

Cornell University

**Biomedical  
& Biological Sciences**



PhD STUDENT  
HANDBOOK  
2022-2023

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## Biomedical & Biological Sciences PhD Program Guiding Statement



The Cornell University Biomedical and Biological Sciences (BBS) Graduate Program is an interdisciplinary program consisting of outstanding graduate students conducting state-of-the-art basic, clinical and translational life sciences research alongside their world-renowned faculty mentors and other research professionals. Housed in the heart of biomedical research at the Cornell-Ithaca campus in the College of Veterinary Medicine, the BBS program takes advantage of outstanding research facilities, the vibrant Cornell undergraduate campus and strong links to the Weill Cornell Medical College campus in New York City.

The BBS Program fosters a nurturing, student-centered community of scholars that is accessible, engaging and committed to ensuring that our graduate students reach their full potential in research, teaching and professional development. A fundamental principle of the BBS program is that scientific collaboration and cutting-edge research are best achieved through a community of individuals with diverse points of view and varied life experiences. In BBS, we are first generation students, students of color, veterans, and returning students. We are baccalaureates, DVMs, and combined degree students. We study cancer biology, immunology, and wildlife conservation, and we come from different parts of the United States and the world. The strength of the BBS program lies in its students, faculty, and staff, and the many individual backgrounds, stories, and interests they bring to our community.



*"Any Person, Any Study."*

- Ezra Cornell and Andrew Dickson White, on Cornell's founding mission

Cornell University is a place where intercultural skills are developed and used everywhere: throughout our diverse campus groups, with our community partners, within our classrooms and in our workplaces. At Cornell, we recognize people with diverse backgrounds and experiences bring great value to education, discovery, creativity, and engagement which is reflected in [our long history of diversity and inclusion](#).

- Join our commitment to diversity and inclusiveness.
- Add to our intellectual community with your unique perspective.
- At Cornell we don't simply want you to fit in with what we are already doing—we want you to expand our horizons, blaze new trails, pursue new knowledge, and share all of what you have to offer with all of us.

At Cornell, we are always seeking new and more effective approaches towards fulfilling our diversity and inclusion mission through the institution's newly established [Core Values](#). We are continually improving our campus culture and demographic diversity through a focused framework for progress, [Belonging at Cornell](#), and through careful attention to [regulatory guidance](#).

## **Belong at Cornell**

Belonging at Cornell is a framework designed to continue the progress towards making Cornell a more diverse and inclusive environment. Its mission is to focus our collective efforts on creating a campus community where individuals from diverse backgrounds and life experiences can both contribute and thrive. The intent of Belonging at Cornell is to improve the overall experience of faculty, staff and students, not to solve every diversity or inclusion challenge, nor eliminate the effects of respectful, but challenging discourse.

**More information at:** <http://diversity.cornell.edu/>

## BBS Program Administration

### Administrative and Support Team

<b>Robert Weiss</b>	Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Education	<a href="mailto:rsw26@cornell.edu">rsw26@cornell.edu</a>
<b>Dave Lin</b>	Director of Graduate Studies ( <b>DGS</b> )	<a href="mailto:dml45@cornell.edu">dml45@cornell.edu</a>
<b>Arla Hourigan</b>	Graduate Education Manager	<a href="mailto:aj96@cornell.edu">aj96@cornell.edu</a> 607-253-4448
<b>Alyssa Lopez</b>	Graduate Education Specialist Primary Graduate Field Assistant ( <b>GFA</b> )	<a href="mailto:al546@cornell.edu">al546@cornell.edu</a> 607-253-3276

## BBS Peer support

The members of the [Biomedical and Biological Sciences Peer Mentors](#) are a dedicated group of current students that help incoming students transition into the BBS program, provide peer support to current BBS students, and answer questions from prospective students. They are here to share their personal perspectives and experiences as a BBS graduate student with you via email. Please feel free to contact them by clicking on their name. You will be assigned a peer mentor after you matriculate into our program (after April 15<sup>th</sup> each year). It is common for BBS Peer Mentors to assist newly matriculated students during the apartment hunting process.

**BBS Graduate Student Society (BBSGSS)** is the coordinating student body charged with representing all students enrolled in the BBS PhD program. This group of current students monitors issues of importance to the graduate student community, represents the concerns of graduate students to BBS Program administration, and advocate for changes to enhance the quality of graduate education. They also sponsor academic and social events of interest to the graduate student community throughout the calendar year.

**BBS Diversity & Inclusion Council** is a group of current BBS students committed to educating and serving the BBS community, while enhancing cultural awareness, sensitivity, and growth. They strive to provide safe spaces for students of all backgrounds to express their concerns and challenges with their graduate school journey on a peer level and maintain active communication with faculty in hopes to promote a more inclusive BBS community. This council aims to amplify student voices, particularly those of Black, Native, Latinxs, Asian American and Pacific Islanders, and other underrepresented student groups by serving as liaisons between students, the BBS community and campus wide resources to ensure well rounded support is available.

## Living in Ithaca



Ithaca is home to spectacular waterfalls and lakes, organic farms and wineries, a thriving music and arts community, and an invigorating climate year-round. Located at the southern tip of Cayuga Lake, the longest of the 11 Finger Lakes, Ithaca is consistently rated among the most livable cities in the United States.

With more restaurants per capita than New York City, Ithaca has a bustling social scene with dozens of bars and restaurants, as well as music venues, theaters, and a farmers' market that's been named one of the best in the country by Zagat.

Downtown Ithaca's newly renovated [Commons](#) is an open-air pedestrian mall that's at the center of the town's dining, shopping, and entertainment scene. Events like the Downtown Ithaca Apple Harvest Festival and the Great Downtown Ithaca Chili Cook-Off are held at the Commons throughout the year.

