



Graduate Student Handbook

Department Guidelines, Programs, Policies, and Procedures



Academic Year: 2025-2026



Foreword

The Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) *Graduate Student Handbook* is provided to help new students navigate their first week or two with ease, give general reference information to use throughout their graduate career, and outline the department's graduate program policies and procedures.

If you need additional help or have a question that isn't answered in this handbook, contact me, one of your graduate student representatives, or the graduate student affairs coordinator:

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The department extends our encouragement, as well as resources for their academic and research success, to all our graduate students.

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Part 1: Settling In

Before You Arrive

The latest you should arrive at UCI is two weeks before Fall quarter classes start. This will allow you enough time to take care of paperwork and other matters, some of which must be handled in person.

You should have received and filed a Statement of Legal Residence online before arriving. The Registrar's Office sends this form to all applicants who have accepted admission. If you have not received it, visit the Residence Classification website <http://reg.uci.edu/stlr/Welcome.do> and complete it online. Failure to provide a Statement of Legal Residence form may result in a hold being placed on your registration.

You must register for classes no later than five days prior to the start of the Fall quarter (see the UCI Registrar's website for notices and deadlines: <https://www.reg.uci.edu>). You can register online before arriving at UCI. To avoid late fees, be sure to register for classes before the deadline to avoid late fees.

You should make housing arrangements before you arrive. If you are a Ph.D. student and plan to live on campus, you should have received information about guaranteed on-campus housing and followed those instructions in early May. Students seeking an M.S. degree are not guaranteed on-campus housing, but may still apply for on-campus housing (see section below on [Housing](#)) or visit [UCI Basic Needs Center website](#) to book campus social worker consultation for housing.

Please note: if you are a teaching assistant (TA) or graduate student researcher (GSR), you will not get your first paycheck until November 1.

Housing

Housing in Orange County can be fairly expensive. As a graduate student, your best option is student housing. Most students in our department (EEB) have chosen this option. See <https://housing.uci.edu/grad/>.

There are five student apartment complexes at UCI:

- The oldest and least expensive one is Verano, which features family housing for those with children. For Verano Housing call: 949-824-5964.
- Palo Verde houses mostly students (as opposed to non-student family members). Rents here are a bit steeper. The Palo Verde Office number is 949-824-8397.
- Vista Del Campo and Vista Del Campo Norte are privately owned and managed apartment communities located on the UC Irvine campus. Both offer furnished apartments to single undergraduate and graduate students, except freshmen. For information on the two Vista Del Campo communities, go to <https://housing.uci.edu/acc/>.

- Puerta del Sol is the newest apartment complex. Visit: <http://www.puertadelsolliving.com/student-apartments/ca/irvine/puerta-del-sol>.

More information is posted on the Graduate and Family Housing website: <https://housing.uci.edu/grad/>.

After You Arrive

International Students

International students should see the UCI International Center webpage for information about preparing for arrival and how to check-in after you arrive <https://ic.uci.edu/students/newStudents.php>.

Email lists

There are both departmental and campus-wide email lists that you may want to join when you arrive to campus. For the department, be sure that you are receiving emails from the bio-ecoevo-students@uci.edu list. If you are not, please talk to the EEB staff.

The second type of lists are general voluntary lists associated with all sorts of groups and organizations within the department and on campus. For instance, the Ecology group and Microbial group in EEB have a list that announces group meetings, campus seminars, and job postings. You can sign up for these lists here: <https://maillists.uci.edu/mailman/listinfo>.

First-Year Prescription Committee

In the weeks before classes, the First-Year Prescription Committee will review your previous academic training. If you are found 'deficient' in a particular area, you might be advised to take an undergraduate course in that area. The basic course series for first year students is discussed in [Graduate Core Courses](#) in Part 5 below.

Training

Before classes begin, you should attend the University and Departmental Orientations and start on various training courses.

- **TA Professional Development Program (TAPDP):** Training for teaching assistants takes place during the week that classes begin. The dates are included in an email sent to you by the graduate student affairs coordinator in early summer. This training is very helpful and is required in the summer before your first teaching appointment (see [Teaching Assistantships](#) in Part 3 for more information)
- **Laboratory Training (TANGO):** All new students must take a Laboratory Training

class (TANGO) on lab safety and emergency procedures. This class is run by Environmental Health & Safety, during September.

