

# Stony Brook University PhD Program in Microbiology & Immunology

Student Handbook

#### **WELCOME!**

It is our great pleasure to welcome you to Stony Brook University and the PhD Program in Microbiology & Immunology! We are looking forward to getting to know each of you and as you embark on your graduate studies. We hope you will soon feel comfortable in your new surroundings and that you won't hesitate to come to us with questions or concerns.

This handbook contains a great deal of useful information regarding the curriculum, registering for courses, health insurance, etc. as well as program policies and forms you will need throughout your graduate studies. We encourage you to maintain a copy of this handbook for future reference.

## **Graduate Program Director**

Nick Carpino, Ph.D. Associate Professor Department of Microbiology and Immunology Life Sciences 160

#### Mailing address:

Department of Microbiology and Immunology Life Sciences Building, Room 130 Stony Brook, NY 11794-5222

Telephone: 631-632-4610 Fax: 631-632-9797

Email: nicholas.carpino@stonybrook.edu

## **Graduate Program Coordinator**

Jennifer Jokinen
Department of Microbiology and Immunology
Life Sciences Building, Room 130
Stony Brook, NY 11794-5222

Telephone: 631-632-8812 Fax: 631-632-9797

Email: Jennifer.Jokinen@stonybrook.edu

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#### ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Stony Brook University (SBU) is a flagship institution of the State University of New York (SUNY) system and one of the top research institutions in the nation. Admission to the Graduate Program in Microbiology & Immunology (HBM) is highly competitive and you have been invited to join us because of your unique qualifications and accomplishments. We are confident in your ability to excel in your studies and future career and have high expectations for each and every one of you!

Students in the Microbiology & Immunology Program are part of the School of Medicine while students in the Genetics (BGE) Program and the Molecular and Cell Biology (MCB) Program, for example, are part of the College of Arts and Sciences. Although the MI and BGE Programs belong to different administrative units, they have a special relationship. The same Graduate Program Coordinator serves students in both programs, and new students in MI and BGE share office space during the first year (the Fishbowl; more about this later). The Graduate Program in Microbiology & Immunology is "owned and operated" by the Department Microbiology and Immunology(MI). Key personnel in MI are shown below.

| Name                  | Role in MI                      |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Dr. David Thanassi    | Chair                           |
| Julianna Pryor        | Department Administrator        |
| Ms. Christina Babzien | Senior Administrative Assistant |
| Dr. Srinivas Sistla   | Director of Laboratories        |

As your studies progress and you choose a mentor for your graduate research, you may become affiliated with another academic department at SBU or at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. However, you will still be members of the HBM Program and the academic policies and procedures that govern your studies will continue to fall under the jurisdiction HBM and the SBU <u>Graduate School</u>. The Graduate School web site contains a great deal of useful information including upcoming deadlines, links to the Graduate Bulletin, policies that apply to all PhD students, and various forms.

#### **GETTING STARTED**

#### **IDENTIFICATION CARDS**

Your Stony Brook ID card and SOLAR number are critical forms of campus identification. Please obtain your photo ID as soon as possible. Take your SOLAR ID number, as well as another form of government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport) to one of the <a href="Campus Card Offices">Campus Card Offices</a> located in the Administration Building or the Health Sciences Center (HSC Level 3). Your Stony Brook photo ID may be scanned to record your attendance at the mandatory Graduate Student Orientation sessions, so obtaining this card should be one of your first priorities.

Pease take steps to safeguard your ID card, as you will be charged a fee for a replacement. Further, your ID card will be programmed to grant you access to various buildings or facilities (next).

#### **FACILITIES ACCESS**

Your photo ID card, once programmed, provides your access to the Life Sciences/Centers for Molecular Medicine complex at night, on weekends and on holidays. The building manager, Lou Capuano (Life Sciences room 051) will encrypt your "prox card" and issue keys to provide the access you need. Some laboratories have specific access restrictions. If you rotate in, or join, one of those labs, please email the building manager (Louis.Capuano@stonybrook.edu) and cc your mentor. Include your ID number, as well as the number printed ON THE BACK of your card. Note that keys must be returned when you leave the institution or graduate.

#### PARKING AND PERMITS

Please take some time to review the <u>Transportation and Parking Services</u> website. As a Graduate Student RA, GA, TA or Fellow, you are entitled to a Faculty/Staff parking permit, provided your car is registered in your name. To obtain a permit you need to take your **vehicle registration** and **Stony Brook photo ID** to the Bursar's office in the Administration building. Note that you will be eligible for a Staff permit only after you have completed payroll paperwork, because your employee designation must be activated in the SOLAR system. It usually takes at least a week after submission of your paperwork to the Payroll department for this to be accomplished.

There is no charge for a Faculty/Staff or Resident parking permit, though you may choose to sign up to park in one of the paid lots, such as the Administration or HSC garages, or a Life Sciences "premium" lot. Students living in on-campus housing may obtain a resident student-parking permit.

Please note that campus parking regulations strictly enforced. Never park in a handicap spot, and be careful to park in designated areas. Also note that you should not park in residential lots, unless you are, in fact, a campus resident and have the proper permit. Parking tickets can add up quite quickly, and unpaid parking tickets will prevent you from registering and can delay your graduation or the issuance of your diploma. Refer to the latest map, which can be found on the "Where to Park" link on the Transportation and Parking website.

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

Stony Brook University <u>Transportation Services</u> provides a wide variety of transportation options. It operates a bus service all year long, to make it easier to get from one side of campus to another, as well as to off campus destinations. On weekdays the buses run from roughly 5:30am until 11:30pm. On weekends, additional "Shopping" service is provided. The <u>SBU Transit Tracking System</u> provides real-time locations of all the campus buses.

