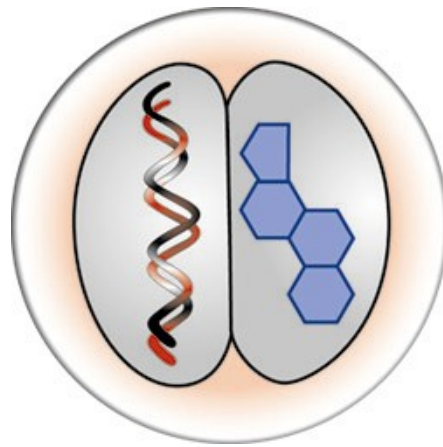


# Endocrinology & Reproductive Physiology Program



## Graduate Student Handbook

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended for your use as a source of information throughout your graduate studies. This handbook contains the policy and procedure information pertaining to degree completion in the Endocrinology & Reproductive Physiology Program. Forms related to degree completion are available to download from the ERP Program web site at <http://www.erp.wisc.edu> in the Program Document section.

Additional questions you may have concerning the Program that are not covered in the following pages should be directed to your major professor or one of the following:

Tiffany Bachmann, Program Administrator  
1465 MSC, 1300 University Ave  
Madison, WI 53706.  
608-265-5838 (voice)  
Email: [tabachmann@wisc.edu](mailto:tabachmann@wisc.edu)

Dr. Ian Bird, Program Director  
7 E. Meriter Hospital  
202 South Park Street  
Madison, WI 53715  
608-417-6252 (voice)  
Email: [imbird@wisc.edu](mailto:imbird@wisc.edu) – **Please contact by email first**

## 1.1 Organizational Structure of the ERP Program

**Director:** Ian M. Bird, Ph.D., Professor  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

**Assistant Director:** Ronald Magness, Ph.D., Professor  
Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; Director- Perinatal Research  
Laboratories

**Associate Director for Diversity Initiatives:** Theresa Duello, Associate Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology

**Program Administrator:** Tiffany Bachmann

### 1.1.1 Committee Descriptions

**Program Steering Committee:** The purpose of this committee is to provide the Program Director with guidance on issues affecting the administrative function of the ERP Program. The immediate past Program Director will also serve on this committee. The Committee will also serve as the nucleus for the pre-doctoral training grant application. Members of this committee are: Dr. Ian Bird, Chair, Dr. Elaine Alarid, Dr. Ted Golos, Dr. Colin Jefcoate, Dr. John Parrish, and Dr. Ei Terasawa. Student Representative, open. Ex-Officio Member, Tiffany Bachmann.

**Admissions and External Affairs:** The purpose of the Admissions and External Affairs Committee is to set standards for acceptance into the ERP Program and screen applications during the admission periods in addition to recruitment and promoting the program to external organizations. Committee members are: Dr. Ron Magness, Dr. Manish Patankar, Dr. Ei Terasawa, Dr. Milo Wiltbank, Dr. Jing Zheng, and Tiffany Bachmann.

**Student Affairs:** This committee reviews the curriculum content of the Special Topics Courses, evaluates course requirements and makes policy as needed in addition to handling student

issues. Members of this committee are: Dr. Ian Bird, Chair, Dr. Paul Bertics, Dr. Colin Jefcoate, Dr. Jon Odorico, and Dr. John Parrish. Student Representative, (rotates annually). Ex-Officio Member – Tiffany Bachmann

**Diversity:** This committee is responsible for enhancing the diversity of the ERP Program consistent with the University of Wisconsin policies. Faculty members are: Dr. William Bosu, Dr. Pam Kling, Dr. Dick Peterson, and Dr. Jyoti Watters. Tiffany Bachmann.

**Seminar Committee:** This committee's main purpose is to assist with the ERP Seminar course (Animal Science 954/ OB-Gyn 954/ Zoology 954). Committee members are selected annually.

**Symposium Committee:** Each year graduate students of the ERP Program organize and host the annual symposium. Committee members are responsible for selecting a date, arranging keynote and invited guest speakers, hospitality and the preparation of symposium materials. Committee members are selected annually.

## 2 DEGREE CURRICULUM

The ERP Program will consider applications for a MS, MS/PhD or PhD. If a student enters for a MS program, please note that continuation to a PhD will require the student is in good academic standing and has the approval of the advisory/thesis committee to continue.

The following pages describe the degree requirements for the PhD and MS. Additional information on course availability is provided on the program website at [www.erp.wisc.edu](http://www.erp.wisc.edu). A grade of a B or better is required for all core courses and students must maintain a cumulative B average to remain in good standing by both the ERP Program and the Graduate School.

### 2.1 Ph.D. Course Requirements

#### 2.1.1 Core Course Requirements

- A. 3-4 credits of Statistics  
Statistics 571 (4 cr, Fall) or Statistics 541 (3 cr, Fall)
  - B. 3 credits in Endocrinology  
\*\*Endocrine Physiology, Animal Sciences 875 (3 Cr, Fall)
  - C. 9 credits in Biochemistry (PhD)
    1. \*\*Biochemistry 507 (3 cr, Fall)
    - And
    2. Biochemistry 508 (3 cr, Spring)
- 3 credits or more in Biochemistry/Cell signaling.
3. \*\*Biochemistry 630 (3 cr, Fall) or Neuroscience 610 (4 cr)

Note: If pre-qualified in Biochemistry, candidate should seek a waiver from 507 and 508 from Program Director. We do not recommend taking course marked \*\* at the same time.

- D. Professional Development
  - \*Surgical Sciences 812 (2 cr, Fall) or Nursing 803 (1 cr, Spring)
- E. ERP Program Seminar (1 cr.)
  - \*Animal Sciences 954, Ob/Gyn 954, Zoology 954

**Additional Elective Requirements: to PhD standard as needed *and per committee approval***

- F. Further credits of Relevant more specialized study in Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Endocrinology or Reproduction. Choices will depend on project and career needs, but should be made with the approval of your advisor and committee.
- G. Other – selections as approved per Certification Committee
  - 1. Advanced Statistics – as per project design – eg Stats 572, Stats 542, BMI 511 [consult with your committee and see below].
  - 2. Advanced Topics Courses – designed to be at the cutting edge. As advised by committee and of relevance to studies – see below.

### **2.1.2 Ph.D. Certification Committee**

PhD Certification committee should be formed no later than the beginning of the second year. An advisor hold will be placed on the student's record and can be removed by the Program Coordinator when the Certification form is completed. All forms are available on the ERP Program website at <http://www.erp.wisc.edu>

The role of the Certification Committee is one of mentoring and advising so care should be taken in the formulation process to ensure a good balance (view points, training experience) and fit with both the student and research project. The Certification Committee faculty should be from the student's primary area of research interest and represent potential graduate committee members. The student should work closely with his/her advisor and arrange a Certification/ Advisory Committee during the first year of study for the purpose of recommending a specific plan of courses to study based upon the student's preparation and direction of proposed graduate research. The student should complete the "Certification" form and distribute it during the certification meeting.

The conduct of original research resulting in a written thesis is required for graduate degrees in Endocrinology & Reproductive Physiology. Identification of an appropriate research topic and faculty mentor are critical steps in the development of a graduate program.

The Program offers tremendous flexibility to permit students to select courses best suited to their individual interests. In order to maintain this flexibility and yet preserve excellence in academics, students must work closely with their Committee members. Early certification and periodic progress updates with Committee members ensure continued success of the Program's format.

The Certification Committee is comprised of the following tenured or tenure track individuals:

- A. Major professor
- B. Two UW-Madison faculty named by student and major professor
- C. Two UW-Madison faculty approved by Program Director

D. Additional members (optional)

### 2.1.3 Ph.D. Preliminary Exam

The preliminary exam is scheduled when the candidate has completed the required course work and is ready to enter dissertator status to devote the remaining degree time to bench work.

