



**Neuroscience Graduate Group
Student Handbook
2022-2023**

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NEUROSCIENCE GRADUATE GROUP ADMINISTRATION

<i>Graduate Group Chair</i>	Elva Diaz, Ph.D. Professor of Pharmacology 3515 GBSF 530-754-6080 ediaz@ucdavis.edu
<i>Graduate Group Lead Advisor</i>	Alex Nord, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Neuro Physiology and Behavior Med Neuro Bldg. asnord@ucdavis.edu
<i>Graduate Program Coordinator</i>	Linette Scibelli Center for Neuroscience, Room 146 lascibelli@ucdavis.edu
<i>Graduate Student Representative</i>	Tracy Warren tlwarren@ucdavis.edu

Center for Neuroscience – Administration

<i>Director</i>	Kimberley McAllister, PhD Professor of NPB and Neurology Center for Neuroscience, Room 103B kmcallister@ucdavis.edu
<i>Chief Administrative Officer</i>	Katrina Spridgen Room 101 kspridgen@ucdavis.edu
<i>Facilities Manager</i>	Lisa Laughlin Room 149 lslaughlin@ucdavis.edu
<i>Network/IT Manager</i>	Ryan Foster Room 110 rfoster@ucdavis.edu
<i>Analyst/Grants Manager</i>	Melanie Lansford Room 144 mklansford@ucdavis.edu
<i>Business Office Manager/Assistant to the Director /Events Coordinator</i>	Theresa Geer Room 103 tgeer@ucdavis.edu
<i>Contracts and Grants Analyst</i>	Diane Godard Remote dmgodard@ucdavis.edu
<i>CNS Payables Team</i>	Lili Barber Room 147 Christine Cossman Room 148 cns-payables@ucdavis.edu

HR/Payroll Specialist

Jennifer Munguia Room 150
jamunguia@ucdavis.edu

Marketing & Communication Specialist

Kimberly Cummings Room 148
kpcummings@ucdavis.edu

Director of Development

Jennifer Scott Room 105
jescott@ucdavis.edu

Academic Coordinator

Kristine Donis-Cox Room 148
kdoniscox@ucdavis.edu

INTRODUCTION

This handbook will help guide you through the Doctoral Program in Neuroscience at UC Davis. It covers issues ranging from lab rotations, advisory committees, and course work (which will take up most of the first two years), to the preliminary and qualifying exams, and dissertation (which will take up the remainder of your time here). Also included are contact information of your classmates and professors, and other useful information. Along with the procedures and facts, we have tried to include some advice and problem solving tips based on our collective experience. We hope our suggestions are helpful!

This handbook contains information specific to the Doctoral Program and Neuroscience Graduate Group. There is some overlap with the Office of Graduate Studies. Resources can be found at the following URL: <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources>.

This page also includes information on registration and enrollment procedures, fees and campus information that we do not provide here, so we refer to it frequently. In addition, the program website prepared by our graduate group and by the Center for Neuroscience provides research summaries for each of the neuroscience faculty. This information will be useful when deciding on your rotations and Major Professor (sometimes referred to as your Principal Investigator or PI). You may view the faculty profiles at the following URL: <https://grad.neuroscience.ucdavis.edu/faculty>

If you wish to view the *official* program documents (the Neuroscience graduate program by-laws and degree requirements), you may view them at the following URL (these documents are also on file in the Graduate Group Office see Linette Scibelli – and at the Office of Graduate Studies in Walker Hall): <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gnes>. You can also log into the Student Portal on the graduate group website. And they are available in your student binder.

A final note: This is a living document, meaning that it is constantly being updated, and will eventually be posted on the graduate group website.

When you first arrive at UCD

Here is a summary of the things you will be doing in your first weeks at the University:

1. Meet with the Lead Advisor, Dr. Alex Nord. Alex will be happy to assist you with any questions you have about first-year coursework, lab rotations, or life beyond your first year. He will also be available to you throughout the year to answer your questions.
2. Attend our Neuroscience Orientation (before classes begin). The Fall 2022 Orientation is scheduled beginning Monday, September 12th. The orientation will give you an overview of the structure of the Neuroscience Graduate Group and its requirements, courses, and activities. The Welcome Social event (TBD) is a great opportunity to meet other graduate students and faculty members and find out about research in a variety of labs within the graduate group.
3. Attend our annual Neuroscience Retreat. This year the retreat will be a two day at the Granlibakken Resort in Tahoe on Saturday, September 24th-25th. If you have any questions, you may contact the Graduate Group Coordinator, Linette Scibelli (lascibelli@ucdavis.edu), or the lead student planner, Vanessa Hull (vlhull@ucdavis.edu).
4. If you have not done so already, activate your UC Davis account. This is where you will obtain your UCD Kerberos login ID and password and email address.

Click on this link: <https://computingaccounts.ucdavis.edu/cgi-bin/services/index.cgi>

Click on "Get your UC Davis Computing Account," click begin and follow the directions. Once you have activated your account, please send Linette Scibelli (lascibelli@ucdavis.edu) your UCD email address so she may add you to the Neuroscience Graduate Student listserv. Once you have been added to the "neuro-grads@ucdavis.edu" email list you should begin checking your UCD account regularly, as you will receive updates on upcoming events (e.g., Annual Retreat, registration, etc.) and other graduate group related information.

5. Complete the FAFSA (if you have not already submitted one). All domestic students are required to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to be eligible for fellowships, work-study, and Federal Financial Aid. This is just a formality and a requirement from the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). Per OGS, any student receiving funding from the University needs to complete the form.

The FAFSA is available online at <http://fafsa.ed.gov>

6. Register for classes via SISWeb at <http://sisweb.ucdavis.edu>. First year students enroll in core courses during the year and one journal club per quarter (see Appendix B for a full listing of 2022-23 courses). After your first year of classes, you will then register for 11 units of NSC 299 and 1 unit of NSC 290C. Linette will email the CRNs to you during the registration period. Each CRN corresponds to a faculty member, so it is important that you register for the correct 299 and 290C classes. In addition, you will also register for any classes of interest and one journal club per quarter.