<u>Biking on campus</u> is encouraged. The Stony Brook train station (on the Port Jefferson Station Long Island Railroad line) is located adjacent to campus. For faster train service to/from New York City, many students use the Ronkonkoma line. The Ronkonkoma station is about a 15-minute drive from campus.

#### VEHICLE REGISTRATION

To register a car in NY you need the original title, your social security card and other forms of identification. If your car is financed, you may have to write to your bank to obtain the title. We suggest you start this process as soon as possible, as it can take several weeks. There is a Department of Motor Vehicles office at 3 Roads Plaza, Port Jefferson Station, NY.

#### E-MAIL ACCOUNT

Please establish a Stony Brook e-mail account as soon as possible upon arriving at SBU. You may set up your email account from your SOLAR home page (see the section: Security and Personal Data). The Program and the University will use your "@stonybrook.edu" email address for all official communications, so it is essential to use this account (or forward emails from this account to your preferred email address).

#### **CAMPUS MAIL**

Mail within the University is distributed through the campus mail system. To send campus mail, address it with the individual's name, department, and the 4-digit campus zip code. You can find this information in the on-line <u>Campus Directory</u>. The MI campus zip code is 5222.

Convenient branches of the US Post Office are located at:

129 Main St, Stony Brook, NY (631) 246-9239 325 Lake Ave, St James, NY (631) 584-4138 450 Route 25A, East Setauket, NY (631) 941-4005

#### STUDENT MAILBOXES

You will each have a mailbox in the room next to the copy room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Life Sciences Building. Please check your mailbox frequently as important notices (particularly mailings from the Graduate School or other campus departments) are not always sent by email.

#### RESEARCH COMPLIANCE AND SAFETY

You are responsible for your own safety, and for learning which training is required for your specific research. Environmental Health and Safety offers numerous live <u>training sessions</u> throughout the year as well as online training for many courses. You are also required to attend the Research Compliance Workshop held during Orientation. The MI Laboratory Director, Srinivas Sistla, can also refer you to the appropriate sources for training you may need. Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory has its own safety training requirements and it is your responsibility to obtain the required training if you rotate in, or join, a CSHL lab.

#### **APPOINTMENTS**

Appointment paperwork is time-critical to ensure your first paycheck is issued on time. In order to appoint you to the payroll system, you must provide your local address plus the following forms of identification:

US students: Valid passport OR valid driver's license plus Social Security card

Permanent Residents: Proof of permanent residency plus Social Security card

International students: Valid passport, Visa (I-94), SEVIS I-20.

**Address changes**: It is important to notify the Graduate Program Coordinator, as well as update your SOLAR account immediately. This is essential since payroll, Visa and Immigration Services, and all academic records are tied to your SOLAR account.

#### PAYROLL DESIGNATIONS: ARE YOU A TA, GA, RA OR FELLOW?

As a graduate student in the MI Program, you will be appointed to the payroll as a Teaching Assistant, Graduate Assistant, Research Assistant or Fellow. These distinctions are important primarily because of the impact they have on your pay periods and health insurance enrollment. The reason for the difference between these classifications is the source of funding for your support.

**Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Graduate Assistants (GAs)** are paid from funds provided by the State of New York. Most first-year students are supported, at least in part, by State funds. As a GA or TA, you are a member of a collective bargaining unit (GSEU union) that has negotiated certain benefits for its members. You should attend the insurance orientation session for TAs and GAs to enroll in the SUNY Student Employee Health Plan (NYSHIP) and learn about the benefits.

After your first year it is quite likely you will be re-appointed as a **Research Assistant (RA)** and it is likely this will be your payroll designation throughout your graduate studies at Stony Brook unless you receive a fellowship appointment. RAs are paid from research funds managed by The Research Foundation of the State University of New York and are represented by the RA union. When you make the change to Research payroll, you should attend the insurance orientation session for RAs to enroll in the RA insurance program, and learn more about your coverage.

#### **Important note:**

When changing payroll status from State Funds to Research or Fellowship funds, or vice versa, it is necessary to complete new tax withholding forms, as well as new Health Insurance enrollment and Direct Deposit forms. The Graduate Program Coordinator can assist you.

Some of you may have, or will receive, a **fellowship** to support your graduate studies. There are several different types of fellowships available to Stony Brook University students in our program:

Training Grant Fellowships: A number of Stony Brook University faculty members have obtained highly competitive federally funded training grants (NIH T32 grants). MI graduate students conducting research in the laboratories of participating faculty may be eligible for appointment to the Molecular and Cell Biology of Infectious Diseases (Principal Investigator Dr. James Konopka) or Chemical Biology (Principal Investigators Dr. Nicole Sampson and Dr. Peter Tonge) training grants. Research mentors nominate their students for appointment to these training grants.

Appointment to one of the NIH training grants is competitive and only domestic (US citizen or Permanent Resident) students are eligible. Criteria for appointment vary, but students appointed to these grants excel both academically and in research. For payroll and taxation purposes, training grant fellows are not classified as "employees" of the University. Rather, the stipend is considered an

academic award. Fellows should consult the Internal Revenue Service website (and/or a tax professional) for information regarding taxation of fellowship stipends.

**Graduate Council Fellowships:** GCFs are awarded by Stony Brook University during the admissions process. Each GCF Fellow is nominated by the graduate program seeking to recruit the student.

**NSF and NIH Fellowships**: Domestic students are also encouraged to apply for their own individual predoctoral National Science Foundation (NSF) or National Institutes of Health (NIH) fellowships. In addition to being a prestigious addition to your *Curriculum Vitae*, recipients of individual fellowships typically receive a bonus, above and beyond the standard program stipend and may provide additional funds to cover fees, travel to scientific meetings, etc. Individual fellowships are also academic awards, as opposed to salaries. Recipients of these fellowships should consult the IRS website (and/or a tax professional) for information on taxation of fellowship stipends.

