

Revised November 2022

# Graduate Student Handbook

Department of  
Biological Sciences



The University of Idaho

## FOREWORD

This handbook is a compilation of policies and interpretations of policies that pertain to graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. It is written for graduate students and intended for use as a guide in planning and pursuing graduate studies. Faculty should also keep a copy of the Handbook for reference. The policies and procedures described herein apply to *all* graduate students admitted to the department's graduate programs after fall semester 2022. Students who are enrolled in interdisciplinary degree programs but work in the laboratories of Biological Sciences faculty are also subject to the departmental operations policies outlined in this handbook. However, these programs have their own degree requirements, and you should refer to the appropriate handbook for those requirements.

Every effort has been made to accurately summarize University policies. However, since policies and interpretations may change over time due to actions taken by the University or the State Board of Education, this Handbook should be considered an unofficial source of information. You are encouraged to consult the appropriate source documents, such as the General Catalog or the Faculty-Staff Handbook, or other authorities to learn more about specific policies. Please bring any errors or ambiguities you find in this Handbook to the attention of the Graduate Affairs Committee Chair so corrections can be made.

## **ADMISSION TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

### **General requirements for admission to graduate studies**

To learn more about how to apply for admission to the graduate programs of the Department of Biological Sciences, please visit the [University's Graduate Admissions general website](#) and the page that has [information that specifically pertains to Biological Sciences](#).

Successful applicants to the department's graduate programs typically have an overall undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 and a grade point average of 3.3 in undergraduate science and mathematics courses. In addition, these applications are supported by a concise and purposeful letter of intent from the applicant, three strong letters of reference, and research interests that clearly overlap with one or more faculty members of the department. The department does not require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

### ***TOEFL Scores***

To be considered for admission to the department's graduate studies program an international student's score on the Internet-based TOEFL exam must be a minimum of 79. To be considered for a Teaching Assistantship the student must score a minimum of 92 on the Internet-based TOEFL exam.

### ***Admission Dates***

Students are normally admitted to begin their graduate studies in the Fall semester. Admission at other times of year is possible with support of a faculty sponsor.

## **DESCRIPTION OF DEGREES OFFERED**

### **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**

Admission to the Biology/ MMBB/ Neuroscience Ph.D. degree programs is based on the compatibility of your research interests with those of a prospective major professor, the availability of assistantships, as well as your academic preparation and academic promise. The prerequisites for applicants to the Ph.D. degree programs include the equivalent of an undergraduate major in biology, including a year of physics, mathematics through calculus, and chemistry through organic chemistry. If you otherwise meet eligibility requirements for graduate admission, but have not completed all of these prerequisites, your committee may require you to take additional undergraduate courses to satisfy any deficiencies.

Ph.D. students are required to be in residence on the Moscow campus for a minimum of four semesters (fall and/or spring). The semesters need not be consecutive.

### **Master of Science (M.S.)**

Admission to the Biology M.S. degree program is based on the same criteria as the Ph.D. degree program.

## **DEGREE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

There are seven requirements that must be met by students pursuing a doctoral degree: (1) appoint major professor; (2) appoint a thesis advisory committee; (3) submit a study plan; (4) pass a Pre-thesis Defense, (5) pass a qualifying exam, (6) present a public seminar, and (7) pass a thesis defense. The requirements for students pursuing a master of science degree are the same as those for students pursuing a doctoral degree except there is no qualifying exam and no public seminar (see table). If you fail to meet these requirements, you will receive a written warning and will have two months to take corrective action. Failure to meet a requirement or receiving two warnings constitutes a basis for the Department Chair to dismiss you from the graduate program.

Three weeks before the end of each spring semester, the department's administrative staff will provide the Graduate Affairs Committee with a list of those students who have not met requirements 1-3 (appointed a major professor, appointed an advisory committee, or had their study plan approved). In the seventh week of each spring semester, the department office will give the Graduate Affairs Committee a list of those students who have not met the deadline for the qualifying exam. The Committee will then meet with each student and the appropriate major professors and will make recommendations for action to be taken by the Department Chair.