- **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training:** All master's and doctoral students must complete the NSF-compliant RCR training online through UCLC: <https://uclc.uci.edu/>. MMG 250, a course through the medical school, is required of any EEB student funded by a NIH research grant (RO1) or appointed to an NIH Training Grant (T32). This training isn't automatically assigned to you through UCLC, but you can register if you look it up.
- **Cyber Security Awareness Training:** All graduate students are mandated to complete online Cyber Security Awareness Training, before the end of their first month on campus. This training can be accessed through UC Learning Center online. You will receive an email notification with a link.
- **UC Ethical Values and Conduct:** All student employees, including GSRs and TAs, are required to complete the UC Ethical Values and Conduct training module through UC Learning Center. You will receive an email notification with a link to the training.
- **Sexual and Violence Harassment Prevention and Response:** As part of a system-wide effort to improve the prevention of and response to sexual violence and sexual harassment, the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (OEOD) is requiring all UC faculty and staff, including student employees, TAs, and graduate student researchers (GSRs) to participate in annual training that will better prepare each of us to prevent and respond to these incidents. It is considered essential that TAs be knowledgeable regarding sexual harassment prevention and resources available on campus. Employees who are required to complete the training will receive a notification from the UC Learning Center with instructions on how to complete the online course. Employees must complete the online training within the first six weeks of their employment or, if you are a TA, it must be completed before classes start.

Establishing Residency

If you are from out-of-state, you need to get started on establishing residency as soon as possible to avoid problems. During your first year as an out-of-state graduate student, non-resident tuition is paid by the Department but, after that, if you are still a non-California resident, you will be responsible for this charge. It is therefore vital that out-of-state domestic students establish themselves as California residents during their first year.

In order to be considered a resident, you must obtain a Petition for Resident Classification from the Office of the Registrar, fill it out, and return it to the Office of the Registrar by the appropriate deadline. You must then produce the required proof of residency at the end of one year. If you don't start the proceedings early, you won't establish your residency in time and will have to pay the higher fees. If you have questions, contact the Residence Deputy in the Office of the Registrar, at x4-6129 or

registrar@uci.edu or look at the Registrar's Office website at www.reg.uci.edu/registrar/residence/index.html.

Part 2: Life at UCI

Student Photo ID

UCI no longer issues ID cards. The Zotkey system issues digital IDs. More information can be found at: <https://zotkey.uci.edu/>

Keys

You can obtain a Key Request Form from the Facilities Management website: <https://facilities.bio.uci.edu/facilities-requests/online-key-access-card-request-form/>.

Mail

Mailing Address: Any mail or packages being made by staff, please include their name AND the PI name in the Attn. line (*Attn: Staff Name – PI/Lab Name*), so that BioSci Facilities team can accurately deliver the mail.

Package Deliveries: Please note that with the Department Admin staff transferring to the purchasing/reimbursement teams, there will not always be someone present in the Dept. Admin office to accept packages in your absence. You can either add/update the sign on your door to direct deliveries to a neighboring lab in your absence, or you can have the items shipped to BioSci Facilities team.

Temperature Sensitive Deliveries: Please plan accordingly when ordering temperature sensitive items to avoid delivery on weekends or holidays when the buildings are locked.

Pallet Deliveries: Pallet deliveries cannot be left on the loading dock. When ordering heavy equipment/pallet deliveries, please ensure you arrange for delivery to your lab door and scheduled delivery when present to accept and sign for it.

Phones

To Make Calls from a Campus Phone:

- **To an on-campus phone:** Dial the five-digit extension (the first number is always 4).
- **To an off-campus phone:** Dial 9 first, then the seven-digit telephone number.
- **Toll Call/Long Distance:** Dial 9 then 1 for domestic calls, (or 011 for international), then the area code and telephone number. Calls outside the U.S. require the use of a calling card — it is not possible to dial direct from most labs. Check with your advisor regarding his or her policy on long-distance phone calls. The campus area code is **949** and the prefix for campus extensions is **824**.

