Note: The policies and regulations in this handbook are in immediate effect and supersede those in previous versions.
# MSP STUDENT & FACULTY HANDBOOK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. **GOALS** .................................................................................................................. 4
2. **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** .................................................................................... 4
3. **LABORATORY RESEARCH ROTATIONS** .......................................................... 5
4. **COURSES** ............................................................................................................. 6
   A. Course Credit Requirements ............................................................................. 6
   B. Required Courses .............................................................................................. 6
   C. Exemptions from Requirements ....................................................................... 7
   D. Electives ............................................................................................................ 7
   A. Colloquia ........................................................................................................... 8
   B. Journal Clubs ................................................................................................... 8
   C. Sample Curriculum .......................................................................................... 8
5. **GRADES** ............................................................................................................. 9
6. **SELECTION OF RESEARCH MENTOR** .......................................................... 9
7. **QUALIFYING EXAMINATION** .......................................................................... 10
   A. Written Examination ....................................................................................... 10
   B. Oral Examination ............................................................................................ 11
   C. Preparation ....................................................................................................... 11
   D. Grading ............................................................................................................ 12
8. **DISSERTATION COMMITTEE** .......................................................................... 12
9. **ADMISSION TO PHD CANDIDACY** ................................................................. 13
10. **TEACHING EXPERIENCE** .............................................................................. 14
    A. Summer Teaching Workshop .......................................................................... 14
    B. Teaching Experience in a Division Program .................................................. 14
    C. Teaching Assistantship .................................................................................. 14
    D. Teaching Associateship .................................................................................. 15
11. **SUBMISSION OF PHD. DISSERTATION** .......................................................... 15
12. **PUBLIC ORAL DEFENSE OF PHD DISSERTATION** ....................................... 16
13. **AWARDING OF DEGREE** ............................................................................... 17
14. **EXPECTATIONS OF PERFORMANCE** ............................................................ 17
    A. Expectations of Faculty for Students .............................................................. 17
    B. Expectations of Students for Faculty ............................................................. 18
    C. Poor Performance ........................................................................................... 18
15. **STUDENT – FACULTY COMMUNICATION** .................................................... 19
16. **COUNSELING SERVICES** .................................................................................. 19
17. **FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND VACATION/PERSONAL TIME** ...................... 19
18. **LEAVING THE PROGRAM** ............................................................................... 20
19. **UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS** ....................................................................... 21

MSP forms and information resources are included in appendices at the end of the Handbook, as follows:
APPENDICES:
Appendix I. MSP Rotation Mentor Selection Agreement
Appendix II. Student Laboratory Rotation Evaluation Form
Appendix III. Request for Assignment of Faculty Mentor
Appendix IV. GDBBS Mentor Agreement Form
Appendix V. Student Annual Report
Appendix VI. Administrative Procedures for the Qualifying Examination
Appendix VII. Dissertation Committee Signature Form
Appendix VIII. Dissertation Committee Meeting Summary & Progress Report
Appendix IX. Provisional Dissertation Approval Form
Appendix X. Preparing a Dissertation & Scheduling a Dissertation Defense in the MSP Program
Appendix XI. Requirements for Membership in the Training Faculty
Appendix XII. Division Affiliation Checklist
Appendix XIII. MSP Training Faculty Membership Questionnaire
Appendix XIV. MSP Specialty Track Form
Appendix XV. MSP Executive Committee

IMPORTANT

MSP students are accountable for compliance with the policies and requirements of the Laney Graduate School (LGS), the Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (GDBBS), and the MSP Program. The LGS Handbook defines minimal requirements for all of its students. The GDBBS Handbook may have additional or more stringent requirements, and the Program Handbook may have additional or more stringent requirements. Students must comply with the most stringent version. In case of confusion or ambiguity, students should contact the program administrator or GDBBS for clarification and resolution.
1. Goals

The program in Molecular and Systems Pharmacology (MSP) prepares students for careers in biomedical research and scholarship. Students learn currently accepted facts and theories; plan, conduct and evaluate research; make an original contribution to knowledge; become skilled in oral and written communication; develop teaching skills; and become self-sufficient in education. The program also prepares students to teach in professional and graduate schools. Students are trained in the broad area of Pharmacology, but they can also select elective coursework and research projects for specialization in Molecular Pharmacology, Systems Pharmacology, Toxicology or Chemical Biology.

Graduate training is unlike other types of school, with less formal course work and more self-education. Much of graduate education occurs through individual interactions between students and their advisors in joint research. Graduate students do many of the same things that occupy professional scientists – reading scientific literature; planning, conducting, and analyzing research; and publishing papers. Scientific research can sometimes be discouraging, but the rewards include a sense of accomplishment and discovery, as well as entry into a rewarding and exciting profession.

2. Executive Committee

The program is coordinated by an Executive Committee. This committee consists of the Program Director and seven faculty members, elected by the MSP faculty; and two student representatives elected by the MSP student body. In addition, the Principle Investigator of the Pharmacological Sciences training grant holds an ex officio appointment on the committee. Faculty members are elected for three-year terms, with staggered exit dates; student representatives are elected for two-year staggered terms. At least one of the student representatives will have passed the qualifying exams.

The Program Director, Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), and Senior Student DGS (SSD) are elected directly by the membership. The Program Director chairs the Executive Committee and represents the Program on the Executive Committee of the Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (GDBBS). The Director of Graduate Studies acts as a temporary advisor for new students until the end of their second year, monitors student performance, and oversees selection of laboratory rotations, and selection of research mentors. The Senior Student DGS oversees the selection of dissertation committees, documentation of dissertation committee meetings, admission to candidacy, progress toward degree, and other senior student issues. Specific Faculty members of this committee are appointed by the Committee to serve as Admissions Chair, Qualifying Exam Chair, Membership Chair, Curriculum Chair, and Communications Chair. Elections for open positions are conducted yearly in April or May, and the term begins on September 1 of that year. If any Executive Committee member leaves the Committee before the end of the elected term, the Committee shall appoint a qualified MSP member to serve the remainder of that term.
3. Laboratory Research Rotations

The course MSP 597R Laboratory Rotations is required for most MSP students. Students who have already joined a lab when they enter the Program, such as MD/PhD students or transfer students, will be exempt from this course. It consists of three rotations over multiple academic terms; the final grade will be the average of the three rotations, and this grade will be applied to each applicable term. Rotations are performed according to the program’s rotation schedule, and exceptions must be approved by the DGS.

a) One of these laboratory rotations may be satisfied by at least six weeks full time research during the summer prior to matriculation. This can allow the student to complete the rotation schedule and begin dissertation research early.
b) The first rotation should be mentored by an MSP faculty member. Subsequent rotations may be mentored by any full faculty member of the GDBBS.
c) Students may request to do a fourth rotation during the summer after their first year. A fifth rotation maybe approved if the first was in the previous summer.
d) If a student is struggling to maintain satisfactory academic performance early in the first semester, the student may be advised to discontinue the Fall rotation in order to concentrate on academic work. This option should only be exercised when the student’s academic progress is in jeopardy, and it must be approved by both the DGS and the rotation mentor. The student may be allowed to complete a later rotation in the same laboratory, but mentors are not obligated to reserve a rotation place for a student who drops out of their lab during a previous rotation.
e) MSP students may not do more than five rotations. Students must have a mentor by the beginning of Fall Term in year 2, in order to continue in the MSP Program.

The yearly schedule of rotations and associated deadlines will be established by the DGS. For each rotation, students must indicate their preferred rotation mentors by submitting the MSP Rotation Mentor Selection Agreement form (see Appendix I) to the MSP Program Administrator, Suite 300A Dental Building. Deadlines for submission will be established by the Director of Graduate Studies. Rotation choices are subject to MSP Executive Committee approval.

Laboratory rotations expose students to different research approaches and techniques of modern science. They help define a student’s research interests and make it easier to select a mentor. The choice of mentor is not limited to those faculty members with whom the student has done a rotation, however. Rotations also allow faculty to observe and evaluate the aptitude of first-year students for research. Expectations for time spent in the laboratory should be clearly established between the faculty member and the student before beginning each rotation. In general, students are expected to be working on their projects when not attending class or studying.

A written report of the rotation must be submitted to the mentor and to the Director of Graduate Studies within one week of the completion of the rotation. The report should be in the format of a short manuscript, containing the usual sections of Summary, Introduction, Experimental Methods, Results, Discussion and References. Students should include name, date, and page number on each page; a header or footer may be used for this purpose. The length of the report will vary depending on the project, but should be between three and seven double-spaced pages (not including Figures and Tables). The mentor is expected to read the report and to give the student feedback on the
quality of organization, grammar and writing style. Laboratory rotations are graded S/U, and are evaluated in a report by the rotation mentor to the Executive Committee (Appendix II).

