



Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development Program

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/graduate-programs/cell-biology-stem-cells-and-development/home>

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Program Guidelines Disclaimer

The Office of Research Education (ORE) PhD programs are affiliated with the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus Graduate School. The Office of Research Education (ORE) resides within the Office of Medical Education (OME) within the School of Medicine (SOM). ORE serves as the administrative home for 1 umbrella-admitting program, Biomedical Sciences (BMSC), and 12 PhD granting programs. As affiliated-programs, ORE PhD programs must comply with the Policies and Procedures of the CU Anschutz Graduate School.

As a member of the CSD PhD Program, you are expected to adhere to all established policies and procedures of the University, the Office of Research Education, the Graduate School and this PhD Program.

CU Anschutz – University Policies <https://catalog.ucdenver.edu/cu-anschutz/university-policies/>

Office of Research Education <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/ore/forms-and-resources>

Graduate School <https://graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu/forms-resources/resources>

For any policies, please make sure to review the [Graduate School Policies and Procedures](#).

This handbook does not constitute a contract with the University of Colorado School of Medicine Office of Research Education or the Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development Graduate Program, either expressed or implied. The Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development Graduate Program reserves the right at any time to change, delete, or add to any of the provisions at its sole discretion. Furthermore, the Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development Program designs the provisions of this document to serve as firm guidelines rather than absolute rules, and exceptions may be made based on extenuating circumstances.

Program Overview

I. Mission

In the **Cell Biology, Stem Cells, and Development (CSD)** PhD program, we empower the next generation of scientists to investigate fundamental biological questions ranging from the basic mechanisms governing cell and developmental biology to innovative, translational applications of stem cell research. Driven by curiosity and resilience, our students utilize rigorous, hypothesis-driven experimental approaches and cutting-edge technologies to push the boundaries of biomedical science.

We are deeply committed to cultivating a collaborative, inclusive environment that stimulates intellectual independence while fostering a profound sense of belonging, integrity, and resourcefulness. Central to our mission is the belief that every student deserves a platform to thrive. We intentionally structure our program to provide robust, continuous opportunities for meaningful engagement, connecting students directly with faculty through research talks, constructive feedback loops, and intensive grant-writing mentorship. By balancing rigorous professional skill-building with a supportive professional community, the CSD program ensures that every student has the resources, mentorship, and platform necessary to showcase their unique insights and evolve into dedicated, authentic scientific leaders.

Program/Student Learning Outcomes: The CSD Program trains graduate students to become proficient and successful investigators who are able to:

1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of central concepts in the biomedical sciences.
2. Understand the current concepts in Cell Biology, Stem Cell Biology and Development.
3. Read and critically evaluate the scientific literature.
4. Formulate hypotheses based on current concepts in the field and design, conduct, and interpret their own research projects.
5. Present research results in peer-reviewed publications and in a dissertation.
6. Communicate research results effectively through oral presentations at scientific seminars, conferences, and other venues.
7. Write a competitive application for research funding.
8. Develop ancillary skills, where necessary, to obtain positions outside of scientific research.

The Program's emphasis is on the definition and resolution of biological problems rather than the application of technologies. Thematically, the program is focused on cell, stem cells and developmental biology and offers a wide range of research opportunities. The nature of this program will best serve those students who are interested in developing independent research careers and who wish to pursue problems in biomedical science from an interdisciplinary perspective. After the initial period of coursework, students choose their specialty fields from a diverse list of topics and proceed with research until the generation and defense of a thesis leads to the award of a Ph.D. in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development.

Student Support

At present, students accepted in the Ph.D. program are provided full tuition, health insurance, and a stipend of \$43,000 per year for living expenses (for the academic year 2026-27). Continued support is contingent upon satisfactory academic and research performance by the student. When a student enters a thesis lab, the thesis mentor assumes complete responsibility for the student's stipend, tuition, fees, and associated research costs. To qualify for in-state tuition for the following year, all out-of-state students must establish Colorado residency by the end of summer of the first year. See the Registrar's website for complete details:

<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/registrar>

Student Advising

During the first and second year, CSD students will meet with members of the Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) on a rotating basis to discuss the student's progress in the CSD Program and any questions that may come up. Students will be expected and encouraged to seek advice from the GAC, Director, and/or other CSD faculty and student members prior to lab rotations, Comprehensive Examination, and any other situation requiring faculty consultation.

Transfer Credits

Please see the Graduate School's "Policies & Procedures Guide" for information about transferring credits towards your degree with the Cell Biology, Stem Cells & Development PhD program. That guide is available on the Graduate School website under the "Resources" tab: <https://graduateschool.ucdenver.edu/forms-resources>

Office of Research Education Contacts

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University of Colorado School of Medicine

Graduate Program in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development

Fitzsimons Building

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Office of Research Education (located in the Fitzsimons Building, 5th Floor West, Suite W5107)

Angie Ribera: Associate Dean of Research Education, angie.ribera@cuanschutz.edu

- Point of contact for faculty, program, and organizational concerns and planning

Jodi Cropper: Business Services Program Director, jodi.cropper@cuanschutz.edu

- Point of contact for financial and organizational planning concerns and coordination

Morgan Texeira: Program Manager, morgan.teixeira@cuanschutz.edu

- Point of contact for program specific concerns, additional point of contact for Program Administrators, ODAI, 8990 grades, and criminal background checks

Miriam Venzor: Academic Services Coordinator, miriam.venzor@cuanschutz.edu

- Point of contact for general administrative concerns, event planning and meeting scheduling

BSP & MSTP Requirements

Students transferring to CSD from the Biomedical Sciences (BSP) or Medical Scientist Training (MSTP) programs may have different credit/course requirements (see appendix 1). Applications for transfer will be evaluated based on thesis lab availability, transcripts, and performance on the preliminary exam and in rotation labs. It is important to understand that transfer from either program into the CSD PhD program depends on a CSD faculty member agreeing to accept the student into her/his lab for their thesis work.

MSTP Students should enter a thesis lab with 27-33 graduate credits, including graduate core. They have also completed/will complete the MSTP Preliminary Course focused on grant writing in Spring term of their transfer year. This course covers F31 grants, but also F30 grants which are specific to dual-degree trainees. The MSTP administration will review student transcripts with the PhD Program Administrator at time of transfer and will confirm that all expected graduate credits have been posted for program review and evaluation.

MSTP students have already selected and been accepted into a thesis lab within the selected PhD program. They will enter the program under this lab's support immediately upon transfer and should not incur charges to the PhD program at any point in training absent the need for gap funding/support. As such please consider this transfer to be equivalent to a second year PhD student. Time to degree is a very important metric for the NIH and the program's T32 grant. MSTPs are expected to complete their PhD training within four years of entering lab. Of course, mitigating circumstances can occur. The MSTP Administration should be alerted to any significant progress concerns which may impact a student's ability to graduate within the expected time frame. This can be accomplished by meeting, email, or committee meeting notes as appropriate.

- MSTP students should contact MSTP Administration to obtain the program specific lab mentor agreement to review lab mentor responsibilities, curriculum requirements and other expectations related to the research portion of training. **MSTP students must have thesis committee meetings every 6 months** regardless of their PhD program. Each MSTP student's thesis committee should have a faculty member representing MSTP. Students should discuss MSTP faculty representation with the Director or Associate Program Director to identify suitable candidates.
- Throughout the Thesis stage of training, MSTPs are required to register for the *Longitudinal Foundations of Doctoring* (FOD) course in 2 terms annually (Fall and Spring). They will enroll into the *Capstone Return-to-Clinics* course in their last year of thesis training, replacing FOD in the spring term. The MSTP mentor is responsible for covering the costs for these courses and agrees to this as part of the MSTP-specific mentor letter.

Curriculum Overview

Registration Process

- [Academic Calendars](#) (see The Graduate School calendar)
- [Register for Classes](#) (see The Graduate School)

- All basic science PhD students must register in a minimum of 5 credits (fall and spring semesters), 1 credit of 8990 (summer semester), and anything above the minimum credit level will need approval from faculty mentor.
- First year students, BSP and MSTP students should work with their program directors, program administrators, and faculty mentors as there will be additional credit requirements associated with their progress in the program.
- The paying of tuition, fees and student health insurance occurs the week following the deadline for semester add/drop period, which can be found on the [academic calendar](#) . The Program Administrator will complete the process of submitting the appropriate form to the Bursar's Office. For those students receiving financial aid, please work with the Program Administrator to avoid any disruption in aid awarding.

Year 1

COURSEWORK & LABORATORY ROTATIONS

Fall Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Foundations in Biomedical Science	BMSC 7806	6
Core Topics in Biomedical Sciences – A “Stem Cell Biology to Regenerative Medicine”	BMSC 7810 - 05	2
Core Topics in Biomedical Sciences – B “Introduction to Animal Models and Experiments in Developmental Biology”	BMSC 7810 - 09	2
Rotation 1	CSDV 7650 (001)	1
Rotation 2	CSDV 7650 (002)	1
Spring Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits

Stem Cells and Development: An Integrated Approach	CSDV 7605	3
Critical Analysis of Research in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development	CSDV 7606	4
Rotation 3	CSDV 7650 (001)	1
Summer Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Doctoral Thesis	CSDV 8990	1

Rotations

Rotations serve several important purposes. First, they enable the student to explore and compare several areas of cell and developmental biology research and aid in the choice of a mentor and project for thesis work. Second, rotation seminars provide intense training in the craft and art of public presentation, an essential aspect of future career success. Third, they allow program faculty to evaluate the motivation and intellectual preparedness of students to undertake independent research

Students must perform 3 rotations before the start of their second year. Students should start their first rotation in the fall semester. Students must complete 3 rotations in 3 separate laboratories to advance to their second year. Register for the first 2 rotations (Sections 1 & 2) in the fall; register for your 3rd rotation (Section 3) in the spring. Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) students must complete two rotations (during the summers of the first and second year of Medical School. Under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the GAC, a student may be allowed to perform an additional rotation during the summer following the first academic year, for the express purpose of enhancing the mentor selection process. CSD will make every effort to assist a student in finding a suitable thesis advisor.

Identifying Rotation Mentors

CSD seeks to maintain a training environment that is supportive, rigorous and aligned with the mission of the program. All CSD training faculty are eligible to serve as rotation mentors; however, opportunities in each lab may be limited by space, funds, etc. Faculty complete an annual survey to indicate rotation availability in their labs, and the Program Administrator maintains a list of faculty who are taking rotation students. Students should discuss their interests with several potential faculty mentors, several weeks or more before the start of the rotation.

The program strongly discourages rotations with mentors who are not training faculty in CSD. Such rotations will only be allowed if the faculty member has already applied to become training faculty in CSD, and the rotation is approved by the GAC chair and the Program Director.

Rotation Expectations

For professionals in training, it is not appropriate to require a minimum number of hours for rotation work. Strong self-motivation is an absolutely essential characteristic for an independent scientist, and we expect our students to demonstrate this quality throughout their training. In this regard, students should expect to be in the lab beyond the normal working hours, i.e. evenings, weekends, and possibly over vacation days during the term. This commitment of time is especially important when long, complex experiments are being done. A major part of the mentor's rotational assessment (as well as their willingness to accept a student) will be based on the degree and quality of lab effort. Students should always discuss time off and/or vacation days with their lab mentor in advance, both in their lab rotations and once they enter a thesis lab.

A short, written evaluation of the student's rotation will be provided by the faculty mentor. Students are required to give an oral presentation of their rotation progress. After completing the requirements, rotation grades will be assigned by the first-year advisor in consultation with the rotation mentor and discussed with the student. For core guidelines and expectations for mentors during graduate student rotations see Appendix 9.

Rotation Seminar

At the end of each rotation the student will present a seminar. The purpose of the seminar is to provide intense training in the craft and art of public presentation, an essential aspect of future career success. Each seminar should be approximately 15 minutes in length (12 minute talk + 3 minutes for questions). The student must rehearse the seminar with their rotation mentor prior to the public presentation. The seminar is an essential component of the research rotation. Students are expected to present a well-organized, clear, and thoughtful seminar. Students should consider the following elements when designing their presentation (although the order need not be strictly followed):

Introduction - a short statement of the question or problem addressed by the rotation, and the hypothesis to be tested.

Background - describe the significance of the question in broad terms for a diverse audience. Describe previous work and its relationship to the project.

Specific experimental aims - what were the particular experimental goals proposed to test the hypothesis?

Methods and Design - explain briefly any unusual strategies or techniques employed.

Results – negative and positive results should be reported

Conclusions and future directions – what can you conclude from your results, and what would you pursue if you remained on the project?

ORE Milestone Rotation Request form to be used when first year students have identified their rotation mentor. Please follow Program specific guidelines, including the submission deadline. Three forms will be submitted throughout the academic year.