7. Establish Residency and obtain your student ID card (Aggie Card). Please complete the Statement of Legal Residence before the start of Fall Quarter:
<https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/tuition/residence/processes/slr-basics.cfm>

If you are not a California resident, you should begin the process of establishing residency as soon as you arrive in Davis. It takes one full year to become a California resident, and at the end of your first year, you should file the appropriate paperwork with the Office of the University Registrar to make the transition from non-resident to resident. Here is a link with more information about how to establish residency:

<https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/tuition/residence/processes/classification-instructions.cfm>

You should expect to complete the online petition by summer 2023.

Here is information on how to obtain your AggieCard:

<https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/records/aggiecard.cfm>

8. Send in your official and final transcripts with your undergraduate degree posted to:
Office of Graduate Studies
University of California, Davis
One Shields Avenue
Davis, CA 95616
9. Find a place to live (of course!) and a bike (and lock for it!)
10. Start attending classes and your first research rotation.

Welcome from the Graduate Group Chair

On behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of the Neuroscience Graduate Group, I would like to welcome you to UC Davis! We are glad that you are here! As a graduate student, you are starting an amazing journey and are expected to take on many roles: student, researcher, learner, colleague, teacher, public speaker, and more. UC Davis provides an ideal environment for you to receive your neuroscience education. The faculty of the Neuroscience Graduate Group are world-class, carrying out research at all levels from molecules to cognition. They will do everything in their power to make the pursuit of a Ph.D. rewarding as well as challenging. The heart of a graduate program is, of course, its students. We are extremely proud of our students. You will soon discover that the students in the Graduate Group are like a big family; they are full of energy, make good friends and colleagues, and are rich sources for all kinds of information. Useful as this Handbook is, there is no substitute for talking to students and faculty about your research interests and career goals. Graduate school is a marvelous time that is filled with new knowledge, new questions and new insights. Our Graduate Group is dedicated to your success and is anxious to help whenever possible. We very much look forward to talking and working with you!

"UC Davis is a diverse community comprised of individuals having many perspectives and identities. We come from a multitude of backgrounds and experiences, with distinct needs and goals. We recognize that to create an inclusive and intellectually vibrant community, we must understand and value both our individual differences and our common ground. The UC Davis Principles of Community is an aspirational statement that embodies this commitment, and reflects the ideals we seek to uphold."

The principles of community, prologue (UC Davis)

Elva Diaz, PhD, Chair, Neuroscience Graduate Group, Professor, Department of Pharmacology

Organizational Overview

The Doctoral Program and Neuroscience Graduate Group

You are enrolled as a graduate student in the Doctoral Program in Neuroscience at UC Davis. The faculty members of the Neuroscience Graduate Group, chiefly through the Chair and the Executive Committee, administer the Doctoral Program (which has a curriculum and degree requirements). Our Grad Group currently consists of about 82 faculty members representing over 13 different home departments from the various colleges and schools across campus. Some of our faculty belong to several graduate groups. Thus, the Grad Group is a meta-entity that floats somewhere above campus departments, but you receive your degree from the University of California through the Doctoral Program. You'll find that the faculty and students are not housed in a single building but are located throughout the campus and in Sacramento (see the directory in Appendix B).

There are currently 57 graduate students in the Program. There are also many postdoctoral fellows in the labs of the faculty members of the Neuroscience Graduate Group. A list of the graduate students and faculty members of the Neuroscience Graduate Group is provided at the end of this handbook.

Center for Neuroscience

The Center for Neuroscience (CNS), located on Research Park (across Freeway I-80 from the University). It serves as a focal point for neuroscience at UC Davis. It houses some of the faculty of our Grad Group, as well as others from Psychology and other departments who are working in our field. A regular series of seminars by local and visiting researchers is held in the CNS Conference Room (Room 113).

The Neuroscience Graduate Student Association and Student Representative

The Neuroscience Graduate Group has a departmental GSA, the Neuroscience Graduate Student Association (NGSA). The NGSA was originally formed in 1994 to officially convene in order to be able to petition for event money from the GSA, the Dean, and the undergraduate campus organization (ASUCD). The student selected as the NGSA representative acts as the lead representative for the departmental group. This student acts as the primary liaison between the students and faculty/staff of the graduate program. It is this student's duty to organize the annual spring meeting, ensure that all committee and officer positions are filled within the NGSA, authorize the treasurers to issue reimbursements, develop and implement the yearly student agenda, and coordinate the dissemination of information between the various committee members/officers and the students. This student also serves as a liaison between the students, faculty, and administration on various administrative issues that arise for students. These issues include, but are not limited to UCD Internal Fellowship applications, course curriculum analyses, new student orientation, and social activities for students and development of student resources for graduate success. You are automatically a member of this auspicious and distinguished association just by being here!

DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN NEUROSCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT POSITIONS IN THE NGSA

Neuroscience graduate students are active in all aspects of policy and academic life in the Neuroscience graduate group. Students are selected annually during the Spring Meeting (every May/June) to fill a variety of positions for the graduate group. These positions are filled by nomination and (if necessary) a vote at the annual Spring Meeting. This is a great way to get involved in the program and to interact with fellow students. Below is the list of positions and position leaders for 2022-2023:

Neuroscience Graduate Student Representative

Tracy Warren

This individual serves as the liaison between the graduate students and faculty. They also arrange and run the meetings of the NGSA, help to define and ensure the filling of other graduate student positions, and work on specific student goals for the year. Send out quarterly newsletters. This student must have advanced to candidacy.

TA Union Representative

Porter Harrast

A student is selected to represent the graduate students on the TA Union. This student can communicate issues from the graduate students to the Union, or report any information provided from the Union to the students to keep them informed of their rights and responsibilities. The student will also help coordinate meetings between the Union and the Graduate group in the Fall to have incoming

student learn about the TA Union and throughout the year as necessary (Ex. Covid-19 virtual town hall). Additionally, the student has the option of taking as active a role in the Union as they would like.

Admissions Committee Representative

Jasmine Carter

The selected student reviews all applications for admission to the graduate group and meets with the rest of the committee to discuss each applicant's suitability for the program. The student committee member will interview prospective students during the recruitment weekend and will meet with the committee to make final admission decisions. Per the bylaws, the Chair of the Neuroscience Graduate Group selects this student. The student member must have advanced to candidacy

Education Policy Committee Representative

Joshua Chandra

The selected student participates in curriculum reviews along with the faculty members of the committee. This student can raise concerns and contribute ideas from the student body regarding changes to the Neuroscience graduate program curriculum.