4. Courses

A. Course Credit Requirements All students must meet the requirements of the Laney Graduate School regarding total credit hours of coursework. Students must be aware that the GDBBS and the MSP Program may establish requirements in addition to the basic LGS requirements.

All students must complete at least 54 credit hours of coursework at the 500 level or above, with a grade of B- or better. In addition, MSP students must take at least the equivalent of two three-hour elective courses. Up to five hours of Directed Study may count toward the coursework requirement if approved in advance by the DGS. To request approval, the student must submit in writing to the DGS, a description of the course of study, including a justification of the credit hours to be claimed, and the mechanism for examination and determining the grade. The document must be signed and dated by the GDBBS faculty member supervising the course of directed study. Departmental seminar series, even if taken for credit, do not count toward the coursework requirement for the degree.

B. Required courses. The training program consists of a required basic core curriculum, followed by more specialized courses. The following courses (or their equivalents) are required of all MSP students:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course #</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBS 555</td>
<td>Basic Biomedical and Biological Sciences I</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 531</td>
<td>Principles in Pharmacology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 532</td>
<td>Principles in Pharmacology II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 536</td>
<td>Drug Metabolism and Toxicology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 537</td>
<td>MSP Grant Writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 538</td>
<td>Design and Analysis of Experiments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JPE 600</td>
<td>Scholarly Integrity Core Class</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 501</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Pharmacology*</td>
<td>1/yr (2 yrs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 570r</td>
<td>Introductory Graduate Seminar</td>
<td>2 (4 semesters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 597r</td>
<td>Laboratory Rotations</td>
<td>(S/U) Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 790r</td>
<td>Advanced Graduate Seminar</td>
<td>1 (2 semesters)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 1 credit for two semesters of class, recorded in Fall Term

Toxicology Track: In addition to the standard curriculum encompassing Molecular Pharmacology and Systems Pharmacology, a specialized Toxicology curriculum is available to students who wish to prepare for careers in this area. Students in the Toxicology Track have the additional requirement of two toxicology courses, which may be counted as the student’s elective courses.
Students who wish to pursue the Toxicology Track should meet with the Senior Student DGS to discuss the proposed coursework; the Senior Student DGS (SSD) will determine whether these courses satisfy the requirements for the Toxicology Track. Students declare their intention by completing the MSP Specialty Track Form (Appendix XIV); this form is signed by the student, student’s mentor and SSD, and submitted to the Program Administrator. This form must be submitted before the student reaches Candidacy. Upon completion of the requirements, the student should send a copy of the form, with a current transcript documenting the completed coursework, to the SSD, who will verify that the requirements have been satisfied; the approved form will be forwarded to the Program Administrator. The MSP Program recognizes the extra effort of completing the specialty track with a personalized plaque, which is awarded after the student’s defense.

**MSP Ethics Course:** The MSP Program places a high priority on raising and maintaining the awareness of ethical issues in students and faculty. MSP 501 is required for students in their first and second years, and students in the third year and beyond must attend at least one session of MSP 501, in each academic year. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to attend.

C. **Exemptions from requirements.** Required courses may be waived for students who have passed equivalent courses with a grade of B or better. Students may be advised not to waive certain required courses, in order to prepare them for success in passing the Qualifying Exams. These decisions will be made on an individual basis by consultations between the student, the DGS, and the Program Director.

D. **Electives** In addition to the required coursework, students must complete at least 6 credit hours of electives beyond the mandated 54 credit hours, by the end of the third year. Electives appropriate to the student’s research area and course of study should be selected in consultation with the research mentor, the dissertation committee, and in some cases, the DGS. The coursework requirement is a minimal one, and students are encouraged to enhance their training by taking advantage of additional electives relevant to their area of research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students in the toxicology curriculum might select from:</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBS 564 Neurotoxicology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 717 Neuropharmacology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 704 Molecular Mechanisms of Ion Channel Regulation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 700 Macromolecular Structure and Function</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS 582 Nutrition and Chronic Disease</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students interested in molecular therapeutics might select from:</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IBS 701 Cell Surface Receptors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 702 Molecular Mechanisms of Signal Transduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 704 Molecular Mechanisms of Ion Channel Regulation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 750 Molecular Neurobiology</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 566 Drug Development: From Proposal to Prescriptions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students interested in behavioral aspects of pharmacology might select from:
E. Colloquia. Many departments conduct colloquium series where well-known scientists describe their most recent research. Students are expected to attend these colloquia regularly in areas related to their research interests. Discussion of these presentations is valuable in obtaining breadth and experience in different areas of science.

F. Journal Clubs. One of the most effective ways to learn research methods and approaches is to read and critique published work. Students are urged to organize informal journal clubs for this purpose. Faculty will be happy to help organize and participate in these activities; however, they are most effective when student-initiated.

G. Sample curriculum. Below is a sample course curriculum for typical students. Students are required by the Graduate School to maintain a minimum of 9 credit hours/semester. In year 2 until candidacy, the balance of hours not spent in coursework is brought up to 9 with Advanced Graduate Research (IBS 699r, MSP section). After attaining candidacy, students usually are engaged in full-time research and take 9 hours of Dissertation Research (MSP 799r) only, unless they choose to take additional elective courses to enhance their training.

Typical student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall year 1</th>
<th>Credit Hrs.</th>
<th>Spring Year 1</th>
<th>Credit Hrs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JPE 600 *</td>
<td>Scholarly Integrity Core 0</td>
<td>IBS 532</td>
<td>Princ Pharmacology II 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 555</td>
<td>Basic Biomed Biol Sci I 6</td>
<td>IBS 536</td>
<td>Drug Metab Toxicology 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 531</td>
<td>Principles Pharmacology 4</td>
<td>MSP 570r</td>
<td>Intro Grad Seminar 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 570r</td>
<td>Intro Grad Seminar 2</td>
<td>MSP 597r</td>
<td>Lab Rotations 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 597r</td>
<td>Lab Rotations 1</td>
<td>IBS 538</td>
<td>Design Analysis Expts 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 501</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Pharmacology 1</td>
<td>MSP 501</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Pharmacology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall year 2</th>
<th>Spring Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSP 570r</td>
<td>Intro Grad Seminar 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 537</td>
<td>MSP Grant Writing 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 699r</td>
<td>Advanced Grad Research 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP 501</td>
<td>Ethical Issues in Pharmacology 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall year 3</th>
<th>Spring Year 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSP 790r</td>
<td>Advanced Grad Seminar 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS 699r</td>
<td>Advanced Grad Research 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ethics/JPE 600 is a one-day course given in late August before the start of Fall Term in Year 1.
5. Grades

Grades in the Graduate School range from A (4.0) to C (2.0) and F (0); there is no D grade. Some courses are taken on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. Students must maintain an average of B (3.0) or better. A student with a semester GPA below 3.0 will be put on academic probation. Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences (GDBBS) policy dictates that a grade of U or F in any course, or a semester GPA below 3.0 in any two semesters, will result in dismissal. If a student who is dismissed believes there were extenuating circumstances that adversely affected his/her performance, he/she may submit to the GDBBS Director a written appeal for consideration of reinstatement. The appeal should clearly outline the extenuating circumstances and must be submitted within one month of grades being recorded by the Office of the Registrar. All appeals will be reviewed by the GDBBS Executive Committee.

Students who are pursuing a special program or certification or a second degree, such as the MSCR, an additional certification are expected to keep up with their primary dissertation research and hold regular meetings with their dissertation committees as required. Students must carefully consider the requirements for their dissertation research before deciding to commit to extra academic endeavors. Students should discuss their goals with the Senior Student DGS. Approval for these activities will be considered for students who have passed the MSP qualifying exams and are in good standing.

6. Selection of Research Mentor

Students are expected to select a research mentor and begin their dissertation research at the end of their third rotation, although it is possible to petition to have an additional rotation. Students should address requests for exceptions to the DGS.

Before deciding on a research advisor, students should discuss possible research projects with each of the program faculty whose work may be of interest to them. Once a choice has been made, the student and prospective advisor must complete the Request for Assignment of Faculty Mentor form (Appendix III) and the GDBBS Mentor Assignment Agreement form (Appendix IV) and submit them to the Director of Graduate Studies. The advisor is responsible for getting his or her Departmental Chairperson to sign the GDBBS form. The advisor must establish that he or she will most likely be able to provide sufficient funding to support the student’s stipend and dissertation research to a successful completion. The DGS and Executive Committee will then evaluate the request, making every effort to accommodate the student’s wishes. To ensure that the quality of mentoring and training is maintained, the Committee will normally approve the assignment of a maximum of two MSP students from any single matriculating class to any single mentor. If adequate justification can be presented, the Committee may waive this rule under exceptional circumstances.

