July 10, 2014

TO: Leadership of Biophysics M.S./Ph.D. Graduate Programs
    Leadership of Cellular and Molecular Biology M.S./Ph.D. Graduate Programs

FROM: Wendy Crone, Associate Dean of Graduate Education

RE: Annual Call for Program Assessment Plans, Learning Goals, and Assessment Activities

CC: Kelly Haslam, Assistant Dean, Graduate School

The Graduate School serves as the assigned administrative school/college for your graduate program with respect to program review, assessment, and accreditation compliance. This memo specifically pertains to program requirements around assessment and accreditation compliance.

The UW-Madison Assessment Plan calls for every academic unit to have an assessment plan and engage in at least one assessment activity each year. These efforts are critical for maintaining academic excellence across our programs as well as at the institutional level. In addition, to meet the requirements outlined by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), it is important that student learning goals for each program degree level (master’s, doctoral, certificate) are articulated.

As the assigned administrative school/college for your graduate program, the Graduate School is requesting the following three items no later than August 15, 2015:

1. **Graduate Program Assessment Plan** – Every graduate program should have an assessment plan in place. If your graduate program already has one in place, please update as appropriate and submit it. If your graduate program does not have one in place, please submit a development plan by August 15, 2015 detailing steps and a timeline of how you plan to submit an assessment plan no later than January 16, 2015. Here are some available resources regarding assessment plans:
   a. UW-Madison Assessment Manual:

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Graduate School
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN—MADISON

Bascom Hall  University of Wisconsin-Madison  500 Lincoln Drive  Madison, WI 53706-1380

Dean's Office  608-262-1044  Graduate Education  608-262-2433  Research  608-262-5835  Accounting  608-262-5802
Fax: 608-262-5134  Fax: 608-262-5134  Fax: 608-262-5134  Fax: 608-262-1534  Fax: 608-262-5235
b. Sample Assessment Plan for “Jurassic Studies”:

2. Graduate Program Learning Goals – Every graduate program should have student learning goals for each program degree level (master’s, doctoral, certificates). If your graduate program already has program learning goals articulated, please update them as appropriate and submit them. If your graduate program does not have any program learning goals articulated, please submit a development plan by August 15, 2015 detailing steps and a timeline of how you plan to submit a first draft no later than January 16, 2015.

The Graduate Faculty Executive Committee is actively working on developing a set of overarching learning goals for graduate programs. Ultimately, there will be a future requirement for all graduate programs to have learning goals in the next Graduate Catalog with an anticipated submission deadline of September 2015.

Student learning goals should be identified in terms of what students know and are able to do at the end of the degree program. These should be observable, measureable, and student/learner specific (rather than statements focused on content delivery or faculty) and should also make clear the difference in expectations across degree levels (e.g. M.S., Ph.D. degrees within the same program would not all have the same student learning goals).

3. Assessment Activities Report – Every graduate program should engage in at least one assessment activity each year. This could take a variety of forms: program review, continuous improvement efforts, assessment planning, implementation of assessment activities (surveys to entering, continuing, or exiting students; surveys to alumni or employers; development of rubrics, evaluation tools, summative assignments/exams for the program; curriculum and/or syllabus review, etc.), focused analysis of assessment activities, etc.

Please submit a 2013-14 assessment activities report for your program no later than August 15, 2014. Describe at least one area of focus as well as the assessment strategies, methods, and analyses used. In addition, summarize the key findings (evidence/results) and how the program plans to use this information (e.g. program enhancements, program redesign, etc.). Finally, briefly outline your planned assessment activities for the coming year.

Here is a summary of the three submission requirements due no later than August 15, 2014:

1. Submission of current/update assessment plan OR of a development plan detailing steps and a timeline of how you plan to submit an assessment plan no later than January 16, 2015.
2. Submission of current/updated program learning goals OR a development plan detailing steps and a timeline of how you plan to submit a first draft no later than January 16, 2015.