ROTATION SCHEDULE FOR 2026-2027:

Fall 1st Rotation: August 31, 2026 - November 20, 2026

Fall 2nd Rotation: November 23, 2026 - February 26, 2027

Spring 3rd Rotation: March 1, 2027 – May 21, 2027

Suggestions for Effective Seminars

1. Avoid reading or memorizing your presentation “word-for-word”. Wooden, canned deliveries are dull and very hard for audiences to follow.
2. Prepare and use simple, effective visual aids. Remember that effective communication of data and ideas is your goal! Do not spend undue effort and expense on fancy multicolored slides (especially for text), if color is not required to simplify complex data or concepts. Colored visuals tend to require a darkened room and are often much harder to read than black on white line drawings or letters. Keep text very brief and do not read directly from the screen (audiences are much faster at reading silently!).
3. Use the marker board when appropriate. Diagramming or outlining while you are talking is a highly effective means of explaining concepts difficult to describe with the spoken word. Use of the marker board can also help answer spontaneous questions from the audience.
4. Consider audience questions carefully! Both faculty and students are encouraged to ask questions during and after rotation seminars. A few of these questions may be intended to probe your understanding of your research rather than illuminate an area of confusion. Part of your evaluation will concern your effectiveness in responding to questions. Thus, make sure that you understand the question before answering. Repeat the question or ask for a rephrasing if you need to. Second, relax and take a moment of silence if you must before answering to formulate a coherent answer. Third, if after contemplation you don’t know the answer, don’t be afraid to say so. We all get stumped from time to time!

For more guidance on effective seminars, students are strongly encouraged to attend a workshop on “How to Give a Scientific Talk” which will be run by Dr. Jeff Moore during the Fall semester.

Transfer to Thesis Lab

- An important aim of the rotations is to enable the student to obtain a thesis mentor. After the completion of the three rotations for regular graduate students or two rotations for MSTPs, the student must come to a mutual agreement with a faculty member to act as their thesis mentor. The chair of the GAC and the Program Administrator must be notified on the choice of mentor on or before June 1st of the first year. Official transfer to the thesis lab takes place on July 1st. Under exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the GAC, a student

may be allowed to perform an additional rotation during the summer following the first academic year, for the express purpose of enhancing the mentor selection process.

- [Predoc Financial Support Agreement](#) for those faculty mentors who choose to take on a new predoctoral mentee.
- **MSTP Specific:** Please work with MSTP Administration and PhD Program Administration to complete the required mentorship agreement for transitioning into a lab.

Residency

- Per University policy, it is required that students begin the process of establishing their residency as soon as they accept their offer to join the PhD program. This process must be started promptly to ensure you meet the necessary deadlines by the end of your first year. For more information, please visit the Registrar's website – [Residency](#)

Applying for the Genetics of Development, Disease and Regeneration (GDDR) T32 Training Program

- CSD students entering their 2nd or 3rd year of training are encouraged to apply for the GDDR T32 training program. The application period will open in July of each year and selections will be announced by the end of August. For more information on program eligibility and selection process, please refer to Appendix 3.

Year 2

The fall and the spring semesters must each total at least 5 units. Students who are considering enrolling in more than 5 credit hours in either of these semesters should first discuss their enrollment with their faculty advisor, as the faculty advisor will be responsible for the additional expenses incurred. Once you have approval from your faculty mentor to take more than 5 credits, forward the email approval to the Program Administrator.

Fall Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Research (Pre-Comps)	CSDV 7650-0V1	1-5
Responsible Conduct in Research	BMSC 7811	1
Informatics and Statistics for Molecular Biology OR Biostatistics	MOLB 7950 OR BMSC7820	3
Spring Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits

Research (Post-Comps)	CSDV 8990	1-5 (variable)
Advanced Topics Discussion (Journal Club)	CSDV 7000	1
Summer Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Doctoral Thesis	CSDV 8990	1

All CSD students are required to complete a course in statistics by the end of the fourth year; however, it is recommended that students complete this requirement during year two since training in statistics will be important for success in their thesis projects. Two options exist to meet this requirement (see below). MOLB7950 and BMSC7820 are both offered in the fall semester. CSD students are strongly encouraged to take either of these courses during their second year and review the course syllabi with their mentors to identify the course that better aligns with their training plans. Students who have already completed a similar course or have identified a different course they would like to take may request an exemption from the Program Director. If the exemption is granted, the student must forward that confirmation to the Program Administrator.

Research Update Talks

- Required to attend in-person seminars
- Wednesdays, 12pm weekly in Hensel Phelps East Auditorium
- Beginning in the second year, each student is required to give an annual update presentation to the program. The first update should be before May 31 of the 2nd year, and is scheduled prior to or at the beginning of the academic year. The Program administrator will reach out to you to schedule your presentation. We also recommend that you form a committee and have one pre-comprehensive exam meeting at the time of your first update seminar. To schedule a committee meeting, you will need to be sure all your members can attend, and coordinating faculty schedules can be challenging. Again, we want to emphasize that arranging this update is your responsibility, and urge you to make plans with your committee.

Comprehensive Exam

At the beginning of the second year of study CSD graduate students will begin preparing for the Comprehensive Exam. It is highly recommended that the student carefully read the Graduate School Policies & Procedures guide on Comprehensive Examination policies and deadlines and check the instructions and forms from the Graduate School website well ahead of the planned examination so all required paperwork can be completed on time. Completed paperwork must be submitted to the Program Administrator no later than one month prior to the examination date: <https://graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu/forms-resources/resources>

Note: A student must be registered at the time they take the Comprehensive Examination. Please see the Examinations and Evaluations section on page 14

Applying for fellowships

All students are encouraged to apply for fellowship support from outside agencies, e.g. NIH, NSF, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, March of Dimes, American Heart Association, etc. Many students work with their mentor to edit their completed comprehensive exam proposal, which utilizes a NIH F31 NRSA predoctoral fellowship format, for submission to external funding agencies. Students can prepare and submit a fellowship application prior to the comprehensive exam and are encouraged to do so. If students submit a predoctoral fellowship prior to the comprehensive exam, students can adapt a submitted fellowship application for use in the comprehensive exam written document. The plan to adapt the fellowship in this way must be communicated to the exam committee and CSD program director **at least one month before** the comprehensive exam.

Year 3+

- Minimum registration requirement for full-time graduate students is 5 credits. Anything above 5 credits must be approved by faculty mentor.
- Students defending in the current semester must register for 5 credits of CSDV 8990. If a student is defending between semester dates as defined by the Academic Calendar, the student must register for 5 credits of CSDV 8990 in the proceeding semester of the scheduled defense date.
- Comprehensive exam **must** be taken by December of Year 3. Students are not required to have 30 didactic credits to be eligible to schedule their Comprehensive exam. However, students are required to complete 30 didactic credits in addition to 30 CSDV 8990 research credits prior to graduating, so most students will complete 27-30 didactic credits prior to scheduling their Comprehensive exam. If you are unsure whether to register for 7650 or 8990 credits, contact your Program Administrator.
- Students are required to take at least one elective or advanced topics course each year during years 3-5. Options include CSDV7000, CSDV7100, CSDV7680, and courses listed in appendix 1. If a student would like to satisfy this requirement by taking another course, which is not listed on Appendix 1, they must receive approval from the Program Director and the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

Fall Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Doctoral Thesis	CSDV 7650 (pre-comps) CSDV 8990	1-5 (variable)

Electives (if applicable)		Variable
Spring Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Doctoral Thesis	CSDV 8990	1-5 (variable)
Electives (if applicable)		Variable
Summer Semester		
Course Title	Registration Information	Credits
Doctoral Thesis	CSDV 8990	1

Research Update Talks

- Required to attend in-person seminars
- Wednesdays, 12pm weekly in Hensel Phelps East Auditorium

Students in their 4th year are required to give a talk at the CSD program retreat. Students in their 5th year and beyond are required to give an annual update presentation to the program. Students who will defend their thesis in the current academic year are not required to give an annual update talk that year. Update talks are scheduled prior to or at the beginning of the academic year. The Program administrator will reach out to you to schedule your presentation. Again, we want to emphasize that arranging this update is your responsibility, and urge you to make plans with your committee, and schedule your presentation with the program administrator well in advance.

Thesis Committee meetings

Students are required to meet at least once each year with the thesis committee, but more frequent meetings (e.g., every 6-9 months) are encouraged and can be scheduled at the discretion of the student or thesis committee. The candidate should provide the program with a 20-30 minute talk as well as a brief written summary of the progress made on the stated aims given to the committee at least one week prior to the meeting. A template for the progress report is provided in Appendix 5 of this handbook. Prior to the meeting, the student must fill out a Thesis Committee Meeting Form and enter in the Future Meeting Date field on the form the date of the upcoming committee meeting. Following the meeting, the committee chair will receive an email prompting them to fill out and submit a Thesis Meeting Assessment that includes the following:

- Numerical rating (scale of 1-3) of student's performance in areas of research progress, evaluation of literature, program concepts, conducting research and oral communication.
- Description of accomplishments since the previous meeting.
- Description of any concerns from the committee.
- Recommended goals to be accomplished by the student for the next meeting.

After the chair submits the assessment, the rest of the committee will receive an email prompting them to read the assessment and provide any additional comments to the chair. The chair will then have 3 weeks to edit the form before a copy is sent to the student.

Examinations and Evaluations

Preliminary Exam

- Every first-year student takes the Preliminary Qualifying Exam at the end of the first year of graduate school. BSP students that plan to join CSD will take the program's preliminary exam.
- MSTP trainees transferring into CSD during year 3 of their training will complete an MSTP specific preliminary exam prior to program transfer; this is accepted as an equivalent to the CSD preliminary exam.

CSD Preliminary Exam Guidelines

All CSD students will complete the Preliminary Exam at the end of their first year of coursework. This exam typically takes place in the third week of June. Four weeks before the exam, students will be provided research topics from each of the Preliminary Exam Committee faculty members. This committee typically has four or five faculty members and will thus provide four or five topics that students can choose from for their Preliminary Exams. Each member will provide 2-3 scientific papers as guidance for completing the Preliminary Exam on their topic.

Each student will choose one of the five topics for their Preliminary Exam. A student may not choose the topic of a faculty member for whose lab they anticipate joining. Students should avoid picking a topic given by any faculty member that they rotated with as well. The Preliminary Exam consists of a NIH F31-style grant proposal followed by an oral defense of their written document. The written proposal is due one week prior to the oral exam date – this is a firm deadline and extensions will not be provided. The proposal will follow the standard F31 format: one page for the Specific Aims and up to six pages for the Research Strategy.

Before the written portion of the exam is submitted, students **may not** receive help from their advisor, non-exam committee faculty members, postdocs, or more senior students. The first-year students may discuss topics and ideas amongst themselves but *must* write proposals on their own. Students are allowed and encouraged to reach out to any of the exam committee faculty members, *preferably the one whose topic the student is pursuing*, with questions about their proposals. This helps to ensure that the proper level of assistance is given to each student.

Only after submitting their proposals to the exam committee, students may send their proposals to other students from whom they would like to get feedback. Additionally,

students are **strongly encouraged to host and participate in a Mock Oral Exam** with the more experienced students in the program. This event provides an excellent opportunity to get helpful tips from more senior students and to practice answering questions related to their written proposals.

Students will be evaluated based on the preliminary exam rubric; see Appendix 2. The exam is designed to test each student's understanding of key concepts and ability to think through experimental design, both of which are important for research in biomedical sciences, with a focus on development, cell biology and stem cell biology. While the main focus of the questions will be related to the written proposal, students should expect questions outside the immediate scope of written proposal. All questions, however, will be limited to the material that the student was exposed to during courses and rotations that they had within the first year of a graduate program.

After each exam, the exam committee will deliberate and come to a consensus score in each of the 4 areas described in the rubric. Those scores, along with any comments, will be provided to each student at the end of the exam day. If a student scores a 1 in any area of the rubric, that will trigger a need for remediation in that area. If a remediation is needed, it will be individually tailored to that area and each student's needs. Regardless of how the remediation is structured, it must be completed within one month of being assigned. **Students performing Preliminary Exam Remediations should not be allowed outside assistance except as outlined in the remediation instructions provided by the Preliminary Exam Committee.** Students are encouraged to reach out to the Preliminary exam committee faculty for help interpreting and understanding the remediation instructions.

Comprehensive Exam

- [App Candidacy form](#)
- [Exam request form](#)

Important: Once a date has been set with your Advisory Committee, you must contact your Program Administrator to initiate forms. You will also discuss room bookings at this time. All forms must be submitted to the Administrator at least a month prior to the exam date.

- As you prepare for your Comprehensive Exam, please ensure that all your committee members have a faculty appointment listed in the [Graduate School Faculty Directory](#).
- All forms are found in the Graduate School website under the "Forms" section.
 - [Graduate School - Resources & Forms - CU Anschutz](#)

At the beginning of the second year of study CSD graduate students will begin preparing for the Comprehensive Exam. It is highly recommended that the student carefully read the Graduate School Policies & Procedures guide on Comprehensive Examination policies and deadlines, and check the instructions and forms from the Graduate School website well ahead of the planned examination so all required paperwork can be completed on time. Completed paperwork must

be submitted to the Program Administrator no later than one month prior to the examination date: (<https://graduateschool.cuanschutz.edu/forms-resources/resources>).

Note: A student must be registered at the time they take the Comprehensive Examination.