Students must select a mentor by the beginning of the Fall semester of the second year in order to take the required MSP Grants course. Students who have not finalized their selection of research mentor by this point may not continue in the program.
Changing Mentors. On rare occasions, it may become advisable to reassign a student to a different mentor. In such a situation, the student and mentor should meet with the Program Director and/or other members of the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will attempt to balance the wishes and concerns of all parties and decide on the best course of action. Since a student may lose substantial time when changing laboratories and research projects, the assignment of a different mentor should be viewed as a relatively extreme step. Guidelines for transitioning to a different advisor are provided below in Section 8.

Mentor Leaving Emory. If a mentor decides to leave Emory, a student may have to make decisions regarding the completion of the PhD degree. For example, the student might have the option of moving with the mentor while continuing to be enrolled at Emory; or of staying at Emory and working with a faculty collaborator. In every case, it is imperative for the student to notify the Program Director and the Program Administrator, who will assure that GDBBS is notified. GDBBS must be involved, in order to ensure that the student’s resources, such as funding, health insurance, and academic support are uninterrupted.

7. Qualifying Examination

Students are required to demonstrate mastery of his or her field by passing a general qualifying examination before being admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. The qualifying exam serves valuable purposes for both students and faculty. Students: 1) This is usually the last opportunity to engage in a broad-based review of the large body of information they have encountered before becoming highly focused on a particular research area. 2) In order to write and orally defend a research proposal, students must familiarize themselves with the literature in their area and give careful consideration to the design and interpretation of experiments that may form a central part of their doctoral research project. Thus, the examination serves as an early catalyst to launch students into a research project. Faculty: 1) The exam allows the faculty to judge whether students have mastered the fundamental information they should have learned during the first two years and, equally important, whether they can use that information appropriately. 2) The exam provides a logical mechanism for terminating students with a history of marginal performance.

The qualifying exam is usually given at the end of the second year and consists of two parts, (1) a written exam and (2) a research proposal and oral exam. To be eligible to take Part I, the written exam, the student must have a grade point average of at least “B” (i.e., 3.0) for all courses taken during the first two years. MD/PhD students or transfer students may request approval by the Executive Committee to take the qualifying exam early, without prejudice, and will be tested on the same material as other students. A student must pass the written exam in order to progress to Part II, the oral exam.

A. Written Examination. Part I is designed to test the students’ general knowledge, and their abilities to analyze and critique scientific data. It is given after the end of the Spring Semester of the second year and administered over two days. The exam consists of essay questions based on material studied over the first two years of the program, including coursework, journal clubs, seminars and recommended readings (see Appendix VI). The exam may also include an exercise based on a scientific article that the students will be asked to read and analyze.
B. **Oral Examination.** Part II consists of an oral defense of a written proposal for an original research project. A summary (title and 2-3 pages of double-spaced typewritten text) with additional supporting literature citations must be submitted to the Qualifying Exam Chair for approval, approximately two weeks following the written exam. Students should include name, date, and page number on each page; a header or footer may be used for this purpose. This summary must state clearly the working hypothesis and goals of the proposed research, and include the proposed Specific Aims. Note that the aims as stated in the abstract may be modified in the full proposal. The topic of the proposal may be the same as or similar to the project which may ultimately form the student’s Ph.D. dissertation; however, it must be written by the student. The proposal will be developed during the grant-writing training provided within the IBS 537 grant-writing course, currently scheduled for the Fall semester of the second year. It is expected that the research mentor may help to formulate the project, provide guidance, and be available to the student for discussion and verbal critique. However, the mentor should not assist in the writing or editing of the actual text. The student will select two MSP faculty members, other than his/her research mentor and subject to approval by the MSP Executive Committee, who will assist in the development of the proposal during the IBS 537 course. The proposal will be improved through the process of the course, and may be altered as needed thereafter, but must be submitted to the exam committee no later than two weeks before the oral exam. [The student must include copies of any failed question (average grade under 3.0) from the written exam.]

i. The proposal should follow the format and guidelines for the Research Training Plan of an individual NRSA grant application to the National Institutes of Health: grants.nih.gov/grants. The site encourages its users to check it regularly for the most current version.

ii. The student must defend the research proposal in an oral exam given by two members of the Executive Committee and two ad hoc examiners two-three weeks after submitting the proposal. The ad hoc examiners (who must be MSP faculty members, but NOT members of the Executive Committee) will be selected by the student in consultation with his/her research advisor. The oral exam typically lasts about an hour, and consists of a brief (five to ten minute) oral presentation of an overview of the proposal, followed by questions from the faculty. The purpose of the oral examination is to test the student’s ability to formulate and defend a worthwhile research project and to test their knowledge and understanding of the subject area of the proposal, pertinent literature and methodological issues, as well as poise and creativity in the oral defense of ideas. The proposal defense should be viewed only as a qualifying examination and is not intended to determine the suitability of the project for the student’s doctoral dissertation. The student will be questioned on specific aspects of the proposed studies as well as on more general aspects of the subject area. The student can also be questioned on subject areas in which weakness was demonstrated in Part I of the qualifying exam.

C. **Preparation.** Students should prepare carefully for the qualifying exam. Such preparation should include a review of relevant course work as well as practice in oral and written communication. Senior students who have taken the exam can advise on
specific exercises which might be helpful. It may be useful to practice writing answers to essay questions to gain experience in organizing material and giving clear answers. Faculty and other students are usually willing to read such practice essays and make suggestions. Since many students will not previously have experienced an oral examination, a mock oral defense of the written proposal before other students can sometimes be very helpful. Faculty and other students are usually willing to help prepare for this important exam.

D. Grading. Each part of the exam is graded separately, and the specific procedures involved are described in detail in Appendix VI. A grade of 3.0 or better is required to pass each part. A student cannot take the oral exam unless he or she receives a grade of 3.0 or better on the written exam. Students must pass both parts of the qualifying exam to continue in the Ph.D. program. A student who fails may petition the Executive Committee to re-take all or part of the exam. The written petition must present compelling reasons why better performance can be expected on a repeat exam. If re-examination is approved for the Part I exam, the student will be allowed to take the following year’s exam with the next class. In this case, the Part II exam would be delayed until after the Part I. If a re-examination is approved for the Part II exam, it will take place within 30 days unless there is a compelling reason to give the re-take at a different time. A repeat oral exam may require submission of a revised or rewritten proposal. The Examination Committee for the retake of the oral exam shall consist of the two Executive Committee members who served on the original Examination Committee, if possible, plus two ad hoc examiners. The student can choose to invite one or both of the previous ad hoc members, OR two different faculty. The new ad hoc faculty member(s) of the committee can be any member of MSP, including Executive Committee members.

8. Dissertation Committee

In consultation with the mentor, each student must select a dissertation committee to assist in formulating and evaluating the student’s research project. The composition of the committee must be approved by the Program Director or Senior Student DGS and LGS. It must contain at least four members in good standing of the GDBBS faculty, including the research mentor, who chairs the committee. At least three of these four committee members must be MSP Program Faculty. If additional expertise and insight is deemed necessary, the student and mentor can elect to include additional committee members who can be of any academic affiliation. The initial meeting of the committee must be conducted within six months after passing Part II of the qualifying exam; the deadline is the end of February of the third year. In order to meet this deadline, students must form the committee and obtain approval according to procedures established by the LGS, prior to scheduling the first meeting. It is important to note that the committee is not official until it is approved; sufficient time must be allowed for this process.

The dissertation committee is the primary body responsible for reading and evaluating the doctoral dissertation and examining the student in the final public oral defense. The student documents the formation of the committee using the Laney Graduate School’s Dissertation Committee Signature Form (see Appendix VII). Each member confirms agreement to serve on the committee by signing the form. The form is approved by the Program Director or the Senior Student DGS and submitted to the MSP Program.
Students must meet with their dissertation committee at least once every six months; students in the sixth year and beyond must meet every four months. At least two weeks prior to each meeting, the student must inform the Senior Student DGS in writing as to the date, time and place of the meeting. The Senior Student DGS will forward this information to the Executive Committee. At least two weeks prior to the first meeting, the students will submit a formal written research proposal to the committee, based on pilot experiments and discussions with the advisor. Preliminary data should be included to support the feasibility of the project. The format for the written proposal should be the same as that for Part II of the qualifying exam. If appropriate, the qualifying examination proposal can be used as the foundation for the dissertation proposal, which will be the basis for discussion at the meeting. Reports must also be submitted to the committee at least one week before each subsequent meeting and should briefly (no more than two pages) summarize the progress made since the last meeting and significant changes in research direction. They should be accompanied by figures and figure legends summarizing new data collected to date. Any member(s) of the Executive Committee can attend these meetings to monitor the student’s progress. During the week after each meeting, the student must submit a completed Dissertation Committee Meeting Summary and Progress Report form (see Appendix VIII), including a written summary of the meeting, to members of the dissertation committee, the Senior Student DGS, and the Program Administrator. Students should include name, date, and page number on each page; a header or footer may be used for this purpose. If a majority of the signing members of the Committee finds that progress has been unsatisfactory, or other issues need to be addressed, the advisor should notify the Program Director in writing. The mentor shall have the tie-breaking vote in all such decisions.