	<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Ph.D. Program</b>	<b>M.S. Program</b>
1	Appoint major professor	End of 2nd semester	End of 1st semester
2	Appoint advisory committee	End of 2nd semester	End of 1st semester
3	Submit study plan	End of 2nd semester	End of 1st semester
4	Pre-thesis defense	End of 3rd semester	End of 2nd semester
5	Qualifying exam	End of 5th semester	Not required
6	Public seminar	End of 6th semester	Not required
7	Thesis defense	Upon committee approval	Upon committee approval

If an extension of the timeline for any of the requirements indicated above becomes necessary, a formal request needs to be made by the student to the chairperson of the Graduate Affairs Committee. The major professor needs to be included in all communications and may be consulted before a determination is made on whether an extension will be granted.

**Requirement 1: Optional Laboratory Rotations and Appointment of Major Professor**

Students entering the Ph.D. program have the option of participating in laboratory rotations. Students wishing to opt out of laboratory rotations can do so if they have identified a major professor during the application process (with the approval of the identified major professor). Students opting to pursue laboratory rotations will complete two half-semester rotations during the fall semester. At the end of the fall semester, the student will select a major professor by mutual agreement between the student and major professor. Students failing to secure a major professor have the option of pursuing additional laboratory rotations during the spring semester. If no major professor is identified by the end of the spring semester, the student will be dismissed from the program. Students opting for the rotation system must complete at least two rotations before selecting a major professor. Students participating in spring semester rotations will have until the start of their third semester (fall of second year) to complete timeline items 1-3 in the table above. The rest of the timeline is unchanged for these students. Normally, students will be supported as teaching assistants during their rotations. Their first rotation supervisor will serve as their academic advisor with respect to coursework during their first semester in graduate school. Master of Science students do not participate in the rotation system (due to the short timeline for their graduate studies).

The major professor must be formally appointed by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies (COGS) by the deadlines above. The "Major Professor and/or Committee Appointment or Changes" form that must be completed and submitted can be found on the [Graduate Forms](#) page of the COGS website. After completing the form, it should be submitted to COGS and a copy of the form should be given to the Department of Biological Sciences.

Your major professor serves as your advisor, the chairperson of your advisory committee, convenes most of the planning and examination committees and guides you to plan, perform, and publish your thesis research. The importance of the major professor-student relationship cannot

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be over-emphasized. Even so, you should solicit the advice of your advisory committee in all phases of your research.

### **Requirement 2: Appointment of Advisory Committee**

You should compose your advisory committee in consultation with your major professor by the deadline above. The “Major Professor and/or Committee Appointment or Changes” form that must be completed and submitted can be found on the [Graduate Forms](#) page of the COGS website. After completing the form, it must be submitted to COGS and a copy of the form should be given to the Department of Biological Sciences.

The advisory committee for Ph.D. candidates consists of at least of four people: your major professor, two other faculty members from within the department, and a faculty member from outside the department. Half of the members on the advisory committee must be graduate faculty from the department.

The advisory committee for M.S. degree candidates consists of at least three people: your major professor, at least one other faculty member from within the department, and a faculty member from outside the department.

If appropriate, additional faculty members from inside or outside the department may be included in the advisory committees of Ph.D. and M.S. candidates so long as at least half of the members on the advisory committee are graduate faculty from the department.

Any changes in the composition of your advisory committee must be mutually agreed upon by you and your major professor and approved by the Department Chair. You can also initiate a change in your major professor, but the Department Chair must approve the change. Conversely, a major professor or advisory committee member can resign from a student’s advisory committee. If your major professor resigns, the Department Chair becomes your advisor of record.

### **Requirement 3: Study Plan**

You and your major professor, in consultation with your advisory committee, must prepare a study plan (a list of the courses that must be taken) that satisfies the minimum requirements stipulated by COGS and the Department of Biological Sciences. It should also be consistent with your academic needs and aspirations.

Typically, you or your major professor will provide the advisory committee with a list of pertinent courses you have already completed, along with the year, place in which the course was taken, and grade obtained. The study plan should also include a list of courses that will be taken as part of your graduate studies and any other information and documentation that might be helpful to your committee. You and your advisory committee should then meet to discuss the proposed study plan and the advisory committee will develop a consensus of opinion regarding the courses that should be taken.

Your study plan must be approved by your advisor and advisory committee members by the deadlines provided above, and submitted under the “Planner” tab of the “Degree Audit” on [VandalWeb](#). Instructions for doing this can be found on the Office of the [Registrar website](#).