Recruitment Committee

*Tanner Stevenson
Stephanie Lozano*

Students serving on this committee help the graduate program coordinator plan and execute the recruitment weekend for prospective neuroscience students. This is an active commitment for approximately one month of the year. This position is a two-year commitment. Therefore, there will be 1 person staying on and 1 new person each year. The new people will stay on for the following year and help train the next coordinator.

Neuroscience Initiative to Enhance Diversity Committee

*Celena Lozano
Maribel Anguiano
Paula Vij*

Students serving on this committee help the academic coordinator plan and execute the NIED weekend for undergraduate students to pursue a PhD in Neuroscience.

Executive Committee Representatives

*Rebecca Wilson
Kiran Long-Iyer*

This committee is comprised of the Chair of the Neuroscience Graduate Group, the faculty chairs of each committee in the graduate program, and two student members. The two student members serve as representatives of the neuroscience graduate student body. The committee meets at least quarterly.

SfN Student Lead

Olga Vafaeva

Students serving on this committee help the graduate coordinator plan and schedule the student volunteers at SfN for the graduate group recruitment booth.

Peer-to-Peer Mentoring Program

*Ksenia Vlasov
Rebecca de Frates
Nicolas Seban*

In this initial year, committee members will need to develop and implement the Peer-to-Peer mentoring program, including getting all interested mentees and pairing them with upper-year mentors.

Retreat Coordinators

*Vanessa Hull
Brett Bormann
Erin Scott
Evna Haley*

The selected students are responsible for working with the graduate program coordinator and chief administrative officer to organize the annual retreat. Usually, two first year students and two second year students volunteer to serve as coordinators. The first year students are responsible for planning the meeting schedule, organizing faculty and student speakers, and organizing room reservations for attending graduate group members. The second-year students are responsible for organizing retreat social events and inviting/hosting the keynote speaker. Each position is a two-year commitment. Therefore, there will be 2 staying on and 2 new people each year. The new people will stay on for the next year and help train the next set of coordinators.

Student-Organized Seminar Series Student Organizers

*Tanner Stevenson
Ksenia Vlasov*

The selected student coordinators organize a meeting during which students nominate and vote on 3-4 speakers for the series. At that time, a student host is selected for each invited speaker. Student coordinators and hosts work together to plan the seminar series. Responsibilities include inviting the chosen speakers, organizing their itineraries with faculty and student meetings during the day and meals with students, scheduling their seminar and introducing them before the talk, and making arrangements for all transportation during the visit.

Student Outreach for Minority Advocacy Student Organizers

*Nicole Claiborne
Rose De Kock
Jose Marquez
Sasha Mikhailova
Raisa Rahim*

Similar to the Student Seminar Series, the selected student coordinators organize a meeting during which students nominate and vote on 3-4 speakers for the series. At that time, a student host is selected for each invited speaker. Student coordinators and hosts work together to plan the seminar series. Responsibilities include inviting the chosen speakers, organizing their itineraries with faculty and student meetings during the day and meals with students, scheduling their seminar and introducing them before the talk, and making arrangements for all transportation during the visit.

Social Media Leads

*Jose Marquez
Kate Foray
Kiran Long-Iyer*

Students serving on this committee help the program coordinator post to the graduate group social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

NeuroFest Organizer

*Porter Harrast
Evan Haley*

Students serving on this committee help the event planner and NeuroFest Faculty organizer with gathering student volunteers and setting up booths.

GSA Representatives

*Caroline Keeshen
Porter Harrast
Kathryn Prendergast(alt)
Nicolas Seban (alt)*

The selected students are responsible for going to monthly GSA Meetings (+ eating delicious Woodstock pizza), forwarding GSA emails to the grad group, and generally representing our interests at the level of the Graduate Student Association.

Senior Tutors

*Rebecca Wilson
Brett Bormann
Nicolas Seban
Celena Lozano*

The function of the Senior Tutors program is to provide support for the first-year Neuroscience graduate student preparation for the preliminary exam. Senior tutors are not teaching assistants and are not expected to be involved in teaching of the core courses. Senior tutors are selected based on their satisfactory progress in the Neuroscience graduate group (NGG). Ideally, students in their second through fourth year of graduate training would be eligible for this program. The NGG provides modest compensation for an expected 30 hours of tutoring services over the course of the academic year.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN NEUROSCIENCE

Program Requirements

Overview

When you successfully finish the Program, you will receive a Ph.D. in Neuroscience from the University of California. Our Program and the University have specific requirements that you must complete in order to receive the Ph.D. You are required to do the following:

1. Complete required undergraduate preparatory courses (you may already have done this).
2. Complete required graduate core courses and three research lab rotations, and (if agreed upon by your Major Professor) an extramural course.
3. Participate in instruction as a Teaching Assistant for one quarter.
4. Pass the Preliminary Exam before the start of your second year.
5. Prepare a thesis proposal and pass the Qualifying Exam within one year of passing the preliminary exam.
6. At the start of your second year, prepare an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with your Major Professor
7. Perform thesis research under your Major Professor and write a dissertation based on that research.
8. Deliver an Exit Seminar to the Neuroscience community.

The First Two Years

During the first two years, you will complete your required course work and lab rotations, choose a Major Professor, begin preliminary research on a possible thesis topic, and begin to prepare for both the Preliminary Exam and Qualifying Exam.

Year 1

Enroll in core courses, complete three laboratory rotations, and select a Principal Investigator to work with and Laboratory to join, prepare for the Preliminary Exam (written and oral exam), which will be administered before the start of your second year.

Year 2

Enroll in statistics core course and potential elective courses, develop an IDP and thesis plan with your PI, select Qualifying Exam committee, write your thesis proposal and pass the Qualifying Exam within one year of passing the Preliminary Exam.

Courses and Journal Clubs

Official course requirements

Neuroscience Graduate Group Core Courses (Organized by Quarter *Fall Quarter*)

NSC 200LB - Laboratory Methods in Neurobiology: (3 units) Laboratory – 9 hours. Individual research in the laboratory of a faculty member. Research problems emphasize the use of contemporary methods and good experimental design. May be repeated three times for credit. Instructors: Current Lead Advisor.

