

**GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
MOLECULAR AND DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGY
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI**

Updated June 2017

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(Contents are in compliance with the rules and policies of the University of Cincinnati Graduate School)

I. APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

A. Application

1. Process

Completion of the UC Graduate School Online Application is required. Apply online at: www.grad.uc.edu/ApplyOnline.aspx. Payment of the application fee is required in order to submit your application. For further instructions, please see the application instructions on the Graduate School website: <http://www.grad.uc.edu/admissions.aspx>.

No hard copies of the personal background statement will be accepted. The personal background statement (addressing the applicant's academic background, research experience, motivation to do a PhD, and career goals) must be submitted electronically with their application. When this is done, the program will receive an email notification that someone has applied and that his or her personal background statement has been submitted.

The UC Graduate School Online Application requires three (3) Letters of Recommendation from people qualified to assess the applicant's ability to succeed in a research-intensive graduate program. The MDB program requires a minimum of three letters, but will accept a fourth letter. The online application will direct applicants to submit names and contact information for their recommenders. Listed recommenders will receive an email with instructions for submitting letters approximately 1-2 days after the student submits an online application.

Official transcripts from every undergraduate and graduate institution attended should be sent directly from the issuing institution to the MDB Program as soon as possible. GRE scores and/or transcripts supplied by the applicant are not acceptable for formal application to the program. Transcripts are the ONLY documents that should be sent directly to the MDB program.

After preliminary screening of applications, selected applicants may be scheduled for a personal interview. The interview serves as an opportunity for the applicant to meet faculty and graduate students, and to see the program's research facilities and for members of the Program to evaluate the applicant. The program will pay for all reasonable travel expenses incurred during the interview process, in accordance with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) Travel Policies.

Applications and all supporting documents are accepted between August 1 and March 1 of each academic year for admission in the fall of the following academic year. For early consideration, applications should be received by February 1.

2. Requirements

The prospective student is expected to have a strong undergraduate background in biology. Some background in chemistry, physics and mathematics is also preferred. All applicants are expected to take the general test of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), administered by the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540. The student must request official GRE Scores to be sent to the University of Cincinnati (institution code 1833). Advanced subject tests are accepted, but not required. All applicants are required by the Graduate School to have obtained a baccalaureate degree, or its equivalent before entering the graduate program.

3. Admissions and Financial Aid

a. Admission Decisions

The program's Admissions Committee, in consultation with the Program Directors, makes all decisions concerning admissions to our graduate program. The committee has the authority to set application deadlines, require certain pre-admission examinations, require satisfactory completion of certain course work prior to admission, and to establish other pre-admission requirements. Admission decisions must not be made on the basis of race, age, sex, color, religion, sexual orientation, or handicap except in those disciplines in which handicap will place the student, other students, faculty or staff in physical danger (Affirmative Action Guidelines). Decisions to admit or not to admit are final unless it can be demonstrated that the Admissions Committee violated a MDB Program policy or failed to apply fairly and consistently the criteria established by the program.

No international student will be granted admission on any basis other than full graduate standing. For admission to full graduate standing at the University of Cincinnati, a student must have a baccalaureate degree from a college or university regarded as standard by a regional or general accrediting agency. The applicant should have at least a "B" grade average in relevant undergraduate course work, or otherwise give evidence of promise satisfactory to the program. Admission will be made at the discretion of the program.

In instances where an international student holds a degree for which the U.S. equivalent is not known or if it is determined by the department and/or the International Student Services Office that the applicant does not have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree, the program must submit a petition for admission without a bachelor's degree to the Graduate Council and provide any supporting documentation deemed pertinent. Before their admission to the university is completed, all international students must fulfill U.S. Immigration Service requirements and register with the International Student Services Office at the University of Cincinnati.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required of all applicants whose native language is not English. The test must be taken before admission is granted and test scores are only good for two years. This requirement may be waived for international students who have a degree from an accredited American college or university and who have studied oral and written English while a student in the American college or university, as defined by the International Student Services Office (ISSO) of the University of Cincinnati. Presently, the minimum UC Graduate School TOEFL score for graduate work is 520 (paper), 190 (computer) and 68 (internet).

Upon arrival at the University of Cincinnati, all international students are required to carry student health insurance. Insurance fees (reflecting the number of accompanying dependents) will be assessed at each registration period.

b. Financial Aid Decisions

All students in good academic standing in the Ph.D. track of the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program will be eligible for tuition scholarship (Graduate Assistant Scholarship, GAS) through the official candidacy period as granted by the University of Cincinnati (up to 174 credit hours for those entering with a BS, 144 for those entering with an MS). Student fees will also be provided for these students, depending on the availability of funds. Graduate assistantship (GAS) stipend support will be provided to all students in the program, based on performance and availability of funds. Student Health Insurance premiums will also be covered by the program during the first year and the Advisor thereafter. Under ordinary circumstances, assistantships and tuition scholarships will not be awarded to students who have accumulated 174 or more graduate credit hours (144 for those entering the program with an MS). Students are expected to devote full-time to their academic and research training.

B. Pre-Registration Procedures and Requirements

1. Supplementary Information Form (UC Graduate School Requirement)

The following individuals must complete the Supplementary Information Form prior to registration:

- a. New students entering the University
- b. Students not enrolled in the previous academic year
- c. Students who transfer from another college

- d. Students who have earned a Master's degree and are admitted to a Ph.D. program.

2. Immunization Records

A copy of each student's immunization records will be required at the time of acceptance into the program. These records will be released to Employee Health at CCHMC for review. If additional immunizations are needed prior to CCHMC badging the student must obtain the required immunizations and provide documentation prior to their start date. Failure to fulfill this requirement and any others mandated by Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center may result in the student's expulsion from the program. This will include evidence of 2 MMR immunizations and either a Tb test in each of the last two years, a 2-step Tb test completed within the last 6 months or a Quantiferon Gold Tb test, also completed within the last 6 months.

3. Transfer of Credits

Limits are set on the amount of work completed at other institutions which can be included as fulfilling graduate degree requirements. The Associate Director for Graduate Studies will determine which credits are transferrable.

II. DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAMS

A. Course of Study

The course of study to be pursued for the doctoral degree will be arranged with each student by the Associate Director for Graduate Studies and their Advisor with advice, as needed, from the Program Directors. Course work in other programs may be scheduled according to the needs of the individual student. In all cases, the aim of the doctoral program will be to develop competence in research, scholarship, teaching, and professional performance in general, and a knowledge of the specialty in relation to allied branches of learning.

B. Credit Hours

The University of Cincinnati defines the minimum requirement for the doctoral degree in the Graduate Student Handbook. In general, a student must earn a minimum of 90 graduate credits beyond a bachelor's degree or a minimum of 60 credits beyond a master's degree, including at least 7 hours of research, to be eligible for a doctoral degree. The last 30 credits, in either situation, must be earned from the University of Cincinnati and cannot be transfer credits.

C. Minimum Academic Standards and Procedures for the Evaluation of Student Progress

1. Students in the Molecular and Developmental Biology Program are required to maintain a minimum of a B (3.0) average in both their didactic and research courses.
2. Students obtaining a C+ or below in any didactic course are automatically placed on academic probation during the semester following receipt of the grade of C+ or below. Students who obtain a D or F will be required to retake the course for credit and earn a B or better. Obtaining two grades of C+ or below in any one semester is cause for immediate dismissal from the program.
3. Failure to find a lab placement and Advisor by June 30 of the first year is grounds for dismissal at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
4. Determination of normal progress in the Program is defined as:
 - a. Obtaining a grade of at least a B- or Pass (in courses where Pass/Fail is the grading mechanism) in all didactic and research courses required by the Molecular and Developmental Biology Program;
 - b. Completion of a total of 60 graduate credit hours for the master's degree and 90 graduate credit hours for the doctoral degree within the specified time stipulated by the rules of the Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati;

- c. Completion of at least two lab rotations or approval of an exception from the Associate Director for Graduate Studies;
 - d. Attendance and participation at the annual Graduate Student Symposium;
 - e. Passing the qualifying exam in the second year;
 - f. Minimum of one Dissertation Committee meeting every six months following successful completion of the Qualifying Exam (there will be a one month deviation allowed for scheduling conflicts);
 - g. Submission and oral defense of a satisfactory doctoral dissertation or its equivalent within 9 years of matriculation (the time limit specified as required by the graduate school).
5. A written assessment of performance for each student is provided at the end of each academic year. These Milestone Reports must be reviewed and signed by the student, their Advisor and the Associate Director for Graduate Studies. Milestone Reports are then filed as part of a student's permanent academic record.
 6. As of 2014, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) requires every graduate student to have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) on file with his or her graduate program. Students will complete the IDP every June in conjunction with the Student Milestone Report, using a template provided by the program.

