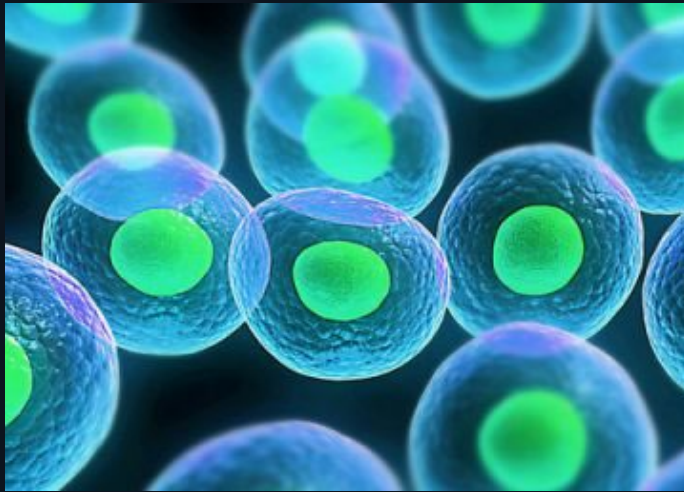


**Student Handbook**  
(updated 9/19/2023)

**Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology  
PhD Training Program**



[www.jhu-bmb-PhD.org](http://www.jhu-bmb-PhD.org)

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# INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (BMB) Graduate Training Program is to train highly qualified scientists who will go on to become the future leaders and supporters of biomedical research. Through research, teaching, and service opportunities available through the program, trainees are empowered to contribute to new insights into the biochemical, molecular, and biophysical underpinnings of cellular and molecular processes that have an impact on public health.

Research activities of faculty affiliated with the program span a broad range of topics including: genome biology and maintenance of genome integrity, cancer biology and cell migration, metastasis and the tumor microenvironment, chemical biology and proteomics, cellular stress response pathways and cell signaling, and immunology, immune responses and infectious diseases. Research tools and techniques include cellular and molecular biology, structural biology and biophysical sciences, data science, and computational biology.

## PhD PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Program requirements are summarized in the “Academic Program Milestones Checklist.” This checklist is designed to assist students in registering for and completing required courses and scheduling and completing program requirements. Students are advised to update this checklist on a regular basis and review their progress with faculty advisors to ensure that milestones are being met as required for progress in the program. The checklist can be reviewed as part of the annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) meeting with advisors.

### **Communications Regarding Program Requirements**

All questions regarding program requirements should be directed to the Program Academic Coordinator or the Program Director (contact information for the Academic Coordinators and other program staff can be found in APPENDIX I: PROGRAM DIRECTORY). It is also very important that completion of all program requirements be appropriately recorded. As detailed in sections below, signed forms are required to report successful completion of the following program requirements:

- Laboratory rotations (required at the end of each rotation)
- Written Thesis Research Proposal Exam
- Practice Preliminary Oral Exam (POE)
- Yearly Thesis Advisory Committee Meetings
- Yearly Individual Development Plans (IDP)

All required forms are listed in Appendix VII: REQUIRED FORMS FOR THE PHD PROGRAM, along with where to find the current versions, when they are used, and how to turn them in. All signed forms must be returned to the Program Academic Coordinator and Program Director using [this link](#) (JHED login required; the link is also included at the bottom of each form).

The IDP is to be returned to Dr. Val Culotta via the indicated link on the IDP form.

### **Program Activity Requirements**

All students, regardless of year of training, are required to attend the weekly BMB Departmental Seminar Series, the monthly BMB Colloquium Series, the annual BMB retreat and participate in the Professional Development and Career Office’s OPTIONs program. Students who have completed their first year of

study are also required to participate in the weekly Cancer Biology Journal Club. Notices about the timing, location and content of individual activities will be communicated to students through email. More detailed information on these activities can also be found in APPENDIX IV: PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.

## **Coursework Requirements**

The School of Public Health's coursework requirements for the PhD include: (1) all students must complete a minimum of 64 credits, (2) all students must complete 18 of their required credits through courses offered outside of their program's home department (BMB), (3) students must complete a minimum of 9 of their required credits through courses offered outside of their home department, but within the School of Public Health, and (4) all students must complete the *Cells to Society* course modules. All PhD students in the BMB training program have a common core curriculum, outlined below, that meets these general requirements.

### ***Cells to Society (PH.552.XXX.81)***

The Bloomberg School of Public Health is accredited through the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), and thus requires courses to satisfy the accreditation standards defined by the Council. The *Cells to Society* courses are online, 0.5 credit courses that satisfy the CEPH standards. These courses are Pass/Fail and students must earn a Pass in each course to fulfill degree requirements. Courses are:

<b>Course no.</b>	<b>Course name</b>
PH.552.601	Foundational Principles of Public Health
PH.552.602	The Role of Quantitative Methods in Public Health
PH.552.603	The Role of Qualitative Methods and Science in Describing & Assessing a Population's Health
PH.552.604	Causes and Trends in Morbidity and Mortality
PH.552.605	The Science of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Prevention in Population Health
PH.552.606	The Critical Importance of Evidence in Advancing Public Health Knowledge
PH.552.607	Essentials of Environmental Health
PH.552.609	Psychological and Behavioral Factors that Affect a Population's Health
PH.552.610	The Social Determinants of Health
PH.552.611	The Impact of Globalization on Global Burdens of Disease
PH.552.612	Essentials of One Health
[PH.260.600]	[Introduction to the Biomedical Sciences – <i>can be substituted for 552.604: Causes and Trends in Morbidity and Mortality</i> ]

**Note:** These courses are offered primarily in terms 1-3, and 552.612 is the only one offered in term 4 (term offerings can be found in the [School's Cell's-to-Society Course Offerings page](#)). These courses should be taken throughout the first two years of the program, **and it is required that all courses be completed by the end of the second year of training.**

### ***Other Required Courses, Years 1 and 2***

**Note:** Courses designated ME are offered by the School of Medicine and those designated PH are offered by the Bloomberg School of Public Health)

## Year 1

Term	Course No.	Course name
1	ME.100.716	Analysis of Macromolecules (3 credits)
	ME.330.709	Organic Mechanisms in Biology (3 credits)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.850	Biochemical Techniques (lab rotations; 6 credits)
	PH.120.852	Current Research Literature (2 credits)
	PH.550.860	Academic and Research Ethics (0 credits)
	PH.120.872	Current Topics in BMB (1 credit)
2	ME.110.733	Principles of Genetics (3 credits)
	ME.260.709	Molecular Biology and Genomics (3 credits)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (1 credit)
	PH.120.850	Biochemical Techniques (lab rotations; 6 credits)
	PH.120.852	Current Research Literature (2 credits)
3	ME.110.728 or ME.360.728	Cell Structure and Dynamics (3 credits) or Pathways and Regulation (3 credits)
	PH.140.615	Statistics for Laboratory Scientists I (4 credits)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.850	Biochemical Techniques (lab rotations; 6 credits)
	PH.120.852	Current Research Literature (2 credits)
4	PH.120.624	Cancer Biology (3 credits)
	PH.120.630	Fellowship Grant Writing in Biomedical Research (2 credits)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (4 credits)
	PH.120.850	Biochemical Techniques (lab rotations; 6 credits)
	PH.140.616	Recommended: Statistics for Laboratory Scientists II (4 credits)
S	PH.120.829	Summer Thesis Research (12 credits)

## Year 2

Term	Course No.	Course name
1	PH.120.820	Thesis Research (11 credit)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (3 credits)
	PH.550.600	Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit)
2	PH.120.820	Thesis Research (11 credit)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (4 credits)
3	PH.120.820	Thesis Research (11 credit)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (4 credits)
4	PH.120.820	Thesis Research (11 credit)
	PH.120.822	Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)
	PH.120.840	Special Studies and Research/BMB (4 credits)

### ***Required Courses, Years 3 and above***

Students are to register for these courses in terms one to four:

PH.120.822, Seminars in Research in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (1 credit)

PH.120.840, Special Studies and Research/BMB (4 credits)

During Summer terms, students are required to register for:

PH.120.829, Summer Thesis Research (12 credits)