All graduate students are required to register for **nine** credits each fall and spring semester of the academic year. Students must be registered during the term of their final defense and graduation. Credits can be for coursework, research (BIOL 500, BIOL 600), or any combination of these. Registration for research credits should be continuous from the first to the last semester of your studies unless you are not in residence and not utilizing faculty time or departmental facilities.

### ***Doctor of Philosophy degrees***

Doctoral students must earn a minimum of 78 approved credits beyond the baccalaureate degree. Of these at least 52 credits must be in courses numbered 500 and above, and at least 33 credits must be in courses other than BIOL 600 Doctoral Research and Dissertation. For more information on degree requirements please refer to the College of Graduate Studies section of the University of Idaho [General Catalog](#). The following courses must be included in the study plan.

BIOL 504 and/or BIOL 501*	Special Topics or Seminar courses	(5 cr)
BIOL 521	Graduate Teaching Practicum	(3 cr)
BIOL 524	Research and Curriculum Progress	(1 cr each year)
BIOL 552	Professional Development for Biologists	(3 cr)
BIOL 553	Ethical Issues in Biological Research	(1 cr)
BIOL 600	Doctoral Research and Dissertation	(variable cr each year)
A statistics course to be identified by your advisory committee.		(3-4 cr)

Electives identified by your advisory committee.

\* Appropriate seminar-style courses may be substituted for BIOL 504 with permission from your advisory committee.

### ***Master of Science degrees***

The Master of Science degree in Biology emphasizes original research. Students must earn a minimum of 30 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree. Of these at least 18 credits must be in courses numbered 500 and above, and at least 20 credits must be in courses other than BIOL 500 Master's Research and Dissertation. The following courses must be included in the study plan.

BIOL 504 and/or BIOL 501*	Special Topics or Seminar courses	(2 cr)
BIOL 521	Graduate Teaching Practicum	(3 cr)
BIOL 524	Research and Curriculum Progress	(1 cr each year)
BIOL 552	Professional Development for Biologists	(3 cr)
BIOL 553	Ethical Issues in Biological Research	(1 cr)
BIOL 500	Master's Research and Thesis	(variable cr each year)
A statistics course to be identified by your advisory committee.		(3-4 cr)

Electives to be identified by your advisory committee.

\* Appropriate seminar-style courses may be substituted for BIOL 504 with permission from your advisory committee.

### ***Teaching Requirement***

All graduate students (both Ph.D. and M.S.) are required to teach a minimum of two laboratory sections as part of their degree requirement. Students that receive teaching assistantship stipends are required to teach 1-2 laboratory sections each semester. All students must enroll in BIOL 521 once and attend the College of Graduate Studies' [teaching assistant training workshop](#) prior to teaching. Note that only 3 credits of BIOL 521 may count toward a student's degree.

### **Requirement 4: Pre-thesis Defense (Advancement to Candidacy)**

All graduate students (both Ph.D. and M.S.) are expected to prepare a written proposal that describes their proposed thesis research. This must be completed within the first year for M.S.

students and by the end of the third semester for Ph.D. students. The body of the proposal should not exceed 8 pages for Ph.D. proposals and 6 pages for M.S. proposals. The format will be decided by your advisory committee. The following is an example of an NIH style proposal; an NSF or other appropriate style proposal is also acceptable.

- 1) Summary (one page)
- 2) Specific Aims (one page)
  - a. State concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarize the expected outcome(s), including the impact of the results on the research field(s) involved.
  - b. Succinctly state the specific aims of the research proposed and explain how achievement of these aims will test a hypothesis, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology.
- 3) Research Strategy (six pages)
  - a. Significance
    - i. Explain the importance of the problem or critical barrier to progress in the field that the proposed project addresses.
    - ii. Explain how the proposed research will improve scientific knowledge, technical capability, and/or clinical practice in one or more broad fields.
    - iii. Describe how the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services, or preventative interventions that drive your field will be changed if the proposed objectives are achieved.
  - b. Innovation
    - i. Explain how the proposed research challenges and seeks to shift current research or clinical practice paradigms.
    - ii. Describe any novel theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions to be developed or used, and any advantage over existing methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
    - iii. Explain any refinements, improvements, or new applications of theoretical concepts, approaches or methodologies, instrumentation, or interventions.
  - c. Approach
    - i. Describe the overall research strategy, methodology, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Explain how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.
    - ii. Discuss potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success anticipated to achieve the aims.
    - iii. If the project is in the early stages of development, describe any strategy to establish feasibility, and address the management of any high-risk aspects of the proposed work.
    - iv. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised.
- 4) Bibliography and References Cited (no page limit).