D. Options when Minimum Academic Standards are not met

1. Any student who fails to meet any of the Minimum Academic Standards as set forth by either the Program or the University of Cincinnati Graduate School will be placed on academic probation. The student will be notified of his/her status with a letter from the Associate Director for Graduate Studies, which will outline the offense and clearly state the terms of probation. Academic probation will last for one semester and the official notice of academic probation becomes part of the student's permanent academic record. No student who is currently on academic probation can be nominated for any awards. Past instances of academic probation will be a consideration in the nomination and presentation for all awards.
2. If a student is placed on academic probation for a second time, one of two courses of action will be followed, at the discretion of the Executive Committee:
 - a. Dismissal from the program.
 - b. A student may be given the option to withdraw from the program. This allows the student to prevent a dismissal action from appearing on their academic transcript.
3. Process for Appeal: If the student believes there are extenuating circumstances that indicate why his/her performance has not met the minimum requirements of the program, he/she may submit a written petition to the Associate Director for Graduate Studies explaining these circumstances. These will then be

presented to the Executive Committee whereupon the Executive Committee will vote either to accept or reject the petition. A vote to reject the petition constitutes a vote for dismissal from the program.

E. Residency

All doctoral students must remain enrolled for at least twelve graduate credits per semester for four out of five consecutive semesters, including the summer semester, so long as they register for each autumn semester involved.

All graduate students must apply for Ohio state residency after residing in Ohio for one year. This will require students to file taxes in the State of Ohio, secure an Ohio Driver's License and register their vehicle in the State of Ohio during their first year in the program.

F. Foreign Language Requirement

There is no foreign language competency requirement for the program.

G. Requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

1. Overview of Requirements

- a. Satisfy all requirements outlined in Section IIC above, and any additional requirements specified in the Graduate Handbook of the University of Cincinnati;
- b. Produce and publically defend a dissertation showing high scholarly achievement based on the student's original research. The student is expected to submit an electronic document as evidence of this research;
- c. The student must provide a completed copy of his/her dissertation to every member of the Dissertation Committee at least two weeks before the date of the public defense of the dissertation;
- d. Public notification of the defense of the dissertation should be made via the online Graduation Application two weeks before actual defense takes place, per Graduate School requirements;
- e. Removal or waiver of all I, NG, UP/SP grades and confirmation of satisfactory repetition or waiver of required course in which an F was originally received, in compliance with Graduate School requirements;
- f. Activities required for graduation.
 - 1) Download the Graduation Checklist from the DB Student homepage on CenterLink.

- 2) Complete the Application for Thesis Defense and return to the Program Coordinator, with all required signatures.
- 3) Complete the official online Application to Graduate and pay the application fee required by the Graduate School by the deadline for the semester in which the student expects to graduate. Per Graduate School policy, deadlines are firm and failure to meet them will delay graduation until the following semester, when they must submit a new application for their revised graduation date.
- 4) Announce your defense with the Graduate School and notify the Program Coordinator of your defense details for CCHMC announcements.
- 5) Create your committee approval form to be signed at defense.
- 6) Submit your Electronic Thesis Dissertation (ETD) for Advisor approval. Once your Advisor has approved your thesis it will automatically be submitted to the Graduate School.
- 7) Check your graduation status online.

2. Initial Start Date

All incoming students will be required to start on July 1st unless there are extenuating circumstances approved by the Program Director.

3. Lab Rotations and Selection of Advisor

It is highly recommended that lab rotations be no less than 6 weeks in length. A minimum of two laboratory rotations is required unless the Associate Director for Graduate Studies approves an exception.

4. Advisor

The Advisor directs the research that will constitute the Ph.D. dissertation. The Advisor shall be a member of the Molecular and Developmental Biology Program and the choice shall be mutually acceptable to student and faculty member. The Advisor serves as chairperson of the Dissertation Committee.

5. Doctoral Candidacy Examination (Qualifying Examination)

The candidacy committee, consisting of five MDB program faculty members, will be invited by the Program Director on an annual basis. The chair of the committee is to be a member of either the MDB Executive Committee or the MDB Advisory Board. The remaining members of this committee will be invited

to serve by agreement of both the Program Director and Qualifier Committee Chair. Depending on student class size, it is permissible to appoint more than five members. The term of service for this committee will be one year. To be eligible for membership on the committee, faculty must:

- 1) Be a member of the MDB Program Faculty;
- 2) Not have a student undergoing the examination process in that year;
- 3) Commit to all stated timelines and meetings as outlined below.

The same committee will examine all students in the same year. Students entering their second year of study will be notified of the Qualifier Committee membership and all deadlines for the process via email from the Program Coordinator in May of each year.

a. The Doctoral Candidacy Examination Process

The Doctoral Candidacy Examination is a requirement of the University of Cincinnati. It represents one of the most careful evaluations of students' intellectual development and capability by the University and the Program. This section contains the rules by which the examination will be conducted by the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program and guidelines to be used by students and faculty in preparing for the doctoral candidacy examination. To fulfill the basic requirement of the Candidacy Examination a student must formulate a research proposal in some aspect of Molecular and Developmental Biology, using the format of an NIH grant application. The subject of the research proposal can be the same as the topic of the student's dissertation, a related topic, or a different topic. The Doctoral Candidacy Committee will administer the candidacy examination.

It is important for both the student and their Advisor to understand that the candidacy exam must represent the independent intellectual effort of the candidate. If the candidate chooses to submit a research proposal directly related to his/her thesis project, it is recognized that the overall research direction will likely be a collaborative effort between student and Advisor. The details of the proposal including background and experimental design should however be formulated and written by the student. Inclusion of material from previously published work without the appropriate attribution will result in sanctions, at the discretion of the examining committee and in accordance with University Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Options include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Reporting to the University of Cincinnati
- 2) Rewriting the candidacy exam
- 3) Permitting withdrawal from the University of Cincinnati
- 4) Dismissal from the University of Cincinnati

The examination process is as follows:

Step 1: Paper selection

Each student will select a recently published research article, that is not from the advisor's lab but mutually agreed upon by the student and his/her advisor, to serve as preliminary data for the development of a research proposal. A PDF of the selected paper should be emailed to the Program Coordinator by the second Monday of July. The Program Coordinator will then disseminate all paper selections to the committee.

Step 2: Specific Aims Page

Each student will develop his/her research direction/hypothesis based on his/her selected research article and submit a one-page Specific Aims section of the research proposal to the Program Coordinator by August 15. The Aims must not have been the subject of any prior research proposal from the advisor's lab. Student may seek advice and comments from the advisor regarding construction of the specific aims page, but the research direction/hypotheses, specific aims, and research design, must be the student's original ideas.

The Committee will review the specific aims pages and provide comments to students by the first week in September. During this time, the Committee assigns each member to be primary reviewer for two to three students' research proposals (depending on class size in each year), with all other members serving as secondary reviewers.

Step 3: Full Proposal

Upon receiving comments from the Qualifier Committee on the Specific Aims page, the student should prepare the full proposal independently and cannot solicit advice or feedback from the advisor or others (including other students, post-docs, lab technicians, etc.). Two exceptions to this rule are noted here: (1) As students at this stage of their career may not be familiar with some of the technical methodologies they propose to use, they may seek guidance on technical matters only from their advisor. The advisor will determine which are technical and which are conceptual matters and may decline to offer advice accordingly. (2) Some students may require assistance with grammar and construction of written documents. The advisor will also give this assistance. The full proposal is to consist of a one-page Specific Aims followed by a six-page research strategy section, including Significance, Innovation, and Approach subsections, with proper citation of references in the text and a complete list of references at the end of the proposal.