Application to the Graduate School for Admission to Candidacy

Applications must be completed no later than one month before the exam. The *Application for Candidacy* form and the *Exam Request* form are available from the Graduate School and must be approved by the Program Director and returned to the Program Administrator. The date of the Comprehensive examination and the composition of the committee must be registered with the Graduate School. The student is NOT required to have completed a minimum of 30 didactic credit hours to be eligible to schedule the exam. However, students will need 30 didactic credits to eventually graduate; Pass/Fail classes and CSDV 8990 credits do not count toward the 30 credit minimum to graduate.

Students must take the Comprehensive Examination for admission to candidacy for the CSD Ph.D. **as early as the start of their second year and no later than December 31st of their third year.** Any deviation to this requirement must have approval from the PI, Graduate Advisory Committee, and the Program Director. The Comprehensive Examination Committee shall consist of a minimum of five Graduate Faculty members. At least one of the members must be outside the Program's core training faculty. Outside members are faculty who are not currently training or non-training faculty in CSD, which can include faculty at CU AMC or faculty from another campus or institution. The thesis advisor may not serve as a member of the Comprehensive Exam Committee. The majority of the members, including the chair, must be from the training faculty of the CSD Program. Students should contact members of the Graduate Faculty whom they wish to be on their committee, in consultation with the Director of the Program and their thesis advisor. Students should inform the committee members of their background, the topic of their thesis research and their preliminary results. In addition, the student arranges the time and location of the exam, and informs the members of the committee that the examination requires three hours. The student should provide the names of the committee members to the GAC, and also submit to the Program Administrator; additional paperwork may be required for outside committee members.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their committee members prior to the exam to discuss the plans for the exam and subject areas each member expects the student to have mastered.

Comprehensive Exam Goals

- The exam process is intended to help students advance their scientific and communication skills. Think journey rather than destination.

- The exam process is meant to help students focus their thesis work, increase their knowledge of CSD topics, and improve their productivity in the lab. The exam is not meant to be punitive.
- Another goal of the exam is to prepare students for future scenarios that require public speaking and “chalk talk” style defense of their data and ideas.

Comprehensive Exam Guidelines:

1. The exam should be completed by December 31st of the student’s third year in the program.

2. The written exam follows the formatting guidelines of a F31 NRSA application:

Title	
Short Introduction and Specific Aims	1.0 page
Research Strategy	6.0 pages
<i>Significance and Background</i>	
<i>Any preliminary data</i>	
<i>Experimental Design & Methods</i>	
<i>Expected Results & Interpretation</i>	
<i>Alternative approaches</i>	

Total	7.0 pages
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Literature citations are additional to the 7 pages. Full references with titles are required.

The written proposal **must** be given to all members of the committee **at least two weeks before** the comprehensive exam.

3. The public seminar should be 25-30 minutes with questions. The talk will be open to the university community. After the talk, questions from those in attendance will be requested. After the questions have been addressed, all but the graduate faculty on the Comprehensive Examination Committee will be requested to leave.

4. Examiners will be provided with the student’s preliminary exam results to determine training progression. Examiners should ask questions that evaluate the criteria present in the four-area scoring rubric (see Appendix 4). The exam chairperson is responsible for keeping the questioning focused.

5. Examiners should consider the stage of the student when scoring. A “4” is a strong performance score for the level, not a perfect one.

6. A passing exam will have scores of 3 or 4 in each area. The exam score in each area is based on the collective consensus opinion of the examining committee. Thus, only one report will be generated with a single score in each area.
7. A score of 1 or 2 in any area requires remediation. This does not indicate a failed exam. Instead, additional conditions need to be met to satisfy the exam requirements. This involves completing a remediation plan (below). The intent of remediation is to improve the student's skills and knowledge. It is not meant to be punitive.
8. Remediation plans will be given to the student in writing. Remediation plans should be focused, completable in ≤ 6 weeks, and be designed to specifically improve the area(s) of deficiency. A revised rubric will then be completed to reflect the outcome of the remediation.
9. If remediation is unsuccessful, the exam is then considered a "fail".
10. The completed comprehensive exam rubric, including the scores and comments, will be uploaded to the student's permanent record by the exam chairperson. In the case of a remediation, the remediation plan and both the original and revised rubrics will be uploaded to the record.
11. The mentor acts as an observer during the exam. They do not provide or determine scoring. The mentor is permitted to answer questions from the examining committee about the student's aptitude and performance in the lab.

Possible Results

Pass (no conditions)

Conditional Pass (conditions must be detailed)

Fail (the student must leave the graduate program)

NOTE:	After passing the comprehensive exam, all PhD students are required to register for Doctoral Thesis CSDV 8990 (instead of CSDV 7650 section 0V1) each fall and each spring. Failure to do so can result in the student being required to retake the comprehensive exam. A student may register for up to 10 units of CSDV 8990 in the semesters before and the semester in which the comprehensive exam is taken and passed.
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Thesis Defense

Final defense of the thesis/dissertation must be completed by Graduate School deadlines.

- [Biosketch Form](#)
 - ☐ This is a graduate school form, not the NIH form
- [Exam Request](#)
- [Thesis Approval form](#)
- ProQuest [General Information for Submitting Dissertation & Thesis](#) page 13 on Graduate School website
- [Watch](#) how to prepare the correct forms and upload your dissertation.
- AI Policies Guidelines for writing the Thesis.
- If defending after the semester ends you must register for 5 credits of 8990 in the proceeding semester. (Thesis defenses must be tied to the end of the semester deadlines dates please see the links below)

After passing the Comprehensive Examination, the student enters Ph.D. candidacy. During the following years the students perform research towards a thesis defense. Students must give annual reports on the progress of their thesis research to the CSD faculty in the form of 30-minute seminars, and meet at least annually with their Thesis Committee. The Chair of the Thesis Committee will submit a report of the meeting and any resulting recommendations using the online evaluation system provided by the Graduate School (<https://gs.ucdenver.edu/gaia/splash.php>).

Upon completion of a body of original research that constitutes a significant contribution of new knowledge to the field of cell, developmental or stem cell biology, students will write a Ph.D. thesis containing this information, and defend this document at an oral examination scheduled by the Graduate School. Check with the Graduate School for current deadlines, thesis format requirements and required paperwork prior to writing the thesis and scheduling the defense.

1. Guidelines

All doctoral students are required to submit a thesis (or dissertation) to the Graduate School as partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The form and scope of this thesis is determined by the student, the thesis advisor, the Advisory Committee, and the Program. The thesis should be based upon original investigation and showing mature scholarship and critical judgment as well as familiarity with tools and methods of research. It must be essentially approved by the examining committee before the final examination can be taken.

The Graduate Program in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development amplifies the definition of the thesis as follows:

The successful thesis presents a problem-orientated, original and substantive investigation. The methodology and results contained in the thesis must be conclusive and of quality. The standards are to be those maintained by quality, peer-reviewed scientific journals. It is the expectation of the program that the student have 1 or more first author publications submitted prior to the thesis defense.

2. Thesis Committee

Once a student is admitted to candidacy, they should establish a Thesis Committee with the advice of the thesis advisor and the Director of the Graduate Program. The committee need not be the same as the Comprehensive Exam Committee but should be composed of five Graduate Faculty members; at least one member must be outside the program and the majority from within the program. The thesis advisor is a voting member of this committee. One faculty member of the program should be selected to serve as a chair of the Thesis Committee. This committee can be the same as the Comprehensive Exam Committee.

Please review the ORE Policy on Conflict of Interest and Undue Influence for Thesis Committees here: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/ore/forms-and-resources>

3. Graduate Advisor

The Chair of the Thesis Committee serves as the advisor to the student and will monitor their progress. The Chair must be a member of the Program. It cannot be emphasized enough, however, that each student is responsible for their own progress.

4. Guidelines for Supervision of Thesis Work

1. Because all students present their work each year, all Graduate Faculty should follow the progress of all students. When concerns arise they should be discussed immediately with the student, the Thesis Advisor and/or the student's Thesis Committee.
2. Students are encouraged to meet every six months, but must meet at least once a year, with their Thesis Committees. Students must submit a written update on their progress to the Committee at least one week before the Committee meeting (see template in Appendix 5). Students are encouraged to schedule their committee meeting soon after their yearly update talk. The Chair of the Committee will file an evaluation and summary of the meeting and recommendations of the thesis Committee using the online student assessment portal provided by the Graduate School. The meetings should be documented (date of meeting, items discussed, committee recommendations, list of attendees, signatures of the student and committee chairperson) and a copy provided to the Program Administrator for inclusion into the student's file. The Thesis Committee can recommend more frequent meetings when the members feel more careful monitoring is warranted.
3. When the student and their thesis advisor agree the work for the thesis has been completed, the student must meet with the Thesis Committee and receive formal approval to begin writing the thesis.

5. Preparation of Thesis and Thesis Defense

1. [Watch the Graduate School's instructional video](#) on how to format your thesis.
2. The Thesis Committee must formally approve the written thesis before the final examination can be taken. Written PhD thesis approval from the chair of the Thesis

Committee is required prior to scheduling of the thesis defense with the Graduate School. The Thesis Approval Form may be obtained from the program administrator. Furthermore, the thesis advisor must find the thesis acceptable prior to submission to the rest of the committee. It is inexcusable for everyone concerned if the student reaches the point of their PhD thesis defense and encounters major difficulties with the thesis.

3. In addition to completing the thesis document, prior to the defense of the thesis, each CSD student must submit a minimum of one original research manuscript for publication in order to receive the PhD. The paper must be first-authored by the student, and represent a component of the student's overall thesis work. Second or middle authorship or authorship of a review article or chapter does not meet this requirement.
4. Arrangements for the thesis defense must be made with the Graduate School office at least one month in advance. Check the Graduate School's "Defense and Graduation Deadlines" form for relevant deadlines for paperwork submission, dissertation defense, and more. The student must be registered for a minimum of 5 credits of CSDV 8990 at the time of the thesis defense (including during a summer semester). In addition, a copy of the thesis must be given to the Thesis Committee at least two weeks before the defense, and this copy must be signed by the student's faculty mentor indicating the mentor's approval of the document.
5. The thesis defense is the final examination of the thesis and related topics. It includes an oral examination of the salient points of the research, its conclusions and its integration with the rest of the field. The oral examination will be conducted by the Thesis Committee and only members of the Graduate Faculty may be present. The final decision regarding the result of the thesis defense is made by the Committee.
6. All corrections to the written thesis required by the Thesis Committee must be completed within thirty days from the date of the thesis defense. The signed, written document must be submitted to the Graduate School at that time.
7. The student must receive affirmative votes from the majority of the committee. The examination may be attempted only once. Disqualification of the thesis examination results in dismissal from the Graduate Program without a degree.

You can find all forms for the comprehensive exam and thesis defense on the Graduate School website under the "Forms" section.

- [Graduate School - Resources & Forms - CU Anschutz](#)

Thesis Defense Resources and Dissertation Guidelines

- [Thesis & Dissertation/ProQuest Format & Guidelines](#)
- [Graduate School Deadlines, Forms, Policies](#)

Policies and Procedures

CSD Obligations, AI Policy & Record Keeping

A. Attendance. All graduate students are **required** to attend the weekly Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development (CSD) seminars (usually, but not always, held on Wednesdays at noon) and specialized research forums. These seminars are a mixture of talks by invited speakers and research reports from the faculty, students and postdoctoral fellows in laboratories of the Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development Program faculty.

All graduate students are **required** to attend post-rotational seminars, comprehensive examinations, student update presentations, and Thesis Defense Seminars given by CSD program students.

All notebooks, original data and reagents from rotational and thesis work are the property of the advisor and must be left with the advisor at the completion of the work.

It is the student's responsibility to register for courses in a timely manner – all late fees and finance charges will be the responsibility of the student.

B. Colorado Residency. First-year students who are domestic students must obtain a Colorado Driver's License at the time of arrival at the University of Colorado School of Medicine to begin the process of establishing Colorado residency. If residency has not been established by the beginning of the second year, the student is responsible for the non-resident portion of tuition that exceeds the resident assessment. The paperwork for establishing Colorado Residency must be filed with the Registrar prior to second year registration. Please check the Registrar's website for full details: <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/registrar>

C. Guidelines for the Use of AI and Machine Learning Tools in CSD Courses

Advances in generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) language models have created tools with potential to enhance scientific writing, including accelerating the writing process and reducing barriers to non-native English speakers. However, these tools also come with major pitfalls, including falsified or inaccurate information, breaches of confidentiality, and plagiarism issues. Importantly, improper use of AI tools has the potential to undermine the learning objectives of coursework and create inappropriate advantages for some students over others.

This policy establishes a simple set of guidelines for acceptable and unacceptable use of AI language model tools in CSD courses. Our goal is to promote acceptable use of new technology while maintaining our overall goals and standards for training. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in course failure. Any questions regarding this policy and its implementation should be directed to the Course Directors and CSD Program Director.