Assessing student learning provides valuable information that can inform curricular planning and development, teaching and pedagogical practices, and improvements for the student experience. Further, evidence-based assessments foster collaboration within and across programs and provide clarity about learning expectations. We look forward to receiving your materials.
The Cellular & Molecular Biology (CMB) graduate program at the University of Wisconsin-Madison provides students the opportunity to work with more than 180 CMB faculty trainers in over 40 academic departments. CMB faculty trainers are grouped into eleven areas of research strength: Cancer Biology, Cell Adhesion & Cytoskeleton, Cellular & Molecular Metabolism, Developmental Biology & Regenerative Medicine, Immunology, Membrane Biology & Protein Trafficking, Molecular & Genome Biology of Microbes, Plant Biology, RNA, Transcriptional Mechanisms and Virology. Coursework and research experience allows students to obtain a solid foundation in Cellular and Molecular Biology that is tailored to the professional objectives of each student. All of the information in this assessment plan is made available to CMB students and faculty through the CMB website (http://www.cmb.wisc.edu).

A. Educational Goals and Objectives
The overriding goal of the program is for students to acquire the ability to perform, design, critique, write about, and speak about research in the fields of cell biology and molecular biology. Knowledge and skills goals will be met through courses and thesis research.

1. The course requirements are as follows:

**Course Requirements Overview (11 total credits required)**
Eleven credits of coursework, not including 990 research credits, are required to complete the CMB course requirements. At least seven credits must be a combination of the core curriculum in molecular biology and cell biology to gain a depth and breadth of understanding in the subject area. Three credits of the CMB course requirements may come from either the core curriculum or the additional courses list. In addition, one credit must be fulfilled through the required ethics course. All CMB course requirements must be completed by the end of the student's second year, before completing the Preliminary Exam and obtaining dissertator status. A list of CMB course descriptions can be found in the Core Curriculum and Additional Courses sections of the CMB Handbook.

**Course Requirements (10 credits required)**
- Seven credits must be from the CMB Core Curriculum, with at least one course from both the molecular biology AND cell biology course lists
- Three credits may be from either the Core Curriculum OR Additional Courses lists
- EXCEPTION: Effective Fall 2012, MD/PhD students are only required to take 3 credits from the Core Curriculum or the Additional Courses list
- For a list of course descriptions, see the Core Curriculum and Additional Courses sections of the CMB Handbook

**Ethics Course Requirement (1 credit required)**
- One credit Oncology 675 (*effective Fall 2013, Oncology 675 is the only course available to satisfy the ethics requirement)
- Any request to take an alternate ethics course will be reviewed by the CMB Curriculum Chair
on an individual basis

2. The thesis research requirements will be established by a thesis advisor and thesis committee:

**Thesis Advisor Overview**
The Thesis Advisor will assist the graduate student throughout the duration of their PhD studies. Upon choosing a Thesis Advisor, the student should formulate goals and expectations when starting in a permanent lab home. The student and Thesis Advisor should work together to ensure that mutual goals and expectations are met.

**Purpose of a Thesis Advisor**
- Monitor and guide the student's progress toward their PhD degree
- Provide the student with advice about how and when to meet the degree requirements of the program
- Help the student decide on appropriate coursework during their PhD studies
- Act as the head of the student's Thesis Committee
- Help the student establish the members of their Thesis Committee

**Selecting a Thesis Advisor**
- Consider the amount of contact, pressure, support, and direction the student might prefer
- Attend CMB faculty trainer talks during Advising and Orientation Week where each CMB faculty trainer will discuss research being conducted in his/her lab
- Review each faculty trainer's lab information found on their website and arrange a time to meet with faculty trainers of interest to discuss questions and obtain more information about their lab
- Ask for copies of grant proposals or published papers about the faculty trainer's research
- Interview other CMB graduate students in the faculty trainer's lab

**Student-Thesis Advisor Concerns**
If a problem between a student and Thesis Advisor develops, the following steps should be taken:
- The student and Thesis Advisor should discuss and attempt to resolve any differences, request changes within a specified time period, note concerns on the Progress Report form, follow up with a letter to the student, and send a copy of the letter to the CMB Office
- If either party is not satisfied with the result, they may present the situation to a member of the Thesis Committee and notify the CMB Office
- If the problem is not readily resolved, the student or Thesis Advisor may seek the guidance of the CMB Program Chair or the Coordinating Committee
- If a solution suggests a laboratory change, the Thesis Advisor may be expected to fund the student for a one month rotation
- The Employee Assistance Office (EAO) at UW-Madison is available to faculty trainers and graduate students as a useful resource when dealing with student-Thesis Advisor concerns

**Thesis Committee Overview**
After joining a thesis lab, students are required to form a Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee Approval form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website, must be filled out and submitted to the CMB Office by March 15 of the student's first year. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration.