The Full Proposal is due to the Program Coordinator by the first Friday following the first Monday in October. The Program Coordinator will provide an

exact due date to the students via email each year. The full proposal should be accompanied by a one-page statement, signed by both the student and advisor, that outlines the extent of permissible help (as described above) the student received during preparation of the proposal.

No mock oral examination or proposal defense session is permitted.

Step 4: Oral Examination

Oral Examinations will be conducted beginning mid-October, and throughout the month of November, as necessitated by committee schedules. The Program Coordinator will work with students and the committee to set this schedule. Advisors are NOT permitted to attend the examination. Each Oral Examination will be scheduled for a 2-hour period. The exam will begin with a 10-15 minute presentation by the student, summarizing their proposal. This will be followed by questioning on all aspects of the proposal by the Qualifier Committee. As a portion of the examination, students can be questioned on any aspect of molecular and developmental biology to evaluate basic knowledge and critical thinking skills.

At the end of the defense the student will leave the room to allow the committee time to deliberate outcomes. The outcome of the examination is determined by a vote of the committee. A "pass" will require support of at least 80% of committee members (4 of 5 members must agree on pass). After the vote, the student will be asked to return to the room and will be informed of the committee's decision by the Committee Chair. The primary reviewer will also briefly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the written proposal and oral defense, as well as any other suggestions or requirements of the student, regardless of outcome. If revisions to the written proposal are requested, students will have 2 weeks from the date of the examination to submit those changes to the Program Coordinator.

Possible outcomes of the examination include:

- (1) Pass
- (2) Revisions Requested
- (3) Fail

Upon successful completion of any requested revisions, the chair will draft a letter giving his/her consent for the student to continue to candidacy and will send a copy of this letter to the student, the student's advisor, the Program Director and the Program Coordinator. A failing performance may be reversed by the completion of additional requirements set by the committee which can include but is not limited to complete formulation and defense of a new independent proposal. Lesser requirements may be set as necessary. Requirements for re-examination are governed by University policies (see b, below). Should the student fail to pass the examination on the second attempt, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

b. Retaking of the Candidacy Examination

No second examination for candidacy should be held unless both the committee and advisor support re-examination. Students will be required to petition the Executive Committee, in writing, for re-examination. The process must be initiated (i.e. Step 1 completed) within 3 months of the initial exam. Under normal circumstances, the same committee will conduct the second. Should the student fail to pass the examination on the second attempt, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

c. Overview of Timing for the Candidacy Examination

Step 1: Paper Selection – By the second Monday of July

Step 2: Aims Page – By August 15

Step 3: Full Proposal – By the first Friday following the first Monday in October

Step 4: Oral Examination – Beginning mid-October through November

6. Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee will be formed upon satisfactory completion of the Doctoral Candidacy Examination. The composition of the Dissertation Committee may be different from the qualifying exam committee, but must include the student's Advisor as Chairperson, at least two faculty members in the Molecular and Developmental Biology Program and at least two additional faculty members, at least one of whom should be from another program, another university or appropriate organization.

The Dissertation Committee will monitor the progress of dissertation research on a continuing basis. Committee meetings with the student should occur at least once every six months, or more often at the discretion of the Dissertation Committee, and will be documented by completion of an evaluation form by the Advisor and each Committee Member to be kept in the student's file. Meetings must be held within one month of the six-month deadline, otherwise the student will be considered out of compliance and may be subject to disciplinary action. Review of the written dissertation and the oral defense of the dissertation will be proctored by this committee.

7. Submission of Dissertation

The student must have at least one first author paper published, in press or accepted in a peer-reviewed journal to be eligible to begin writing the dissertation. The paper(s) must represent, in the view of the student's Dissertation Committee, significant contributions to the scientific literature. Publications that do not meet the minimum requirement include abstracts, brief notes, preliminary communications, book chapters, review articles and papers under review for publication. The Executive Committee will consider exceptions

to this requirement on a case-by-case basis. The student will have the option of writing the dissertation in either a traditional thesis format or as a combination of published and supplementary material as described below.

a. Traditional Thesis Format:

Introduction - presents the research problem, the background, which critically evaluates existing knowledge and specifically identifies gaps that the research has attempted to fill.

Materials and Methods - complete description of materials and methods employed in carrying out the research

Results - presentation of most or all of the relevant graduate research incorporating necessary tables, illustrations and photographs, and diagrams

Discussion - discussion of results, conclusions drawn, relevance to existing knowledge, difficulties of interpretation of particular data

Bibliography - listing of all cited literature references, including all authors, titles, dates, volume and inclusive pages

Appendix - additional materials including tables or figures, if desired

b. Combination of Published and Supplementary Material:

This mechanism would allow the inclusion of material previously published by the student in the dissertation without substantial rewriting. The completed dissertation would then consist of reproductions of work published or in press and also any additional methods, results, and/or discussion deemed necessary by the student's Advisor and committee.

In most cases, the published work will constitute separate chapters preceded by a General Introduction and followed by a General Discussion. Chapters containing unpublished data should be written in the format of a scientific paper.

The creation of two mechanisms to satisfy the Program's requirement for a written dissertation does not change the requirement of a satisfactory oral defense of the dissertation or any other requirement of the Program.

8. Final Defense of Dissertation

The student's final defense of his/her dissertation will be open to the public and all members of the academic community. Following an oral presentation of the dissertation the general audience is free to ask questions and make comments. After the audience leaves the room, members of the Dissertation Committee

will ask pertinent questions of the candidate. At the conclusion of the defense, the student will withdraw, and the Dissertation Committee will make a decision with regard to the acceptability of the dissertation and its defense, and report to the candidate. If the decision is favorable, the approval form will be signed by the committee members and should be scanned and uploaded by the student into the Electronic Thesis Dissertation (ETD) system. At least 4/5 of the voting members of the dissertation committee must approve the dissertation.

9. Time Limitations

The doctoral degree will be granted for no less than the equivalent of three years of full-time graduate study. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within nine (9) consecutive years of initial enrollment. A period of seven (7) months must elapse between admission to doctoral candidacy and receipt of the degree.

Students who are entering their fifth year of studies should discuss a reasonable timeline for defense with their Advisor. In the event that the student and advisor agree a sixth year of study (either a full year, or partial) is necessary, they must apply for an extension of funding and support from the graduate program. The application must include 1) a cover letter written by the student explaining the reasons an extension is needed and any extenuating circumstances which will prevent the student from defending in the fifth year, 2) a supporting letter from the Advisor and 3) a draft manuscript or copy of a first-author publication already in press. These documents must be submitted to the Program Coordinator no later than January 1 of the fifth year of study. The Program Coordinator will also pull the student's committee reports and Individual Development Plan (IDP) to accompany the extension petition. The Executive Committee will consider all extensions during the February meeting; at that time the student will either a) be granted an extension or b) be denied an extension. Student who are denied an extension then have three options. They may 1) finish their PhD work by June 30 of the fifth year, 2) apply to the Master of Science program offered by MDB (please note that this program does not include stipend and tuition support and your acceptance is not guaranteed) or 3) withdraw from the program. Any extension beyond a sixth year of study will be extremely rare.

10. Exit Survey

The Office of Graduate Research and Assessment, at its discretion, will conduct an exit survey on the doctoral experience of all graduating doctoral students. The results will be shared with the doctoral programs. In most cases, the student will be asked to complete this survey upon applying for graduation.

III. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. Graduate Course Requirements

1. Students must complete a minimum of 90 credit hours, if entering with a Bachelor degree. Students entering with a Master degree must complete a minimum of 60 credits. All students must take a core curriculum of required courses; thereafter students choose the appropriate coursework and timetable according to their backgrounds and interests, in consultation with the Associate Director for Graduate Studies and their Advisor.
2. Students are required to participate in Journal Clubs (DB9004; Fall Semester each year of study), attend weekly CCRF/MDB Seminars (DB9001 & DB9002; Fall & Spring Semesters of each year of study) sponsored by the Division of Developmental Biology and the Perinatal Institute, and attend all MDB Student Thesis Defenses.
3. Students are required to take the Ethics in Research course in the spring semester of their first year.
4. Students are expected to register and complete classes in a timely fashion. Dropping classes, after the first three lectures, will not be permitted except in cases of personal emergency as determined by the program.

