

# Graduate Group in Biochemistry, Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology Bylaws

*Administrative Home: Graduate Group Complex, College of Biological Sciences, Green Hall*

*Revision date(s): April 15, 2009*

*Graduate Council Approval: January 28, 2022*

## Article I. Objective

### A. Degree(s) offered by the program:

The Graduate Group in Biochemistry, Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology (hereafter referred to as BMCDB or the Group) is organized primarily to establish and administer graduate education leading to the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in conformance with the rules of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies of the Davis Campus of the University of California. A function of equal importance is to provide a focus on research in molecular biology by facilitating the research interaction of graduate students, faculty and postdoctorals. Postdoctoral training is considered part of the group mission.

**B. Discipline:** The study of fundamental biological problems at a molecular level. Experimental approaches used to address these problems range from the atomic and ultra-structural levels to the cellular and organismal levels. Research in the group reflects traditional disciplinary strengths in biochemistry, molecular genetics, cell and developmental biology, as well as interdisciplinary approaches that combine biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, math and/or computational approaches.

**C. Mission of the Program:** The Group is organized to administer the graduate group in BMCDB. The Group may consider and act upon any matters pertaining to those programs. The Group functions as a mechanism for curricular structure in training students in molecular biology at UC Davis and fosters interactions and collaborations among faculty pursuing molecular biological research through different academic departments. BMCDB is committed to upholding the UC Davis Principles of Community and recognizes that efforts towards diversity, equity, and inclusion are a valuable means to advance science.

## Article II. Membership

### A. Criteria for Membership in the Graduate Program

#### 1. Appropriate academic and teaching title.

The Group consists of those faculty members of the Davis campus qualified to guide candidates for the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Biochemistry, Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology. Interested faculty having strong interest and expertise in biochemistry, molecular genetics, and cell & developmental biology whose appointment authorizes the direction of graduate work, may be elected to membership in the Group by the Executive Committee.

Members shall hold an appropriate academic title as (a) a member of the Academic Senate of the University of California (includes Professors, Lecturers with Security of Employment, Professors in Residence, Professors of Clinical “\_\_\_”, Professors Emeritus/a, and Research Professors), (b) Adjunct Professor, (c) Lecturer (without Security of Employment) or (d) Lecturer Without Salary. Academic staff with primary appointments as Cooperative Extension Specialists or in the Professional Research series are not eligible to be members of graduate programs unless they also hold an appropriate instructional title (normally Lecturer Without Salary).

**2. Active research, practice or teaching appropriate to the discipline(s) encompassed by the program.**

Members must have training in fields related to Biochemistry, Molecular Genetics, Cell and/or Developmental Biology and be engaged in an active research that meets the expectations of the University of California in order to provide appropriate guidance to graduate students. A member should have formal training in Biochemistry, Molecular Genetics, Cell & Developmental Biology, as evidenced by M.D., M.S. or Ph.D. degrees or peer-reviewed publications in Biochemistry, Molecular Genetics, Cell and/or Developmental Biology. Membership is independent and separate from academic department appointments. Membership is based upon disciplinary expertise and active research, so members throughout campus are eligible for consideration to membership in the group.

**3. Voting rights.**

All active members are eligible to vote on graduate matters, except those defined in Section C. Emeritus.

**B. Application for membership.**

**1. How Faculty May Apply**

Candidates apply directly to the Membership Committee. Admissibility shall be determined by the Membership Committee with review by the Executive Committee of the Group. If the Executive Committee does not concur with the decision of the Membership Committee, the final decision will be made by joint consideration of the two. A majority vote of both committees would then determine the applicant's membership.

The applicant should provide the following materials to the Membership Committee:

1. BMCDB New Membership Application form and CV which includes the following:
  - a. Education, training, and prior professional appointments
  - b. The month and year of appointment to the UC-Davis faculty
  - c. Peer-reviewed publications for at least the last three years
  - d. External grant support, including source of funds and principal investigator
  - e. Membership in other graduate groups
  - f. The program enrolled in, year of graduation and current position of all students for whom candidate has served as major professor

## **2. Anticipated contributions that graduate faculty members will perform as a member.**

Graduate faculty members are expected to contribute through any of the following:

1. Active role in the administration of the graduate group by serving on administrative committees; as a graduate adviser (not to be confused with a major professor); or as an administrative officer of the group.
2. Providing graduate level instruction, as appropriate, in addition to research instruction.
3. Service on dissertation and qualifying examinations/Master's comprehensive examination committees, etc.