In the Event of an Emergency

- **Dial 911** when using a campus telephone extension or any payphone located on campus.
- **Inside an elevator** — All UCI campus elevators are equipped with emergency call boxes. Each box has a push button that connects directly to the UCI Police Department UCIPD 911 via speakerphone.
- **If you are outside a building**, look for an emergency phone. These yellow emergency phones with blue lights on top are located on the campus ring mall and in many campus parking lots. Each box has a push button that connects directly to the UCIPD 911 via speakerphone.
- **From a cellular telephone:** Dial **911**. If you are on campus it is routed to a UC Irvine Police dispatcher. If you have any questions about the features available on the campus phones and how to use them, the campus telephone directory will guide you. A summary of services is available at the Office of Information Technology (OIT), <http://www.oit.uci.edu/telephone>

zotALERT System

One of several modes of emergency communication used at UCI, zotALERT is an emergency alert system that uses cell phone text messaging to quickly notify the UCI community of emergency and safety related information. The system will not be used for routine announcements. zotALERT messages will be sent periodically to test the system and to promote emergency preparedness.

The zotALERT text message system is complemented by the ZotMail email system, which provides an additional notification mechanism to text messaging. ZotMail will also help get the word out to those who do not have cell phones or find notification through text messaging ineffective. Redundancy is an important component of emergency communication strategy.

Students are strongly encouraged to sign up for zotALERT messages.

1. Login to StudentAccess
2. Click Contact Information
3. Update your Mobile Phone and provide your cell phone number.

Email

Each student has an email account based on their UCInetID. Please use this address for official communication with the University. This is the email that will be used for all departmental messages. To access your free email account, you will need to activate it by following the easy instructions on the Office of Information Technology (OIT) web page at <http://www.oit.uci.edu/ucinetid/>, and then clicking on **Activate your UCInetID**. Be sure to have your student ID number and Social Security number available.

Photocopies

Photocopy machines are located in Steinhaus Hall (SH) Room 322 (Color), McGaugh Hall (MH) 2224 (Color), MH 4224, Natural Sciences I, Room 2115 (Color), Natural Sciences II, Room 4120, and Biological Sciences III, Room 2202. These copiers require copy codes that may be requested from the administrative staff. You may ask your advisor for a code that can be used for research-related copying. Additional photocopiers (as well as painters and scanners) are available in the libraries for personal use. Check the Library website for more information: <https://www.lib.uci.edu/printing-copying-scanning>.

Parking

Parking Permits: Parking at UCI currently runs \$75- \$125 per month. Parking permits may be obtained online at <https://www.parking.uci.edu/> or from the Parking and Transportation Office in the Public Services Building, Room 200, located at the corner of Berkeley and Pereira (section C9, Building 7 on campus maps).

Alternative Transportation Incentives: If you are getting to campus by alternative means, you may be eligible for the Alternative Transportation Incentive Program. If you are a TA, you can sign up to enroll in the sustainable transportation program. You receive free-passes per month to park on campus if your main form of transportation to campus is public transport or biking/walking. Check out the Parking and Transportation website for more information: <http://www.parking.uci.edu/AT/incentives/graduate.cfm/>.

OCTA University Pass: A good way to avoid parking costs is to ride the OCTA bus. For a \$169 membership fee, you can purchase a University Pass card for unlimited access to the Orange County Transportation Authority's (OCTA) bus system 24 hours a day throughout the county. Have your ID card with you whenever you stop by the Parking and Transportation Services Office. The OCTA pass is valid from July 1 until June 30 the next year. For more information visit: <http://www.parking.uci.edu/at/modes/octa.cfm>

Local Stores

The most convenient grocery store close to campus is Albertson's, across Campus Drive from Verano housing. It is fairly large and has a pharmacy. Trader Joe's is across the street from the UCI campus in the University Town Center Shopping Area on Campus Drive. For health/organic/vegetarian foods, you can try Wholesome Choice Market at Culver and Michelson, or Mother's Market at 2963 Michelson in Irvine or 19th Street in Costa Mesa. Target opened in July 2017 at the University Center mall, and there are also several Costco stores in Irvine and surrounding communities. UCI also has a food pantry available to graduate and undergraduate students. <https://basicneeds.uci.edu/fresh-pantry/>

Campus Recreation

The Anteater Recreational Center (ARC) is equipped with two gymnasiums, an elevated running track, a rock-climbing wall, a fitness lab, several activity rooms, and a 10,000 square foot weight and cardio room. Its Aquatics Plaza contains a 25 yard by 25 meter recreational lap pool. Students may pursue their own fitness programs or participate in a myriad of campus recreation programs. These programs include in-line skating, scuba, kick box aerobics, Aikido, sailing, and more. Tours of the ARC are available by calling X45346 to make an appointment, or you can check out the ARC at www.campusrec.uci.edu.

