation research	<u>CB 799</u>	10 h
Spring	Cell Biology Seminar	CB 747	1 h
	Journal Club		1 h
	Dissertation research	<u>CB 799</u>	10 h
Summer	Dissertation research	CB 799	9 h

*Students are required to take 3 advanced courses after the Fall Semester of their second year through the end of their studies.

**Students are required to give a Cell Biology Student Seminar after they have advanced to candidacy.

2008-2009 Academic CalendarFall 2008

Mar 31 - Apr 4	Early Assigned Time Registration
Apr 7 - Jun 1	Early Fall Registration
Jul 28 - Aug 1	Assigned Time Registration
Aug 4 - Aug 18	Open Registration
Aug 18	Book Discussion
Aug 19	Classes Begin
Aug 19	Financial Aid Disbursement
Aug 19 - Aug 26	Registration After Classes Begin
Aug 26	Last Day to Drop/Add
Aug 26	Last Day to Submit Undergraduate Application for Degree
Aug 28	First Payment Deadline
Sep 1	Labor Day Holiday
Sep 30	Final Payment Deadline
Oct 17	Last Day to Withdraw (Undergraduate)
Nov 26	No Classes Held
Nov 27 - Nov 30	Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec 3	Last Day of Class
Dec 3	Last Day to Withdraw (Graduate)
Dec 4	Weather Make-up Day
Dec 5 - Dec 11	Final Exams
Dec 13	Commencement
Dec 13	Diploma Date
Dec 16	Grades Available Online

Spring 2009

Nov 3 - Nov 7	Assigned Time Registration
Nov 10 - Jan 6	Open Registration

Jan 7	Classes Begin
Jan 14	Last Day to Drop/Add
Jan 14	Last Day to Submit Undergraduate Application for Degree
Jan 19	Martin Luther King Holiday
Mar 6	Last Day to Withdraw (Undergraduate)
Mar 8 - Mar 14	Spring Break
Apr 27	Last Day of Class
Apr 27	Last Day to Withdraw (Graduate)
Apr 28 - Apr 29	Weather Make-up Day
Apr 30 - May 6	Final Exams
May 9	Commencement
May 9	Diploma Date

Summer 12-Week Session 2009

May 11	Classes Begin
May 18	Last Day to Drop/Add
May 25	Memorial Day Holiday
Jun 22	Last Day to Withdraw (undergraduate)
Jul 3	Independence Day Holiday
Jul 30	Last Day of Class
Jul 30	Last Day to Withdraw (graduate)
Jul 31	Aug 6 Final Exams
Aug 8	Diploma Date

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION***Financial Aid***

Because the pursuit of the Ph.D. degree is a full-time activity, all Cell Biology graduate students are supported by stipends and do not have any mandatory teaching duties in the classroom or laboratory. Continuous registration and satisfactory academic standing during all terms is required. All students accepted into the program can expect to receive a stipend of \$25,000/year plus payment of all tuition, single-coverage insurance and fees. Students may not seek outside employment.

Department of Cell Biology Website

A great deal of information regarding the Department of Cell Biology may be obtained from our website located under the UAB website (<http://main.uab.edu>). Follow the path Departments/Academic/Cell Biology. Here you may learn about research interests of the faculty, see the schedule of the Cell Biology Seminar Series, obtain updates to this handbook and follow links that may be of interest to Cell Biology students.

Student Activities

The students themselves, some seven years ago, requested a seminar series of their own. Therefore, we have a once a month lunch time meeting, where a student presents a research seminar. The students learn presentation skills that they will need later in their careers. Attendance at this function is mandatory for all Cell Biology students. If there is a reason that you cannot attend a certain seminar, it is your responsibility to call the Program Office ext. 5-7145) so that your absence may be excused. It is mandatory for each Cell Biology student to give a seminar at least once in their graduate career; this is done after advancement to candidacy.

Cell Biology Seminar Series (CB 747) a class offered during Fall and Spring Semesters must be taken by all students after completing their first year core curriculum. The seminars are held each Wednesday, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM in BBRB170. Again, attendance is mandatory; excessive unexcused absences will affect your grade point average. A schedule of speakers is available at the Department of Cell Biology website.

Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The Graduate Student Association provides monetary travel awards for attending academic conferences, money for interlibrary loan requests. In addition, the GSA acts as a sounding board for student issues such as: Health Insurance, Parking, Campus Safety, and Career Services. All graduate students are welcome to attend the monthly GSA meetings that are held the first Wednesday of each month, 5 P.M., HUC Room 413. Call the GSA office at 4-4717 if you have any questions.

Lister Hill Library

Hours: Monday - Friday, open at 7:30 A.M. Monday - Thursday, closes at 11:00 P.M. Fridays, close at 7:00 P.M. Saturday, 8:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. and Sunday, 2:30 P.M. - 11:00 P.M.

Student Health

The Graduate Student Association and the Student Health Services (SHS) have compiled the following key information for the graduate/professional students who are covered under the SHS-provided medical center student insurance policy. This information is not meant to be comprehensive. Please consult the actual policy for details.

