



UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY

College of Medicine
Department of Neuroscience

**GRADUATE STUDENT
INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES
HANDBOOK
2018 – 2019**

Neuroscience Doctoral Program

Neuroscience Doctoral Program

The Department of Neuroscience has high expectations of its graduate students. While these expectations are described elsewhere in this handbook, we want students to be fully aware of them prior to choosing our department. All entering graduate students and their chosen mentors must read and sign the “**Compact Between Predoctoral Appointees and Their Mentors**” prior to entering the department. This compact ensures that the mentor and predoctoral appointee are aware of and agree on the expectations and responsibilities involved in graduate and professional training.

Academic Performance: Students with a GPA of less than 3.0 during the IBS year should discuss this openly and frankly with their potential mentor. Students who are officially on academic probation are not eligible for graduate school payment of out-of-state tuition charges, and these students may be asked to pay these charges. Academic performance after joining the department is expected to remain above a GPA of 3.0.

Professionalism: Our students are expected to demonstrate a high degree of professionalism that is inclusive of, but is not restricted to, personal honesty and integrity. Academic and scientific professionalism includes the following characteristics:

- The student is expected to maintain an academic GPA greater than 3.0 to ensure that they are able to sit for Qualifying Examinations, or tuition costs will be incurred.
- The student is expected to follow the direction and timetable established by his/her dissertation advisor and Advisory Committee in completing research and the graduate program.
- The student is expected to discharge all duties assigned by the department and agreed to by the student and his/her advisory committee.
- The student is expected to uphold ethical behavior in all aspects of academic life including the classroom and laboratory. Cheating, lying, plagiarism, and taking excess vacation time are all considered to be flagrant violations of ethical behavior in science and academia. We strictly enforce these guidelines and expulsion from the program could result from an ethics violation or a continued series of violations.

Teaching Responsibilities: All graduate students within the department must have a minimum of one unit of teaching experience (see details below). The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with course directors, will assign each student their TA responsibility. There is no additional compensation for this (although an official TA-ship may be available in some cases to help cover your tuition charges). TA responsibilities generally include: attending all classes and conducting review sessions prior to exams, assisting with proctoring of exams, grading exams, serving as a lab instructor and /or various other duties within the normal scope of teaching in the Department of Neuroscience.

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Welcome to the Neuroscience doctoral program. The next several years will be filled with many new experiences that will impact your advancement toward your doctoral degree and your development as a professional scientist. The information in this handbook will guide your progress through your graduate school years; it includes information on administrative issues, stipends and tuition, student health insurance, registration, curriculum and evaluation. **Admissions and registration** for first year graduate students are administered through the **Integrated Biomedical Sciences (IBS) Director's Office**, located in the Dean's office, College of Medicine. Details of the program can be found on-line at <http://graduate.med.uky.edu/integrated-biomedical-sciences>.

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Students electing to continue their graduate studies in the Neuroscience program, beginning with their second year, may be awarded stipends, assistantships or fellowships (defined in the Graduate School Bulletin) through the Department of Neuroscience. The Department Administrator, Ms. Zel Madison (B481 BBSRB, 323-6299, or via email at zfrye@uky.edu) will provide assistance in completing all the necessary paperwork.

Additionally, Ms. Madison and the office staff will assist students in signing up for health insurance, e-mail addresses and parking permits. Second year students should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Wayne Cass (HSRB 226, 323-1142, or wacass1@uky.edu), **before** registering for the fall semester. Registration for classes is online during the appropriate registration period.

To obtain keys to the common equipment rooms and laboratories, see Ms. Zel Madison (323-6299 or zfrye@uky.edu) in B481 BBSRB.

If students need access to the animal facilities, your dissertation advisor will obtain the necessary security clearance sticker for your ID badge and clearance for the Simplex Proximity Readers. This sticker is obtained through the Department of Laboratory Animal Resources (DLAR) only. Your new ID badge (see Zel Madison) should also be coded to provide access to any buildings with restricted access as appropriate.

