



# 2023-24

# GRADUATE

# STUDENT

# HANDBOOK

ANATOMY & NEUROBIOLOGY



[anatomy.uci.edu](http://anatomy.uci.edu)

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# Message from the Chair

*“Our students, faculty and scientists work across disciplines to discover how the brain operates and to develop the next generation of treatments for neurological disease.”*



**Christine M Gall, PhD**

Distinguished Professor  
Chair, Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology

## WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY & NEUROBIOLOGY

Our faculty, students and postdoctoral researchers work at the forefront of scientific discovery.

Within A&N, our world class research laboratories are rapidly advancing fundamental knowledge about how the brain operates and developing the next generation of treatments for neurological disease. Research projects currently underway in our department are designed to identify synaptic and circuit mechanisms of memory and higher cognitive function, and to discover treatments and cures for epilepsy, Alzheimer's

disease, stroke, learning and memory disorders, drug addiction, ALS, deafness and other hearing disorders, spinal cord injury, Parkinson's disease, dementia, intellectual disability and more.

As a graduate student in our department, you are a critical part of this mission. We are creating a highly interactive research community where the best neuroscientists from every background are welcome and supported. Throughout your graduate career, you will be trained to become an expert in your respective field, and you will also develop a strong general background in other areas of neuroscience and related disciplines.

To achieve this important goal, our students take a variety of interdisciplinary core and advanced courses in neuroscience, primarily through the Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program, as well as related coursework sponsored by other training programs on campus. In addition, graduate students in A&N perform basic and translational research under the supervision of our high-caliber and diverse research faculty.

We wish you the best of luck in your graduate studies!

**Dr. Christine M Gall**



## Overview of the program

### About the Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology

#### Our research strengths

- Investigating brain structure and function from molecular to systems levels
- Biological basis of memory, complex behavior and diseases of the nervous system
- Stem cell biology & regenerative medicine

#### Goal of graduate training

Our goal is to provide a **world-class training environment** for doctoral students to develop the skills and expertise necessary to become the next generation of leaders in the field of neuroscience.

## A&N by the numbers

Founded 1964



#### Ranking

Anatomy Departments  
according to BRIRM



#### Research

Current NIH award dollars  
to primary faculty

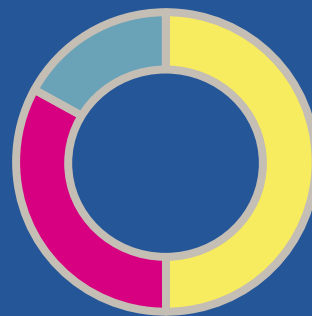


#### Training

Average time to  
PhD degree

#### Graduate student careers

since 2015



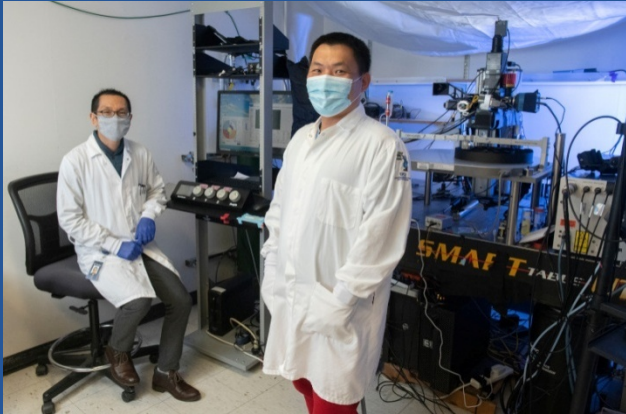
■ Academia  
■ Industry  
■ Other



#### Faculty & Trainees

- ▶ 16 Primary Faculty
- ▶ 32 Graduate Students (PhD or MSTP)
- ▶ 18 Postdoctoral Fellows

# UCI Centers directed by A&N faculty



The **Center for Neural Circuit Mapping (CNCM)** is advancing the study of neural circuits to define mechanisms and pathways that underlie neurodevelopmental, neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders.

Website: <https://cncm.som.uci.edu/>

The **Center for the Study of Cannabis (CSC)** is a multi-disciplinary research center whose mission is to address the medical, legal and cultural challenges posed by cannabis legalization.

Website: <https://cannabis.uci.edu/>



The **Conte Center at UCI** addresses how early-life experiences influence the brain and contribute to mental illnesses starting during adolescence.

Website: <https://contecenter.uci.edu>



The **Epilepsy Research Center (EpiCenter)** is the leading academic research center dedicated exclusively to epilepsy research. It is home to a collection of scientists, clinicians and students who are working across disciplines to devise new ways for understanding, preventing and treating epilepsy.

Website: <https://epilepsyresearch.uci.edu/>



The mission of the **Reeve-Irvine Center for Spinal Cord Injury Research (RIRC)** is to find new treatments for spinal cord injury through the collaborative research and educational efforts of prominent scientists and clinicians both at the University of California, Irvine and around the world.

Website: <http://www.reeve.uci.edu/>

The **Sue and Bill Gross Stem Cell Research Center (SCRC)** is a dynamic center encompassing a diverse array of interdisciplinary investigators that span the schools of Medicine, Biological Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Engineering, Arts and Law. Our state-of-the-art, LEED Platinum certified research and clinical building houses 23 of our 50 center faculty members.

Website: <https://stemcell.uci.edu/>



## Did you know?



### A&N Graduate Students currently hold

- ▶ 5 F30/31 NRSA or NSF Fellowships
- ▶ 6 T32 Graduate Training Fellowships
- ▶ 3 Other Fellowship Awards



## Our commitment to diversity and inclusion at UCI

In the **Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology**, equity, diversity and inclusion are at the core of who we are. We are committed to building a broadly diverse community of scientists and to providing a fun, safe, welcoming and intellectually stimulating environment for everyone. We know that having varied perspectives, ideas and experiences helps foster a culture of creativity and innovation necessary for scientific discovery. In addition to nurturing a welcoming and supportive environment for all, the following Centers and resources are also available on campus:

### **Asian American and Native American Pacific Islanders**

UCI is an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI). This federal designation aligns with UCI's aspiration to be a national leader and global model of inclusive excellence. The Center provides a wide range of education and advocacy services for faculty, staff, students and the general public. For more information, visit the [AANAPISI website](#).

### **Black Thriving Initiative**

The [UCI Black Thriving Initiative](#) recognizes and responds to anti-Blackness as an existential threat to our mission as a public research university. In depriving Black people of their full participation in society and in university life, anti-Blackness compromises UCI's capacity to educate, discover, create and heal. It therefore demands a whole university response. This response relies on each member of our campus community linking their future to the success of Black students, faculty and staff as well as alumni and communities served by UCI. The campus strives to elevate attention, intensify effort, and disseminate knowledge and creative expressions that refute anti-Blackness, promote innovative public policy solutions to structural racism, and yield practical benefits to Black communities locally, regionally and nationally. For additional information, you can visit the Initiative website at <https://inclusion.uci.edu/uci-black-thriving-initiative/>.

### **DECADE**

DECADE stands for the Diverse Educational Community and Doctoral Experience. In collaboration with the Office of Inclusive Excellence, this program provides a diverse group of UCI graduate students with a supportive community consisting of faculty, staff, and students; resources tailored to fit specific needs, and a wide variety of professional development and leadership opportunities. DECADE seeks to improve inclusive excellence by increasing the participation and retention of women and underrepresented minorities in graduate programs. As part of the program's mission to promote inclusive excellence in graduate education, DECADE provides a wide range of resources and leadership opportunities that all graduate students are welcomed to take advantage of. For DECADE resources and events, visit: [Graduate Division DECADE](#).