Part 3: Personal Finance

Local Banks

A variety of ATMs are located on campus at the Student Center. In addition, School's First Credit Union and Wells Fargo have branch offices inside the Student Center. Any University of California (UC) employee, including TAs and GSRs, can join School's First Credit Union.

Getting Paid

When You Will Be Paid

If you hold a TA or GSR appointment, please be aware that you will be paid in arrears, i.e., you will receive your first paycheck on the first day of the month following the month of service. For instance, for Fall quarter your first paycheck will be on November 1 and your last paycheck for the quarter will be on January 1. For Spring quarter, your first paycheck will be on May 1 and your last paycheck for the quarter will be on July 1. This means that a student may not receive their first paycheck for more than a month after they arrive.

Recipients of most fellowships will be also paid in arrears, so pay dates will be the same as TA or GSR pay.

For first year students, the department provides a one-time stipend to help with their move to UC Irvine. This is provided when the student arrives at UCI.

Direct Deposits

It is highly recommended that you sign up for direct deposit to have your paycheck and/or fellowship check deposited electronically by the University. This not only means you do not need to go to the bank to make a deposit, but with some banks your payroll check is deposited a day early, with the exception of the January 1 pay date. You can view your payroll related pay stub online through UCPATH and sign up for direct deposit at ucpath.uci.edu. If you do not have direct deposit, your check will be mailed to your home address and may take several days to arrive. More information about UCPATH and payroll can be found here: [https://ucpath.uci.edu/ user-type/student-](https://ucpath.uci.edu/user-type/student-)

[employees.php](#).

Non-Payroll Related Pay Stubs

You can view non-payroll related (fellowship) pay stubs online after logging on to your zot account online at <https://zotaccount.uci.edu/>. You can sign up for Payroll's direct deposit service, DEFT, at <https://fs.uci.edu/student-billing/direct-deposit-deft.php>.

Teaching Assistantships

Pay for Teaching Assistantships is experience-based. You will be informed your salary step and monthly pay when you have a Teaching Assistantship appointment.

Fellowships

Tax Implications for Different Kinds of Fellowships

Be aware that there are different kinds of fellowships available, and, most importantly, that federal and state income taxes are not automatically withheld from fellowship stipends like they are from paychecks. To avoid possible future penalties, you will probably need to make estimated tax payments to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and California Franchise Tax Board. See IRS Publication 970 ("Tax Benefits for Education"), IRS Form 1040-ES, and Franchise Tax Board Form 540-EZ for more information.

Fellowships Covering Fees

Many fellowships cover fees in addition to providing a stipend. If this is true for you, the fellowship should be noted on your ZotBill. You also will need to register for a minimum of 1 unit before the fee payment will be activated. If your bill continues to show a balance after you have registered, please check with the graduate student affairs coordinator.

Applying for NIH, NSF, or Private Fellowships

You are encouraged to apply for graduate fellowships such as those from National Institutes of Health (NIH), National Science Foundation (NSF), UCI, or private foundations. Contact your faculty advisor and the Departmental Graduate Advisor for assistance. They can help you identify potential funding agencies and will guide you through the application process. Also, please remember: never send an application directly to the agency without first speaking to one of the financial analysts in the BioSci School office. Each faculty member has an analyst assigned to their accounts. If you receive a fellowship, please send the fellowship award letter to the graduate student affairs coordinator.

Fees

Covered Fees: If you are employed as a TA, the Graduate Division provides a fee remission. If you are a GSR, all your fees are covered by the grant. Many fellowships also pay your fees in full.