Acceptable use

1. *Language and grammar checks.* AI tools can be used to check your drafts for grammatical errors. This provides an opportunity for you to learn rules and best grammatical practices.
2. *Identifying articles related to a topic of interest.* AI tools can be used to identify literature related to a particular topic. Consider this a starting point to direct you to new literature. Your job is then to read this literature, evaluate it, synthesize the content, and use that synthesis to develop a rationale for your original ideas and experimental plans.

Be honest and transparent about the use of AI tools in coursework. Citation of any use should be included in the bibliography of your written assignments and include the name of the specific tool (and version) and how it was used. *Ex: ChatGPT, v4 was used to evaluate the grammar in this proposal. Suggestions from this evaluation were included in the final draft.*

Unacceptable use

1. *Drafting outlines or paragraphs for research proposals.* Writing assignments in CSD courses are an expression of your original thinking and writing ability. You may not use AI tools to identify proposal topics or to generate potential experiments for the proposal. You may not use AI tools to generate new written content in your proposal. Although AI tools can be used to evaluate the grammar of your own, original written content, and make suggestions to improve grammar and clarity, they cannot be used to generate new sentences for your writing assignments. Verbatim use of sentences generated by AI tools will be considered plagiarism.
2. *Drafting peer review summaries.* You may not use AI tools to generate summaries or reviews of your classmates' work. Peer review is an excellent opportunity to sharpen your critical thinking and evaluate alternative ideas on a topic and provides a unique opportunity for practicing concise written communication. Use this opportunity to consider the proposal from your peer and provide your own perspective. Using AI tools to generate summaries or reviews denies you this opportunity and denies your peer from gaining your perspective. Furthermore, uploading content from another individual's proposal to an AI tool may violate confidentiality, as the uploaded content may be disseminated or used for other purposes without your consent. NIH has recognized this threat and recently adopted a policy that prohibits the use of generative AI technologies for the peer review process.

D. Student's Files. A file for each student will be kept by the Program Administrator. All relevant records should be given to the Program Administrator for the files, including published abstracts and papers, notifications of awards and honors, and copies of forms filed with the Office of Research Education. These files should reflect the total record of the student during their entire graduate career. Upon written request, the records may be examined by the student.

Office of Research Education

Policies can be found on the [Office of Research Education](#) website under Resources -> Policies.

- [Conflict of Interest](#)
- [Honor Code and Committee Procedures](#)
- [Anschutz Email address communication](#)
- Student Badge Requirement: Students must have their university badge visible, on their person, at all times while on campus.
- [Financial Aid for Graduate Students](#)
- Tuition, fees and stipend

All incoming Graduate Students are offered a financial aid package from the Graduate School that includes an annual stipend of **43,000** (approved for **Academic Year 2026-2027**), tuition costs, and payment of individual student health insurance and activity fees. The Stipend is evaluated on an annual basis for the cost of living. Please note that this support covers the period July 1, through June 30 for continuing PhD students, and August 15, through June 30 for first year PhD students. Payment of annual stipend, along with tuition costs, fees and individual health insurance is dependent upon satisfactory academic progress as defined in the Graduate School and Program policies.

A. Credits. The Graduate School requires at least 30 semester hours in course work (rotations and Research CSDV 7650 count as course hours) and 30 semester hours of thesis research (CSDV 8990) for the PhD. All work undertaken as a graduate student must be in compliance with the academic Code of Honor (see the Graduate School's website).

B. Maintenance of a 3.0 GPA. All students must maintain an average of "B" or better in their course work. Students are expected to earn a "B" or better in all required courses. Only in *exceptional* circumstances may a "B-" in a required course be acceptable, as determined by petition to the GAC. Required courses completed with a grade of below "B-" cannot be counted towards PhD requirements.

C. Preliminary exam. To continue in the program a student must pass the Preliminary Exam at the end of the first year. If the Preliminary exam is failed, the student will be asked to retake part of the exam (i.e., remediation; see p. 16, point 9). If the student fails the retake, they will be asked to leave the PhD training program.

D. Remedial and Disciplinary Actions. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on Academic Probation by the Graduate School. The student must earn a GPA of 3.0 in each of their next two semesters in order to be removed from Academic Probation. The Graduate School requires that after a student is put on academic probation, they must maintain a 3.0 in all subsequent semesters. Failing to meet either condition will lead to immediate dismissal from the Graduate School. A "B-" or below in any required course is considered unsatisfactory academic progress and more than one "B-" or below is grounds for immediate dismissal from the Program.

A graduate student who receives an unsatisfactory grade in a course (a B- or below) may repeat that course once or successfully complete an alternative assignment, upon written recommendation from the GAC and approval by the Graduate School Dean (provided the

course has not been previously applied toward a degree). The two grades received will be averaged in calculating the grade point average, and all grades received will appear on the student's transcript. The course may be counted only once toward satisfying the unit requirement for the degree.

After two semesters, a GAC meeting will be held to determine the student's progress. If the student's cumulative GPA is 3.0 or above, the student will be removed from probation. If the student's cumulative GPA is below 3.0, the chair of the Thesis Committee, the thesis advisor and the student will meet with the CSD Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will make one of the following determinations:

1. The student is not in good academic standing and will be placed on probation again for not more than 30 days.
2. The student is not in good academic standing and will be released from the program. All meetings will be thoroughly documented and given to the Program Administrator for placement into the student's file.

E. Change in Thesis Lab. Students experiencing difficulties in their thesis labs are encouraged to seek support from structures within CSD (thesis mentor, GAC, thesis committee, Program Administrator, Program Director (PD)) or structures within the university (e.g., ORE Associate Dean, Office of Student Affairs, Ombuds Office).

When issues cannot be resolved using these structures, leaving the thesis lab may be the best course of action. The Office of Research Education has developed a policy with guidance for how students and/or mentors may decide that a student will leave the mentor's lab (see [here](#)). The following CSD program policy applies to students who are leaving their current thesis lab and seeking to join a new thesis lab.

1. The student must be in good academic standing, as determined by the PD and GAC.
2. The student, with support from the PD and current mentor, will organize a meeting with the current mentor, PD, GAC chair, and thesis committee chair (if applicable) to discuss issues in their current lab that motivated the decision to leave, and potential paths forward. After this meeting, the PD will prepare a report summarizing the issues discussed and submit that report to ORE using the Maxient form (see [here](#)). This creates a record for the program and ORE.
3. After the decision to leave lab is made, the current mentor will continue to support the student's stipend for up to 6 weeks during the current semester. This support will not extend into a new semester.
4. If student is post comps, the thesis committee chair will help advise the student on next steps and potential new labs. If the student is not post comps, then GAC chair will help advise.
5. The student is responsible for identifying a potential new thesis lab and arranging a 4week rotation. This includes contacting PIs to discuss the possibility of joining their lab, and availability and timing for a rotation. The student will notify the PD and Program Administrator of the rotation plans. If the student is unable to identify a rotation mentor within 6 weeks of leaving their thesis lab, then the student will either request a Leave of

Absence or the student will leave the program. The student will contact the PD for guidance regarding these steps.

6. The student will complete a single, 4-week rotation with the potential new lab. The rotation mentor agrees to support 50% of student stipend during the rotation. ORE will also provide 50% support.

7. At the beginning of the rotation, the mentor and student will develop a rotation proposal including goals for the rotation. This proposal will be provided to the PD.

8. At the end of the rotation, the mentor will meet with the PD and thesis committee chair (or GAC chair, if applicable) to evaluate the rotation and decide whether the student will join the lab. If the student will join the lab, that transition will be effective immediately. If the student will not join the lab, then they will be dismissed from the graduate program.

F. Time Limit of PhD Studies. Students have eight years from the time they enter Graduate School to complete all requirements for the degree. Continuation after eight years requires the approval of the student's Thesis Committee, the CSD Steering Committee & the Graduate School.

G. Personal Leave of Absence. Personal LOAs are approved by a student's Program in consultation with the ORE Director of Business Services (Jodi Cropper). A student considering an LOA should first speak with their thesis advisor (if applicable) and Program Director or Program Administrator. It is important that students are advised of all their options and directed to appropriate support.

H. Medical Leave of Absence. The Office of Research Education (ORE) encourages and recommends Graduate students considering an MLOA to first speak with their advisor and Program Administrator and/or contact The Office of Student Outreach and Support (Morgan Phoebus) to discuss options. As the student's health and confidentiality are priorities, students are not required to notify their Programs and may directly contact the Office of Student Outreach and Support. Please see the Request for MLOA form under Resources and Support.

I. Faculty member who leaves the institution. The Office of Research Education (ORE) and the School of Medicine (SOM) PhD programs work to ensure that all ORE PhD students have optimal PhD training conditions. Major challenges occur, however, when a student's PhD mentor leaves the institution, and the student has not completed the PhD requirements. Depending on the student's stage in her/his/their research and the program, the challenges will vary. See ORE's policy regarding students whose mentors leave the institution here: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/ore/forms-and-resources>

J. External Employment for Graduate Students

Graduate students, in good academic standing, may, with appropriate approval, work a maximum of 10 hours per week. Such employment must be approved in advance in writing by the Student's Program Director for first year students and by Program Director and Thesis

advisor for those students who have entered a laboratory or who transfer or are directly admitted to a laboratory.

The Office of Research Education and the Students advisory/ thesis committee must also be informed of any students approved for external employment. External employment must not conflict with any required elements of a student's PhD training. Examples include but are not limited to: classes, assessments, seminars, journal clubs, lab meetings, retreats and other required program or ORE activities. Students must remain in good academic standing in order to continue their external employment.

Approvals must be reviewed and reported by the student's Program and Advisory committee every 6 months. Students will attest that they have not exceeded approved hours. Students receiving extramural support for their PhD from training grants or other sources are subject to the requirements and policies of those funding entities and may not be eligible for external employment.

Failure to disclose external employment, falsely reporting or willfully exceeding approved hours will be grounds for disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the PhD program.

Definitions

External employment- any paid (or compensated in kind) work or work product outside of a student's PhD training program and the Office of Research Education.

Good academic standing-maintaining a minimum of a B grade in all classes, rotations and thesis work. Passing Preliminary and comprehensive exams. Meeting other Program requirements, as described in Program Handbooks. Demonstrating satisfactory and timely progress toward the PhD, as determined by the Students Advisory/Thesis Committee.

Resolution of problems

Students may appeal denial or rescinding of approval for external employment on the basis that policies were not followed or applied fairly. Appeals will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Research Education and their decision will be final.

Program Events and Activities

A. Annual Student Research Retreat

Each fall, the students host an out-of-town retreat for the students and faculty in the Graduate Program in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development. The purpose of the retreat is twofold: 1) to provide everyone with the opportunity to get together and interact on a scientific/intellectual level so as to cultivate new interactions and strengthen existing ones; and 2) to provide an opportunity for incoming first year CSD and Biomedical Sciences Program (BSP) graduate students, and 1st and 2nd year MSTP students to become familiar with the research activities and faculty within the CSD Program. The retreat is usually held in October. Current 4th year students are expected to present their work via a talk. Other senior students (2nd year and beyond) are expected to present their work via a poster.

B. Genetics of Development, Disease and Regeneration T32 Symposium

Appointed GDDR trainees organize an annual symposium that focuses on a specific topic under the broad theme of the genetics of development, disease and regeneration. This event is open to all CSD students and faculty, and provides GDDR trainees with unique opportunities to develop skills in project management and networking with prominent scientists in their fields, and to take responsibility for guiding the scientific direction of the program. The symposium will feature several researchers and/or clinicians from CU Anschutz and the surrounding region, and 1 nationally prominent researcher who will provide the keynote address. In addition, the symposium includes oral presentations from all current GDDR trainees.

C. Participation in Recruitment Functions

During February/March each year, prospective student applicants visit our program for interviews. It is in the Program's best interest to attract and retain the best of these prospective students. To do this we need the help of current students and CSD faculty who can convince these individuals that our Program is the place to be! When asked, please be willing to spend some time with prospective students during dinners or other functions. Our CSD Program can and has flourished with your irreplaceable help.

Program Committees

Each committee within the program has a student representative. Below is a description of the duties for each position:

Recruitment: This committee reviews submitted applications to the graduate program, selects candidates to interview in person or by Zoom, organizes recruitment weekend, and ultimately selects who will be admitted to the program. The student members participate fully in the entire process, and in particular are in charge of enlisting and organizing the student body to help with both academic and social recruitment efforts.

Advising: The Graduate Advisory Committee helps students maintain progress toward their Ph.D. degree. As a member of this committee, the student member helps discuss student progress and may be recruited to and/or advise the committee to tutor first year students in need. This committee requires that the student member be a doctoral candidate, i.e., has passed the Comprehensive Exam.

Curriculum: This committee discusses the current curriculum and suggests and implements changes in the best interest of the program and students, including but not limited to selection of Advanced Topics courses to be offered each academic year based on faculty availability and student interests.

Membership: This committee is responsible for faculty membership within the program. The student member participates in the establishment of guidelines for faculty membership, reviews current faculty participation, and makes recommendations concerning new faculty applicants.