All students are assigned a departmental mailbox. There are photocopy and fax machines in the department mailroom MN-223. Students may use the photocopy machines by obtaining a five digit access code from their mentor.

STIPENDS AND TUITION

Second-year students are awarded a yearly stipend from the research laboratory they choose for their dissertation research, the departmental Graduate Program or other sources. This stipend is in addition to tuition, fees, and health insurance. The stipend is considered to be a salary paid to part-time student employees and is subject to federal and state income taxes. Stipend checks and fellowship checks are available on a bi-weekly basis. Both **MUST** be direct deposited into a bank account (contact the Basic Sciences HR office). The Graduate Program Committee can discontinue a stipend if a student fails to meet program requirements (see following section on **Student Evaluation**).

Students awarded a research assistantship or fellowship through IBS receive payment of tuition, both in-state and out-of-state. Students are guaranteed payment of tuition related to their doctoral programs subject to the following conditions:

(1) The coursework for which the student has registered has been approved by the IBS director during the IBS year, and by the chair of their advisory committee and the DGS of their program, once they have entered a doctoral program.

(2) The student is in good academic standing. Effective fall 2007, students who have been notified by the Graduate School that they are officially on academic probation will be responsible for payment of out-of-state tuition charges while they remain on probation. During this time, in-state tuition will be paid by the PI/program for out-of-state students. Once they have raised their GPA to the required 3.0 to regain good academic standing, payment of any future tuition charges will be covered by their PI and/or program, subject to condition #1.

VACATIONS

Students are entitled to up to 4 weeks (20 days) of vacation per year (with a minimum of 2 weeks allowed), which must be planned in consultation with the student's advisor. The vacation leave policy should be discussed between the mentor and student and be described clearly in the predoctoral compact. An official Absence Record form must be submitted to the Basic Sciences HR office. For leave other than vacation, please contact the Basic Sciences HR office. Students must follow University Employee Guidelines for holidays. Please note that courses in the Medical School do not follow the same academic calendar as graduate courses (university calendar). For graduate students, time away during these breaks must be arranged as with any vacation time.

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

The Department of Neuroscience provides the financial support for a “**hospitalization only**” plan (Aetna) for second, third and fourth year students. The Graduate School enrolls all full-time RA and TA graduate students in the Aetna Insurance Program. A card will be mailed to your student billing address. Be sure to provide your Lexington address to the department business office (Zel Madison, 323-6299 or zfrye@uky.edu in B481 BBSRB) and the Graduate School.

The Department of Neuroscience will only provide funds for the Aetna Group hospitalization plan for each student on a research assistantship or fellowship. If a student wishes to obtain a broader coverage plan, then he/she is responsible for the additional premiums. The Department also provides the financial support for access to the University Student Health Services (for further information see: <https://ukhealthcare.uky.edu/university-health-service/student-health>).

REGISTRATION

The required courses for the doctoral program in Neuroscience follow in the section entitled **Program Requirements**. Each student should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies regarding registration. Registration is done online via the myUK portal. It is the student's responsibility to complete registration on or before the required dates (see Graduate School or Medical School academic calendars). **The Department will not assume responsibility for any late or drop fees.**

GRADUATE PROGRAM GUIDELINES

After successful completion of the IBS program, students with a research interest in Neuroscience may enter the department's doctoral program. Once your enrollment has been changed from the IBS program to the Neuroscience program, students must follow the guidelines outlined below and are expected to pursue the degree on a 12-month, full-time basis. Selection of a dissertation advisor must be made prior to beginning the second year of the program and before entering the department. The dissertation advisor

must agree to accept the student for dissertation research. The **Dissertation Advisor & Program Selection** form from the IBS program must be filled out and signed by the advisor, Director of Graduate studies and the Department Chair. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair will only sign off on this form when the “**Compact Between Predoctoral Appointees and Their Mentors**” has been read and signed by the student and mentor. The acceptance of all students for dissertation research requires review and approval by the Director of Graduate studies and the Chairperson of the department. Students must complete the general requirements of The Graduate School as described in The Graduate School Bulletin. Any exceptions to the stated Program Requirements must be approved by the student's Advisory Committee **and** the departmental Graduate Program Committee.