**Purpose of a Thesis Committee**
- Guide the student through the process of earning their Ph.D. degree and meeting all CMB Program requirements
- Assist the student in developing as an independent scientist in the student’s area of research
- Provide the student with an array of ideas and opportunities regarding the direction of their research and thesis project
- Evaluate the student’s research proposal, attend Curriculum Certification, Preliminary Exam, annual Progress Report, and Thesis Defense

**Composition of a Thesis Committee**
- A Thesis Committee consists of five faculty members, including the Thesis Advisor
- Three committee members, including the Thesis Advisor, must be faculty trainers in the CMB Program
- Two committee members must be outside the student’s direct area of expertise
- For more information, see the Graduate School Academic Policies and Procedures website

**Formation of a Thesis Committee**
- The student must consult with the Thesis Advisor to determine members of the Thesis Committee
- Fill out the Thesis Committee Approval form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website
- Obtain signatures of all Thesis Committee members on the form and submit it to the CMB Office by March 15 of the student's first year
- If a member of the student’s Thesis Committee changes, submit a revised Thesis Committee Approval form with the signature of the new member and the Thesis Advisor (other members do not need to sign revised form)
- If a student and Thesis Advisor wish to form a committee that does not fulfill one or more of the requirements listed above, they need to request an exemption from the CMB Program
- If a student changes Thesis Advisors, they must form a new Thesis Committee within three months of joining the new lab and turn in a new Thesis Committee Approval form to the CMB Office

**Chair of Thesis Committee Meetings**
- At each yearly meeting, a member of the Thesis Committee will serve as the chair of that particular meeting
- The chair of the committee meeting cannot be the Thesis Advisor
- The chair will be a floating chair and can be different at each committee meeting
The duties of the Thesis Committee Chair will be to maintain the pace of the meeting and provide written feedback to the student on the corresponding CMB form

**B. Instruments and Methods for Assessment**
1. Progress in coursework will be assessed as follows:

**Curriculum Certification Overview**

Once the student has formed a Thesis Committee, they must hold a Curriculum Certification meeting to discuss their research area and choose appropriate coursework to complete the CMB course requirements. The Curriculum Certification meeting is not a formal research presentation and the student is usually not expected to present papers or research findings. Students will discuss the format of this meeting with their Thesis Advisor prior to the meeting to establish clear expectations. The meeting must be scheduled by May 17 and completed by August 31 of the student's first year. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration.

**Requirements to Complete**

Prior to the Curriculum Certification Meeting:
- Schedule Curriculum Certification meeting with committee members
- Send an email notification with the scheduled date to the CMB Office by the May 17 deadline (failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration)
- Complete the Curriculum Certification form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website

At the Curriculum Certification Meeting:
- Bring copies of the Curriculum Certification form
- Bring a current grade report, available at My UW
- Establish the Chair of the Curriculum Certification meeting (see the Thesis Committee section of the CMB Handbook)
- Obtain signatures of committee members on the Curriculum Certification form
- At least three members of the committee must be present at the meeting, including the Thesis Advisor
- If necessary, the student should meet individually with the rest of the committee to get their input and signatures after the meeting

Submit the Following Materials:
Submit the signed Curriculum Certification form to the CMB Office by the August 31 deadline (failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration)

**Satisfactory Academic Progress**
- A grade of "B" or better must be achieved in each course to maintain satisfactory academic progress in the CMB Program
- Any grade of "BC" or lower will not count towards the CMB course requirements
- If a student receives a "BC" or lower, they must repeat the course to achieve a higher grade or substitute a different course to satisfy the CMB course requirements

