

Bylaws

Cellular, Molecular, and Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program

I. Definition and Objectives

The Cellular, Molecular and Biomedical Sciences (CMB) Graduate Program focuses on educating scientists to understand cellular, genetic and biochemical mechanisms in prokaryotes and eukaryotes that control growth, development, responses of cells and organisms to their environment, and changes in cell signaling and gene expression that contribute to normal cellular function and/or disease. The objectives of the CMB Program are to provide students with the ability to:

- 1) Become scholars in their field, attaining a core set of knowledge within cellular, molecular and biomedical sciences, with concentrations in one of the following areas:
 - Biochemistry, Structural Biology & Biophysics
 - Genetic, Cellular & Molecular Biology
 - Microbiology & Immunology
 - Molecular Physiology & Pharmacology
- 2) Understand, design and undertake a hypothesis-based approach to research in an ethically responsible manner.
- 3) Think independently, creatively, and critically.
- 4) Be effective in both written and oral forms of communication as teachers, researchers, and scholars.

II. Administration

The CMB Program will be administered by a Program Director and Steering Committee with administrative staff assistance. The CMB Program Administrator, a permanent full time position assigned by the Graduate College, will support and assist CMB Program functions. The CMB Program Administrative Assistant, a full time position assigned by the Graduate College, will support and assist CMB Program functions, as well as graduate education functions in the Colleges of Medicine and Agriculture & Life Sciences.

III. Director of the CMB Program

Selection and Appointment of Director

The Director will be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College in consultation with the Deans of the Colleges of Medicine and Agriculture & Life Sciences, and with input from the CMB community (faculty/staff, and students). Individuals within the CMB Program may self-nominate or nominate faculty for this position. The Graduate College will provide a vetted list of nominees and request comments and ranking from the CMB community for each nominee by using an anonymous survey. This data will be shared and discussed with the Steering Committee (excluding nominees) prior to making the choice of Director.

The Director will typically serve for a renewable term of three years, and will devote 25% of a 12-month appointment to this position. The Graduate College and the College of Medicine share an equal responsibility for 25% of the Director's salary while s/he is serving in this position. Though the term is 3 years, the contract is renewed annually and runs from July 1, 20XX to June 30, 20XX+1. Renewal of the contract requires satisfactory completion of the duties of the position. Based on unsatisfactory performance, a Director may be removed from his/her position

by the Dean of the Graduate College in consultation with the Steering Committee and the Deans of the Colleges of Medicine and Agriculture & Life Sciences. CMB faculty may bring concerns of the Director's performance to the attention of the Steering Committee for discussion, which may or may not include the Director. At the Steering Committee's discretion, this information may be brought to the attention of the Dean of the Graduate College. If consideration for the Director's removal/dismissal is being advocated, this information must be received by the Dean of the Graduate College prior to February 15th of a contract year.

Selection of a new Director will occur in April of the year a current Director completes his/her 3-year term. If the current Director wishes to be re-appointed for another term and the Dean of the Graduate College concurs, the Steering Committee will be asked to vote on whether the Director should serve another term; their decision is binding. Removal of a sitting Director prior to the end of his/her 3-year term for unsatisfactory performance will occur in late March of any year to allow selection of a new Director to occur in April of that year. The sitting Director would serve out the remaining contract year with the new Director in place July 1. In the event of an emergent situation requiring the Program Director to step down, an interim Director will be appointed by the Associate Dean of the Graduate College in consultation with the Steering Committee.

Overall Responsibilities of the CMB Director

The Director's role in the CMB Program is equivalent to that of a department chair. She/he is responsible to the Graduate College for the CMB Program and delegates a portion of these responsibilities within the Program. A full description of the Director's duties is included in the Program Handbook. The overall responsibilities of the CMB Director are to:

- Report to the Dean of the Graduate College
- Consult with Chairs and Deans of participating Departments and Colleges.
- Chair the CMB Steering Committee
- Call and preside at CMB Program meetings
- Delegate responsibilities to CMB Program members (faculty, student, and/or staff) as needed to fulfill the functions of the CMB Program
- Appoint ad hoc committees for the needs of the Program
- Appoint interim member to subcommittees as needed
- Make final recommendations to the Graduate College for acceptance/dismissal of students from the CMB Program, in consultation with the Steering Committee
- Notify Graduate College for CMB faculty membership status changes as proposed by the Faculty Membership Committee and the Steering Committee.
- Make final recommendations to the Graduate College for individual student financial support
- Assume additional responsibilities as assigned by the Dean of the Graduate College
- Respect and represent the perspectives of all faculty in the CMB Program