### ***Additional Course Requirements***

- *Cancer Biology Courses:* Students who are supported by the National Cancer Institute T32 training grant in their second year or beyond are required to take *Fundamentals of Cancer: Cause to Cure* (ME.510.706) or *New Approaches to Cancer Prevention and Therapy* (ME.510.701) offered by the Sydney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center. These courses should be taken during the time that students are supported by the training grant. Students should consult with the Academic Coordinator regarding course availability.
- *Responsible Conduct of Research:* All students must complete courses in the responsible conduct of research. Currently, the online course *Academic and Research Ethics* (PH.550.860) must be completed by all students during the first term of matriculation. Students must also take the course *Responsible Conduct in Research* (PH.550.600), in the term 1 of their second year. Students should refer to the [Bloomberg School of Public Health Student Policies webpage](#) for Policy and Procedures on the subject of Academic Ethics.
- *OPTIONS program requirements:* All students are required to participate in the OPTIONS program managed by the Professional Development and Career Office (PDCO). A meeting with first-year students and the director of the OPTIONS program will be scheduled for the fall of the

first year of training. The program requirements include:

- Year 1 – 3 hours of career awareness programming
- Year 2 – 3 hours of career awareness programming
- Year 3 – 12 hours of career exploration programming (6x2 hours) and interview
- Year 4 – Meet with OPTIONS program director, Dr. CJ Neely, to develop strategic career plan

APPENDIX IV: PROGRAM ACTIVITIES provides additional information. Detailed information about the OPTIONS program can be found on the [PDCO website](#).

### **Teaching Assistant (TA) Requirement:**

All students are required to serve as a TA for one BMB-directed course during their second or third year in the program. TA positions provide students with an opportunity to develop their teaching and interpersonal skills, to work professionally with faculty and fellow students, and to contribute service to the Department. Thus, TA service is considered a key element of our educational program. Although serving as a TA is a requirement, remuneration in the form of a travel grant will be awarded at the end of the term of the course for which the student serves as a TA. The current grant amount is \$800.

A list of available courses with TA opportunities can be found in APPENDIX VI: BMB-DIRECTED COURSES. Students should work with the Academic Program Coordinator, or directly with course instructors, to secure a TA position for a particular course. Students may not be concurrently enrolled in a class and serve as a TA for that class. In addition, all students must complete the self-paced, online course, [Teaching Assistantships I: Essential Elements](#) prior to serving as a TA. **Completion of the course must be reported the Program Academic Coordinator.** Please note that students will not receive remuneration for the course if this requirement is not met.

The completion of *Teaching Assistantships II: Interactive Methods* is highly recommended for students who wish to further develop their knowledge and TA skills. Students who complete both courses will receive a certificate of completion. In addition, the [Teaching Academy](#) offers PhD students college teacher training and academic career preparation opportunities through courses, workshops, teaching practicums, teaching-as-research fellowship appointments, and individual consultation. Trainees interested in improving their teaching skills are able to participate in any of the Teaching Academy trainings on an ad-hoc basis. Those interested in committing more fully to their professional development and teaching preparation may opt to complete the full Certificate of Completion Program.

### ***TA Learning Objectives, Roles and Responsibilities:***

While TAs are not responsible for teaching entire courses, their support is integral to the courses taught within the Department. The Learning Objectives for this experience are tied to the program's core competencies.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

1. Enhance knowledge base of current biochemistry, molecular and cellular biology, and cancer biology
2. Enhance understanding of how to design, implement, and evaluate graduate level biomedical and public health courses
3. Develop and demonstrate breadth of knowledge in biomedical sciences and in public health
4. Communicate the results of scholarship and research clearly and professionally



## 5. Apply skills in written and oral communication in engaging with students in the course

### Roles and Responsibilities:

Students are not expected to complete all of the tasks listed below for any one course but should work directly with the course instructor to determine assigned areas of responsibility prior to beginning work on the course. It is expected that all tasks will be completed in direct consultation with the course instructor.

- Course Preparation and updating on CoursePlus
- Revising course syllabus
- Selecting/revising readings (new and supplemental, websites)
- Developing handouts
- Updating assignments/group work projects
- Updating and/or formatting lectures
- Coordinating guest lecturers
- Attending class sessions
- Reading assigned readings
- Proctoring exams
- Monitoring course discussion boards and participating in discussions
- Leading discussion or review sections onsite and/or online
- Emailing updates to students
- Responding to student emails
- Holding office hours
- Tracking classroom/live chat attendance
- Managing drop boxes
- Serving as CoursePlus Resource
- Grading papers/exams/assignments (limited to multiple choice questions and/or short answer questions to which a key/rubric has been devised by the instructor; essay questions should be graded on a very limited basis and should also have a rubric accompanying them)
- Creating grading distribution

**\*\* The Training Program adheres to the current academic standard for full-time students which limits the number of work hours per week to a maximum of 19.9. **Completion of TA responsibilities are not to exceed a total of 55 hours for the term.**** Students are expected to track their own hours and report concerns or violation of the expected total hours to the Program Director.

### Competencies

A table showing the academic competencies that PhD students in the Department are expected to obtain prior to graduation is available at [my.jhsph.edu](http://my.jhsph.edu) under Departments->Biochemistry & Molecular Biology->Team Sites->Biochemistry & Molecular Biology->Student Forms.

### Laboratory Rotations

During their first year, students spend approximately one-half of their time performing bench research during four laboratory rotations. The rotations last eight weeks and are conducted in labs affiliated with the BMB training program. A complete list of eligible labs and training faculty can be found in APPENDIX V: Program Faculty Preceptors.

The purpose of these rotations is to familiarize the student with research activities performed by faculty members in the program and to allow the student to make an informed decision in choosing a thesis advisor



and research lab. Rotation selections will be made as follows:

- For rotation 1, students will be requested to provide the names of three labs for possible rotation assignment prior to their arrival in the fall. Assignments will be made by the Program Director based on this list.
- For rotations 2-4, students are expected to meet with faculty preceptors to discuss and secure their next lab rotation. These discussions should occur no later than two weeks prior to the end of their current rotation. **Students should inform both the Academic Coordinator and the Program Director of their rotation choices one week prior to the beginning of each rotation.**

Students are allowed to rotate only once in any given lab. Normally, the rotations will be distributed so there is only one rotation student per laboratory. This rule may be waived if there are unusual circumstances. To assist students in rotation choices, the Department offers a one-credit course titled “Current Topics in BMB” held during the first term of the academic year, in which training faculty introduce themselves and their research to students.

Students will be given a specific research project at the beginning of each laboratory rotation. The student is expected to acquire the necessary background information to carry out the project through literature reviews and discussions with the faculty advisor and other lab members. In carrying out the project, the student can also expect hands-on assistance as required from the faculty heading the lab and their trainees.

At the end of each rotation, first-year students present a report on their rotation project before the faculty and other interested parties. Each student will write a brief abstract which is to be submitted to the Academic Coordinator at *least one day before* the rotation report date. During the rotation report, students give an oral presentation lasting 10 minutes. A five-minute question period follows each oral presentation. Each student is also required to complete a rotation self-evaluation form at the end of each rotation. The completed form should be discussed in-person with the faculty advisor who will provide their own assessment of the student’s understanding of the project, effort, interest and technical abilities in carrying out the project. The faculty’s assessment, including an overall evaluation of the rotation, will be documented on the final page of the form. **The signed evaluation form must be returned using the link at the bottom of the form.**

### ***Satisfactory Academic Progress and Laboratory Rotation Performance***

- Students must receive a grade of B or better in all required core courses. Accumulation of two or more C’s or lower in these courses is grounds for possible dismissal from the program. If a student receives a C or lower grade in any of these required courses, they must repeat the course and receive a B or better grade the second time.
- The School of Public Health requires PhD candidates to achieve a final GPA of 3.0 or higher for graduation.
- Students must receive satisfactory evaluations for each of the four laboratory rotations. Receiving two or more “poor” evaluations is grounds for possible dismissal from the program.
- Academic progress and laboratory rotation performances will be evaluated by the Program Steering Committee prior to the completion of the 4<sup>th</sup> rotation. Students who have met both academic and laboratory rotation standards will be notified and permitted to select a laboratory for thesis research.
- Students who do not meet program standards will be fully reviewed by the Program Steering Committee and decisions concerning an appropriate course of action, including possible dismissal from the program, will be made following consultation with the Program Directors.