Contact the Program office 3-4 weeks prior to the examination date to obtain the appropriate examination application form for submission to the Graduate School and request that a warrant be obtained from the Graduate School office. Be prepared to provide the date of examination and members of your examining committee. Have available at time of examination:

- (a) a complete transcript or record of undergraduate and graduate courses taken and grades received
- (b) a copy of certification, and evidence of having completed the requirements for the degree (for Preliminary and Final examinations)

Ideally the preliminary exam will be done in the third year unless there are extenuating circumstances. If exam hasn't been taken by the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> year, Program will enquire as to the student's plan or circumstances. The purpose is to identify problems at the prelim exam and this will then help determine if the student should re-evaluate the project, lab environment or continue in the program. The exam's aim is to see the thinking process of the project and clarify the plan for the thesis project by using a grant format; a significant amount of data is not required although many aim to at least show the project is technically achievable. Ideally all course work would be completed before the prelim is taken, however if there is a course requirement outstanding, the committee can sign the form, but withhold the date of completion until the course is complete. Student will not achieve dissertator status until the signed warrant is returned to the Graduate School.

#### 2.1.3.1 Ph.D. Preliminary Exam Format

First and most important note all written documents, questions, answers etc must be channeled through the appropriate personnel. Specifically, the initial proposal must be submitted to and approved for format by the program administrator before it is formally accepted and the clock begins. Note all written questions must be submitted by faculty for collation to the administrator in order be recorded and the administrator will communicate these directly to the faculty advisor for moderation before passing on to the student. Likewise student answers will be made to the administrator who will record them prior to forwarding to the committee members. Be aware deviation from this procedure can only mean unnecessary delays for all concerned.

Before you begin to prepare your written document for the preliminary exam, you should discuss the following issues with your faculty advisor and your thesis committee:

- A. Pre proposal preparation
  - o Major Grant Guidelines that you will follow (NSF, USDA, NIH)
  - o Scientific Content
  - o Availability of ALL concerned (candidate, advisor, committee) for the oral review. Keep in mind that the oral review cannot take place within 30 days of the submission of the written document.
- B. Proposal development

- The written portion of the exam must follow the specified guidelines of your selected grant agency. You are only responsible for the Scientific Proposal section. You do not need to include resource pages, biosketches, budgets etc...Ask your advisor or committee members for sample proposals to review formatting and content style.
  - i. Page formatting
    - 1. Use the font, text size, margin and spacing guidelines as required by the grant agency
    - 2. Number the pages consecutively
    - 3. Stay within the specified page limitations for the scientific proposal section; the proposal does not need to be maximum number of pages allowed.
  - ii. Content
    - 1. Your faculty member is responsible for reviewing the scientific content of each section
    - 2. Follow all heading requirements
    - 3. Follow all guidelines for the use of graphs, photos, tables and figures
    - 4. Review guidelines for inclusion of literature reviews and publication requests. If not generally included with a proposal to your agency, include this information following the main document.
  - iii. General Presentation
    - 1. Document must be word processed in a commonly available format (MS Word)
    - 2. The completed document must be a single file with all images, tables, figures and graphs embedded into the document laid out in the style of the chosen national granting agency.
    - 3. Include a brief table of contents and cover page with your name, date submitted, and advisor's name.
    - 4. Follow all rules regarding the use of fonts and color. Do not rely only on color to convey your information as some will not have access to a color printer.
- C. Proposal Submission
  - Contact the Program Coordinator at least 24 hours prior to your expected date of distribution to check formatting and accessibility.
  - The Program Coordinator will review your document to verify that it meets the formatting grant guidelines of your selected agency. You and your advisor are responsible for reviewing the scientific content.
  - Proposals that do not meet the proper formatting requirements will be returned to the student for corrections.
  - The student may work in the program office to correct the formatting issues. PC computers are available.
  - If the proposal passes the formatting check it will be converted to an Adobe Acrobat format.
  - The Program Coordinator will be responsible for sending out the final approved exam document to the committee members with a carbon copy of the message and document to the student. This is the day at which the clock starts, not the day of submission by the student.
- D. Question Submission

- Committee members are required to send their written questions to the Program Coordinator during the two week timeframe specified in the email.
  - The Program Coordinator will compile the questions received into a single document and forward them to the student's advisor for review at the end of the two week period.
  - The faculty advisor is responsible for reviewing the questions for clarity and repetitiveness and preparing a final copy to be given to the student and Program Coordinator.
  - The student has two weeks from the date of receipt of the committees' questions to reply. The student must send the written replies to the Program Coordinator who will compile the written responses into a uniform document to be distributed to the committee members at the end of the two week period.
- E. The Oral Exam
- Purpose
    - i. The aim of the oral exam is to discuss the student's answers to the written questions and the scientific aims of the proposal as well as develop a sound timeframe for degree completion. By the end of the meeting the student and committee members should have a firm understanding of the remaining work to be completed, papers to be written and semester of completion.
  - Format
    - i. The student may elect to give a brief presentation, not longer than 30 minutes to update the committee on new developments since the time the written document was sent.
    - ii. The student's faculty advisor is the chair of the committee and is responsible for keeping the meeting on track and completed in a reasonable amount of time.
    - iii. The discussion should be similar to grant review session.
- F. After the exam
- If the student has passed the exam each committee member should sign the warrant.
  - The student should return the signed warrant to the Program Coordinator to make a copy for the file and be returned to the Graduate School.
  - The Graduate School will send the student an email letter confirming dissertator status for the following semester.
  - In cases where the student does not pass the preliminary exam, the committee can recommend two options:
    - i. Retake the exam at a later date provided that the committee has given clear instructions for areas of improvement
    - ii. Recommend that the student terminate with an MS degree

## **2.2 M.S. Course Requirements**

### **2.2.1 Core Course Requirements**

#### Core Course Requirements

- A. 4 Credits of Statistics
  - Statistics 571- Statistical Methods for Bioscience 1 (4 cr.) **or** Advanced Statistics
- B. 3 Credits of Endocrinology

- Animal Sciences 875- Endocrine Physiology (3 cr.) **or** Biochemistry 630
- C. 3 Credits of Biochemistry
  - Biomolecular Chemistry 503 (3 cr.) **or** Biochemistry 501 (3 cr.)
  - Biochemistry 507 (3 cr.) & 508 (3 cr.) also possible
- D. ERP Program Seminar – 1 cr. Each Fall and Spring
- E. 1-2 Credits in Responsible Conduct of Research
  - Surgical Sciences 812 (2 cr. Fall) **or** Nursing 803 (1 cr. Spring)

Additional Course Requirements

- F. Further credits of **relevant** advanced study in Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Endocrinology or Reproduction. Choices will depend on your project **and** career needs, but should be made with the approval of your advisor **and** thesis committee.
- G. 990 Research Credits – variable credit per semester as needed to maintain your enrollment status.

## 2.2.2 M.S. Certification Committee

The role of the Certification Committee is one of mentoring and advising so care should be taken in the formulation process to ensure a good balance (view points, training experience) and fit with both the student and research project. The Certification Committee faculty should be from the student's primary area of research interest and represent potential graduate committee members. The student should work closely with his/her adviser and arrange a Certification/ Advisory Committee during the first year of study for the purpose of recommending a specific plan of courses to study based upon the student's preparation and direction of proposed graduate research. The student should complete the "Certification" form and distribute it during the certification meeting.

The conduct of original research resulting in a written thesis is required for graduate degrees in Endocrinology & Reproductive Physiology. Identification of an appropriate research topic and faculty mentor are critical steps in the development of a graduate program.

The Program offers tremendous flexibility to permit students to select courses best suited to their individual interests. In order to maintain this flexibility and yet preserve excellence in academics, students must work closely with their Committee members. Early certification and periodic progress updates with Committee members ensure continued success of the Program's format.