**Graduate School Academic Guidelines**
- In order for a PhD degree to be awarded, the Graduate School requires:
- A minimum of 32 credits taken in graduate level courses: 12 of these will satisfy CMB course requirements and the remaining credits can be 990 research credits
• Maintain a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 in all graduate-level coursework
• Courses with grades of “P” (Progress) count toward the credit requirements only if they are research credits
• Courses taken pass/fail, audited, or with grades of “D” or “F” will not be counted toward Graduate School credits
• A student may be placed on probation or suspended from the Graduate School for unsatisfactory grades

For more information, see the Graduate School Academic Policies and Procedures website

2. Progress in thesis research will be assessed as follows:

Preliminary Exam Overview
The Preliminary Exam is taken within two years after entering the CMB Program, following successful completion of the CMB course requirements. It is important to view this exam not so much as a hurdle, but more as an important educational exercise. The Preliminary Exam must be scheduled by May 17 and completed by August 31 of the second year. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration.

Shortly after submitting the signed Preliminary Exam warrant, students should expect to receive an email from the Graduate School confirming dissertator status for the following semester and admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. Dissertator status is a university fee status in which the student has completed all necessary PhD requirements, except the dissertation. To reach dissertator status, a student must complete all CMB course requirements and pass the Preliminary Exam. For more information on dissertator status, see the Graduate School Academic Policies and Procedures website.

Goals of the Preliminary Exam
To determine if the student can:
• Think independently through a research proposal
• Identify a realistic experiment for the PhD dissertation
• See possible pitfalls in the long-term planning of a research proposal
• Develop a logical attack on a specific problem (i.e. which experiment comes first, second, etc.)
• Present the proposal with clarity in written form, using the NIH format listed in the Preliminary Exam Research Plan (see below), scaled to the candidate's dissertation time frame
• Present the proposal successfully
• Defend the proposal and think on his/her feet

Preliminary Exam Research Plan
Proposal Content:
• Students must consult with others, including their Thesis Advisor when writing the proposal
• Subject matter must coincide with the student's anticipated thesis research
• Extensive preliminary data is NOT necessary for the exam
• The proposal must be prepared in a format similar to a NIH postdoctoral grant application
• Recommended format and page limit:
  The length of the entire proposal may not exceed 20 pages
Format must be double spaced
10 or 12 point font
Adherence to this format and page limit will be considered in the final evaluation

- If research involves human subjects or animals, approval of the appropriate campus compliance committee must be obtained prior to the exam
- For more information about research policy, compliance, and integrity activities, visit http://www.grad.wisc.edu/research/policyrp/index.html

Specific Aims:
- State the broad, long-term objectives
- Describe concisely and realistically what the specific research is intended to accomplish and any hypotheses to be tested
- One page is recommended

Background and Significance:
- Briefly sketch the background of the present proposal
- Critically evaluate existing knowledge
- Specifically identify the gaps in knowledge that the project is intended to fill
- State concisely the importance of the research described in the proposal by relating the specific aims to the broader long-term objectives
- 2-3 pages are recommended

Preliminary Studies:
- Provide an overview of the preliminary studies that have been conducted in regard to the proposal
- Provide other information that establishes the experience and competence of the student in relation to the proposed project

Experimental Design and Methods:
- Outline the experimental design and the procedures intended to accomplish the specific aims of the project
- Detail the means by which the data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted
- Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies
- Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims
- Provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the investigation
- Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and precautions to be exercised

Literature Cited:
- Each citation must include the title, names of all authors, book or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication
- Make every attempt to be judicious in compiling a relevant and current list of literature citations; it need not be exhaustive
- This does not count as part of the 20-page total limitation
- Figures that are critical to the proposal should be included within the 20-page limit
• The student will have the opportunity to present other figures at the oral exam