## **Selecting a Thesis Advisor**

As a general policy, only one student may enter a given laboratory in any one year. Exceptions to this policy are made when circumstances warrant. Students are expected to meet with potential thesis lab advisors during the two weeks prior to the end of the fourth rotation and discuss the possibility of joining that lab for their thesis studies. **Following these meetings, students must communicate their thesis advisor choice(s) to the Program Academic Coordinator and the Program Director one week prior to the end of the fourth rotation.** Students may be requested to meet and discuss thesis lab choices with the Program Director. Thesis lab placements will be formalized between the student and advisor following approval by the Program Directors. Every effort will be made to give students their first choice of thesis research lab.

## **PROGRAM AND SCHOOL QUALIFYING EXAMS**

Following the completion of the first year of training, students must satisfactorily complete two qualifying exams. The first exam, the Thesis Research Proposal Exam is administered by the training program and consists of a written proposal based on each student's thesis research topic. The second exam, or Preliminary Oral Exam (POE), is administered by the School of Public Health and consists of an oral defense aimed at testing a student's breadth and depth of knowledge and ability to conduct research in their field of study. The first exam, and a practice POE, must be successfully completed before students are eligible to schedule the official POE.

### **Thesis Research Proposal Exam**

The Thesis Research Proposal Exam is a two-part exam that is based on the student's doctoral thesis research project. For **part 1** of the exam, the student must write a research proposal that follows the format of a NIH F31 fellowship. The student need only prepare the 1-page "Specific Aims" section and the 6-page "Research Strategy" section of the fellowship proposal. Specific guidelines for preparing these sections can be found in the current year's Fellowship Instructions at the [NIH How To Apply Application Guide](#). For **part 2** of the exam, the student must prepare a revised version of the proposal that addresses recommendations of a review committee comprised of the student's advisor and two additional faculty members. Specific details and a timeline for completing the exam are as follows:

**May – September, Year 1:** The student works full-time in their chosen thesis lab to generate the preliminary data and ideas for developing a research proposal. The advisor must work closely with the student in defining the research project to pursue. The student and advisor choose a committee of two additional faculty that will act as consultants for the student and reviewers of the written proposal. These faculty members may come from within the BMB Department or from outside the department. In any case, the students should choose their committee based on expertise of the research area and their suitability for providing an effective critique of the research proposal. This committee can be instrumental in helping the student prepare a proposal suitable for funding considerations, so choose the committee wisely. Over the summer the student should schedule an in-person meeting with the committee (advisor and two additional faculty) to review the proposal and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. This meeting should occur within the first two weeks of October (see below).

**September – October, Year 2:** The student writes the first draft of the proposal. The advisor is expected to play an active role in proposal development and coaching the student to write in a clear, concise, study section-friendly manner. The advisor should not write the proposal but provide guidance and feedback through several drafts.

**October 15, Year 2:** The student meets with their committee to receive feedback on the proposal no later

than October 15. The student must submit their proposal to the committee at least one week in advance of the in-person meeting. Students and advisors are responsible for educating their committee members as to meeting format as follows: The two committee members must read the proposal in its entirety in preparation for the in-person meeting. The advisor should attend the meeting but will not ask questions. The meeting will last approximately 1 hour. At the beginning of the meeting, the student will give a short introduction explaining the rationale for the proposed studies. The two committee members will then lead the student through a discussion of the individual sections of the proposal. The discussion can be used to test the student's knowledge of the research areas and their ability to defend the proposed experiments. In addition, the discussion should include a full critique of the proposal by the committee, including a detailed discussion of what would be required to make this proposal ready for submission to an outside agency for funding. Suggested revisions should be summarized by the committee in writing in the "Thesis Research Proposal Exam Form."

**October 15 – November 15, year 2:** The student prepares a revised version ("A1") of the proposal that addresses concerns and incorporates suggestions made by the committee. The student prepares a 1-page "Introduction" to the proposal that addresses the reviewers' concerns. The advisor should work closely with the student in assembling the Introduction and the A1. The A1 must be submitted to the committee no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> for review. Within two weeks, the committee members should either approve the revised proposal or, if necessary, request additional revisions. Failure to satisfy the committee following two rounds of revision must be communicated to the Program Academic Coordinator and Program Director and will result in an external review by the Program Steering Committee.

Following approval of the revised application, the student has officially passed the Thesis Research Proposal Exam. **The "Thesis Research Proposal Exam Form" must be signed and returned using the link at the bottom of the form.**

Additional comments: This exercise is designed to help students prepare quality research proposals that can be submitted as fellowship applications for funding considerations. It is expected that a majority (but not all) students will choose to submit their proposals to the NIH and the exam requirement will be completed in time for the December 8<sup>th</sup> F31 deadline. Other students may choose alternative funding sources, but regardless, the exam requirements remain the same: a 6-page research plan with separate 1-page Specific Aims Page. Students seeking non-NIH funding sources should be able to re-format the proposal as needed to meet the specific agency requirements. A full list of funding opportunities can be found at the JHU Office of Research [Graduate Student Funding Opportunities page](#).

The reviewing committee should be considered as a continual resource for the student. Prior to submitting the fellowship for funding considerations, the student is recommended to solicit feedback from their committee on all aspects of the fellowship application including pages that address selection of sponsor and institution, description of research experience, etc.

#### Timeline Summary

Timing	Activities
May-September, year 1	Define specific aims of the proposal, identify two committee members, generate preliminary data
September-October, year 2	Prepare first written draft of the proposal
October 1 <sup>st</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup> , year 2	Submit the proposal to examining committee, schedule and complete in-person meeting and review
October 15 <sup>th</sup> – November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Submit revised proposal for review by the committee

## **School Preliminary Oral Exam (POE)**

Students are required to successfully pass a Preliminary Oral Exam (POE) to be officially accepted as candidates for the PhD degree. The POE is administered by the School of Public Health and is designed to test the student's breadth and depth of knowledge in their area of study. The POE should be completed by April 30th of the second academic year.

### ***Practice Exam***

In preparation for the POE, students are required to schedule an oral examination practice session. This practice session should be held no later than 1 month prior to the POE. The purpose of the practice session is to help assess exam readiness. The student will select a committee consisting of five peers. These five peers should be predoctoral students who have already taken and passed their oral exam, and/or postdoctoral fellows. No more than two of the peers can be from the student's own laboratory. Scientific diversity is highly encouraged. The student's advisor is encouraged to sit in on the practice exam to ensure that it emulates the official POE mandated by the University, and to provide feedback and guidance to the student for the final stages of their POE preparation. The Practice POE Completion Form must be signed and **returned using the link at the bottom of the form**. The student may finalize the faculty committee and schedule the official POE prior to the practice session. However, the practice session must be completed before the official examination.

### ***Official Exam***

In consultation with their advisor, the student must identify a panel of faculty that will comprise their POE examining committee. A POE scheduling form, identifying the members of the committee and the proposed exam date, must be approved by the Program Academic Coordinator and **submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs at least one month prior to the examination date**. Once a committee has been approved by the Office of Academic Affairs, substitution of committee members may not be made without prior approval of that office. The composition of the examining committee must meet the following criteria:

- The committee shall consist of five voting members. A minimum of three departments of the University, with at least two being from the School of Public Health, must be represented. Not more than three members of the student's department can serve. The primary appointment of faculty members determines departmental membership. The thesis advisor does NOT serve on the committee. The advisor will, however, introduce the student to the committee before the start of the exam.
- The senior faculty member outside the student's home department will normally serve as chair and must hold the rank of Full or Associate Professor. Scientists/Lecturers and Adjunct Faculty may serve on the committee. Visiting Faculty and Senior Associates may serve as voting committee members with the approval of the Chair of the home Department. However, no more than two Scientists/Lecturers, Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty/Scholars or Senior Associates may serve as voting members on an exam committee. Only one of these individuals may be a Senior Associate.
- Two faculty with a current JHU appointment, one inside and one outside the home department, will also be designated as alternates. If one of the approved members of the committee fails to appear on the date fixed for the examination, the approved alternate must be prepared to discharge the responsibility of the absent individual. A preliminary oral examination may not be held with fewer than five approved faculty members in the room.