Students who are reassigned to a different advisor before completing Part II of the qualifying exam should make every reasonable effort to base Part II of the qualifying exam on studies that will be completed in their new lab. If this is not possible due to time constraints, students are expected to complete a new formal written research proposal by their first committee meeting following the format and guidelines for the Research Training Plan of an individual NRSA grant application to the National Institutes of Health (grants.nih.gov/grants) as outlined above. Students who are reassigned to a different advisor after completing Part II of the qualifying exam are expected to establish a thesis committee and produce a 2-3 page written proposal that includes Specific Aims, Background and any Preliminary Data. This proposal should be presented to the thesis committee within 3 months of joining the new laboratory and it is expected that students will develop a complete written proposal by their second thesis committee meeting, although the precise structure of this proposal is at the discretion of the advisor & thesis committee. All questions concerning this transition should be directed to the Senior DGS.

9. Admission to PhD Candidacy

Students are expected to apply to the Graduate School to become a candidate for the Ph.D degree as soon as they are eligible. Admission to candidacy presupposes that all course and qualifying examination requirements have been met and that a plan of study and research covering the entire course of advanced study, including the designation of the
mentor, dissertation committee, and the title of the dissertation, has been approved. Application forms for Ph.D. candidacy are obtained from the Laney Graduate School website: [http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/policies/candidacy.html](http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/policies/candidacy.html). Completed forms along with supporting transcripts of completed coursework (obtained from OPUS) must be submitted to GDBBS no later than the semester preceding the semester in which the Ph.D. degree is expected to be awarded. It is expected that MSP students will submit candidacy paperwork by the end of Spring Term in year 3. The absolute deadline for declaring candidacy is September 15 of the fourth year, per LGS policy. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the student’s being placed on academic probation, and the student will be required to develop a remedial plan in consultation with the Senior Student DGS.

**Dissertation Completion**

Students are expected to complete their dissertations and apply for their degrees within six years. Once students begin the sixth year, it is important to review the LGS Handbook for current policies and procedures regarding the timeline for completion, including penalties for non-compliance.

10. **Teaching Experience**

The Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity Program (TATTO) provides teacher training and experience for students in the GDBBS. Completion of the TATTO program is required for all Ph.D. students. The TATTO program involves four stages as outlined below:

A. **Summer Teaching Workshop.** Also known as “TATTO Training”, this multi-day required summer course takes place in mid-August. In most cases, students attend in the summer following their first year of graduate study; however, the timing may be adjusted in special circumstances.

B. **Teaching Experience in a Division Program** At the core of the training program are the graduate seminar courses offered by each Program. For MSP students, the Introductory and Advanced Seminar courses in years 1 – 3 fulfill this stage. Students present seminars to their peers under the supervision of the Program’s faculty, thereby acquiring skill in lecturing, communicating research data, managing discussions, evaluating their peers, and using audiovisual equipment.

C. **Teaching Assistantship** All students in the GDBBS are required to serve as a Teaching Assistant for one semester, usually during the year following participation in the summer workshop. This service is often referred to as the “TA experience”. Teaching Assistants typically serve as laboratory instructors or discussion leaders for small groups. Teaching Assistants also assist students with problems during scheduled office hours, help prepare handouts and/or laboratory material, and help administer and grade exams. Students assigned to laboratory courses assist in setting up laboratory exercises, and help students understand the theoretical and practical aspects of the exercise. Supervising faculty submit an evaluation of the student’s teaching performance to the Director of Graduate Studies.
D. Teaching Associateship. The final stage of TATTO is not a general requirement. Rather, it is tailored to the needs of individual students in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and the research advisor. Students in the program typically fulfill this requirement by mentoring, coaching or teaching first-year MSP students, mentoring an undergraduate or a first-year graduate student in a research laboratory, presenting their research at national meetings, or lecturing in undergraduate, graduate or professional courses. Some students may view it as an enhancement to their chosen career plan.

11. Submission of Ph.D. Dissertation

When the candidate and mentor agree that the dissertation project is nearing completion, a meeting of the dissertation committee is held to discuss the acceptability of the completed research. If the committee agrees that the body of work is acceptable, the student may then begin to write the dissertation. It is expected that the student should have published in a refereed journal (as primary author) and completed enough research for their dissertation to support the development of two or more papers. In rare cases, if the dissertation committee members judge that the quality and content of the body of work equals that of multiple publications, the work represents a significant contribution to the field and submission of at least one primary author manuscript is in process or imminent they may petition the MSP Executive Committee to waive the publication requirement.

Directions for preparation of the dissertation are provided in Appendix X. The dissertation may be in one of two formats. The classic format includes the following sections: Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion and References. Each section can encompass one or more chapters as appropriate. In the alternative format, the work may be presented as a series of manuscripts (published or unpublished), each of which has its own Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion Sections. In that case, each method must be fully described in the first chapter in which it is used. References should be collated and presented in a separate section. The alternative format should contain a general Introduction section and a general Discussion section. The dissertation committee should approve the format of the dissertation unanimously before it is written. Figures and other illustrations must be of publication quality.

After the dissertation has been read and approved by the dissertation advisor, the student must give a copy to all members of the dissertation committee. The dissertation must be complete at this time, including figures and references. No sooner than two weeks after distribution of the dissertation, the student must obtain the signature of each committee member on the Preliminary Dissertation Approval Form (Appendix IX), certifying that the student has a defensible dissertation of high quality. The two-week period should give committee members enough time to read the dissertation thoroughly. If minor revisions are needed, members of the Committee should sign the form, and the mentor must verify that the required revisions have been made before the oral defense. In all other cases, the candidate must revise the dissertation to the committee’s satisfaction before written provisional approval is granted. If there is substantial disagreement among committee members, a meeting of the committee should be called to obtain a resolution.

Once unanimous provisional approval has been given, the oral defense can be scheduled and announced. The cost of preparation of the dissertation is borne by the student.

As a final requirement, the candidate must orally defend the dissertation before the dissertation committee and other interested members of the University. The oral defense must be scheduled at least two weeks after signature of the provisional approval form. The candidate must identify an appropriate date and time and notify the dissertation committee and the Senior Student DGS in writing. The defense should be scheduled at a time when the Examining Committee can attend, and should not conflict with any classes, MSP events, or scientific meetings attended by large numbers of program faculty or students. At least two weeks before the defense, the student must submit a completed flyer for the announcement of the defense to the Program Administrator; a template is available upon request. The flyer will be used to notify the MSP Program membership through its email listserv, and it will be forwarded to GDBBS for inclusion in the division event announcements. Although most dissertation defenses require two hours or less, three hours should be scheduled to ensure sufficient time. A final copy of the revised dissertation should be available for interested program faculty, and should be submitted electronically to the Program Administrator at the time of notification.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to schedule the defense in the absence of a committee member, or a member may be absent due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance. In such cases, the oral defense can proceed if: i) a minimum of three committee members are present, including the dissertation mentor and ii) approval of the Program Director or the Senior Student DGS is obtained. If a student has dual mentors, either of them can fulfill the role of advisor at the oral defense.

The dissertation mentor will chair the dissertation defense. The public dissertation defense is a formal scientific seminar, and care should be taken to preserve the formality of the occasion. The atmosphere should be one that encourages critical questioning so that the student can demonstrate expertise in an open forum. At no time should the student or members of the audience be led to believe that a pass is automatic. The mentor will outline the format of the defense and introduce the student and research in a manner similar to other seminars. The mentor and the student should avoid personal comments as well as mention of subsequent parties at this time. Personal comments, congratulations and acknowledgements are more appropriate for the party following a successful completion of the oral defense. The defense begins with a 30-45 minute public oral presentation by the candidate. After the presentation, members of the faculty that are not on the dissertation committee and the audience question the candidate on matters related to the dissertation research, to assess the thoroughness of the candidate’s knowledge and the quality of the work.

Following the public oral examination, the dissertation committee will continue the examination in private. The candidate is expected to be an authority in his or her research area, and successful defense of the dissertation requires the oral demonstration of that expertise. The success of the defense will be assessed by the committee. At no time should the mentor answer questions posed to the student, although the mentor may ask questions during this session. After the student has been dismissed, the student’s performance will be discussed and evaluated by the committee. If the committee decides that the student has not met the criteria for a successful defense, the committee has discretion to decide on how to proceed. In most cases, all revisions to the dissertation are
made prior to the defense. However, if additional revisions are required following the defense, final approval of the dissertation will be delayed until such revisions are approved.