The Committee will be comprised of three faculty: 1) Major Professor 2) faculty selected by both the student and major professor and 3) a faculty member approved by the Program Director.

Due to the short time line for MS students, the first Thesis Committee meeting should be more than simply to just select course-work; time should also be devoted to discussing the project. Master's students are required to form their committee and meet within the first year otherwise an advisor hold will be placed on future registration. This hold can be removed by the Program Coordinator when the Advisory Committee form has been returned. All forms are available on the Program web site at <http://www.erp.wisc.edu>

### 2.2.2.1 M.S. Preliminary Exam

While a prelim exam for Masters students is not traditionally required it would be remembered that the current Prelim format for PhD goes a long way to safeguarding the student against any unpleasant surprises at the final seminar or Thesis defense. By writing in the style of the grant the student is forced to consider the possible adverse outcomes and discuss alternate strategies that may well be necessary **BEFORE** they occur. In addition by having a detailed 'grant' proposal and study design the committee gets every opportunity to state **BEFORE** time runs out what problems they may have with the basic techniques, analysis, and design of the project in its closing stages. As such there is considerable merit in a Prelim for Masters students and on balance it should be seriously considered to be in the students best interests.

The written portion of the preliminary exam will be the submission of a short grant proposal formatted document of the student's thesis/dissertation topic to the committee members. **The specific agency format will be determined by the student and committee members.** The student will submit the written proposal to the committee members at least one month before the oral exam is scheduled. The committee has at least two weeks from the receipt of the proposal to respond to the student with questions in writing. Upon receipt of the questions, the student will then have two weeks to respond to the committee and schedule the oral exam.

(See PHD format 2.1.3.1.)

## 2.3 Recommended Courses

The UW-Madison campus offers a rich course catalog for graduate students. The ERP Program website has a list of recommended courses that can be used to fulfill degree requirements. Your advisor and thesis committee will assist you in determining what courses are advanced given your educational background, research project and career goals.

## 2.4 Seminar Requirement (See also Final Seminar Presentation)

Seminar is not just a chance for you to practice presentations but an integral part of the dynamic communication of the group which only meets at this one venue on a regular basis. It is also a business forum for the program, and a chance to meet what could be future employers. In any of your future jobs you may well be organizing such a series. Take the opportunity to observe how it is done and develop your professional skills as well as your knowledge in such areas. It has also been frequently said by students that after a few years 'what is the point? – I am not learning anything new'. The answer is that you are also teaching- you give deeper presentations, ask better questions, and set an example to early year students. As with many things in life there is more to this than at first sight, and the more you put in, the more you get back. For these and other reasons we would like to remind you all of the following rules and grading guidelines:

- 1) All students will now enroll for 1 credit of seminar regardless of giving a presentation or not in each semester. *Our rationale is seminar participation goes well beyond simple presentation and the 1 credit makes all students accountable for the grade earned.*
- 2) Your seminar grade will be determined by multiple factors reflecting the multiple areas of participation: The former quality of presentation when scheduled to speak continues and we now further consider questions asked during the talk, participation in attending lunch with a guest speaker (aimed at new students in particular, but also those who don't speak up during the Q & A) helping otherwise hosting the speaker such as making lunch arrangements or actively participating in the visit during the day, promptness of arrival at seminar, and submission of the annual progress report (spring). *All of these areas are either evidence of your education or evidence of your*

*participation, and further documentation of your ongoing professional development. (see below)*

3) Definition of what on-time means: On-time arrival is seated no later than 3:10 pm to receive full credit for attendance. Arrival after 3:10 pm would be a deduction to the day's attendance and consistent late arrival will require remedial action/additional work to be completed before deficient grades are cleared. Equally consistently leaving early before presentations are complete will be considered the same as arriving late. If there is a valid reason we need to hear it.

4) Sometimes events prevent attendance – for clarity absences beyond 3 need to be communicated in advance and within 24 hours for MD fellows since we realize they may have clinical issues that don't always allow for notice before the seminar. Nonetheless persistent absences without notification will result in the same penalties as above.

5) We would also remind students of our expectation of good seminar etiquette: Not only on-time arrival, but also turning off of cell phones or at least setting them to vibrate, active participation and interaction with the speaker, particularly guest speakers.

6) The student presentation schedule is determined by simple alphabetical order by last name beginning with students in their second year of study and later is published well in advance to give you time to develop a presentation that is appropriate for your stage of training. Students are required to present on their scheduled date; only under exceptional circumstances will presentations be re-scheduled and must be done with the approval of the Program Director in advance of the presentation date.

Obviously there can always be problems that make attendance difficult or impossible but the key here is do you find attendance truly impossible or just 'inconvenient' due to a lack of planning. If it is a *genuine* conflict we are always open to discussion, or even arranging another seminar series as an acceptable substitute. But the bottom line is deal with such problems up front, and do not leave it until you are called on it.

**Grading:** This is a course like any other course. In each semester you will present or not but the grade is on the whole, not just the presentation.

If you give a talk and grade as required your starting grade for seminar is still a B, not an A. To get an A you must participate further.

If you give no talk in a seminar and you turn up on time but ask no questions and do not participate your grade is again a B. To get an A you must participate further.

## 2.5 Registration Requirements

Students with Research Assistantships (RA's) or Trainee appointments and who have not achieved dissertator status must register for 8-12 graduate level credits each fall and spring semester to remain eligible for tuition remission and health insurance. Students with summer RA's or trainee appointments must register for at least two graduate level credits during the regular 8 week summer session. If you fall below full-time status, you are responsible for contacting your payroll and benefits coordinator as this status change will have consequences.

Students who have achieved dissertator status with an RA or Training Grant Fellowship must register for three credits (usually 990 Research Credits) each semester (fall, spring and summer) until their dissertation is on file at Memorial Library as well as register for the seminar series. Dissertators who do not have an RA or other appointment that requires enrollment, are not required to register for the 8 week summer session unless graduation is planned.

The same registration policy applies to international students. International students should consult the Office of International Student and Scholar Services at 262-2044 with questions regarding student status and their visa.

Registration requirements for summer vary by student status however students are expected to register for the summer session if they are using campus facilities, staff time or intend to graduate. Consult the Graduate School Academic Guidelines for specific policies.

## 2.6 Research Credits

Students are expected to enroll for 990 Research Credits each semester until they have completed their degree. Students should contact their major professor or departmental timetable representative for authorization to register. The number of research credits to register for each semester depends on your overall course load to maintain your student status for stipend and benefits.

First year students will register for 990 Research Credits with their assigned faculty member.

## 2.7 Annual Progress Report

All ERP Program graduate students are required to complete an annual progress report by the last day of the ERP spring semester seminar or other deadline announced. The progress report form is located on the ERP Program web site.

The purpose of the annual progress report is to provide a forum for you and your advisor to discuss satisfactory progress and resolve any concerns before they become a source of contention or impediment to degree completion.

# 3 DEGREE COMPLETION

## 3.1 Final Seminar Presentation

Planning for the exit seminar should take place a semester ahead – do not leave the organization of the defense and writing to the last minute. You must start to organize a defense at the time you begin to write, or even better as soon as you decide to begin. There have recently been mixed assumptions by faculty and students about who does what in preparing for a defense – we have provided this document to outline our expectations. While this is a student defense and it is justifiable to expect the student to organize as such, there are times they meet with resistance and we expect the faculty to help overcome that. In the text that follows we have outlined precisely who is responsible for what in the planning of the defense (student or advisor). Essentially at the time thesis preparation begins You the Candidate should contact your committee and ask for available dates 3 or more months away. Use MeetingWizzard.com or doodle.com to fix the date as soon as you can. Ask your advisor for help if needed with unresponsive Faculty. Notify the office by email of the expected date. Note: Faculty have also been given procedures to follow if it is not possible to have all examiners present at one time.