### **Disability Services Center**



The [UCI Disability Services Center](#) provides a culture of inclusion and equal opportunity for students with disabilities is a campus wide responsibility and commitment. UCI demonstrates its core values of individual growth, development, civility, and diversity by recognizing students with disabilities as an important part of its student body. Our mission is to empower students to maximize their abilities to thrive in today's global community. For more information, you can contact the Center at email [dsc@uci.edu](mailto:dsc@uci.edu) or 949-824-7494.

The following services are available to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities:

- Disability management counseling
- Liaison to faculty
- Individual or group orientation to campus
- Assistive technology (e.g., note taking tools, text-to-speech software, etc.)
- Course Notes (Note taking assistance)
- Readers. Scribes and sign language interpreters
- Assistive listening devices
- Real-time captioning services
- Limited transportation services (e.g., wheelchair, scooter, knee walker, Ring Road Rides)
- Assistance in receiving books and course material in alternate formats
- Document conversion; books and other course materials in alternate formats (e.g., enlarged, Braille, computer disk and other audio formats)
- Housing Accommodations (Recommendations)
- Accessible classroom furniture

### **Latinx Resource Center**

UCI is a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). This federal designation aligns with UCI's aspiration to be a national leader and global model of inclusive excellence. The [UCI Latinx Resource Center \(LRC\)](#) was founded in 2020 to raise awareness of social, political, economic, historical and cultural realities of the Latinx and Chicanx communities. The Center accomplishes this mission by offering resources, programs, and a space where cultura, arte and academia are interconnected. Their vision is that these efforts will broaden access, increase retention and ensure a clear pathway to graduation through the empowerment of Latinx and Chicanx students. For more information, you can visit the Center website at <https://latinx.uci.edu>.

### **Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center**

The [UCI Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center](#), which opened in 1995, provides support, education and advocacy from an intersectional perspective regarding sexual orientation/attraction and gender identity for the UC Irvine Campus Community. The Center provides a wide range of education and advocacy services supporting intersectional identity development. It fosters community, wellness, an open and inclusive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex,

transgender, queer, asexual, ally, and questioning students, faculty, staff, and the larger campus community. It strives to develop an atmosphere of acceptance and wellbeing in which the campus community can support the academic mission of the university. They have a quarterly calendar of educational, cultural and social events, and they can provide information on campus events and resources. For additional information, contact the LGBTRC at [lgbtrc@uci.edu](mailto:lgbtrc@uci.edu) or call (949) 824-3277.

### **UC Immigrant Legal Services Center**

The UC Immigrant Legal Services Center provides free immigration-related legal services to students (undocumented or otherwise), as well as their immediate family members (spouse, siblings, children, and parents). These services are free of charge. The UCI branch of the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center is located on the fourth floor of the Student Center South building, also known as the RISE Suite. For clarification on any of the services or if emergency legal assistance is needed, students can email the campus attorney Lucero Chavez Basilio at [lucero.ucimm@law.ucdavis.edu](mailto:lucero.ucimm@law.ucdavis.edu) or reach her by phone at 530-400-2062. Students can also make appointments for immigration relief screenings with the following link <https://tinyurl.com/UCI-ImmLegalServices>.

### **Womxn's Hub**

The [UCI Womxn's Hub](#) advances gender equity by raising community consciousness, fostering personal growth, implementing social justice initiatives, and increasing access to resources that support student success. The center focuses on womxn-specific needs and ideas through workshops, training, personal development, and community building. The space is open and affirming to all who believe in the strength of womxn, womxn-identified persons, and all allies. For more information, contact the Womxn's Hub at [womenshub@uci.edu](mailto:womenshub@uci.edu) or (949) 824-6000.

\*Additional diversity programs may be sponsored by the [UCI Office of Inclusive Excellence](#).

## Expectations of graduate students

### Maintaining good academic standing

Graduate students in A&N are expected to make normal progress toward the PhD. This is evidenced by meeting the Department's degree requirements and progressing in your dissertation research at a reasonable pace and with a high level of performance. Students must meet the following standards to remain in good standing in our program:

1. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in graduate level coursework at UCI.
2. Receive grades of B or better.
3. Be registered in at least 12 and no more than 15 units of graduate or upper-division coursework each quarter, unless part-time status or an academic leave of absence has been approved in advance by the Graduate Dean. In cases of approved part-time status, enrollment in 8 units of credit toward the degree is expected each quarter.
4. Have a current quarterly report and annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) evaluation on file.
5. Make satisfactory progress towards the degree as determined by your thesis advisor and Committee in your annual evaluations (see *Normal progress toward the degree* below).
6. Meet all time limits as described below.

Failure to maintain these standards may place you on probation by the Department or by UCI Graduate Studies and could lead to dismissal from our program. Your continued financial support is also contingent on maintaining good academic standing. Students not making satisfactory progress according to departmental and UCI Graduate Division standards, or who do not meet the normal time to Advancement to Candidacy, will be notified in writing detailing areas that require improvement and given one year to make the necessary improvements in their academic status or file a petition to the Dean of Graduate Studies. Additional details can be found in the *General policies* section of the handbook or the UCI [Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

### Normal progress toward the PhD

Normal progress toward the degree means that you are expected to move through a series of milestones necessary to obtain your PhD at a reasonable pace and at the level of performance described above. Under normal circumstances, students are expected to complete all of the requirements for the PhD in 5 years. This is called the *normative time*. We have a normative time limit policy to encourage you to complete your PhD in a timely manner and to encourage your thesis advisor and faculty advisory committee to provide sufficient guidance and intellectual support for you to advance to candidacy and complete a high quality dissertation. Please refer to the *General policies* section of the handbook for information about maximal time limits.

To complete a dissertation within the normative time, graduate students should adhere to the following timeline:

**Year 1**

1. Participate in and complete all Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program (INP) or Medical Science Training Program (MSTP) required coursework.
2. Select a thesis advisor.

**Year 2**

1. Begin thesis research
2. Participate in ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (Journal Club)
3. Participate and present in Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars
4. Attend and participate in A&N Grad Day
5. Attend and participate in A&N seminars
6. Conduct annual IDP evaluation with your advisor
7. Select a pre-advancement faculty advisory committee
8. Hold first committee meeting with your committee

**Year 3**

1. Continue thesis research
2. Participate in ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (Journal Club)
3. Participate and present in Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars
4. Participate in A&N Grad Day and present your research
5. Attend and participate in A&N seminars
6. Conduct annual IDP evaluation with your advisor
7. Hold a faculty advisory committee meeting
8. Advance to candidacy

**Year 4**

1. Continue Dissertation research
2. Participate in ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (Journal Club)
3. Participate and present in Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars
4. Participate in A&N Grad Day and present your research
5. Attend and participate in A&N seminars
6. Conduct annual IDP evaluation with your advisor
7. Meet with committee twice yearly to discuss progress toward a PhD

**Year 5**

1. Complete thesis research
2. Participate in ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (Journal Club)



3. Participate and present in Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars
4. Participate in A&N Grad Day and present your research
5. Attend and participate in A&N seminars
6. Conduct Pre-defense thesis evaluation meeting with your faculty advisory committee
7. Prepare thesis
8. Defend thesis

Please refer to the *Academic requirements for PhD degree* section of the handbook for detailed information.

# Academic requirements for PhD degree

## Detailed trajectory of academic progression

Please refer to the *Description of the formal coursework* section of the handbook for information about each course.