Unanimous approval of the dissertation committee members who attended the oral defense must be obtained prior to submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School. The appropriate form is available on the Laney Graduate School web site. The student is responsible for providing the committee with the form. Committee members who are unable to attend the oral defense can sign the form (approve / disapprove) based on their assessment of the written document. If the committee is not unanimous, the acceptability of the dissertation project will be determined by the Executive Committee.

Students should follow Laney Graduate School guidelines for dissertation submission. Students are required to submit an electronic copy of their dissertation to MSP. The dissertation will be available to MSP students and faculty, just as the bound copies were in the past, but the MSP Program will not make the dissertation publicly available until the embargo is lifted.

13. Awarding of Degree

The Laney Graduate School has several deadlines which must be met during the semester in which the degree is to be awarded. These deadlines include: 1) last day to file application for degree; 2) last day for receipt of Degree Clearance Reports for Master’s and Doctoral candidates (note: theses and dissertations must have final approval, and dissertations must be defended prior to this date); 3) degree candidates’ theses and dissertations due in the Graduate School Office. These deadlines are published in the Academic Calendar of the Graduate School Bulletin.

When a student has completed all course requirements and has submitted and successfully defended his or her Ph.D. dissertation, the GDBBS Director will submit the appropriate forms to the Dean of the Graduate School. Formal application for a degree must also be made by the student at the beginning of the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. The student must also be registered during this semester.

Under certain circumstances, students may be permitted to work for a terminal M.S. degree. A student who fails the Qualifying Examination, or who chooses not to complete the doctoral program, may petition the Executive Committee for permission to complete an M.S. If approved, the student must form a thesis committee consisting of a faculty advisor and at least two additional program faculty. A written thesis must be orally defended to this committee. The Executive Committee should be invited to the defense, but shall not be voting members of the examining committee. The format for writing and submission of M.S. theses are the same as those for doctoral dissertations, although less significant research contributions are expected for the M.S. degree.

14. Expectations of Performance

A. **Expectations of Faculty for Students.** Students are expected to perform satisfactorily in required and elective course work, and to participate actively in classroom and seminar discussions. Students should continually develop their
scientific independence and creativity by active pursuit of the current scientific literature and vigorous laboratory research. It is expected that each student will acquire and develop excellent written and oral communication skills, and his or her research results will be published in quality peer-reviewed journals.

Students are also expected to make continuing progress through the program. This includes selection of an advisor and dissertation committee in a timely fashion, holding regular dissertation committee meetings as required, and submission and defense of the dissertation soon after completion of laboratory research.

It is anticipated that most students will complete the graduate program in approximately five years. However, development as a scientist is usually not attained in a regular 40-hour work week. Students are encouraged to show a dedication and enthusiasm for their research projects, and to continue to strive for the excellence and discipline that will make them highly competitive in science. Students should be familiar with the regulations governing University/student Relationships, and with the Graduate School Honor and Conduct Codes as published by the Graduate School.

B. Expectations of Students for Faculty. Students may expect the faculty to give their time and expertise enthusiastically. This is done by presenting well prepared and current courses and by providing individual instruction and consultation in the laboratory. The faculty provides laboratory space, equipment, and supplies for the student’s research. For students in their third and subsequent years, stipends are normally provided by faculty research grants. Faculty should serve as professional role models and encourage and advise students to fully develop their scientific talents. Faculty should also counsel students in determining the direction of their postdoctoral careers. Faculty are also expected to provide reasonable and clear guidelines for the graduate program and to administer Graduate School requirements at the program level. Student grievances and appeals should be addressed directly to the Director of Graduate Studies, the Senior Student DGS, the Program Director, or members of the Executive Committee.

C. Poor Performance. The Executive Committee will review the progress of students at the end of each academic year. All students must meet the Graduate School’s definitions of good standing and due progress to remain in the program. The student’s research project must also be progressing satisfactorily, as judged by the mentor and dissertation committee. Students who experience difficulties are encouraged to seek assistance as soon as possible from the Program Director, Director of Graduate Studies, Senior Student DGS, their mentors, or other faculty. Every effort will be made to assist students in meeting the required performance standards. A student who does not maintain adequate progress will be placed on probation, and financial support may be withdrawn. The student will be informed in writing of the conditions of probation, and a time-table for elimination of probation established. A student who fails to meet the conditions of probation will be terminated from the program. Such decisions may be appealed to the Graduate School.
15. Student – Faculty Communication

Students usually have questions and suggestions about many aspects of the graduate program that can help the faculty to maintain a high quality training program. Student feedback about all aspects of the program, and particularly about courses, is very important in helping the faculty recognize strengths and weaknesses. Student/faculty communication is strongly encouraged, and students are urged to make their views known to the faculty. Although faculty try to request feedback, they will often assume that there are no problems in the current program when they do not hear from students.

Many of the problems (academic and otherwise) that students encounter occur early in graduate school. The DGS has responsibility as the formal academic advisor to first-year students until they have selected a dissertation mentor. The MSP program provides students with an additional confidential, comfortable and informal forum in which they have the opportunity to discuss their progress, problems or concerns in the early stages of graduate school: a faculty counselor. In September of their first year students select their counselor, who will be a member of the MSP Program. While counselors should be available for meetings (with suitable notice) at any time, students and counselors must meet by mutual arrangement by October and again by February of the first year.

In later years, the student’s dissertation mentor or members of his or her dissertation committee are usually in the best position to discuss research or personal problems. The Program Director, the Senior Student DGS, members of the MSP Executive Committee, and the Program Administrator are obvious resources concerning procedure and policy questions. All faculty attempt to be readily available to meet with students. If a faculty member cannot see a student immediately, he or she will make an appointment at the earliest available time. Students are encouraged to use the faculty as a resource.

16. Counseling Services

Emory University provides free personal counseling services under strict rules of confidentiality for all registered students. The counseling center staff is comprised of medical doctors, registered psychologists and social workers. To make a counseling appointment, please call the Counseling Center at 727-7450. The office is located in the same building as the GDBBS offices, 1462 Clifton Road, Suite 235.

The Emory Law School also provides a free legal service help line for students. You can reach them at 727-6516.

17. Financial Support and Vacation/Personal Time

Stipends and tuition fellowships, awarded to students on the basis of academic merit, are intended to cover basic living expenses and tuition. With the exception of special awards, such as the Woodruff Fellowship, stipend levels are set by the GDBBS based upon the availability of funds from Graduate School and university sources. The faculty also encourages and assists students in obtaining individual stipend support from extramural sources, such as federal agencies and private foundations. Students are supported by the GDBBS for an initial period of training. Additional support will be
provided by research mentors, training grants, or other sources. Financial support is normally provided only to full-time students working toward the Ph.D. degree.

**Outside Employment.** Stipends and tuition fellowships are awarded to allow students to devote full time to the graduate program and complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree in as short a time as is consistent with adequate training and research progress. Additional employment is strongly discouraged. Such outside employment inevitably causes a serious distraction from the educational process. Graduate education and research are by necessity largely self-motivated processes, and the distractions of outside employment can interfere with the ability of students to prepare satisfactorily for their future professional careers. If additional income is absolutely necessary, students are encouraged to consider the possibility of low-interest student loans and should consult with the financial aid office. If a student feels strongly that outside employment is necessary while in the graduate program, the student must discuss the need with his or her advisor and the Program Director. If outside employment is approved, the student must not allow it to interfere with high standards of performance in academic courses and in research.

**Vacation/personal time.** All students receiving a stipend have an allowance for time off: students may take the official University holidays and an additional ten working days, per year. Vacation/personal days should be arranged in advance with the mentor or with the DGS and rotation mentors for students who have not yet chosen a mentor. Spring and Fall Breaks and breaks between semesters are NOT holidays for graduate students; if classes are cancelled, the student should spend the extra time in lab.

**Leave of absence.** Requests for an unpaid leave of absence must adhere to Laney Graduate School policy; refer to the LGS Handbook for current details. Leaves must be approved by the DGS or Senior Student DGS, and then forwarded to the GDBBS Office for the Director’s approval. The Dean of the LGS must give final approval for any leave. Students on unpaid leave are not considered enrolled students and will only receive health insurance until the end of the semester in which they go on leave (as long as they go on leave after the date of record for that semester). If the leave extends into the next semester, the student is eligible to purchase health insurance coverage under COBRA guidelines. Students may only return from leave at the beginning of a semester.

**Parental Leave.** Students requesting parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child should submit a written request to the dissertation mentor (or the DGS if the student has no mentor), with copies to the MSP Office and the GDBBS Office. The term of the leave must be approved by the dissertation mentor and the MSP DGS or Senior Student DGS. GDBBS must be notified of all proposed leaves. GDBBS will notify the student of the duration and conditions of the approved leave, and the student shall accept this leave by returning a signed copy of the letter. If more leave time is required beyond the approved parental leave, the student may request an unpaid leave of absence. Students are advised to refer to the LGS Handbook for current details.