With approval from your advisor, the student should contact the Program Coordinator to select a date for the final presentation. Students must make a full length (55 minute), lecture format presentation for that credit in the final year for each degree prior to the final defense. This presentation of original research at Animal Science/OBGYN/Zoology Seminar 954 will be graded

by the course instructor and members of the audience. The student must earn at least a “B” grade for this presentation. If the minimum grade is not achieved the student must make a second presentation.

Although in the past the required ERP seminar and exit seminar have been one and the same thing; this need not be the case and indeed it may be easier for the PhD candidates if it were not. ERP candidates must have a graded seminar to fulfill requirement but this does not have to be the Exit seminar if it is not convenient.

The ERP seminar can be given any time during the final year if it is not the Exit seminar. The ERP seminar is evaluated by the audience. At the beginning of the presentation it must be made clear to the audience if this is or is not also an Exit seminar.

The Exit seminar format is to be approved by the committee. If the regular ERP seminar time is not convenient for the speaker, committee members or due to other scheduling conflicts, an outside (special time) seminar can be arranged by the student. A departmental seminar is an acceptable forum, so long as it is announced to the entire ERP faculty body, the student’s committee members and students in the Program. The Exit seminar should be given close to the end of the final semester. It is desirable to have a gap between the Exit seminar and the thesis defense, although both can be given on the same date if circumstances dictate this. Ideally the Exit seminar should be given between one week (ideal) and three months maximum before the thesis defense exam. If all examiners were at the Exit seminar presentation students should skip repetition in the thesis defense and use the defense presentation for more detailed questions from the Committee.

### **3.2 Final Examination Degree Warrant Request**

As soon as you have a complete draft of the thesis get your advisor’s approval that it is complete – that tells us you are close to circulating your thesis and we will request a warrant. Only when we receive the enclosed form signed by your advisor and a pdf of the complete draft will we proceed. Note- if you are unable to get your advisors signature please contact the Program Director.

If at this time you are on track to circulate the Final complete thesis (including all pages, spell checked and final figures) one month ahead of the defense then all is well. If the progress slows and you are way behind we need to adjust your defense date. The one thing we insist upon is you to have your defense thesis in the committee’s hands for one month ahead of time and it be in fully printed form (double sided is fine if you want to save paper) delivered by You the Candidate. Several faculty have objected to simply being sent a pdf and expected to print it – I agree this is unreasonable, and sometimes it will not print, and particularly figures in unusual formats.

### **3.3 Thesis Defense**

The thesis defense is the culmination of completing course work, laboratory research and preparing a thesis / dissertation document to be defended before your advisory committee. This event is your opportunity to demonstrate your growth and transition from student to junior colleague. If handled properly the thesis defense can actually be an enjoyable experience for both you and your committee members celebrate your accomplishments. But if you fail to plan ahead and so are not properly prepared when you enter the room you set yourself up for very long and difficult defense. Instead of being a meeting of the minds it is literally a defense against many criticisms that are quite honestly fully justified. This document describes the procedure you should follow to not end up in that position.

Recently we have seen more and more students having excellent projects go into a defense in a rush and quite honestly are not properly prepared to show their achievements at their best. Lack of

planning of the defense, unrealistic expectations to be able to prepare the thesis in a short time, combined with a premature planning of departure based on an assumption all will be well are all a part of this. Remember this: a PhD thesis may take as long as 3 months and MS 2 months to write just the first draft if you work on it full time. Even then you are REQUIRED to circulate your thesis 4 weeks before the defense. We have been lenient of late in allowing 2 weeks but this is leading to more problems, not less so we are now sticking to 4 weeks required. Start planning now.

At this point you have a month to do things all students should do. You still have obligations before you leave and now is a good time to do them. Get your lab notes finalized, sort out the samples, reagents and document your tools properly (plasmids, antibodies, etc) as you should for grant funded work being concluded. Someone else's ability to follow up your work depends on this. Future papers may only get accepted given further study which you will not be there to perform. Get onto preparing remaining chapters for submission as papers. In preparation for the defense look up research areas on PubMed you may need to discuss further.

Once you go into your defense and assuming all goes well you will inevitably have corrections to make. It is important your advisor keeps track of verbal comments but it is also clear any committee member that requires a change before they sign makes that absolutely clear. We will now require all examiners to complete a form at the defense listing that which is a required change. Anything else not listed as required will by default be advisory. Changes that are required should either be undertaken or an explanation provided of why not (and there may be a good reason that only comes up later- that is fine). Either way the final version should be approved by that examiner and this is indicated by a signature on the warrant. Anything else (ie those changes suggested but not required) is by default changed at the discretion of the student with the approval of the advisor.

### **3.4 Final Oral Examination**

The student is responsible for scheduling (date, time and location) the final oral examination with members of the Committee and providing them the dissertation at least four weeks in advance of the exam. The student will present his/her research to the panel as well as answer questions from them. Typically the exam is at least two hours in length.

Upon successful defense of the thesis, all members will sign the warrant and complete the Thesis Committee Review form located in the appendix to identify what changes are mandatory and which changes are advisory. The committee member review forms will be collected from you and placed in your student file along with a copy of your warrant and thesis committee page and pdf copy of your final dissertation. The original warrant should be taken to the Graduate School at the time of your final review of your thesis.

#### **3.4.1 Final Oral Exam: Revisions and Corrections**

If the final oral examination does not result in a unanimous outcome, per Graduate School policy, only one dissenting signature is allowed on the final degree warrant regardless of the number of members on the committee. If more than one committee member dissents, the student has not passed the final oral examination. The student, faculty advisor and committee members should come to a mutual understanding of what steps must be taken in order to reschedule the final oral examination or re-evaluate the degree goal.

After your final oral exam, you, your faculty member and committee members should come to a mutual understanding on how revisions and corrections to the final thesis will be addressed via the Thesis Committee Review Form (included in your degree packet). It is generally accepted that your faculty advisor will have the most influence on how revisions and corrections are

addressed. Differences of editorial opinion should be addressed by the individual faculty members involved. Expect that some revisions will be required before the thesis will be deposited with the Graduate School; allow yourself a reasonable amount of time to make revisions and meet degree deadlines. You can not make changes to your dissertation once it has been deposited.

### **3.4.2 Depositing Your Thesis / Dissertation**

#### **3.4.2.1 Procedures for Ph.D. Degrees**

##### **3.4.2.1.1 *The Graduate School Final Review***

After passing your oral defense, contact the Graduate School at 608-262-2433 to arrange an appointment for the final review. If you are defending near a semester deadline call immediately after your defense; appointment times fill rapidly during the two to three weeks before any deadline. Before you come for your final review make all corrections requested by your committee.

Dissertation review appointment times are 10:00-11:00 a.m. and 2:00-3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Reviews normally take about 15 minutes.

If you are requesting certification of your degree from the Registrar's Office, the grade(s) for the semester in which you are depositing your dissertation (and all other outstanding grades) must be reported to the Graduate School and to the Registrar before or by the time of your final review.

**The following materials must be brought to 217 Bascom Hall for the final review:**

- Warrant. Your Committee must be identical to the one approved on the Ph.D. Final Oral Committee Approval Form.
- Survey of earned Doctorates
- ProQuest Information and Learning (formerly UMI) Microfilm Agreement Form. This form is found in "Publishing Your Dissertation," pp. A4 and A5. (The "Author Discount Form" on p. A6 is not required or endorsed by the Graduate School)
- Three (3) extra copies of the Title Page. The title on one of the three copies is to have all equations, formulae, chemical symbols, and the like translated into words (for example, instead of "H<sub>2</sub>O", use "water").
- Committee's Page (do not hand write except for signatures).
- UMI Abstract. This abstract must be signed by your advisor and is in addition to any abstract that may be in your dissertation.
- Completed unbound dissertation on high quality, white, 20 pound weight paper. Paper is available for purchase at UW Bookstore or office supply store (ie Office Max, Staples, Office Depot)

### **Depositing Your Dissertation**

The copy of your dissertation will be retained by the Graduate School to be sent to Proquest Information Learning for microfilming and binding.