**W. Burghardt Turner Fellowships:** Domestic students who are from groups underrepresented in the STEM disciplines may be nominated for a Turner Fellowship, funded by New York State. These are competitive fellowships, and most are awarded during the admissions process. Additional Turner Fellowships are awarded to more senior graduate students as they near completion of their dissertation research. Unlike federally funded training grant Fellowships, stipends from Turner Fellowships are taxable.

Scholars in Biomedical Sciences: The Scholars in Biomedical Sciences Program, nicknamed the "Med-into-Grad" program, enables biomedical PhD students to receive additional training in translational medicine. This opportunity is available to both international and domestic students. Students in years two or three of graduate school may apply for this competitive fellowship. The track aims to give graduate students an understanding of the presentation, progression and treatment of diseases related to their area of research. Scholars in Biomedical Sciences Fellows work with a clinician and complete additional coursework during the fellowship year.

**Additional Fellowships:** The Graduate School provides information, resources and assistance regarding external funding opportunities. The Center for Inclusive Education also offers assistance and funding opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

#### PAY DAYS and DIRECT DEPOSIT

Throughout your studies your stipend may be derived from a fellowship, State teaching assistantship, a research assistantship – or a combination of these various sources of funding. It is likely that you will be paid as a research assistant on your mentor's research grant after your first year, unless you join a laboratory at Cold Spring Harbor. Students conducting research at CSHL become CSHL graduate student employees and participate in a different benefit program.

Research Foundation employees (Research Assistants and most Fellows) will receive their paychecks on Fridays, every two weeks. State employees (Teaching Assistants, Turner or SUNY Fellows) will receive their checks on Wednesdays, every two weeks. Please consult with the Graduate Program Coordinator if you have any questions regarding your pay or deductions.

All graduate students and University employees are asked to set up **direct deposit** of payroll checks. This is especially helpful for those of you conducting rotations at off-campus (or cross-campus) locations. It often takes two pay periods (or more) for the direct deposit to become active, and you must re-enroll in the Direct Deposit program if you change status (from RA to Fellow or vice versa). Also note that any changes to your Direct Deposit instructions must be filed with Human Resources, Administration Building Room 390. Information for setting up Direct Deposit of your paycheck may be found <a href="here">here</a>. Research Assistants enroll in Direct Deposit using the <a href="RF Self Service">RF Self Service</a> website. You must provide your 08/01/22

account number and bank electronic routing number, both of which are printed on your checks. Please provide a voided check or a direct-deposit letter from your bank in order to ensure these numbers are recorded properly. Remember to check your pay stub regularly, especially if you have Direct Deposit. Errors *can* occur, so the sooner you notice a discrepancy, the sooner we can resolve any issues or errors. Deductions (especially for insurance) can sometimes be confusing – so please ask if there are any concerns.

#### TIME REPORTING

It is your responsibility to report your attendance every month (protocol varies according to appointment type). Failure to report your attendance may result in a delayed paycheck.

#### **SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS (International Students)**

The purpose of a Social Security Number (SSN) is to help the government keep track of an individual's earnings in the US for tax purposes. International students must apply for a Social Security number as quickly as possible after completing registration, as this number is required for both payroll and insurance enrollment purposes, and must be in our files **no later than October 30**<sup>th</sup>. Detailed instructions, a link to the application form and a list of required documents are included on the <u>Visa and Immigration Services</u>' web site.

Please bring your social security card to the GPC office as soon as you receive it so photocopies may be made for your permanent record and for the Payroll and Insurance offices.

#### FEDERAL AND STATE INCOME TAXES

When completing your original appointment paperwork, you will complete both State and Federal tax withholding forms. You may make changes to your withholding instructions at any time, by visiting Human Resources, Administration Building Room 390. Most students will be entitled to a tax refund each year, so it is important to file State and Federal tax returns on a timely basis (April 15 deadline each year). Domestic students must file tax returns prior to filing the FAFSA application. Refer to the Human Resources Tax Forms and Information page for forms, tax changes for the current year as well as information specifically for International Students. All students filing taxes for the first time are strongly encouraged to attend the Tax Workshops sponsored by the Graduate Student Organization ("GSO") each year.

Some international students qualify for special tax treatment. Please refer to Non-Resident Alien Frequently Asked Tax Questions for more information. Depending upon your personal circumstance, you may wish to visit the Human Resources Office for clarification.

#### FAFSA AND FINANCIAL AID

All domestic students are encouraged (but not required) to complete the "FAFSA" (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) each year to ensure eligibility for any student loans that may be needed. The <u>Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Services</u> can assist, and has numerous on line resources to help with the process. Remember you will need your tax return information to complete the FAFSA.

#### GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE AND BENEFITS

"Required" Student Health Insurance and Health Insurance Waiver: Stony Brook now requires every student to have basic health insurance and automatically enrolls all students in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) or International Student Health Insurance Plan (ISHIP) to ensure no one is overlooked. These plans are intended primarily for undergraduate students and provide limited coverage.

The MI Graduate Program provides you with employee health insurance as a benefit, so it is important to waive the mandatory health insurance on SOLAR every semester. If you decide to remain on a family health insurance policy, you may do so, and will still qualify for a waiver of the insurance premium provided you complete the waiver request on SOLAR. If you discover an insurance charge is still on your SOLAR account in late September, please let the GPC know. No waivers will be granted after October 1.