Learn more at [Visit Ithaca \(www.visitithaca.com\)](http://www.visitithaca.com)

View the "Best of Ithaca" website for more details on local favorites for food and drink, essentials, and entertainment venues [https://www.ithaca.com/special\\_sections/](https://www.ithaca.com/special_sections/)

### HOUSING

If you are looking for information about housing, check out the following links:

- <https://scl.cornell.edu/residential-life/housing/campus-living>
- <https://www.vet.cornell.edu/education/biomedical-biological-sciences-bbs-phd-program/phd-program/current-students/our-community/housing-information>
- <https://ithaca.craigslist.org/d/apts-housing-for-rent/search/apa>

## Academic Calendars

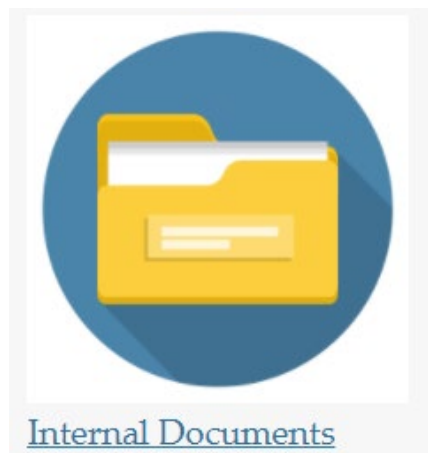
The BBS Program follows the University Primary Academic Calendars, found online here <https://registrar.cornell.edu/academic-calendar/2022-2023>

BBS PhD orientation begins one week prior to the Fall start of classes. Each day is primarily of half-day of programming. Our goal is to provide you with needed information that will help you transition into graduate school at Cornell while providing you with social opportunities to network with faculty, staff, and new and current graduate students. We will also give you plenty of "down time" to make sure that you can take care of personal business.

## Program Overview

Graduate education at Cornell is organized around Graduate Fields. These Fields are based on specific areas of research which span different Departments and Colleges. Cornell faculty may join any field which aligns with their research program. The Biomedical and Biological Sciences PhD Program is designed to incorporate and build on this structure, creating an integrated research community. It is required that all participating faculty adhere to similar standards and expectations in specific areas in order to ensure that all graduate students in the Program have a similar and equitable graduate education experience.

Important BBS field specific documents *are located in the Cornell Box* – [BBS Internal documents folder](#)  
You will notice the following icon throughout the BBS website – [www.vet.cornell.edu/BBS](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/BBS)



**Research opportunities in BBS:** Students in the BBS field will select Special Committee chairs associated with one of five concentrations: Immunology and Infectious Disease, Molecular and Cellular Medicine, Population Medicine and Epidemiology, Translational Medicine, and Zoology and Wildlife Conservation. A brief description of each of the concentrations follows.

**Population Medicine and Epidemiology** represents the study of health and disease in a population and the underlying factors that lead to these conditions. The goal of this research is to prevent the spread and/or



future incidents of illness. As such, it is considered the cornerstone of public health, production medicine, and preventive medicine.

**Immunology and Infectious Disease:** The concentration of Immunology and Infectious Disease has a substantial cadre of faculty members and students working in the areas of infection and immunity, cellular immunology, immune regulation, immunogenetics, and immunopathology. There are also members currently carrying out studies in the areas of immunotoxicology, membrane biochemistry, developmental immunology, immunoparasitology, and related fields.

**Molecular and Cellular Medicine** faculty and trainees are engaged in investigations of fundamental cellular processes and the mechanisms that control them in health and disease. Research projects range from molecular interactions, protein folding, and membrane biophysics to development and function of organ systems and whole animals. Fundamental research, using cutting-edge technologies, enables researchers at Cornell to make significant advances in broad scientific disciplines such as cell and developmental biology, genetics and genomics, neurobiology, stem cell biology, mechanisms of cancer, and physiology.

**Translational Medicine:** Translational medicine seeks to leverage basic science discovery for the development of new therapies that will improve the health of animals and humans. Basic scientists and clinicians partner in drug and biomarker discovery, stem cell and regenerative medicine, and development of imaging technology to tackle problems in reproductive biology, infectious disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, and other clinically relevant areas.

**Zoology and Wildlife Conservation** integrates two broad fields of biology: animal biology and conservation biology. Opportunities exist for study and research in comparative and functional anatomy, developmental biology, and comparative and experimental embryology. The survival of threatened and endangered species requires innovative and integrative ideas and approaches to wildlife conservation, and our faculty are those innovators – conservation studies focus on individual animals, species, and ecosystems.

## BBS Program Learning Goals

As an umbrella program, the Biomedical and Biological Sciences PhD program fosters an atmosphere of collaboration, focusing on the interface between scientific research and clinical practice as well as a commitment to animal and human health.

The overriding goal of the PhD program is to assemble the knowledge and skills in a discipline that enables you to perform research that will create new knowledge. While each student's course of study is tailored to their needs and background, students across the program will share many learning goals on the road to establishing themselves as a professional scientist, including: independent learning and mastery of the appropriate literature in the student's subfield; integration of the current state of knowledge to formulate a cutting edge research question; acquisition of data collection skills; acquisition of appropriate analysis skills to derive conclusions for appropriately designed investigations; development of teaching skills; effective communication abilities using written, spoken and presentation skills.

Additionally, it is essential that biomedical and biological scientists are aware of ethical issues pertaining to the conduct and dissemination of research, in collaborative research endeavors as well as instances that may arise concerned with the teaching arena. Opportunities to participate in training concerned with ethical issues will be provided and must be completed by all students.



## Proficiencies

A candidate for a PhD degree in the BBS PhD Program is expected to demonstrate mastery of knowledge in the field, and to contribute significant, original research to our understanding of biology within their sub-discipline. In so doing, the candidate will have demonstrated the following upon completion of the program:

1. Made an original and substantial contribution to the field.
2. Demonstrated in-depth knowledge of one area of expertise.
3. Demonstrated a broad knowledge of theory and research across several sub-disciplines in the field.
4. Learned and followed ethical guidelines for working in the field.
5. Written and spoken effectively to professional and lay audiences about issues in the field.

## Assistantships & Fellowships

BBS PhD students may be awarded financial support in the form of an assistantship. The two typical assistantships that BBS student are awarded are the Graduate Research Assistantship (**GRA**) or Teaching Assistantship (**TA**). Graduate student assistantships ([Policy 1.3](#)) are an arrangement in which financial support is awarded to a graduate student who engages in teaching and/or research in furtherance of the university's academic mission, as well as his or her graduate education. All assistantships include a tuition credit, a stipend at least at the university's published minimum rate, and health insurance coverage.