After the Graduate School has approved your dissertation, you will be authorized to go to the Bursar's Window at 333 E. Campus Mall to pay the microfilming & binding fee of \$90. You can pay with cash, checks, and money orders. **Credit cards are not accepted.** The Window hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

If you are registering and retaining copyright of your dissertation through Proquest, you will also pay the copyright fee at the Bursars office. The copyright fee is now \$65.00. Cash, personal checks and money orders are accepted.

For your student record, please provide us with a complete copy of your thesis saved as a .pdf on CD and a copy of your signed degree warrant along with the committee review forms.

### **3.4.2.2 Procedures for M.S. Degrees**

#### **3.4.2.3 Depositing your Thesis**

Your thesis is the culmination of your research work during your time at UW-Madison. The Graduate School has prepared the "Guide to Writing your Master's Thesis." This booklet contains information on page formats, paper quality, and information on depositing the thesis at Memorial Library. This guide is available on the Internet at <http://www.wisc.edu/grad/guide/mguide.html>.

You are required to deposit your thesis at Memorial Library. See the Graduate School guide to Preparing your Master's Thesis for additional information.

At the time of deposit, the signed degree warrant will be taken to the Graduate School and a complete, unbound copy of your thesis should be delivered to Memorial Library. If you want to obtain copyright protection, obtain the forms the Graduate School at the time of your warrant submission. Fees will be paid at the Bursar's Office Window at 333 East Campus Mall. For your student record, please provide us with a complete copy of your thesis saved as a .pdf on CD and a copy of your signed degree warrant along with the committee review forms.

## **3.5 Commencement**

Information about graduation ceremonies is available from the Secretary of the Faculty's web site at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/secfac/commence/Commence.html>. The Program Coordinator will announce deadlines concerning commencement participation. Ceremonies are held in December and May. Students who complete degree requirements during August may participate in either ceremony. Participation in the commencement ceremony does not indicate degree completion. Degree completion certification letters can be requested the Registrar's Office. Diplomas are mailed to the student's permanent address approximately 12 weeks after the degree deadline.

## **4 GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS**

During your time as an ERP graduate student you may find that a situation or policy is objectionable and want to seek a remedy, either informal or formal. The action taken can vary on a case-by-case basis from an informal discussion with the party involved to a formal enquiry by the Student Affairs Committee or Graduate School. The Program will work with the parties involved to seek a solution with the minimal disruption to the student, faculty member or laboratory as possible. All students are welcome to contact the Program Coordinator or Program Director with any issues or concerns. If you are not comfortable with either of these people, you may contact any member of the Student Affairs Committee, the departmental representative in your primary area, your major professor, or members of your thesis committee among others.

Most issues are best resolved at the "local" level with the party involved. If the two parties cannot come to a satisfactory resolution, the issue can be reviewed by the Student Affairs Committee. This committee will investigate the nature of the concern and recommend further action. Where the issue is beyond the scope of the Committee, it is recommended to seek counsel from resources within the university community. Additional information is available in the Graduate Student Handbook.

Appealing a failing preliminary exam determination: **See Prelim Exam**

## 5 OTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### 5.1 Laboratory Rotations

The ERP Program is able to offer laboratory rotations to select applicants if funding is available. The initial selection criteria is defined in item 4.

1) At least one laboratory director must express an interest in a single student and at least preliminarily be prepared to commit to offering a position pending the rotation evaluation be satisfactory. It is also understood that the faculty member either has funds in hand or has a very high likelihood that funds will be forthcoming. The student in turn must have made a commitment to the ERP and be prepared to undertake the full rotation. All parties should understand that occasionally a match will not result and, if that is the outcome, the student then goes back to the available pool of applicants in the application status.

2) The rotation is three months total through a maximum of three laboratories. Time is to be divided equally among the labs unless an appeal is successfully made to the Program Director justifying the extension or other change.

The goal is not for the student to accomplish an entire research project, but rather for the student and faculty member to both get a general sense of each other and what mutual experiences they would have upon a proper match.

3) The ERP Program will fund the student's salary and administer benefits during the rotation period using the 12 month appointment scale. The stipend for 2010/2011 is \$1,700 per month with a 50% RA appointment.

4) In cases where there are a limited number of slots, students are usually picked by the recruitment committee but the members should consider possible conflicts of interest when voting on applications who are under consideration for a position in his/her lab. The Director's vote can be sought when abstention leads to a tie.

a) A strong GPA (>3.5) is preferred, but flexibility may be appropriate so that the funds can be used as necessary.

b) Rotations are only given to students pursuing the PhD degree. Preference is not automatically given to a student who already has a master's degree, but rather to the strongest overall candidate

5) Faculty Obligations during the lab rotation

a) The faculty member must ensure that student's time is utilized during the rotation.

b) The faculty member must be present to participate in the training sufficiently to allow accurate evaluation of the student during the rotation period.

c) The faculty member will conduct both an entrance and exit interview with student. The performance grade should be pass/fail only. [Exit interview form.](#)

d) At the end of the rotation, the 2-3 faculty must discuss the disposition of the student and coordinate an offer of acceptance, or return to the applicant pool.

6) Student Obligations during the lab rotation

a) The student will participate in an entrance and exit interview with each member during the rotation period.

[Exit interview form](#) (online)

b) The student must be present and available for training during the rotation period.

c) The student must use his/her time efficiently in the lab during the rotation.

d) The student will be informed that if a major professor is not identified at the end of the rotation period, the student will go back to the pool of available applicants. The ERP Program makes no guarantee of a subsequent match, ie. the same applies for other available applicants.

## 5.2 Scholarships and Fellowships

The Graduate School coordinates the many University and national fellowships for predoctoral students. For additional information about available fellowships, visit their web site at <http://info.gradsch.wisc.edu/fellows/index.html>. Your advisor may also be aware of scholarships and fellowships within your area of study through professional associations and societies.

The pursuit and attainment of external scholarships and fellowships during your training will provide a direct benefit to your CV as you are looking for a position following graduation, may provide additional stipend and travel support as well as benefit your faculty member by having extra resources to fund other members of the lab while you have support.

## 5.3 Student Travel Funds

The ERP Program has funds available to offset the cost of students traveling to present at national and international meetings. Students who are interested in a travel grant should review the guidelines and then contact the Program Office to coordinate the request.

1) The travel grant award is \$300.

2) Funding is limited to students who have (or will have) abstracts accepted for a national or international meeting.

3) Funds will be released when the ERP Office receives a copy of the acceptance letter and 2) copy of the accepted abstract.

4) Funds must be used by June 30th, but requested for processing by June 1st

5) Only one travel stipend is available per student each fiscal year. Contact the Program Coordinator for specific details.

6) The Program Coordinator has a designated travel credit card available if you would like to have your airfare or meeting registration pre-paid to avoid out of pocket expenses.

7) Spending must be coordinated through the ERP Office to ensure funds are spent in accordance with University travel policies.

## 5.4 Reimbursements

Each student will have access to the e-Reimbursement system to enter and submit requests for reimbursement from university funds. Training on how to use the system is provided either by your faculty member's primary tenure department or the Office of Human Resources. You can give another campus employee "delegate entry" permission to enter travel expenses on your behalf. The ERP Program Coordinator is willing to enter expenses if funding is coming from ERP Program resources. The Program Coordinator's Person ID is 00327379.