### Year 1

The first two years of graduate school are critical for mastering the discipline, knowledge and skills needed for success as a neuroscientist and for acquiring the kind of insight into yourself and the broader neuroscience community that will allow you to make the most of your talents and interests. There are three major components of the First Year that will guide you toward becoming an independent neuroscientist. In the first year, you will begin to learn how to apply modern research methods, generate informed opinions on scientific findings and discuss and communicate your research to a diverse community of scientist. This accomplished by successfully completing the following activities:

1. **Core curriculum.** The first year of graduate study is largely dedicated to formal coursework. Each student is expected to gain a broad understanding of neuroscience and related disciplines. A complete list of first year courses for students entering through INP is outlined below. Required coursework may be different for students entering the department from other program, such as MSTP.
2. **Laboratory rotations.** Laboratory rotations are an essential component to interdisciplinary training and each student is recommended to complete a minimum of two 10-wk rotations. Lab rotations serve a dual purpose of broadening your background in neuroscience research and helping you to choose a future thesis advisor.
3. **Enrichment activities.** A variety of programs are offered across campus. The primary activities INP students participate in are Neuroblitz, a seminar series for trainees that is run by the Department of Neurobiology & Behavior, and Progress in Neuroscience (PiN), a trainee seminar series run by the Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology. Students rotating in A&N laboratories will also attend department seminars and other training programs in which their rotation laboratory participates.

### Major milestones of your first year

- Complete all required first year coursework with a grade of B or better.
- Demonstrate a broad understanding of current ideas, concepts and experimental approaches in modern neuroscience through satisfactory performance in all coursework.
- Complete at least two laboratory rotations.
- Select an advisor who will guide your research, assure that you progress in a timely manner and assume fiscal responsibility for your support.

### Coursework

The Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program (INP) requires completion of the following formal coursework in the first year of graduate study:

#### ***Fall quarter***

Systems Neuroscience (NEURBIO 208A or AN 210A)  
 Molecular Neuroscience (NEURBIO 206)  
 Foundations of Neuroscience (NEURBIO 202A)  
 Neuroblitz and/or PIN (trainee talks)

#### ***Winter quarter***

Cellular Neuroscience (NEURBIO 207)  
 Foundations of Neuroscience (NEURBIO 202B)

*Optional:* Developmental Genetics (DC 210) can be substituted for NEURBIO 207; Neuroblitz and/or PIN (trainee talks)

#### ***Spring quarter***

Responsible Conduct of Research (MMG 250)  
 Neuroblitz and/or PIN (trainee talks)  
*Optional:* Behavioral Neuroscience (NEURBIO 209), Physiology of Ion Channels (PB232)

Note: MSTP students enter A&N after successful completion of MS1 and/or MS2 coursework.

### Selecting an advisor

Selecting a Thesis Advisor to supervise your PhD thesis research and to chair your faculty advisory committee is a critical step in your graduate career. You should give careful thought to your advising needs before selecting an advisor. You will want to select an advisor with intellectual and research interests, work style and personality that are compatible with your own. Your thesis advisor may be any ladder rank (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor Series) academic senate faculty member in the Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology. You should select your thesis or PhD advisor by the end of June of the first year, and no later than the beginning of the second year.

## **Questions to ask yourself in years 1 and 2**

### ***General***

- Have I established a clear set of goals that I wish to accomplish this year and next?
- Have I discussed these goals with my mentor/advisory committee members?

### ***Academics***

- What courses do I need to become literate in graduate level neuroscience?
- What courses or training will provide me with the specialized background needed for research in my field of interest?
- Am I spending enough time and effort on my coursework in order to learn what I need to know?
- What primary literature should I be reading? Which reviews?
- How do I learn about new developments in my field?
- How do I know when to trust what I read in the literature or hear in a seminar?
- How do I learn about emerging knowledge in neuroscience?
- Am I attending seminars within and outside my area of focus to broaden and deepen my scientific knowledge base?
- What laboratory and/or computational skills do I need to master?

### ***Research***

- What are my goals and how will my progress be assessed?
- Am I spending enough time and effort in the lab to accomplish my goals?
- Can I design an experiment to address a scientific question and generate a conclusive answer from the results?
- Can I plan and execute an experiment and record the results in a form that could be published?
- Am I beginning to interpret my results and to assimilate new knowledge to formulate good scientific questions?

### ***Community***

- Do I understand the standards of professional scientific conduct? Am I committed to upholding them?
- Have I formed appropriate support relationships with mentors, peers and administrative staff?

### ***Communication***

- What are my goals and how will my progress be assessed?
- Can I organize, interpret and present my research results using the appropriate graphics and text?
- Can I communicate my research results effectively in an oral and visual presentation to my colleagues? To a general audience?
- Can I communicate scientific concepts effectively through speech, visual presentations and writing?
- What fellowships will I apply for and when are the deadlines?
- Who are the key contacts, in addition to my PI, for helping me think through ideas?

## ***Year 2***

You should have selected your thesis advisor before the beginning of your second year. During Year 2, you will work with your advisor to select your Pre-advancement Committee. These faculty members will be part of your network of academic advisors (see more about this in the *Advising Structure* section below). A primary goal of your second and third year is to identify an important, challenging and tractable research problem from which you can develop your thesis.



### Major milestones of your second year

- Identify an area of thesis research
- Select your Pre-advancement Committee.
- Hold first faculty advisory committee meeting

### Coursework and departmental activities

ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (fall, winter, spring)  
 Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars  
 A&N Grad Day  
 A&N seminars

### Annual evaluations

Annual IDP with your advisor  
 Pre-advancement meeting

## **Year 3**

The third year of graduate school is the second year entirely dedicated to research in the laboratory. As a member of a research team, your role is to expand your interests beyond the bench in order to build multi-tasking skills, further your academic knowledge, expand your network through collaboration and technical interactions and become a scientist. The third year is a pivotal point of your graduate training to grasp the entirety of what a good scientist must consider and do to be successful. Your sense of belonging to the scientific community should develop. Your longer term goals should emerge in order to make appropriate decisions with respect to scientific projects and your career.

### Major milestones of your third year

- Make progress in research
- Present your research at Grad Day
- Advance to candidacy

### Coursework

ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (fall, winter, spring)  
 Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars  
 A&N Grad Day  
 A&N seminars  
 Annual IDP evaluation

### Annual examination

Annual IDP meeting with your advisor  
 Advancement to candidacy (qualifying examination)

## **Questions to ask yourself in year 3**

### ***General***

- Have I begun to define my specific interests and objectives for my PhD studies?
- Have I evaluated my strengths and weaknesses and made adjustments to my training to improve on or accommodate them?
- Have I developed a focused set of goals that will lead to publication of a paper and development of my thesis within the next year?
- Have I discussed these goals with my mentor/advisory committee members?

### ***Academics***

- What reading must I be doing to become an expert in my field?
- What knowledge will broaden the scope of my work?
- How do I stay abreast with novelty in science?
- Am I attending enough, or too many, seminars?
- Am I critical enough of the literature or of what I hear in a seminar?
- What additional skills may I need to become even better?
- Am I becoming an expert in my area of research?
- Am I balancing bench work and dry lab work efficiently?
- How could I improve my multitasking skills?

### ***Research***

- What are my goals and how will my progress be assessed?
- How do I refine my research project and become more focused?
- Am I spending enough time and effort inside and outside the lab to accomplish my objectives?
- How can I improve my experimental design?
- Am I thinking creatively, troubleshooting my own experiments and developing my independence?
- How do I efficiently translate my results into publication quality data?
- How far am I from my 1st publication?

### ***Community***

- Do I understand the overall philosophy of research/the scientific method?
- How can I improve my relationships with mentors, peers and other scientists?

### ***Communication***

- What are my goals and how will my progress be assessed?
- How good am I at presenting my research results?
- How can I improve my presentation skills? Whom should I get feedback from?
- Have I presented my work at and/or attended a scientific meeting?
- Have I written an abstract or paper?
- How can I improve my writing?