GRADUATE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Wayne Cass, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Studies
 Warren Alilain, Ph.D.
 Sam Franklin, Ph.D.
 Richard Grondin, Ph.D.
 Ed Hall, Ph.D.
 Pat Sullivan, Ph.D.

HSRB 226, 323-1142, wacass1@uky.edu
 469 BBSRB, 257-3219, warren.alilain@uky.edu
 MS-209, 323-3780, sfranklin@uky.edu
 MN-210, 323-8925, rcgron0@uky.edu
 477 BBSRB, 323-4678, edhall@uky.edu
 475 BBSRB, 323-4684, patsull@uky.edu

Graduate Program Committee Staff:

Zel Madison, Department Administrator
 Avalon Sandoval, Graduate Program Admin. Asst.

B481 BBSRB, 323-6299, zfrye@uky.edu
 MN225, 323-5155, avalon.sandoval@uky.edu

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

ACADEMIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS

First Year

Each student must complete a minimum of 9 credit hours per semester of graduate level coursework to qualify as a full-time graduate student. For first year students this is accomplished by completing the required Integrated Biomedical Sciences (IBS) core curriculum. The core curriculum includes elements of anatomy, biochemistry, cell biology, genetics, molecular biology, neuroscience, physiology and pharmacology and is designed to provide students with a basic background in the biomedical sciences. Students are expected to maintain a “B” or better average (GPA of 3.0) for all IBS courses to be eligible for promotion to the second year.

Faculty Interviews. Each first-year student is required to interview faculty members whose research interests them. Following these interviews, students identify rotation mentors for IBS rotations.

Laboratory rotations. The purpose of lab rotations is to provide opportunities for students to experience and participate in varying research laboratories. First-year students are required to complete four rotations in three different labs during their first academic year before choosing a lab and advisor for their dissertation research. The general goals of the rotations are for the student to experience research as carried out in three different labs, to begin to develop attitudes and a work ethic consistent with those of a professional scientist and to learn time management skills. To obtain credit for this activity, students register for Research in Integrated Biomedical Sciences - IBS609- in the fall and spring semesters. Generally, a rotation period is 8-10 weeks. Each rotation mentor is expected to communicate the expectations for the rotation to the student. Lab rotation faculty will provide a written evaluation of each student’s accomplishments and development following the rotation using the form available from the IBS office. These evaluations are available to the student and to any potential dissertation advisors and are filed in the student’s record.

Second Year

Students select a dissertation advisor from faculty of the doctoral programs participating in IBS. The selected dissertation advisor must agree to accept the student for dissertation research. The acceptance of a student for dissertation research in the Department of Neuroscience must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Chairperson of the department before dissertation work may begin. The student and advisor will select graduate elective courses and research experiences for the second year based on the needs and interests of the student.

Required Courses for Second Year Students in the Neuroscience Program

ANA636 Advanced Neuroscience Fall semester only	(5 cr.)
ANA600 Seminar in Anatomy Fall and/or Spring semester	(1 cr.)
STA570 Basic Statistical Analysis, or STA580 Biostatistics I, or equivalent Fall or Spring semester	(variable credit)

Elective courses

Elective courses are offered each semester. The courses taken will depend on the interests of the student and will be chosen in consultation with their dissertation advisor. Examples of ANA Elective courses are:

ANA605 Neurobiology of CNS Injury and Repair (Fall semester)	3 cr.
ANA638 Developmental Neurobiology (Fall semester)	3 cr.
ANA780 Neurobiology of Brain and Spinal Cord Disorders (either semester)	3 cr.

NOTE: Not all elective courses are offered each year. The student, in consultation with their dissertation advisor, will select elective courses from the Department of Neuroscience or other departments. Students should register for a minimum of 9 credit hours each semester. ANA790 (Research in Anatomy) should be used to make up the difference in credit hours if total semester credits in organized courses is less than 9 credit hours.