What Is Included in the Fees: Your quarterly fees include a number of charges in addition to the basic University fees, including fees for the Student Center, Recreation Center, and the Bren Events Center. There is also a UC Graduate and Professional Council (UCGPC) fee which is a non-mandatory fee that graduate students are assessed during the fall, winter and spring terms to support the systemwide UC Student Association. Students may elect to opt-out and once the opt-out is elected students will not be charged the fee unless they change their election for a later term. Another charge is for student health insurance. If you have other medical insurance, you may opt out of the University's student health insurance plan (see [Health Insurance](#) in Part 4). Tuition and mandatory fees have been set regardless of the method of instruction and will not be refunded in the event instruction occurs remotely for any part of the academic year.

Zot Billing: Billing is handled via a monthly statement through ZotBill at <http://zotaccount@uci.edu>. The statement includes a breakdown of all charges/debits as well as any credits, including financial aid handled directly by the University. It is strongly recommended, if you are paying for your own fees, that payment be made electronically, though payments will be accepted by mail or at designated campus drop boxes. Be sure to put your name, address and account/student ID number on all checks and correspondence. You should get an informational brochure with your first bill. As soon as you meet with the principal personnel analyst (<https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/people/staff/>) who will enter your appointment into the payroll system, your Zot account will show that these fees are covered.

Federal Student Aid

File a FAFSA: Financial aid to graduate students is available from the federal government in two ways: a) through grants and fellowships, and b) by student loans. For both types, domestic students need to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). If you applied for federal financial aid as an undergraduate, you are probably already familiar with the procedures. You can submit the FAFSA online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. The instructions are fairly straightforward. This should be done each year that you are in the graduate program whether or not you are looking for financial aid. If funds become available through department fellowships, the FAFSA is usually required and it saves some time if this filled out already.

The Financial Aid Office is in 102 Aldrich Hall. Be aware that this office handles a lot of traffic and consequently lines can be long. You should educate yourself about the system as much as possible and ask questions as needed. You can call the Financial Aid Office at x4-8262 and access their web page at <http://www.ofas.uci.edu/content/>.

Before Accepting Financial Aid: Note that taking out the full amount of the loans offered to you in the Fall quarter might reduce your financial need, and consequently

affect your ability to receive certain fellowships from the department later in the academic year. Consult with the graduate student affairs coordinator before accepting financial aid.

Part 4: Health, Wellness, and Support

Health Insurance: UC SHIP

What Is UC SHIP? The University-sponsored health insurance program for graduate students is University of California Student Health Insurance Plan for Graduates (UC SHIP for Graduates, or GSHIP). Eligible graduate students are automatically enrolled in UC SHIP, and the premium for this insurance is assessed each term on the graduate student's registration fee statement. You may request to waive (opt out of) this plan if you can demonstrate comparable and verifiable health coverage that meets the campus' minimum standards for insurance.

UC SHIP is a comprehensive health plan that provides medical, mental health care, pharmacy, vision, and dental coverage. It features year-round, worldwide coverage using the Anthem Blue Cross PPO network. UC SHIP provides optimal coverage for services on campus and in the UC Irvine community, and peace of mind for students.

UC SHIP Primary Care Provider: For UC SHIP members, the Student Health Center (SHC) is their primary care provider. Primary care providers and specialists at the Student Health Center will administer treatment and/or, if necessary, they will generate a referral for the student to receive additional services and/or specialists in the community if those services are not offered at SHC. Please note that, under the terms of the UC SHIP plan, students must first obtain a referral authorization from a Student Health Center primary care provider BEFORE seeking treatment from a non-SHC provider in the community. If a referral authorization is not obtained in advance, then the claim will be denied.

When Is Your Insurance in Effect? Your insurance is in effect as of the first day of Fall quarter, providing your fees have been paid and you are enrolled. Insurance premiums are paid in Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters only. Paying fees and enrolling in Spring quarter will extend insurance through summer until the beginning of the subsequent academic year.

Further information about the program, important telephone numbers, and other useful links are available on the GSHIP website at http://www.shs.uci.edu/Health_Insurance_Privacy/Insurance.aspx. If you have a question not addressed on the website, please contact the insurance coordinator, at 949-824-2388.

Accidents

Work-Related Injuries and/or Sickness

UC Irvine employees are covered under Worker's Compensation Insurance. The Student Health Center does not see patients as a result of injury and/or sickness that

arises out of or in the course of their employment. On-the-job injury is not covered under GSHIP insurance. However, if the student/employee has GSHIP insurance and does not want to report or claim the injury under Worker's Compensation, they can be treated at the SHC, emergency room, or urgent care using GSHIP insurance. For an emergency after hours, please call (888) 344-6098 to access participating providers or visit www.uhcsr.com.