Arrangements before the examination:

1. You must register for BIOL 524 during the semester that you plan to complete your Pre-thesis Defense.
2. You should submit your proposal to your advisory committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination. At the same time, a copy should be emailed to the main office for departmental faculty review.

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3. At least two weeks prior to the date of the exam you must arrange for the main office staff to send an announcement of the exam to all faculty in the department and to have it posted in the department.
4. You are responsible for reserving the room(s) needed.
5. All members of your advisory committee should participate in the examination. If substitutions are necessary because of scheduling conflicts the Department Chair must approve them.

The examination:

1. The Pre-thesis Defense will include a seminar that you present to the advisory committee and other department personnel (not to exceed 30 minutes).
2. All faculty members, instructors, postdoctoral fellows, research staff and graduate students can attend your Pre-thesis Defense seminar.
3. After the seminar, there will be a closed-door session in which members of your advisory committee will question you. The questions from the committee will be of two basic types:
  - a. Those that require you to explain and justify the research methods chosen, expected outcomes, and other issues that are pertinent to the proposed research
  - b. Those that test your general knowledge
4. There is no limit on the length of the exam.
5. The exam will be chaired by the student's major professor. The role of the exam chair will be to facilitate the exam and strive for consistency in the nature of the questions and the rigor of the exam.
6. When the questioning has been completed you will be asked to leave the room. After consulting with each other your advisory committee will reach a consensus on whether you have 'passed' the exam and successfully prepared a scientifically sound written proposal, orally defended the proposed research, and demonstrated adequate breadth and depth of knowledge.
  - a. A two-thirds majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree that you have passed the examination.
  - b. Your committee will need to complete a "Research and Curriculum Progress Form" (PhD and MS students) that can be downloaded from the department website. A letter grade will be assigned and a written critique will be provided to you and submitted to the Department Chair. The completed form will be submitted by the major professor to the department.
  - c. Ph.D. students are also required to complete the "Report of Preliminary Examination & Advancement to Candidacy Form" that can be downloaded from the [COGS website](#). The completed form will be submitted to COGS and a copy will be provided to the departmental office.

Important notes:

1. The Pre-thesis Defense will satisfy the requirement to meet with your advisory committee once each year. Accordingly, you should register for 1 credit of BIOL 524 Research and Curriculum Progress for the semester in which you schedule your Pre-thesis Defense. The letter grade you receive for the Pre-thesis Defense exam will be the grade for BIOL 524 in that semester.



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2. Failure to complete the Pre-thesis Defense during the first three semesters will result in an "F" grade in BIOL 524 for the third semester.
3. A grade of "C" or above is required to pass the Pre-thesis exam. If you receive a grade of "D" or "F" the Pre-thesis Defense must be repeated in the subsequent three months. The Pre-thesis Defense cannot be repeated more than once and failure to pass will result in dismissal from the degree program.

You are encouraged to convert your pre-thesis proposal into either a National Science Foundation (NSF) or National Institutes of Health (NIH) pre-doctoral fellowship application. More information about these programs can be obtained from [NSF](#) or [NIH](#).

### **Requirement 5: Qualifying Examination**

In order to continue in the PhD program, students must pass a qualifying exam at some time during the first **five** semesters of their graduate studies. The exam will be oral and will be designed to determine the boundaries of the student's knowledge and test their ability to think critically about broad topics in their discipline. You should consult with your major professor and advisory committee for guidance on material that is appropriate for this exam.

The qualifying exam will be chaired by the major professor. The role of the exam chair will be to facilitate the exam and strive for consistency in the nature of the questions and the rigor of the exam.

Arrangements before the examination:

1. You must obtain a [Report of Qualifying Examination](#) form from the Department.
2. You are responsible for reserving the room(s) needed.
3. All members of your advisory committee should participate in the examination. If substitutions are necessary because of scheduling conflicts the Department Chair must approve them.