Retreat: Every fall, the program has a retreat (typically overnight) in a mountain location. It is the role of the students (two) on the Retreat Committee to organize the retreat with the oversight of a CSD graduate program faculty representative. With a pre-determined budget in mind, the students have a role in selecting the location as well as an invited speaker.

Community and Belonging Committee (CBC): This committee promotes a welcoming environment within CSD by strengthening relationships among students and faculty to ensure everyone feels connected and valued. The CBC offers several resources to support community needs, including mentor-mentee workshops, recruitment and outreach efforts, and community building events. The committee may also help develop educational and training activities across CU Anschutz Ph.D. programs.

CSD Voices: This student committee is responsible for representing the CSD student body at the ORE Student Council. In addition, this committee organizes timely nominations and elections of CSD students to all committee positions.

Steering Committee: This committee consists of the faculty chairs of each of the program committees plus additional members as deemed appropriate by the director of the program.

Student Executive Committee: Consists of the student members of the Program Committees (Advising, Recruitment, Curriculum, Membership, Retreat, Community, and Voices) and additional members to represent each cohort in the student group, and is chaired by a student member of the Advising Committee. The goal of this committee is to organize student activities and provide a mechanism to discuss student issues that can be directed to the Steering Committee and/or program director.

Resources and Support

Students can access a variety of campus services through the links provided below. The Office of Student Affairs is committed to supporting CU Anschutz students by offering guidance and assistance in navigating campus resources. For detailed information about available services or to schedule an appointment, please visit the Office of Student Affairs webpages. For additional questions or support, you may contact the office via email at StudentAffairs@cuanschutz.edu.

- [Office of Student Affairs](#) ○ [Campus Life](#) ○ [Student Support](#) ○ [Health & Wellness](#) ○ [Student Resources](#)
 - [Student Services](#)

- [Students Resource Directory](#) ○ Includes all campus resources
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Residency](#)
- [Badging Office](#)
- [Student Parking & Transportation](#) ○ Eco Pass ○ Campus Circulator
(Transportation service) ○ Medical Campus Rail Shuttle
- [Office of Information Technology](#)
- [Student Health Insurance](#)
- [Office of Research Education – Concern Reporting Form \(Maxient\)](#)
- [CU Anschutz Student Outreach and Support Referral](#)
- [CU Anschutz Student Request for Medical Leave of Absence](#)
- [Graduation Deadlines Thesis, Anschutz](#)
- [Thesis & Dissertation/ProQuest Format & Guidelines](#)

CSD Committee Membership Roster 26-27

Director

Santos Franco, Director

Steering Committee

Bruce Appel
Linda Barlow
Jim Bridges
Yunsik Kang
Jeff Moore
Jen McKey
Jess Nelson
Matt Taliaferro
Julie Siegenthaler
Santos Franco

Student Executive Committee

Jeremy Brown
Judy Cheng
Nicole Costantino
Amanda Garfield
Emily Gregersen
Charles Griffin
Colette Hopkins
Maggie Keating
Kaia Kinkel
JP Martin
Ali Otadi
Gabi Padilla
Susannah Schloss
Elizabeth Ung
Wendy Zhang

CSD 2026 Retreat Committee

Jeremy Brown, Student Rep
Charles Griffin, Student Rep
Linda Barlow, Faculty Rep

Membership Committee

Matt Taliaferro, Chair
Wendy Macklin
Ron Vagnozzi
Kaia Kinkel, Student Rep
Elizabeth Ung, Student Rep

Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC)

Jim Bridges, Chair
Eszter Vadar
Ron Vagnozzi
Bruce Appel
Julie Siegenthaler
Ally Nguyen
Amanda Garfield, Student Rep
Kaia Kinkel, Student Rep

CSD Seminar Series

Linda Barlow, Chair
Katherine Fantauzzo
Chad Pearson
Stephen Santoro

Recruitment Committee

Jessica Nelson, Chair
Elle Roberson
Han Zhu
Maggie Keating, Student Rep
Wendy Zhang, Student Rep

Curriculum Committee

Martin Breuss, Chair
Julie Siegenthaler
Greg Way
Arianne Theiss
Kristen Watt
Emily Gregersen, Student Rep
Nicole Costantino, Student Rep

Journal Club

Emily Gregersen
Colette Hopkins

Advanced Writing Workshop

Judy Cheng
Susannah Schloss

CSD Voices

Wendy Zhang
Ali Otadi

Community and Belonging Committee

Jen McKey
Yunsik Kang
JP Martin, Student Rep
Gabi Padilla, Student Rep

Appendices

Appendix 1: Course Descriptions

YEAR 1

Fall Semester - Required Registration

Foundations in Biomedical Sciences – Section 001

BMSC 7806 6 units

Course Director: Drs. E. Lau, A. McClure, K. Fantauzzo, R. Prekeris, C. Pearson, J. Moore

This section of the course covers basic biochemistry, molecular biology, genetics, and cell biology.

Core topics in Biomedical Sciences

BMSC 7810 Sections 001-010

First year students will register for two sections, one section in Core Topics A (Section 001-005) and one section in Core Topics B (Sections 006-010). Each section is a 3 week intensive special topics course, the Core Topic A sections start immediately after BMSC 7806 followed by Core Topic B sections. Course offerings vary by year but includes topics courses in immunology/microbiology, stem cell and regenerative medicine, developmental biology, cancer biology, and exploratory data analysis in R/R Studio. An updated list of the course offerings will be provided to students prior to registration in the fall. CSD are **strongly encouraged but not required** to take the section offered by the CSD program, “Stem Cell Biology to Regenerative Medicine” and “Intro to Animal Models & Experiments in Developmental Biology”; see descriptions below. First-year students who would like to take Core Topics offerings other than the options that are strongly encouraged should consult with the Program Director prior to enrollment.

Stem Cell Biology to Regenerative Medicine

BMSC 7810 Sec. 005 2 units **Course Director:** Dr. I. Kogut

Students will be introduced to the concept of stem cells with an emphasis on embryonic, pluripotent, and tissue stem cells. Besides their role in normal development of different organ systems, we will specifically address the use of stem cells in tissue engineering and disease modeling. We will then discuss new approaches using stem cells in regenerative medicine. Lastly, we will discuss ethical issues regarding the use of these cells (e.g. the creation of human/animal chimeras for research purposes).

Introduction to Animal Models and Experiments in Developmental Biology

BMSC 7810 Sec. 009 2 units

Course Directors: Drs. L. Barlow, J. McKey

Introduction to animal models in developmental biology: This course offers a hands-on approach to the study of developmental biology including an opportunity to perform experiments on model systems used in the study of development. In addition, general principles and definitions used in developmental processes will be discussed as well as a focus on specific processes such as gastrulation and neurulation. This knowledge can be directly applied to the study of stem cells and cell biology.

Research in CSDV (Lab Rotations)

CSDV 7650 (001 & 002) 1 unit each

(Register for both sections 001 and 002)

Coordinated by the GAC Chair, Dr. Jim Bridges

Students will perform research in the laboratory of one of the members of the program. The rotation will be followed by an oral presentation.

Cell Biology, Stem Cells & Development Seminar

No registration required 0 units **Course**

Director: Seminar Committee

Seminar series designed to present recent important findings in cell and developmental biology research. Different topics are presented weekly by CSD Training Program faculty, students and visiting faculty. **Attendance is required.** Individual seminar details will be sent by the Program Administrator; additionally, upcoming seminar details are available on the program's website.

Spring Semester - Required Registration

Stem Cells and Development: An Integrated Approach

CSDV 7605 3 units

Course Director: Dr. Eszter Vladoar

This course aims to familiarize students with fundamental principles in cell, developmental, and stem cell biology. Students will critically evaluate important scientific concepts and develop compelling new hypotheses through in class discussions, 'thought question' exercises and presentations. Completion of the course should facilitate successful pursuit of basic and translational research.

Critical Analysis of Research in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development

CSDV 7606 4 units

Course Director: Dr. Christian Mosimann, Ron Vagnozzi, and Jamie Nichols

First-year students will learn to critically evaluate the scientific literature in preparation for conducting original research in their thesis labs and writing and critiquing research grant proposals. Primary literature will focus on cell and developmental biology topics related to CSDV 7605. The course consists of four blocks, the first 3 of which each includes a lecture and 3 paper discussions. Each block session concludes with written mini-proposals and peer critiques. In the fourth block, students will write a major proposal in the format of an NIH F31 NRSA fellowship to gain important grant writing and critiquing skills through instruction, practice, and peer evaluation.

Research in CSDV (Lab Rotation)

CSDV 7650 (section 001) 1 unit (for 3rd lab rotation)

Coordinated by the GAC Chair, Dr. Jim Bridges

Students will perform research in the laboratory of one of the members of the program. The rotation will be followed by an oral presentation.

Cell Biology, Stem Cells & Development Seminar

No registration required 0 units

Course Director: Seminar Committee

Seminar series designed to present recent important findings in cell and developmental biology research. Different topics are presented weekly by CSD Training Program faculty, students and visiting faculty.

Attendance is required. Individual seminar details will be sent by the Program Administrator; additionally, upcoming seminar details are available on the program's website.

Summer Semester

Research in CSDV

CSDV 8990 1 unit

All students must be registered during the summer months to be maintain full-time status

YEAR 2

Fall and Spring Semesters – Required Registration

Research in CSDV

CSDV 7650 (Section 0V1) 1-5 unit*

Course Director: Dr. Santos Franco

Laboratory research with CSD Training Program faculty.

Responsible Conduct of Research

BMSC 7811 1 unit

Course Director:

All rising 2nd year students are required to enroll in 1 unit of BMSC 7811 and will be expected to enroll again every 4 years

CSD: Advanced Topics Discussion (Journal Club)

CSDV 7000 1 unit

Course Directors: Emily Gregersen and Colette Hopkins

The Student Journal Club is developed and run by CSD students. This course provides opportunities to learn outside your thesis topic, sharpen presentation skills, and socialize with CSD students. The Journal Club is a year-long course, running through both the Fall and Spring semesters; students will not be allowed to stop participation at the end of the Fall semester or begin participation in the Spring semester. Students are expected to attend class meetings during both semesters; however, they should only enroll in CSDV7000 for the Spring semester. Intent to participate must be stated at the **mandatory** Journal Club Town Hall held before the first session of the Fall semester (August 26th at noon).

All CSD students are required to complete a course in statistics by the end of the fourth year; however, students are strongly encouraged to complete this requirement during the second year, since training in statistics will promote success in the thesis project. Two options exist to meet this requirement (see below). MOLB7950 and BMSC7820 are both offered in the fall semester.

Informatics and Statistics for Molecular Biology

MOLB 7950 3 units

Course director: Jay Hesselberth

This course teaches students to design and analyze experiments commonly used in molecular biology. The course is organized around the Central Dogma (DNA > RNA > Protein) wherein each block presents 2-3 experimental approaches. Each week, a new experiment is introduced with a discussion of appropriate design and statistical considerations. The remaining weeks' classes are devoted to digging into the analysis of a sample data set with hands-on programming.

Statistics and Data Analyses for the Biomedical Sciences

BMSC 7820 3 units

Course Director: Ethan Lange

This is a basic introductory level course in applied biostatistics designed for students pursuing graduate degrees in biomedical research that is designed to meet minimum requirements for a biostatistics/statistics course.

YEAR 3

Students are required to take at least one elective or advance topics course each year during years 3-5. Options include courses listed below. If a student would like to satisfy this requirement by taking another course, which is not listed below, they must receive approval from the Program Director and the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.

Elective Courses

CSD: Advanced Topics Discussion (Journal Club)

CSDV 7000 1 unit

Course Directors: Emily Gregersen and Colette Hopkins

The Student Journal Club is developed and run by CSD students. This course provides opportunities to learn outside your thesis topic, sharpen presentation skills, and socialize with CSD students. The Journal Club is a year-long course, running through both the Fall and Spring semesters; students will not be allowed to stop participation at the end of the Fall semester or begin participation in the Spring semester. Students are expected to attend class meetings during both semesters; however, they should only enroll in CSDV7000 for the Spring semester. Intent to participate must be stated at the **mandatory** Journal Club Town Hall held before the first session of the Fall semester (August 26th at noon).

Advanced Writing Workshop

CSDV 7100 1 unit

Course Directors: Judy Cheng and Susannah Schloss

This course is a student-led writing workshop focusing on developing writing skills through the submission, editing and discussion of drafts. Draft types will be chosen by the students enrolled and will include manuscripts, theses, and documents related to career development. Only post-comps students may enroll in CSDV7100.

Developmental Genetics

CSDV 7607

2 unit

Course Director: Dr. Bruce Appel

Course participants will read, present and discuss scientific literature addressing topics in developmental, disease, and regenerative genetics. The course will be organized into 4 blocks, with each block focusing on one topic.

Advanced Topics in Cell Biology Stem Cells and Development: Organoids

(Depending on faculty availability and student interest. Contact course director if interested.)