## **Year 4**

As a fourth year graduate student, you should be focused on your research, writing papers and communicating your findings. By now, you should have acquired considerable expertise in your chosen field, and you should be exhibiting this expertise through more effective planning and implementation of experiments, through mentoring less experienced lab members and through discussions with others in your scientific community. By the end of the fourth year, your thesis project should be nearing completion, or at the very least, a detailed thesis outline and attainable set of objectives for completion should have emerged. You should be able to critically read the literature, identify important new problems, develop hypotheses and design experiments to test them. These skills will be demonstrated by preparing and defending an original research proposal. Finally, you should be planning the next stage of your career.

### Major milestones of your fourth year

- Make progress in research
- Present your research at Grad Day

### Coursework

ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (fall, winter, spring)  
 Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars  
 A&N Grad Day  
 A&N seminars

### Annual evaluation meetings

Annual IDP with your advisor  
 Two committee meetings (Grad Day can count as one)

## **Questions to ask yourself in year 4**

### **General**

- Do I have a clear plan for completing my PhD thesis research?
- Am I developing an original research proposal and do I understand the criteria for assessment?
- Am I thinking ahead about my next career stage having evaluated my strengths, weaknesses and passions?
- Am I discussing my timetable for completion and career plans with my mentor(s)?

### **Academics**

- Am I establishing and demonstrating expertise in my chosen area of study?
- Am I staying up to date with the current literature in my field?
- Can I read the literature critically and identify assumptions, important implications and/or alternate interpretations?
- Am I increasing the depth and breadth of my knowledge by attending seminars within and outside of my field?
- Am I asking important questions and developing good scientific taste and judgment?
- Can I develop new hypotheses and design experiments to test them?
- Am I willing to learn new techniques and to take risks?
- Can I write an original and competitive research proposal?

**Research**

- What are my goals and how will my progress be assessed?
- Am I interpreting my own data, questioning my assumptions and identifying important implications of my findings?
- Am I asking important questions and designing my own experiments to generate answers?
- Am I working with sufficient focus and intensity to drive discovery and complete my research objectives?
- Am I managing my time for experiments, reading and writing?
- Am I developing and following through on my own ideas?
- Have I demonstrated creativity and innovation in my experimental work?
- Have I published a paper, or am I preparing manuscripts for publication?

**Community**

- Am I developing confidence as a member of the scientific community?
- Do scientists outside of my institution know who I am?
- Do I ask questions and enter into discussions in seminars, conferences and journal clubs?

**Communication**

- What have I discovered? Why is it important? Can I articulate this?
- Can I deliver an effective seminar?
- Am I seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities to present my research?
- Am I at presenting my research results authoritatively?
- Am I attending local and national meetings and presenting my results?

**Year 5**

In the fifth year (and beyond), you should be focused on completing your experimental work, writing research papers and your thesis, scheduling your thesis defense and finalizing plans for the next step in your career. As a fifth year student, you should have your thesis plans, and a chapter by chapter outline of your thesis, approved by your committee. You will be expected to be an expert in your specific area of research, have command of the literature and articulate how your research contributions complement those of other laboratories. By the end of the fifth year, it is expected that you will have defended your thesis, or will at a minimum have a clear timeline for finishing and defending your thesis.

**Major milestones of your fifth year**

- Make progress in research
- Defend Dissertation
- Graduate

**Coursework**

ANATOMY 227: Current Topics in Neuroscience (fall, winter, spring)

Progress in Neurobiology (PiN) seminars

A&N Grad Day

A&N seminars



## Annual Evaluations

Annual IDP with your advisor

Pre-defense committee meeting

Dissertation defense

## Questions to ask yourself in year 5

### ***General***

- Do I have a well-organized thesis plan?
- Have I set my thesis committee and a thesis defense date?
- Have I made plans for the next stage of my career?
- If not, what must I do to complete these goals?

### ***Academics***

- Can I demonstrate that I am an expert in my field?
- Can I present and defend my work in an authoritative manner?
- Can I articulate how my work contributes to new knowledge in my field?
- Can I demonstrate that I have a breadth of knowledge in areas related to my area of research?
- Am I able to balance bench work with writing papers and finalizing my thesis?

### ***Research***

- Have I reached a high level of proficiency in my research?
- Do I have a clear path and timetable for completion and publication of my thesis research?
- Have I demonstrated the ability to identify experiments necessary for writing up my results for publication and a final thesis?
- Do I think creatively about the implications of my research to other work in the field?
- Have I published any research papers, and if so are they planned as chapters of my thesis?

### ***Community***

- Can I confidently discuss the current literature in my area of expertise?
- Do I ask questions and enter into discussions in seminars, conferences and journal clubs?
- Have I maintained good communication with mentors, peers and administrative staff?
- Have I effectively communicated with my thesis committee about finalizing my research and defending my thesis?

### ***Communication***

- Have I reached a high level of proficiency in my scientific communication?
- Have I presented my research in local, national, or international meetings?
- Have I prepared and practiced my thesis seminar to be understood by my committee and a diverse scientific audience?
- Have I demonstrated writing skills through publication of my research or writing chapters of my thesis?

## Advising structure

### Thesis advisor

#### Role

Your advisor assumes primary responsibility for guiding your research, mentorship and assuring that you make progress in meeting A&N degree requirements. You and your thesis advisor should set up a program of formal research and courses that is designed to build a depth of knowledge and technical skill set in the area of your dissertation research and to give you the breadth necessary for a successful career in neuroscience. This should include:

1. Guidance in the selection of a challenging, but feasible, research project.
2. Ensuring that you are making progress in meeting all department requirements.
3. Support you in developing an ability to communicate your ideas in writing and oral presentations through participation in appropriate courses, journal clubs and department activities.

You and your thesis advisor should meet on a regular basis. To guide you in your progression through our program, you will receive annual evaluations from your thesis advisor and committee. You will also work with your advisor on an annual IDP to provide personalized structure and feedback on your progress. For detailed information, please see the *Annual Evaluation and Examination* section of the handbook.

Note: Your thesis advisor assumes fiscal responsibility for you, which includes payment of all fees and tuition and your stipend.

### Faculty advisory committee

#### Role

Your faculty advisory committee is charged with providing general oversight and guidance of your research progress throughout your graduate studies. You will meet with your committee at least twice a year (Grad Day can count as one meeting) to review your research progress. During these meetings, your committee will evaluate your progress toward a PhD, provide constructive feedback and contribute to your annual assessment. The committee also assists in deciding an end-point for the dissertation (such as, the final acceptable composition of your thesis work). All committee members will be available to assist you if you encounter difficulties at any time during your research. You are encouraged to build strong professional relationships with each committee member and to communicate with them regularly.

## Selection

Initially, you will work with your advisor to select a faculty advisory committee composed of at least three faculty members, including your Thesis Advisor who serves as the Chair. Committee members can hold professorial titles of any rank but should be members of the academic senate. At least one committee member, other than your advisor, must have a primary appointment in A&N. You will meet with your faculty advisory committee during your second year committee meetings. The Qualifying Exam (Advancement) requires the presence of additional members be added to your faculty advisory committee. While committee members can change during your graduate training, it can be beneficial to keep the composition of your committee relatively stable as this will provide consistent feedback and accountability throughout your dissertation research.

### Composition of faculty advisory committee at each stage

#### ***Pre-advancement (3 members total)***

1. Chair (your thesis advisor)
2. One A&N faculty (must have a primary appointment in A&N)
3. One additional faculty member (can be from another department or institution but it doesn't need to be)

#### ***Advancement (qualifying exam; 5 members total)***

1. Chair (your thesis advisor)
2. Two additional faculty with a primary appointment in A&N
3. One additional faculty member
4. One faculty from a separate degree granting unit

*Note:* UCI Graduate Studies does not allow you to include a committee member from another institution for the qualifying exam.

