

DVM Graduate Studies Guidelines

2005-2006

PURPOSE OF THE DVM GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM

The primary purpose of the DVM Graduate Studies Program is to provide consistency among research training for veterinarians who aspire to careers in which research is a significant element of the individual's professional commitment. The second objective is to attract outstanding graduate students to the College of Veterinary Medicine, thereby enhancing the quality of research conducted in this institution. Students who enter the DVM Graduate Studies Program will be full members of the already existing Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program. The goal of this program is to provide a structure that is broader than the current Field system and create a community from which all participants in Graduate Education can benefit. Graduate students will benefit generally from increases in the scope of services, support networks and research opportunities provided, as well as standardization of financial support. In turn, the faculty will benefit from the increased quality of matriculating students, the ability to have students rotate through their labs and resulting research collaborations with other faculty. Through student rotations and increased interaction among the several Graduate Fields, an integrated research community will be created.

PURPOSE OF THE DVM GRADUATE STUDIES GUIDELINES

The DVM Graduate Studies Guidelines are intended to provide guidance for all DVM graduate students that are enrolled in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences (BBS) Program at the College of Veterinary Medicine. The BBS Program includes the following Graduate Fields: Biochemistry, Comparative Biomedical Sciences, Immunology, Microbiology, Physiology, and Pharmacology. The DVM Graduate Studies Guidelines are consistent with the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program Guidelines. Decisions made by the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program take precedence over the material provided below. The information provided in this document is intended to serve as a supplemental guideline that addresses issues particular to DVM graduate students.

RESEARCH AREAS AND COURSE WORK

Graduate education at Cornell is administered by the University's Graduate School. Students may pursue graduate studies in a variety of subjects. The field of Comparative Biomedical Sciences includes studies of normal, healthy animals, as well as animal diseases at the molecular, organismic, animal and herd levels. Each student selects a major in one of the following areas of concentration: Developmental & Reproductive Biology, Structural & Functional Biology, Cellular & Molecular Medicine, Infectious Diseases, or Population Medicine & Epidemiology. Research in the field of immunology is focused primarily on host resistance to infectious disease. The field offers advanced training in the following concentrations: cellular immunology, immunochemistry, immunogenetics, immunopathology, and infection and immunity. The field of Pharmacology offers an intensive course of study and research with particular emphasis on cellular, molecular and biophysical aspects of pharmacology. Major research is in progress in the field of Pharmacology to elucidate the basic cellular and molecular mechanisms involved in receptor and ion channel function, signal transduction, neurotransmission, stimulus-secretion coupling, membrane-trafficking, and mechanisms of oncogenesis, genetic recombination and DNA repair. Students in the field of Physiology have the opportunity to concentrate in behavioral physiology; cardiovascular and respiratory physiology; endocrinology; environmental and comparative physiology; gastrointestinal and metabolic physiology; membrane and epithelial physiology; molecular and cellular physiology; neural and sensory physiology; physiological genomics and reproductive physiology. The field of Zoology's areas of concentration include animal cytology; comparative and functional anatomy;

developmental biology and ecology.

Formal instruction in a wide range of academic subjects is offered at Cornell. The graduate fields generally do not have specific course requirements. Instead, they defer to the student and to the student's Special Committee in selecting courses that are relevant to the individual's needs and interests. Some graduate programs in the College do have course requirements, however. On recommendation of the Special Committee, and with the consent of the instructor, a student may register for any course offered by any department, school or college of Cornell University. Course work is typically concentrated in the first two years of graduate study, although students may register for courses anytime during their training.

LABORATORY ROTATIONS

All incoming DVM graduate students will undertake 3 rotations during the first year of study, the duration of which is at the discretion of the Fields, but should fall between 1-4 months duration. Students are encouraged to complete all of these rotations. The purpose of the rotations is to enable students to assess a variety of training opportunities before they designate their Special Committee Chair. Although incoming students are admitted into only one Graduate Field, they are free to rotate among the laboratories of any of the graduate faculty that are a member of the Biological and Biomedical Sciences Program during the initial year of their graduate work. If, at the end of the rotations, they have chosen a mentor who is not a member of their admitting Field, the student is able to switch to another Field of their choice, pending approval of the Field's Executive Committee. Within existing Field guidelines, lab rotations are subject to evaluation by the laboratory mentor.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or a faculty member appointed by the DGS (typically the Department Chair, Section Chief, or Unit Director), will serve as the student's interim advisor during the initial rotation period. Students select the laboratories through which they rotate in consultation with the DGS. Although the time spent in each laboratory may vary, it must be a meaningful experience as judged by the DGS or his (her) designee. In exceptional circumstances, students may petition the Executive Committee of their Field to be excused from one rotation. The option of approving or denying such petitions is entirely at the discretion of the Field. Master's students entering a PhD program may be excused from rotations if they request an exemption and if the Executive Committee of the Field judges an exemption to be appropriate.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

All graduate students will fulfill a single semester teaching assignment appropriate to their expertise. These assignments will be comparable in duration and effort and will be conducted in the second or third year of the student's program. The Special Committee Chair responsible for the student during the teaching experience will be expected to release the student to fulfill their teaching commitment and also continue to provide a financial support for that period of time. It is expected that the teaching experience commitment will be no greater than 12-15 hours / week for one semester and the BBS Oversight Committee will approval authority over the teaching experience selection.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH TRAINING PROPOSAL

All DVM graduate students must submit an individual research training proposal to an external sponsor by the 18 month anniversary of enrollment in the Graduate School. The proposal must include financial support and must be endorsed by the student's Special Committee Chair and Department Chair or Unit Director of record.