As a Graduate Student Research Assistant (RA), Teaching Assistant (TA), Graduate Assistant (GA) or Research Fellow, you are provided with graduate student health insurance benefits. There are some differences in the plans for State GAs/TAs versus the plan for research assistants and fellows. There will be several orientation sessions – please plan to attend to learn more about the insurance plan, as well as how to enroll your spouse, dependents and/or Domestic Partner. Graduate student insurance includes dental and vision coverage, in addition to medical benefits. For specific information, forms, premium rates and other useful links, refer to the appropriate website indicated below.

#### **STATE Graduate Students:**

Graduate student TAs and GAs (paid with State funds) can find detailed information on their benefits on the Human Resource Services "State Graduate Student" benefits website. To view your Benefits Handbook, log on as a "graduate student" at NYSHIP online.

#### **RESEARCH Graduate Students:**

Graduate students paid solely with Research funds (RAs and some Fellows) can find detailed information on their benefits on the Human Resource Services "RF Graduate Student" benefits website.

#### **INTERNATIONAL Graduate Students:**

The University provides certain services specifically for International Students. For example, you are covered by (mandatory) Emergency Medical Evacuation coverage. This enables you to return home if you become seriously ill, and you will see this charge on your SOLAR account each fall and spring semester. It is especially important for you to enroll in your Graduate Student Employee health insurance within 30 days of your appointment date. Once you enroll and payroll deductions begin, the mandatory ISHIP health insurance fee will be removed from your student bill, usually in October. You must present your Social Security card to complete your enrollment in the RA or TA health insurance plan, so, again, it is critical to apply for the Social Security card as soon as possible.

#### **VACATIONS**

First-year laboratory rotations run from the end of August into early May, so students are expected to be working during this time. We understand that many of you will have holiday plans and/or family obligations on certain holidays. Since you also have laboratory obligations, absences from rotations during your first year require pre-approval of your rotation advisor. A brief trip home during the holidays or a planned absence for religious observation does not require approval but you should let your rotation advisor know that you will be absent. If there should be an emergency that requires you to leave the University unexpectedly, be sure to contact the Program Director as soon as possible.

Once you join a research group, your mentor will be responsible for approving your vacation leave. In order to remain in good standing, discuss vacation plans with your advisor well in advance. It is suggested that graduate students take no more than 2-3 weeks off each year. Students needing more time (such as international students returning home for a month) should discuss these plans with the advisor. It is also customary to take less time off the following year.

#### CHILDBIRTH ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

The Graduate School has established a special program for students who bear children during the course of their PhD studies. This program enables pregnant and childbearing graduate students to maintain full-time, registered student status and facilitate their return to full participation in class work, research, teaching and clinical training.

The Childbirth Accommodation Program, SB-CAP, includes provisions for academic extensions, relief from regular teaching, research, or training duties and short-term financial support for students normally paid as Teaching Assistants, Grad Assistants or Research Assistants. Under this program, the Graduate School pays the student's stipend, so that the mentor's financial resources are not strained during the period the student is not in the lab. Leave is granted for a period of 12 weeks. More information, including the application for Leave may be found at the Childbirth Accommodation page.

Please note that pregnant graduate students must inform their Program Directors and Research Mentors that they wish to take leave by the 24th week of pregnancy. Students must have the knowledge and consent of their advisor, program directors, professors and a doctor's note to be eligible for SB-CAP. International students must also consult with Visa and Immigration Services.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student may need to take a leave of absence from graduate studies under some circumstances. A leave of absence may be taken for a single semester or for as long as one year. Your Graduate Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School must approve a request for a leave of absence. The Request for Leave of Absence form may be found on the Graduate School website.

## NEW YORK STATE RESIDENCY (US Citizens or Permanent Residents only)

All graduate students who are US citizens or permanent residents must establish New York State Residency before the start of the fall semester following your first year and should begin this process upon arrival at SBU. If you are not a New York State resident, but are eligible to establish residency, and have not completed this process by then, you will be charged for the difference between in-state tuition and the out of state rate – \$2,000 or more, per semester. This will be your responsibility, since, beginning in year two, your tuition scholarship is calculated at the in-state tuition rate.

Detailed information on how to apply for residency, along with the Residency Application Form.\, are posted on the Bursar's website. To establish residency, you should register to vote (at a local post office), and obtain a New York State driver's license. If you own a car that is registered in your name, and you wish to use free Faculty/Staff parking, you will need to change to New York State registration and register your automobile in NY State. Other documents that can be used to support your application for residency are a local bank account (with statements mailed to your local address), or a utility bill in your name, showing a local address. Students who wish to remain on their parents' health insurance policy may still establish residency, providing all other documents have a valid NY address.

Please note that if you have a vehicle on campus registered to your parents who reside out-of-state, you cannot be considered independent and therefore will be charged the out-of-state tuition rate. As a result, the vehicle must be leased or registered in your name.

#### GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The <u>Graduate Student Organization</u> (GSO) is the graduate student governing body at the Stony Brook University. It is incorporated in the State of New York as a nonprofit organization and is legally, and structurally, independent of the University. The GSO purpose aims to protect the rights of graduate students, advance their interests, provide a forum for public debate, and promote graduate student participation in University affairs. GSO sponsors numerous activities, provides various services (tax and legal clinics, emergency loans and more) and promotes interaction between graduate students from various disciplines. Check out the links on their webpage, including the latest "Survival Guide."

The GSO also assists graduate students with the costs of travel related to your research. Reimbursement of up to \$350 is available through the Resource Access Project (RAP) program. The competitive Distinguished Travel Award will provide up to \$1,500 for attendance at prestigious conferences or symposia. Note that there are two nomination cycles per year for the Distinguished Travel Award and each Graduate Program may only nominate two students per nomination cycle. The MI Program selects students for nominations on a first-come first-serve basis. Learn more about these funding opportunities by exploring the Forms page on the GSO website.