CSDV 7670

2 units

Course Director: Peter Dempsey

This 2 credit course is an introduction to concepts and practice of organ and tissue modeling using both adult and pluripotent stem cell organoid culture systems combined with bioengineering applications. Lectures/article reviews will be balanced with a significant, hands-on lab component to gain experience in organoid culture techniques. This course is offered in Fall or Spring semester, please contact course directors for information on when the class will be held during the academic year.

Introduction to Microscopy

(Depending on faculty availability and student interest. Contact course director if interested.)

CSDV7680

1 unit

Course Director: Victor Ruthig

This course will introduce students to the principles of image acquisition, analysis, data management & sharing, and rigor & reproducibility. Microscopy content will be mostly focused on systems available to CSD students. Limited lectures and select readings will prepare students for hands on work using prepared modules in class and group discussions. This course is offered in Fall or Spring semester, please contact course directors for information on when the class will be held during the academic year.

Practical teaching experience in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development

CSDV 7675

1 unit

Course Director: Julie Siegenthaler

Students will be paired with a CSD faculty mentor to develop a class session for IDPT 7801 courses directed by CSD faculty, CSDV 7605, CSDV 7606 or CSDV 7670 (depending on student interest and faculty availability). Each session will include a practice presentation and post-session critique.

Practical mentoring experience in Cell Biology, Stem Cells and Development

CSDV 7676

1 unit

Course Director: Jeff Moore

This course trains PhD students in effective mentoring skills for a research lab setting. Students will receive training in a wide variety of topics including project design, communication, conflict resolution, creating equitable and inclusive mentoring relationships, and more. This course is intended for students who are further along in their training and seeking to build professional skills that will enable them to be successful in the next stage of their career. As such, it is offered for students in year 2 or beyond of their training. GDDR Training Grant trainees are required to take CSDV7676 once, as part of their roles as mentors in the Developing Scholars Program.

Appendix 2: Preliminary Exam Rubric

	KNOWLEDGE AND SCHOLARSHIP Identifies background and existing information.	score:
4	- Strong evidence of synthesis of concepts covered in coursework. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are correct and described in depth. - Clearly identifies research problem in the field, based on prior knowledge. - Critiques prior work on the problem. - Demonstrates command of literature relevant to proposal. - Information presented is appropriately cited.	comments:
3	- Evidence of synthesis of concepts covered in coursework. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are mostly correct and described with sufficient depth. - Identifies research problem in the field, based on prior knowledge. - Some critique of prior work on the problem. - Demonstrates familiarity with the literature relevant to proposal. - Most information presented is appropriately cited.	
2	- Some evidence of synthesis of concepts covered in coursework. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are mostly correct but lacking important details. - Description of prior knowledge is adequate. - Describes, but does not critique prior work on the problem. - Demonstrates familiarity with the literature relevant to the proposal, but some relevant literature is neglected. - Information presented is cited, but could be improved.	
1	- Little to no evidence of synthesis of concepts covered in coursework. - Descriptions of terms, concepts, principles and methods are insufficient and/or incorrect. - Insufficient description of prior knowledge. - Insufficient description of prior work on the problem. - Insufficient incorporation of literature relevant to the proposal. - Information presented is rarely cited.	
	SCIENTIFIC REASONING AND EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN Describes hypothesis and experiments designed to test it.	score:
4	- Hypothesis is clearly stated, along with compelling rationale - Compelling rationale for experimental approach is provided. - Experiments are clearly described and appropriate. - Clearly describes controls and how they impact interpretation of the results. - Alternative experimental approaches are clearly described. - Clearly describes how results impact the hypothesis. - Identifies weaknesses in interpretation. - Alternative results are described, and impact on the hypothesis is considered.	comments:

3	- Hypothesis is stated and rationale is provided. - Rationale for experimental approach is provided. - Description of experiments is mostly clear and appropriate. - Controls and their interpretation are described. - Alternative experimental approaches are described. - Describes how results impact the hypothesis. - Alternative results are described and connected to the hypothesis.	
2	- Hypothesis is stated, but rationale is weak and could be improved. - Rationale for experimental approach is provided, but is unclear. - Description of experiments lacks some important details. - Controls are described, but description of interpretation is weak. - Alternative experimental approaches are described, but not developed. - Description of how the results impact the hypothesis lacks depth. - Alternative results are described, but not clearly connected to the hypothesis.	
1	- Hypothesis is unclear and rationale is weak. - Insufficient rationale for experimental approach. - Description of experiments is unclear or inappropriate. - Controls are poorly described. - Alternative experimental approaches are insufficiently described. - Insufficient description of how the results impact the hypothesis. - Alternative results are insufficiently described.	
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION Communicates knowledge and reasoning through writing and graphics.		score:
4	- Writing is exceptionally clear and effective. - Graphics are well-organized. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly.	comments:
3	- Writing is mostly clear and effective. - Most aspects of graphics are well-organized. - Most terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly.	
2	- Some aspects of writing are clear and effective. - Some aspects graphics are well-organized. - Some terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly.	
1	- Writing is unclear and ineffective. - Graphics are disorganized. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are lacking and/or incorrect.	
ORAL COMMUNICATION Communicates scientific knowledge and reasoning through speech and visual displays.		score:
4	- Oral communication is exceptionally clear and effective. - Graphics are well-organized. - Response to questions consistently incorporates appropriate evidence. - Response to questions is reflective.	comments:

3	• Most of oral communication is clear and effective. • Most graphics are well-organized. • Response to questions often incorporates appropriate evidence. • Response to questions with occasional prompting or “leading” required.	
2	• Some aspects of the oral communication are clear and effective. • Some aspects of the graphics are well-organized. • Response to questions incorrectly, even after prompting or “leading”.	
1	• Oral communication is unclear and ineffective. • Graphics are disorganized. • Fails to respond to questions.	

Appendix 3: GDDR T32 Trainee Selection and Reappointment

Trainee Selection and Reappointment

Each year, students are encouraged to apply to join the Genetics of Development, Disease and Regeneration (GDDR) T32 Training Program. Only CSD Program students who have passed their Preliminary Exam, are entering their second, third, or fourth year, and are working in the labs of GDDR Training Faculty will be eligible for support. Training Faculty and their mentees will submit the student's biosketch, statements of research goals and career goals, and a training plan written by the thesis mentor. The Trainee Selection and Oversight Committee will review nominations and identify eight applicants for support from the T32. Each trainee will be supported for a maximum of 2 years, contingent on progress as determined by the Trainee Selection and Oversight Committee. While supported by the training grant, trainees are expected to submit abstracts and present their work at national or international conferences and participate in all GDDR functions, including the Roundtable, Developing Scholars Program, and Spring Symposium. **Applicant Eligibility**

1. CSD Program or HMGG Program student, or BSP or MSTP student who plans to join CSD
2. Mentored by a member of the GDDR Training Faculty (see list of current GDDR faculty below)
3. Entering 2nd or 3rd year of training. Students entering their 4th year of training will only be eligible for re-appointment.
4. Meets [NIH T32 eligibility criteria](#)

Application Materials and Application Process

1. Application materials will be submitted by email to Zachary Hersh (zachary.hersh@cuanschutz.edu).
2. Application deadline is August 14 by 5pm.
3. Mentors and mentees will jointly prepare and submit application materials.
4. Application materials will include:
 - a. Applicant biosketch
 - i. Find blank format page and samples for NIH Fellowship Biosketch here: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>
 - ii. For part D. Scholastic Performance, please list only graduate courses.
 - b. Description of research goals (one page or less). This description should focus more on concepts – what are the knowledge gaps, why are they important, what is needed to close them – and less on specific experimental details. This should be formatted as a narrative and **not** as a Specific Aims page.
 - c. Description of personal and professional goals (one page or less). This should include goals for the period of T32 support, for Ph.D. training, and for the student's career.
 - d. Training plan written by the faculty mentor (one page or less). This plan should be tailored to the student and include a description of the student's strengths, areas for improvement, and specific training for the thesis project.
 - e. Trainees seeking reappointment for a second year of support will also submit a summary of accomplishments and contributions to the T32 program during the prior year of support, including but not limited to the following:
 - i. Courses taken
 - ii. Participation in roundtable, including a detailed description of your role in planning specific roundtable events.
 - iii. Participation in symposium, including a detailed description of your role in the symposium.
 - iv. Participation in the Developing Scholars Program, if applicable.
 - v. Provide abstracts from presentations at conferences, and conference details (i.e., name, date, location).
 - vi. Fellowship applications submitted.
 - vii. Revised training plan written by mentor.

Selection Process

1. All members of the Trainee Selection and Oversight Committee will review all applications.
2. Applicants will be scored using a 1-9 NIH scoring scale on the following criteria:

- a. Prior academic performance in graduate courses
- b. Prior research accomplishments
- c. Clarity of research goals
- d. Clarity of personal and professional goals
- e. Clarity of training plan
- f. Strength of fitness with the training objectives of the GDDR T32

Application and Appointment Timeline

1. Application opens in July and closes on August 14.
2. Trainee appointments to the training grant will be announced by August 28.
3. Trainee appointments begin September 1

Appointment Strategy

The GDDR T32 will support eight students annually. Each trainee is eligible for up to two years of support. To ensure continuity of junior and senior trainees, in the second year of the T32 a maximum of four of the original eight trainees will be reappointed for a second year of support.

Trainee Oversight and Selection Committee

This committee will consist of the Director of the GDDR T32 Program and members of the Training Faculty chosen to represent the breadth of Program research interests and to include individuals from diverse backgrounds and different career stages.

Current GDDR T32 Training Faculty for 2026-2027

Bruce Appel	Wendy Macklin	Stephen Santoro
Linda Barlow	Sue Majka	David Schwartz
Emily Bates	Kristyn Masters	Julie Siegenthaler
Martin Breuss	Jeff Moore	Kelly Sullivan
Joe Brzezinski	Christian Mosimann	Lori Sussel
David Clouthier	Jessica Nelson	Ron Vagnozzi
James DeGregori	Jamie Nichols	Kristin Watt
Peter Dempsey	Chad Pearson	Cheryl Ackert-Bicknell
Katherine Fantauzzo	Eric Peitras	Joaquin Espinosa
Santos Franco	Rytis Prekeris	Arjun Krishnan
Suja Jagannathan	Olivia Rissland	Ivana Yang
Yunsik Kang	Charles Sagerström	

Appendix 4: Comprehensive Exam Rubric

PURPOSE OF THE SCORING RUBRIC:

This scoring rubric is intended to help standardize the comprehensive exam process. Its purpose is to improve transparency, calibrate expectations, and to ensure that CSD students are treated equitably. Comprehensive exams are customized for each student, making the exam process inherently subjective and difficult to standardize. Nonetheless, this scoring rubric provides a framework for evaluating the student in the most objective fashion possible given the complexities of the exam. It is meant to have some flexibility.

SCORING RUBRIC:

This rubric contains examples of exam performance and should not be viewed as a strict checklist.

	KNOWLEDGE AND SCHOLARSHIP Identifies background, existing information, and reasoning.	score:
4	• Strong evidence of synthesis of concepts to support the thesis topic. • Terms, concepts, principles and methods are correct and described in depth. • Clearly identifies research problem in the field, based on prior knowledge. • Critiques prior work on the problem. • Demonstrates command of literature relevant to the thesis topic. • Information presented is appropriately cited. • Demonstrates independence in reasoning and understanding of the topic.	comments:
3	• Evidence of synthesis of concepts to support the thesis topic. • Terms, concepts, principles and methods are mostly correct and described with sufficient depth. • Identifies research problem in the field, based on prior knowledge. • Some critique of prior work on the problem. • Demonstrates familiarity with the literature relevant to the thesis topic. • Most information presented is appropriately cited. • Shows some independence in reasoning and understanding of the topic.	
2	• Some evidence of synthesis of concepts to support the thesis topic. • Terms, concepts, principles and methods are mostly correct but lacking important details. • Description of prior knowledge is minimal. • Describes, but does not critique prior work on the problem. • Demonstrates familiarity with the literature relevant to the thesis topic, but some relevant literature or preliminary data are neglected. • Information presented is cited, but could be improved. • Shows little independence in reasoning and understanding of the topic.	
1	• Little to no evidence of synthesis of concepts to support the thesis topic. • Descriptions of terms, concepts, principles and methods are insufficient and/or incorrect. • Insufficient description of prior knowledge. • Insufficient description of prior work on the problem. • Insufficient incorporation of literature relevant to the thesis topic. • Information presented is rarely cited/attributed. • Lacks independence in reasoning and understanding of the topic.	
	SCIENTIFIC REASONING AND EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN Written or oral description of hypotheses and experiments designed to test it.	score:

4	• Hypothesis is clearly stated, along with compelling rationale • Compelling rationale for experimental approach is provided. • Experiments are clearly described, powered, and appropriate. • Clearly describes controls and how they impact interpretation of the results. • Alternative experimental approaches are clearly described. • Clearly describes how experiments and results test the hypothesis. • Identifies weaknesses in interpretation. • Alternative results are described, and impact on the hypothesis is considered. • Statistics, rigor, reproducibility and sex as a biological variable are deeply considered and suitable to the thesis project.	comments:
3	• Hypothesis is stated and rationale is provided. • Rationale for experimental approach is provided. • Description of experiments is mostly clear, powered, and appropriate. • Controls and their interpretation are described. • Alternative experimental approaches are described. • Describes how experiments and results test the hypothesis. • Alternative results are described and connected to the hypothesis. • Statistics, rigor, reproducibility and sex as a biological variable are sufficiently addressed and suitable to the thesis project.	
2	• Hypothesis is stated, but rationale is weak and could be improved. • Rationale for experimental approach is provided, but is unclear or weak. • Description of experiments lacks some important details or is underpowered. • Controls are described, but description of interpretation is weak. • Alternative experimental approaches are described, but not developed. • Description of how experiments and results test the hypothesis lacks depth. • Alternative results are described, but not clearly connected to the hypothesis. • Statistics, rigor, reproducibility and sex as a biological variable are incompletely addressed.	
1	• Hypothesis is unclear and rationale is weak. • Insufficient rationale for experimental approach. • Description of experiments is unclear or inappropriate. • Controls are poorly described. • Alternative experimental approaches are insufficiently described. • Insufficient description of how experiments and results test the hypothesis. • Alternative results are insufficiently described. • Statistics, rigor, reproducibility and sex as a biological variable are not addressed.	
WRITTEN COMMUNICATION Communicates knowledge and reasoning through writing and graphics.		score:
4	• Writing is clear and effective. • Graphics are well-organized and effective. • Terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly. • Writing takes full advantage of the student’s preliminary data, experience, and/or the supporting literature. • Citations are organized, appropriate, and of sufficient depth.	comments:
3	• Writing is mostly clear and effective. • Most aspects of graphics are well-organized and effective. • Most terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly. • Writing partially takes advantage of the student’s preliminary data, experience, and/or the supporting literature. • Citations are organized, but sometimes inappropriate or of limited depth.	