**18. Leaving the Program**

The question of what direction a student’s career will take following completion of the Ph.D. should arise early and become increasingly important as training progresses. It is never too early to consider career options. Students receiving a Ph.D. usually take a
postdoctoral research position to acquire additional techniques and expertise to further prepare for an independent research career. Such postdoctoral training is usually essential for a career in academic research. Some students take permanent positions in industrial or government laboratories immediately after receiving the Ph.D. degree, while others enter additional advanced degree programs such as medical school, law school or business school. Career objectives can best be realized through careful planning. All members of the faculty stand ready to advise students on career options, and students are encouraged to seek this advice at any time during their training. GDBBS holds forums on career choices and also has other resources for career development. For information see the GDBBS web site.

19. University Requirements

Every effort has been made to make this document as accurate and complete as possible. Formal University requirements are detailed in the current Laney Graduate School Handbook and the Graduate Division (GDBBS) Handbook and are in addition to those detailed in this document. Policies are subject to change without notice. Students should be aware that the LGS and GDBBS handbooks reflect minimum requirements for students, and programs may have additional or more stringent requirements. MSP students must comply with all policies and regulations, and therefore must be familiar with all three handbooks. Current versions of the handbooks are available on the MSP web site.
MSP ROTATION MENTOR SELECTION AGREEMENT

Rotation dates: _______________ to _______________

1. We have discussed possible rotation projects.
2. There are space and appropriate resources available in the lab during this period.
3. Mentor will devote the time necessary to provide a quality learning experience for this student.
4. Mentor agrees to:
   - Read the written rotation report and give the student feedback on the quality of organization, grammar and writing style.
   - Attend any seminar presentations by the student during the rotation period.
5. Student agrees to:
   - Conduct research under the supervision of Mentor.
   - Provide a research report in the required format.
6. All rotation agreements are subject to approval by the MSP Executive Committee.
7. We have discussed the lab safety procedures and protocols used in the lab to comply with all safety and other regulatory requirements (including any specific expectations, standard operating procedures for the lab, and any biological or chemical agent-specific information).

______________________________  __________________________  ________________
Student (print name)                  Signature                  Date

______________________________  __________________________  ________________
Rotation Mentor (print name)          Signature                  Date

Office Phone Number: _______________ Lab Phone Number: _______________
Mentor E-mail: ____________________________

Other students who will be rotating in this lab during this period:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Rotation Dates</th>
</tr>
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Return signed form to the MSP Program Office, Suite 300A Dental Building.

Revised 8/2017


**Appendix II.**

**PROGRAM IN MOLECULAR AND SYTEMS PHARMACOLOGY**  
**STUDENT LABORATORY ROTATION EVALUATION FORM**

MSP Program guidelines indicate that student performance in laboratory rotations is graded on an S/U basis. To allow the Executive Committee to monitor student performance, faculty advisors must complete this form within four weeks of the end of the rotation.

Student Name: ________________________________________________________________

Faculty Name: __________________________ Date: ________________________________

**GRADE:** (circle one)  **S**  or  **U**

On each of the following scales, place a mark at the point that best represents your evaluation of the student’s performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time and effort in the lab</td>
<td>little or none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>never stopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual involvement</td>
<td>little or none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>best ever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to grasp principles and concepts</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>best ever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks advice</td>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows advice</td>
<td>never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical ability</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of output</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction with other lab members</td>
<td>some problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gets along well</td>
</tr>
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</table>


MSP Program – Student Laboratory Rotation Evaluation Form

☐ Please check here to certify that you have read the written rotation report, and that you have provided the student with a critique on organization, writing style and grammar.

Additional comments:

Confidential comments: (not to be communicated to the student)

Signature ___________________________ Date _________________________

Please submit form to MSP Office: msp@emory.edu
REQUEST FOR ASSIGNMENT OF FACULTY MENTOR
FOR MSP STUDENT DISSERTATION RESEARCH

The student and faculty member named below formally request that the Executive Committee of the Graduate Program in Molecular and Systems Pharmacology consider the appointment of the faculty member as the student’s dissertation mentor.

1) Mentor agrees to assume the responsibility for the intellectual and financial support of the student, under the guidelines established by the GDBBS.
2) Mentor agrees to submit and grade questions for the MSP Qualifying Exam Part I, if asked.
3) Mentor agrees to participate in the MSP grants course when this student is taking the course.
4) Mentor agrees to attend oral presentations given by the student in MSP-sponsored functions.

Student Name: _____________________ Faculty Name: _____________________

______ Signature _____________ Date ____________________________ Signature _____________ Date ____________________________

Mentor: Program guidelines indicate that this agreement must be approved by the MSP Executive Committee. To allow the Committee to make an informed decision, please complete the following information: (print or type, attach additional sheets as needed.)

1) How many students are you currently supervising?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Program Expected</th>
<th>Expected Graduation Date</th>
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2) Do you expect that any other Division students will join your laboratory in the next year? (If yes, give names and programs)

_________________________ ____________________________
Signature of MSP Director of Graduate Studies Date

Please return signed form to the MSP Program Office 300A Dental Building, along with other Mentor Agreement paperwork.
Appendix IV.

The GDBBS Mentor Agreement Form can be accessed with this link:

https://secure.web.emory.edu/biomed/intranet/documents/students/gdbbs-student-forms/MentorAssign.pdf

Print it, complete it, and submit it to the MSP DGS, along with the Request for Assignment of Faculty Mentor for MSP Student Dissertation Research form. The second page, which describes the Faculty Stipend Reserve Fund Regulations, should also be printed and provided to the Mentor and department Chair.

Note:

- The student signs the form and gives it to the Mentor.
- The Mentor signs and obtains his/her department Chair to sign. This task is not delegated to the student, as it may involve a conversation between Mentor and Chair.
- The Mentor gives the signed form to the student, who submits both forms to the DGS.
- The DGS will petition the MSP Executive Committee for approval and notify the student of the result.
- Forms are submitted to GDBBS by the Program Administrator.
- Mentor assignments are official after receipt and approval by the GDBBS.

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Appendix V.

STUDENT ANNUAL REPORT

The MSP Program requires that all students submit a formal Annual Report at the end of each academic year. This report provides an annual check to make sure that each student is continuing to make appropriate progress in all aspects of their training. This report must be submitted by every student to the MSP Program Administrator on or before May 31 of each calendar year. Student name and report year should appear on each page.

The report will include the following items (if not applicable, simply state N/A; do not delete headings):

1) Name
2) Today’s date
3) Year entered into MSP Program
4) Advisor
5) Courses taken this academic year, with grades (if available)
6) Most recent cumulative GPA
7) Research rotations done (first year students only)
8) A list of publications and patents (include submitted and in press; do not attach copies)
9) A list of abstracts presented at national or regional meetings (do not attach copies)
10) Presentations made locally
11) Fellowships or grants awarded or continuing
12) Activities fulfilling TATTO Teaching Associateship (see MSP Handbook)
13) Research progress (3-4 paragraphs)
14) Dates of dissertation committee meetings during the year; and dates that reports were filed
15) Anticipated date of next dissertation committee meeting
16) Anticipated Ph.D. completion time
17) Goals after completing Ph.D.
18) Names of three people you would ask for recommendations for jobs or fellowships

☐ Check this box if you would like to request a confidential meeting with the MSP Executive Committee to discuss your progress or any aspect of your training.

Filing of the report is required to maintain adequate progress in the program.

Submit report to msp@emory.edu.
Appendix VI.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The Qualifying Exam Chair will organize and chair a committee to administer the qualifying exam. The committee should consist of faculty who teach in graduate courses and reflect the breadth of the program, and at least one student who has advanced to Candidacy.

Notification. The Qualifying Exam Chair will notify in writing those students who are to take the qualifying exam and their advisors. Letters will be sent at least one month before the written exam and will also include a tentative date(s) for the oral exam. The letter will describe the procedures to be followed, and the required performance standards.

Written Exam. The Qualifying Exam Committee will solicit essay questions from faculty. Questions should be accompanied by an outline of an adequate answer, which will be distributed to faculty graders. The committee should ensure that questions are based on material to which the students were exposed during the first two years. Relevant course syllabi will be available for determining the suitability of questions.

Grading of the Written Exam. Written exams will be coded so that graders will not know the identity of the students. At least two graders for each question will be recruited by the committee; a question’s author will be one of its two graders, when possible. Each question will receive a numerical score based on a continuous scale from 0 to 4.0, with 4.0 being the highest possible score. The final grade for each question will be determined by averaging the scores from each grader. For each student, the grade for the one question with the lowest score will be discarded, and the scores for the remaining questions averaged to determine the final grade. Students will receive written notification of their average grade on each question as well as their final grade. The minimum passing grade is 3.0.
Appendix VII.