Reporting and Obtaining Treatment for Work-Related Injuries

All work-related injuries must be reported via the online Incident Form available at <https://www.ehs.uci.edu/forms/report-injury/> or call 949-824-7008. Once the Incident form is completed please make sure to notify the principal personnel analyst by phone or email (see <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/people/staff/>) of the injury by sending. More information about work-related injuries and how and where to obtain treatment are on this website: <https://hr.uci.edu/partnership/workforce-relations/files/WorkersComp-Campus-Treatment-Poster.pdf>.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Advisors Program

UCI does not tolerate sexual violence (dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault) and sexual harassment. UCI's [Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity \(OEOD\)](#) deals with issues of discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. The OEOD can provide an individual who experienced such sexual violence and/or sexual harassment with supportive measures, such as changes to housing or classes, academic assistance, withdrawals and extensions, financial aid assistance, Visa assistance, safety escorts to walk with on campus, workplace accommodations, and more.

A less formal option is to consider talking with a [Sexual Harassment Prevention Advisor \(SHPA\)](#). SHPAs serve as neutral advisors (not advocates) and a resource for students, staff, and faculty with concerns related to sexual harassment, stalking, dating or domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of sexual misconduct. SHPAs possess knowledge of applicable laws, University policies. In addition to facilitating a warm hand-off to OEOD, they may assist OEOD in the implementation of Title IX-related academic, housing, and workplace accommodations. In EEB, Sarah Kimball is our SHPA (949-824-7151, skimball@uci.edu), and BioSci has additional SHPAs outside the department. In addition, you might also contact the BioSci Equity Advisor: Monica Daley, (949) 824-6654, madaley@uci.edu.

Graduate Division Resources

Graduate Division offers a number of resources to support the well-being of UCI's graduate students and postdoctoral scholars. These services range from professional development to academic counseling specifically for graduate students. In particular, see contact information for the graduate division counselor who provides support and referral services to graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in personal distress or in need of academic counseling see <https://grad.uci.edu/well-being/well-being/>. The professional development resources include writing workshops and one-on-one

feedback, information about teaching internships and certificates, and career advising. See <https://grad.uci.edu/current-students/student-resources/>.

Counseling Services

The office of [Wellness, Health & Counseling Services](#) supports students during situations and crises that may be impacting their personal and academic well-being, through short-term resource referral and long-term case management. Services are available to the entire UCI community at no cost. They maintain an online collection of all campus and community resources for basic needs, medical, and local mental health and counseling providers.

If you are concerned for a colleague, please know that all of the resources above are also available for you in working out how to best assist someone. Wellness, Health & Counseling Services has an excellent [webpage](#) that provides resources for community members that are worried about a student and are not sure how to help them. Keep in mind that, in simple terms, UCI employees (including graduate students when disclosures are made in their capacity as employees) are required to report knowledge of discrimination, harassment, and assault (more [specifics](#) here).

Campus Social Work

The office of Campus Social Work supports students during situations and crises that may be impacting their personal and academic well-being, through short-term resource referral and long-term case management. Services are available to the entire UCI community at no cost. They also maintain an online collection of campus and community resources for basic needs, medical, and local mental health and counseling providers. <https://www.whcs.uci.edu/do-you-need-help/campus-assist-list>

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

DECADE Mentor

The DECADE Mentor program works out of Grad Division (<https://grad.uci.edu/diversity-equity-inclusion/decade/>). DECADE Mentors are committed to fostering an inclusive environment within UCI's graduate programs, and promoting diversity within the graduate student population campuswide. They serve as a resource to graduate students and faculty alike, collaborating with Equity Advisors and UCI's Graduate Division to accomplish their program's goals. The current EEB DECADE Mentor is Nancy Aguilar-Roca (nmaguila@uci.edu). [DECADE Mentors](#) are committed to fostering an inclusive environment within UCI's graduate programs and promoting diversity within the graduate student population campuswide. They serve as a resource to graduate students and faculty alike, collaborating with Equity Advisors and UCI's Graduate Division to accomplish their program's goals.