EXAMPLE – Courses for second year
Fall Semester

ANA636 Advanced Neuroscience	5 cr.
Elective or ANA790 Research in Anatomy	3 cr.
ANA600 Seminar in Anatomy	<u>1 cr.</u>
Total credits	9

Spring Semester

ANA780 Neurobiology of Brain and Spinal Cord Disorders	3 cr.
STA580 Biostatistics I	3 cr.
Elective or ANA790	3 cr.
ANA600 Seminar in Anatomy	<u>1 cr.</u>
Total credits	10

At least 18 graduate credits must be completed during the second year to total at least 36 graduate credits for the first two years. **A student must have a 3.0 Graduate GPA as a requirement to take the Qualifying Examination in the third year.** Students on Academic Probation from the Graduate School will not sit for their qualifying exams in the fall of their 3rd year. Any incomplete (I) grade must be resolved within one year. "I" grades are assigned in accordance with Graduate School rules. In order to take the qualifying examination, all "I" grades must be cleared from the student's record.

The student and dissertation advisor (major professor) should form the student's Advisory Committee **prior to September 1st** of the student's second year in the graduate program.

Third Year

University graduate residence requirements must be fulfilled after completing the qualifying examination. Students first enrolled in a doctoral program in the fall 2005 semester or later are required to enroll in ANA767 – Dissertation Residency Credit (2 cr.). Students will remain enrolled in this course until defense of their dissertation in order to maintain full-time enrollment. Students must complete a minimum of 2 semesters of ANA767 prior to graduation.

Fourth Year and beyond...

Students will register for ANA767 until defense of their dissertation.

ELECTIVES

Elective coursework may be chosen from the advanced courses offered in Neuroscience or from graduate level courses in relevant departments such as Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology, Pathology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Biology, Psychology, Pharmacy, and Statistics. The Doctoral Program requires sufficient formal graduate course electives be taken to satisfy the overall credit-hour requirements. Students should choose electives carefully through consultation with their dissertation advisor and advisory committee to insure that they receive a well-rounded education in areas important to their professional and research interests.

DEPARTMENTAL SEMINARS

The Department sponsors weekly research seminars which provide an excellent opportunity for students to get an appreciation for the depth and breadth of neuroscience research. All departmental graduate students are required to attend these seminars unless excused by the Seminar Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies.

DEPARTMENTAL PRESENTATIONS

Graduate students are required to give presentations each year within the program. The presentations reflect research conducted by the graduate student or original scholarly work (such as discussion / critique of journal articles or a body of literature relevant to the student's area of research). The presentation is an opportunity for the student to gain experience in giving professional oral presentations and to receive constructive feedback from the primary advisor(s), advisory committee and other faculty within the department. The primary advisor(s) must be present for the presentation. **The presentation slides must be original slides prepared by the student** – slides created by the primary advisor(s), other lab members or collaborators cannot be used (except in the case of a complicated methodological description; in this case, the individual(s) who created the slide must be acknowledged). Slides may be created based on existing slides, but the content of the slides must be changed by at least 25% from the original. The length of the presentation will depend on the time the student has been in our department, according to the following schedule:

2nd-Year students (1st year in the Department) will be required to give a 25 minute presentation (~ 20 minutes of slides with 5 minutes for questions, approximately 16-20 slides in length) on a topic, a paper or a set of papers. The presentation will be given in the Departmental Seminar series.

3rd-Year students (2nd year in the Department) will give at a 25 minute presentation (~ 20 minutes of slides with 5 minutes for questions, approximately 16-20 slides in length). The presentation is based on research conducted by the student in their current lab. Any experiments conducted to date can be presented, even if the experiments did not work as expected. Plans for future research / dissertation work and follow-up studies should be presented. The presentation will be given in the Departmental Seminar series.