B. Course Schedule

1. Overview

In the first and second years, students will take courses in Developmental Biology, Molecular & Cellular Biology, Grant Writing, Regulation of Gene Expression and Ethics in Research as outlined below. In addition to these courses, Development and Disease (DB9087) and Advanced Topics in Developmental Biology (DB9086) are required in either the 1st or 2nd year. Please note that these courses are offered in alternate years in the Spring Semester.

In the second and third years, students complete their course requirements by choosing further electives. For more information on elective courses recognized by the MDB Program please see the Program Coordinator. In addition to completing any elective coursework, students are required to take a Statistics Course by the end of the third year of study. Options for completing this requirement are limited and student should contact the Program Coordinator for current requirements.

In Years 3-5 the central focus is the research project, as well as attendance at journal club (1 semester per year), weekly Seminar, MDB Thesis Defenses and the annual Graduate Student Symposium.

Excused absences may be granted at the discretion of the Course Director(s) with the agreement of the Associate Director for Graduate Studies. For Seminar, Journal Club & Thesis Defense attendance requirements, the only excused absences will be as follows:

- A vacation which was planned AND communicated to the Program Coordinator prior to notification of a thesis defense; if the student fails to notify the Program Coordinator until after the defense notification, the student will not be excused
- An experiment related obligation (time point, scheduled surgery, etc.) which is scheduled prior to notification of a defense and communicated to the Program Coordinator within 24 hours of a defense notification email
- Vacations & experiments are expected to be scheduled around established thesis defenses, seminars and Journal Clubs
- Attendance at an academic conference or meeting, when communicated to the Program Coordinator PRIOR to the scheduled absence (preferably immediately upon scheduling the trip); applying for an Akesson Award does NOT constitute notifying the Program Coordinator of an absence
- Medical issues which will require a doctor's note

If a student feels that they have a legitimate reason to miss a required seminar, journal club or thesis defense that is not outlined above, they should contact the Associate Director for Graduate Studies PRIOR to the absence, whenever possible.

An example of the courses chosen by a typical first year MDB student:

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Developmental Biology Seminar DB 9001 (1 hr.)	Developmental Biology Seminar DB 9002 (1 hr.)
Journal Club DB 9004 (1 hr.)	Grant Writing DB 9089 (1 hr.)
Developmental Biology Laboratory Research DB 9073 (3 hrs.)	Developmental Biology Laboratory Research DB 9073 (6 hrs.)
Introduction to Developmental Biology DB 9085C (3 hrs.)	Advanced Topics in Developmental Biology DB 9086 (1 hr.) or Development & Disease DB 9087 (1 hr.)
Principles of Molecular & Cellular Biology GNTD 7001 (4 hrs.)	Regulation of Gene Expression DB 9088 (2 hrs.)
	Ethics in Research GNTD 7003 (1 hr.)

2. Molecular and Developmental Biology Journal Club (DB9004)

Responsibility for organizing Journal Club resides with the Graduate Student Representatives. Journal Clubs will be led by advanced graduate students. The Program Coordinator will track attendance at Journal Clubs and students who are leading the Journal Clubs will indicate to the Associate Director for Graduate Studies whether students satisfactorily participated in a given semester. Attendance is mandatory for all students. An advanced student is exempt from attendance and participation in Journal Club only in the semester during which he/she defends the PhD thesis. Any student who has 25% or more unexcused absences during the semester (as defined by the University of Cincinnati official calendar) will receive a “C” and be placed on academic probation.

3. Lab Rotations (DB9073)

Three laboratory rotations of a minimum of 6 weeks each are recommended; a minimum of two rotations is required. Students must complete one of the required laboratory rotations during the summer prior to fall semester of their first year. A faculty member who takes a student into a lab rotation is expected to give the student adequate time and supervision. The first laboratory rotation must begin within one week of program orientation in the July prior to the fall semester of their first year. Performance during lab rotations will provide a basis for the research (DB 9073) grade in the first year.

4. Graduate Student Symposium

All students in their third year or beyond are required to present their work at the annual MDB Student Symposium. Presentations take the form of oral presentations or posters. Second year students have the option to present a poster of their preliminary studies. Students who are defending their thesis in the fall semester are not required to present at Symposium but should plan to attend.

5. Cincinnati Children’s Research Foundation Seminar Series (DB9001 & DB9002)

All students are required to participate in the weekly seminar series sponsored by the Division of Developmental Biology and the Perinatal Institute. The Program Coordinator will sit on the Seminar Committee, which is appointed by the Director of the Division of Developmental Biology. The Program Coordinator is responsible for organizing the weekly series and will record student attendance each week. The Associate Director for Graduate Studies will issue grades for seminar participation. Also, as part of the grade for the Seminar course (DB9001 & DB9002) students are required to attend all MDB Student Thesis Defenses. Any student who has 25% or more combined seminar/defense unexcused absences during a given grading period (May-December for fall grades and January-April for spring grades) will receive a “C” and be placed on academic probation.

C. Requirements for the Ph.D. degree in the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program for students in the MSTP combined M.D./Ph.D. program

1. MSTP students will enter the program as second-year students for the purposes of Student Symposium requirements. However, all Developmental Biology courses MUST be taken within one year of entering the program. This includes Introduction to Developmental Biology (DB9085C), Advanced Topics in Developmental Biology (DB9086), Development & Disease (DB9087) and Gene Regulation (DB9088). Whichever of Development & Disease or Advanced Topics in DB is not offered during the first year must be taken during the second year.
2. MSTP students must successfully complete their first year in the MDB program prior to beginning their candidacy exam.
3. Withdrawal/dismissal from the MSTP program will result in an automatic dismissal from the MDB PhD program.
4. MSTP students must have a first author paper submitted and either a) accepted or b) sent back with only minimal revisions, as deemed by the committee
5. All other requirements will be the same as for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree.

D. Overview of PhD Program Requirements Timeline

	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June
	Lab Rotation I		Lab Rotation II			Lab Rotation III			Lab Rotation IV			Lab Declaration
Year 1	Program Orientation	MDB Student Symposium (no presentation)	Fall Semester Coursework				Spring Semester Coursework including either Development & Disease or Advanced Topics in DB (offered in alternate years)				Milestone Report	
Year 2	Begin/Continue work in selected lab	MDB Student Symposium (optional poster presentation)	Fall Semester Journal Club & Fall Semester Seminar				Spring Semester Seminar & either Development & Disease or Advanced Topics in DB (offered in alternate years)				Milestone Report	
			Qualifier Examination Process									
Year 3	Begin/Continue work on thesis project	MDB Student Symposium (required oral presentation)	Fall Semester Journal Club & Fall Semester Seminar				Spring Semester Seminar **Last Semester in which to complete the Biostats Requirement**				Milestone Report	
			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting						
Year 4	Continue work on thesis project	MDB Student Symposium (required poster presentation)	Fall Semester Journal Club & Fall Semester Seminar				Spring Semester Seminar				Milestone Report	
			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting						
Year 5	Continue work on thesis project	MDB Student Symposium (required oral presentation)	Fall Semester Journal Club & Fall Semester Seminar				Spring Semester Seminar				Milestone Report	
			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting						
Years 6+	Continue work on thesis project	MDB Student Symposium (required poster presentation)	Fall Semester Journal Club & Fall Semester Seminar				Spring Semester Seminar				Milestone Report	
			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting			Bi-Annual Committee Meeting						

IV. GRADUATE CREDITS AND GRADING PRACTICES

A. Course Load

1. Students will register for at least 12 credits (for full-time student status) for Fall and Spring Semesters exclusive of audit credits, unless otherwise directed by the Program Director.
2. Except in unusual circumstances, no outside work is permitted for students. Exceptions require written permission of the program.