The POE will take between 1.5 and 2 hours. Before the oral exam begins, the student's thesis advisor will

meet briefly with the committee and without the student. Following this meeting, the advisor will leave and the exam will begin with the student providing a brief, 5-minute introduction to their thesis research project. During the oral examination, each faculty member of the committee is given an opportunity to ask questions (~15 minutes/faculty member) designed to probe the student's understanding of foundational knowledge pertinent to their ability to conduct hypothesis driven biomedical and public health research. The examination has three possible outcomes: unconditional pass, conditional pass, or failure. In cases of conditional pass, the student may be required to take additional coursework or write a report to remove the condition, as determined by the examining committee. If the student fails the exam, the examining committee may recommend one of the following: (1) dismissal from the program, (2) reexamination by the same committee, (3) reexamination in written form by the same committee, (4) reexamination by a new committee. If permitted, a successful reexamination must be completed within one year. A full description of POE protocol and procedures can be found in the [School's Doctoral Candidate Information page](#) (MyJHSPH login required).

## POST PRELIMINARY ORAL EXAM

### **Thesis Advisory Committee**

Upon successfully completing the POE, a Thesis Advisory Committee is formed to monitor the student's progress on their thesis research. The committee consists of at least three faculty members (typically four) including the student's thesis advisor. Members of the committee may have primary appointments in BMB or in other departments of the university. Although there is not strict requirement for committee composition, some consideration should be given to requirements for the composition of the Final Thesis Defense Committee so that there is some committee overlap (see below). Students are encouraged to select members of their committee in consultation with their thesis advisor. In addition to regularly scheduled meetings with their Thesis Advisory Committees, students are also encouraged to consult regularly with their committee members for advice.

**Students are required to meet with their Thesis Advisory Committees at least once each year,** beginning from the time that they select a thesis lab in April of their second year. Students entering year 5 of training are required to meet with their committee every 6 months. Thesis committee meetings will be conducted using the following format:

1. Students will designate one committee member as the chair – this should be the most senior BMB faculty member on the committee, excluding the thesis advisor. If the thesis advisor is the only BMB faculty member on the committee, the chair should be the most senior faculty member from outside of the department.
2. The Annual Thesis Committee Meeting form will be completed and emailed to all committee members at least one day in advance of the meeting.
3. The meeting begins with the student stepping out of the room, allowing for a private discussion between committee members.
4. The meeting proceeds with the student presenting research progress and any other relevant information related to meeting individual development plans and progress toward graduation.
5. Following completion of the student presentation, the committee chair will lead a discussion that summarizes the committee's views on student progress and recommendations for continued success and timely completion. Specific points in the committee's Annual Thesis Committee Meeting form will also be discussed and the form will be completed by the chair and signed by all committee members before the end of the meeting. The student will retain a copy of the form and

**return a signed copy using the link at the bottom of the form.**

6. The meeting concludes with the thesis advisor stepping out the room, allowing for a private discussion between the student and all other committee members.

### **Individual Development Plans**

After joining a thesis research laboratory, all predoctoral trainees and their preceptors are required to participate in an Individual Development Plan (IDP) process on an annual basis.

As part of this process, trainees and their mentor discuss the following elements during a confidential, face-to-face meeting set up specifically for the IDP purpose:

1. Career goals
2. Assessment of relevant skills, ranging from proficiency at the lab bench to knowledge of the literature, oral presentation, writing, leadership, collegiality, etc., as they relate to these goals
3. List the achievements of the last year
4. Set specific goals relating to productivity, training, and professional development for the upcoming year
5. Discuss time to graduation and preparation for post-graduation professional life
6. Required to review University Mentor/Mentee Rights and Responsibilities documents

IDPs are to be completed by July 1 of each year. The IDP Program Director, will reach out to all trainees in advance of this deadline with instructions for completion of the IDP and directions for uploading signed forms to an online portal.

### **Thesis Preparation and Final Oral Exam**

The Thesis Advisory Committee must approve a target date for completion of the thesis project and final defense. When this approval has been granted, the student should begin preparing to write their thesis. The thesis must consist of novel and publishable research findings and may contain material that has already been published by the student during the course of the thesis project. Thesis formatting requirements can be found at the [Johns Hopkins Sheridan Library page](#).

The thesis will be evaluated by a Thesis Defense Committee composed of four readers, including the student's thesis advisor. The composition of the committee must meet the following criteria, and may or may not have the same composition as the Thesis Advisory Committee:

- A minimum of three departments of the University, two being from the Bloomberg School of Public Health, must be represented. Two readers must be from the student's Department; however, with the approval of the Committee on Academic Standards, the Department may nominate an individual from outside the Department to replace a departmental reader. At least one reader must have neither a primary nor joint appointment in the student's Department.
- The senior faculty member outside the student's Department will normally serve as chair and must hold the rank of Full or Associate Professor. The primary appointment of faculty members determines whether they are considered inside or outside the department. Advisors, however, are considered inside examiners even if their appointment is outside of the department sponsoring the candidate. The Executive Vice Dean for Academic Affairs (or their designee) will appoint the chair. Scientists/Lecturers and Adjunct Faculty may serve on the committee. Visiting Faculty and Senior Associates may serve as voting committee members with the approval of the Chair of the

home Department. However, no more than two Scientists/Lecturers, Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty/Scholars or Senior Associates may serve as voting members on an exam committee. Only one of these individuals may be a Senior Associate. The committee of thesis readers may be increased to five voting members, provided that the conditions stated above are satisfied.

The Appointment of Thesis Readers and Final Oral Exam form must be submitted to the Program Academic Coordinator **at least one month prior to the date of the thesis defense**. The thesis, accompanied by a letter from the student's advisor signifying that the thesis is ready for distribution to the committee (PRELIMINARY THESIS APPROVAL FORM), **should be submitted to the Thesis Committee at least two weeks prior to the thesis defense**. On the date of the defense, students are required to give an oral presentation of their research findings in a seminar open to the public. Following the presentation, the student will meet with the defense committee for a final oral examination.

Within one month of successfully completing the thesis defense and any required thesis revisions, students must submit their final thesis with edits to the University library. The instructions for submitting the thesis as well as the Appointment of Thesis Readers and Final Oral Exam documents can be found at the [School's Doctoral Candidate Information page](#) (MyJHSPH login required).

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS/ LEAVE AND WITHDRAWAL POLICIES**

### **Residency Requirements and Time Limitations**

In accordance with Johns Hopkins University policy, a minimum of four consecutive terms of registration as a full-time student is required. Experience indicates that a minimum of four and one-half years is necessary to fulfill all PhD requirements and that the average student requires about five to six years. Not more than seven years may elapse between the date of matriculation and fulfillment of all requirements for the degree without formal review and approval by the student's advisor, Department Chair, and the Committee on Academic Standards.

### **Withdrawal from Program**

If a student withdraws from the PhD program prior to completion of their degree, whether for personal or academic reasons, tuition and stipend support will be provided by the department for the remainder of the term during which the decision to withdraw is made. The department may opt to deviate from this policy depending on the particular circumstances.

### **Leave Policies (Vacation, Sick, Leave of Absence, Parental Leave)**

#### ***Vacation***

Graduate student holiday and vacation schedules traditionally have been flexible to accommodate the varied demands of individual research projects. The Department considers graduate education, research and training to be a full-time, 12-month-per-year undertaking. It is the policy of the training program that graduate students are permitted two weeks of vacation annually, in addition to:

- University holidays
- Spring break
- The period between last day of 2nd term and the first day of winter intersession

Graduate students are expected to be present during winter intersession and summer term or as required by



their experimental protocols. Only in exceptional circumstances will a student be permitted to take a vacation of more than one month's duration. These guidelines are not intended to eliminate flexibility in the scheduling of holidays and vacation, and do not replace any conditions that might be imposed by fellowships/funding agencies. These guidelines also do not restrict legitimate academic or research activities conducted off campus, such as attendance at scientific meetings and field work. Students should consult with their thesis advisors before formalizing vacation plans.

### ***Sick Leave/Leave of Absence***

A leave of absence (LOA) is for students who are forced to take a temporary break from their programs of study due to reasons beyond their control, such as illness, military service, financial exigency, or pressing personal reasons justifying an interruption of their graduate studies. A leave of absence is an officially recognized inactive student status that is entered on a student's academic record. LOA cannot be used by a student working on a thesis who has completed all other degree requirements. LOA is limited to one academic year except for military service. Guidance on taking a leave of absence can be obtained from the Associate Dean for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Mike Ward, or the Program Advisor for Student Matters, Dr. Jennifer Kavran. Applications for LOA must be made on a form available from an Academic Coordinator.