4th -Year students (3rd year in the Department) will give at a 25-minute presentation in the Departmental Seminar series. The content of the presentation should reflect dissertation research conducted by the student in their current lab and should include specific aims, background (how key papers are tied into the student's research topic), hypotheses, design and results. Any experiments conducted to date can be

presented, even if the experiments did not work as expected. Plans for future research / dissertation work and follow-up studies should be presented.

5th -Year students (4th year in the Department) and beyond will present a complete 50-minute talk in the form of a departmental seminar. The content of the presentation should include dissertation research conducted by the student in their current lab and should include specific aims, background (how key papers are tied into the student's research topic), hypotheses, design and results. Data should be presented in a logical order that begin to tell a cohesive story about the research. Plans for future research and follow-up studies should be presented. Students are not required to present a seminar in the spring of their final year if defending their thesis within 6 months of June 30th.

Seminars are scheduled with the faculty member currently acting as Seminar Program Coordinator and Ms. Sandoval, keeping in mind that the primary advisor(s) must be present for the presentation unless excused by the departmental Chairperson.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency in English is required for a doctoral degree in Neuroscience.

TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

All graduate students within the department must have a minimum of one unit of teaching experience. A unit of teaching experience is defined as:

- two semesters as a Teaching Assistant in undergraduate courses (ANA109/110, 209-001, 209-201; attend all lectures, hold review sessions, assist with proctoring exams and grading for classroom sections; answer student emails and assist with grading for online sections, etc.).

The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with course directors, will assign each student their one unit of TA responsibility. The student must attend the university-sponsored TA-orientation program, prior to beginning the TA assignment. The TA assignments will typically occur during the third year (2nd year in our department). However, in years where the number of 3rd-year students is not sufficient to meet the teaching needs of the department, 4th- or 5th-year students will be assigned TA-ships. There is no additional compensation for the TA assignment, although an official TA-ship may be available in some cases to help cover tuition charges. TA responsibilities generally include: attending all classes and offering review sessions prior to exams in the course, assisting with proctoring of exams, grading exams, serving as a lab instructor and possibly other duties related to classes taught by Department of Neuroscience faculty. If the student is interested in a teaching track career (in consultation with their dissertation advisor and course directors) they may assume additional responsibilities in a class - including preparing and presenting lectures.

In addition to the Teaching Assistant requirement, graduate students will be asked to assist with exam proctoring for large-format courses. Proctoring assignments for each semester will be made by the Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with course directors. All graduate students will be available to help with proctoring exams. Proctoring duties include passing out written exams to students and proctoring while students are taking exams.

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The **student** is responsible for completion and submission of the "**Doctoral Advisory Committee Request**" form (available online under the "Current Students" drop-down menu (select "Doctoral

Degree Candidate Forms”) on the Graduate School home page or at: http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). Pressing the “Submit” button will forward the form to the Director of Graduate Studies for review. Once approved the Director of Graduate Studies will then forward the form to the Graduate School. A copy of the approved form will be added to the student’s file in the Department office. The Advisory Committee reviews all aspects of the student’s program and progress including elective courses completed, academic performance, professional behavior, TA assignments, etc. The student’s dissertation advisor, the student, or the Director of Graduate Studies can call an Advisory Committee meeting. The Director of Graduate Studies is a non-voting member of all Advisory Committees.

A dissertation advisor (major professor) must be identified prior to beginning the second-year of graduate studies (prior to entering the Neuroscience doctoral program). The major professor (dissertation advisor) chairs the Advisory Committee. If the dissertation advisor has a joint appointment in the Department of Neuroscience, then a co-chair who has their primary appointment in the Department of Neuroscience must be included on the committee (exceptions to this are possible by approval of both the Departmental Chair and DGS). The dissertation advisor and the student select members of the advisory committee following Graduate School regulations. The composition of the advisory committee must follow the criteria established by the graduate school and the department:

For students in the Department of Neuroscience, the Advisory Committee has a core of **five** members. The core consists of the Major Professor as Chair, at least two other members from the major area (from the Department of Neuroscience), and at least one member from any minor area(s), usually the one required member from outside the Department of Neuroscience. In addition, all members must be members of the Graduate Faculty at the University of Kentucky and three (including the Major Professor) must possess Full Graduate Faculty status. Associate members may co-direct dissertation research with a full member of the Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who do not hold Graduate Faculty status may serve as non-voting members of the Advisory Committee. The core of the Advisory Committee must be kept at its full complement throughout the graduate career of the individual student. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, an appropriate replacement must be made, and approved by The Graduate School by completion and submission of the "**Doctoral Advisory Committee Modification Request**" form, prior to making any committee decisions (form available online under the “Current Students” drop-down menu (select “Doctoral Degree Candidate Forms”) on the Graduate School home page or at: http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm).

The student must meet with members of the Advisory Committee every 6 months. The Department of Neuroscience mandates biannual meetings, to review the student's progress. The student is responsible for writing a brief summary of each meeting, in which the major points made by committee members are outlined, and attaching it to the departmental form “**6-month Committee Meeting Documentation**.” If all faculty members approve of the student proceeding with dissertation or degree requirements (as indicated by signing the form), then the DGS will sign off on the form and it will be placed in the student’s file. If any faculty member does not indicate approval for the student to proceed with dissertation or other degree requirements, the issues must be worked out between the student and the committee member(s) who disapprove, and the advisor, if necessary. In this case, a clear, documented plan must be drafted and circulated among committee members along with the attached form. The form must be signed by all committee members prior to the DGS signing off on it. Copies of this form and summary minutes must be provided to the student, the dissertation advisor, Advisory Committee members and the DGS at their request. The goal of this twice annual evaluation is to protect everyone involved from misunderstandings, misdirectives, etc. and help keep the student (and the Advisory Committee) well informed of the progress and direction of the student's project.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Student performance will be evaluated biannually by their committee; one of these assessments must be following the student's annual spring departmental seminar. **It is the student's responsibility to set up these meetings, while also notifying Ms. Sandoval.** The Graduate Program Staff Assistant (Ms. Sandoval) will contact the student to remind them that they need to do this. Acceptable academic progress for all doctoral students in the Neuroscience program have been outlined as follows:

- A “B” average in IBS core curriculum courses in year one
- Grade of "A" or "B" in all departmental neuroscience courses
- An overall coursework GPA of 3.0 or above
- Attendance and participation in departmental seminars and journal clubs
- Demonstration of development of a scholarly attitude toward accumulation of advanced knowledge and research in the anatomical/neurobiological sciences. This can be demonstrated by continued development of the professional and technical skills expected of a researcher and teacher.
- Appropriate interaction and cooperation with other students, staff, and faculty as expected of a professional scientist and teacher.

The student may not sit for the qualifying examinations until all of the above criteria are met to the satisfaction of the Graduate Program Committee and the Department of Neuroscience. Successful completion of the criteria may involve the retaking of ANA courses in which a “B” or better was not earned or passing a remediation/mastery exam to be arranged with the respective course coordinator(s). In either case, the failing grade (“C” or lower) must be replaced with a “B” or higher within one-year of earning the original grade.

Second-year students will be evaluated to determine whether or not ‘good progress’ is being made, following the completion of each semester in the program by the Advisory Committee or the Graduate Program Committee. The Director of Graduate Studies will report evaluations to the Graduate Faculty. If progress is judged as unsatisfactory by faculty majority vote, the student may be terminated from the program. The student may appeal this decision directly to the Graduate Faculty of the Department through the Director of Graduate Studies, explaining their problem(s) or any extenuating circumstances. Following this appeal the Graduate Faculty will vote again. A second negative vote is final. If the second vote allows the student to continue in the program, the Director of Graduate Studies will inform the student of what they must do to redress deficiencies. In this case the student's progress will be reviewed again following his/her second semester midterm exams or some other agreed upon date.