NSC 221 - Cellular Neurophysiology: (4 units) Lecture – 3 hours; discussion – 1 hour. Physiological aspects of cellular and subcellular organization of the nervous system. Neuronal cell biology, the structure and function of ion channels, electrical excitability, signaling cascades, sensory transduction and, mechanisms of synaptic transmission, and the cellular basis of learning and memory. Instructors: D. Fioravante, T. Griffith, J. Gray, N. Marsh-Armstrong, K. Zito

NSC 226– Molecular and Developmental Neuroscience: (4 units) Lecture/discussion – 4 hours. Key issues in developmental and molecular neurobiology. Discussion emphasis on critical evaluation of the experiments and methods described in research papers. Readings of seminal, primary research papers, reviews, and book chapters. Reading materials will be distributed one week in advance. Instructors: E. Diaz, K. Murray, C. Rogers

NSC 298 – Responsible Conduct of Research Ethical Lecture Series: Seminar—2 hours/week; Participation in the Office of Research’s Responsible Conduct of Research lecture-discussion series throughout the year (8 lectures mandatory).

One NSC Journal Club of student’s choice

Winter Quarter

NSC 200LB - Laboratory Methods in Neurobiology: (3 units) Laboratory – 9 hours. Individual research in the laboratory of a faculty member. Research problems emphasize the use of contemporary methods and good experimental design. May be repeated three times for credit. Instructors: Current Lead Advisor.

NSC 201 (lecture)– Neuroanatomy for Graduate Students: (3 units) Lecture – 2 hours; laboratory/discussion – 1 hour. Mix of lectures, demonstrations, and dissections, emphasizing functional significance of neuroanatomy from a biological perspective, with comparisons between human and non-human brains. Emphasis placed on functional anatomy of the nervous system, integrated with cellular, molecular, cognitive, and developmental concepts. Instructors: S.C. Noctor (Lecture).

NSC 219- Design to Data: Statistics for Modern Neuroscience: (Taken in your 2nd year) (4 units) Lecture – 4 hours. Instruction will be through lecture and problem-based learning using real data, including examples drawn from cellular and molecular, systems, to cognitive

neuroscience. Students will use the open source R environment and will learn basic statistical programming and best practices for statistical computing. This class will prepare students to meet rigor and reproducibility expectations necessary for practitioners of modern neuroscience. Instructors: A. Nord, R. Chaudhuri.

NSC/NPB 222 - Systems Neuroscience: (5 units) Lecture – 4 hours; discussion – 1 hour. Integrative and information-processing aspects of nervous system organization. Topics include sensory systems, motor function, sensorimotor integration, the limbic system, and the neurobiology of learning and memory. Instructors: W.M. Usrey, W.M. DeBello, J. Ditterich.

NSC 298 – Responsible Conduct of Research Ethical Lecture Series: Seminar—2 hours/week; Participation in the Office of Research’s Responsible Conduct of Research lecture-discussion series throughout the year (8 lectures mandatory).

One NSC Journal Club of student’s choice

Spring Quarter

NSC 200LB - Laboratory Methods in Neurobiology: (3 units) Laboratory – 9 hours. Individual research in the laboratory of a faculty member. Research problems emphasize the use of contemporary methods and good experimental design. May be repeated three times for credit. Instructors: Current Lead Advisor.

NSC 223 - Cognitive Neuroscience: (4 units) Lecture – 3 hours; discussion – 1 hour. Neurobiological bases of higher mental function including attention, memory, language. Instructors: P. Janata

NSC 298 – Preliminary Exam Preparations: (3 units) Seminar—3 hours/week; Participation in study and practice sessions for the preliminary exam. Schedule to be determined.

NSC 298 – Responsible Conduct of Research Ethical Lecture Series: Seminar—2 hours/week; Participation in the Office of Research’s Responsible Conduct of Research lecture-discussion series throughout the year (8 lectures mandatory).

One NSC Journal Club of student’s choice

Additional Courses:

You are not expected to enroll in these courses until the completion of your core courses or after your first year of graduate study.

Neuroscience Graduate Group Courses:

NSC/NPB/PSC 211 – Advanced Topics in Neuroimaging: (2 units) Lecture - 2 hours. Critical presentation and discussion of the most influential advanced issues in neuroimaging, emphasizing fMRI design/analysis and the integration of fMRI with EEG/MEG. Offered Winter quarter. Instructors: L. Miller.

NSC 220 – How to Give a Scientific Seminar: (3 units) Lecture/ Presentations - 3 hours. Student presentations of selected neuroscience topics in seminar format. Must be taken in two consecutive quarters. Offered Winter and Spring quarters (alternate years). Instructors: A. K. McAllister, W.M. DeBello.

NSC 225 – Translational Research in the Neurobiology of Disease: (2 units) Lecture – 1 hour; discussion – 1 hour. This course will provide an overview of major neuropsychiatric and neurological disorders from both the clinical and fundamental science perspectives. Offered Spring quarter. Instructors: C. Carter, A.K. McAllister.

NSC 243 – Topics in Cellular and Behavioral Neurobiology: (2 units) Discussion – 1 hour; seminar- 1 hour. An advanced examination of several current problems in neurobiology. Topics will vary in different years. Offered TBA. Instructors: TBD

NSC/NPB 247 - Topics in Functional Neurogenomics: (2 units) Lecture – 1 hour; discussion - 1 hour. The theory, methods, and principles of functional neurogenomics with emphasis on the relationship to molecular mechanisms involved in development and disease of the nervous system. Offered Winter quarter (alternate years). Instructor: Neuroscience Graduate Group Faculty.

NSC 250 – Biology of Neuroglia: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 1.5 hours. The properties and functions of non-neuronal or neuroglial cells in the mammalian central nervous system with relevance to neuronal development, physiology and injury response. Offered in alternate years. Instructor: Neuroscience Graduate Group Faculty.

NSC 261A – Topics in Vision: Eyes and Retinal Mechanisms: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. Structure and function of the visual system, with emphasis on the eye and retina, including optics, anatomy, transduction, retinal synapses, adaptation, and parallel processing. Offered in Fall quarter (alternate years). Instructors: M. Burns

NSC 261B – Topics in Vision: Systems, Psychophysics, Computational Models: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. Functions of the central visual pathways and their underlying mechanisms. Recent research on aspects of anatomy, biochemistry, electrophysiology, and psychophysics, development, and genetics of the visual system. Offered in Winter quarter (alternate years). Instructors: M. Burns

NSC 267 – Computational Neuroscience: (5 units) Lecture/discussion – 4 hours. Mathematical models and data analysis techniques used to describe computations performed by nervous systems. Lecture topics include single neuron biophysics, neural coding, network dynamics, memory, plasticity, and learning. Lab topics include programming mathematical models and data analysis techniques in MATLAB. Offered in Fall quarter. Instructors: M. Goldman.