Requirements to Complete
Prior to the Preliminary Exam:
• Complete the CMB course requirements
• Schedule Preliminary Exam with committee members
• Send an email notification with the scheduled exam date to the CMB Office at least three weeks prior to the date in order to obtain the Preliminary warrant
• The CMB Office will request a warrant from the Graduate School and notify the student when it can be picked up in the CMB Office
• It is recommended that the written proposal draft be submitted to the Thesis Advisor
• It is recommended that the Thesis Advisor read it and provide feedback such that the student has time to make revisions before going out to the rest of the committee
• Circulate the final proposal to the Thesis Committee at least two working weeks prior to the exam
• Complete a Preliminary Exam form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website

At the Preliminary Exam:
• Establish the chair of the meeting (see the Thesis Committee section of the CMB Handbook)
• The student presents a brief oral presentation describing their research proposal (approximately 20 minutes)
• After the presentation, the student responds to questions by the Thesis Committee, which correspond to the proposal itself and any related material
• Obtain decision and signatures of all Thesis Committee members on the Preliminary Exam form and warrant
• The exam is usually completed within two hours

Submit the Following Materials:
Submission will be based on the Thesis Committee's decision of the outcome of the Preliminary Exam:
Pass
• Submit the signed warrant, signed Preliminary Exam form, and a copy of the final research proposal to the CMB Office

Written Revisions
• Submit the signed Preliminary Exam form to the CMB Office
• Complete recommended written revisions of Preliminary proposal as suggested by the Thesis Committee
• Obtain signatures of Thesis Committee members on the warrant after written revisions have been completed
• Submit the signed warrant, signed Preliminary Exam form, and a copy of the revised research proposal to the CMB Office

Written Revisions and Repeat of Oral Defense
• Submit the Preliminary Exam form to the CMB Office
• Complete recommended written revisions and reschedule to repeat the Preliminary Exam
• Obtain a new decision and signatures of all Thesis Committee members on the new Preliminary Exam form
• Submit the signed warrant, the new Preliminary Exam form, and a copy of the revised research proposal to the CMB Office

Fail
• Discuss results and recommendations with the Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee
• Submit the Preliminary Exam form, unsigned warrant, and a copy of the research proposal to the CMB Office and inform them of the committee's recommendations

Extension Request
• Under special circumstances, the CMB Program will consider a six-month extension for the Preliminary Exam
• The student and the Thesis Advisor must justify the reasons for an extension in writing to the CMB Office
• The CMB Curriculum Chair and/or the CMB Program Chair will review the request for consideration

If the Preliminary Exam is not completed by the end of the six-month extension, the student's academic standing in the CMB Program may be jeopardized.

Seminar Requirements Overview
The goal of the seminar requirement is to give each student training and experience in oral presentations. Students are required to give an oral presentation beginning the second year of the CMB Program and each year thereafter. Second and third-year students can give either a Journal Club Presentation or Formal Research Seminar, while fourth, fifth, and sixth-year students must give a Formal Research Seminar. A Journal Club Presentation is a presentation about literature pertaining to a specific research topic. A Formal Research Seminar is a presentation given by a student regarding their independent research topic. The requirements can be satisfied through a number of seminar series within individual CMB focus groups and departments across the UW-Madison campus. Additionally, certain courses may also satisfy the seminar requirement. Students should consult with their Thesis Advisor as to the appropriate seminar presentation opportunity. The yearly seminar requirement must be completed by the August 31 deadline. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration.

Requirements to Complete
• Students should discuss Journal Club or Formal Research options with their Thesis Advisor
• At least three CMB faculty trainers must be present at the seminar and must sign the Seminar Requirement form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website

Journal Club Presentation:
• Journal Club Presentations can be completed by second and third-year students
• It is expected that the student will attend the Journal Club on a regular basis
• The presentation must be a 30-minute campus talk

Formal Research Seminar:
• Formal Research Seminars must be completed by fourth, fifth, and sixth-year students
• Provides a training component in which student presenters are provided with critical feedback on their research presentation
• The presentation must be a 10-minute national talk or 30-minute campus talk
• A joint lab meeting may count as a Formal Research Seminar if the presentation is at least 30 minutes and at least three CMB faculty trainers are present

Submit the Following Materials:
Submit the signed Seminar Requirement form to the CMB Office by the August 31 deadline (failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration)

**Yearly Progress Report Overview**
All students are required to conduct a yearly Progress Report meeting with their Thesis Committee after passing the Preliminary Exam. This meeting ensures that the student is making satisfactory research progress toward their PhD and provides a mechanism for the student to identify areas of strength and weakness in their development as an independent scientist. The Progress Report meeting must be scheduled by May 17 and completed by August 31 of the third, fourth, and fifth year. Failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student’s registration.