#### ***Post-advancement and Defense (3 members total)***

1. Chair (your thesis advisor)
2. Two other committee members, at least one with a primary appointment in A&N

*Note:* If there is intellectual property involved at any stage, you will need to include a conflict of interest advisor in addition to the committee members described above. More information can be found here: [https://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/faculty-and-staff/faq\\_coi.pdf](https://www.grad.uci.edu/forms/faculty-and-staff/faq_coi.pdf)

*Note:* You are allowed to change your committee (add or drop members) at any point during your PhD. This is easiest time to do this is at the Advancement stage when you submit the DocuSign (e.g., if you drop from 5 members to 3 members). If you change your committee after advancement, you need to complete and submit a change of committee request form with Grad Division.

## Annual evaluation and examination

All graduate students are required to receive formal annual evaluations during the course of graduate training. In A&N, we use a multi-leveled evaluation system that has been designed to carefully and consistently evaluate your progress so you can complete your degree in approximately five years.

### Individual development plan

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are an annual planning tool to help you identify your short- and long-term goals, make timely progress toward the PhD and achieve your career objectives. They provide a written planning process that identifies both professional development needs and career goals. It serves as a tool to help facilitate communication between you and your mentor. Graduate Division has put together an [IDP](#) that you can use. However, many other formats exist, such as [myIDP](#), [ImaginePhD](#) and others. We highly encourage you to work with your faculty advisor to decide which IDP format suits your individual needs.

### Goals

An annual IDP is just one component of a broader mentoring program in A&N. Specifically, it will help you:

- Facilitate conversations between you, your faculty adviser and your mentorship team about your progress in research and professional training in the past year.
- Establish realistic targets for completing academic and research milestones in the upcoming year.
- Identify your long-term career goals and make plans for achieving them.

### Did you know?

In a [2005 Sigma Xi National Postdoc Survey](#), Postdocs who wrote research/career plans at the start of their appointments were more productive than those who did not. They also reported greater satisfaction and better relationships with their advisor.

### Benefits

By completing an annual IDP, you have a process that will help you make progress toward your long-term career goals. Additionally, identifying short-term (annual) goals will give you a clearer sense of expectations and help identify milestones along the way to achieving specific objectives. The IDP also can be a useful tool to provide structure to conversations between you and your mentor(s).

### Outline of the IDP Process

The development, implementation and revision of the IDP require a series of steps to be conducted by you, and then discussed one on one with your mentor. These steps are an interactive effort, and ideally both you and your mentor will fully participate in the process.



## Annual committee meetings

Starting in your second year (and continuing until your Defense), you are required to have two annual meetings with your faculty advisory committee. Participation in Grad Day can count toward one of these meetings if you present your research and all committee members are present. Committee meetings are formal meetings designed to evaluate your research accomplishments and make sure you stay on track and make normal progress toward your PhD degree. These meetings should help you plan your research and give you effective feedback and support.

During each committee meeting, you should present a short report of your research progress so far. This should be in the form of a 30 minute presentation and is meant to be a discussion rather than a seminar on your research. You could think of it as a lab meeting presentation with your committee members. It can be helpful to provide each committee member a brief written report prior to the meeting, as well, but this is optional. In your meeting, you should plan to cover the following:

- A brief description of research conducted, results obtained and their significance
- A description of any changes in goals, aims or experiments
- Specific objectives for the coming year

You and your advisor will take notes on any suggestions or comments that are made during the meeting, and the committee will provide you with an overall assessment of your progress. Your committee's assessments are an important component of the official written evaluation that your committee members prepare each year. All evaluations should be placed on file in the Department office. Having current annual evaluations on file is part of demonstrating good academic standing.

### Notes:

- It is your responsibility to schedule your annual committee meetings, not your advisor's.
- Your advancement to candidacy exam will replace the annual committee meeting for that year.
- The Annual Committee Meeting report can be found in Appendix I. This should be completed at your annual meeting and submitted to the Department Graduate Coordinator (Shanti Iyer) and placed on file in the Department office.

## Advancement to candidacy exam (qualifying exam)

The goal of the Advancement to Candidacy (also referred to as a Qualifying Exam) is to demonstrate that you have made substantial progress in your thesis research, and that you can present a coherent plan for completing the research. By the end of the third year, you must demonstrate that you have identified an important, challenging and tractable research problem of sufficient scope, and that you

have a substantial command of the relevant literature in your area of study. By this time, it is also expected that you will have generated preliminary data supporting your main hypotheses.

Advancement to Candidacy consists of two phases: a **written document** and an **oral presentation**.

### **Format of the written portion**

The format of the written portion of the exam will be that of a research proposal (e.g., in the form of a NIH F31 NRSA individual pre-doctoral fellowship). You and your advisor can use this as a basis for submitting an actual proposal to NIH or another extramural funding agency. There is no page limit to the proposal, but it should include the following sections:

- Specific Aims  
List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or practice, address a barrier to progress in the field, or develop a new technology.
- Background/Significance  
Briefly review the scientific literature leading to the proposal, critically evaluating existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance of the research and any clinical implications the results may have
- Preliminary studies  
Use this section to provide an account of preliminary studies pertinent to the proposal. This information will help the members of the Candidacy Committee determine your competence to pursue the proposed project, its feasibility and likelihood of success.
- Research Design and Methods  
Describe the research design, conceptual or clinical framework, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantages over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. Provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project.
- Literature Cited

The proposal should be submitted to your faculty advisory committee at least 1 week prior to your advancement meeting.

### **Format of the oral portion**

At your advancement meeting, your written proposal will be presented orally before the committee. If the committee has indeed been meeting there is no need for it to be a full seminar type presentation. Rather, you should plan for a 30 minute discussion with your committee. You should focus on your research accomplishments (preliminary results), the experimental approaches you will use to

accomplish the specific aims of your dissertation research, and a timetable for the completion of the dissertation. You should be prepared to answer the Committee's questions, provide background information pertinent to the proposed research and defend the rationale for the proposed experiments. Prior to the exam, the student must inform the Department Graduate Coordinator (Shanti Iyer) who will set up the appropriate Graduate Division DocuSign form. This will be completed after your advancement meeting and placed on file in the Department office.

**You are very strongly encouraged to advance to candidacy by the end of your third year.** This is normative time. However, you **must** complete it no later than the end of the fourth year. All five members of your faculty advisory committee must be present for the oral portion of the exam.

### Pre-defense evaluation

When you have essentially completed your thesis research, you should schedule a Pre-Defense meeting with your committee. This meeting should be held approximately 1-3 months before your planned defense and involves a review of your research that will go into your thesis and thesis defense. There is no formal paperwork requirement for this meeting, but a draft outline of the proposed content of each of your chapters of your thesis should be shared with committee members before the meeting and presented during the meeting along with a preliminary thesis defense presentation. The committee must decide that there is sufficient material for you to begin writing the thesis before you can set a date for your dissertation defense.

### Dissertation defense

The Defense is an examination required by the Dean of Graduate Studies. It consists of two parts: (1) a formal ~45 min presentation of your research in a public seminar and (2) a closed door meeting with your Dissertation Committee. You are expected to circulate copies of the final dissertation draft, complete with figures and tables, to all members of the committee at least two weeks *before* your scheduled formal presentation. The dissertation thesis must be organized and written in a form approved by the doctoral advisor and UCI Graduate Studies. Each committee member should indicate their approval of the dissertation before the formal presentation is scheduled.

For detailed instructions on how to format your dissertation document and information on all required forms: <http://www.grad.uci.edu>

Prior to the defense, the student must inform the Department Graduate Coordinator (Shanti Iyer) who will set up the appropriate Graduate Division DocuSign form. This will be completed after your advancement meeting and placed on file in the Department office.