Students may hold different assistantships during their time at Cornell, or may receive funding from a variety of other funding arrangements such as fellowships or external awards. Because assistantships include a service component the **stipends are processed semi-monthly through Cornell's payroll system with applicable tax withholdings.**

Because students funded through assistantships are expected to make progress towards their research degrees, assistantship hours for TA appointments are limited to 15 to 20 hours per week, averaging no more than 15 hours per week for a TAship that covers 100% of the stipend and tuition. Hourly limits for GRA appointments are not explicitly defined because they, by definition, are "An academic appointment focused on thesis or other degree-related research of a type that is required from all candidates for the degree. Because a student devotes considerable time to dissertation research, the time spent on research connected with the project is variable. GRAs are awarded full tuition credit and a stipend." GRAs may accept a combined total of up to **eight hours** per week during their GRA assignments of additional assistantship, hourly student appointment, or outside employment.

A **fellowship** provides financial support to graduate students to pursue graduate studies without associated teaching or research responsibilities (as they are in a teaching or graduate research assistantship). Fellowships are generally merit-based internal or external awards to support a student in a full-time course of study. **Fellows are paid three times a year in lump sum payments and taxes are not withheld for U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents.** The Internal Revenue Service classifies grant aid in excess of tuition and mandatory fees as taxable income and requires Cornell to withhold 14% in taxes if you are a non-resident alien and not eligible for exemption from taxes under a tax treaty.

Approximately 20 percent of our doctoral students studying on campus receive Cornell University Fellowships. These fellowships typically include full tuition, a 12-month stipend, and Cornell individual student health insurance.

## Roadmap to Graduation

All students enrolling in the BBS Graduate Program will take a core curriculum that is intended to provide training in research design, translational science, oral and written scientific communication, and research ethics. The student will also select a BBS concentration that is associated with the area of their thesis research: Immunology and Infectious Disease, Molecular and Cellular Medicine, Population Medicine and Epidemiology, Translational Medicine, and Zoology and Wildlife Conservation.

In addition to coursework, students are required to complete 3 research rotations in the first year, complete a one-semester teaching experience in the second or third year of training, attend eight or more seminars per semester, and participate in professional development opportunities.

BBS concentration course titles	Credits
BIOAP 6100 By Scientific Design	2
BIOAP 7100 Translational Biology	2
BIOMG 7510 Research Ethics	1
VTBMS 7200 BBS WIP	1

**VTBMS 7200 BBS Work-in-Progress (WIP)** during Fall and Spring semesters. Designed to highlight and disseminate BBS student research, students are required to enroll in WIP and present on an annual basis through their 5th year of enrollment. All BBS students are required to attend 75% of the BBS WIP and provide feedback via Qualtrics survey for 50% of presenters (attendance and feedback will be tracked). All BBS faculty are encouraged to attend. First-year students will give a presentation on their rotation projects. Students beyond the first year should coordinate their annual Special Committee meeting with their BBS WIP research presentation and request their committee members attend the seminar.

Students beyond their first year will give a 12 or 20 minute presentation (based on current year) with 5-10 minutes of questions. First-year students will give two “elevator pitch” (5 or 3 minute) presentations (one Fall and one Spring) on their rotation projects. We do not expect students beyond their 5<sup>th</sup> year of graduate study to give a WIP seminar. Similarly, any student with a scheduled B-exam date during the academic year will not be expected to present. We still highly encourage these students to attend. Students are expected to attend 8 seminars per semester for the duration of their PhD.

**The objectives behind the BBS WIP are four-fold:**

1. Provide each student an opportunity to formally present their thesis research, allowing them to develop communication skills essential for a successful research career.
2. Develop students’ critical thinking abilities by encouraging them to ask questions of speakers.
3. Expose our students to the exciting depth and breadth of research within the BBS Field, and to encourage research communication across the range of concentrations within BBS.

4. Foster a community among our current students across what used to be distinct fields. The successful BioAP 6100 course has connected our first-year students, and we aim to continue this communication across the different classes as they carry on with their research.

## Laboratory Rotations

BBS PhD students are required to complete three rotations during their first year enrolled in the program. These rotations are designed to: 1) provide a range of research experiences that will give you a broad knowledge of methodologies and techniques; 2) provide you with the opportunity for more substantial contact with various faculty (and faculty with you) in order for both to make an informed decision about your thesis laboratory and Special Committee membership; 3) provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate your scientific abilities and enthusiasm for research to various faculty, with the ultimate goal of finding a mentor who is willing to accept you into the lab and provide your funding for the duration of your research project.

*You may begin discussing joining a lab with faculty members on May 1<sup>st</sup>. All first year students are expected to have been accepted into a lab by June 1. If a fourth rotation is required, permission from your DGS and the Associate Dean of Research & Graduate Education must be obtained.*

### General timeline to follow for first year rotations

Rotation #1 - Begin no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> and end sometime in November

Rotation #2 - Begin no later than first week in December and end by February 28th

Rotation #3 – Begin no later than March 1 and end mid-May

The BBS rotation evaluation process provides a framework for constructive discussion of the student's laboratory rotation. ***The rotation evaluation has three components:***

1. **Student Evaluation** – [ONLINE FORM](#) Student completes online self evaluation. This evaluation will be emailed to your rotation mentor and student will be copied on the message.
2. **Mentor Evaluation** – [ONLINE FORM](#) Faculty submits online response which will then be emailed back to faculty mentor to be shared with student prior or during the required face-to-face dialogue.
3. **Face-to-Face Discussion**

*DVM seeking PhD students who are eligible to be appointed to the Comparative Medicine NIH T32 training grant must conduct research rotations on an accelerated timeline. (each rotation is typically 10 weeks in duration and must be at least 8 weeks long)*

Rotation #1 - Sept 1 until Thanksgiving break

Rotation #2 - Dec 1 until Feb. 15

Rotation #3 – Feb 15 until beginning of May

**Note:** *A student may request a reduction in required lab rotations if they have extensive research experience and demonstrate a strong rationale for their selection of a Special Committee chair. Students may discuss this possibility with their DGS and petition for a reduced rotation requirement. Approval is at the discretion of the DGS and the chair of the BBS Oversight Committee. Students should be aware that such requests are approved only rarely.*

## BBS 1<sup>st</sup> Year Expectations Discussion

To encourage communication between students and their faculty mentors, formal opportunities have been established to review student progress. Upon joining a lab, students will complete an expectations discussion ([HERE](#)) with their PI. Each year, students will complete the Individual Development Plan ([HERE](#) and see below) with their PI. At each annual committee meeting, an explicit point of discussion should be the student's progress to date. And finally, the annual Student Progress Report (SPR) form ([HERE](#) and see below) also includes a section for PIs and students to discuss progress to date.