NPB 270 – How to Write a Fundable Grant: (3 units) Lecture/discussion – 3 hours. Familiarization with the skills required to craft a successful grant proposal submitted to extramural agencies such as NIH and NSF. Offered in Spring quarter. Instructor: M. Burns.

NSC 271A – Core Concepts & Methods in Learning, Memory, and Plasticity, Part I : (2

units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. Core concepts and methods used in studies of learning, memory and plasticity. This is the first quarter of a three-course sequence. It includes an overview of the behavioral paradigms and measurement approaches in human and animal studies of learning and plasticity, as well as a consideration of the functional, anatomical and neuronal mechanisms underlying brain plasticity. (F) Instructors: C. Ranganath.

NSC 271B – Core Concepts & Methods in Learning, Memory, and Plasticity, Part II: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. Core concepts and methods used in studies of learning, memory and plasticity. This is the 2nd quarter of a three-course sequence. The 1st half of the course provides a detailed survey of methods to study learning, memory and plasticity, from the cellular and molecular level to the level of neural circuits. The 2nd half describes areas of learning, memory, and plasticity research where recent progress has been made in linking across these levels of analysis.. (W) Instructors: T. Hanks.

NSC 271C – Translational Approaches to Learning, Memory, and Plasticity Disorders: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. An introduction to a range of neurological disorders, the effect of these disorders on learning, memory and plasticity, approved therapeutic options and current research designed to improve understanding and treatment of these diseases: (i) the clinical presentation, diagnostic criteria, and existing therapies, (ii) mechanistic studies in humans and animal models, and (iii) molecular pathways involved in the disease and approaches for drug discovery. (S) Instructors: G. Gurkoff.

NSC 290C – Research Conference in Neurobiology: (1 unit) Discussion – 1 hour. Presentation and discussion of faculty and graduate student research in neurobiology. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: Principal Investigator.

NSC 292 – Cortical Plasticity and Perception: (2 units) Lecture/discussion – 2 hours. Examination of articles on cortical plasticity and changes in perception. Examples drawn from studies of the somatosensory, visual, auditory, and motor cortex. Offered Winter quarter (alternate years). Instructors: Neuroscience Graduate Group Faculty.

NSC 298 – Group Study: (1-5 units) Variable. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: Graduate Group Faculty.

NSC 299 – Research: (1-12 units) Variable. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: Major Professor.

Neuroscience Graduate Group Journal Clubs:

All Neuroscience graduate students, regardless of their year, are expected to participate in one journal club, of the student's choice, per quarter. Journal clubs are a good way for you to familiarize yourself with the literature relative to a specific field of expertise. They can vary, however, in style and breadth. Some clubs are more narrowly focused than others.

In some clubs, students may be required to make a formal presentation of a research paper, whereas in other clubs, everyone reads a weekly selection and comes prepared to discuss its merits and weaknesses. We recommend approaching faculty that you would be interested in

taking a journal club from. Many journal clubs are initiated by student interests. The following is a list of journal clubs open to Neuroscience students. Note: not all journal clubs are offered each quarter.

NSC 283 – Neurobiological Literature: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Critical presentation and analysis of recent journal articles in neurobiology. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: TBA

NSC 284 – Development of Sensory Systems: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Presentation and discussion of recent literature on the development of sensory systems. Offered Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: TBA.

NSC 285 – Literature in Visual Neuroscience: (2 units) Seminar – 2 hours. Critical presentation and discussion of current literature in visual neuroscience. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: W.M. Usrey, J. Ditterich.

NSC 287A – Topics in Theoretical Neuroscience: (2 units) Seminar – 2 hours. In-depth exploration of topics in theoretical neuroscience. Foundational material from books and review articles. Topic varies each year. Offered Fall quarter. Instructors: M. Goldman, J. Ditterich.

NSC 287B – Topics in Theoretical Neuroscience: (2 units) Seminar – 2 hours. In-depth exploration of topics in theoretical neuroscience. Topic varies each year. Continuation of year's topic through readings of seminal articles from the primary literature. Offered Spring quarter. Instructors: M. Goldman, J. Ditterich.

NSC 289 – Topics in Molecular and Developmental Neurobiology: (2 unit) Seminar – 2 hours. Analysis and discussion of seminal and current research papers in molecular and developmental neurobiology. Different topics will be covered each quarter. In the past, topics have include, "Synaptic vesicle dynamics," "Neuronal polarity," and "Glutamate receptors." Offered Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: E. Diaz, K. Zito.

NPB 291 – Auditory Neuroscience: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Exploration of various important aspects of auditory physiology, behavior and psychophysics through the review of original literature. Offered Fall, Winter, Spring quarters. Instructors: G.H. Recanzone, M.L. Sutter.

NSC 298 – Brain Imaging Neuroscience Journal Club: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Current issues related to cognitive neuroimaging, with an emphasis on functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). Emphasis will be placed on the pragmatic aspects of neuroimaging methods (i.e., relating theory to practical issues faced by experimenters), rather than in-depth explanation of biophysical and statistical methods. Instructor: C. DeCarli, C. Ranganath.

NSC 298 – Neuronal Signal Transduction Mechanisms: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Critical evaluation and discussion of current issues and literature related to signal transduction neurobiology. Instructors: M.E. Burns.

NSC 298 – Behavioral Phenotyping: (2 units) Seminar – 1 hour. Behavioral Phenotyping of Transgenic and Knockout Mice. Instructors: J. Crawley.

NSC 298 – Animal Models of Neurodevelopmental Disorders: (1 unit) Seminar – 1 hour. Spring quarter. Instructors: J. Silverman.

See Appendix B for a full listing of courses and journal clubs for Fall 2022.

Extramural courses

In addition to the course requirements, there are also extramural training options. Extramural training includes summer courses such as those offered on neuroscience-related topics at the Marine Biology Laboratory in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York, the Summer Institute in Cognitive Neuroscience, or other institutions. You can choose from a very large range of possibilities depending on your interests. Usually, you apply for an extramural course after your first or second year in the Program.

Seminars

Perspectives in Neuroscience Seminar Series

The Perspectives in Neuroscience Series is the official formal seminar series at the Center for Neuroscience. The schedule and list of speakers for 2022-23 is in the seminar section of your Orientation binder. Please plan on attending the seminars from 12-1 p.m. and the student/postdocs-only lunch hour from 1-2 p.m. with each speaker. The list of dates \presentations are located in your folder.