2	- Some aspects of writing are clear and effective. - Some aspects of graphics are effective or the graphics are incomplete. - Some terms, concepts, principles and methods are used correctly. - Writing poorly reflects the student's preliminary data, their experience, and/or the supporting literature. - Citations are poorly organized, inappropriate, or of insufficient depth.	
1	- Writing is unclear and ineffective. - Graphics are disorganized or lacking. - Terms, concepts, principles and methods are lacking and/or incorrect. - Writing does not utilize the student's preliminary data, their experience, and/or the literature. - Citations are unorganized, used inappropriately, or lacking.	
ORAL COMMUNICATION Communicates scientific knowledge and reasoning through speech and visual displays.		score:
4	- Oral communication is exceptionally clear and effective. - Graphics are well-organized and effective. - The public seminar is highly effective, engaging, and on-time. - Response to questions (public and with the committee) consistently incorporates appropriate evidence and reasoning. - Response to questions is reflective and shows independent thinking.	comments:
3	- Most of oral communication is clear and effective. - Most graphics are well-organized and effective. - The public seminar is effective, but could be improved for clarity, engagement, or time. - Response to questions (public and with the committee) often incorporates appropriate evidence and reasoning. - Response to questions is correct after substantial prompting or "leading".	
2	- Some aspects of the oral communication are clear and effective. - Some aspects of the graphics are effective or the graphics are incomplete. - The public seminar is somewhat effective, lacks logical flow, or is inappropriately brief or long. - Response to questions frequently incorrect, even after substantial prompting or "leading".	
1	- Oral communication is unclear and ineffective. - The public seminar is ineffective. - Graphics are disorganized or lacking. - Routinely fails to answer questions correctly or coherently.	

Appendix 5: Template for Thesis Committee Meeting Progress Report

Written progress reports can be useful tools for structuring your committee meetings. It is recommended that you send your committee members a brief progress report ~1 week before your committee meeting. The goals of the progress report are to update your committee on your progress and accomplishments, identify any needs or concerns, and identify goals for the future. Below is a suggested format for your progress report.

Student Name:

Year started graduate school:

Year of comps:

Meeting date:

Last meeting date:

Committee members:

Thesis mentor:

Title of project:

Summary of progress since last meeting:

Thesis project:

Supporting projects/collaborations/pending publications:

Manuscripts:

Meetings, abstracts and form of presentation (poster/talk):

Fellowships/ Grants:

Other experience, accomplishments:

Potential timeline for the upcoming year and graduation:

Appendix 6: Example Individual Development Plans

Adapted from Duke University:

Building an Individual Development Plan

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) provide a way for you to plan how you will develop professionally and prepare for the next steps in your career. An IDP should be flexible enough to suit your interests and personal working style, and it should be rigid enough to ensure that you make active progress toward your goals.

IDP Steps

Step 1 Consider the skills, experiences, and qualities that are valued in your academic program(s) and in careers of interest

Step 2 Assess which of these skills, experiences, and qualities you want to improve long-term and short-term, and brainstorm specific experiences you can seek out

Step 3 Prioritize experiences to seek out and create SMART goals to ensure you make progress

Step 4 Discuss your IDP with mentors and others to gather feedback

Step 5 Implement your IDP and revisit it every 3-6 months **Step**

1: How do you want to develop professionally?

Answer the following questions with lots of specific details. You can also include learning more about something as a quality you want to develop. For example, you can add “explore careers in science communication” to your career list.

What skills are required to be a successful student? What qualities are most valued?

What careers are you considering after PhD? What additional skills and qualities are valued in these careers?

Careers	Additional Skills & Qualities

Step 2: Setting Priorities and Gaining Experience

From the lists from Step 1, choose which skills, experiences, and qualities you want to develop in the short-term (the next 3-6 months) and which you want to build in the long-term (the next 1-2 years). Then, brainstorm different ways for you to gain experience in these areas.

Short-term Priorities

Skill/Quality	Potential Experiences

Long-term Priorities

Skill/Quality	Potential Experiences

Networking

Who Would Be A Helpful Contact?	Potential Ways to Meet

Career Exploration

What Careers Do You Want to Learn More About?	Potential Ways to Learn More

Self-Care

Activity, creativity, community, and spirituality

Ways You Care for Yourself	Potential Ways to Learn More

Step 3: SMART Goals

*SMART goals are **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Accountable**, **Realistic**, and **Time-bound**. Use the table below to outline your SMART goals to help you develop as a professional.*

Specific Goal	How Will Your Success Be Measured?	When Will You Complete This Goal By?	Who Will Hold You Accountable? How Will You Update Them on Your Progress?

Step 4: Mentors' and Others' Feedback

Gathering input from mentors and others can help you gain insight and set more effective goals. Mentors can include your advisor, faculty members at Duke and other institutions, fellow students, university staff, alumni and other professionals in careers of interest. Seek out a variety of formal and informal mentors who can provide insight on the skills and qualities you want to develop.

Who could you recruit as a mentor for your short-term and long-term goals? When could you meet with them to ask for feedback?

Potential Mentors	When/How to Ask for Feedback

Overview

<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Academic</u>
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Leadership / Campus Involvement / Volunteer</u>
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Career & Professional Development</u>
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Self-Care</u>

<u>Contributors</u>	<u>IDP Goal 1</u>
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>IDP Goal 2</u>

Contributors: who provides you with advice, feedback, support, mentorship for these activities? Who are you engaging with?

Adapted from CU AMC Immunology Program:

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Annual Progress Report

What were your main goals for the past year?

Which goals did you meet? If you did not meet a goal, why not?

List all major accomplishments this year in career development (e.g. presentations, publications, teaching, committees, course work, etc.). Include mentoring of graduate or undergraduate students in the laboratory.

Describe your level of satisfaction with your career development in the past year using a scale of 1-5 with 1 being highly satisfied. Provide a rationale for your choice.

- 1 – Highly satisfied
- 2 – Somewhat satisfied
- 3 – Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 4 – Somewhat dissatisfied
- 5 – Highly dissatisfied

Self-assessment

Core Competencies	No basis to evaluate	Needs development	Appropriate to career stage	Strength	<i>Adapted from ScienceCareers MyIDP, which is based on the National Postdoctoral Association's Core Competencies for Postdoctoral Scholars</i>
Scientific Knowledge					
Broad based knowledge of science					
Deep knowledge of specific research area					
Critical evaluation of scientific literature					
Research Skills					
Technical skills related to research area					
Experimental design					
Statistical analysis					
Interpretation of data					
Creativity/innovative thinking					
Navigating the peer review process					
Communication					
Basic writing and editing					
Writing scientific publications					
Writing grant proposals					
Writing for nonscientists					

Speaking clearly and effectively					
Formulating and asking sound questions					
Presenting research to scientists					
Presenting to nonscientists					
Teaching in a classroom setting					
Training and mentoring individuals					
Seeking advice from advisors and mentors					
Negotiating difficult conversations					
Professionalism					
Demonstrating workplace etiquette					
Complying with rules and regulations					

Upholding commitments and meeting deadlines				
Maintaining positive relationships with colleagues				
Contributing to discipline (e.g. professional society member)				
Contributing to institution (e.g. committee participation)				
Management and Leadership Skills				
Providing instruction and guidance				
Providing constructive feedback				
Dealing with conflict				
Planning and organizing projects				
Time management				
Managing research resources responsibly				
Leading and motivating others				
Creating vision and goals				
Serving as a role model				
Responsible Conduct of Research				
Careful recordkeeping practices				
Understanding of data ownership/sharing issues				
Demonstrating responsible authorship/publication practices				
Demonstrating responsible conduct in human/animal research				
Able to identify and address research misconduct				
Able to identify and manage conflict of interest				
Career Advancement				
Creating and maintaining a professional network				
Identifying career options				

Tracking professional development and accomplishments (e.g. writing and maintaining a CV or résumé)					
Interviewing					

Goals for the Upcoming Year In

the upcoming year, what:

Publications do you plan to submit?

Meetings, conferences, and workshops do you plan to attend?

Fellowships or other funding applications do you plan to submit?

Collaborations do you plan to establish?

Other professional training or activities do you plan to participate in (e.g. teaching, university service, courses, internships, etc.)?

Career goals

Approximately when do you hope to finish your predoctoral training?

If you plan to finish within 12-18 months, estimate when you will begin a job or postdoctoral search.

What is your “Next Step” career goal (e.g. postdoctoral training, research job, science policy)?

What is your long-term career goal? (*ScienceCareers* MyIDP can help you evaluate your options in light of your interests and skills.)

What further training is required before it is appropriate to start a career search?

How can your PI help you achieve your goals for the upcoming year? What do you need from your PI?

Step 5: Implement and Revise

Start using your IDP. Be sure to set a reminder to revise your IDP every 3-6 months and seek additional feedback from mentors and others. You will likely need to revise and adapt some goals to better suit your needs along the way, which is perfectly fine and is to be expected.

Appendix 7: Tax Preparation Information

DISCLAIMER

Anschutz Medical Campus is not qualified to provide legal and/or tax advice. The information provided may or may not reflect recent revisions in IRS regulations. For tax advice on your specific situation, contact a tax professional. For additional information regarding the education tax credits. Please refer to the resources listed below for any additional help.

IRS Tax preparation help:

Anschutz website:

<https://www.cuanschutz.edu/student-finances/billing-payments/1098-t-information-tax-year-2018-or-later>

IRS relevant publications:

IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education (attached)

IRS Form 1098-T, Tuition Statement (Attached) (*“Eligible educational institutions file Form 1098-T for each student they enroll and for whom a reportable transaction is made.”*) Please

note:

1. 1098-T Information Tax Year is available in the Student Portal
2. W-2: depending on the source of your stipend, you will or will not automatically receive a W-2 for the University. (Typically, students who are appointed to a training grant or have independent fellowship support that provides a majority of the stipend amount will NOT automatically receive a W-2.)
3. Tax withheld: Depending on the source of your stipend, you will or will not have taxes withheld from your monthly distribution. (Typically, students who are appointed to a training grant or have independent fellowship support that provides a majority of the stipend amount will NOT have taxes withheld.) If taxes are not withheld, you are still responsible for making appropriate quarterly estimated tax payments.

I. From CU Anschutz website:

How to view the 1098-T Form:

“ Log into UCDAccess

In your "Student Center", select "Student Account"

Select "View 1098-T" and select the year you want to view

The forms will be available only if you meet ALL of the following criteria:

- You have a valid, active home or mailing address on file at Anschutz Medical Campus.
- You have paid tax-reportable tuition, fees, or financial aid transactions on your account for that calendar year, including prior-year adjustments.

The items below are generally reported on the 1098-T.