DVM graduate students who are ineligible to submit a research training application because of citizenship restrictions are required to prepare a research proposal by the specified anniversary date. The adequacy of the proposal will be determined by the student's Special Committee and the Department Chair or Unit Director of record. Indication that the requirement has been fulfilled must be filed in the Graduate Education Office.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

DVM graduates who are interested in applying to a Graduate Field must follow the application procedure specific to that Graduate Field. In order to consider an application complete, all DVM graduates also must submit the following additional material by the Graduate Field deadline.

- Supplemental Application for DVM Graduate Students (LINK)
- Current Curriculum Vitae
- One copy of up to *three* most significant publications

Application forms for the Cornell Graduate School may be obtained by writing, telephoning or e-mailing. In addition, the supplemental application, curriculum vitae and publications can be sent directly to.

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Each Graduate Field's Admissions Committee will review all applications, beginning in January 2005, and make recommendations to a separate DVM Graduate Admissions Committee for further consideration and determination of funding possibilities. The DVM Graduate Admissions Committee's recommendation will be reviewed by the Dean, bearing in mind the College's academic and research missions and its commitment to equal opportunity and affirmative action. Domestic applicants being considered for admission will be asked to attend an Interview / Recruitment Weekend on March 4-5. All applicants will be notified of outcomes in March 2005. Successful candidates are not obligated to accept an offer prior to April 15, 2005, as agreed upon by the Council of Graduate Schools' Resolution.

The following criteria will be considered in evaluating prospective veterinarian graduates (not listed in any particular order).

- Completed courses
- Letters of recommendation
- Research and work experience
- Career Goal / Rationale
- GRE Scores
 - Most applicants have a 1200 combined verbal and quantitative score
- Undergraduate and DVM grade point average
- TOEFL score (if relevant)

FUNDING INFORMATION - PERIOD OF SUPPORT

The terms and conditions of the support period for any given DVM graduate student will vary,

depending on the source of funding used to support that student. Each student accepted into the program will receive an appointment letter that highlights the details associated with the period of support. Some common sources of funding include College support funds, NIH institutional training grants, and faculty mentor grant support.

Students pursuing a Ph.D. program typically remain in training for a period of four to five years. A faculty member who accepts a student must provide written assurance to the Department Chair or Unit Director of record and to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education that tuition, fees, and a salary commensurate with the student's professional qualifications and experience (see below) will be provided for a period of five years. Each year of financial support is contingent on the student's continued enrollment as a full-time PhD student in good standing in the Graduate School and evidence of satisfactory progress toward the degree as determined by the student's Special Committee.

Regardless of the specific funding source, tuition (\$18,000 for 2004-05) and health insurance (\$1,202 for 2004-05) will be the responsibility of the College of Veterinary Medicine. All graduate students are required to carry the Cornell University Student Health Insurance Plan (CUSHIP). Family coverage is offered by the Graduate School; the cost of the plan is borne by the student.

The stipend / salary amount that the DVM graduate student receives is dependent on the funding source. Specific details will be presented in the appointment letters. The College of Veterinary Medicine has established the Veterinary Graduate Assistant salary schedules to reflect our minimum salary commitment to all DVM's that are seeking their PhD. All DVM graduate students can expect to receive the following (2004-05):

Level 1	\$28,600	Level 5	\$32,200
Level 2	\$29,400	Level 6	\$33,200
Level 3	\$30,200	Level 7	\$34,300
Level 4	\$31,200	Level 8	\$35,300

One level is allowed for each full year of relevant academic experience. Experience in full-time academic or industry research positions, Resident or Intern programs, and in relevant M.S. degree programs will be counted as academic experience. Credit above level one is also given for full-time private veterinary practice as follows:

Up to two years in Practice	= 1 Level
Three or Four Years in Practice	= 2 Levels
Five or More Years in Practice	= 3 Levels

Depending on the funding source, DVM graduate students may also be eligible for a training-related allowance. Again, details will be presented in the appointment letter.

TAXABILITY OF AWARDS

Applicants are encouraged to consult with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or their personal accountant regarding the tax obligations of awards. The IRS publication entitled "Scholarships and Fellowships" (Publication 520) is a useful document to review. Interpretation and implementation of the tax laws are the domain of the IRS and the courts. Cornell does not have the authority to provide tax advice nor to determine what the status may be for a particular taxpayer. Cornell will provide a 1099 form at the end of the calendar year.

CONCURRENT AWARDS

Students cannot concurrently accept two training positions or fellowships. Should a candidate accept an assistantship and subsequently receive another award, he or she must resign the first position before activating the new award. The student should contact the Office of Graduate Education if he/she has questions regarding their situation.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students requiring a leave longer than one month must seek approval from the Graduate School, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education and the Graduate Field.

VACATION, HOLIDAYS, AND SICK LEAVE

Students are ineligible to participate in the College's benefit plan. Students must seek approval from their Special Committee Chair when leaves are required.

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

All faculty that have a DVM Graduate Student working with them need to adhere to the DVM Graduate Studies Guidelines.