## **C. Emeritus Status.**

Emeritus faculty who are members of the Group are afforded full rights, except Emeritus faculty who no longer run active research programs; they may attend and participate in Group activities, including meetings, but are not afforded the right to vote on policy and bylaw issues related to the Group. Emeritus faculty are eligible to teach in graduate courses and serve on student dissertation committees.

## **D. Review of Membership**

The criteria for reviewing members of the program is the same for all members. Each faculty member's contributions to the Group shall be reviewed once every three years for the purpose of identifying faculty members who are not providing a minimal level of service to the Group. This review will be conducted by the Committee on Membership, who will shall review on a yearly basis one-third of the membership. When appropriate, the Executive Committee may request an early review of any member.

The review will focus on a) the areas defined in Section B. above, "Anticipated Contributions by Members" and b) satisfactory mentorship of BMCDB students. All members of the graduate group are expected to adhere to 1) the Mentoring Guidelines (MG) set by UC Davis Graduate Council and any modifications set by the Student Mentorship Committee (see Article V, below), and 2) the UC Davis Principles of Community (POC). The Executive Committee may request an early review of any member if they are alleged to have violated the MG or POC.

Faculty whose record reflects poor performance in any of these areas will be subject to nonrenewal or to a probationary period in which greater involvement and/or improved student mentorship must be demonstrated as a condition of continuing membership.

## **E. Membership Appeal Process**

If membership is denied, a faculty can appeal to the Executive Committee. Applicants denied membership or renewal of membership may make a final appeal to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

## **Article III. Administration**

The academic leadership and management of the Group shall be vested in the Group Chair and an Executive Committee. The Chair is the chief officer and spokesperson for the Group and for

the Executive Committee. Management of the Group shall be open and democratic.

#### **Article IV. Graduate Program Chair**

##### **A. Chair appointment process**

The Chair will be appointed in accordance with the Academic Personnel Manual policy UCD-245.B and the policies and procedures of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies.

A "Nominating Committee" will be named by the Executive Committee to solicit nominations for Graduate Group Chair from the faculty and graduate students of the Group. Those nominated will then be contacted regarding their willingness to serve. The names of the nominees who have indicating a willingness to serve will then be submitted to the Group's faculty and graduate students for comments. All comments will remain confidential.

The Nominating Committee will forward at least one name to the Dean of Graduate Studies along with all comments received on the nominees. All comments solicited from faculty and students of the group will be treated as confidential information by the Group's Nominating Committee and by the Office of Graduate Studies.

If the Group puts forward more than one nominee, it may express a preference for one and, if it does, should indicate the basis for determining that preference. The nominee(s) may be interviewed by the Dean of Graduate Studies (or delegate) and will then forward their recommendation to the Chancellor for appointment. The normal term of the Chair's appointment is three years, however what is recommended will be based on the nominees' willingness to serve.

##### **B. Duties of the Chair**

The Chair: a) provides overall academic leadership for the program; b) develops and implements policies for the program; c) represents the interests of the program to the campus and University administrators; d) calls and presides at meetings of the Executive/Program Committee; e) calls and presides at meetings of the program; f) is responsible for coordinating all administrative matters with the Office of Graduate Studies; g) manages the budgets of the program; h) submits course change or approval forms; i) is responsible for the accuracy of all publications related to the program including web pages and catalog copy; and j) nominates graduate advisers for appointment.

The chair shall maintain liaison with biochemistry, molecular genetics, cell and developmental biology groups on other campuses of the University and with related groups on the Davis campus.

##### **C. Vice Chair**

The Executive Committee shall select of and for itself, and for the Group, a Vice Chair to serve for a three-year term of service. The Vice Chair will vote on all issues brought before the Executive Committee. The Vice Chair will serve as chief officer of the Group in the absence of the Chair, for less than a quarter. If the Chair will be absent from campus for more than a quarter, the Chair appointment procedures must be followed

## **Article V. Committees**

### **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the chair of the Group, who serves as chair of the committee, plus seven faculty elected from the membership, plus the Master Adviser and one student appointed annually by the BMCDB Graduate Students' Association. To ensure broad participation, the Executive Committee shall have members from at least three different departments (tri-department rule) including at least one member each from the College of Biological Sciences and from the School of Medicine. All members have voting rights, including the student representative, unless the student does not participate in the discussion due to the nature of the item (see below). The faculty members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for a three-year term, which is renewable two times. Two members shall be elected each year.