### ***Parental Leave Policy for Graduate Students***

Graduate students may request parental leave following the adoption or birth of a child. Parental leave applies to either or both parents and includes 60 calendar days of stipend/salary support and health insurance coverage. Additional *unpaid* leave may be granted at the discretion of the advisor. If both parents are graduate students and/or postdoctoral fellows in the same School, both may request simultaneous parental leave. Parental leave must be requested on a Departmental Paid Leave of Absence form, available from the Payroll Coordinator. More detailed information is available from [this JHU Policies page](#).

## **STUDENT FUNDING**

### **Tuition and Fees**

The Department provides full tuition and fee support for all PhD students while enrolled in the program.

### **Health Insurance**

All students are required to be enrolled in a qualified health insurance plan. At the time of registration, students must provide written proof of enrollment in a plan that meets standard guidelines in the State of Maryland. For those students who do not have existing health insurance coverage, the Bloomberg School of Public Health offers the Student Health Plan (SPH). The Department provides full support for individual enrollment in SHP. The Department also supports the required UHS Clinic Fee and (optional) individual dental coverage (Access Plan). For more information on health insurance, please see the Bloomberg School's [Health Benefits and Insurance page](#).

### **Stipends, Salaries, and Income Taxes**

During their first year, PhD students will receive stipend support from departmental (non-sponsored) funds. After the first year, PhD students may receive stipend support from an institutional training grant, salary support from a research grant, or a combination of both. In keeping with federal guidelines, stipend (scholarship/fellowship) income is not taxed by Johns Hopkins University, although it is likely to be

taxable income. Salary to graduate students from research grants is taxed, although these wages are not subject to Social Security or Medicare tax (FICA).

Stipend recipients should investigate making federal and state estimated tax payments. All students should use their December 31 pay stub as documentation of compensation for tax purposes, as forms W-2 and 1099 will not include stipend payments. Pay stubs may be viewed and printed by clicking on the “MyPayroll” icon at [my.jhu.edu](http://my.jhu.edu).

Visit the [IRS website](http://irs.gov) to obtain form 1040ES, regarding Federal estimated tax payments. Student Tax Issues are addressed in IRS Publication 4. Visit the [Maryland tax website](http://marylandtax.com) to receive form 502D for Maryland estimated tax payments. Assistance may also be obtained from the JHU Tax Office (Eastern Campus) at 443-997-8442, or by emailing [tax@jhu.edu](mailto:tax@jhu.edu). Consultation with a personal tax advisor is encouraged.

## **Taxation of Nonresident Aliens**

Nonresident aliens are usually taxed on earnings received while living in the United States. Generally, nonresident aliens (F-1 and J-1) are exempt from FICA (Social Security tax). If the Visa type is F-1 or J-1, the student may be exempt from Federal taxes only if the country where the student lived before arriving in the U.S. has negotiated an income tax treaty with the United States government. The country in which the student was born is not a deciding factor. If the country of residence has negotiated an income tax treaty, and it covers the type of payment the student is receiving while visiting the United States, the student should complete Form 8233 for earned wages or Form W-8BEN for scholarship/fellowship payments. These forms must be completed each calendar year so that Federal tax is not withheld. State taxes must be withheld on wage payments paid by the University. Forms are available at the [JHU Tax Office form library website](http://tax.jhu.edu). At year-end, the University issues to nonresident aliens either a Form 1042-S or Form W-2, or both, which summarizes income. Nonresident aliens are required to complete federal form 1040NR to report and pay taxes, if appropriate, on any income. An excellent guide to Nonresident Alien taxation is IRS Publication 519, available from the [IRS web site](http://irs.gov).

**Note:** The Department cannot provide individual tax advice to students. All tax-related questions should be directed to the JHU Tax Office at (443) 997-8442; information is also available on [their website](http://tax.jhu.edu). The office is located at the Eastern Campus at 1101 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street. To assist international students, the Office of International Students, Faculty, and Staff Services, in cooperation with the JHU Tax Office, conducts tax seminars in March of each year.

## **Training Grant Support**

Eligible students may be supported by the program’s NCI-funded T32 training grant “Training in Areas Fundamental to Cancer Research” in their second and third years of training. Appointment to the training grant is based on a competitive review of applications solicited in the spring of each year.

### ***Training Grant Requirements***

All students supported by the T32 raining grant are subject to the following requirements:

- Complete an online Statement of Appointment annually.
- Provide annual reports on the progress of their doctoral studies.
- Acknowledge the training grant in all publications resulting from their doctoral studies.
- Participate in the annual Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center’s Fellow Research Day event
- Complete an online Notice of Termination upon termination of training grant support.

***Additional course requirements specific to the NCI-funded T32 training grant:***

*Fundamentals of Cancer: Cause to Cure* (ME.510.706) or *New Approaches to Cancer Prevention and Therapy* (ME.510.701) offered by the Sydney Kimmel Comprehensive Cancer Center. \*\*See Academic Program Coordinator regarding course availability.

A list of T32 Preceptors can be found in APPENDIX V: PROGRAM FACULTY PRECEPTORS

**Additional Funding Information**

For more information on PhD student funding opportunities, visit the JHU Office of Research [Graduate Student Funding Opportunities page](#).

# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX I: PROGRAM DIRECTORY**

### ***Program Administration***

#### **Program Directors**

- Dr. Michael J. Matunis, Program Director
- Dr. Ashani Weeraratna, Program Co-Director and Department Chair

#### **Academic Office:**

- Dr. Roza Selimyan, Executive Director of Academics, W8507, [rselimyan@jhu.edu](mailto:rselimyan@jhu.edu)
- Kecia Garrett, Academic Coordinator, W8503A, [vkeller2@jhmi.edu](mailto:vkeller2@jhmi.edu)
- Erika Vaitekunas, Administrative Specialist, E8626, [erikav@jhu.edu](mailto:erikav@jhu.edu)

#### **Administrative Office:**

- Kear Wright, Departmental Administrator, E3132B, [kwright@jhu.edu](mailto:kwright@jhu.edu)
- Chandan Prasai, Financial Manager, E3135, [cprasi@jhmi.edu](mailto:cprasi@jhmi.edu)
- Morgan Backhaus, Senior Administrative Specialist, E3132, [mbackha1@jhmi.edu](mailto:mbackha1@jhmi.edu)
- Samuel Ingram, Budget Specialist, E3132, [singram5@jhu.edu](mailto:singram5@jhu.edu)
- Dr. Sarah Studer, Scientific Communication Specialist, W8041B, [sstuder3@jhu.edu](mailto:sstuder3@jhu.edu)

### ***Training Program Steering Committee***

- Dr. Michael J. Matunis (Program Director and Committee Chair)
- Dr. Ashani Weeraratna (Program Co-Director and Department Chair)
- Dr. Fengyi Wan
- Dr. Cynthia Sears
- Dr. Scott Bailey
- Dr. Alan Meeker

### ***Program Advisor for Student Matters***

- Dr. Jennifer Kavan, W3116, [jkavran@jhu.edu](mailto:jkavran@jhu.edu)

### ***PhD Club Advisor***

- Dr. Danfeng Cai, W8508, [danfeng.cai@jhu.edu](mailto:danfeng.cai@jhu.edu)

## **APPENDIX II: HELPFUL RESOURCES**

### ***Administrative***

#### **Human and Animal Subjects**

Before beginning contact with either human or animal subjects, students (as all researchers) must obtain the appropriate approval for their projects from either an Institutional Review Board or the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. In both cases, the student's faculty mentor must be involved in this process, since the protocol for the research project is submitted under the advisor's name with the student listed as a student investigator. It is important to remember that NO contact can be made with humans, human tissue, human samples or human records without prior approval.

Students intending to work with human subjects should contact the Department Administrator for information on required training and procedures.

Students working with animals must complete online training available through the [JHU Animal Care and Use Committee Training Program page](#). Students should consult with their research advisor on the specific course(s) required for their individual research projects. Animal protocols will not be approved or renewed unless individuals working with animals complete this training. It is also mandatory that all individuals working with animals at Johns Hopkins University enroll in the Animal Exposure Surveillance Program (AESP). The program is designed to prevent occupation-related disease among those working with animals. Enrollment consists of the completion of an AESP form, available [here](#).