# Enrollment and registration

## Web registration

All students must register for coursework every quarter. To be registered at UCI, you will need to do the following:

1. Enroll in at least 12 and no more than 15 units of graduate or upper-division coursework each quarter. This is done online through WebReg.
2. Pay fees (these are paid by your lab).

It is important to confirm each quarter through WebReg that your fees have been paid for by the deadline. If you are not enrolled at the end of the second week of instruction, you will be charged a late enrollment fee. Late registration may also affect your FICA status. If your account shows a positive balance for fees, contact our department administrator.

WebReg website: <https://www.reg.uci.edu/registrar/soc/webreg.html>

## Required courses

**ANATOMY 200. Research in Anatomy. 2-12 Units.** Individual research supervised by a specific faculty member. Course director: your faculty advisor.

**ANATOMY 200R. Research in Anatomy and Neurobiology for First-Year Students. 2-12 Units.** Independent research within the laboratories of graduate training faculty in the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology for first-year Ph.D. students. Course director: your faculty advisor.

**ANATOMY 227A/B/C. Current Topics in Neuroscience. 1-4 Units.** Focuses on critical reading, presentation, and discussion of current literature in neuroscience research. Course directors: Drs Javier Diaz Alonso, Laura Ewell, Momoko Watanabe.

**M&MG 250. Responsible Conduct of Research. 2 Units.** Each session includes a formal presentation by faculty/invited speaker followed by a discussion of case studies related to the topic under consideration. Course director: Dr Al Goldin.

## Electives

**ANATOMY 215. Epilepsy as a Window to Mechanisms of Neuronal Plasticity. 4 Units.** Understanding the mechanisms of brain disorders provides novel insights into the normal function of neurons and circuits. Discusses approaches to studying mechanisms of brain function ranging from imaging, the use of models and others to study epilepsy. Course director: Dr. Tallie Z. Baram.

**ANATOMY 292A/B/C. Topics in Neural Circuit Mapping. 2 Units.** Presentations by invited lecturers and participating faculty that are open to the science community, followed by discussion of the lecture topics or related topics. Students are encouraged to host invited speakers and practice their presentation and communication skills. Course director: Dr. Xiangmin Xu.

#### Notes:

- A&N does not have a specific requirement for additional coursework after the first year of PhD studies.
- The list above is only a list of graduate courses offered by A&N. There are many courses available in other programs on campus that may be beneficial for your graduate training.

## Teaching

There is no formal teaching requirement as part of your graduate training in A&N. However, UCI offers many opportunities to gain teaching experience. If you have an interest in incorporating teaching into your graduate training, you should explore the various opportunities available to you with your faculty advisor and mentorship committee.

### Teaching assistantship (TA)

TA opportunities are often available in the School of Biological Science. The UCI School of Medicine (SOM) requires PhD students in SOM to take the university's TA training, known as TAPDP (TA Professional Development Program) prior to accepting TA positions. This is for students to be TA ready. TAPDP is offered each Fall quarter. The training is valuable to develop personal time and project management, pedagogical skills, and support strategies for supervising undergrads in your labs. Additionally, the training connects PhD students in similar fields of study. Previous participants have considered this training instrumental in preparing for their roles as TAs and in succeeding professionally.

### Certificate in teaching excellence program (CTEP)

The Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation (DTEI) is offering its Certificate in Teaching Excellence Program (CTEP). CTEP provides pedagogical training for UCI graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in a flexible and self-paced manner. More information about this program can be found here: <https://dtei.uci.edu/certificate-in-teaching-excellence-program-ctep/>



## A&N events and activities

The Department holds activities throughout the academic year that encourage peer support, and give students a chance to develop professional skills, such as public speaking, lab skills, or to promote health and well-being.

### Annual Grad Day

The Department organizes a graduate student research symposium, called Grad Day, each fall that fosters interactions among department faculty, staff, postdoctoral researchers and graduate students. This event is intended to be a supportive space where we can get together as an entire department to celebrate your accomplishments and milestones of the past year. It is expected that all students will attend Grad Day each year and participate in all of the scientific sessions. Students are required to present their research in the form of a poster and/or a short talk in their third, fourth and fifth years. Grad Day is typically held on campus and features lectures, discussion groups and social events.

### Seminars

The Department holds seminars throughout the academic year.

#### Mandatory events

1. Progress in Neurobiology (PiN)
2. A&N Seminars

\*graduate students are required to attend 80% of these events

#### Optional events hosted by A&N

1. Center for Neural Circuit Mapping seminar series
2. Department-hosted research seminars
3. EpiCenter Seminars for epilepsy research
4. Epilepsy CHATS (Career Histories and Training Series) for career networking

### Department socials

A&N socials give students and faculty a chance to socialize in a casual setting, such as the Annual Department Holiday Party. They are held throughout the academic year and sponsored by the Department, various centers on campus or individual labs.

### Activities offered by other programs (optional)

1. Grant writing course (UCI): Uni Stu 231, 1 unit
2. MSTP Distinguished Lecture series (mandatory for MSTPs)
3. School of Medicine Grad Day - annual symposium and activities for SOM grad students

4. Stem Cell Center seminar series
5. Conte Center seminar series
6. Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory (CNLM) activities and seminar series
7. Neurobiology & Behavior seminar series
8. UCI Mind seminar series

## Financial support

### Annual Stipend

The Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology supports all PhD students by providing an annual stipend, including payment of a stipend, tuition and health insurance. Your stipend may consist of funds from various sources, including research grants, fellowships, research contracts and training assistantships. Students are responsible for paying all student fees, late fees, etc.

### 2023-2024 Annual Graduate Student Support Levels

Stipend amount: varies by step, see [Academic Salary Scales for GSR](#)

Resident tuition & fees: \$19,793.97\*

Non-resident tuition and fees: \$34,895.97\*

\* the above fees include health insurance

### Tax information

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the California Franchise Tax Board (FTB) consider graduate fellowships taxable income to the recipient and, therefore, students may be required to complete various tax forms depending on their individual situation and they are required to file a tax return(s) with the appropriate agency each year. Fellowships may include payment of fees; non-resident supplemental tuition; or stipends. However, a portion of a fellowship may be excludable from gross income. For more information, see: <https://grad.uci.edu/funding/tax-information.php>

### California residency

All graduate students should complete and submit a [Statement of Legal Residence \(SLR\)](#) to the UCI Registrar's Office immediately after submitting their Statement of Intent to Register (SIR). Official residence determinations are made only after the student's SLR is reviewed and any requested documentation is received by the University Registrar's office. The Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program will only pay one year of non-resident tuition for US citizens who are non-California residents. It is the responsibility of the non-resident student to become an official resident of the State of California by the end of their first year in order to be exempt from out-of-state tuition in subsequent years. Questions about California residence and nonresident supplemental tuition should be directed to the UCI Residence Deputy in the Registrar's Office at (949) 824-6124 or [regres@uci.edu](mailto:regres@uci.edu). More information about California Residency classification is available at the [Registrar's website](#).

### Extramural fellowships

As a graduate student, you are strongly encouraged to apply for (and hopefully obtain) extramural fellowship funding as part of your training, such as the *NIH F31 NRSA*, *NSF Graduate Research*

*Fellowship Program, HHMI, etc.* More information on possible fellowships can be found at the [Graduate Division website](#).

Also see: [JHU List of Fellowships for Graduate Students](#)

### **Individual fellowship incentives**

The School of Medicine's Office of Graduate Studies has established an incentive plan called the [Individual Fellowship Application Incentive](#) designed to encourage graduate students to apply for individual external fellowships in their own name. This incentive provides a \$250 award to students who submit an external fellowship application (e.g., F31 NRSA). If your efforts are successful and you receive outside funding (outside of UCI), then you may be eligible to receive \$1,000 per year on top of other stipends.