Advanced graduate students, must continue the academic performance and development of scholarly and professional attitudes outlined above and will be regularly evaluated by his/her advisor and Advisory Committee. An important component is the development of a dissertation prospectus under the guidance of the student's advisor and Advisory Committee. Students generally graduate in 4-5 years, but must complete their degree within 8 years of entering the IBS program.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION AND RESEARCH PROSPECTUS

The **student** is responsible for completion and submission of the form required to schedule the qualifying examination. The “**Request to Schedule the Qualifying Examination**” form is available online under the “Current Students” drop-down menu (select “Student Forms”, then see list under “Students in Doctoral Programs”) on the Graduate School home page or at: http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm. Pressing the “Submit” button will forward the form to the Director of Graduate Studies for review. Once approved the Director of Graduate Studies will then forward the form to the Graduate School. This form must be submitted to the Graduate School **at least two weeks before the examination**. A copy should be provided for the student’s file in the Department office. **The examination should be scheduled with the Graduate School after the start of the third year (Fall semester), and taken by the end of the Fall semester**, in order to maintain adequate progress towards graduation. The Graduate School mandates successful completion of the Qualifying Examination within 5 years of entry into the program – or the student will be dismissed from the program. The Advisory Committee may require conditions, such as additional coursework or reexaminations, before granting a passing grade for the Qualifying Examination. The student is a candidate for the Ph.D. degree following the satisfactory completion of the Qualifying Examination.

A student's ability to conduct independent research is evaluated on the basis of the research prospectus (proposal) and Qualifying Examination. The prospectus is prepared by the student with the guidance of the dissertation advisor and should describe the course of action, including rationale and methodology, for the proposed research. The prospectus will be written in the form of a predoctoral NIH grant application (Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Research Training Grants and Fellowships) that will be submitted to federal agencies or private foundations. Copies of the completed prospectus (grant application) must be made available to Advisory Committee members at least two weeks before the examination. Updated NIH forms and information are available online: <https://researchtraining.nih.gov/programs/fellowships>

The student’s Advisory Committee administers the Qualifying Examination in accordance with The Graduate School rules. This examination consists of written (the research prospectus) and oral components. The oral examination focuses on the student's preparation for research. Thus, advanced coursework, the general area of proposed research, and the dissertation prospectus serve as subject matter for the examination. The Advisory Committee determines whether or not the student has passed the Qualifying Examination by majority vote.

DISSERTATION

Dissertation research is performed under the guidance of the student's advisor, with the advice and consent of the student's Advisory Committee. The student is responsible for ensuring that the Advisory Committee is informed about the progress of dissertation research. Dissertations must be prepared in accordance with The Graduate School guidelines. Information on **preparation of the dissertation** can be found at: <http://gradschool.uky.edu/thesis-dissertation-preparation>. All core members of the Advisory Committee must read the dissertation before signing the departmental dissertation approval form. The student must submit the dissertation to all Advisory committee members **six weeks prior to the desired approval date**. The committee may require changes and revisions in the dissertation before approval and scheduling of the dissertation defense. The committee members shall provide feedback and revisions within two weeks. The student then has two additional weeks for revisions, if needed. At this point, a majority of Advisory Committee members must agree that the form and substance of the dissertation are adequate to justify scheduling a dissertation defense. **A Departmental Dissertation Approval form must be completed and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.**

THE FINAL EXAMINATION – DISSERTATION DEFENSE

The student is responsible for completing and submitting a “**Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination (NOTIF)**” form. The form is available from the Graduate School website (under the “Current Students” drop-down menu (select “Doctoral Degree Candidate Forms”) or at: http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). Pressing the “Submit” button will forward the form to the Director of Graduate Studies for review. Once approved the Director of Graduate Studies will then forward the form to the Graduate School. **This form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least eight weeks before the proposed examination date.** Following the submission of this form, the Graduate School will appoint an outside examiner. **The Graduate School must approve the specific time and date of the examination at least two weeks before the intended exam date.** The student is responsible for completing and submitting the “**Request for Final Doctoral Examination**” form (available from the Graduate School website (under the “Current Students” drop-down menu (select “Doctoral Degree Candidate Forms”) or at: http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). Pressing the “Submit” button will forward the form to the Director of Graduate Studies for review. Once approved the Director of Graduate Studies will then forward the form to the Graduate School. **This form must be submitted to the Graduate School at least two weeks before the proposed examination date.**

Final examinations may not be scheduled later than 8 days before the end of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. Exams may not be scheduled on University holidays, during the periods between semesters or during the period between the end of the eight-week summer session and the beginning of the fall semester.