To help expedite your reimbursement for travel or hosting expenses, please provide the following:

- ✓ Original, itemized receipts for expenditures
- ✓ Dates and times of departure and return if claiming meals on travel days
- ✓ Conference agenda that shows dates, location of the meeting and meals provided in the registration fee
- ✓ Hosting Expenses – names of individuals in attendance and time of departure and return from the meal.
- ✓ Travel Funds: A copy of the accepted abstract and letter of confirmation by the hosting organization
- ✓ The name and affiliation of guests who shared a hotel room with you (includes roommates at a conference even if assigned by the conference)
- ✓ You will be required to approve the travel or reimbursement expense online; THIS CANNOT BE APPROVED BY A DELEGATE.

All reimbursements will be direct deposited to the account where your stipend is sent.

## 5.5 Immigration Visa Compliance

International students are required to check in and attend the mandatory orientation session with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services. Staff will discuss applicable visa and immigration policies as they relate to your student status at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The orientation and check in will be in the On Wisconsin Room located at the Red Gym, 716 Langdon St.

Orientation dates for Fall 2010 are: TBA

## 5.6 New Student Orientation

The Graduate School hosts “Welcome Week” activities to orientate new students to the UW-Madison Campus. Events of interest to graduate students are scheduled on Wednesday, August 25, 2010 at Memorial Union.

## 5.7 Student Records

Some student records fall under the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act. A brochure regarding access to your student records is provided in your orientation binder.

The task of handling student records and related administration functions within the ERP Program is the responsibility of the ERP Program Student Services Coordinator. Student files will be kept confidential at all times and include some or all of the following documents:

- Application for Admission
- Letters of Recommendation
- Copies of Transcripts
- GRE / MCAT / TOEFL Scores
- Letters of Appointment
- Annual Student Progress Reports
- Degree Completion Documents

## 5.8 Change of Personal Data

Personal data can be updated through you're MY UW portal page and changes in address or status that would impact insurance benefits must be done through your payroll coordinator.

## 5.9 Safety

The safety and health of employees is a priority. The University of Wisconsin-Madison makes every effort to comply with all federal and state workplace safety requirements. UW-Madison's workplace safety rules and are governed by the following regulatory bodies:

- Office of Biological Safety
- Research Animal Care and Use Committee
- Human Subjects Institutional Review Boards (IRB's)

Laboratory safety is everyone's responsibility. Contact your major professor or laboratory manager regarding any safety and training requirements that need to be completed. A list of safety courses are provided in your orientation binder.

## 5.10 Building Security

Each and every employee must follow the building security rules and regulations for their specific location. More campus facilities are requiring access cards to gain entry into research areas or to the building afterhours. Your major professor or laboratory manager can assist you in obtaining the necessary passes or keys for your location.

## 5.11 Personal Property

Unattended valuables are a prime target for theft; therefore, it is highly recommended that you take precautions to secure your valuables when they are out of your sight or direct control; the best advice is to simply leave them at home. Contact your building manager and Campus Police (264-2677, non-emergency) if you have been a victim of theft.

## 5.12 Health-related Issues

**Sick leave.** Common sense should prevail on when to call in sick to maintain the health and safety of both you and your colleagues. Research Assistants do not have a formal sick leave policy so be sure to talk to your advisor on how and who should be notified if you are absent because of illness. If you need extended sick leave to care for immediate family members, you may want to consider a leave of absence. Talk to the Program Director, Coordinator and your advisor if you want to pursue this option as deadlines and payroll issues should be considered in advance. TA and PA supported students should consult the current TAA contract document for information regarding sick time and usage.

**Maternity/ parental leave** (both men and women) should be discussed as soon as reasonable plans can be made. Graduate Students with RA appointments do not fit the definition of a "regular employee" who is covered by formal maternity/ parental and Family Medical Leave policies. This type of leave is negotiated directly between the student, advisor and payroll staff. In many cases opportunities to work from home on projects that do not involve coming to the lab on daily basis can be arranged (writing a paper, analyzing data, etc.) to meet the needs of both you and the aims of the grant. Direct and continuous communication between you and your advisor is essential during this period of time.

## 5.13 Vacation Hours

Your paycheck will more than likely come from your major professor's research grant and you will be paid on a monthly basis. A 50% RA for 20 hours per week would equal 1040 hours of work per 12 month period, giving you two weeks of leave time in a given year at the discretion of your supervisor. Be considerate when asking for time off and note that requests for time off to study is a red flag. If you have extended vacation plans and do not plan to make those hours up, you must contact your payroll coordinator in your primary department to adjust your level of appointment and stipend. Be sure to speak with your major professor about your plans in advance. TA and PA supported students should consult the current TAA contract document for information regarding vacation time and usage.

## 5.14 Weather-related and Emergency-related Closings

Students are expected to use their best judgment when determining if travel during inclement weather is appropriate. Check the UW-Madison homepage for updates on closures or delays. You are responsible for contacting your major professor or designated personnel to inform him/her of your absence.

## 5.15 Furloughs

Graduate Students appointed as RA's, TA's, PA's or trainees, are not subject to the mandatory State of Wisconsin furlough requirement that includes a reduction in pay by taking 8 unpaid days of leave time during each of the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 academic years; however, faculty, academic staff and support staff are. Be sure to speak with your major professor on how these furlough days will affect your laboratory.

Current furlough days for the 2010/2011 Academic Year are:

Friday, November 26, 2010  
Thursday, December 30, 2010  
Friday, March 18, 2011  
Monday, May 16, 2011

# 6 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

## 6.1 General Guidelines

All graduate students are urged to become familiar with University of Wisconsin-Madison rules and standards of academic conduct. Specific guidelines and policy statements are provided on the Graduate School's Academic Guidelines booklet in your orientation binder or on the web at <http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/acadpolicy/guidelinesindex.html>

## 6.2 Satisfactory Progress

Success in graduate school is heavily dependent on satisfactory progress towards degree. The Graduate School Academic Guidelines has a formal definition of satisfactory progress that you should become familiar with, but you should also understand what satisfactory progress means to your faculty advisor in terms of your performance in the laboratory. The ERP Program developed an annual evaluation form to be completed by both the student and advisor with a structure similar to a performance evaluation that you would experience in the workplace. We can not overstate the importance of regular, ongoing communication with your faculty member about both your research project and personal goals.

If your personal goals or circumstances have changed since beginning your course of study, it is vital you speak directly with your faculty member as soon as possible. In having this conversation, both you and your faculty member will be able to develop a mutually agreeable plan to adjust the research project workload and establish a timeline for completion with your advisory committee.

Sometimes it is not the degree goal that is a concern, but the laboratory environment has changed thereby impacting your progress to degree. If you find you would rather be elsewhere or anywhere but in the lab, we advise that you sit down and talk to your advisor about your concerns; chances are your advisor has noticed this change in you and is waiting for you to come forward. Diminished productivity hurts not only you in your degree completion, but also the rest of the lab who may be counting your work to move forward in other projects. Chronic or unexplained absences are unprofessional in the workplace and could be grounds for termination or removal of funding (see Termination of Funding).

### **6.3 Work Schedule**

One of your responsibilities as a graduate student is to arrange a mutually agreeable work schedule with your major professor and lab members. Having a relatively predictable schedule allows everyone in the lab to plan accordingly to meet deadlines and accomplish project goals. Some labs are very flexible with work schedules while others require that you be in the lab at set hours due to experiments, animal needs or other circumstances. Be sure to clarify these expectations during the early weeks in the lab and during the rotation period.

In turn, your major professor also has an obligation to inform you of his/her schedule as much as possible. The lab does not shut down while the supervisor is away; there is an element of trust that you and your lab members will continue to function in his/her short-term absence. A post-doc or lab technician should usually be around to help you trouble shoot urgent problems, otherwise make note of your question and discuss it upon return.

### **6.4 Meetings**

Part of the learning experience is getting regular feedback from your major professor. During your first weeks in the lab, establish a regular meeting time that is separate from a general lab meeting with your major professor. This forum provides you an opportunity to discuss questions, results, ideas and up-date him/her on your progress with limited interruption. Once you agree on a time, be prompt and prepared for each meeting. In early meetings, the major professor may direct the conversation by asking about the project results, unexpected problems or surprises, however as you become more comfortable with the lab and your major professor, you should take the lead in the conversation and topics to discuss.