## Academic Progress

Progress toward a graduate degree at Cornell is measured in successful academic semesters earned. The minimum academic registration requirements for earning a PhD equals six semesters, two of them being after the A exam. Summer semesters do not count towards the six academic semesters needed to earn the PhD.

## BBS Student Progress Report (SPR)

The BBS PhD student progress report (SPR) provides a framework for constructive discussion of a student's progress toward his or her degree. Students will participate in self-evaluation, and faculty mentors will provide students with a written evaluation of their progress and performance.

Students are then required to meet with their Special Committee yearly to review their progress and discuss future academic plans. If a student fails to fill out the SPR, a hold may be placed against the student's record until it is completed.

The SPR must be completed annually by ALL BBS students, including first year students, on or before May 15th. Faculty need to submit their portion by June 1st.

1. Schedule an annual meeting with your Special Committee. Students are responsible for setting up this meeting, and are strongly encouraged to hold it in conjunction with their WIP presentation. First year students should meet with their DGS.
2. Submit annual committee meeting date to Office of Grad Ed via this [SURVEY](#). You and your special committee chair will receive an email in response that includes the links to the SPR.
3. Complete the Student Section of the SPR, save and distribute to your Special Committee **10 days prior** to your committee meeting.
4. Meet with your Special Committee to discuss your progress and plans for the coming year.
5. After the meeting, finalize the Student Section of the SPR and submit it.
6. Your Committee Chair will submit their portion of the form **within 30 days of your meeting** and your milestone will be marked complete.

Please contact your DGS or the Office of Graduate Education if you are unable to fulfill this requirement. These reports will be saved in your permanent file as evidence of progress in your program.

Examples of unsatisfactory progress include such things as a GPA or grade in a course that falls below a B-, unsatisfactory work in the lab or in your teaching experience. It is important to communicate with your faculty mentor, the DGS of your Field and/or the Office of Graduate Education immediately if you are experiencing academic problems or problems that affect your academic performance. All of these individuals are committed to your success and can offer assistance and, in some cases, solutions.

[General information, tips and FAQ about the SPR for students](#)

**Please note:** Not all questions are relevant for all students (e.g., you may not yet have a publication, etc.). If a question is not applicable, simply enter "NA".

## BBS Individual Development Plan (IDP)

BBS students, in conjunction with their faculty chair, are required to fill out an [Individual Development Plan \(IDP\)](#) (fillable PDF available on the BBS internal box site) by the start of classes each Fall semester.

BBS views the individual development plan (IDP) as a tool to assist graduate students in identifying areas for scientific and personal development. The IDP is an opportunity for graduate students to reflect on where they are in their development journey and identify meaningful goals to further their growth in the coming year. It serves as an opportunity for dialogue between graduate students and their PIs to set goals for the year and pinpoint how best to achieve those goals. For PIs, this is an important opportunity for you to mentor your graduate student and provide guidance, something this is particularly important in light of the pandemic and all of the uncertainty it has created.

Students - once you have completed your discussion with your PI, please send BBS GFA, Alyssa Lopez ([al546@cornell.edu](mailto:al546@cornell.edu)) a note confirming you have completed the meeting. You are not required to share your IDP form with the Office of Graduate Education.

## Course Enrollment

Registration is the first step in your study at Cornell. Once registered with the University, you will have established your status and be able to use Cornell's many resources.

### Checking Your Registration Status

To check your registration status, log in to Student Essentials (<https://studentessentials.cornell.edu/>) and view your "Registration Status" at the top of the page. If you are registered, your Registration Status will state "Registered" with a green checkmark.

The absence of a green checkmark means there is a hold preventing your registration. After the third week of classes you will lose access to university services and will be charged a \$350.00 late fee in

addition to finance charges. If you register after the sixth week of classes, you will be charged a \$500.00 late fee in addition to finance charges.

### **Course Requirements**

To be considered a full-time student, you are required to enroll in a minimum of 12 credits each semester. You should meet with your advisor at each semester to plan for your next semester's course enrollment to ensure that you are on the right path.

### **Enrolling in Courses**

The course Add-Drop period spans the start of each semester. You must complete enrollment within the first three weeks of each academic term using the Student Center ([www.studentcenter.cornell.edu](http://www.studentcenter.cornell.edu)).

### **Dropping Classes**

The last date to drop a class is seven weeks after the start of the term. All drops and changes must be made through your Student Center ([www.studentcenter.cornell.edu](http://www.studentcenter.cornell.edu)).

After seven weeks, changes to your courses will be made only in exceptional circumstances. If you drop a course, your transcript will show a "W" signifying that you withdrew from it.

If you want to drop a course after the drop period closes, you must get a General Petition form signed by the course instructor and your special committee chair. Forms are available from the Graduate School form's page ([www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms](http://www.gradschool.cornell.edu/forms))

### **Auditing Classes**

Auditing a class means you regularly attend the class, but do not participate in all aspects of the course. You won't receive any credit hours and the course will be marked with a "V" on your transcript. Some courses do not lend themselves to auditing, and in such cases instructors may not allow it.

## Course of Study / Class Roster

The Courses of Study catalogs Cornell University's diverse academic programs and resources. <http://courses.cornell.edu/> Explore the online navigation links for information about colleges, departments, course offerings, and requirements for majors and minors. Course offerings are updated throughout the year and are subject to change. Policies and requirements are updated annually. The Courses of Study is published yearly by the Office of the University Registrar, and is only available online. Use the *Help* button to find codes and definitions, and answers to frequently asked questions.

The Class Roster is the semester by semester scheduled classes, university-wide requirements, and select university policies, initiatives and interdisciplinary centers. You will need to go to Class Roster to get the Class number (which is used to enroll in a course in studentcenter. For example – Spring 2022 - BIOAP 7100 By Scientific Design: Skill Building for a Career in the Life Sciences II Class number = 2696. When you enter 2696 in studentcenter to add the course you will be enrolled in BIOAP 7100!