B. Scholarships

Students receiving University Graduate Assistantships (UGA) or University Graduate Scholarships (UGS) must carry a full-time course load (12 credits or more) each semester exclusive of audit credits. Under ordinary circumstances, assistantships and tuition scholarships will not be awarded to students who have accumulated 174 or more graduate credit hours. Students will be eligible for tuition scholarships and graduate assistantships based on performance and availability of funds for up to 9 years post-matriculation. UGA and UGS will be awarded based on continued compliance with all University guidelines as outlined in the University of Cincinnati Graduate Student Handbook.

C. Grading Practices

Students may view grade reports online immediately following submission of final grades by the instructor. Grade reports include total graduate hours and hours for the current semester. Credits carried and earned, and quality points, are computed each semester. In addition to appearing on students' grade reports, these hourly totals are posted on the permanent academic record. "Credits carried" include all credit hours with grades other than P (pass), U (unsatisfactory), T (audit), I (incomplete), W (official withdrawal with participation), UW (unofficial withdrawal), SP (in progress-satisfactory progress), UP (in progress-unsatisfactory progress) and N/NG (no grade reported). Credits earned includes all credit hours for which grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, or C are reported. "Credits carried" differs from credits earned by the sum of credit hours with grades of F, UW and I/F "Total graduate hours" is the sum of credits earned, P hours, SP hours, UP hours, NG hours, and advanced standing. All graduate work, regardless of the University of Cincinnati college in which the work was done, is accumulated for graduate students. Approved transfer credits are included in the sum of credits earned, but quality points for those credits are not included in the grade point average.

For the complete graduate grading scale and a definition of all grades, consult the "Grading Scales and Definitions" page of the Registrar's Office website.

V. REGISTRATION

Alterations to the student's schedule involving the addition of one or more classes, changes in class sections, or changes in credit status, may be submitted by logging in to the web registration system or by submitting a paper form. The "Registration Change (Add/Drop) Form" may be obtained from the student's college or from the One Stop Student Service Center (University Pavilion 2nd floor) or a regional campus registration office.

From the eighth (8th) day of the term through the fifteenth (15th) day of the term, additions to a class schedule require only the approval of the instructor. Thus, only the class instructor's signature is required on the Registration Change (Add/Drop) Form" through the fifteenth day of the term. A college signature is not required.

Beginning with the sixteenth (16th) day of the term, however, both the approval of the instructor and the college are required, and so the "Registration Change (Add/Drop) Form" must be signed by both the instructor and a representative of the college offering the class.

The completed and signed "Registration Change (Add/Drop) Form" must be submitted in person to the One Stop Student Service Center, or regional campus registration office.

A. Adding and Dropping Classes

Enter the One Stop Student Service Center or a regional campus registration office to submit a completed "Registration Change (Add/Drop) Form" for processing. Add/drops are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

If space is not available in the section that the student wishes to add, the student may attempt to add try other sections of that class (if offered).

Frequently check your schedule online to verify classes.

Full-time students who add credit hours over 18 will be charged additional fees for those excess hours. In addition, the credit hours over 18 must be dropped by the eighth calendar day of the term in order to have 100% of the charge for the excess hours removed.

B. Withdrawing from Classes

1. Academic Considerations

After the 15th calendar day of the term (consult the appropriate academic calendar for Summer term dates), but within the term, the student may withdraw from one or more classes, as follows:

Students may withdraw from classes through web registration if the instructor permits web withdrawals (refer to the instructor's class syllabus). Students and instructors both will receive e-mail notification of the withdrawal. Students are assigned a "W" grade at the time of the withdrawal, but instructors reserve the right to change the "W" to an "F" through the final grading process.

Students may also withdraw from classes in person by submitting a completed "Registration Change" form to the One Stop Student Service Center (University Pavilion, 2nd floor) for processing. The last day to withdraw from a class is the 58th calendar day of the term (consult the appropriate academic calendar for the specific date).

2. Financial Considerations

Official dropping from individual courses or completely withdrawing from the University must be initiated by the student in writing through the appropriate graduate office.

Examples of actions that are not considered official notice of withdrawal are: failure to attend class, giving notice to an instructor, stopping payment on a check used to pay fees, or verbal notice to any University office.

A refund will not be issued to a student who has been awarded a University Graduate Scholarship (UGS) to support their tuition. In the event of disciplinary suspension or dismissal, fees will not be refunded in whole or in part. Questions concerning interpretation of the regulations governing refund of student fees should be referred to the Registrar.

C. Audit Regulations

The audit option is intended for cases in which course work is desired or advised but in which, a grade for credit purposes is deemed unnecessary by the student in consultation with their Advisor. Students may elect to audit a course instead of receiving academic credit for a course up to the 7th calendar day of the term. Prior to the 7th calendar day of the term, a student may elect to take the course for credit. However, after the 7th calendar day of the term, the student will not be permitted to take the course for credit during that specific term.

Graduate students generally register to audit a course to obtain remedial/deficiency instruction in major or minor areas of their program of study. The student must discuss the course-work expectations with the instructor (e.g., attendance only) prior to auditing the course. Students who audit a course will be designated with an "A" grade type on the class and grade lists. A passing audit grade ("T") should not be awarded automatically by the course instructor, but rather only if the student has participated in the course to the level of faculty expectation for passing the course. It is possible, and at times appropriate, for the instructor to assign a grade of "F" to a student who has failed the course by not

meeting faculty expectations for participation. The “F” grade carries 0.000 quality points and is averaged into the grade point average if the course being audited carries credit hours.

Students who audit a course must pay regular fees for the audited course. At the end of the term, the instructor should enter a grade of “T” for those students who have met course participation expectations. Audit hours do not count toward the 174 credit hour limit (as a condition of eligibility for UGS), nor are they included in the determination of full-time status.

D. Student Status Options

1. Full-Time Student Status

- a. Students are enrolled for 12* or more credit hours in a semester. This includes DB Seminar, Journal Club and Lab Research.
- b. The Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) does not make deduction from the students’ pay.
- c. The program covers student Fees, which include Rec Center Membership.
- d. Student Health Insurance is automatic unless waived by the student and is covered by the program.
- e. Any previous student loans remain in deferment by default.

2. Part-Time Student Status

- a. Students are enrolled for less than 10 credit hours in a semester; typically only one credit hour of lab research.
- b. OPERS will make deductions from students’ pay.
- c. The program covers student Fees but they do NOT include Rec Center membership. A part-time student membership can be purchased at current rates.
- d. Students must enroll for health insurance coverage and the program covers it.
- e. Student loans require special paperwork to remain in deferment.

	Credits	OPERS Deducted?	Rec Membership?	Health Insurance?	Loan Deferment?
Full-Time	10+	N	Y	Y	Y
Part-Time	1-9	Y	N	Y	Y

**Please note that the University only requires 10 credit hours for full-time status but the program requires 12.*

VI. ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM

The program shall be administered by an Executive Committee to consist of the Director of the Program (chair), Co-Director of the Program, Associate Director for Graduate Studies, Associate Director for Admissions and ad-hoc members. Major programmatic changes will go through an MDB Advisory Board consisting of the four most recent Program Directors for evaluation and recommendations will be made to the Executive Committee.

A. Role of Director of the Program

The Director of the Program shall have responsibility for administration of the Program. The Director shall call faculty meetings, bring appropriate issues to the faculty for resolution, carry out policy decisions of the faculty, and appoint individuals and committees to carry out duties of the Program. It is ultimately the Program Director's responsibility to assure that activities related to the Program are carried out in compliance with University policies and needs. The Chairman of Pediatrics appoints the Director of the Program for a three-year term.

B. Role of Co-Director of the Program

The purpose of the Co-Director of the Program is to ensure an orderly transition at the end of a Director's term and is considered the Director-elect. The Co-Director shall work with the Director to perform the duties outlined above when the Director is indisposed. The Co-Director shall also have responsibility for overseeing all graduate courses in the program. He or she will also appoint Course Directors for each graduate course offered by the program and be responsible for overseeing the activities of those Course Directors. The Chairman of Pediatrics appoints the Co-Director of the Program for a three-year term to overlap with the term of the Director.