Dissertation Committee

By the end of the first two semesters (or equivalent) of full-time graduate studies, a student usually will have made arrangements with one faculty member to serve as dissertation advisor. A Dissertation Committee is selected after the student passes the qualifying exams. The first committee meeting should take place no later than six months after the Part II exam. The committee is selected by the dissertation advisor and student; it includes the dissertation advisor, who serves as chairperson, and at least three other faculty members; at least three of these members must be MSP Faculty.

The duties of the committee include assisting the student in creating and executing an original, publishable research project, assisting in the preparation of an acceptable dissertation, and administering the final oral examination (dissertation defense). As such, this committee is vital to the progress of the student. It should be chosen as soon as possible, and committee meetings should be held at least every six months; students in the sixth year and beyond should meet at least every four months. The committee members are there to help, so it is very important that they be consulted and made aware of progress on a regular basis.

Committee members from outside of Emory University are subject to approval from the Laney Graduate School (LGS). The mentor will supply to LGS the proposed member’s full CV and a letter stating why he or she will be of value to this committee.

The Dissertation Committee Signature Form is required by the Laney Graduate School and may be found on their web site: http://www.gs.emory.edu/academics/policies/dissertation.html

This link leads to the LGS web page that contains instructions for completing and submitting the information for forming - and changing, if necessary – the student’s Dissertation Committee. Note that the form is accessed from this page, and they are additional instructions with the form.

Students will scan and submit the completed (signed) document on-line. Submit the original form to the MSP Program Office, 300A Dental Building.

The form should be completed, approved, and submitted before the first meeting is held. All signatures must be original; copies of the form will not be accepted.

Revised: 8/2017
PROGRAM IN MOLECULAR AND SYSTEMS PHARMACOLOGY

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
SUMMARY AND PROGRESS REPORT

This form summarizes and documents the outcome of dissertation committee meetings. Students must complete the narrative section of the report within a week following each meeting. The report must be approved by the student’s advisor, and copies distributed by the student to the dissertation committee, Senior Student DGS, and the MSP Office.

Student Name and Signature                                       Date of meeting

Committee members (including mentor): please sign and check appropriate space.
Note: Members who missed the meeting do not sign this form; separate meetings should be documented on separate forms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Satisfactory</td>
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* If a majority of the signees check Unsatisfactory, the advisor must notify the Program Director in writing. The advisor holds the tie-breaking vote.

Next committee meeting by: ____________________________________________

Narrative Comments: (e.g. goals met; goals set; changes in research direction; experiments required to complete research; anticipated timetable for completion or research and/or writing; concern of the committee, etc.). Attach additional pages for narrative comments.

Senior Student DGS’s Signature                                       Date

Please return signed form to the MSP Office, Suite 300A Dental Building.

Revised: 8/2017
Appendix IX.

PROGRAM IN MOLECULAR AND SYSTEMS PHARMACOLOGY

Provisional Dissertation Approval Form

This form must be submitted to the Senior Student DGS by the candidate at least two weeks before the dissertation defense is scheduled.

STUDENT NAME: ________________________________________________

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: _________________________________________

DATE OF FINAL COMMITTEE MEETING: ______________________________

DISSERTATION DEFENSE DATE TIME: PLACE:

_________________________________________________________________

The signatories below agree that the dissertation is in a form suitable for oral defense

Student: _______________________________________________________

(Type or print) Signature Date

Mentor: _______________________________________________________

(Type or print) Signature Date

Dissertation Committee members sign below: Are minor revisions needed before the defense?

1) ______________________________________________________________

2) ______________________________________________________________

3) ______________________________________________________________

4) ______________________________________________________________

5) ______________________________________________________________

Signature of Senior Student DGS____________________________________

Please return signed form to the MSP Office, Suite 300A Dental Building.
Appendix X.

PREPARING A DISSERTATION AND SCHEDULING A DISSERTATION DEFENSE IN THE MSP PROGRAM

Guidelines for preparation of the Dissertation:

Before beginning to write the dissertation, students should obtain an information packet from the GDBBS office. This packet includes: a checklist for submission of the dissertation, graduate school instructions and requirements for preparation of the dissertation, and various necessary forms.

The following program guidelines have been developed in order to minimize confusion among students, their mentors and committee members as to the acceptable format of the document. They are entirely consistent with Graduate School requirements, many of which are incorporated into the guidelines:

Document and page order
Use the following order: Circulation agreement, approval sheet, abstract cover page, abstract, dissertation cover page, acknowledgements (optional), table of contents, list of figures, list of abbreviations, and body of the dissertation.

Figures and figure legends
Each figure should be drawn on a separate page, which should be placed immediately following the page on which it is first mentioned in the text. Figure legends should begin with the figure number and an appropriate title. Numbering should contain the Chapter number and the sequence of citation (e.g. Fig 4.1 or IV-1). The legend can be typed on the same page, or it can be typed on a separate page preceding the figure. The same legend position should be used throughout the dissertation.

Tables and Table legends
Follow the same rules as for figures with the following modifications: Table legends should be on the same page as the Table, and can be placed above or below the Table. If desired, the table number and title may be typed above the Table, and the rest of the legend can be typed below it. Follow the same convention throughout the dissertation.

Abbreviations
All abbreviations should be defined in parentheses at the place of their first use in the text (or in the appropriate figure or Table legend), and should also be listed alphabetically in the List of Abbreviations. The abbreviations of some important biochemical compounds, e.g. ATP, NADH, DNA, and amino acids in proteins, need not be defined. Simple chemical formulae (e.g. NO) may also be used without definition.

References
Follow the formats of one of the following two journals: Molecular Pharmacology; Annual Reviews in Pharmacology and Toxicology. Templates for these styles can be found in the Endnote software program.
Appendix X.  *(DISSERTATION AND SCHEDULING)* continued

**Dissertation Defense - Information and Timeline for Scheduling**

1. Obtain approval from the dissertation committee as to the content and format of the dissertation. Inform the Senior Student DGS that approval has been given.

2. Read the Graduate School and MSP Program guidelines and regulations for preparation and submission of a dissertation.

3. Write the dissertation. Give it to your advisor for comments. Revise the dissertation if necessary. Get approval from your advisor to distribute the dissertation to your committee.

4. Distribute the dissertation to the committee. Make any revisions suggested by the committee. At least two weeks after distributing the dissertation, get the committee members to sign the Provisional Dissertation Approval Form.

5. **ALL OF THE FOLLOWING MUST BE DONE AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE DEFENSE:**

   i. Set a date for the defense that can be attended by all members of the dissertation committee. You must avoid conflict with classes, national meetings attended by a large number of Program faculty or students (e.g. Experimental Biology or Neuroscience). To avoid conflicts, discuss date/time options with the Senior Student DGS and/or Program Director.

   ii. Reserve an appropriate room for the defense. It is recommended that the defense be held on the main Emory campus, to encourage maximum attendance by faculty and students.

   iii. The Provisional Dissertation Approval Form is signed by the Senior Student DGS, and the form is submitted to the Program Administrator.

   iv. Obtain a template of the formal announcement flyer from the Program Administrator. Use this to enter your information as indicated. Get your mentor to proof it, and then forward it to the Program Administrator for distribution. The completed flyer should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the defense. It will not be sent until the Provisional Dissertation Approval Form is received by the Program Administrator.

   v. Submit minor corrections to the dissertation, if any, to members of the dissertation committee.

   vi. Submit a final electronic copy of the revised dissertation with the Program Administrator, for interested faculty and students to read.

6. At the defense, bring copies of the signatures page of your dissertation and the form "**REPORT OF COMPLETION OF REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE**" for the committee to sign. A copy of the form is on the Laney Graduate School web site.

7. **ALWAYS** check the LGS Handbook to assure that you have the current form and instructions for the completion procedure!

Revised: 8/2017
Appendix XI.

REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN THE TRAINING FACULTY

Consistent with GDBBS policies, there are three types of membership in the MSP Program. New members are usually expected to qualify for Full Membership, but their status may be changed later under certain circumstances.

1) Full Members must be independently funded faculty at Emory University in good standing. They have full rights and privileges, including the right to serve in any GDBBS function and to act as Dissertation Advisors. All dissertations must be directed by a Full Member, even if the research is being done in the laboratory of an Associate or Adjunct member.

2) Associate Members must be faculty at Emory University. These faculty members may only serve as a Dissertation Co-Advisor. This category may include faculty who may not take a student because of indebtedness to the Stipend Reserve Fund; or those who have been judged to be non-participatory during the annual Program Review of participation.