IV. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee consists of a student representative elected by a simple majority vote of the student body and the Chair of each of the following subcommittees: Faculty Membership, Education, Recruitment and Admissions and Student Progress. The CMB Director serves as the Chair of the Steering Committee. It is the responsibility of the Steering Committee to help

supervise the CMB Program and advise the Director to ensure success of the Program. The Steering Committee shall meet at least three times per year and as needed to monitor progress and plan strategically for the future of the CMB Program.

Overall Responsibilities of the Steering Committee

- Oversee the activities of the various subcommittees of the Program
- Advise the Director on issues that may impact the Program
- Formalize policy regarding Program requirements
- Advise the Director when considering dismissal of a student from the Program
- Evaluate requests from the Faculty Membership Committee to terminate faculty from the Program
- Vote on reappointment of a Director to an additional 3-year term if requested by the Director and the Dean of the Graduate College
- Review and approve concentration areas; a vote is required to change the concentration areas
- Annually review and approve changes to the Program Handbook initiated by the Director, the subcommittees or the faculty

V. Subcommittees

Four subcommittees have been formed to help carry out the responsibilities of the Program. Members of each CMB subcommittee will elect a faculty chair annually to serve on the Steering Committee. When a committee vote is required, a simple majority of the committee membership is sufficient to pass a motion and this vote can be made in person or electronically.

Elections and Terms

Faculty members of each subcommittee are elected for a rotating term by a simple majority of the CMB faculty. Specific information about the length of the terms for faculty members of each committee is described in the Program Handbook. Student members, where specified are elected annually by a simple majority vote of the CMB students. This vote is conducted electronically and distributed to all graduate students within CMB. It is the responsibility of the elected members to respect and represent the perspectives of all members in the CMB Program. Elections will be held at the end of the spring semester of each year and terms begin August 1. Current subcommittee members may run for re-election at the end of their term but cannot be elected for more than two consecutive terms on the same committee. If a subcommittee member must be absent for an extended period of time, resigns or does not perform committee responsibilities, an interim member, who will serve until the next election, will be appointed by the Program Director.

Education Committee

The Education Committee will be responsible for the development and review of all policies relating to the formal educational and professional training requirements for CMB graduate students.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Review all courses in the CMB Program curriculum, including core and elective requirements, as outlined in the Program Handbook. Major curricular changes for the CMB Program are subject to regulations of the Graduate College Executive Committee and the Faculty Senate.
- Interface with faculty and Chairs of participating Departments to ensure availability of appropriate graduate courses.
- Define the specific curricular requirements of the advanced educational concentrations within the CMB Program, which will appear on a student's transcript.
- Implement and administer the Comprehensive Exam as detailed in the CMB Program Handbook, all phases of which are to be completed by August 31 of the student's second year in the Program.
- Develop and supervise the weekly CMB student seminar series, as defined in the Program Handbook, for students to present their dissertation research to the UVM community.

Any changes in educational requirements must be presented to the Steering Committee and Director for final approval. Seven faculty members will be elected to serve on this committee with one student representative.

Faculty Membership Committee

Faculty members of the CMB Graduate Program shall consist of University of Vermont Graduate College faculty who are qualified to guide and advise candidates for a Ph.D. degree in the disciplines associated with cellular, molecular and biomedical sciences in accordance with Graduate College and CMB Program standards. Members in good standing will have an independent research program and be willing to participate in the educational and administrative missions of the CMB Program. Criteria for CMB faculty to remain in good standing within the Program can be found in the Program Handbook.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Maintain an up-to-date, publically accessible list of CMB Program faculty
- Review and approve new faculty applications
- Review and approve faculty renewal applications
- Submit names of faculty to be removed or denied membership to the program, to the Steering Committee.

Four faculty members will be elected to serve on this committee with no student representative.