C. Role of Associate Director for Graduate Studies

The Associate Director for Graduate Studies shall have responsibility for dealing with student affairs. Duties shall include advising students on matters including curricula, maintaining student records, informing faculty of student progress, and informing students of their academic standing. The Associate Director for Graduate Studies shall also serve as an ex officio member of the Admissions Committee. The Director and Co-Director of the Program appoint the Associate Director for Graduate Studies for a three-year term.

D. Role of Associate Director for Admissions

The Associate Director for Admissions shall have responsibility for recruitment and admission of graduate students to the graduate program in Molecular and Developmental Biology. Duties shall include communicating with applicants, arranging interviews when appropriate, arranging admissions committee meetings

and updating and maintaining recruitment material. The Associate Director for Admissions is the chairperson of the Admission Committee and shall organize the Admission Committee in consultation with the Director and Co-Director of the Program. The Director and Co-Director of the Program will appoint the Associate Director for Admissions for a three-year term.

The Associate Director for Admissions selects the members to serve on the admissions committee. The roster for the committee is then approved by the program directors. The admissions committee should contain at least two student representatives, elected by the student body. The students' representatives must be in good standing in the program or the Associate Director for Admissions can request replacements. The admissions committee interviews applicants and makes recommendations to the program directors about which applicants to render an offer of admission. The Associate Director for Admissions chairs the admissions committee meetings and interviews unless he/she is absent, in which case a surrogate may be appointed. Any disagreements between committee members may be referred to the program directors and executive committee if necessary.

E. Role of Ad-Hoc Members

Ad-Hoc Members will be appointed by the Director and Co-Director of the Program as needed and may include members with expertise in program finance, human resources, student recruitment, and/or faculty membership. These ad-hoc members shall have responsibility for advising the Executive Committee on those issues which fall under the purview of their specific area of expertise.

F. Appointment of Officers

The Director of the Program and the Co-Director of the Program are each appointed for three-year terms, by the Chairman of Pediatrics. The Chairman of Pediatrics, or his/her representative will solicit nominations. The Director of the Program and the Co-Director of the Program will appoint the Associate Directors.

G. Grievance Committee

The Executive Committee shall serve as the grievance committee. The grievance committee is responsible for dealing with student grievances according to University policy as described elsewhere in these program guidelines. In the event that a student is dissatisfied with the ruling of the program grievance committee, he/she is encouraged to pursue resolution through either the University Ombuds Office or the formal Graduate School Grievance Procedures.

H. Role of Program Coordinator

The Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program is based in the Division of Developmental Biology at the Children's Hospital Research Foundation.

The Program Coordinator is the main contact person for the Program. This individual attends to and coordinates the day-to-day activities of the program, including providing clerical support, monitoring budgetary activities, tracking student progress, providing guidance to faculty, coordinating committee activities, and organizing the student symposium. The Program Coordinator will also serve as a member of the Admission Committee and coordinate all activities related to the recruitment and admission of students to the program. The Program Coordinator will also coordinate the CCRF/MDB Seminar Series in consultation with the Seminar Committee, which is appointed by the Director of the Division of Developmental Biology. Activities related to the daily operation of the program courses will also be the responsibility of the Program Coordinator, including but not limited to attendance tracking. Questions or concerns related to the program should first be brought to the attention of the Program Coordinator who will forward them to the appropriate individual when necessary. The Program Coordinator is also responsible for developing and updating a procedure manual for activities related to the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program. The Program Coordinator shall attend the program's faculty meetings and prepare minutes.

I. Role of Advisory Board

The Advisory Board will consist of the four most recent former Program Directors. This board will use their knowledge of the program to consider major programmatic changes and make recommendations to the Executive Committee. The Board should meet a minimum of once per year but may meet more often as necessary and as requested by the Program Director. Members of the Executive Committee may be asked to attend Advisory Board meetings when topics discussed will directly impact the day to day operation of the program. Final decisions on all issues considered by the Advisory Board will rest with the Program Director.

J. Graduate Student Officers

Elections for Molecular and Developmental Biology student officer positions are held at the end of the Spring semester each year. Students may nominate themselves or others for any positions and then vote based on the nominations.

1. Admissions Representatives

Student Admission Representatives play active roles during the interview process and recruitment of new students each year. They are responsible for organizing the Thursday night dinners that take place prior to the interview day. On the interview day, the Student Admission Representatives read through applications of interviewees and sit in on each candidate's interview, and weigh in on the discussion and decisions following each interview session. Student Admission Representatives are also responsible for organizing the lab tours and

demonstrations that take place on interview days. Two Admissions Representatives will be elected.

2. Student Representatives

Student Representatives act as liaisons between the MDB students and faculty. They attend MDB general faculty meetings throughout the year where they address student questions and concerns. Student Representatives organize student led journal clubs in the Fall semester. Additionally, Student Representatives keep the MDB student posters up to date as new first year students join the program and upper classmen graduate. Student Representatives also organize the MDB officer elections at the end of the Spring semester. Two Student Representatives will be elected.

3. Seminar Coordinators

Seminar Coordinators organize the Wednesday seminars according to research focus and assign students to lunches and breakfasts with the seminar speakers based on mutual research interests. Additionally, seminar coordinators are responsible for hosting the Richard Akeson Memorial seminar speaker at the beginning of the school year. Two Seminar Coordinators will be elected.

4. HSGA Representative

One of the main goals of Health Sciences Graduate Student Association (HSGA) Representatives is to work with the HSGA and make Graduate Student Governance Association (GSGA) student awards known to all MDB students. It is important to maintain this affiliation with HSGA in order to allow MDB students the opportunity to apply for GSGA travel grants. Additionally, HSGA representatives are responsible for attending HSGA general meetings and notifying MDB students of GSGA activities, fundraising events and new university policies. One HSGA Representative will be elected.

5. Student Meeting Coordinator

Student meetings in the MDB program are typically held once a month during the academic year. The Student Meeting Coordinator organizes times, rooms and presenters for each meeting. MDB students give presentations as well as provide feedback to other students on presentation clarity, skill and data. Meetings may be organized to allow students to prepare for conferences, MDB student symposium, and committee meetings and to allow first year students to refine their presentation skills. One Student Meeting Coordinator will be elected.

6. Social Coordinators

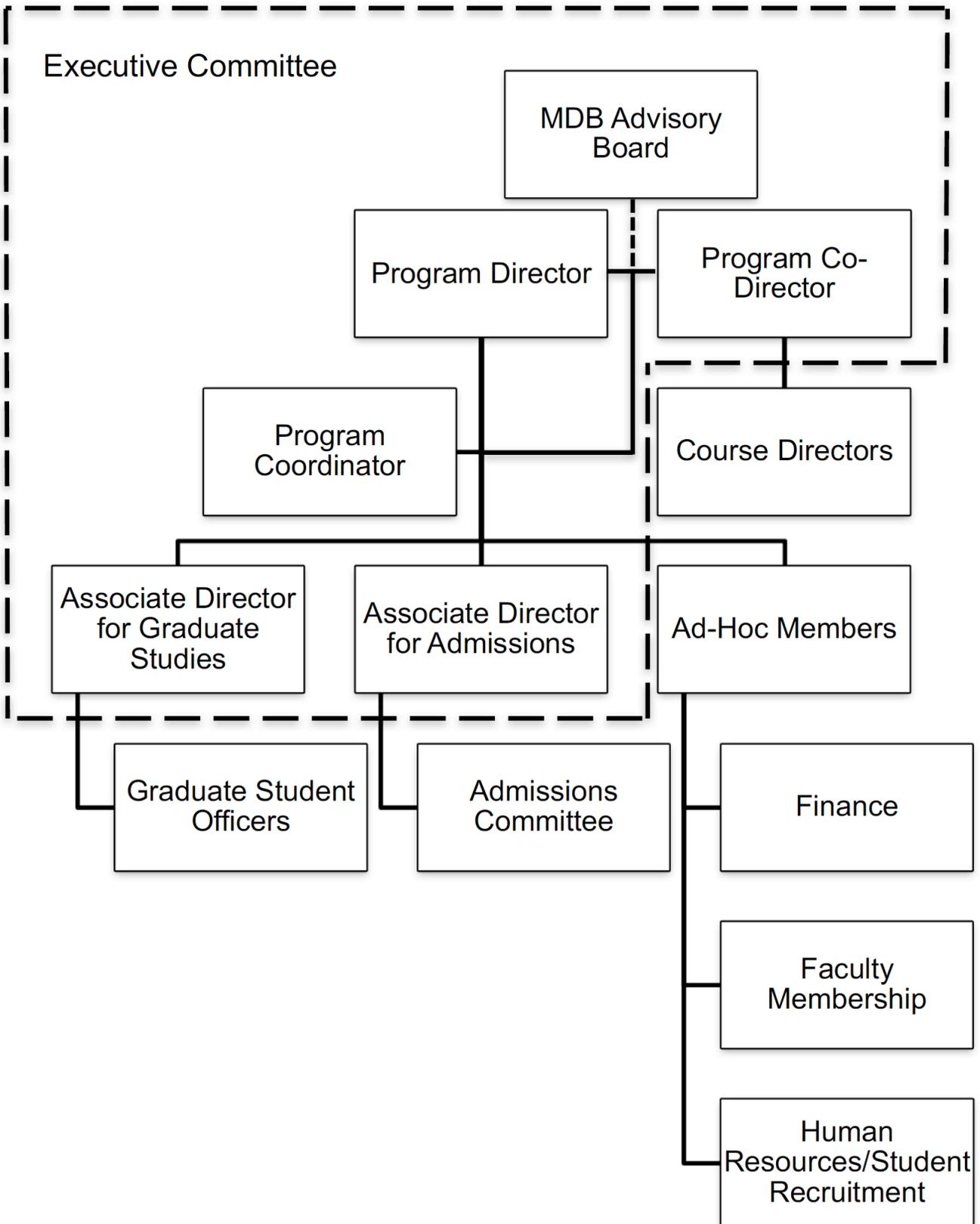
Social Coordinators organize social and recreational events that allow MDB students to socialize outside of the lab and introduce the first year students to