3) Adjunct Members are faculty or staff of another institution and have credentials similar to those of Full Members. The MSP Program does not accept Adjunct Members at this time.

Requirements for Maintaining Membership. Full members of the MSP training faculty must participate in the teaching and/or service functions of the program, be active in research, and document these activities as follows:

Teaching. Submit and grade qualifying exam questions. Attend graduate seminar and submit papers for student presentations. Teach in a graduate IBS or MSP course, either as principal instructor, guest or team lecturer, course director, or seminar director. Supervision of students in laboratory rotations, dissertation research, or directed study does not satisfy this requirement. Training faculty must maintain an average of 3 contact hours per year, averaged over 3 years, to satisfy their teaching obligation. Course or seminar directors will be credited with contact hours equivalent to the number of credit hours for the course(s) they direct.

Service. Serve on the Executive Committee or as a member of a standing committee or subcommittee. Attend the Program retreat and Program recruiting activities. Serve on MSP student dissertation committees.

Research. Faculty must be actively engaged in research, and have the resources to support graduate student stipends and research activities. This requirement can be satisfied by current research funding or by funding for at least 2 of the previous 4 years at a level sufficient to support graduate student research.

Documentation. Return a yearly questionnaire documenting program participation. Expectations of Associate or Adjunct members are lower, but they must also document their participation yearly. The questionnaire is a requirement for continued program membership.

Faculty Evaluation – Training faculty activities will be reviewed by the membership committee. Failure of a full faculty member to meet the requirements of the program will result in a one-year probationary period, in which the member will not be eligible to host MSP students for laboratory rotations nor serve as a research advisor for new students. Those individuals who have not satisfied the maintenance requirements after one year on probation will be moved to Associate member status. To be reinstated to full membership, faculty on probation or Associate members must document that they have satisfied the requirements for membership. Any decision regarding membership status may be appealed to the Executive Committee.
Appendix XII.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE TRAINING FACULTY

Applications for membership of the training faculty will be considered by the membership committee, who will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee for final decision. Denial of membership may be appealed directly to the Executive Committee. Current requirements for membership include:

1) Currently hold the rank of Assistant Professor or higher as primary or secondary appointment at Emory University.
2) A history of publications in biomedical research that are either directly related, or complementary, to the study of pharmacology and toxicology.
3) Research funding and lab space sufficient to support graduate student research or the potential to obtain such funding, as evidenced by pending applications.

Applicants wishing to join the MSP faculty should submit a letter of application to the Chair of the Membership Committee. The letter should specify that the applicant is seeking Full Membership in the MSP Program and describe the applicant’s specific interest in MSP. It should also specify how the applicant plans to participate in the teaching and training mission of the Program. Some examples of program participation can be found in Appendices XI and XIII.

Attach the following documents to the application:

- Curriculum Vitae, including current and past grant support
- NIH Biosketch
- Information on past experience in training doctoral students or postdoctoral fellows including current position and current position and current institutional affiliation of present and former trainees (use training grant table format/form supplied)
- Publication records of past and present trainees from work performed with the candidate for Program appointment (highlight names on C.V.)
- A list of planned or ongoing collaborative efforts with other MSP and GDBBS faculty
- A one-page research description, including references to two recent publications
- A one-sentence summary of major research efforts
- A letter from the candidate to the GDBBS Director indicating his/her desire to become a training faculty member within the Division and willingness to meet the teaching commitments of the Division
- A letter of support from the Chairperson of the department in which the candidate holds his/her primary appointment

Following receipt of the application, the Membership Chair will distribute it to the MSP Membership Committee. If the Committee agrees that the applicant is an appropriate candidate for membership in the MSP Faculty, the Membership Chair will arrange for the candidate to present a research seminar advertised to the MSP Program. The seminar can be in one of the established departmental programs at Emory University, or it can be a special seminar convened for this express purpose. The seminar will help the Program evaluate the candidate’s suitability to the program, and will also serve as a vehicle to initiate and foster scientific interactions between the candidate and the program faculty. Following a vote of the current MSP Faculty, the membership committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to whether to offer membership to the candidate.

After favorable consideration by the Program Executive Committee, the Membership Chair will forward the request for appointment to the GDBBS office with a recommendation for approval. If the request meets GDBBS requirements, the Division Director will request the Dean of the Laney Graduate School to appoint the candidate as a member of the graduate faculty in the GDBBS, affiliated with the MSP Program.
APPENDIX XIII.

MSP TRAINING FACULTY MEMBERSHIP ANNUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Last Name (Print)</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
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</table>

Signature    Date

It is the expectation of the MSP program that faculty make consistent and meaningful contributions to the goals of the program. The major areas of involvement include (1) mentoring a rotating or dissertation program student, (2) teaching in MSP-related courses, (3) attending MSP events, such as retreats and symposia, (4) contributing papers and participating in the weekly MSP student seminars, (5) serving on MSP student dissertation committees, (6) serving on the MSP Executive Committee or subcommittees, (7) participating in the student recruitment functions of the program, and (8) submitting questions to and grading the qualifying examination. While it is recognized that different program faculty have differing interests and skills related to these areas, membership in the program obligates participating faculty to contribute meaningfully in more than one of these areas. While serving as a student’s dissertation advisor is meritorious, this act in and of itself is not deemed to be sufficient for continued membership in the program. In addition to the above requirements for program participation, program guidelines indicate that faculty must be actively engaged in research, and have the resources to support graduate student stipends and research activities.

To ensure faculty commitment, active involvement in the program by participating faculty is assessed by the membership committee on a yearly basis. This is done by review of this form that allows each faculty member to detail their specific past-year contributions to the program in the aforementioned areas. Faculty members who have not made significant contributions to the functions of the MSP program in a prior year will be contacted by an MSP executive committee member and are expected to work with that member to increase their involvement with the program in the upcoming year. If the deficiency continues, the faculty member will be placed on probationary status as detailed in Appendix XI.

Please respond to the following:

In the past year have you:

Mentored a rotation MSP student in your laboratory? Yes No

Mentored the dissertation research of an MSP student? Yes No
TRAINING FACULTY MEMBERSHIP

Please respond to the following:

In the past year have you:

- Attended an MSP program retreat or symposium? Yes No
- Served on an MSP student dissertation committee? Yes No
- Participated in MSP student seminars? Yes No
  If yes, # contributed articles _____ # sessions attended _____
- Participated in MSP Ethics workshops? Yes No
  If yes, # sessions presented _____ # sessions attended _____
- Served on the MSP Executive Committee/subcommittees? Yes No
- Participated in MSP student recruitment activities? Yes No
- Participated in the MSP qualifying examinations? Yes No
  If yes, contributed exam questions _____ graded exam answers _____

In the past 3 years have you:
- Taught in the MSP curriculum Yes No
  Course(s) ______________________ # lectures (total, 3 years) ________

OTHER ACTIVITIES

If you feel that your recent participation in the program is not adequately described by the above data, please describe other activities or services you have performed in the past three years that have contributed to the MSP Program:

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Please append an NIH Biosketch including your current research support (and pending applications, if you so wish).

MSP STUDENT PROGRESS

For each MSP student currently in your laboratory, on a separate page, please write a short account (2 sentences – 1 paragraph) summarizing the student’s progress in the past year. If you are dissatisfied with the student’s performance or progress, please explain and indicate whether you would like to meet with the Executive Committee for a confidential discussion.
Appendix XIV.

MSP SPECIALTY TRACK FORM

This form documents the student’s intent to pursue a specialty track, along with the standard MSP curriculum. It must be submitted before the student reaches Candidacy. The lower section will document the MSP Program’s approval, after the requirements have been met.

Specialty track to be pursued: ______________________________________

Today’s Date: _____________________________________________________

Requirements:

________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Student: ___________________________  _____________________________
Print Name                                      Signature

Mentor: ___________________________  _____________________________
Print Name                                      Signature

SSD:      ___________________________ ____________________
Print Name                                      Signature

Submit form to the MSP Program Office, Suite 300A Dental Building.
Student should keep a copy.

********************************************************************************************

Upon completion of the requirements, the student will ask the SSD to review the transcript and confirm that all conditions for the specialty track are met.

Senior Student DGS          DATE

Submit form to the MSP Program Office, Suite 300A Dental Building.
### MSP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Randy Hall</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Andrew Jenkins</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Student DGS</td>
<td>Roy Sutliff</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions Chair</td>
<td>Christopher Doering</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Chair</td>
<td>Hyunsuk Shim</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination Chair</td>
<td>John Calvert</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Eric Ortlund</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Chair</td>
<td>Cassandra Quave</td>
<td>2019</td>
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<td>Pharmacology Training Grant PI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Representative</td>
<td>Lauren Fleischer</td>
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Handbook Revised: 8/14/17