BioSci Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The BioSci Office supports and advises the School on inclusive excellence

across programs throughout the School. Its website has information about everything from campus diversity affinity groups to inclusive teaching resources: <https://inclusion.bio.uci.edu/>. Some of the groups mentioned below were established in part by EEB department members.

SACNAS at UCI

The Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics & Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) includes a chapter at UC Irvine. SACNAS as an organization is “dedicated to fostering the success of Chicano/Hispanic and Native Americans scientists, from college students to professionals, in attaining advanced degrees, careers, and positions in of leadership in STEM,” (<https://www.sacnas.org>). SACNAS at UCI aims to emulate those goals along with establishing a sense of community, providing access to professional development, and eventually creating opportunities for K-12 outreach. See <https://sites.uci.edu/sacnasatuci/our-story/>.

QT STEM

QT STEM is an organization at UCI for queer and/or trans people who are part of the STEM fields. Their goal is to create a more visible LGBTQ+ community in what can be an underrepresented area of academia.

Black in Neuro

Black in Neuro (<https://sites.uci.edu/endoracism/blackinneuro/>) is a grassroots organization dedicated to celebrating Black excellence in neuroscience and neuro-related fields. Their events have been open to the community (not just neuroscience).

UCI Office of Inclusive Excellence

UCI Office of Inclusive Excellence (<https://inclusion.uci.edu/>) is a campus office that supports programs such as the Black Thriving Initiative, Inclusive Excellence Certificate Program, Gender Inclusive Campus, Native American Thriving and information about UCI as an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander- Serving Institution (AANAPSI).

Campus Student Life

Campus Student Life (<https://studentlife.uci.edu/home.php>) lists campus-wide cross-cultural organizations. While these have a focus on undergrads, they include resources for all community members.

Part 5: Graduate Study Programs, Policies, and Guidelines

Aims and Objectives

The EEB department studies the molecular basis of how organisms adapt to the natural world over evolutionary time, and how the resultant biological diversity in organismal function affects present-day ecological processes. EEB faculty study questions pertinent at a variety of levels of biological organization, from molecular aspects of evolution to organismal physiology and the ecology of terrestrial, freshwater and ocean ecosystems. We have considerable strengths in areas such as molecular evolution, functional morphology, phylogenetics, physiological ecology, population genetics, evolutionary ecology, community ecology, microbial ecology and global change. We seek to train a diverse student body for successful scientific careers by providing a collaborative, supportive, and inclusive environment for department members.

The EEB Graduate Program offers both a PhD and MS in Biological Sciences. Our department also offers a Masters in Conservation and Restoration Science, but this section of the handbook does not focus on students pursuing this degree. Please see the MCRS [website](#) for information specific to that degree.

For information on the formal learning outcomes of our graduate programs, see [Appendix B: Program Learning Outcomes \(PLOs\)](#).

Admission

Application for Admission

Application for graduate study is made directly through the Graduate Division website: <https://apply.grad.uci.edu/apply/>. Our department admits students directly into a particular lab, so students normally do not do lab rotations. Thus, it is highly recommended that applicants make contact with at least one department faculty member whose research interests are related to their own.

Completed application documents include the application form, official transcripts of previous University study, three letters of recommendation, a research and personal statement, and if applicable, language exam (TOEFL or IELTS) scores. All graduate applicants are required to demonstrate English proficiency for admissions consideration. Applicants are waived from the English Language Proficiency requirement if they have earned an undergraduate degree from an institution at which English was the sole language of instruction according to the [World Higher Education Database \(WHED\)](#). For more information see <https://grad.uci.edu/admissions/applying-to-uci/>.

Applications are due on **December 1** for consideration for admission and support for the following Fall quarter.

Evaluation of Applicants

The admissions committee typically consists of the chair for admissions, who is a faculty member, two additional faculty members, and one graduate student. After the recruitment process, the committee will present a summary to the department of the admissions for the coming year. The committee also brings to the faculty matters of admission policy and/or procedure that it concludes require reform or reevaluation and informs the department of all applicable changes in regulations, policies, and other directives from UCI Graduate Division.