You will also be expected to participate in lab meetings and journal discussions with your research group. These are forums to present work, trouble-shoot, congratulate each other and plan for the next phase of the project in addition to a social occasion.

### **6.5 Absence and Lateness**

Students are responsible for contacting their major professor or other designated staff regarding absences from the laboratory. Keeping the lines of communication open between you and your faculty member is essential to maintaining a positive working relationship regarding work schedules. Be honest with your major professor about schedule commitments or constraints that impact your ability to be in the lab at mutually agreed upon times.

### **6.6 Termination of Funding**

Termination of funding by a faculty member is typically a measure of last resort when you are not making satisfactory progress (see above) towards your degree and there is no other consequence available to your faculty member to get you back on track to being a productive and accountable member of the laboratory. Before your funding is terminated with cause, the faculty member must provide reasonable, documented evidence that your performance has not improved over an agreed upon timeline. Generally speaking, performance and satisfactory progress issues are best addressed between you and faculty member directly to develop a mutually agreeable plan of action. You or your research advisor can enlist the help of the Program Director and Program Coordinator to discuss performance issues in a neutral environment.

## **6.7 Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

Students who believe they have been a target of harassment are encouraged to seek assistance from a trusted individual which can include the ERP Program Director, Program Coordinator, members of your thesis committee or staff from the Dean of Students Office, Ombuds Office or other departmental resource people. Additional support is also available from The Office for Equity and Diversity Policy and resource documents are available at:

<http://www.oed.wisc.edu/sexualharassment/index.html>

<http://www.oed.wisc.edu/sexualharassment/resource.html>

## **6.8 Dress Code**

The lab is your workplace and your dress should reflect this. Dress comfortably so that you can do your work with minimal distraction for yourself and others. Wear a lab coat or other protective clothing as needed. Remember that your clothing and personal appearance does leave an impression upon people, both positive and negative. You don't have to dress like a runway model, but you shouldn't look like you just rolled out of bed either, and personal hygiene becomes an issue if you become offensive. Your lab or building location (i.e. Clinics, hospital) may have additional dress code guidelines, ask your supervisor what is appropriate or consult appropriate handbooks or websites for guidance.

Wear appropriate protective clothing (lab coat, safety glasses, gloves, coveralls, masks etc.) and follow all safety protocols in the laboratory. If you need training or are uncertain about a procedure, ask. You may want to consider keeping a change of clothes at the lab in case of a spill or other contamination.

## **6.9 Use of Laboratory Equipment**

The laboratory is a communal place where you will interact with a variety of people including undergraduate students, graduate students, faculty, technicians, other support staff and post-docs. As a researcher, you are expected to develop and maintain a professional relationship with those that you work with.

1. Keep your work area and bench clean. Chemicals and other agents can remain on the work

surface for weeks and contaminate another experiment. Promptly clean up spills and broken glassware following safety protocols. Do not leave the mess for someone else to find.

2. Leave both the equipment and the lab area in better condition than you found it. If you used consumable supplies, re-stock them. Also if you notice supplies are running low, let the appropriate person know to re-order them.

3. Return cleaned and dry equipment to its proper location when not in use.

4. If you find that the equipment is not working, notify the lab manager or your supervisor. Again, don't leave it for someone else to find.

5. Plan ahead if you have large project that will prevent others from using the equipment at peak periods.

6. Do not adjust equipment settings without first checking with either your major professor or laboratory manager. Many of the instruments have been specifically calibrated for an explicit purpose or experiment and adjustments by untrained staff can lead to lost productivity or unusable results for the rest of the lab.

## 6.10 Use of Computer, Phone, Internet and Mail

**Telephone:** A phone in the lab is provided for the express purpose of conducting lab and work related business. We accept the fact that there may be occasions where a personal call is received or made, however the lab phone number should not be given out as your "social number" to family and friends nor should you be placing social calls from the lab. Many buildings have a lounge area where personal calls can be made.

You may find that having a cell phone is a convenience or even your primary phone, however, this can be a distraction for others in your work area both because of the continued disruption of incoming calls or simply the voice level used when carrying on a conversation. When you are in the lab, if you must have your phone on, turn the ringer volume down or set it to vibrate and answer the call quietly and discreetly then return to work. We urge you to turn your phone off during lab hours so you can fully concentrate on the job at hand; many plans have voice mail included with the service. Also, don't leave your phone unattended at your desk so it rings non-stop, either take the phone with you or turn it off. Keep the calls to a minimum.

**Email:** Each enrolled student is provided with a campus email address (@wisc.edu). Some departments may also have an email server and issue you an email address (@department.wisc.edu) which ever campus email address you use should be used for professional communications. Messages should be written using standard business spelling and punctuation. Save the instant messaging shorthand for friends using another email addresses. Use special fonts, color coding, and formatting tricks minimally.

Think carefully about the contents of your email message before hitting the send button. Remember the reader only sees the words in front of them and does not hear your tone of voice or non-verbal expressions. What seems harmless to you might be offensive to your reader.

**Internet:** Time spent on unrelated web surfing during lab hours is not consistent with the aims of the grant or source of funding of your stipend.

## **6.11 Use of Computer Software**

In most labs, each student will have a personal computer with the appropriate software installed to meet the needs of preparing documents, proposals, and graphics. You should not alter the configuration or install programs not authorized by your major professor or network administrator. This includes the installation of “instant messenger” programs, software downloads, games, or applications that would potentially interfere with the security of the data or functionality of the machine. The supervisor or network administrator reserves the right to delete files or applications that interfere with the stability or functionality of the machine.

If you are using your personal computer to connect to the campus network, you are responsible for following the campus computing guidelines regarding software licenses and virus protection as well as ensuring your data is safely protected. Each student has a personal online file storage area available through the MY UW portal. This is a secure way to store information, but have it accessible wherever there is an internet connection. Talk to your faculty member, network administrator or designated computer support people before hooking up your laptop to a lab data jack.

## **6.12 Solicitations and Distributions**

Lab time is not personal time to “convert” other people to your cause. This is against state work-rules and could be considered harassment. Keep brochures for fundraisers at your desk or in a break area.

## **6.13 Change of Laboratory**

There are situations when transferring labs is in your best interest, at the completion of one degree, faculty relocation, retirement or in worse case situations irreconcilable differences. If you find that you are going to leave a lab for whatever reason, keep the following items in mind:

1. Give your supervisor reasonable notice.
2. Establish a transition period to complete projects and tasks as appropriate.
3. Inform your payroll person. A break in payroll can negatively impact your benefits, tuition remission, and fees.
4. Return all lab property, keys, notes and documents. Remember that your lab notes are the property of the granting agency under the stewardship of the PI.
5. Keep the departure as positive as possible. Don't spread negative comments about former co-workers, the faculty member or staff.

## **6.14 Return of Laboratory Notes and Property**

A hallmark of good science is keeping and preparing proper documentation of your work, however if you are being paid from a research grant, as most students are, your laboratory notes are the property of the granting agency and managed by the PI of the project, therefore your notes are NOT your own.

The Graduate School offers a 1.5 hour seminar on keeping laboratory notes. Check the Graduate School website for dates and times.

## **7 COMPENSATION POLICIES**

### **7.1 Assistantships – see also the Graduate School Academic Guidelines**

Over 95% of ERP student's graduate education is supported by a research assistantship (aka RA) appointment. This type of funding allows you to receive a monthly stipend for your laboratory work as well as paying for your tuition and major portion of your health insurance. The RA does not cover the segregated fees; you must pay these every semester. Generally most faculty appoint their students to a 50% RA or higher percentage which provides the benefits mentioned above as long as you remain in good standing and funding permits.