The examination:

1. The oral examination will be a closed-door session in which members of your advisory committee will question you.
2. There is no time limit on the length of the exam.
3. When the questioning has been completed you will be asked to leave the room. After consulting with each other your advisory committee will reach a consensus on whether you have 'passed' the exam and successfully demonstrated the ability to think critically and have an adequate breadth of knowledge. A two-thirds majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree that you have passed the examination.
4. If you pass or fail the qualifying exam your major professor and advisory committee members must complete and sign the [Report of Qualifying Examination](#), which the major professor will file with the Department.
5. If you fail the qualifying exam it must be repeated at some time during the subsequent three months. The qualifying exam cannot be repeated more than once and failure to pass the exam will result in dismissal from the degree program.
6. The qualifying exam does not satisfy the requirement to meet with your advisory committee that year to evaluate your research progress (BIOL 524).

### **Requirement 6: Public Seminar**

Doctoral students are required to present a formal seminar at some time during their sixth semester in the program. The graduate affairs committee will organize an annual symposium for graduate students in their third year to present their research to the department. In consultation with the departmental seminar committee, this will be scheduled on a Friday afternoon during the spring semester when no departmental seminar speaker is scheduled. Each student will have 20 minutes to present their seminar, followed by 5 minutes of questions. The presenting students will receive feedback from one departmental faculty member who is not on their thesis committee. All departmental students, faculty, and staff will be encouraged to attend.

### **Requirement 7: Thesis/Dissertation Defense**

Before the Ph.D. dissertation defense can be scheduled you must have at least one first authored paper accepted and one submitted for publication. All M.S. students must have a chapter within their thesis that contains publication-quality material. The thesis/dissertation must be written following the formatting requirements of the College of Graduate Studies. It is your responsibility to arrange a date and time when all members of your thesis advisory committee and the department chair or their designee are available to participate in your thesis defense.

Arrangements before the examination:

1. A memorandum announcing this exam must be sent to department faculty and posted in the department by main office staff at least two weeks prior to the date of the exam. You are responsible for making arrangements for this to be done and for reserving the room(s) needed.
2. An electronic copy of the dissertation/thesis must be emailed to the departmental administrative assistant for faculty review two weeks prior to the defense.
3. At least 10 working days before your defense you must obtain and complete a Request to Proceed with Final Defense form and submit it to the College of Graduate Studies.
4. All members of your advisory committee and the department chair or their designee must be in attendance at the examination.
5. Your thesis defense **cannot** be scheduled during the last three weeks of the **semester in which you want to graduate**.

The examination (Ph.D. and M.S.):

1. The thesis defense will consist of a seminar of no more than 50 minutes that is followed by questions from the audience.
2. All faculty members, instructors, postdoctoral fellows, research staff and students can attend your thesis defense seminar.
3. After the public presentation, the advisory committee will hold a closed-door session in which the advisory committee members and any other faculty in attendance will examine the student.
4. The questions from the committee members will be of two basic types:
  - a. Those that require you to explain and justify the methods, results, conclusions or other pertinent points of the dissertation.

- b. Those that test your general knowledge and critical thinking skills, particularly in areas related to your research.
5. When the questioning has been completed you will be asked to leave the room. After consulting with each other your advisory committee will reach a consensus on whether you have 'passed' the exam. A two-thirds majority of the members of your advisory committee must agree that you have passed the exam. The Final Defense Report form must be completed by the committee. A copy of the form will be retained by the department and the original will be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies.
6. This exam can be repeated once if your first attempt is unsuccessful. The interval before the second attempt may not be less than three months or longer than one year.

### **ANNUAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Your advisory committee must formally review your progress each year. This is done by registering for 1 credit of BIOL 524 Research and Curriculum Progress and arranging a meeting with your major professor and advisory committee. At this meeting you should present a formal update of progress in your research and coursework and answer questions from committee members. The committee will prepare a written assessment of your progress and complete the Research and Curriculum Progress form. This will be submitted to the Department Chair who will record your grade. Satisfactory performance requires completing your degree requirements on a reasonable schedule, making adequate progress in your research, and satisfactory performance as a teaching assistant. If your progress is twice deemed to be inadequate (a grade of "C" or lower) you will be dismissed from the department's graduate program.

If you think your performance has been unfairly evaluated, you can submit a written explanation of the extenuating circumstances that hindered your progress and performance. Your appeal will be considered by the Graduate Student Affairs committee who will then make a recommendation to the Department Chair. The chair makes the final decision regarding your dismissal from the program.