#### **Classroom/Conference Room Scheduling**

Rooms W8017, W8504, W8041A, E3130 are available for lab meetings, journal clubs, student exams, and other gatherings. Calendars are maintained online and can be accessed by logging onto the BMB Team Site and visiting the [Reservation Calendar page](#) (MyJHSPH login required). The Program Academic Coordinator can also provide assistance with scheduling when needed.

#### **Copying**

PhD students' ID badges are coded to allow access to all copiers in the school that are equipped with the Pharos scanner system. The copy machines in room W8034, are both on this system. Students should see Program Academic Coordinator for access or questions.

#### **Demographic Data**

Any changes regarding one's personal status, home address and phone numbers, etc. should be changed through ESS (Employee Self Service), available through [my.jh.edu](http://my.jh.edu) so all payroll and online systems can be updated automatically. A forwarding address is required upon graduation or departure from the Department. The Department's NIH training grants require that we document professional careers of our graduates for a 10-year period following their departure from JHU. Therefore, the Department asks that student alumni keep us informed each time there is a change in their contact information or employment situation.

#### **Foreign Students: Visa Applications and Other Issues**

Foreign students are required to report to the Office of International Services located in Reed Hall (1620 McElderry St.) on the first day of arrival in the U.S. They should bring their visa and I-94. During the student's tenure in the department, all visa extensions and other issues pertaining to visa status are handled by department administrative staff (room E3132) in cooperation with the OIS. A student's I-9 (employment eligibility) form must also be updated whenever there is a change in their visa status. International students are encouraged to visit the [Office of International Services web site](#). This site also

provides a link to the JHMI International Society. Contact information for School of Public Health and School of Medicine students can be found at the [OIS @ Medical Institutions page](#).

### JHED

The Johns Hopkins Enterprise Directory is an on-line source of address, telephone, e-mail and other contact information for faculty, staff and students throughout the Johns Hopkins University. Incoming students' information is pulled into the directory from the Registrar and Payroll databases. It is imperative that students maintain current information in JHED since other resources depend on the directory information. To verify and update information, log on to [my.jh.edu](#). First time users will be prompted to create their own password. The JHED user ID and password will be required to access other secure online JHU systems.

### Pay Dates and Check Distribution

Students are paid semi-monthly (the 15th and the last day of the month) for effort through that date (no lag). Should a payday fall on a weekend or holiday, funds will be distributed on the previous day. Students are encouraged to sign up for direct deposit through our Employee Self Service System (ESS). ESS is a convenient, secure, user-friendly enhancement to the central HR/Payroll system that will allow you to view your personal and payroll data and easily make changes (including direct deposit set-up). All paper checks are delivered to the department Administration Office for pick up, room E3132. You will be notified when your paycheck arrives. If your check is not picked up within 48 hours, we will mail the check to the address on record. Direct deposit stubs can be viewed through ESS (Employee Self Service), available through [my.jh.edu](#) - paper stubs are not distributed.

### Registration

Students are required to register for all Bloomberg School of Public Health courses online through the [Student Information System \(SIS\)](#). Students will be registered for School of Medicine courses with assistance from the Program Academic Coordinator. Students are expected to have their registration for elective courses approved in advance by their advisors.

## ***Laboratory Safety and Facilities***

### Facilities Management

Problems with facilities (lights, leaks, etc.) and/or laboratory equipment should be reported immediately to the student's mentor or to the Department Administrator in the Administration Office.

### Fire Alarms

All occupants must shut the door to their lab or office and exit the building immediately whenever a fire alarm sounds. For more information on emergency situations, please visit the Department of Health, Safety and Environment's [Emergency Information page](#), including how to report a range of emergencies.

### Radiation Safety

Radiation safety training will be arranged for PhD students on an as-needed basis. Badges to monitor external radiation exposure will be issued to students upon completion of the training and on a quarterly basis thereafter. When a student receives a new radiation badge, he or she should return the previous badge promptly to the Administrative Coordinator in the Administrative Office.

### Lab Safety

The Johns Hopkins University Safety Policy and Procedure Manual is available online at the Hopkins Medicine [Health, Safety and Environment website](#). All students must understand that it is their responsibility to comply with appropriate safety and health standards as issued by the Department and



University. Unsafe conditions should be reported immediately to the student's faculty mentor or to the BMB Department Administrator.

The Office of Health, Safety and Environmental Health (HSE) has the responsibility of providing guidance and direction in all phases of the safety program. It conducts annual safety and environmental inspections of our laboratories and facilities, advising administration of unsafe conditions or non-compliance with federal and state regulations.

### ***Health and Wellness***

JHU has launched a comprehensive health and well-being resource for all students:

<https://wellness.jhu.edu/>.

### **Johns Hopkins Ombuds Office**

The Ombuds Office is a place where people can confidentially and informally raise any issue of concern involving Johns Hopkins Doctoral and Postdoctoral Students, Fellows and Programs.

The Ombuds serves to:

- Listen
- Serve as a strategic thought partner
- Help to identify and evaluate different options
- Plan for difficult conversations
- Provide information about university policies and resources
- Assist with informal conflict resolution and problem solving
- Provide upward feedback on problematic trends or systemic issues

No matter what the issue is, the Ombuds Office provides support that is ***independent, confidential, impartial, and informal***.

Appointments with the ombudsperson can be made online at the [office website](#).

### **The Calm App**

JHU students have free access to the premium version of the Calm app through [their JHU webpage](#).

### **Johns Hopkins Student Assistance Program (JHSAP)**

This program provides support to students in dealing with the pressures and problems they encounter during their academic careers. SAP services are private and confidential, in accordance with state/federal laws and University policies. There is no cost to a student for utilizing SAP services. Services include:

- Short-term counseling
- Crisis response
- Healthy relationship support
- School-life coaching and adjustment
- Educational workshops
- Dean, faculty, and staff consultations

For more information or to schedule an appointment, visit the [JHSAP website](#), call (443) 287-7000, or email [jhsap@jhu.edu](mailto:jhsap@jhu.edu).

## University Health Services (UHS)

UHS provides medical and mental health services to Hopkins students, residents, fellows and trainees and their spouses/domestic partners. Their health care providers consist of internal medicine physicians, psychiatrists, a licensed psychologist, nurse practitioners, and licensed clinical social workers assisted by our clinical and administrative staff. To schedule an appointment, contact University Health Services at (410) 955-3250.

## UHS Office of Wellness and Health Promotion

UHS Wellness serves students, post-doctoral fellows, house staff and other trainees within the School of Medicine, Bloomberg School of Public Health, School of Nursing, and the Berman Institute. UHS has a weekly newsletter, hosts monthly wellbeing events, and offers various wellness opportunities throughout the year. Phone: (410) 955-8705 Email: [uhswellness@jhu.edu](mailto:uhswellness@jhu.edu)

Assistance and well-being information for students who are parents can be found at the JHU [Benefits & Worklife page](#).

## The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE)

The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) leads JHU efforts to foster an environment that is inclusive, respectful and free from discrimination and harassment. In its role, OIE ensures compliance with affirmative action and equal opportunity laws, investigates complaints of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct, and serves as a central resource for those with disabilities or those who require religious accommodations or pregnancy adjustments. For more information, please visit [OIE's website](#).

## Discrimination and Harassment

OIE is responsible for the [Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures \(DHPP\)](#).

The DHPP states: “The Johns Hopkins University is committed to equal opportunity and providing a safe and non-discriminatory educational and working environment for its students, trainees, faculty, staff, post-doctoral fellows, residents, and other members of the university community. To that end, the university seeks to provide community members with an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, gender, marital status, pregnancy, race, color, ethnicity, ancestry or national origin, immigration status, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, military status, veteran status or other legally protected characteristic. The university is also committed to providing individuals appropriate access to all academic and employment programs, benefits and activities on the basis of demonstrated ability, performance and without regard to any protected characteristic.”

The Discrimination and Harassment Report Form [can be found online here](#).

In addition, FAQs about the DHPP can be [found online here](#).

## Sexual Misconduct

OIE is responsible for the [Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures \(SMPP\)](#).