Election of faculty members of the Executive Committee: nomination shall be made either by e-mail or from the floor at the annual Spring Quarter meeting of the Group. Elections shall be conducted by mail or electronic-mail ballot within two weeks of the annual Spring Quarter meeting. At election, each member of the Group shall vote for not more than the number of positions to be filled on a ballot provided, without weighing of choice. Those receiving the most votes will be declared elected. Ties will be resolved by lot. Election results shall be communicated to the members of the Group promptly. Elected members shall assume their duties on July 1.

The principal duties of the Executive Committee shall be to determine and implement policy for the good of the Group, and to represent the interests of the Group generally to various universities and other agencies. The Executive Committee is also responsible for distribution of Block grant and work study funds.

The Chair of the Executive Committee may rule that an item of business is inappropriate for discussion in the presence of the student representative. That item of business will then be discussed in the absence of the student member of the Committee. More generally, The chair of any committee with a student member must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students.

The Executive Committee shall meet at least quarterly. Additional meetings and executive sessions may be held as deemed necessary, or upon petition by five members of the Group.

The Executive Committee shall fill interim vacancies for the remainder of the current year.

### **Membership Committee**

The Membership Committee shall consist of five members appointed by the chair of the program for three-year terms, renewable two times. The Chair of the Membership committee is an Executive committee member appointed by the Chair of the program. The Committee on Membership shall review on a yearly basis one-third of the membership in addition to new

applicants.

### **Educational Policy Committee**

The Educational Policy Committee shall consist of the members of the Executive Committee and two graduate advisors. There will be one student member appointed by the Group Chair for a one-year term. The chair of the program shall be the chair of the Committee on Educational Policy. The function of this committee shall include consideration of course offerings and recommendations regarding the graduate program and supervision of teaching assignments and teaching experience of graduate students, subject to restrictions of Article VI. The faculty members of the Educational Policy Committee will serve for a three-year term renewable two times.

### **Admissions Committee**

The Admissions Committee shall consist of the Vice Chair of the program, a minimum of five members appointed by the chair for three-year terms, and a minimum of one student appointed by the BMCDB Graduate Students' Association. The Vice Chair of the program shall be the chair of the Committee on Admissions. The functions of this committee shall include making recommendations of admission of students to the program and the preparation of recommendations of their financial support for final approval by the Chair and Vice Chair of the group. The faculty members of the Admissions Committee shall serve for a three-year term.

### **Student Affairs Committee**

The Student Affairs Committee shall consist of the chair of the program, all graduate advisors, and the Master Adviser who shall be the chair of the Student Affairs Committee. The term of appointment encompasses the tenure of the Chair and advisors. This committee shall be responsible for (a) analysis of the results of the placement examinations for new entering students and determination of what remedial actions may be needed, (b) the assignment of all students to research advisors, (c) the recommendation of student Master's and Ph.D. qualifying exam committees, (d) the active overview of the status of student financial support during their entire period of study, and (e) the coordination of any changes in funding which may occur.

### **Fellowship Committee**

The Fellowship Committee shall consist of three faculty members appointed by the chair of the program for three-year terms renewable two times. The Chair of the Fellowship Committee is an Executive Committee member appointed by the Chair of the program. The functions of the committee include nomination and ranking of students for consideration of university fellowships and awards and identification of students to receive tuition waivers.

### **Recruitment Committee**

The Recruitment Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the chair of the program for three-year terms renewable two times, and a minimum of two students appointed by the Graduate Student Association. The Chair of the Recruitment Committee is an

Executive Committee member appointed by the Chair of the program. The functions of the committee are to coordinate the hosting of selected applicants for visitation to the campus, to develop and administer programs for increasing the number, quality, and diversity of applicants to the program, and to generate suitable brochures and web sites to provide information to prospective applicants.

### **Student Mentorship Committee**

The Student Mentorship Committee shall consist of three members appointed by the chair of the program for three-year terms, renewable two times, and two students appointed by the Graduate Student Association. The Chair of the Student Mentorship Committee is an Executive Committee member appointed by the Chair of the program. The functions of the committee are to oversee: (i) modification of Graduate Council Mentoring Guidelines (<http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/gradcouncil/mentoring.pdf>) to fit the specific circumstances of the program, (ii) their adoption by the program, and (iii) distribution and notification to the students and faculty of where the Guidelines are posted.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC)**

The Diversity Committee shall consist of two faculty members appointed by the Chair for three-year terms, renewable two times, and a minimum of two students appointed by the BMCDB Graduate Students' Association. The Chair of the DEIC is an Executive Committee member appointed by the Chair of the Group.