A major goal in biomedical research is to translate advances in basic science into practically useful applications in clinical medicine. This class will provide graduate students with exposure to basic ... [view course details](#) ▶

**Enrollment Information** Syllabi: [1 available](#)

Regular Academic Session. **2 Credits Graded**

<b>2696</b>	★ <a href="#">LEC 001</a>	<a href="#">R</a>	2:45pm - 4:15pm	Feb 8 - May 14, 2021	<a href="#">Collins, R</a>	<span style="color: green;">●</span>
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[Online Meeting](#)

**Instruction Mode: Online**

Prerequisites: graduate student in the Biological and Biomedical Sciences program or with instructor consent

For more information on courses commonly taken by BBS students review the “**BBS class recommendations 2021-22**” document, please reference the Cornell Box – [BBS Internal documents folder](#)

## Special Committee

Your PhD program is developed and supervised by your Special Committee. You, with the advice and assistance of your faculty mentor, will choose the members of your Committee. **Your full Special Committee must be formed by the end of your third semester of registration** as a graduate student. It is to your advantage to establish your committee as soon as possible after your rotations so that you can be informed of their expectations for your program. Once you have spoken to faculty who you want to include on your Special Committee, you need to update your record via Student Service Center. The BBS Program requires that a PhD Committee be composed of at least four faculty members, as detailed below.

- **Chair:** Your Chairperson represents the concentration chosen as the major subject in the BBS field, directs your thesis research and is responsible for your funding.
- **Minors:** You need at least two members representing one or two other minor concentrations. True to the spirit of Cornell’s individualized program, these may be any graduate faculty from the more than 90 Graduate Fields in the University who you feel would contribute to your particular research project.
- **Field Appointed:** A Field Appointed Member (FAM) is chosen by the Director of Graduate Studies soon after your Special Committee is formed. The Field-Appointed Member is a permanent member of your Committee and is charged with ensuring that Field standards and requirements are upheld and serves as an advocate for you. Contact your DGS giving a short summary of your proposed project, your DGS will then make recommendations for your FAM in consultation with you and your PI.

**Communication is Key:** Since your Special Committee directs your program, decides whether you are making satisfactory progress toward your degree, conducts exams and approves your thesis, frequent communication is essential. Once you have chosen the members of your Special Committee, you should schedule a meeting with your entire Committee to create a plan for your research project and degree



completion. Your Special Committee meets on an annual basis to complete your Graduate Student Progress Review (at the end of the spring semester or early summer). You can also call additional meetings of your Special Committee at other times during the year as you feel it is necessary.

*For more information and to review the “[Simple Guide to BBS Committee roles and expectations](#)” document, please reference the Cornell Box – [BBS Internal documents folder](#)*

## Teaching Experience

All BBS graduate students are required to complete a one-semester teaching experience, this can be a paid TAship or an unpaid teaching experience. Typically, students complete this requirement in their second or third year. The Office of Graduate Education coordinates teaching experience assignments each year. A partial list of available TAships is distributed via the BBS student listserv during the Spring semester each year. Students then submit a ranking of the teaching experience that best suits their experience, expertise, and area of interest. Students may submit a TAship that is not on the internal BBS list to fulfill their teaching requirement. The Office of Graduate Education then works with BBS DGS, Dave Lin to coordinate teaching assignments for the following year.

The teaching experience is designed to give you practice in aspects of teaching at a college level. Your faculty advisor will release you from the lab to fulfill this teaching commitment. After the teaching experience is complete, the faculty mentor must email the Office of Graduate Education to confirm the experience was completed successfully. Students can participate in a paid TAship or an unpaid teaching experience and are allowed to do so more than once if desired or financially necessary.

All students who are interested in teaching and improving their teaching skills are encouraged to participate in many of the workshops and symposia organized by the [Center for Teaching Excellence at Cornell](#).

## Admission to Candidacy

### **A Exam**

The A exam is also known as the Examination for Admission to Candidacy. For the BBS program this oral exam includes a written component, as determined by your Special Committee. You can take the exam after completing two successful academics semesters in your program, but before beginning your seventh semester—unless special permission is obtained from the Graduate School Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs.

Passing the A exam means the graduate faculty believes that you are ready to proceed into the dissertation phase of your degree program.

You will need to set a date with your special committee for your A exam, and then submit the online Schedule of A exam form. The completed/signed form **MUST** be received at least **SEVEN** calendar days prior to your exam.

After your exam you will need to submit a *Results of Admission to Candidacy* (A Exam). The results form must be completed within **THREE** business days of your exam.

The field of Biomedical and Biological Sciences does not confer a non-thesis Masters at the time of passing/failing the A-Exam.

Both forms can be found here <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/>

For more information and to review the “**BBS A-exam guidelines**” document, please reference the Cornell Box – [BBS Internal documents folder](#)

## Dissertation Defense

### B Exam

The B exam is an oral defense of your thesis or dissertation. This exam can be taken after completing all degree requirements, but not earlier than one month before completing the minimum registered semester requirements. At least two semesters of successful registration must be completed between the passing of the A exam and the scheduling of the B exam.

You will need to set a date with your special committee for your B exam, and then submit the online Schedule of A exam form. The completed/signed form **MUST** be received at least **SEVEN** calendar days prior to your exam. BBS GFA, Alyssa Lopez will then contact you for your B exam seminar information to announce to the BBS community.

After your exam you will need to submit a *Results of Final Defense of PhD Degree* (B Exam). The results form must be completed within **THREE** business days of your exam.

Both forms can be found here <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/forms/>

## Conference Travel Grants

The Graduate School provides grants to all graduate students who are invited to present papers or posters at professional conferences. Recipients must be enrolled (full-time or In Absentia) in a graduate research (MA/MS, MFA, DMA, JSD or PhD) degree program through the Graduate School and be a registered student during the term in which the conference takes place. Students must be presenting a paper or poster at the conference for which funds are requested. Historically, all qualifying applications have been funded!

The Graduate School also awards grants for research-related travel in the United States and abroad. These grants are for travel that is directly related to dissertation research, not conference travel. Awards of up to

\$2000 are offered, with priority given to post-A exam doctoral candidates who have not received a prior award.

BBS students are encouraged to submit your application materials as early as possible, preferable before the conference start date, however, applications will be accepted up to 30 days after the start date of the conference. Additional deadline and application instructions for the Graduate School conference grant are located [here](#).

In addition, the Office of Graduate Education will provide top off awards to Graduate School conference grants. If your expenses exceed the amount of your Graduate School conference grant please contact your GFA, Alyssa Lopez, [al546@cornell.edu](mailto:al546@cornell.edu). See [document](#) for additional details on the CVM conference grant top off.