upper classmen in the program. Several events are planned each semester, beginning with the official MDB Welcome Picnic. Previous events have included trips to local sporting events, skiing, Cincinnati Zoo outings and bowling. Two Social Coordinators will be elected.

7. Website Coordinator

The Website Coordinator is responsible for regularly updating the MDB program website with new developments and progress made by faculty and students. A major focus of the website coordinator is to increase the online visibility of the MDB program. An additional responsibility of the Website Coordinator is to facilitate interaction with international organizations, blogs and websites that are resources for prospective graduate students. One Website Coordinator will be elected.

L. Overview of Program Administration



VII. SPECIAL RULES AND PROVISIONS

A. Eligibility of University Faculty and Administrators for Graduate Degrees

No graduate degree will be granted to any faculty member above the rank of instructor who teaches in the same college in which the degree is to be granted. The only exception to the above rule applies to those members of the faculty who were, as of September 1, 1963, candidates for advanced degrees. This rule is applied also to adjunct appointments at any professorial rank and to interdisciplinary degrees when the same college is one of the interdisciplinary colleges; the only exception in the latter case will be when the faculty member was admitted to the interdisciplinary degree program prior to September 1, 1976.

No holder of an academic administrative title of Assistant Dean or equivalent or above shall be granted a graduate degree from the University of Cincinnati. The only exception will be when the administrator was admitted to the graduate program prior to September 1, 1976. This rule applies only to those who hold faculty rank above instructor. Those holding "equivalent rank" must petition the Graduate Council.

B. Non-Discrimination Policy

The University of Cincinnati reaffirms its policy that discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era or age shall not be practiced in any of its activities. Furthermore, where past or present discrimination continues to have an adverse impact upon protected class members such as minority groups, women, disabled, Vietnam era veterans, or disabled veterans, the university will take affirmative action in carrying out its policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all. The Office of Equal Opportunity (University Hall, Suite 340) will address all complaints involving violations of the University of Cincinnati's nondiscrimination policy.

C. Right to Review Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), is the federal law that governs the release of and access to student education records. FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. For the complete FERPA information, consult the "Records Privacy" page of the Registrar's Office website.

D. Grievance Procedures

Any graduate student who believes that he or she has valid grounds for a grievance should prepare a written statement of the grievance setting forth the specific allegations with reasonable particularity and submit it as follows:

1. To the Director of the Program for grievances against a faculty member of an agency associated only with that program with a copy simultaneously sent to the University Dean.
2. To the Dean of the College of Medicine for grievances against faculty members in two or more programs of that college or a college-wide agency with a copy simultaneously sent to the University Dean.
3. To the Dean of the Graduate School for grievances against faculty members in two or more colleges or a university-wide agency.

Program Review: Within one academic calendar week after the Director of the Program receives such a state of grievance, he or she will appoint an ad hoc review committee consisting of three disinterested members of that college's graduate faculty (excluding him or herself) and two disinterested graduate students, all drawn from that program, and will inform the grievant and all other parties to the grievance of these nominees. Either the grievant and all other parties to the grievance may challenge the disinterestedness of any nominee. When a committee acceptable to all parties to the grievance is appointed, this committee will convene within one academic calendar week after their appointment.

E. Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense and cannot be tolerated in an academic community. Dishonesty in any form, including cheating, plagiarism, deception of effort, or unauthorized assistance, may result in a failing grade in a course and/or suspension or dismissal from the Graduate Division. When a student is suspected of academic dishonesty a formal complaint should be brought to the Executive Committee for review. The Executive Committee will then convene to discuss the allegation and decide on a proper course of action, within the guidelines of the University of Cincinnati.

The University has established formal procedures to deal with cases of alleged academic misconduct that are described in the Student Code of Conduct. Every student is required to adhere to the rules of the Student Code of Conduct and to follow the procedures set forth therein in cases where a violation is alleged. The first level of resolution of a complaint occurs between the student, faculty, and if needed the Dean of the College.

The student's Advisor or members of a student's committee may be contacted initially with a complaint. If the complaint can be resolved at this level, no further action is required. If not resolved, it is to be forwarded to the Executive Committee, which will make a formal recommendation for action to the Program Director. If resolved by the program, no further action is required. If not resolved, the complaint is forwarded to the Dean, who will appoint a committee to review the matter. Further appeals are possible as prescribed in the Student Code of Conduct.

All entering students will receive a copy of the Student Code of Conduct and will sign an acknowledgment indicating receipt. This acknowledgment will be retained in the student's permanent record.

Academic misconduct includes cheating (dishonesty or deception in fulfilling course or other academic requirements), fabrication (falsification of information), or plagiarism (using another person's work without assigning the originator proper credit).

F. Sexual Harassment

Law and University policy forbid sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a matter dependent on the perceptions of the alleged victim of the harassment, not the alleged offender. Anyone perceiving that they have been treated inappropriately based on their gender may take their complaint to an officer of the program, their Advisor, or a member of their committee. There is also a formal institutional sexual harassment grievance procedure in place at both the University and the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center that may be used at the discretion of the individual.

G. Maternity/Paternity Leave Policy

Students in the Molecular Developmental Biology Program will be paid for no more than six weeks of maternity/paternity leave. Under extenuating circumstances as deemed by the student's physician, Advisor, and the Director of the Program, additional time may be granted. The student's Advisor and the Director of the Program, prior to the beginning of the leave, must approve all time off. The student's Advisor and the Director of the Program may approve additional time off without pay.

VIII. FACULTY MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES

A. Goals

The goals of the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program are (1) to develop outstanding new scientists through guidance of thesis and dissertation research of participants in the program; (2) to provide formal courses, seminars, and journal clubs of the highest quality to the Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate students and also the University of Cincinnati academic community; (3) to enhance the participants' breadth and depth of scientific expertise in fundamental issues in contemporary basic and biomedical science; and (4) to increase awareness both within the University of Cincinnati academic community and elsewhere of the potential contributions to basic and biomedical sciences of the information contained in and the approaches used by the discipline of Molecular and Developmental Biology. It is expected that new faculty have demonstrated independence in their research program and an ability to support a graduate student -- generally through grant funds. Applications would also be encouraged from individuals who might be expected to complement and/or develop strong interactions with the current faculty. The faculty should be thinking in terms of focused training areas, which will lead to training grants. Two-thirds of the faculty in the Program should have their primary appointments in the Department of Pediatrics. Faculty members are required to attend at least one third of the Faculty meetings as evidence of their continued interest in the Program.

