

Student, Mentor, and Program Commitments

BMB MS Program

August 2021

The purpose of this document is to establish and clarify expectations and responsibilities that connect the three main partners in the educational program of MS. students in the BMB/BMI Graduate Program: the student, their mentor, and the program.

Student Responsibilities

- Commitment: I am prepared to participate in an intensive learning experience that will develop personal, professional, and scientific skills that will provide a solid foundation for my future endeavors.
- I will treat my educational experience as a full-time job in terms of hours worked, 30+ hours per week. This can be modified if mutually agreed to by the Student and Mentor. I will track my time in a way that is transparent to my adviser.
- I will not allow outside employment to interfere with day-to-day interactions that are vital to my learning or research experiences.
- I will abide by procedural and ethical guidelines provided by the university and by my mentor.
- I will read and become familiar with the BMB MS Student Handbook
- I will keep up to date on all required training for my research (IACUC, IBC, RSC, etc.).
- I will choose my adviser and define my thesis topic and specific aims by the end of the first October.
- At the beginning of my stint with my adviser, I will have an explicit discussion of expectations, in terms of effort, training of other students in the lab, scheduling
- I will work with my mentor and committee to forge and execute a suitable project for thesis work.
- I will read and develop an understanding of the literature relevant to my thesis research and understand the potential significance of my work in its context.
- I expect to demonstrate competence in established methods that I employ in my thesis research.
- I will maintain experimental procedural details, results, and all data in a OneDrive folder initiated by my adviser, or the equivalent designated by my adviser. All data in my thesis will track back in my records to original observations. I will strive for publication quality data in my thesis and note and justify cases where this may not apply.
- I will perform experiments, analyze data, make conclusions and be able to demonstrate understanding of these items in progress reports and in the final thesis and defense.
- I will present Progress Reports at the ends of each semester in sufficient detail to permit useful feedback and troubleshooting by my committee; I will demonstrate increasing understanding of my project and the literature in sequential reports.
- I acknowledge that if I am placed on academic probation 2 consecutive semesters, if I receive an unsatisfactory Progress Report or Early Assessment evaluation, or if I cannot secure a position in a research lab for my thesis research, I may be dropped from the program.

Mentor Responsibilities

- I will provide an environment that is rich in educational opportunities that connect to and extend from the specific research project conducted by the student, one that is conducive to the overall growth of the student.
- I will provide regular and ongoing advice and guidance related to career development, including participation in development of the Student's Research Plan and the Early Assessment Form.
- At the beginning of my student's stint in my lab, I will have an explicit discussion of expectations, in terms of effort, training of other students in the lab, scheduling, and other items, preferably as a written policy statement for my lab.

- After the initial month in my lab (January 31 of the first Winter term) I will provide early feedback to the new student in the Early Assessment form, and list explicit items that they may need to improve upon to be successful or to remain in my lab. If it seems that there is no likely path to improvement, I will so advise the student and Program Director at this time.
- I will provide research resources that will enable the student's thesis work to stand as a state-of-the-art scientific training experience.
- I will read and become familiar with the BMB MS Student Handbook.
- I will abide by procedural and ethical guidelines provided by the BMB/BMI programs and the university.
- I will be available for regular one-on-one meetings with my student. The frequency of these will be agreed upon by student and mentor, but at least bi-weekly.
- I will initiate a OneDrive folder or an equivalent, into which my student will enter all data and analysis so that I can track and store data even after the student graduates or otherwise leaves WSU.
- My commitments to or involvements with institutions outside the department will not supersede my responsibilities as a mentor.
- I will support my Student's active participation in the Department's scientific and social activities.
- I will support my Student in preparing yearly oral presentations of their research within the department. This includes speaking about unpublished data and research in progress.
- I will monitor the student's weekly time in the lab in order to acknowledge that s/he was present 30 hours per week on average, 420 hours per semester.
- I will allow my Student to take time off from lab work for university holidays, and other valid reasons with advance notice.

Thesis Committee Member responsibilities

- To advise on and approve of the Research Plan in terms of its significance, scope, feasibility
- To attend each Progress report meeting, communicate concerns or problems if any, assess progress, assess whether student is on track with specific aims and understanding, see that a clear set of actionable goals for the upcoming semester are stated and agreed upon, and witness that the student has fulfilled the minimum time requirement.
- To read, edit, and provide useful feedback on the written thesis, and attend and evaluate the final thesis defense.

Program Director Responsibilities

- To ensure that Program rules and guidelines are consistent with policies of the WSU Graduate School.
- To respond quickly to problems that arise with respect to Program procedures, administrative matters, classroom experiences, the student-mentor-relationship, and other activities and relationships that connect to Program activities.
- To ensure that the BMB MS Guidelines are usefully informative, up-to-date, and accessible.
- To act as a resource and sounding board for Student and Mentor if difficulties arise.
- To handle issues involving students on a case-by-case basis within the program guidelines.
- To directly communicate to all students and mentors prior to their implementation.

Title of thesis project (tentative):

Major Goals or research questions:

Signature page:

Student name Signature Date

Mentor name Signature Date

Thesis committee member Signature Date

Thesis committee member Signature Date

Program Director name Signature Date

Nothing in this document supersedes other guidance, rules, or regulations established by the Graduate School or the Provost's Office.