What does a 50% RA really mean? It is best to consider an RA a "job" where you have obligations to fulfill in-order to receive financial and educational compensation. A 50% RA is interpreted to mean that your supervisor is employing you for on average of 20 hours per week to actively contribute to the aims of the grant proposal from which your stipend comes from and is related to your thesis work in some capacity. As such, you are expected to establish a mutually agreeable work schedule, to notify your faculty member of any changes in work schedule, and use your time in the laboratory efficiently to accomplish the goals and objectives specified. This is your "job" and is in addition to your course work and other obligations.

Your major professor has a responsibility to ensure the grant dollars are being spent on the research it was intended. Time spent on personal pursuits including homework, studying for exams, unrelated web-surfing and personal email is not consistent with any grant objectives and is not acceptable. If you find that you have too much time on your hands, realize that your supervisor will notice this too. Be proactive and seek productive tasks to fill your time when lab activities are slow.

**Training Grant Funding:** The National Institutes of Health fund competitive training grant proposals to provide financial support for pre and postdoctoral students during their course of study; the ERP Program's pre-doctoral application has been competitively refunded through April 30, 2014. The Program will seek applications for support from eligible candidates in the Spring of each calendar year as funds permit in addition to the applicant making satisfactory progress and the project falls within the remit of our funding institute of NICHD.

Support from our training grant includes a stipend of \$20,976 per year, full tuition and fee payment and \$500 in travel funds.

**Project Assistant Funding:** Selected PhD students may be supported by a Project Assistantship through the TEAM-Science grant lead by Dr. Molly Carnes. Pay and benefits are similar to the Research Assistant appointment, but these PA positions are represented by the Teaching Assistant Association (TAA) collective bargaining unit. TEAM-Science students will be provided with a copy of the TAA contract.

## 7.2 Payroll and Paydays

Your payroll will be handled by staff in your faculty member's tenure department home for the duration of your degree unless you have a Training Grant Fellowship or Project Assistant appointment with TEAM-Science. This person will handle renewing your appointment, submitting tuition remission authorization forms and be your primary benefits contact.

Graduate students are paid monthly. Your first check will be direct deposited on **10/1/2010** for September 2010 hours.

A pay schedule is available from the Office of Human Resources at <http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/ecbs/emp-calendars-schedules-menu.html>. Select the Unclassified (paid monthly) link.

Payroll forms are located in your Benefits package and forms can be completed and submitted at the Benefits Orientation meetings held during welcome week.

Stipend payments will be direct deposited. Please be sure to have your banking information available to complete the direct deposit authorization form.

## 7.3 Salary Reviews

Your monthly stipend is based on a percentage of \$40,800, the current approved rate for graduate research assistants in 2010/2011. While the base amount of \$40,800 does not change, a pay increase by your advisor can be made by increasing the percentage of your appointment up to the maximum 75% level. It is important to keep in mind that many factors influence the percentage of appointment you have including: total amount of funding available to your advisor through grants and departmental sources, the number of other students and staff supported by your advisor and departmental policies and customs.

We encourage your faculty member to consider a stipend increase when additional funds are available or when you become a dissertator (PhD students). Other circumstances may also warrant a percentage of appointment increase. While the ERP Program would like every student to receive the same level of support whenever possible, it is simply not possible for us to establish or enforce a uniform stipend rate among the trainers.

Attainment of an external fellowship, grant or other award in your own name is one additional method to secure a pay raise during the award period. Fellowships, grants and awards are publicized through many venues including the Graduate School Fellowships Office, websites of professional and scholarly associations and through the various federal grant agencies (NIH, NSF, USDA). These awards require an application so advanced planning is essential. The use of your preliminary exam document (PhD students) should be an excellent foundation to make revisions to submit an application.

## 8 GROUP HEALTH BENEFITS

### 8.1 Benefits Summaries and Eligibility

Graduate students with a qualifying Research Assistant, Project Assistant, Teaching Assistant or Trainee appointments are eligible to participate in the State of Wisconsin benefits programs. A

comprehensive package of information is provided at the new student orientation. The Office of Benefits Services has benefit orientation sessions scheduled for the Week of August 24th, 2010. Additional benefits information for Graduate Students is also available online at <http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/ecbs/emp-seminars-ben-edu.html>

## 8.2 Health Insurance

Graduate students participating in the State of Wisconsin program will receive a copy of the booklet "Its Your Choice" in the benefits package. Students must pick a plan that serves the Dane County area. Each plan in the ***It's Your Choice*** Book has a two page description that outlines services available, how to make appointments, the need for referrals to specialists, hospital affiliations and complimentary services such as dental, mental health and vision care. You may change your plan provider during the open enrollment period in October to take effect in January 2011. Health Plan representatives will be available at the Benefits Orientation sessions scheduled during Welcome Week to answer questions about your specific situation.

For individuals who are not participating in the State of Wisconsin program, health insurance and services are also available at University Health Services located at 333 East Campus Mall. Additional information is available at [http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/home.jsp?cat\\_id=116](http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/home.jsp?cat_id=116)

## 9 Resources

### 9.1 Banking Services

#### Local Banks/ Credit Unions near campus

- Associated Bank – [www.associated.com](http://www.associated.com)
- Wells Fargo – [www.wellsfargo.com](http://www.wellsfargo.com)
- UW Credit Union – [www.uwcu.org](http://www.uwcu.org)
- Anchor Bank – [www.anchorbank.com](http://www.anchorbank.com)
- Heartland Credit Union – [www.heartlandcu.org](http://www.heartlandcu.org)
- Park Bank – [www.parkbank.com](http://www.parkbank.com)

### 9.2 Campus Services

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| ▪ Division of Information Technology (DoIT)  | <a href="http://www.doit.wisc.edu">www.doit.wisc.edu</a>                      |
| ▪ Graduate School                            | <a href="http://www.grad.wisc.edu">www.grad.wisc.edu</a>                      |
| ▪ International Student and Scholar Services | <a href="http://iss.wisc.edu/">http://iss.wisc.edu/</a>                       |
| ▪ Wisconsin Union                            | <a href="http://www.wisc.edu/union">www.wisc.edu/union</a>                    |
| ▪ University Libraries                       | <a href="http://www.libraries.wisc.edu">www.libraries.wisc.edu</a>            |
| ▪ Office of Child Care & Family Resources    | <a href="http://occfrc.wisc.edu/">http://occfrc.wisc.edu/</a>                 |
| ▪ Transportation Services                    | <a href="http://www2.fpm.wisc.edu/trans/">http://www2.fpm.wisc.edu/trans/</a> |
| ▪ Wiscard Program                            | <a href="http://www.wiscard.wisc.edu/">http://www.wiscard.wisc.edu/</a>       |
| ▪ University Bookstore                       | <a href="http://www.uwbookstore.com">www.uwbookstore.com</a>                  |

### 9.3 Child Care

The City of Madison and the UW-Madison community have many child care options and programs available from birth to age 12 in addition to drop-in care, afterschool and non-school day programs.

A number of non-profit organizations maintain a list or database of childcare programs in Dane, Rock, Sauk, Columbia, Walworth, Dodge and Green Counties. Resource and referral specialists can assist you in finding the child care programs that meet both your child's educational needs and your family budget. The following is a limited list of resources on Dane County services.

- Coordinated Community Child Care (4C) [www.4-c.org](http://www.4-c.org)
- YMCA of Dane County [www.ymcanedane.org](http://www.ymcanedane.org)
- Madison Metropolitan School District [www.madison.k12.wi.us/daycare.htm](http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/daycare.htm)
- UW-Madison Office of Child Care and Family Resources [http://occf.wisc.edu/child\\_care/campus\\_centers.htm](http://occf.wisc.edu/child_care/campus_centers.htm)
- Parenting Resources from the United Way of Dane County [www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/index.php?page=403](http://www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/index.php?page=403)