Neurolunch

Each month, members from a laboratory present their recent results to the Neuroscience Graduate Group. Neurolunch seminars are held on Thursdays throughout the year, and the lunch (pizza!) begins at 11:30 a.m. in the Center for Neuroscience Conference Room 113. The list of dates and lab presentations are located in your folder.

Student Organized Seminar Series

The Neuroscience Student Organized Seminar Series is a symposium in which graduate students nominate, invite, and host neuroscientists whose work they admire. Traditionally, three to four speakers are hosted each academic year representing multiple areas of neuroscience research. The goal of this seminar series is to promote interactions between graduate students and invited speakers. As such, the invited speakers spend much of their social time with graduate students who are also responsible for arranging all aspects of the speakers' visits. The schedule and list of speakers for 2022-23 will be announced soon.

Seminar Outreach for Minority Advocacy (SOMA)

The purpose of SOMA is to enhance the visibility of successful underrepresented minorities in neuroscience and educate our campus community about issues that contribute to continued oppression of minority groups. Current neuroscience graduate students organize a speaker series consisting of scientists from underrepresented backgrounds. Half of these speakers will be from cellular/systems/cognitive neuroscience backgrounds, while the other half will be from social neuroscience, speaking on their research related to the neuroscience of implicit bias, race relations, gender, etc. All invited speakers will begin their seminar with a description of their journey in academia as a minority. This is their opportunity to share personal stories that will enhance the awareness of underrepresented stories in academia. Each seminar is accompanied by lunch and dinner, allowing students an opportunity to interact with the speaker on a personal level. All talks are open to the entire campus community; lunches are reserved for neuroscience graduate students.

Registering for Courses

Register for classes via SISWeb at <http://sisweb.ucdavis.edu>. First year students enroll in core courses during the year and one journal club per quarter (see Appendix B for a listing of Fall 2022 courses). After your first year of classes, you will then register for 11 units of NSC 299 and 1 units of NSC 290C. Linette Scibelli will email the CRNs to you during the registration period and will be available on the student portal. Each CRN corresponds to a faculty member, so it is important that you register for the correct 299 and 290C classes. In addition, you will also register for any classes of interest and one journal club per quarter.

In addition to Neuroscience courses and journal clubs, you may register for other classes offered by the University. For a full listing of the courses offered each quarter, please see <https://registrar.ucdavis.edu/registration/schedule/class-search.cfm>.

Lab Rotations

Our graduate program is unique in that you are not automatically assigned to a Major Professor when you are admitted; you have approximately one year to decide with whom among the Neuroscience Graduate Group faculty you want to work. The purpose of laboratory rotations is to give you early exposure to neuroscience research to help you make that decision. All students in the program are required to complete three laboratory rotations during their first year.

During each laboratory rotation, you visit the lab of a professor in the Neuroscience Graduate Group and perform a small research project for one quarter. In the beginning you and the professor will decide what project you will work on (s/he will probably give you some choices) and you and the faculty will develop a one-page proposal to be submitted at the start of the rotation. Everyone's experience with lab rotations is different, but the basic expectation is that you put in a reasonable amount of time on the rotation project and try to get something out of it. The rotations are for your benefit to see whether you like one kind of research over another, but they are also evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis. The evaluation is based on

1. A 12 minute presentation (with an additional 3 minutes for questions) that you give on your rotation project to the Lead Advisor and the Neuroscience Graduate Group community at the end of each quarter.
2. A short discussion between the Lead Advisor and the professor you worked under during the rotation.

This does not mean that you must have spectacular results (or even any results, if the project did not work), but rather that you made an effort to accomplish something. To choose your rotations, talk to the Lead Advisor, the professors with whom you might want to do rotations, and with classmates who may have done rotations with the same professors. You will need to make sure a given professor can take you on as a rotation student. If you decide that you want to change your list of intended rotations, talk with the Lead Advisor.

Every rotation is slightly different. In some laboratories, you may be limited to mostly observing post-docs or other graduate students. This may be the case in labs where you need special training or permission to handle the equipment or animals. In other labs, the professor may expect you to design a small project and collect some data. Thus, it is worthwhile to spend some time talking with professors and investigating labs in which you would most like to do rotations. Discussing the specifics of what you would like to do and what your chosen professor thinks is reasonable is the best way to avoid mismatches between your expectations and those of the professor.

You are ultimately responsible for making the necessary arrangements for your lab rotations. Visiting professors in their own labs and talking to them about their current research projects is the best way to start. In addition, it is important to plan in advance. Find out what quarters professors will be in Davis (sometimes they go on sabbatical or are on clinical rounds) and which quarters they may be willing to take rotation students. Finally, do not rely on the printed research summary as a guide to the current research that a professor is pursuing; the publication process is very lengthy, and the professor may now be working on something different from when the summary was printed.

While you are actually doing a rotation, you may want to ask yourself whether you would want to eventually settle into that lab. Questions to consider include: Do you enjoy the research? Is the professor a good mentor? Are the other students or post-docs in the lab happy? Can you think of a way to extend the research in a direction that could be your own independent project? The end of the rotation is an excellent time to discuss whether or not the professor would be willing to take you into their lab and what kinds of funding they could provide.

Your choice of rotations can have a major effect on your later direction for thesis research. Some students have switched areas of interest entirely after a rotation (either toward a new direction or to get away from something that does not look so interesting anymore!). So, do not be afraid to sign up for a rotation in unfamiliar territory.

Teaching Assistantships

A requirement of the Program is that you teach at least one quarter as a Teaching Assistant (TA). Many courses need TAs every quarter, so keep in touch with the Lead Advisor or any faculty that teach undergraduate courses in need of a TA.