The aspiration of the Program to excellence requires a vigorous and committed faculty. As membership in the Program is voluntary, it is clear that the goals of the Program will be met only through a high level of faculty involvement. Thus, new faculty members must have demonstrated that they share these aspirations, and the level of commitment of existing faculty members must be assessed periodically.

While the guidance of thesis/dissertation research is a major activity of the Program, some individuals may contribute significantly to the Program without acting as a student's Advisor. Faculty appointments will be made at either of two levels. One will be comprised of Training faculty who will act as mentors for students training in the Molecular and Developmental Biology Program. In addition, it is recognized that some individuals may contribute significantly to the Program without wanting to act as a student Advisor and such individuals can join as Program Affiliates. Faculty with either appointment will have equal voting privileges. It should be noted that students are permitted to select an Advisor who was on the training faculty at the time of their entrance into the Program, as long as that faculty member maintains adequate funding to support the student.

B. Nomination and acceptance procedures for New Training Faculty.

To meet the above stated goals, the following processes for consideration of Training faculty appointment and evaluation have been adopted.

1. Tenure track and non-tenure track Faculty members at the University of Cincinnati are eligible for admission to the Program.
2. The candidate should be willing to assume teaching, administrative, and related responsibilities within the Program.
3. Unless the nominee is an entry-level faculty, he/she should have a previous history of training of students either as a mentor or a member of student committees and be able and willing to provide stipend support for students under their supervision.
4. The funding source for students may not impose any restrictions or limitations on the ability of the student to publish their research findings.
5. Prospective MDB Faculty members should have sufficient major funding to support a student and his/her research or should be actively seeking funding if they are newly independent investigators.
6. Prospective MDB faculty should have established strong research productivity as indicated by first and/or last author publications.
7. Prospective MDB Faculty members should understand it is the expectation that Division Directors will provide funding for any students working under the faculty in their division, in the event that a faculty member were to lose funding.
8. MDB faculty members are required to have current and complete information on the MDB Website

The process for the nomination and acceptance of a faculty candidate for membership in the program should be as follows:

Candidates must be nominated by their Division Director and approved by the ad-hoc member for faculty membership. The application should include the following: a letter from the candidate which should define (1) his/her expectations from the Program, (2) contributions that he/she feels his/her expertise and background will provide to the Program, (3) supporting evidence for interest in Molecular and Developmental Biology which will include a summary of past research, graduate student training, and teaching experience and (4) a history of present and past research support; a current CV; a letter of support from a current member of the program faculty and; a letter of support from the candidates' Division Director outlining the division's willingness to cover any declared students in the event that the candidate should lose funding. This information should be forwarded electronically to the Program Coordinator who will forward to the ad-hoc member. This information will then be provided to the Faculty as a whole and the application will usually be voted on at the next general faculty meeting (held three times per year).

C. Reappointment of Current Training Faculty

All Faculty members in the Graduate Program have appointments of 6 years, after which time the ad-hoc member, appointed by the Director of the Program, will review the members and make recommendations to the faculty as to whether or not each reviewed faculty member should continue as faculty within the Graduate Program. The criteria for continued membership in the Program will be similar to those applied to the admission of new Faculty members and will be particularly

concerned with the extent of involvement of the Faculty member in teaching, administration, and other related tasks in the Program as well as the ability to support a student's research.

Prior to each review the Program Coordinator will request that each faculty member being reviewed submit a letter outlining their intention to remain with the MDB program as well as their training activities since their last review. A current CV should also be forwarded.

Appendix A
Graduate Student Forms

1st Year Lab Rotations

NAME: _____

ENTERING CLASS YEAR: _____

Please list the faculty member that you will be rotating with each quarter and have that faculty member initial on the appropriate line. **Have the Associate Director for Graduate Studies initial this form *BEFORE* each rotation.** Once your rotations are complete you should return this form to the MDB Program Coordinator in S3.441 and you will need to complete a lab declaration form to formally conclude your rotations and join a lab for your thesis research.

Lab Rotation:

	Faculty Lab	Faculty Initials	Assoc. Dir. Grad. Studies Initials
Rotation I	_____	_____	_____
Rotation II	_____	_____	_____
Rotation III	_____	_____	_____
Rotation IV	_____	_____	_____
Rotation V	_____	_____	_____
Rotation VI	_____	_____	_____



I hereby acknowledge that all of the above rotations have been successfully completed and all evaluation forms have been returned to the MDB Program Coordinator. I also understand that I cannot formally declare a lab until all evaluations have been completed and returned.

Student Signature

Date

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:
Amanda Middleton
MDB Graduate Program
S3.441 (MLC 7007)

ROTATION ADVISOR EVALUATION

Rotation Date: _____

ROTATION ADVISOR RESEARCH ROTATION EVALUATION

Molecular and Developmental Biology Graduate Program

Student: _____ Date: _____

Rotation Advisor: _____

Briefly summarize the goals of the rotation. Please summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the student in research.

Will the student co-author on a publication? Yes No
If the manuscript has been submitted, please include a copy.

Would you consider taking this student in your lab? Yes No

ROTATION GRADE: _____

Rotation Advisor Signature

Date

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:
Amanda Middleton
MDB Graduate Program
S3.441 (MLC 7007)

LAB DECLARATION FORM

I have chosen _____'s Lab for my thesis research.
Printed Name of Faculty

Printed Name of Student

Student's UC ID # (MXX-XX-XXXX)

Student Signature

Date

I have agreed to accept this student in my laboratory for his/her thesis research in the Molecular & Developmental Biology Graduate Program. I hereby acknowledge that I currently have adequate funds to support this position.

Printed Name of Faculty

Faculty Division Name

Faculty Signature

Date

I hereby acknowledge that the above-mentioned faculty in my division has agreed to accept the above-mentioned student in his/her lab to complete thesis work for the Molecular & Developmental Biology Graduate Program. I further acknowledge that should this faculty lose funding at any point during this student's tenure, the division will be responsible for providing gap funding for supporting this student to complete his/her graduate study.

Printed Name of Division Chief

Division Chief Signature

Date

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:
Amanda Middleton
MDB Graduate Program
S3.441 (MLC 7007)

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

THESIS ADVISOR EVALUATION

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Summary of Student Progress: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Is the student regularly attending lab? Yes No

Has the student published any papers as first author (does not include reviews)? Yes No

Has the student published any papers as a middle author? Yes No

What is the target date for first-author publication? _____

Has the student presented his/her work (regional/national/international meeting)? Yes No

What is the target date for thesis defense? _____

When should the next committee meeting take place (time frame)? _____

Please list any specific requests or areas for improvement for the student to focus on prior to the next meeting:

Advisor Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Associate Director for Graduate Studies Signature

Date

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

COMMITTEE MEMBER EVALUATION

Committee Member Name: _____

Student Name: _____ Date of Committee Meeting: _____

Summary of Student Progress: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

What is the target date for first-author publication? _____

What is the target date for thesis defense? _____

When should the next committee meeting take place (time frame)? _____

Has the student met the goals set during the last committee meeting? Yes No

Please comment on any deficiencies in meeting goals set at the last meeting:

Please list any specific requests or areas for improvement for the student to focus on prior to the next meeting:

Committee Member Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

APPLICATION FOR THESIS DEFENSE

Name: _____ Date: _____

Thesis Title:

Proposed Date & Time of Defense**:

**Please note that this date may NOT be less than 6 weeks prior to the end of the semester in which you wish to graduate.

Do you need to schedule a room? Yes No, I have scheduled the following: _____

Committee Approval:

By signing below you agree that this student is well prepared for defense of his/her thesis and you approve their moving forward with both defense and graduation pursuant to College and Program requirements.

Chair/Advisor

Signature

Committee Member

Signature

Student Signature

Date

As Associate Director for Graduate Studies, I hereby approve the proposed thesis defense as outlined above.

Associate Director of Graduate Studies Signature

Date