The SMPP defines and prohibits multiple types of sexual misconduct, including:

- Sexual Assault
- Sexual Harassment
- Sex-Based Harassment (including harassment based on sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression)

- Stalking
- Intimate Partner Violence (Dating and Domestic Violence)

The Sexual Misconduct Report Form can be [found online here](#).

FAQs about the SMPP can be [found online here](#).

### Retaliation

OIE recognizes that individuals may be hesitant to file a report with OIE or to participate in an OIE investigation due to fear of negative consequences from the accused person or others. This fear can be heightened when the power dynamics favor the accused individual over the reporting individual or witness. Both the [Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures](#) (SMPP) and the [Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) (DHPP) strictly prohibit retaliation, using a broad definition to encourage reporting and to deter retaliatory actions.

Retaliatory conduct does not need to be in-person and can include online communications and activities such as social media.

More information about how retaliation is defined and how OIE responds to concerns about and reports of retaliation can be [found here](#).

### Reporting Discrimination, Harassment and/or Sexual Misconduct

Everyone is encouraged to report incidents of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct. Responsible employees<sup>1</sup>, however, must *promptly* report all known relevant information about discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct. OIE will then determine next steps.

OIE will assess all reports it receives to determine next steps under the relevant University policy, which could include an investigation, informal resolution, or other measures/actions. However, individuals have other options besides submitting a report to OIE, including consulting confidential counseling or filing a complaint with law enforcement. The University recognizes that deciding among these options can be difficult and individuals are encouraged to seek information before deciding how to proceed. OIE is available to address questions and hypothetical situations about OIE's process and options, even if one is not ready to disclose any specific information.

Various confidential resources can help individuals consider their options and support them before and after they've made their ultimate decision. A list can be [found online here](#).

In addition, OIE will follow up to the greatest extent possible on anonymously reported incidents of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct. However, it may be difficult to do so— and particularly to conduct an investigation— without knowing the name(s) of the affected individual(s) or, if known, without the participation of the affected individual(s). If OIE does know the name of the individual(s) who may have been subject to discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct, OIE will attempt to contact that individual before deciding how to proceed.

More information about what OIE does after receiving a report, and how to respond to disclosures of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct can be [found online here](#).

### Program Advisor for Student Matters

Dr. Jennifer Kavran serves as the Program Advisor for Student Matters. In this position, she is available to

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<sup>1</sup> University employees designated as “[responsible employees](#),” including but not limited to faculty, department chairs, and academic advisors, have an obligation to report any information about possible discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct to OIE. More information is available on OIE's website's [Responsible Employee Guidance page](#).

meet with students regarding issues or concerns related to their performance and progress in the program. These include issues related to coursework, laboratory work, or personal interactions with advisors, students for other university employees. As Advisor for Student Matters, Dr. Kavran's role is strictly limited to providing advice and guidance. She is not expected to act on a student's behalf to resolve issues that are discussed. Student's seeking additional assistance in resolving academic issues or concerns should contact the Program Director and Department Chair.

While information shared with Dr. Kavran is expected to remain discreet, Dr. Kavran is **not** a [confidential resource](#). Dr. Kavran is considered a [responsible employee](#) and is therefore obligated to report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual misconduct to OIE.

### ***Professional Development***

#### **BSPH Career Services**

The [Career Services Office](#) at the Bloomberg School of Public Health helps students, alumni, faculty, staff and employers navigate the world of public health jobs. Specifically, the Bloomberg School's Career Services Office provides:

- Career coaching for students and alumni
- Help in preparing a public health resume
- A robust database of public health jobs and internships
- Information about employers
- Access to a growing network of public health professionals

You can always contact the Career Services Office directly by email at [JHSPH.Careers@jhu.edu](mailto:JHSPH.Careers@jhu.edu) or call at (410) 955-3034. To set up an appointment with a career coach, you can log into your Handshake account or contact the office directly. All students are encouraged to join [JHU Handshake](#), a valuable career services platform: If you would like to schedule a virtual session with a Career Coach, visit the Career Planning for Students page and look for the Virtual Drop-in hours section. please contact Paul Hutchinson [paul.hutchinson@jhu.edu](mailto:paul.hutchinson@jhu.edu) or Caroline Kelly [ckelly47@jhu.edu](mailto:ckelly47@jhu.edu).

#### **Profession Development and Career Office (PDCO)**

The PDCO provides professional development and career services to doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, and Bloomberg School of Public Health. Services include:

- one on one career counselling appointments
- grant writing workshops
- career fairs
- resume advice
- LinkedIn clinics
- mock interviews
- internship opportunities
- and more.

Information about services and activities offered can be found on the [PDCO website](#).

#### **JHU Teaching Academy**

The Teaching Academy offers college teacher training and academic career preparation opportunities through courses, workshops, teaching practicums, teaching-as-research fellowships, and individual

consultation, available to PhD students from all divisions across Johns Hopkins University. Teaching Academy programs and community are committed to developing and sharing Culturally Responsive Teaching practices and instructional approaches that engage students, support improved learning outcomes, and foster inclusive classrooms and critical pedagogy.

Students are invited to take part in any of the Teaching Academy offerings on an ad-hoc basis. In addition, students considering a career in academia may also participate in the full Certificate of Completion Program.

More information can be found on the [JHU Teaching Academy web site](#).

### Biomedical Careers Initiative (BCI)

BCI facilitates internships for PhD students in fields outside academic research, such as R&D in biotech or pharmaceutical companies, technology transfer, science policy, science administration, science education, and scientific writing. The goal of BCI is to provide students the opportunity for hands-on experience in their field of interest.

Advanced PhD candidates who are registered as full-time Johns Hopkins University students are eligible to apply for a BCI internship. Find additional information on the [BCI student internships page](#).

### OPTIONS Career Communities

OPTIONS supports PhD students in creating an informed and specific career plan, expanding their professional community, and improving their networking skills. All students are expected to participate in the OPTIONS program and complete the minimum program requirements. Find more information at the [OPTIONS Career Communities page](#).

The manager of the OPTIONS program, Dr. CJ Neely, will meet with first-year students in the fall of the first year to review program requirements and opportunities. provide more information and career support as well. She can be reached at [cj.neely@jhu.edu](mailto:cj.neely@jhu.edu).

### *Useful links*

- [BMB Website](#)
- [BMB Team Site \(MyJHSPH login required\)](#)
- [School of Public Health Home Page](#)
- [School of Public Health Office of Student Affairs](#)
- [Course Catalog](#)
- [Welch Medical Library Home Page](#)
- [Office of Health, Safety, and Environment](#)
  - [HSE's Emergency Information page](#), including how to report a range of emergencies
- [Student Assistance Program](#)
- [Office of International Services](#)
- [Doctoral Candidates Forms page](#); requires my.jhsph login (Preliminary Oral Exam Form, Appointment of Thesis Readers, Form Final Exam Form)
- [JHU Tax Office](#)
- [Health and Safety Training](#)

- [Animal Care and Use Training](#)
- [MyJH \(portal for many Johns Hopkins web applications\)](#)
- [Radiation Safety](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [JHU Health & Wellness](#)
- [JHU Calm App](#)
- [Ombuds Office](#)
- [Family and Caregiving Programs](#)
- [Sexual Misconduct Response & Prevention](#)
- [BSPH Career Services](#)
- [OPTIONS Career Communities](#)
- [Professional Development and Career Office](#)
- [JHU Teaching Academy](#)
- [Biomedical Careers Initiative](#)

### **APPENDIX III: SUMMARY OF PROGRAM MILESTONES AND COMPLETION DATES**

<b>PhD Program Milestones</b>	<b>Completion Dates</b>
Laboratory rotations (year one)	(Specific dates vary) 1 <sup>st</sup> : September/October 2 <sup>nd</sup> : November/December 3 <sup>rd</sup> : January/February 4 <sup>th</sup> : March/April
Thesis lab selection (year one)	April 15
Thesis proposal / oral exam (year two)	Oral defense: October 15 Revised proposal: November 15
Departmental practice POE (year two)	Before March 31
University POE (year two)	Before April 30 (within one month of practice POE)
Thesis Advisory Committee Meetings (years three to completion)	Annual
Individual Development Plans (year two to completion)	Annual
Thesis defense	To be determined / Maximum of 7 years



## **APPENDIX IV: PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

### ***Departmental Retreat***

The BMB departmental retreat is usually held in late March or early April. Attendance is required by all PhD students, postdoctoral fellows, and faculty. This retreat allows faculty and students an opportunity to present research accomplishments in an informal setting. Students should contact their faculty advisors for more information regarding the format of the presentations. Details of this retreat are provided in February-March.