#### ACADEMICS AND REGISTRATION

#### **GRADUATE BULLETIN**

The <u>Graduate Bulletin</u> is updated every semester, and includes important information on academic policies and degree requirements. Each graduate program has its own section of the Bulletin and you may find the Bulletin to be a useful source of information for finding electives.

#### ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATON

The number of credits for which you should register is determined by your academic classification. Each entering MI graduate student is classified as either a "G3" or a "G4":

- G3 First-year graduate student who has completed less than 24 graduate-level credit hours by the start of the semester and is enrolling in a doctoral degree program. G3 students register for 9 credits during the fall and spring semesters in year one.
- G4 Advanced graduate student who has completed 18 or more SUNY credits or has a master's degree. G4 students register for a total of 9 credits each fall and spring semester.

G3 students will become a G4 student in the fall semester of the second year and all students will become a G5 student after presenting a successful dissertation proposal and "Advancing to Candidacy". Both G4 and G5 students register for a total of 9 credits each fall and spring semester – no more, no less.

#### REGISTRATION AND DEADLINES

After your individual advisory session with your Program Director, please register as soon as possible. Date specific calendars and deadlines are posted on the Registrar's <u>Academic Calendar</u> web page. To avoid late registration charges, you must always be registered for at least one credit <u>before</u> the first day of classes in the fall and spring semesters.

- The last day to **drop a class**, without incurring tuition liability, is the end of the first week of classes.
- The last day to "swap" classes (exchange one course for another, equal number of credits) is the last day of the second week of classes. After this deadline you must petition the Graduate School to make any changes to your registration.
- The deadline to complete any registration changes is the end of the third week of classes. If you are not registered as a full-time student by the end of late registration, you will lose your tuition scholarship, as well as jeopardize your full-time student (and F-1 visa) status.
- As a general rule, it is always easier to ADD, rather than drop, classes, so long as you do so before the end of Late Registration.

Late registration and tuition liability fees are your responsibility, so please make it a point to <u>register early each year</u>. Contact your Program Director (and/or Administrator) if you do not know which courses to take or encounter registration difficulties.

You must be registered as a full time student throughout your graduate studies, in order to receive tuition scholarships and/or maintain F-1 visa status. You must also register for 0 (zero) credits of HBM 800 Summer Research EVERY YEAR to continue your full-time student status. Please be very careful to register for the appropriate number of credits, as significant tuition liabilities will be incurred if you are under or over the proper load and/or miss the critical deadlines. Consult your Program Director to obtain permission to register for any additional or alternate courses. International students who are required to take ESL classes may register for more than 12 credits without additional tuition charges.

#### **REGISTRATION BLOCKS**

If you are "blocked" from registration, first check your SOLAR messages and account balance. In most cases you are prevented from registering if you owe any fees (parking tickets, e.g.), or have not responded to a SOLAR message or need to submit documents to the Graduate School. The Graduate Program Coordinator can help you sort out any problems but don't wait until the registration deadline to seek help.

#### LABORATORY ROTATIONS

Laboratory rotations are a critical part of your first year of graduate studies and you are required to complete at least three rotations. Your rotation experiences will help you to find the appropriate lab for the duration of your graduate studies. Once you join a lab, your mentor will be responsible for paying your stipend. You are expected to find a permanent laboratory no later than the end of your first year of study. You should make every effort to participate fully in laboratory activities during your rotations and demonstrate your interest and ability to contribute to the group's research. The rotation period is very much a courtship (you are looking for a laboratory in which to conduct your dissertation research and the faculty are looking to recruit the best student to their group), as well as an opportunity to learn new techniques and build collaborations. Each rotation must be pre-approved by the Program Director. You will receive a rotation evaluation at the end of each rotation that will become part of your permanent academic record (a blank copy of the rotation evaluation form is included in this handbook). Many PIs will ask their rotation students to present his/her rotation project at a group meeting toward the end of the rotation as one way to assess the student's understanding of the project and his/her ability to present and interpret data.

Not all biomedical graduate programs follow the same rotation schedule, so it is important to inform your rotation mentor of the dates. With the approval of your Program Director and the laboratory PI, the rotation period may be adjusted if needed. A summer rotation is scheduled for students who have not been successful in finding a laboratory during the academic year. Since classes are not in session during the summer and students may work full-time in a summer rotation, the length of a summer rotation is determined by the PI and Graduate Program Director. For 2019-20 the rotation dates are:

Fall: August 22 through November 18, 2022 Winter: November 28 through February 10, 2023 Spring: February 13 through May 5, 2023

Students must wait until the end of the spring rotation period, May 1, 2023, before asking to join a lab.

#### ROTATIONS AT COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY

Students who wish to rotate at CSHL usually find that the winter rotation gives them the necessary time in the laboratory as classes are not in session from mid-December to approximately the third week of January. CSHL requires that you complete a Rotation Checklist and turn in a Rotation Requisition before you may begin a rotation there. This procedure ensures that CSHL is aware of your presence in one of their labs and that you can be informed of important regulations, procedures and safety information. The checklist and Rotation Requisition are included at the end of this handbook. If you use public transportation for the commute to Cold Spring Harbor, be sure to check out the partial reimbursement available from the Graduate Student Organization.

#### **GRADES AND GPAs**

The Graduate School requires all Stony Brook graduate students to maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher. The Graduate School's policy specifies "If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, he/she will be placed on academic probation for one semester. If the overall graduate average has been raised to B by the end of the semester following notice of probation, the student will automatically return to regular status. A student on academic probation who fails to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of the second semester of probation will usually not be permitted to reenroll."