**Requirements to Complete**
Prior to the Progress Report Meeting:
• Schedule the Progress Report meeting with the Thesis Committee
• Send an email notification with the scheduled meeting date to the CMB Office by the May 17 deadline (failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration)
• Prepare a presentation of the research progress
• Obtain and complete the first section of the Progress Report form, available on the CMB Forms section of the CMB website
• Submit the Progress Report form to the Thesis Advisor

At the Progress Report Meeting:
• Establish the chair of the Progress Report meeting (see the Thesis Committee section of the CMB Handbook)
• Give a presentation describing the past year’s accomplishments
• The presentation and Progress Report will be discussed by the student and the Thesis Committee
• At least three Thesis Committee members must be present at the meeting and must sign the Progress Report form
• If necessary, the student should meet individually with the rest of the committee to get their input and signatures after the meeting

Submit the Following Materials:
• Submit the signed Progress Report form to the CMB Office by the August 31 deadline (failure to do so will result in a hold being placed on the student's registration)

**Time To Degree**
The CMB Program desires and expects its students to graduate in a timely fashion, as this is in the best interests of the individual students and the program as a whole. However, it must be recognized that different students progress at different rates, and any given student may encounter unexpected problems beyond their control that extend their time to degree. To ensure that these competing factors are balanced, the CMB Program Coordinator will automatically bring to the attention of the Coordinating Committee (CC) any students who are entering their 8th year in the CMB Program. The CC will examine such situations and determine on a case-by-case basis whether or not there are extenuating circumstances that merit continuation of the student in the CMB Program. If the CC determines that there are no extenuating circumstances, the CC will intervene as appropriate based on each individual case. Options for intervention include, but are not limited to, a terminal MS degree for the student.

**Thesis Defense Overview**

The Thesis Defense is a presentation of the student's independent research topic, an overview of the experiments completed, and a summary of the analyzed data and results. Most students are able to complete their PhD within five to six years after entering the CMB Program. The Thesis Defense must be completed within five years after completion of the Preliminary Exam. For more information on this policy, see the Graduate School Academic Policies and Procedures website.

**Requirements to Complete**

At Least Three Weeks Prior to the Thesis Defense:
- Schedule the Thesis Defense with the Thesis Committee
- Send an email notification with the scheduled date, defense location, defense time, thesis title, and listing of thesis committee members to the CMB Office
- The CMB Office will then request a warrant from the Graduate School
- Upon approval, the Graduate School will issue the warrant to the CMB Office electronically
- When the warrant has been received from the Graduate School, the CMB Office will email the warrant directly to the student
- Read through the Graduate School's page on "Completing Your Degree"
  http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree/
- Follow the instructions outlined in the Graduate School publication to submit Thesis Defense: Dissertation Submission for PhD Students
- If changes in the Thesis Committee are made after a warrant has been requested, then a new request must be made to the Graduate School for approval and issuance of a new warrant

At Least Two Weeks Prior to the Thesis Defense:
- Submit a copy of the Thesis Defense to all members of the Thesis Committee
- The CMB Office will create a Thesis Defense flyer and distribute this announcement to the current CMB faculty trainer and graduate student email list, publish it in the weekly e-newsletter, and post it on the calendar of events on the CMB website
- Notify your departmental payroll coordinator of the date you are expecting to defend and deposit your thesis

At the Thesis Defense:
- All five committee members must be present
• Give a presentation about the research
• Defend and answer questions asked by the Thesis Committee
• Obtain signatures of all Thesis Committee members on the Thesis Defense warrant