- Paid Tuition
- Paid Mandatory Student Fees
- Paid Course/lab Fees
- Waivers
- Scholarships
- Grants

Items Not Reported on the 1098-T **(Be sure to keep and maintain receipts/documentation.)**

- Payments to or credits from the items below are NOT reported on the 1098-T. Unless noted otherwise, the IRS does not generally allow you to claim these items when calculating your allowable educational expenses and payments.
- College Opportunity Fund (COF) - The COF credit is not reported as a payment towards your tuition in Box 1, nor is it reported as a Grant or Scholarship in Box 5.
- Student Loans - If applicable, your loan provider will issue tax statements for deductible loan interest.
- Room and Board Expenses
- Fines (ie., parking, library, late fees)
- Tuition and Fees for Non-Credit Courses
- Anschutz Medical Campus Student Health and Dental Insurance Plans
- Books - per IRS guidelines, book charges and payments are usually tax deductible. For some courses taken at Anschutz Medical Campus, students are automatically charged for e-textbooks on their student accounts. Payments for those charges are included on the 1098-T form, UNLESS those charges were refunded due to approved appeals (ie., the books were purchased elsewhere) or the classes were dropped before the census deadline. For other book charges and payments not posted on the student account, those items will not be reported on the 1098-T form. ***Keep invoices and receipts of those transactions in your own tax records."***

II. IRS website information

1098-T (https://www.irs.gov/instructions/i1098et#en_US_2023_publink1000277119)

"Qualified tuition and related expenses.

Qualified tuition and related expenses are tuition, fees, and course materials required for a student to be enrolled at or attend an eligible educational institution.

The following are not qualified tuition and related expenses.

Amounts paid for any course or other education involving sports, games, or hobbies, unless the course or other education is part of the student's degree program or is taken to acquire or improve job skills.

Charges and fees for room, board, insurance, medical expenses (including student health fees), transportation, and similar personal, living, or family expenses."

Withholding and Tax Estimates. (<https://www.irs.gov/faqs/estimated-tax>)

“Question: How do I know if I have to file quarterly individual estimated tax payments?

Answer: Generally, you must make estimated tax payments for the current tax year if both of the following apply:

- You expect to owe at least \$1,000 in tax for the current tax year after subtracting your withholding and refundable credits.
- You expect your withholding and refundable credits to be less than the smaller of:
 - o 90% of the tax to be shown on your current year’s tax return, or
 - o 100% of the tax shown on your prior year’s tax return. (Your prior year tax return must cover all 12 months.)”

The IRS website has a Withholding Tax Estimator: <https://apps.irs.gov/app/tax-withholding-estimator>

PhD Student Tax info on other websites UCLA

<https://biomedsci.ucsd.edu/students/financial-support.html#Are-my-stipend/salary-and-tuiti>

“Though you will not receive a W-2 for your stipend income, **you are responsible for paying taxes on this amount.** You should be aware of this and plan accordingly.

- Free tax preparation assistance (domestic): <http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Find-a-Location-for-FreeTax-Prep> “

Vanderbilt. <https://gradschool.vanderbilt.edu/funding/taxes.php>

- “The IRS has a [Free File site](#) that can help you figure out if you can file your federal taxes for free and has the list of eligible online tax preparation companies or software. Some online tax preparation sites offer live, online support from tax experts. [Turbo Tax](#) is one option that has been used and recommended by students.
- The IRS's [page on scholarships, fellowships, and other grants](#)
- “[Do I Include My Scholarship, Fellowship, or Education Grant as Income on My Tax Return?](#)”

Cornell. <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/financial-support/tax-information/> Cornell-specific

tax information:

- [Understanding the 1098-T form](#)
- [1098-T FAQ](#)
- [Fellowship recipients](#)

All students:

- [Internal Revenue Service](#)

From Ask a Dean:

- [Do graduate students have to pay tax on our health insurance plan?](#) (March 2017)
- [Are we taxed on our health insurance?](#) (February 2019)

From Tips and Takeaways:

- [Understanding Federal Taxes with Mary MacAusland, C.P.A., Ph.D.](#)

Appendix 8: Faculty Membership

1. *Application and Evaluation Process for New Faculty Membership:* The Program Director is the initial contact for prospective faculty and advises potential applicants of the criteria and Program requirements for membership. Faculty applicants are required to submit a current CV, list of current and pending financial support and completed CSD membership questionnaire. In addition, applicants with limited extramural grant support but substantial other funds (including start-up funds) must also submit a letter of support from their departmental chair. The Membership Committee receives and evaluates these documents. Applicants determined to meet the criteria of the Program on paper are invited by the committee to present a research seminar and meet with students. The committee then discusses the candidate and makes a recommendation to the Program Director regarding the suitability of the candidate. This determination is based in part on confidential comments from faculty and students that are solicited after the research seminar and meeting with students. Within one month following the application seminar, the Membership Committee will vote on whether to recommend the applicant for faculty membership. If a majority support membership, then the full faculty will vote electronically.

The ballot will consist of three options: YES, NO, and DISCUSSION NEEDED

If ANY faculty member votes NO or DISCUSSION NEEDED, a membership decision will be deferred until a discussion can take place at the next general faculty meeting. At that point, the membership committee will summarize their evaluation of the applicant, and faculty will discuss and vote by ballot. The ballot vote requires a 2/3 affirmative vote by a quorum of the Program faculty. A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the total faculty. Ballots will be provided to those in attendance at the general faculty meeting. All votes will be kept confidential. Faculty meetings will be called semi-annually, in December and June.

2. *Criteria for Selection of Program Faculty:* Faculty membership does not require research in a specific area of cell biology, stem cells or development. Individuals with active programs of *hypothesis-driven* or *discovery-based* research that focus on how tissues and organisms develop and function at cellular and molecular levels will be considered for membership.

2.1. *Training Faculty:* The criteria for the selection of training faculty include all members of UCD faculty who: (i) are active as a principal investigator on an NIH R01 or equivalent grant with a stable pattern of funding (with the exception noted below for junior faculty, paragraph 2.1.1.), (ii) are active in the training of graduate students or postdoctoral fellows; (iii) have a history of being participatory in graduate training activities including support for departmental or interdepartmental Ph.D. training programs and graduate (Ph.D.) teaching activities; (iv) are actively involved as a major research interest in research related to CSD programmatic themes as described above in paragraph 2; (v) have membership in the UCD graduate school faculty, and (vi) are independently appointed, not subservient to the aims of other investigators, and at the rank of assistant professor or above. Full-time faculty at National Jewish Health (NJH) with university-equivalent rank of Assistant Professor and above, and who meet all other criteria as stated above, are also eligible for membership. Because of the above listed requirements, generally only tenure track faculty will be considered for program admission.

2.1.1. Newly Appointed Faculty: For newly appointed faculty hired at the Assistant, Associate or full Professor levels, the funding criterion can be temporarily waived for a period of up to three years provided the faculty member has been given a startup package sufficient to support graduate education and the candidate's chair writes a letter clearly stating that the department will guarantee the stipend, tuition, insurance, fees and funds to support the student's research until the completion of the Ph.D., if the faculty member fails to obtain grant funding and exhausts available startup funds. At the end of three years, faculty in this category will undergo a review as detailed in Section 3.

2.2. Non-training Faculty Members: Non-training faculty members have all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of training faculty members except non-training faculty will not serve as primary mentors for graduate students in the CSD Program.

Non-training faculty members, like CSD Program Training Faculty, are expected to regularly:

- i. Serve on CSD graduate student comprehensive & thesis committees, ii. Teach in CSD courses,
- iii. Attend CSD Program seminars, retreats and mini-symposia, iv. Serve on CSD Program standing committees,
- v. Attend and vote at CSD Program Faculty Meetings.

Non-training faculty membership will be recommended for CSD Program faculty who wish to participate in the academic aspects of the CSD Program but are unable to financially support graduate student thesis research in their labs. Non-training faculty members need to maintain active graduate school appointments. Upon securing funding sufficient to support student thesis research, a non-training faculty member can request a change in status to training faculty pending a review as detailed in Section 3.

2.2.1. Eligibility for non-training faculty: Membership as non-training faculty is open to 1) faculty previously appointed as training faculty in the CSD Program that at the time of their five year review lack the funding required for student training (see paragraph 3); 2) existing faculty that no longer desire to mentor graduate students but still desire to be involved in the CSD educational mission, and 3) new faculty that do not currently have the funding required for student training but are committed to being involved in the CSD educational mission.

2.2.2. Decision to recommend new faculty applicant as a non-training member: Following a review of application materials, discussion about the faculty applicant's seminar and input from program faculty and students, the Membership Committee may choose to recommend that the candidate be forwarded to the full faculty as a non-training member. In that event, the Membership Committee Chair will inform the Program Director of that decision. The Program Director will then contact the faculty applicant and discuss the committee's decision. The faculty applicant can provide additional information which can be used in a re-evaluation. Otherwise, the program director will confirm with the Membership Committee chair that a discussion has occurred and that the faculty

candidate wishes to move forward. The Membership Committee chair will then forward the application to the full faculty for consideration as a non-training member.

3. *Review of Current Program Faculty:* Program Membership for both training and non-training faculty members will be reviewed every five years. A questionnaire will be sent to each faculty member being reviewed, requesting an updated *curriculum vita*, a listing of current support, and evidence of participation in CSD program activities. Based on this information, the Membership Committee will make recommendations to the Steering Committee for continued faculty membership. Recommendations by the Membership Committee will be approved or disapproved by the Steering Committee by a simple majority vote. If the Steering Committee disapproves the recommendation of the Membership Committee, the recommendation will be returned to the Membership Committee for re-evaluation. A second disapproval by the Steering Committee will be taken as the final recommendation (positive or negative). If the Steering Committee does not support continued membership, the affected faculty member will be notified of this decision by the Program Director. Should a faculty member slated to undergo a review have a current CSD student in their lab, they will be reviewed when the student completes their thesis work and graduates. Should a faculty member have multiple CSD students in their lab, the review will take place after the next student graduates.

3.1. *Criteria for continuation as training faculty:* The criteria for continuation of membership as a training faculty are: (1) commitment to the program through service on student thesis or other faculty committees of the program; (2) involvement in teaching and/or other educational functions of the program such as seminars and retreats; and (3) sufficient funding to cover costs of student training. Active training faculty that fulfill requirements 1 and 2, but that do not have sufficient financial support for student training at the time of the review, will be recommended for membership as non-training faculty.

3.2. *Criteria for continuation as non-training faculty:* Criteria to remain as non-training faculty are commitment to the program through service and involvement in the educational mission of the program as described for training faculty.

3.3. *Transitioning from non-training to training status:* When sufficient financial resources for student training are re-achieved, the faculty can apply to transition to training faculty through an email request to the Program Director. The faculty member must attach a current CV to the request (and the faculty questionnaire if more than three years has elapsed since joining CSD in non-training status). The change to training status will be made following a recommendation by the Membership Committee and does not require a vote by the full CSD membership.

Appendix 9: Core Guidelines/Expectations for Mentors During Graduate Student Rotations

Preparing for the rotation

- Mentor plans ahead before the rotation for how to provide quick training and access for students to critical instruments, research spaces, etc. to not delay experiments. This includes coordination of animal facility access.
- Prior to accepting a rotation student, mentor should contact their Department Finance Administrator and discuss their plans to take a new student into their lab beginning in the following July.
- Mentor and student work together to form a hypothesis-driven rotation project in the realm of the lab's ongoing research. The student should not simply carry out work on a current lab member's project as extra pair of hands. The mentor and student will work together to complete the ORE Rotation Selection Form, describing the project background, hypothesis, aims and approach. This form should be completed and submitted for Program Director approval within the first two weeks of the rotation.

During the rotation

- Rotation students are generally expected to work in the lab during normal working hours (i.e. 9am-5pm, Monday-Friday), when not in class or attending CSD program activities. Rotation students are expected to clearly communicate class hours and required additional effort to their rotation mentors to coordinate lab presence times and mutual expectations. It is not appropriate for PIs to require a minimum number of hours for laboratory work during the rotation.
- Mentor works directly with the student or designates an experienced hands-on, day-to-day mentor/supervisor in the lab for the duration of the rotation, such as a more senior graduate student, post-doctoral fellow, established PRA, etc.
- Mentor and student hold regular one-on-one meetings throughout the rotation to discuss goals, progress toward agreed upon goals, challenges, etc. The recommendation is to meet at least once per week during the rotation.
- Mentor helps the student to develop and deliver their rotation talk. The rotation lab can also help.

Concluding the rotation

- Mentor holds a structured exit interview with the student at the end of their rotation to discuss how the rotation went, provide constructive feedback to the student, discuss the potential availability of a spot for the student in the lab, discuss if the lab is a good fit for the student, and discuss any contingencies on joining the lab (e.g. funding, consideration of other students in past or subsequent rotations).
- Mentor provides a short, written evaluation. The evaluation template is sent by the ORE to the mentor at the end of each rotation.
- Mentors factor in the time, quality, and realistic output of the lab effort of the student when assigning a grade for each rotation. The rotation grade is included as part of the evaluation form sent by ORE.
- If a mentor is to take multiple rotation students during the year, they are strongly advised to avoid an immediate offer to the first rotation student unless they have expressly qualified they can financially support multiple trainees.

- If a mentor has an unexpected change in funding and can no longer support a spot for a graduate student, they will communicate this to the rotation student quickly to allow rotation student to find alternative rotation options if necessary.

Information compiled and edited from University of Colorado Anschutz ORE advice and guidelines for Graduate Student research rotations document and from the rotation expectations section for the students listed in the CSD handbook.

[Developed by GAC, Program Director and Associate Program Director. 12.17.25]