## Mental Health Care

The health and mental wellbeing of our students is a top priority of the BBS program. We recognize that stresses unique to the responsibilities of performing PhD-level research contribute to creating mental health challenges that are new or overwhelming. In the BBS community, we seek to dismantle the stigma associated with these commonly-encountered experiences. Our goal is to provide resources to encourage students to reach out and access a variety of available mental health support systems, without fear that it will be negatively viewed or impede their progress. The PhD journey is a marathon, and we believe that actively caring for students' mental wellbeing is vital to ensure that they flourish as scientists.

Within BBS, we offer the BBS Faculty EARS program. Graduate students in BBS can speak to any member of a rotating group of EARS faculty about difficulties they are facing in graduate school. The intent is to create a safe and confidential listening space where students can discuss their concerns. All EARS faculty were nominated by students, and have gone through basic training with the Cornell EARS program. Students wishing to talk to a BBS faculty EARS member have two options. They can contact any of the faculty listed and meet with them at their convenience. Alternatively, they can attend a virtual 'drop-in' hour, hosted by one of the faculty members. Times for drop-in and a list of current faculty are posted [here](#) on the intranet site. Faculty participants will rotate each year, and times for drop-ins will change month to month.

In addition, the BBS GSS offers students a safe and confidential space to discuss issues of concern to them. Further, the peer mentor group also offers the opportunity to discuss concerns in confidence. And finally, the DGS, Arla, and Alyssa are always available for consultation and support.

A wide range of Counseling and Psychiatry Services are offered to all students across campus including, individual, group, drop-in and crisis intervention.

### **Common reasons students seek care:**

- Stress & anxiety
- Depression & loneliness

- Trauma or grief
- Adjustment challenges
- Relationship difficulties
- Questions about identity
- Managing existing mental health conditions

A complete list of services can be found at <https://health.cornell.edu/services/mental-health-care>

Check out the **BBS Mental Health & Wellbeing WEBSITE** – to read BBS PhD student testimonials on seeking support.

**24/7 phone consultation** If you have a physical or mental health concern – for yourself or for someone else – you can call us any time for consultation and support. We'll help you determine what care is needed, and how, when, and where to get it. **Call 607-255-5155**

If you need immediate care, consider these options:

<p><b>Cayuga Medical Center (CMC)</b>  <i>Ithaca hospital &amp; emergency department</i>  <u>101 Dates Drive, Ithaca</u> – on Rt. 96 on the west side of Cayuga Lake          Open 24/7 <u>607-274-4411</u></p>	<p><b>WellNow Urgent Care</b> (formerly called Five Star)  <i>Non-emergency walk-in clinic</i>  <u>740 South Meadow Street, Ithaca</u> – on Rt. 13, south of Wegmans          Open every day, 8:00 am – 8:00 pm  <u>607-319-4563</u> *Optional: <u>reserve your spot</u></p>
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## Leave of Absence

Under compelling circumstances, you may request a leave of absence for personal, medical, or parental reasons. <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/policies/leaves-of-absence/>

- For medical reasons unrelated to childbirth or adoption, request a [health leave](#), available for up to 12 months and renewable for a maximum of four years.
- Maternity and paternity leave ([parental accommodation](#)), although not technically a leave, offers six weeks of paid accommodation (eight weeks for the birth mother for a cesarean section delivery) OR up to two semesters of reduced load status depending on your circumstances.
- Leave of absence is available to any student for personal reasons other than health and parental accommodation for up to 12 months and renewable for a maximum of four years.

### Common reasons cited for taking a personal leave:

- Personal reasons (i.e. family situation, financial, need to re-evaluate your interests and/or goals)
- You complete a degree prior to the end of the fall or spring semester. You can file for a leave upon completion to be eligible for prorated tuition for the semester.

- You take a job while completing your degree. You will not make academic progress during a leave and will not be eligible to receive funding from Cornell during a leave of absence.

**NOTE:** If you are on a non-immigrant visa and would like to take a personal leave, you should contact the [International Services Office](#) (ISSO) and the Graduate Student Services Office for assistance, especially for remaining in compliance with visa requirements and maintaining visa eligibility for re-entering the United States.

***Please discuss with your DGS, GFA, and special committee chair when considering a leave of absence.***

## In Absentia

You may register in absentia to conduct approved research or study 100 miles or more away from the Cornell campus while still under the guidance of your special committee. To register for in absentia status, submit an [In Absentia Petition](#) with a study plan approved by your special committee outlining how you will accomplish your degree requirements. Submit an in absentia petition to the Graduate School by November 1 for the Spring Semester and by June 15 for the Fall Semester. Approval by the Graduate School is required. In absentia students are charged \$200 tuition/semester.

When you are in approved in absentia status you are eligible for fellowships, assistantships, the student health plan, and educational loans as in on-campus registration status. The same limitations on employment apply for in absentia students as for on-campus students; time away from campus is expected to focus on making academic progress.

### **Common reasons students change their status to in absentia:**

1. Conducting research for an extended period of time at a location far from campus
2. Traveling to another institution for an extended period of time to use library, archival, laboratory, or other resources to advance your scholarship.
3. Taking courses at another university that are not available at Cornell.

***In absentia status will not be approved for reasons related to immigration or finances; there must be an academic justification for holding in absentia status. While in approved in absentia status you may not take classes or engage in research at another Cornell Graduate School campus location.***

## Title IX Policy

The Office of Institutional Equity and Title IX (OIETIX) promotes and ensures equal opportunity and access to enable all members of the Cornell community to succeed and thrive. OIETIX prevents and addresses bias incidents, sexual and related misconduct, discrimination, and protected-status harassment through data collection and analysis, incident response and resolution, and training and education.

We are guided by five core values: community, accountability, empathy, integrity, and the creation of a positive and safe environment.

Through Cornell University [Policy 6.4](#), “Prohibited Bias, Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual and Related Misconduct,” and the [applicable procedures](#), the University provides means to address bias, discrimination, harassment, and sexual and related misconduct, including sexual harassment and sex/gender-based harassment, sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation.

In addition, through Cornell University [Policy 6.3](#), “Consensual Relationships,” OIETIX strives to protect the integrity of students’ and postgraduates’ university experience, with the freedom to pursue academic, training, research, and professional interests in an environment without preferential or unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment, bias, or coercion.