### **ASSISTANTSHIPS**

There are three types of graduate student stipends ("assistantships") available to graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences: 1) Teaching Assistantships, 2) Research Assistantships, and 3) Non-Departmental TAs and other Fellowships. These can be distinguished by the nature of the duties associated with them.

#### **Teaching Assistantships**

As a teaching assistant you have a teaching obligation in the department. Fellowships are half-time appointments and require approximately 20 hours per week to perform specific duties. However, this is a professional appointment and strict time accounting is not appropriate. Rather, a high level of performance is expected, and the time required to meet this expectation depends upon your experience and efficiency. These fellowships require teaching a maximum of two sections per semester.

#### **Research Assistantships**

Research Assistants receive financial support for conducting research, usually from a grant or a personal research fellowship. Typically, the major professor is also the employment supervisor and determines the duties and responsibilities of the research assistant.

### **Non-Departmental TAs and other Fellowships**

In cases where the major professor is in a department other than Biological Sciences, teaching assistantships may be awarded through that department. The requirements and expectations of these assistantships will be outlined by the awarding department. Students may also be eligible for teaching assistantships through University-wide programs, such as the Institute for Modeling Collaboration and Innovation (IMCI). Students supported by other fellowships will be expected to meet the requirements outlined by the awarding body.

## **DUTIES OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS**

### **Assignment of courses**

Your assignment to a specific course(s) will be made prior to the beginning of each semester. The faculty member or instructor in charge of the course will supervise you.

### **Your responsibilities as a teaching assistant**

Your supervisor will explain your responsibilities at the beginning of the semester. Your duties will vary somewhat with the course(s) to which you are assigned. You should not delegate any responsibilities to other graduate students without the approval of your supervisor and the Department Chair. As a teaching assistant you should not institute policies in laboratory sections of courses without specific approval of the faculty member in charge.

You are expected to be present on campus from your official start date until final grades are submitted.

If you become ill at some time during the semester and unable to meet your responsibilities as a teaching assistant, you should immediately notify your course supervisor and work with them to make arrangements for another teaching assistant to teach your laboratory sections.

### **Attendance of Lectures**

You are expected to know the material being taught in lectures of the course. The faculty member or instructor teaching the course will decide if you must also attend lectures.

### **Testing**

You may be asked to prepare quizzes and exams on subject matter covered in laboratory sections or lectures. This should be done in consultation with your supervisor.

### **Grading**

You may be asked by your supervisor to determine the grades for laboratory reports and lecture exams of a course. Be sure that you completely understand the criteria used to determine grades. When in doubt, consult with the faculty supervisor. Keep complete and accurate records of grades and provide these to your faculty supervisor.

### **Evaluations**

Your supervisor will evaluate your teaching performance, which could include student teaching evaluations from your laboratory section(s). This evaluation will be shared with you, your major professor, and the department chair. You should use this feedback to improve as an instructor.

## **KEY UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **Policy on professional conduct and ethics**

As graduate students and professional scholars-in-training, you are expected to exercise high standards of ethical and professional behavior toward your students, your peers and your professors.

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As professional teachers, both professors and teaching assistants should encourage learning on the part of their students, and should model high standards of scholarship. You should protect students' academic freedom and confidentiality, and make every effort to evaluate students rigorously and fairly. Students should not be exploited or humiliated by their instructors, but inspired to excel in their studies whenever possible.

Science as a whole can only make progress if individual scientists are truthful and trustworthy. As academic professionals and members of the larger community of scientists, graduate students should practice intellectual honesty at all times. You should exercise scholarly discipline and good critical skills, while engaging in civil, collegial discussion of scientific and professional matters. Ideally, scientific professionals should strive to be objective and fair in their criticism and discussion of colleagues' work. Graduate students must never engage in, permit or otherwise support professional misconduct, including plagiarism, falsification of information, or deception of any kind. Each of us is obligated to report professional misconduct to a supervisor or Department Chair as appropriate.

### **Policy on academic honesty**

As stated above, graduate students are expected to uphold high standards of intellectual and academic honesty at all times, and to enforce university and departmental standards for academic honesty. This is true particularly when it comes to your own academic and scientific work and the work of your students.