### **UCI School of Medicine internal fellowships**

There are a number of internal [fellowship opportunities for graduate students](#) in the School of Medicine. These include:

1. Stanley Behrens Fellows in Medicine Program
2. Gazzaniga Family Medical Research Award
3. Dr. Lorna Carlin Scholar Award

For additional information on these opportunities, see the SOM website:

<https://www.som.uci.edu/graduate-studies/student-support/student-support.asp>

### **UCI School of Medicine travel awards**

With the support of the Dean of the School of Medicine and the UC Irvine Graduate Division, the Office of Graduate Studies offers [travel support](#) to doctoral students in the School of Medicine at a level of \$500 per academic year.

Any questions about SOM fellowships, incentives or travel support should be directed to Leora Fellus, Graduate Studies Director, School of Medicine at [lfellus@uci.edu](mailto:lfellus@uci.edu).

### **Working Outside of Graduate School**

Students are strongly discouraged from working another job outside of their graduate research. Students receive tuition/fee support and a stipend to provide for basic cost of living expenses in order to focus on their academic studies and research.

## General policies

### Academic integrity of scholarship, research and student conduct

Integrity of scholarship (i.e., academic integrity) is essential for our academic community. Academic integrity is built on a foundation of honest, responsible, fair and trustworthy scholarly activity. Without it, the degrees we confer, the research we conduct, and our reputation all diminish in value. All students are subject to the UCI Policies on academic integrity. More information and a full description of UCI policies can be found here: <https://aisc.uci.edu/>

### Conflict of interest

The UCI policy on Conflict of Interest and Graduate Education deals with any financial conflict of interest as defined in Section 028 of the Academic Personnel Manual (APM), adopted April 26, 1984. (<https://ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-028.pdf>). Conflict of interest - with regard to your graduate education - refers to a potential financial interest on the part of a Faculty Mentor/Thesis/Dissertation Advisor that relates to a project on which you are working that may have the potential to harm your academic interests. It is the responsibility of your faculty advisor to notify the Department's Director of Graduate Studies and the student of any personal financial interests that could lead to a Conflict of Interest. However, you may discuss a potential Conflict of Interest issue at any time with your faculty advisor, thesis committee, Direct of Graduate Studies or the campus Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee.

### Sexual harassment prevention

Everyone at UC – students, faculty, staff and administrators – has the right to a safe learning and working environment. UC does not tolerate sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating/domestic violence or stalking. UC's policies and codes of conduct spell out the rights and responsibilities of students and employees in ensuring that UC is a safe environment, and how the university addresses reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment. For a comprehensive list of UC and UCI policies and procedures please see the UCI Sexual Violence Prevention & Response office: <http://sexualviolence.uci.edu/policies.html>. For any questions regarding policies, please contact the Title IX Officer in [OEOD](#) at [oeod@uci.edu](mailto:oeod@uci.edu).

### Time limits

To encourage you to complete your PhD in a timely manner, the Department has the following time limits:

1. Pre-advancement (4 years): This is the maximum registered time in which a student must advance to PhD candidacy. If you have not advanced by the expiration of your pre-candidacy time limit, you may not be permitted to register.
2. Normative time (5 years): Before the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> academic quarter (including one year in INP). This is the standard established for the time period in which students, under



normal circumstances, are expected to complete all requirements for the PhD. The goal of having a normative time limit policy is to encourage students to complete their PhD in a timely manner.

3. Support time limit (7 years): Before the beginning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> academic quarter (including one year in INP). This is the maximum registered time during which a doctoral student can receive financial support toward completion of the PhD.
4. Total registered time limit (7 years): Before the beginning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> academic quarter (including one year in INP). This is the maximum registered time in which a doctoral student must complete all PhD requirements.

### **Leave of absence**

A Leave of Absence (LOA) may be granted for up to one academic year (3 quarters) if, following review of the student's academic record, it is deemed consistent with the student's academic objectives and progress toward degree. For more information on leaves of absence, please review the [Leave of Absence Petition](#). Students in [Self-Supporting Graduate Professional Degree Programs](#) (SSGPDPs) are permitted to take a leave of absence.

### **Part-time status**

In most instances, completion of an advanced degree at UCI requires full-time study. However, UCI recognizes that a legitimate need may exist for part-time study, and it may be allowable under certain circumstances, if academically feasible. Requests for part-time status must be submitted in writing to the Graduate Dean and signed by the Departmental Faculty Graduate Advisor. UCI policy defines part-time enrollment at the graduate level during the academic year as enrollment in one to eight units.

### **Disqualification and dismissal from the program**

UCI Graduate Council has put clear academic policies in place concerning disqualification and dismissal from UCI. These can be found in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#). Disqualification means that a student is no longer eligible to continue in the graduate program at the UC Irvine. Dismissal is an administrative action resulting in removal from graduate study based on behavior or conduct. A graduate student who has not demonstrated satisfactory academic progress will be provided written notification by their faculty advisor outlining specific details on areas that require improvement, a timeline for future expectations of academic progress, and set meeting dates to maintain continuity in advisement; and state the consequences if the student does not meet the requirements within the time provided. The purpose of the notice of potential unsatisfactory progress is to provide the student with a period of time in which to make the necessary improvement in their academic status, and successfully complete their graduate study.

## Support services

### **Graduate Division**

The UCI Graduate Division provides leadership on all graduate education matters, working with scholars from all over the world to engage in study, teaching, and research in the pursuit of a master's or Ph.D. degree or of postdoctoral training. We promote academic integrity and greater understanding by supplying information, guidance, and support to the campus community and beyond. Our aim is to enhance the educational experience by engaging and leading on all matters related to graduate student life: academic progress and advocacy, fellowships, funding and financial support, diversity, employment and professional development.

Website: <https://www.grad.uci.edu/>

### **Campus police**

The University of California, Irvine Police Department, provides contemporary law enforcement services including patrol, traffic, investigations, community engagement, crime prevention and suppression, emergency management, and security services to a daily population of more than 50,000 people.

Website: <https://www.police.uci.edu/>

### **Graduate housing**

UC Irvine offers apartment style housing to graduate and professional degree students and families. The graduate housing office provides full details on housing options and the application process.

Website: <https://housing.uci.edu/grad/>

### **Anteater Recreational Center**

The Anteater Recreational Center (ARC) is a state-of-the art facility equipped with two gymnasiums, elevated running track, a rock climbing wall, a fitness lab and several activity rooms. Its Aquatics Plaza contains a 25 by 25 yard heated recreational lap pool and a 10,000 square foot weight and cardio room. Students can pursue their own fitness programs or participate in a full myriad of campus recreation programs. These programs include in-line skating, scuba, kickbox aerobics, Aikido, sailing and more! Tours of the ARC are available by calling x4-5346 to make an appointment.

Website: <https://www.campusrec.uci.edu/>

### **Student Health Center**

The UC Irvine Student Health Center is a comprehensive outpatient clinic staffed with licensed primary care physicians, psychiatrists, licensed clinical social workers, dentists, physician assistants, registered nurse practitioners, and registered nurses. Medical specialists from various disciplines

including dermatology, orthopedics/sports medicine, gynecology, internal medicine, and ENT provide on-site consultation on a regular basis.

Website: <https://shc.uci.edu/>

### **Students with families**

Many graduate students have families or are considering becoming parents. UCI is committed to providing a supportive and family-friendly environment on campus so that students can meet both their academic and familial needs. Certain graduate student fellows who meet minimum criteria may be eligible for the [childcare reimbursement program](#). An overview of family-related benefits available to UCI graduate students can be found here: <https://grad.uci.edu/about-us/students-with-families.php>.