For sexual and related misconduct—including gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, or other forms of sexual misconduct—report the incident through the following options:

- Contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator or any Deputy Title IX Coordinator by telephone, email, or in person during regular office hours. See contact information for Title IX staff (<http://titleix.cornell.edu/reporting>)
- By emailing: [titleix@cornell.edu](mailto:titleix@cornell.edu)
- Submit an incident report online (<http://titleix.cornell.edu/reporting/cornell>)
- Contact the Cornell University Police Department (CUPD) at (607) 255-1111 or **911** for emergency assistance.

The University strongly supports a complainant’s desire for confidentiality. However, students should be aware that all disclosures of gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, or other forms of sexual and related misconduct to a staff or faculty member will be reported, as required by Cornell Policy 6.4, to the Title IX Coordinator. All Cornell offices and employees who cannot guarantee confidentiality will maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible. The information you provide to a non-confidential resource will be relayed only as necessary for the Title IX Coordinator to investigate and/or seek a resolution.

The Title IX Coordinators will maintain privacy to the greatest extent possible, but are not confidential resources.

For confidential help, please see the list of confidential resources at: [www.titleix.cornell.edu/resources/confidential](http://www.titleix.cornell.edu/resources/confidential)

## Code of Academic Integrity

Cornell University has a campus-wide Code of Academic Integrity. Every student enrolled in the BBS program has already agreed to abide by this code. You have already been asked to review and sign this code; please be sure that you are well-apprised of it. (<http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/aic.cfm>)

### The Code of Academic Integrity

Absolute integrity is expected of every Cornell student in all academic undertakings. Integrity entails a firm adherence to a set of values, and the values most essential to an academic community are grounded on the concept of honesty with respect to the intellectual efforts of oneself and others.

Academic integrity is expected not only in formal coursework situations, but in all University relationships and interactions connected to the educational process, including the use of University resources. While both students and faculty of Cornell assume the responsibility of maintaining and furthering these values, this document is concerned specifically with the conduct of students.

A Cornell student's submission of work for academic credit indicates that the work is the student's own. All outside assistance should be acknowledged, and the student's academic position truthfully reported at all times. In addition, Cornell students have a right to expect academic integrity from each of their peers.

**In summary, your responsibilities are as follows:**

- ❖ **A student shall in no way misrepresent his or her work.**
- ❖ **A student shall in no way fraudulently or unfairly advance his or her academic position.**
- ❖ **A student shall refuse to be a party to another student's failure to maintain academic integrity.**
- ❖ **A student shall not in any other manner violate the principle of academic integrity.**

**Examples of violations:**

**Plagiarism** Definition: Knowingly representing the work of others as your own. Avoiding it: Cite, acknowledge, and give credit to all sources.

**Cheating** Definition: Fabricating data in support of laboratory or field work; forging a signature; obtaining unauthorized assistance on academic work. Avoiding it: Do your own original work; don't copy the work of others.

**Unauthorized collaboration** Definition: Obtaining or providing unauthorized help on exams, research, papers, or other academic work. Avoiding it: Credit your collaborators and talk to your faculty member or advisor to make sure sharing your work with others or partnering to do work is acceptable.

**Misrepresenting yourself** Definition: Misrepresenting your academic accomplishments or credentials, including degrees awarded. Avoiding it: Be honest about who you are and what you've accomplished.

## Grievance Policy

We hope that while you are a student at Cornell you will never need to deal with a grievance. However, should you need to, Cornell University and the Graduate School have a well-defined policy in place. The type of complaint will determine which action you take.

1. Conflict between graduate students and faculty members, while unusual, occasionally arises. **Graduate education complaints** by individual students against faculty will follow the Graduate School's [Grievance Procedure](#).



## Summary of Key Steps in the Graduate School's Grievance Procedure

At each of the steps described below, **you may have a witness or support person accompany you to each meeting**. In each phase of the process, clearly indicate the topic of your grievance and to the extent possible articulate what you believe a fair remedy would be. **Each of the steps has a specific time frame associated with it, to encourage timely and fair resolution**. The full process is described here:

<http://gradschool.cornell.edu/grievances-and-complaints>

**Step One:** Speak directly to the source of your grievance. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Step One, go to Step Two.

**Step Two:** Contact your Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). If you are not satisfied with the outcome of Step Two, go to Step Three. If the DGS is the source of the complaint, skip Step Two and go to Step Three.

**Step Three:** Bring the case to the Dean of The Graduate School. If you (or the other party) are not satisfied with the outcome of Step Three, go to Step Four.

**Step Four:** Refer the case to the Graduate Grievance Review Board (GGRB), composed of two students and three faculty members. The GGRB recommendations are reviewed by the Provost who will make the final determination.

- 2. Prohibited discrimination, protected-status harassment, sexual harassment, and sexual assault and violence, and bias activity complaints** are covered under [Policy 6.4, Prohibited Discrimination, Protected-Status Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault and Violence, and Bias Activity Procedure](#). To report bias incidents or related concerns, complete the form or send email to [titleix@cornell.edu](mailto:titleix@cornell.edu)
- 3. Sexual misconduct** complaints should be reported to the University Title IX Coordinator at [titleix@cornell.edu](mailto:titleix@cornell.edu)

## Safety Training

Health and safety considerations are paramount for students working in environments where there may be [biological, fire, radiation, chemical and laboratory safety](#) considerations. During the BBS PhD orientation week you will participate in mandatory laboratory safety training with Paul Jennette, Biosafety Engineer and Director of Biocontainment Operations at Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine. Prior to this training you are required to complete the online laboratory safety course (EHS 2555 EHS-Laboratory Safety) via the CULearn system.

[Environment and Health Safety](#) offers additional short courses on laboratory safety and other topics.

Cornell also offers training on the use of human subjects, animals, and biohazardous agents in research. For example, Cornell offers training on research with human subjects, all of which must be reviewed and approved by Cornell's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before research can begin, per federal regulations.

Research with animals (live vertebrates) must also be reviewed and approved by Cornell's [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) (IACUC) before researchers order, acquire, or handle animals.

Before biohazardous agents can be used in research and teaching, Cornell's [Institutional Biosafety Committee](#)(IBC) reviews and approves proposed activities using biohazardous materials.

## Cornell Health and Counseling Services

**Cornell Health** is a fully accredited university health center, consisting of a multidisciplinary staff of medical providers, counselors and psychiatrists, nutritionists, physical therapists, and behavioral health consultants. Cornell Health is located at 110 Ho Plaza, at the corner of Campus Road and College Avenue. For hours and information visit, [www.health.cornell.edu](http://www.health.cornell.edu) or call (607)255-5155.