Preliminary Exam

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION DESCRIPTION

The General Knowledge Exam

- I. Written Exam Portion
 - a) Administered after the first year coursework has been completed in a campus computer lab.
 - b) Designed to be finished in 4 hours, though 6 hours will be allowed (3 hour morning session, 3 hour afternoon session).
 - c) Consists of approximately 1/3 basic facts, 1/3 problem solving/short answer and 1/3 integrative essay.
 - d) Covers the knowledge base that is taught in the core courses (Mol/Dev; Cell; Systems; Neuroanatomy; Cognitive).
- II. Oral Exam Portion
 - a) Administered within the week following the written exam.
 - b) Designed to be a 1.5-hr exam, though additional time may be needed on a case-by-case basis.
 - c) Allows examination of areas of perceived weakness from the written exam and allows testing of the student's ability to "think on their feet."
- III. Exam Committee
 - a) Composed of 6 faculty approved by the Ed Policy committee.
 - b) Same committee will write and grade both portions of the exam.
 - c) If there is an unforeseen conflict, the faculty member will appoint a replacement approved by the Ed Policy Committee.
- IV. Outcomes
 - a) Pass/No Pass/Fail applies to both the written and oral components of the exam.
 - b) If No Pass on the first attempt, the student will re-take the exam within 3 months (with exemptions for special circumstances approved by the testing and Ed Policy committees). If No Pass on the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program.
 - c) If Fail on first attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program.
 - d) If No Pass on one section and Pass on the others, then the student may retake just that portion of the exam.

Qualifying Exam

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION GUIDELINES

To be completed within 1 year of passing the Preliminary Exam

The Research Proposal

The proposal is modeled after an NIH proposal for a predoctoral fellowship (NRSA), with the addition of an overall in-depth introduction. Students are encouraged to work with their PI after passing the qualifying exam to submit a version of their proposal to NIH for possible funding.

The formatting of the proposal will follow NIH guidelines including: Font: Arial 11, Margins: 0.5 inches, single spaced.

The following sections must be included:

- a. An overall introduction to the proposal that reviews relevant literature and puts the student's proposal into context (up to five pages). Note: this is not part of the NIH proposal format.
- b. Project Summary/Abstract (30 lines of text).
- c. Specific Aim(s) (one page). Compactly outlines the main scientific questions addressed by the proposal. Should include hypotheses and a very brief description of what will be done to test the hypotheses.
- d. Research Strategy (six pages). This should be modeled after the guidelines of an NRSA application and should include significance, innovation, and approach. The student should clearly describe the methods under use, potential pitfalls, and what would be concluded from different possible outcomes. Preliminary data can be included in this section, but is not required.

In general, the document should explain why the experiments are being done, how they will be performed, and what will be concluded from different possible experimental outcomes. Remember that the thesis proposal is not a binding contract for the work to be done; normally this evolves under the guidance of the major professor and thesis committee. The proposal is to be given to the committee at least 3 weeks in advance of the exam date. The thesis proposal defense is expected to be completed within one year of passing the general knowledge exam.

Oral Defense of Research Proposal

The committee

The student, in consultation with the PI and the Lead Advisor, chooses the committee for this exam. The committee must include at least five members, one of whom must come from outside the Graduate Group. One member also must be on the advising committee and serves as the Chair. The expertise of the members should relate to the subject of the student's proposal. In sum, the Chair must be a member of the advising committee, you must have one external

member, and the remaining three members must be from the Neuroscience Graduate Group. You will need to complete the Qualifying Exam Application available on the Graduate Studies website. The form requires the committee composition, the date of the exam, and the Lead Advisor's signature. The application must be filed at least one month prior to the exam.

Structure of the exam

The oral defense is a 3-hour exam. It starts with a presentation of the proposal. It is expected that the committee members will have read the proposal in detail, so this section should be brief (approximately 20-30 minutes seems to work well), perhaps offering more graphical support than in the proposal itself. Following this, there is a general discussion of the proposal, with examiners free to explore background (i.e., the student's scholarship), methodology, and reasoning. As in the general-knowledge exam, each faculty member will be given a nominal time slot in which to work; it will probably be less meaningful in this exam because it will most likely be more discussion-oriented. The student will be asked to leave, and the faculty will discuss whether the student has demonstrated sufficient expertise to advance to candidacy. A second round of questioning might also be called for at this point, to inquire into areas not sufficiently explored in the first round.

Expectations

The proposal should be well researched, scholarly, and the presentation professional. The student should fully grasp the rationale behind the proposed experiment, the methodology used to perform it, and what interpretations will be drawn from it. In short, the student is expected to show full professional competence as a scientist.

Outcomes

The Graduate School allows three possible results: Pass, Not Pass, and Fail. Under a not-pass outcome, the committee may specify a variety of remedial actions, from redoing the exam, re-writing parts of the proposal, to demonstrating in other ways proficiency where it was found lacking during the exam.

The Exam committee's unanimous vote is required to pass a student on the exam. If a student does not pass the exam, the committee may recommend that the student be reexamined one more time, but only if the Graduate Adviser concurs with the committee. The second exam must take place within one quarter of the first exam. The format of the second exam is the same as that of the first exam and may include the submission of an amended version of the proposal. The examination may not be repeated more than once. A student who does not pass on the second attempt is subject to disqualification from further graduate work in the program.

The Dissertation

Once you pass the Qualifying Exam, you are eligible to advance to candidacy, or become a Ph.D. candidate. You can obtain the Advancement to Candidacy form Plan B on the Office of Graduate Studies website here: <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/index.html>. You will need to select your dissertation or thesis committee, obtain signatures from the Lead Advisor and chair of your Qualifying Exam, pay the candidacy fee and finally submit the form to the Office of Graduate Studies.

The Dissertation Committee

On the Advancement to Candidacy form, the candidate lists proposed members of the Dissertation Committee. The Committee consists of your Major Professor and four other faculty members (one must be from outside the Graduate Group) that agree to give advice concerning the shaping of your thesis research. Your Major Professor will serve as chair of the committee. Once the committee has been selected, you must meet with them annually. The chair of your Committee will then submit a summary of your progress to the Lead Advisor. These meetings are mandatory and essential to the successful completion of your dissertation.

Completing the thesis research and dissertation

At this point in the Program, you will devote a significant amount of time to completing your research project. After gathering a sufficient amount of data, you will begin writing research papers for publication. These can be incorporated into your dissertation, which will likely also include unpublished results. The Lead Advisor and your Major Professor have a lot of experience with dissertations, so refer to them for help, as well as your other Dissertation Committee members. There are numerous copies of dissertations from our Alumni in the Graduate Student Lounge. Feel free to peruse them at your leisure.