Students receiving a grade lower than B in a required course should consult the Graduate Program Director, as it is likely the course must be repeated. A higher grade for a repeated course will replace the original grade.

#### TEACHING PRACTICUM

SUNY requires all Ph.D. students to gain teaching experience consisting of a minimum of one semester of supervised teaching. MI graduate students currently fulfill the teaching practicum requirement by serving as a TA in the medical microbiology course taught to first-year medical and dental students.

#### ATTENDANCE AT SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

Students are encouraged to attend scientific conferences and present their research findings as part of their training. The costs associated with attending a conference are paid by the student's mentor's research grants and may be supplemented with funds from a number of sources:

- Students appointed to a training grant may receive funding to attend scientific conferences
- Sigma Xi (call for applications usually issued in March)
- Graduate Student Organization travel award; note that the Program may only nominate two students per funding cycle and these nominations are made on a first-come first-served basis
- Professional Development Award from the Graduate Student Employees Union (members only)
- Organizations sponsoring conferences often provide travel awards (e.g., <u>American Society for Microbiology student travel awards</u>)

#### ATTENDING CONFERENCES AT COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY

As a Stony Brook graduate student, you are welcome to attend conferences and symposia held at CSHL without charge as long as you are not presenting a poster or platform talk at the meeting. However, you do need to register online and select "check to follow," so that there will be a nametag waiting for you. The nametag will grant you free admission to the meeting, wine and cheese reception (if any), etc., but no meals will be provided. Abstract books for CSHL meetings are delivered to MI several days before the start of the meeting and copies may be found next to the student mailboxes on the second floor of the Life Sciences Building as well as in the MI main office (Life Sciences Building, room 130).

Before you register online please contact Val Pakaluk in the meetings department and provide the following information:

- Your Name
- Your SBU Graduate Program
- The meeting you plan to attend

Send this information to: Val Pakaluk, Meetings Administrator pakaluk@cshl.edu 516-367-6895

#### MI ANNUAL RETREAT

The Department of Microbiology and Immunology holds a retreat every year, usually in late September or early October, to help new students become familiar with research opportunities in the Department and become better acquainted with the faculty, other graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and staff members. All MI graduate students are expected to attend the retreat every year. Students who have joined a research group are expected to present a poster every year at the retreat. The retreat also provides a forum for presentation of graduate student awards.

#### SBU SYMPOSIA AND COLLOQUIA

The Department of Microbiology and Immunology periodically sponsors a colloquium on human diseases. Other departments and institutes at SBU also sponsor annual symposia (e.g., the annual Institute for Chemical Biology and Drug Discovery Symposium, Cancer Center Symposia). Attendance at these intramural scientific meetings is without cost to SBU graduate students but may require preregistration online. Students are encouraged to take advantage of these excellent scientific meetings.

#### THE FISHBOWL

The first-year MI and BGE student office will be your special refuge and study area throughout the first year. We encourage you to make good use of it for study sessions, as well as for good times together. You will need to work together to keep the space reasonably clean and comfortable. The cleaning staff will empty the trashcans but other cleaning is up to you.

We have provided a computer and printer, as well as other useful items. The previous denizens have left you sample exam questions, as well as carryout menus and other odds and ends. If there are any technical issues with the computer, or other items needing attention, please let the Graduate Program Coordinator know. Access to nearby electrical outlets is limited at some of the office carrels. If you prefer to use one of these carrels, please use a power strip to connect to the closest electrical outlet (additional power strips may be obtained from Srinivas Sistla). The use of extension cords in conjunction with power strips creates the risk of fire and is prohibited by the SBU Fire Marshal.



#### MI PROGRAM POLICIES

#### GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR

Graduate students in the MI Program will register for HBM 696 *Professional Development in Microbiology and Immunology* every fall and spring semester, and present their research in an annual seminar as part of this course. Graduate students whose advisory committees have given them written permission to write and defend their dissertations in the upcoming fall or spring semester in a given academic year will not be required to give a seminar as part of HBM 696 that academic year. The student's dissertation seminar will fulfill the requirement for an annual seminar under these circumstances.

#### **DISSERTATION COMMITTEE**

MI graduate students form an advisory committee for the dissertation proposal defense with the advice of the advisor and approval of the Graduate Program. This committee is composed of a minimum of two members of the training faculty ("inside members"), one of whom who serves as chair of the advisory committee, and a minimum of one faculty member who is not a member of the MI training faculty ("outside member"). The outside member may be from another department at SBU or another university. The chair of the committee is responsible for submitting the Dissertation Proposal Defense Report and the annual Dissertation Research Progress Report. Upon successful defense of the dissertation proposal, the student's advisor joins the above faculty members to form the Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee contributes to the development of the dissertation project, monitors the student's progress, reads the student's dissertation, attends the dissertation seminar, and questions the student after the public dissertation seminar. The Committee may request changes to the dissertation before signing the signature page and recommending acceptance of the dissertation. A request for appointment of the Dissertation Examining Committee must be submitted to the Graduate School at least four weeks before the dissertation defense. The Graduate Program Director will submit this request will be submitted to the Graduate School on behalf of the student. Note that a current CV must be provided for an outside committee member who is not a member of a SBU graduate program.

#### DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE

After completing all required courses and passing the qualifying exam, students in the MI Program must write and orally defend a dissertation proposal in order to advance to candidacy. Students must submit the written proposal to their committee and defend the proposal within 10 months of the qualifying exam. The student's committee will decide if the student has passed the proposal defense and make recommendations to the Program's Executive Committee with regards to corrective actions and timelines in instances where the student does not pass the proposal defense. Under exceptional circumstances, a student may petition the Executive Committee for an extension to this 10-month rule.

#### MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

All students who have successfully defended their dissertation proposal are required to meet with their advisory committee once a year (annual report) and submit a written report six months after every meeting (6-month report).

#### Annual Report:

- 1. Students will provide a written summary of the dissertation research and distribute the summary to each member of the advisory committee at least five working days prior to the annual meeting.
- 2. The advisor will provide a brief statement that summarizes his/her perspective on the student's progress and the direction of the project to each member of the advisory committee in advance of

- the annual meeting.
- 3. The chair of the advisory committee will complete the Dissertation Research Progress Report that indicates whether the progress made by the student and his/her effort on the project since the previous meeting exceeds expectations, meets expectations, or falls short of expectation. If the student's progress and/or effort have fallen short of expectations, the report will also specify steps to be taken by the student in order to meet expectations within six months.

#### Six-Month Report:

- 1. Students shall submit a written report six months after every annual meeting to all members of their advisory committee and the Graduate Program Director.
- 2. The six-month report should be a concise summary of the dissertation research organized by specific aims.
- 3. If the student's progress fell short of the committee's expectations at the previous meeting, the report should also summarize the steps taken by the student to address their concerns.

#### **PUBLICATION POLICY**

All MI students must be the first-author of at least one publication of original research to graduate. This policy was reviewed and endorsed by the Program's Executive Committee on March 30, 2007. The Committee further decided that a student who has submitted a first-author paper for publication, but has not yet received a decision from the journal, might request permission to schedule the dissertation defense provided the student's advisor and dissertation committee supports this request.

#### DISSERTATION DEFENSE POLICY

In order to ensure that adequate time will be available to make all requested changes to the dissertation, students must schedule their dissertation seminars and defense a minimum of 14 days before the Graduate School's deadline for submission of dissertations.

#### INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN PROGRAM

All first- and second-year MI graduate students and graduate students appointed to the Molecular and Cell Biology of Infectious Diseases training grant are expected to participate in the MI Individual Development Plan (IDP) Program. The IDP Program provides a mechanism for setting short- and long-term professional goals and for the periodic review and refinement of these goals. The IDP Program is presented in conjunction with career development activities to assist students in their professional growth.



#### **GRADUATE STUDENT LABORATORY ROTATION EVALUATION**

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide constructive feedback to the rotation student. A copy is also needed to document the student's progress and be placed in the student's academic file. All evaluations will be shared with the student, as well as his/her Graduate Program Director.

Please describe the student's laboratory performance, indicating both his/her strengths as well as areas in which the student can improve. Please address any delays or difficulties the student may be experiencing.

If you have concerns or comments you prefer not to share with the student, please contact the Graduate Program Director directly. Contact information is on page 2.

| Student Name:  |           |         |             |                |
|--|-----------|---------|-------------|----------------|
| Rotation Period  | FALL      | WINTER  | SPRING      |                |
| Rotation Mentor:   |           |         |             |                |
| After reviewing the descriptions below, please rate this student's performance by checking the appropriate rating: |           |         |             |                |
| OUTSTANDING  | EXCELLENT | VERY GO | OOD PASSING | UNSATISFACTORY |

#### **Outstanding-**

Performance is well beyond that expected of a first-year student, at the level of an advanced graduate student. The student works independently and has devoted substantial time and thought to project goals and independent background readings. He/she demonstrates an ability to improve experimental design. The student's technical skills are very good and he/she is able to master new techniques quickly. This grade should be reserved for exceptional first-year graduate students.

#### **Excellent-**

Work is at a level above that of an average first-year student. The student shows strong motivation, works diligently on the project, and thinks about the basic scientific issues the experiments are meant to address. This grade should indicate that you are confident of the student's potential as a researcher and are very satisfied with the student's performance in the laboratory.

#### Very Good-

Work is as expected for a typical first-year graduate student. The student shows clear potential for productive graduate level research, but may need to work on technical skills, intellectual independence, effort in laboratory, etc. This grade should be given for an average rotation performance, to a graduate student showing reasonable skill levels and interest. This grade may also be appropriate for an excellent student who has entered the program without extensive laboratory experience, especially during first rotations.

#### Passing-

The student shows potential but will need significant improvement technically and/or intellectually in order to successfully complete a Ph.D. This grade indicates that you have some concerns about the student's ability to succeed in the program.

# Unsatisfactory-Perform

Performance was below that expected for a first-year graduate student. The student shows inadequate motivation, effort and/or ability in the laboratory.

#### Overall impression of the student:

What are the student's strengths?

How can the student improve his/her performance?

If funding is available, would you consider taking this student into your lab for his/her dissertation research?

Evaluation completed by:

(Name / Date)

Please return a copy of the completed evaluation to the student, with a copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Program Director. Additional or confidential comments may be sent to the Graduate Program Director.

**Graduate Program Coordinator** 

Jennifer Jokinen (Jennifer.Jokinen@stonybrook.edu) (631) 632-8812

Graduate Program Director, Microbiology & Immunology

Nick Carpino (nicholas.carpino@stonybrook.edu) (631) 632-4610



#### COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY

#### **Graduate Student Rotation Requisition Form**

# **Student Personal Information** Name: Home Telephone: Local Address: Lab Telephone: E-mail address: Cell#: Emergency contact (name and telephone number): **Home Institution Information** School (e.g., SUNY Stony Brook): Program/Department: Matriculation Date: Program Coordinator: Signature Name Date **CSHL Information** (to be completed by CSHL Faculty Advisor) CSHL Rotation Start Date: End Date: CSHL Rotation Faculty Advisor: Name Signature Date I understand that acceptance as a Rotating Graduate Student is not a guarantee of placement for future full-time research in a CSHL laboratory. I have discussed the availability of future funding with my faculty advisor prior to being accepted as a rotating student. I understand that ALL full-time student placements are subject to written approval and funding. Student's Signature Date

cc: Kimberly Geer, Watson School Carol DuPree, Office of Sponsored Programs SBU Program Coordinator