### ***BMB PhD Club***

The PhD Club is organized and managed by students with the purpose of promoting awareness of career opportunities within and outside of academia, as well as creating a forum for predoctoral trainees to discuss a broad range of issues pertinent to their success. The club receives guidance from the PhD Club faculty advisor.

### ***BMB Departmental Seminar Series***

The departmental seminar series takes place on Mondays at noon throughout the academic year (September-June). Seminars are given by research scientists from both in and outside of the University who have been selected and invited by Department faculty. A number of speakers each year are also invited by committee of predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees.

### ***BMB Colloquium Series***

The departmental colloquium series takes place once each month (day and time to be announced) throughout the academic year. Each colloquium is hosted by one lab from the training program and features presentations given by trainees in the host lab.

### ***Cancer Biology Journal Club***

The departmental Cancer Biology Journal Club takes place on Fridays at noon throughout the academic year and features presentations of selected research papers given by predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees in the program. An emphasis is placed on review of cancer-relevant research papers, but all topics are discussed.

### ***OPTIONS Career Development Program***

OPTIONS is a series of short workshops walking students through the career preparation process. The program is there to support PhD students in creating an informed and specific career plan, expanding their professional community, and improving their networking skills. Find more information, including the curriculum, at the [OPTIONS page](#).

The manager of the OPTIONS program, Dr. CJ Neely, can provide more information and career support as well. She can be reached at [cj.neely@jhu.edu](mailto:cj.neely@jhu.edu).

### ***BSPH Happy Hour: The Insoluble Fraction***

A student-run (by BMB students) social hour is held each Friday from 4:30-6:00 p.m. in the Student Lounge Court. This is open to all in the school. Beer and soft drinks are sold; pretzels and potato chips are free.

### ***BMB Happy Hour***

A departmental social hour is held the last Wednesday of each month in the McCollum Reading room. Only open to faculty, staff and trainees of BMB.

## **APPENDIX V: PROGRAM FACULTY PRECEPTORS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degree(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Primary Department or Program</b>
Bailey, Scott	PhD	Associate Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Berger, James	PhD	Professor	Biophysics & Biophysical Chemistry
Bibee, Kristin	MD, PhD	Assistant Professor	Dermatology
Cai, Danfeng	PhD	Assistant Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Casero, Robert	PhD	Professor	Cancer Genetics & Epigenetics,
Caterina, Michael	MD, PhD	Professor	Neurosurgery
Culotta, Valeria	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Elisseeff, Jennifer	PhD	Professor	Ophthalmology
Ewald, Andrew	PhD	Professor	Cell Biology
Fertig, Elana	PhD, MS	Associate Professor	Oncology
Gilkes, Daniele	MS, PhD	Assistant Professor	Oncology
Green, Rachel	PhD	Professor	Molecular Biology & Genetics, Biology
Hicks, Stephanie	PhD	Associate Professor	Biostatistics
Jaffee, Elizabeth	MD, PhD	Professor	Oncology
Kavran, Jennifer	PhD	Associate Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Kinzler, Kenneth	PhD	Professor	Oncology
Klein, Sabra	PhD	Professor	Molecular Microbiology & Immunology
Laiho, Marikki	MD, PhD	Professor	Radiation Oncology & Molecular Radiation Sciences
Leung, Anthony	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Liu, Jun	PhD	Professor	Pharmacology
Matunis, Michael	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degree(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Primary Department or Program</b>
Meeker, Alan	PhD	Associate Professor	Pathology
Nayar, Utthara	PhD	Assistant Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Oberdoerffer, Philipp	PhD	Associate Professor	Radiation Oncology
Pearce, Erika	PhD	Professor	Oncology, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Pienta, Kenneth	MD	Professor	Urology
Pomerantz, Joel	PhD	Associate Professor	Biological Chemistry
Prigge, Sean	PhD	Professor	Molecular Microbiology & Immunology
Rebecca, Vito	PhD	Assistant Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Sears, Cynthia	MD	Professor	Medicine
Sharma, Dipali	PhD	Professor	Oncology
Sinnis, Photini	PhD	Professor	Molecular Biology & Immunology
Smith, Kellie	PhD	Assistant Professor	Oncology
Stivers, James	PhD	Professor	Pharm. & Molecular Sciences
Toska, Eneda	PhD	Assistant Professor	Oncology
Velculescu, Victor	MD, PhD	Professor	Oncology/Cancer Biology
Wan, Fengyi	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Wang, Jiou	PhD	Professor	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Weeraratna, Ashi	PhD	Professor and Chair	Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
Wirtz, Denis	PhD	Professor	Chemical Biomolecular Engineering
Wu, Carl	PhD	Professor	Biology, Molecular Biology and Genetics

## **APPENDIX VI: BMB-DIRECTED COURSES**

### **BMB-Directed Courses, 2023-2024 Academic Year**

<b>Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Instructor</b>
120.600	Introduction to Biochemistry: Protein Structure and Enzyme Catalysis	1st	Randy Bryant
120.602	Concepts of Molecular Biology	1st	Scott Bailey/ Anthony Leung
120.620	Fundamentals of Reproductive Biology	1st	Phil Jordan
120.601	Biochemistry II	2nd	Randy Bryant
120.603	Molecular Biology of Pandemic Influenza	2nd	William Wright
120.626	Principles of Cell Biology	2nd	Fengyi Wan
120.608	Gene Editing, therapy and Manipulation	3rd	Scott Bailey
120.613	Nucleic Acid Chemistry	3rd	Randy Bryant
120.622	Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms of Reproduction	3rd	William Wright
120.606	Cellular Stress in Physiology and Disease	4th	Jiou Wang
120.624	Cancer Biology	4th	Jennifer Kavran/ Vito Rebecca
120.605	Genome Integrity	4th	Danfeng Cai/Phil Jordan

## **Appendix VII: REQUIRED FORMS FOR THE PHD PROGRAM**

Current forms will be found at the links listed below. Except where noted, forms should be submitted to through the [BMB PhD Training Program Forms Submission page](#) (JHED login required).

### ***1st year forms***

**Academic Program Milestones Checklist:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- Update prior to registering each term in the first year and beyond

**Rotation evaluation report:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- Required after each rotation
- Signed form must be submitted one week after the end of the rotation

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> year forms***

**Practice POE form:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- Must be signed and dated by members of the practice POE committee
- Submit prior to the official POE

**Preliminary Oral Exam PHD ScD form:** [MyJHSPH Doctoral Candidate Information folder](#)

- Complete after all members of the Committee have agreed on a meeting date and time
- Submit at least one month in advance of proposed defense date

**Research Proposal and Oral Exam Completion Form:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- Completed by most senior faculty member on the committee, excluding the thesis advisor
- Submit at the completion of the exam

**Teaching Assistant Travel Award Form:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- Completed by the student and signed by instructor before sending to the administrative staff
- Submit within a week of the end of the course

### ***Annual Forms***

**Annual Thesis Committee Meeting forms** – Student and Committee: [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#)

- The student form will be completed and emailed to all committee members at least one day in advance of the meeting in addition to uploading the BMB forms submission page
- The committee form will be completed by the chair and signed by all committee members before the end of the meeting
- Student will retain a copy of the Committee form and upload a copy to the BMB forms submission page

**Individual Development Plan:** [BMB PhD Program Forms Library](#); you will receive an updated from each year from IDP program director Val Culotta.

- To be completed by July 1 of each year
- IDP program director Val Culotta will contact students with instructions on completing and

submitting the forms; do not use the PhD program submission link.

***Dissertation and Defense Forms***

**Appointment of Thesis Readers and Final Oral Examination Form:** MyJHSPH Doctoral Candidate Information folder

- Complete after all members of the Committee have agreed on a meeting date and time
- Submit at least one month in advance of proposed defense date

**Dissertation Approval Form:** MyJHSPH Doctoral Candidate Information folder

- Sent by thesis advisor along with the final thesis/dissertation to thesis committee members
- Does not need to be submitted to program