The University's Student Code of Conduct includes policies on academic honesty. Cheating on classroom or outside assignments, examinations or tests is a violation of this [academic honesty] code. In addition, plagiarism, falsification of academic records, and the acquisition or use of test materials without faculty authorization are considered forms of academic dishonesty and, as such, are violations of this code. The possible consequences for violation of academic honesty policies are clearly explained in the University's Student Code of Conduct.

Should you encounter academic dishonesty on the part of one of your students, you should immediately bring it to the attention of your teaching supervisor. Other suspected instances of academic dishonesty in research laboratories should be discussed with your major professor or the Department Chair.

### **Policy on harassment**

Graduate students are expected to treat their students, peers, professors, and other colleagues in the university workplace respectfully at all times. By the same token, you are also entitled to respectful behavior on the part of your coworkers.

Harassment in the workplace is often defined in sexual terms. However, harassment in a broader sense can also take the form of teasing, insults and other hostile or harsh speech, crude gestures, or otherwise acting toward another person in an extremely objectionable or humiliating manner, even when that behavior lacks a sexual context. Legally prohibited harassment includes not only sexual harassment but also harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran.

The University of Idaho Faculty and Staff Handbook defines sexual harassment as follows:

*Sexual harassment of a student is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the student's grade, receipt of a grade, or status as a student; (b) the student's submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for a decision affecting that student; or (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's learning or learning performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment. In*

*addition, it includes behavior that overtly or covertly uses the power inherent in the status of a professor, teacher, or other officer to affect a student's educational experience or career opportunities by intimidating, threatening, or coercing the student to accept sexual advances or risk reprisal in terms of a grade, a recommendation, an opportunity for professional growth, or a job. Moreover, a student is deemed to be a victim of sexual harassment if he or she is denied educational benefit because someone else has received preferential treatment in return for sexual favors.*

Under no circumstances should a graduate student engage in behavior that might be construed as harassment, sexual or otherwise. If you feel you have been harassed or are aware of a possible violation of the University's harassment policy, you are strongly encouraged to contact your major professor, supervisor, the Department Chair, the Graduate Affairs Committee, the Women's Center, or the University's Office of Human Rights, Access and Inclusion.

## **KEY DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES**

### **Policy on Department Seminar Program**

All faculty and graduate students are expected to attend and participate in the Departmental Seminar Series. This is an excellent opportunity to learn the latest research developments from outstanding investigators who have been invited to visit the department and present their recent work.

### **Policy on Graduate Student Grievances**

A graduate student may request a hearing before a department grievance committee. Complaints may include, but are not limited to, conflicts that involve a colleague, teaching supervisor, employer, or major professor. You must attempt to resolve the problem by informal discussion with those involved in the grievance before requesting a hearing. You can request a hearing from the Department Chair or the chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee and they have the discretion to determine if a hearing is warranted. If it is warranted the Graduate Affairs Committee Chair will appoint at least two other tenured faculty and will chair this committee. The chair of the Graduate Affairs Committee will be recused from the hearing if they are in some way involved in the grievance and replaced by a tenured faculty member appointed by the Department Chair. After hearing both sides of the dispute the Committee will consult and then provide a written summary and recommendation on what actions, if any, should ensue.

### **Annual Leave and Sickness**

You are not eligible to accrue paid sick and annual leave. You should notify your major professor of illness and request their approval for personal time off.

### **Keys, Building Access and Security**

Keys to your office and the appropriate research and teaching labs can be obtained from the main office of the Department of Biological Sciences.

- University keys may not be duplicated.
- Never loan your keys to others.
- You must turn in keys at the end of your graduate studies.
- Failure to complete University-required or laboratory-specific training may result in revocation of building access and laboratory keys.
- If you fail to return your keys to the department upon completing your graduate studies and leaving the University your pay may be withheld.

Revised November 2022

After hours you can only enter the building using Vandal card readers located outside doors to Gibb Hall and Life Sciences South. Department staff in the main office can arrange for you to have access to the building after hours.

All members of the department share responsibility for the security of our facilities. Once you have entered a secured part of a building or other university facility, you are responsible for relocking or otherwise re-securing it. Offices and labs should generally be locked any time they are unoccupied. You should never allow any unauthorized person access to a university facility.

You should contact the campus office of the Moscow Police Department (Phone: **208-882-2677** (882-COPS) if you observe a person in Life Sciences South or Gibb Hall who is behaving suspiciously or should not be there.