

## Graduate Student Research Seminars and Annual Review

Graduate Student Research Seminar Program. The goals of this seminar program are to enhance the intellectual atmosphere of the department, to provide students opportunities to develop skills in publicly presenting research results, and to facilitate faculty monitoring of student research progress. Following the successful passage of the Research Qualifying Examination, students will present an annual 30-minute, public research seminar starting in their third year and continuing until the semester of their thesis defense. Currently, these seminars are held on Wednesday afternoons at 4 pm.

One week prior to the seminar, the student will provide a one page summary of research accomplishments in the past year and a one page summary of research plans for the coming year to the Office of Student Affairs; the Office will distribute these to the Ph.D. Advisory/Thesis Final Committee. The student's Ph.D. Advisory/Thesis Final Committee will attend the seminar. Within two weeks following the seminar, the student will meet with his or her Ph.D. Advisory/Thesis Final Committee to discuss the research accomplishments and plans; the Office of Student Affairs will arrange the time and location for this meeting. The chair of the advisory committee (normally the thesis advisor) will prepare a short written summary of the meeting containing any recommendations to the student that must be submitted to the Office of Student Affairs by the Monday following the meeting. These summaries will be sent to the student and a copy will be placed in the student's file in the Biochemistry Office of Student Affairs.

Students will receive credit by registering in the Biochemistry Seminar course (BIOC 595) for 1 hour of credit per semester. Although the course will be graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis, the primary goal is to develop skills and provide feedback on research progress. Students will begin registering for the seminar course in their second year, and begin their annual presentations one semester after passing their research qualifying examination. Presentations and registration would continue until the semester of the thesis defense. (First year students are likely to have class and/or teaching assignment conflicts that could prevent routine attendance. However, if possible these students as well as those completing their dissertations are encouraged to attend.) The presentations will be scheduled as regularly as possible and repeated on a more or less regular basis so that each student will know well in advance when his or her talk will be held. Students being scheduled for the first time would be assigned dates as late as possible in the year. This scheduling would give these students at least 1.5 years to start their research and have adequate data for preparation of a seminar. Students would continue making an annual presentation until they were within one semester of defending their dissertation (see below). The department provides sodas and cookies for the enjoyment of the students and faculty in attendance.

### Benefits:

1. Students would learn to present their research in public to a general audience.
2. Students would receive regular feedback and advice on their research projects. The progress of our students would be regularly monitored and they would receive formal, regular feedback.
3. A high rate of participation in such a visible research-oriented activity could help build the intellectual "atmosphere" of the department.
4. Increased knowledge of one another's research would facilitate intergroup interactions.
5. The students would be able to hear an overview of each laboratory's ongoing research directly from the faculty member.
6. The students and faculty would be able to meet on a regular basis, thereby encouraging more student-faculty interactions.
7. Students will receive academic credit for registration in the course.

In addition, faculty will participate in the seminar program by giving one hour talks (approx. 3-5 per year), usually at the beginning of each semester. The entire faculty is expected to rotate through the schedule about every three years.

**Annual Review.** After the Research Qual, a Ph.D. Advisory/Thesis Final Committee is appointed. It may be different from the Qual committee, and the student's advisor is the Chair. The composition of this committee may change as the student's work progresses. The purpose of the Thesis committee is to assess the student's *continuing* progress, primarily by attending the student's annual, Wednesday seminar and any other campus equivalents (such as the Fall conference or training grant Symposiums).

At least once a year the student prepares a 2 page research summary of past year accomplishments and future plans, and the committee should meet to discuss the student's progress, and meet subsequently with the student if there is any doubt about satisfactory progress being made.

After each annual assessment, the committee chair (advisor) summarizes the committee's findings on the Thesis Final Committee Summary Form, signs it, and delivers it to the Biochemistry Student Affairs Office.