Following the Thesis Defense:
• Submit Thesis Defense electronically
• Contact the Graduate School (262-2433) to schedule an appointment for the final review
• All corrections and revisions of the Thesis Defense must be made before submitting your Thesis Defense
• For more information, see Dissertation Submission for PhD Students

Submit the Following Materials:
• To the CMB Office:
  A copy of the warrant, signed by all Thesis Committee members
  The Forwarding Address form
• To the Graduate School:
  Thesis Defense warrant
  Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) certificate of completion
  Graduate School Doctoral Exit Survey (DES) certificate of completion

3. Faculty trainers will be assessed as follows:

**Trainer Review Overview**
• The CMB Program reviews 1/5 of the current affiliated faculty trainers each year based on the first letter of their last name
• All current faculty trainers will be reviewed once every five years, as an ongoing process
• Recently admitted faculty trainers may be reviewed sooner than five years based on where their last name falls in the rotation
• The CMB faculty trainer submits a Faculty Trainer Review form and a current NIH biosketch as requested by the CMB Office
• The faculty trainer review usually takes place in May or August/September at the Coordinating Committee meeting
• The Coordinating Committee will review the completed form and consider the following:
  How appropriate the current research area of the faculty trainer is in relation to the CMB Program
  Research quality, as judged by a continuing record of productivity and extramural funding relating to cellular and molecular biology
  Participation in various CMB Program functions
  Track record of training graduate students and the training environment provided in the lab
• Faculty trainers will be informed of the Coordinating Committee's decision within one month of when the Coordinating Committee meeting takes place
• Faculty trainers whose research focus, research quality, or CMB Program participation is determined to be unsuitable for the CMB Program will receive a letter from the Coordinating Committee stating they have been removed from the CMB Program as a faculty trainer
• Faculty trainers may challenge their removal by submitting a timely appeal to the Coordinating Committee.
• A removed faculty trainer may also apply for reappointment at any time following removal.
• The reappointment process is similar to the original review process, however, the Coordinating Committee may request supplemental information if necessary.

The Coordinating Committee will apply somewhat more rigorous standards for reappointment than for the initial appointment of a new faculty trainer.

C. The Feedback Mechanism

The Chair, Coordinating Committee, and Student Services Coordinator are constantly assessing whether the CMB Program is achieving the stated goals. The Coordinating Committee consists of the program Chair, Student Services Coordinator, Chairs of each of the eleven focus groups, Chairs of the Admission, Recruiting, Curriculum, and Advising & Orientation committees, and three student representatives. The Coordinating Committee meets each month during the academic year to assess the program and implement changes to improve the program. The Chair meets yearly with students to discuss the program. The Student Services Coordinator reviews the yearly evaluations of each student and reports issues to the Chair. Graduating students are asked in a survey to evaluate their experience in the program and provide advice on improving the program. On the basis of these review mechanisms the Chair will provide the program and the university with an annual report. (2014 report attached).

D. Timetable for Implementation

The assessment plan is in place.
CMB Annual Report
2013-2014 Academic Year

Summary of Student Accomplishments:

Number of Students Graduated:
21 (18 PhD, 3 MS)
7 will defend in August 2014

All first year CMB students successfully found lab homes after conducting rotations.

Student Publications:


Student Awards and Honors:

Windgassen, Tricia, Class of 2013, Lab of Jim Keck
National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Award

Craig Barcus, Class of 2010, Lab of Linda Schuler
SVM-Phi Zeta Award for Research Excellence by a Graduate Student at the Vet School

Suyong Choi, Class of 2009, Lab of Richard Anderson
Predoctoral Fellowship for American Heart Association

Kevin Cope, Class of 2013, Lab of Jean-Michel Ane
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention

Asuka Eguchi, Class of 2010, Lab of Aseem Ansari
Jump Start Award

Xin Gao, Class of 2011, Lab of Emery Bresnick
American Society of Hematology Abstract Achievement Award

Chris Hooper, Class of 2010, Lab of Shigeki Miyamoto
F31 NIH Predoc Award

Ryan Kessens, Class of 2013, Lab of Mehdi Kabbage
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention

Sanghee Lee, Class of 2008, Lab of Wade Bushman
Vilas Conference Presentation Funds

Sarah Neuman, Class of 2011, Lab of Arash Bashirullah
3rd Place Poster Award at the Genetics Society of America 55th Annual Drosophila Research Conference

Jarred Rensvold, Class of 2009, Lab of David Pagliarini
Wisconsin Distinguished Graduate Fellowship

Xiaolin Zhang, Class of 2008, Lab of Jennifer Reed
Vilas Travel Award

Changes to the Program:

There were a few significant changes that took place in the CMB Program during the 2013-2014 academic year. These changes are outlined below.