### **Student wellness program**

We empower students to make informed decisions to support individual health and a healthy campus environment by providing comprehensive programs and coordinated services to:

- Build awareness through assessment and goal-setting
- Create balance by taking a wellness-based approach to health
- Develop healthy and sustainable habits
- Take pride in achieving your personal best
- Inspire community by leading fellow Anteaters to be healthy

Website: <https://studentwellness.uci.edu/>

### **Perks & discounts**

As a part of the UCI Community, Faculty, Staff, and Retirees have many discounts available to them. Take advantage of these money saving opportunities.

Website: <http://www.wellness.uci.edu/discounts.html>

### **Transportation services, campus shuttles & parking**

Transportation and Distribution Services (T&DS) provides a wide variety of resources for the UCI community including campus maps, parking information, and sustainable commute solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and savings on travel costs.

Website: <https://parking.uci.edu/>

Graduate students are eligible to register for the free sustainable transportation program. You can register at <https://www.parking.uci.edu/AT/>.

The Anteater Express is a UCI-run bus system. Rides between graduate student housing and the main UCI campus are free. You can learn more at <http://www.shuttle.uci.edu/>.

**Counseling center**

Counseling Center services are free of charge to currently enrolled students who have paid registration fees. Sometimes other people important in your life, such as spouses/ partners, parents, children, or friends, may be involved in therapy sessions with you. The need to involve others will be determined by you and your therapist.

Website: <https://counseling.uci.edu/>

**International center**

The International Center advances and facilitates international engagement at UCI to enhance the academic and personal experience of the international community. The International Center staff is committed to serving campus constituents through advising, immigration services, programming, advocacy, and outreach.

Website: <https://ic.uci.edu/>

**Office of the Ombudsman**

The Office of the Ombudsman provides a safe and comfortable environment to discuss complaints, concerns or problems confidentially. When appropriate, the office will initiate an informal intervention with the goal of facilitating a resolution that is acceptable to all parties involved. The ombudsman acts as an independent, impartial resource. If a matter cannot be resolved through our office, a referral will be made. When appropriate, the office can make recommendations regarding policy review and change. The Office of the Ombudsman serves all students, faculty, staff and administrators of the UCI community – both on the main campus and at the medical center. The Office handles only UCI-related issues, and therefore we are unable to assist anyone with a non-UCI-related concern.

Website: <https://ombuds.uci.edu/>

## Key people

### Academic Management

Department Chair: Christine Gall, PhD ([cmgall@uci.edu](mailto:cmgall@uci.edu))

Department Vice Chair: David C. Lyon, PhD ([dclyon@uci.edu](mailto:dclyon@uci.edu))

Department Grad Advisor: Robert Hunt, PhD ([robert.hunt@uci.edu](mailto:robert.hunt@uci.edu))

### Administrative Services

Chief Administrative Officer: Lesley Dowd ([ldowd@uci.edu](mailto:ldowd@uci.edu))

Academic Affairs HR Analyst: Christine Shortt ([cshortt@uci.edu](mailto:cshortt@uci.edu)) and Marla Ogelvie ([mpurcell@uci.edu](mailto:mpurcell@uci.edu))

Contract and Grant Accounting: Douglas Schroettinger ([dschroet@uci.edu](mailto:dschroet@uci.edu))

Purchasing Coordinator: Stephanie Ching ([sching4@hs.uci.edu](mailto:sching4@hs.uci.edu); [anpurchasing@uci.edu](mailto:anpurchasing@uci.edu))

Coordinator for Graduate and Medical Education Programs: Shanti Iyer ([shantii@hs.uci.edu](mailto:shantii@hs.uci.edu))

Basic Science IT Support: Rob Pulido ([ronp@uci.edu](mailto:ronp@uci.edu))

### Other Graduate Student Contacts

Associate Dean for Graduate Studies: Francesco Tombola, PhD ([ftombola@uci.edu](mailto:ftombola@uci.edu))

SOM Graduate Studies Director: Leora Fellus ([lfellus@uci.edu](mailto:lfellus@uci.edu))

INP Director: Norbert Fortin, PhD ([norbert.fortin@uci.edu](mailto:norbert.fortin@uci.edu))

INP Associate Director: Laura Ewell, PhD ([lewell@hs.uci.edu](mailto:lewell@hs.uci.edu))

INP Administrator: Gary Roman ([gary.roman@uci.edu](mailto:gary.roman@uci.edu))

## List of faculty

### Primary Faculty Members

Munjal Acharya, PhD | Assoc Professor

Anne Calof, PhD | Professor

Lulu Y Chen, PhD | Asst Professor

Javier Diaz-Alonso, PhD | Asst Professor

Laura Ewell, PhD | Asst Professor

Christine Gall, PhD | Chair and Distinguished Professor

Robert Hunt, PhD | Assoc Professor

Kei Igarashi, PhD | Assoc Professor

Kwang Mook Jung, PhD | Assoc Adj Professor

David Lyon, PhD | Vice Chair and Professor

Daniele Piomelli, PhD | Distinguished Professor, Louise Turner Arnold Chair in the Neurosciences  
 David Reinkensmeyer, PhD | Professor  
 Oswald Steward, PhD | Distinguished Professor, Reeve-Irvine Chair in Spinal Cord Injury Research  
 Momoko Watanabe, PhD | Asst Professor  
 Jamie Wikenheiser, PhD | Professor Adj  
 Xiangmin Xu, PhD | Professor and Chancellor's Fellow

### **Joint Faculty Members**

Yama Akbari, MD, PhD | Assoc Professor (Neurology)  
 Aileen Anderson, PhD | Professor (Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation)  
 Tallie Z Baram, MD, PhD | Bren Distinguished Professor, Danette "Dee Dee" Shepard Chair in Neurological Studies (Pediatrics)  
 Brian Cummings, PhD | Professor (Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation)  
 Frederick Ehler | Professor (Pharmacology)  
 Mark Fisher, MD | Professor  
 Lisa Flanagan, PhD | Professor (Neurology)  
 Alan Goldin, MD, PhD | Professor (Microbiology & Molecular Genetics)  
 Ranjan Gupta, MD | Professor (Orthopaedic Surgery)  
 Autumn Ivy, MD, PhD | Asst Professor (Pediatrics)  
 Gary Lynch, PhD | Distinguished Professor (Psychiatry)  
 Andre Obenaus, PhD | Assoc Clinical Professor (Pediatrics)  
 Diane O'Dowd, PhD | HHMI Professor, Vice Provost for Academic Personnel (Developmental & Cell Biology)  
 Magdalene Seiler, PhD | Assoc Professor (Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation)  
 John Weiss, MD, PhD | Professor (Neurology)  
 Michael Yassa, PhD | Professor and Chancellor's Fellow  
 Fan-Gang Zeng, MD | Professor (Otolaryngology)

### **Emeritus Faculty Members**

James Fallon, PhD  
 Leonard Kitzes, PhD  
 Charles Ribak, PhD  
 Richard Robertson, PhD



## APPENDIX I: A&N ANNUAL COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Quarter and year student entered graduate school \_\_\_\_\_

Quarter and year student started in current lab \_\_\_\_\_

Date of advancement to candidacy \_\_\_\_\_

Expected quarter and year of dissertation defense \_\_\_\_\_

Date of previous committee meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Comments from dissertation advisor:

Comments from committee members:

Comments from the student:

Is there a potential conflict of interest that might impact the proposed studies?

(Conflict of interest may include but is not limited to a circumstance where dissertation advisor has financial interest in outcome of project, reagent or animal model being subject to regulations that affect disclosure, publication or replication of data etc.).

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If "Yes" attach a memo describing the nature of conflict of interest.

## COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STUDENT SIGNATURES

Name:

Signature:

## Satisfactory Progress?

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Dissertation Advisor

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Student