#### **Duties of the DEIC**

The committee will work to foster appreciation for the value of diversity in the Group, to create and sustain a supportive and inclusive environment for all members, and to diversify our membership. The specific functions of the committee are to 1) advocate for recruiting a diverse group of students through outreach and support of the Admissions Committee, 2) Support enrolled students by providing information resources and social events, 3) Foster an inclusive and vibrant training environment by organizing student and faculty trainings and webpage management to raise awareness of diversity issues, 4) Ensure that the Group is aware of and compliant with the Campus' Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Vision Plan, 5) Identify methods to increase student and faculty diversity in the Group and present these methods to the Executive Committee for consideration of adoption. Finally, the Student Wellness, Inclusion, and Retention Liaisons (SWIRL) subcommittee will function as liaisons to current students to help them navigate their graduate careers. The SWIRL committee will promote the mental and physical well-being of all students in the Group. The committee will work to foster appreciation for the value of diversity in the Group, to create and sustain a supportive and inclusive environment for all members, and to diversify our membership.

### **Article VI. Student Representatives**

Student representatives (who shall be in good standing academically) are appointed annually by the BMCDB Students' Association to the Executive, Admissions, Recruitment and Student Mentorship committees and have voting rights except on an item where they

are excused from the discussion.

The Chair of any committee with student members must excuse the student representatives from meetings during discussion about other students, personnel actions or disciplinary issues relating to faculty, during rankings of existing students for funding, and for disciplinary issues related to students.

## **Article VII. Graduate Advisers**

Graduate Advisers will be appointed in compliance with policies and procedures of the Graduate Council and the Office of Graduate Studies. When selecting Graduate Advisers, nominations shall be solicited from Group members. Comments on nominees shall then be sought from Group members and students. The Chair and Executive Committee will recommend nominees to be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies for review and appointment.

A minimum of 6 Graduate Advisers will be appointed. This will include a Master Adviser, a minimum of one adviser each specializing in one of the four tracks (Biochemistry, Molecular Genetics, Cell, Development), and one Master of Science Adviser, who will advise Master's students. The Master Adviser will oversee and coordinate advising activities and serve on the Executive Committee. Two of the advisers shall serve on the Educational Policy Committee, four advisers will serve on the Student Affairs Committee.

Graduate advisers will be appointed for a 2-year term, which is renewable for as long as the faculty is willing to serve.

## **Article VIII. Meetings**

The Group Chair shall call an annual meeting during Spring quarter for the purpose of electing officers and conducting other business. The Chair shall be privileged to call other meetings in the interest of the Group and shall be required to do so at the written request of three or more members. Notification will be emailed at least two weeks before the meeting. Faculty not on campus may participate by teleconference or other available technology.

## **Article IX. Quorum**

Fifty+ percent of the members of the Group constitutes a quorum for the conduct of business. In the absence of a quorum, issues requiring a vote will be taken up by e-mail balloting or other web-based balloting technology.

All issues that require a vote must be:

- 1) Voted on by 50+% of the available members who are eligible to vote (i.e., not on sabbatical or other approved leave).
- 2) On graduate program matters other than amendments/revision of bylaws: passage requires a 50+% supporting vote by those voting.
- 3) On amendments and revision of bylaws: require a two-thirds majority of those voting.

If balloting is conducted via email or web-based technology, 10 days must be provided for expression of opinions about the proposal prior to the acceptance of votes; the program must allow 14 days for votes to be returned or before the "polls are closed."



## **Article X. Order of Business for Meetings**

N/A

## **Article XI. Amendments**

Amendments to these bylaws may be made in accordance with program's quorum policy in Article IX. Program members may propose amendments by petition to the program Chair. The program Chair, or relevant program committee, may ask for revisions from the faculty who submitted proposed amendments before forwarding the revisions to the membership for review and voting. Quorum, voting and passage is prescribed in Article IX. All amendments and revisions must be submitted to the Graduate Council for review and approval; changes in the bylaws will become effective upon approval by the Graduate Council.