The dissertation defense consists of a formal research seminar and discussion, followed by a dissertation examination by the student's expanded Advisory Committee; the expanded committee includes the outside member from the University Graduate Faculty. This individual is appointed by The Graduate School (see above). Normally, the student's dissertation advisor will chair the expanded Advisory Committee. The full dissertation examination committee votes to approve, or not approve the dissertation defense by majority vote. The defense is open to the public and must be advertised in accordance with Graduate School requirements. Final copies of the dissertation, with mandated changes and corrections completed, must be delivered to The Graduate School within 60 days following the final examination.

APPLICATION FOR DEGREE

To be eligible to receive a degree, doctoral students must submit an on-line “Application for Degree” form via <http://myuk.uky.edu/StudentServices/myRecords/GraduateDegreeApplication>.

Applications must be received in the Graduate School within 30 days of the start of the semester in which the student expects to complete their work (or within 15 days of the start of Summer Session II).

PROFESSIONALISM

Professionalism is expected of our students. This can be defined as demonstrating the following:

- The student is expected to maintain an academic GPA greater than 3.0 and earn no less than a “B” in all ANA coursework, to ensure that they are able to sit for Qualifying Examinations - or tuition costs are incurred.

- The student is expected to follow the direction and timetable established by his/her dissertation advisor and Advisory Committee in completing research and the graduate program.
- The student is expected to discharge all duties assigned by the department and agreed to by the student and his/her Advisory Committee.
- The student is expected to demonstrate ethical behavior applying to all aspects of academic life – classroom and laboratory. Cheating, lying, plagiarism and taking more vacation time than allotted are all considered to be violations of ethical behavior.

POLICY ON OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Stipends are provided to cover living expenses for students pursuing a graduate degree and are considered to be salary. Outside employment is strongly discouraged as it interferes with the student's ability to obtain optimal training. Provided the graduate student continues to fulfill program requirements, limited outside employment may be permissible but must be approved by the student's dissertation advisor, the Graduate Program Committee and the Graduate School. Approval of outside employment will be re-evaluated on a yearly basis. By accepting an assistantship or fellowship, the student takes on the responsibility of devoting adequate time to completion of program requirements. Students should recognize that outside employment may delay completion of the degree to the point that the stipend may be discontinued. Moreover, if a student chooses to take on employment that is judged by the Graduate Program Committee to reduce their ability to fulfill program requirements, the Departmental stipend will not be paid for that period of time.

TRAVEL AND RESEARCH SUPPORT

The Graduate School is no longer providing financial support for conferences and research related travel (currently the Dean's office in the College of Medicine is providing help with travel funding). However, the Department of Neuroscience may be able to provide assistance for selected travel. The departmental travel form can be found at: <https://neurobiology.med.uky.edu/ANA-Grant-Student-Research-Travel>. Once completed the form must be signed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator.

Graduate Student Incentive Program (GSIP)

Graduate students who have been awarded nationally competitive fellowships of \$10,000 or more annually may apply for an additional five percent lump-sum supplemental stipend through the Graduate Student Incentive Program (GSIP). See <http://gradschool.uky.edu/graduate-student-incentive-program> for more details.

Please visit The Graduate School website for more information on any of the issues in this handbook: <http://www.rgs.uky.edu/gs/>

Interpretation, clarification and effectuation of the contents of this handbook is at the discretion of the Graduate Committee and the Department of Neuroscience.

Revised May, 2018.

I, _____ (please print), have read and understand that I am fully responsible for the complete content of the **2018 - 2019 GRADUATE STUDENT INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES HANDBOOK.**

Student Signature

Date

Director of Graduate Studies

Date