Recruitment and Admissions Committee

The Recruitment and Admissions Committee is responsible for the recruitment of outstanding applicants and recommendation for admission to the Director of the most qualified doctoral candidates into the CMB Program.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Raise the profile of the CMB Program nationally
- Create Program promotional materials
- Support the web presence of the CMB Program
- Explore outreach events for the Program
- Review and evaluate all graduate student application materials
- Participate in and organize the graduate applicant interview process

Applicants to the Program will submit materials to the Graduate College for review by the CMB Recruitment and Admissions Committee. Recommendation of acceptance outstanding candidates will be based on a variety of criteria determined by the Recruitment and Admissions Committee and the Graduate College.

Eight faculty members will be elected to serve on this committee with one student representative.

Student Progress Committee

The Student Progress Committee serves as the Studies Committee for the student until s/he has selected a Dissertation Committee within his/her second year in the Program.

Specific Responsibilities include:

- Mentor first year graduate students and notify the Steering Committee and Director of any student who is on academic probation or who is unable to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities as a student.
- Oversee the performance of each first year student in three laboratory rotations. The specific requirements of these rotations are listed in the CMB Program handbook.
- Periodically review the progress of each student in the CMB Program, answer questions that students may have in terms of CMB Program requirements and provide advice to students to help them progress through the CMB Program satisfactorily.

Six faculty members will be elected to serve on this committee with no student representative.

VI. Faculty Meetings

There will be one meeting each semester of the general CMB Faculty. Additional meetings will be scheduled as needed to address Program-wide concerns and initiatives.

VII. Graduate Student Financial Support

In accordance with Graduate College policy, students must maintain at least half time enrollment to be funded by the Program. During the first two years, students will be supported by Graduate Teaching/Research Assistantships (GTA/GRA) from the CMB Program. Students holding a GTA/GRA should commit 20 hours per week effort split between teaching and research for these assistantships in addition to their studies. The Program expects that all student advisors make a good faith effort to provide financial support for their student(s) after their second year. In the absence of such support, students who are in good standing may be supported by a CMB Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) beyond his/her second year. This position consists of 20 hours per week teaching effort in addition to his/her studies. Students in the CMB Program will be fully supported as long as they are making satisfactory progress towards his/her degree.

Additional details concerning student funding are provided in the Program Handbook.

VIII. Dissertation Committees

A Dissertation Committee, once chosen, will replace the Student Progress Committee in the role of Studies Committee. A student's Dissertation Committee consists of a minimum of four UVM Graduate Faculty members; the student's advisor and at least two CMB faculty. The Chair may be from within CMB, but must be outside the advisor's home department (for both primary and secondary appointment). The composition of the Dissertation Committee and the name of the advisor must be submitted to the Graduate College at the time it is constituted.

All students must choose and meet with his/her Dissertation Committee by the end of his/her second year and annually thereafter. Within two weeks after each meeting, the chair of the Dissertation Committee must submit to the CMB Office a short summary of the meeting, and the Committee's assessment of the student's progress with outlined research goals for the upcoming year. Typically, the Dissertation Committee will also serve as the Dissertation Defense Committee. Upon receipt of a completed dissertation, the Graduate College will appoint the Dissertation Defense Committee. Should changes from the Dissertation Committee for the Dissertation Defense Committee be requested, the student should provide that request to the Graduate College.

IX. Teaching

It is a University requirement to have a teaching experience while in graduate school. Teaching assignments will be determined by a Graduate Teaching Assignment Committee appointed by the Associate Dean of the Graduate College. This committee will consist of representatives from Biochemistry, Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and Biology and Biological Sciences, and a faculty member of the CMB Program who will serve as the Committee Chair and primary interface with the CMB students who will serve as teaching assistants. The Associate Dean of the Graduate College and the Director of CMB also serve on this committee. Specific courses to which CMB TAs are currently assigned were agreed to within the 2012 MOU that established the new CMB Program and are: MMG 65, 101, 104, 201, 203, 222; BIOC 205, 206, 207; BCOR 011, 012, 101, 103; and BIOL 001, 002. Priority for assignment of teaching assistants is primarily for undergraduate courses that have labs.

X. Revision of Bylaws

CMB faculty who wish to suggest revisions to the Bylaws should contact the Director or Steering Committee. If the Director and Steering Committee approve the proposed changes favorably, there will be a Program faculty meeting to discuss the modifications, before a vote is scheduled. Changes to the Bylaws will be accepted with a two-thirds majority vote of the faculty membership. Voting will be conducted through an anonymous, electronic poll. All faculty members within CMB will receive a ballot. A two thirds majority, of those who voted in the allotted time, is necessary to pass the revision of the Bylaws.