Some of the services provided by Cornell Health include:

- [Medical Care](#)
- [Counseling & Psychiatry](#)
- [Pharmacy](#)
- [Physical Therapy & Massage](#)
- [Sports Medicine](#)
- [Occupational Medicine](#)
- [Nutrition & Healthy Eating Services](#)
- [Sexual Health Care](#)
- [Gender Services](#)
- [Alcohol & Other Drug Services](#)
- [Student Disability Services](#)
- [Patient Advocacy](#)
- [Victim Advocacy](#)
- [Health Leave of Absence](#)

### Cornell Health Insurance Highlights

- Two types of health insurance (SHP and SHP-M) are available, developed especially for Cornell students to provide access to convenient and comprehensive care on Cornell's campus and anywhere else you might live, study, or travel.
- Dental and vision care insurance plans are optional.
- SHP is a platinum-level plan, providing the highest level of coverage.
- Coverage is available through the network of Aetna providers nationwide.
- Worldwide assistance and emergency air transportation services cover you when you are away from Ithaca.
- The plan covers pre-existing conditions and is tailored for student needs.
- Premiums for BBS graduate research assistants and students on fellowships are paid by Cornell as part of their funding packages.

## English Language Support

The English Language Support Office (ELSO) offers high-quality instruction in writing and speaking to Cornell's international graduate and professional students. All of our programs are optional for students, and through support from the Provost's Office and Graduate School, offered free of charge to you. Visit our website, [www.knight.as.cornell.edu](http://www.knight.as.cornell.edu) to learn more about our services:

- **Courses on Writing and Speaking:** These 7-week credit-bearing pass/fail courses target particular areas of writing and speaking, such as becoming a better editor of your work, writing with sources, giving presentations, preparing for the job search, taking part in discussions, and improving pronunciation. These courses are designed to provide you with opportunities to learn a range of strategies, practice skills in a supportive atmosphere, and form community with peers from across fields and professions. For the list of courses, course descriptions, and the current schedule, visit [knight.as.cornell.edu/also-courses](http://knight.as.cornell.edu/also-courses)
- **Tutoring on Writing, Presentations, and Pronunciation:** This tutoring program is designed to meet immediate needs of graduate and professional students, whether you are working on a thesis or paper for publication, preparing for a conference or an interview, or needing to focus on a specific aspect of pronunciation in order to communicate more clearly. You may also make regular appointments to work on a larger project (like a dissertation) or focus on improvement over time.
- **Workshop Series:** Our 90-minute interactive workshops are designed to allow international graduate and professional students to learn key strategies relevant to speaking and writing in graduate school. Recent topics have included networking in English, preparing for the U.S. job search, writing research papers, and using online resources to support pronunciation.
- **Speaking Groups Program:** This program offers ongoing practice with conversational English through small groups that meet weekly throughout the semester. Participants not only gain experience with social English, but make meaningful connections with members of the Cornell community.
- **Writing Groups Program:** In this program, domestic and international graduate students, professional students and post-docs support each other in meeting writing goals. Through regularly scheduled meetings, writers come together to write at the same time, talk about their writing, or provide each other with peer review.

### Visit them in Caldwell Hall 260!

Michelle Cox  
ELSO Director  
[mtc225@cornell.edu](mailto:mtc225@cornell.edu)

Nathan  
Lindberg  
Coordinator,  
Tutor  
[nlw23@cornel](mailto:nlw23@cornel)

Melissa Myers, Lecturer  
[mm177@cornell.edu](mailto:mm177@cornell.edu)

Amanda Munson,  
Program Assistant  
[anm94@cornell.edu](mailto:anm94@cornell.edu)

## Graduate School Support

As a part of their mission, the Graduate School offers a number of services and resources. It is a great idea to be aware of them: <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/>

Some specific student life resources that we think you might like include the following. Please check out the full list of resources here: <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/student-life>.

- **The Big Red Barn Graduate and Professional Student Center (BRB)**, an old carriage house turned student center, is located in the heart of campus and surrounded by lawns and gardens. A central place for eating and relaxing, the Big Red Barn hosts more than 200 events per year, including the ever popular T.G.I.F. (Tell Grads It's Friday), Trivia Night, and Speed Dating. Connect with the Big Red Barn on Facebook and Twitter to stay up to date on BRB events and community-related news. <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/student-life/big-red-barn>
- **Office of Graduate Student Life** is committed to the importance of student health and well-being as a foundation for academic and life success. In recognition that health and academic performance are intimately linked, the Office of Student Life at the Graduate School is a source of support and advocacy for Cornell graduate and professional students. The Office of Student Life serves as a coordinating hub of services that facilitate the student life experience at Cornell. <http://gradschool.cornell.edu/student-life/office-graduate-student-life>
- **Student Communities.** Individuals are central to the Grad School's notion of community, and it's the collection of inspiring students, dedicated faculty, and caring administrators who make Cornell a community that is easy to call home. For more information regarding student communities, clubs, engagement and Community-Building Opportunities visit, [gradschool.cornell.edu/communities](http://gradschool.cornell.edu/communities).
- **Help and Support**
  - Contact Janna Lamey [janna.lamey@cornell.edu](mailto:janna.lamey@cornell.edu) 607-255-5184 or Angela Yantorno [ajy45@cornell.edu](mailto:ajy45@cornell.edu) in the Office of Graduate Student Life to receive support and referrals for anything ranging from academic, wellness, policies and procedure to personal concerns.
  - For issues related to academic progress, conflict resolution and academic integrity contact Associate Dean Jan Allen at [jan.allen@cornell.edu](mailto:jan.allen@cornell.edu)
  - Diversity and Inclusion questions and concerns can be addressed by contacting Associate Dean Sara Xayarath Hernandez at [sh267@cornell.edu](mailto:sh267@cornell.edu)
- **The Graduate and Professional Student Assembly (GPSA)** brings together Cornell's 7,000 graduate and professional (M.B.A., J.D., D.V.M.) students to address non-academic issues of common concern. Drawing upon the strengths of our diverse constituencies, the GPSA works with the university administration to improve the quality of life at the University. Additional information can be found at the Assemblies website, <http://assembly.cornell.edu/GPSA/Home>