- Changes in program leadership and administrative staff
  - David Wassarman from the Department of Cell and Regenerative Biology assumed the role of CMB Program Chair in summer of 2013. He took over for Bill Bement who had served as Program Chair for seven and a half years.
  - Jessica Karis became the new student services coordinator for the program in August of 2013. Jessica succeeded Michelle Holland who had been with the program for nine years.

- Student seminar series
  - The CMB student-led seminar series was revitalized after a brief break. New student leaders took on the planning role and coordinated the series to take place monthly during the fall and spring semesters.

- Individual development plans and professional development
  - CMB students are required to meet yearly with their thesis committees to discuss progress. Students fill out progress report forms and have their committee members sign off on these forms at the yearly meeting. There has been an increased effort within the program and campus to facilitate and enhance professional development opportunities for graduate students. In response to this, CMB edited the yearly progress report forms, adding a section about professional/career development. In addition to the conversation with committee members about progress on their research project, the conversation at the meeting now features a professional development component as well. The program is encouraging professional development by putting on a series of professional development events (organized by the student professional development committee) and connecting current graduate students with CMB alumni who are working in various fields/jobs of interest.

- Work with Graduate School
  - CMB also began working with the Graduate School (and other affiliated programs) to develop an individual development plan template. CMB is working to be a leader in helping the graduate school incorporate IDPs for other graduate programs across campus.
Course review
- The Program is currently undertaking a review of all courses currently listed to fulfill CMB Program requirements. Courses are evaluated for rigor, breadth, and content. Some courses may be removed or added from the listing, but this will be determined in August 2014.

Proposed Changes to the Program:

There are some planned changes for 2014-2015, which are outlined below.

- Focus Groups
  - The program is broken into eleven focus groups highlighting research strengths and areas within the program. There is a proposal to add a 12th focus group in “Systems Biology” and will be reviewed by the CMB Coordinating Committee in the Fall of 2014.

- Individual Development Plans
  - The program plans to implement use of the IDP form developed and recommended by the IDP working group coordinated by the Graduate School.
Graduate Program Learning Goals and Objectives:

The overriding goal of the program is for students to acquire the ability to perform, design, critique, write about, and speak about research in the fields of cell biology and molecular biology. Knowledge and skills goals will be met through courses and thesis research.

Assessment Activities Report:

- **Surveys to Graduating Students**
  - Graduating students are asked about what resources they found helpful as they prepared to finish their degrees, and are asked to share a few words of advice regarding their experience in the program to share with current or prospective students.

- **Surveys to Current and Incoming Students**
  - The program surveys incoming and current graduate students to learn about what professional development opportunities/topics they’re interested in learning about. The program then incorporates as many of these ideas as possible into the professional development events that take place about once per month throughout the year.

- **Meeting with Senior Graduate Students and First Year Graduate Students**
  - The program chair and student services coordinator meet with senior students as well as first year graduate students (separate meetings) to determine their needs and touch base about how things are going. Based on feedback from these groups, the program works to provide assistance or opportunities for them.

- **Curriculum Review**
  - The program is in the process of conducting a large review of all the courses that CMB students take for credit in the program. They’re being evaluated for breadth, depth, and content and are being assessed to make sure they meet the training needs of students in the program.

- **Annual Trainer Review**
  - 1/5 of the faculty trainers are reviewed each year by the program coordinating committee to assess that they are contributing to the program and development of students.

Planned Assessment Activities:

The program plans to utilize the above items in the upcoming year and may develop a more in-depth survey to graduating students.