Exit Seminar

Before leaving the graduate group and the University, you will present a public exit seminar describing the results of your research. Congratulations! You have become an independent, self-sufficient scientists.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Annual Meeting with the Advisor

Every year before the Spring Meeting, the students are required to meet individually with their assigned advisor from the Graduate Advisory Committee to discuss their progress in the program. Unsatisfactory progress reports are forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies. You will receive an email from the SPA (Student Progress Assessment system) in early spring to start your annual report and, with the assistance of Linette; you will schedule your meeting.

Spring Meeting

The Neuroscience Graduate Group meets annually every spring to discuss student progress and program issues. In the first part of the meeting, the faculty and students meet separately; the faculty meet to discuss student progress, and the students meet to discuss issues that need to be raised during the general meeting. In the second part of the meeting, the students and faculty meet as a whole to review the past year's events and honors and to discuss any issues related to the program.

Financial Support

Stipend (new students only):

The Neuroscience Graduate Group offers financial support for its first-year students with a yearly stipend, full fee remission, and as necessary, full non-resident tuition. Please note that satisfactory academic progress must be maintained and that you must file a FAFSA form (<http://fafsa.ed.gov>) to be eligible for this support. The FAFSA form can be filled out online and should be submitted at your earliest convenience.

Your stipend will be paid monthly, over 10 months, upon presentation of a validated student ID card at the Student Accounting Office, 2022 Dutton Hall, beginning October 1, 2022. You can request direct deposit by filling out the appropriate forms available through the Student Accounting website: <http://studentaccounting.ucdavis.edu>. Please note: your first check will be presented to you on October 1st, through June 31, 2023. Once you join a lab and are hired as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR), depending on your funding your first paycheck will be August 1, 2023 or October 1, 2023.

Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) appointments:

Once you pick a lab to work in (decision after your third lab rotation in Spring), you will be picked-up by your Major Professor or Principal Investigator (PI) and hired as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) in that lab. As a student in the Neuroscience Graduate Program you will continue to receive the monthly stipend.

Fellowships

UC Davis offers information on a number of great internal fellowships:

<http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/ssupport/internal.html>

And external fellowships: <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/ssupport/external.html>

Tax Information

Refer to Internal Revenue Service Publication 970

(<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p970/index.html>). Fellowships and scholarships are taxable, except for the amount paid for tuition, required fees, books and course-related expenses. The university neither withholds taxes, nor reports such payments to the IRS or State Franchise Tax Board for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. Individuals are required to report this income themselves and to make arrangements with the federal and state tax services to make estimated quarterly tax payments on fellowship income. Information on tax reporting is available in the Government Documents section of the University library (<http://www.lib.ucdavis.edu>), or you may contact the campus tax accountant at (530) 757-8936.

International Students – Refer to the Internal Revenue Service Publication 519.

Fellowships are paid through the payroll office and taxes are withheld and reported to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the State of California, Franchise Tax Board. Certain individuals from countries with which the United States has a tax treaty may be exempted from federal withholding (<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/cao/paycoord/taxstate.html>). More information is available from Services for International Students and Scholars (SISS) at <http://siss.ucdavis.edu/taxation.cfm>.

The graduate group is not allowed to give out tax advice. Please refer to the following links for Student Accounting and tax information: <https://studentaccounting.ucdavis.edu/tax>

Contact information for Student Accounting: <https://studentaccounting.ucdavis.edu/contact>

Health Insurance and Benefits

You are eligible for UC Davis graduate student health insurance (GSHIP), which is included in your student fees. If you are a new student, the health coverage will not begin until the beginning of the quarter. If you arrive in Davis early, please make sure you have health coverage prior to the beginning of the quarter in case of an emergency.

Here is a link to the Student Health Services: <http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu/>

Here is a link to your insurance information:

<http://healthcenter.ucdavis.edu/insurance/index.html>

Life Balance and Wellness information: <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/support-resources/graduate-student-resources>

Mental Health and Counseling information: <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/current-students/mental-health-counseling-services>

Leave Accommodation information: <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources/student-employment/leave-accommodation>

Student Parents and Family information: <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/resources/graduate-student-resources/life-balance-and-wellness/student-parents-families>

Crisis Counseling: <https://www.ucdavis.edu/news/uc-davis-promotes-texting-option-crisis-counseling>
<https://eachaggiematters.ucdavis.edu/here-are-some-options-immediate-crisis-support>

Planned Educational Leave Program (PELP)

The University offers students the option of taking a break in their education for a valid reason. You can PELP for a minimum of one and a maximum of three consecutive quarters. During your PELP period, you are not a registered student, but you retain some student privileges such as using the library and the recreational facilities (only if you purchase the necessary cards for each of those). For more information regarding the PELP, please contact the Office of Graduate Studies (752-0650).

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response and Title IX

One of UC Davis' highest priorities is the safety of its students and all members of its community. UC Davis prohibits all forms of sexual harassment and sexual violence, including sexual assault, dating and domestic violence, and stalking. Such conduct violates University policy and may violate California law.

More information: <https://sexualviolence.ucdavis.edu/>

Title IX information: http://compliance.ucdavis.edu/compliance_program/title_ix.html

Aggie Travel (students with Major Professors housed at the CNS)

It is inevitable that you will attend a few conferences while a graduate student in the Program. If your Major Professor or the Graduate Program is covering some or all of your costs you will need to go through a reimbursement process where you submit your travel summary info and receipts to the administrative staff. All receipts must be in the traveler's name as we cannot reimburse individuals for costs in the name of others. When sharing a hotel room please do not have one person charge the entire cost; please split payment of the hotel bill. Request a separate bill in each person's name; all hotels should provide this service. Remember that original receipts are required for everything, including your boarding pass.

Contact: cns-payables@ucdavis.edu

Room reservations

You may reserve the Center for Neuroscience conference room 113 or School of Medicine Neuroscience conference rooms 320 or 602 by submitting a request through our online reservation system at <https://resources.neuro.ucdavis.edu/reservations/rooms>
Please email Theresa Geer (tgeer@ucdavis.edu) for information on how to reserve rooms.

Zoom and printing

If you need to connect to the printers or need to set up cameras for zoom presentations in the conference rooms, please talk to the IT person at CNS (Ryan Foster rfoster@ucdavis.edu) to get you set up. Please feel free to make copies in the mailroom; a scanner is also available on the copy machine.

Mailboxes

You will have a mailbox in the mailroom at the Center for Neuroscience. You will be sharing a mailbox with graduate students who share the first letter of your last name.

APPENDIX A: Neuroscience 2022 Fall Course Listing