**HR Signature** 

08/01/22

Date



#### ROTATION STUDENT'S CHECKLIST

We are pleased that you have decided to do a graduate school laboratory rotation here at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory and welcome you to our campus. The following are the required steps which must be completed prior to the start of your rotation. If at any point during this process you have questions, please contact Michele Borriello at 516-367-6984, or mborriel@cshl.edu. **Complete Graduate Student Rotation Requisition Form** (Mandatory) This form is available from your Stony Brook program coordinator. Obtain all required signatures, including your SBU program coordinator and the CSHL faculty advisor who accepted you for a rotation. Note: A new form is required for every new rotation. If a new form is not submitted, your building and computer access will cease on the end date of your original rotation. **Submit Graduate Student Requisition Form (Mandatory)** Your completed requisition form must be returned to Michele Borriello in the CSHL Human Resources Department, Luke Building (Tel. 516-367-6984) prior to the start of your rotation. An information packet will be provided. **Schedule Safety Orientation** (Mandatory) Before any work in the Lab may begin, you must attend a mandatory Laboratory safety orientation given by the CSHL Department of Environmental Health and Safety. Please contact Graham Wildt at wildt@cshl.edu, or at 516-367-8336, to be included in the next scheduled training session. **Obtain CSHL Security Identification Card** (Mandatory) Complete the Security Information Sheet and 1) present it to Michelle Borriello in the Human Resources Department who will authorize your status and assign an employee number and 2) bring it to the CSHL Security Department in the Richards Building where a picture ID card will be issued for you. A security ID card is required to gain access to campus buildings, obtain a computer account or purchase discounted meal cards. Give all completed forms to the HRIS Assistant for data entry. **Purchase Meal Ticket** (Optional) Discounted meal tickets for use in the Blackford Dining Hall may be purchased from the cashregister attendant in the dining hall. In order to qualify for the discount, show your CSHL security identification card. (A \$20 meal card is available to graduate students for \$16.) **Shuttle Transportation Service** (Optional) The Lab provides a shuttle van service to and from the main campus, the Woodbury campus and the Syosset train station. The schedule for our van service may be found on the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory intranet site under General Information ( http://meetings.cshl.edu/shuttle.pdf ) **On-campus Housing** (Optional) Occasionally, you may find the need to spend the night on campus. We do have limited on site rooms available to graduate students on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please contact Andrea Newell in our Meetings Office at 367-6847, or newell@cshl.edu, if you need a room for the night. We cannot guarantee that rooms will be available. Therefore, it is important for you to contact the Meetings Office, identifying yourself as a Rotating Graduate Student, as soon as know you may need a room. There is a \$51.00 per night charge for staying in our on-campus rooms. (Note: Rooms are generally not available from Wednesday-Sunday when meetings are in session.)

#### **Watson School of Biological Sciences**

You are invited to visit the Watson School of Biological Sciences, located in Urey Cottage, whose staff will be happy to assist you with any questions you may have as a rotating graduate student.

# MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM DISSERTATION PROPOSAL SUMMARY REPORT

| Student:   |  |               |
|--|--|---------------|
| Title of Proposal:   |  |               |
| Advisor:   |  |               |
| Defense Date:  |  |               |
| Attach a summary of the proposal defense, including form (pass/conditional pass/fail). | g recommendations of the committee, to | o this signed |
| Dissertation Proposal Committee  |  |               |
|  | Chair of the Committee                 |               |
|  | Second Inside Member                   |               |
|  | Third Inside Member (optional)         |               |
|  | Outside Member                         |               |
|  | Second Outside Member (optional)       |               |

Together with the advisor, this committee becomes the Dissertation Research Committee. This committee must meet at least once per year to monitor the progress of the dissertation research and review six-month reports submitted by the student between annual meetings. The chairperson is responsible for submitting a summary of the proceedings of the annual meetings to the Program Office.

cc: Dissertation Advisor Graduate Program Director

# GRADUATE PROGRAM IN MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY DISSERTATION RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORT

|               |  |                          | (Student's name)   |
|---------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| net on _      | to revi                                    | ew his/her progress.     |  |
|               | (Date)                                     |                          |  |
| The p         | progress made by the student               | t and his/her effort on  | the research since the previous meeting:   |
|               | Exceeds expectations                       | i.                       |  |
|               | Meets expectations                         |                          |  |
|               | Falls short of expecta                     | tions                    |  |
| Pleas<br>meet | <u> </u>                                   | nrizes the progress of t | he research and suggestions made at the  |
| of ex         |  | d steps to be taken by   | ent's progress and/or effort has fallen sho<br>the student to meet the committee's |
|               |  |                          |  |
| Dissertat     | tion Research Committee:                   |                          |  |
| 1) _          |  | (2)                      |  |
|               |  |                          | (A 1 · )   |
|               | (Chairperson)                              |                          | (Advisor)  |
| 3) _          |  | (4)                      |  |
| 3)            | (Chairperson)  (Second inside member - opt | ional) (4)               | (Advisor)  (Outside member)  |
| 3) <u>(</u>   |  | ional) (4)               |  |

This committee must meet at least once per year to monitor the progress of the dissertation research. The Chairperson is responsible for summarizing the proceedings of these meetings and submitting the report to the Program office (Room 130 Life Sciences, SUNY Stony Brook, Stony Brook, NY 11794-5222).