What to do if you get sick:

- ◇ Go to the SHS located on the 3rd floor of the Community Health Services Building, 933 South 19th Street. The hours are Monday - Friday, 8 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. with the preferred walk-in hours of 8-9 A.M. and 12-1 P.M. It is advisable to call in advance to make an appointment at 934-3580.
- ◇ Please note that all specialist referrals have to be issued from the SHS. There will be a \$10 co-payment for specialist visits.
- ◇ Call 934-3580. There is a physician on call 24 hours from Monday to Friday to give medical advice.

Emergency within Birmingham...

- ◇ Go to the UAB emergency room when possible.

Emergency away from Birmingham...

- ◇ Call SHS and ask for instructions.
- ◇ Please note that the insurance coverage is not as comprehensive outside UAB Medical Center; please refer to the policy for details.
- ◇ If the injury/sickness is not an emergency, we advise you to wait until you come back to Birmingham to see a SHS physician.
- ◇ Call 934-3580. There is a physician on call 24 hours from Monday to Friday to give medical advice.

If you get a bill or a letter from a collection agency...

- ◇ Open and read immediately. If you have a question, contact Ms. Brooke Tedder at SHS and bring the bill to SHS.

**Guidance for Graduate Program Staff and Directors concerning
Missing or Distressed Students**

1. a. Call and email the student with a request to reply as soon as possible*.
- b. Contact the student's mentor to determine if s/he has knowledge of the student's circumstances.

If no response -

Inform the Program Director if s/he is not already involved.

Call the student's emergency contact(s) and request that they contact the student and ask him/her to reply to the program as soon as possible*.

2. If the emergency contact reports that they are unable to reach the student and they have significant concern, they should be instructed to call the UAB police requesting that they contact the appropriate local police to visit the student's residence. They may need to provide information on the student's vehicle as well as address of residence.

UAB Police – 205-934-3535 (911 on campus)

UAB legal recommends that UAB faculty or staff should not personally go to the student's residence, due to concerns for the personal safety of faculty or staff or other potential liability issues.

The police have the responsibility to communicate further with the family depending on the nature of the outcome of the investigation. They may instruct the family to contact the local police department and/or the local fire department for further assistance if there is an urgent health concern. Depending upon the circumstances, the police may or may not communicate their findings with program staff in addition to the family.

3. If the emergency contact cannot be reached, UAB Police can be contacted for further assistance.
4. If it is reported that the student is found to be deceased or in distress, the Program Director should immediately contact:

a. Andy Marsch, 934-4175, marsch@uab.edu, Asst VP, Student Life (after hours contact 205-612-5569 via cell)

UAB police will also contact Andy if information is received by the agency that a student is missing or in distress.

Marsch office will contact (based on the specific situation):
Media Relations

Housing and Residential Life
Counseling and Wellness (after hours)
Disability Support Services, International Student and Scholars, etc
Risk Management, Legal Counsel, etc
Vice President for Student Affairs/Provost
Family member(s) as appropriate
Registrar's Office (in cases where student is deceased)

b. Counseling & Wellness Center, 934-5816; to offer grief counseling information to classmates as soon as practical

c. Bryan Noe, 975-8852, bnoe@uab.edu ; Dean, Graduate School

The appropriate Assoc Dean should also be notified as soon as practical or in Dr. Noe's absence:

Jeff Engler, 934-4734, engler@uab.edu ; Assoc Dean, Academic Affairs

Susan Rich, 996-4835, srich@uab.edu ; Sr. Assoc Dean, Life Sciences

5. The program should be in contact with the family to offer assistance as needed.

In the event of concern about students with apparently urgent mental health or suicide issues:
(for situations involving mental health that are not urgent, contact Counseling and Wellness)

1. If the student is on campus, someone (*faculty, staff or student, as appropriate to the immediate situation*) should take the student to UAB Hospital Emergency Room immediately. If the student is unwilling, or there is any reason to believe they will not be cooperative, contact the UAB police for further assistance.

UAB Hospital Emergency Room, North Pavilion
18 St South & 6th Ave (Walk-in Emergency entrance on 18th St S)
Also see [Map](#)

UAB Police – 911 (on campus) or 934-3535

2. The program director should call the ER and speak to the Psych nurse to explain the situation. The ER physician will assess the student and typically request an emergency psychiatric consultation.

UAB Hospital ER 934- 5105

3. If the student is not on campus, ask the student if there is a friend or family member who can come to get them at their residence or to meet them somewhere and transport to the ER. If the student is unwilling, contact UAB police for further assistance.

UAB legal recommends that UAB faculty or staff should not personally go to the student's residence, due to concerns for the personal safety of faculty or staff or other potential liability issues.

4. Follow the steps in #4 above.

Also see [*How to Deal with Distressed Students*](#), UAB Counseling & Wellness Center.

**** It is important for the program to have student's current email, phone and local home address and their emergency contact information on file, preferably including cell phone numbers.***