In December and January of each year, the admissions committee prescreens applications to identify admissible candidates. These candidates are then evaluated by faculty accepting students into their labs. Based on these evaluations, the admissions committee invites potential students to interview in late January or early February. The interviews serve to facilitate further evaluation of students by faculty, and vice versa. The admissions committee then makes a final recommendation about admissions. The committee will endeavor to attract faculty sponsorship of particular students that it deems highly admissible.

Notification of Admission

Notification of admission is normally made by March of each year. Students are admitted to begin the graduate program in the Fall quarter, except under unusual circumstances.

Financial Support

Ph.D. students are guaranteed financial support for at least five years as long as they remain in good academic standing. This funding can be provided in the form of teaching assistantships (TAs), graduate student research appointments (GSRs), and graduate fellowships. Separate application for support from University of California sources is not necessary; however, students are highly encouraged to apply for external fellowships with the help of their faculty advisor. The department provides all Ph.D. students a minimum salary, which is explained in their admissions letter.

Note that this amount may not be sufficient for living in the Irvine area, nor sufficient for the support of dependents. If additional needs exist, students may need to explore other sources of income including financial aid. Master's students can TA, but this funding support is not guaranteed.

Teaching Assistantships

TAs provide a student with a stipend and tuition/fee support. When students are fully supported as 50% time TAs, they are expected to teach an average work load of 20 hours per week. Students with TA support less than 50% are required to teach the number of hours in proportion to their appointment. Students who are supported as GSRs or through fellowships are not required to be TAs, but all graduate students must fulfill a teaching requirement as part of their curriculum (two quarters for Ph.D. students and one-quarter for M.S. students). Students must be proficient in English to TA, and this proficiency usually has to be demonstrated upon admission to the program.

Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST)

EEB pays for non-resident tuition for all Ph.D. students in their first year. U.S. students must take appropriate actions to establish California residency as soon as they move to California so that NRST is not applicable after the first year. International students cannot establish California residency; however, the University provides NRST fellowship support for international students in years 2 and 3. NRST is waived after Advancement to Candidacy for three years; therefore, it is critical for international students to advance within three years, otherwise the student's faculty advisor is responsible for the NRST.

Doctoral Program

Summary and Timeline

The doctoral (Ph.D.) degree is awarded on the basis of evidence that the recipient possesses knowledge of a broad field of learning and mastery of a particular sector of that field. It is not an award for diligence, but an indication of critical judgment, comprehension, and creativity.

The main elements of the EEB Ph.D. program include:

- Coursework: four core courses plus research units every quarter
- Two quarters of teaching
- Semi-annual committee meetings
- Annual submission of an Individual Development Plan (IDP)
- Advancement exam
- Submission of a written dissertation
- Dissertation defense exam

In addition, incoming EEB students should take An Introduction to Graduate School (EE203A) in Fall of their first year. The department also offers intermittent workshops, additional writing courses/writing clubs, and advanced graduate seminars. Students should discuss which of these activities they should participate in with their advisor.

A typical timeline for an EEB Ph.D. student is given below. The normative time to advance to candidacy (AtC) is three years, and the normative time to defend is just over five years. Currently, the Associate Dean (AD) offers a \$1,000 bonus to the student for advancing by the last day of instruction of Spring quarter in their third year (or the 9th quarter in residence). A student will be placed on academic conditional status (ACS) by the Associate Dean if they have not advanced by their eleventh academic quarter. Most students TA during their first year, which meets the program's teaching requirement

| | Fall | Winter | Spring | Summer |
|---------------|---|-------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Year 1 | Intro to Grad School | | Committee meeting IDP | |
| Year 2 | Committee meeting | | Committee meeting Finish required classes IDP | |
| Year 3 | Committee meeting | | Normative time to AtC (\$1K bonus) IDP | |
| Year 4 | Committee meeting | CAS if not AtC | Committee meeting IDP | |
| Year 5 | Committee meeting | | Committee meeting IDP | Normative time to defend |
| Year 6 | Committee meeting | | Committee meeting IDP | |
| Year 7 | Last year notice Need AD approval to TA Committee meeting | Committee meeting | Committee meeting IDP | Last possible quarter! |

A minimum residency requirement for the Ph.D. is two years. Waiver of the residency requirement is at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate Division.

Coursework

The EEB curriculum of courses plays a critical role in supporting the students' research endeavors and broadening their knowledge. The curriculum also provides an opportunity for cohorts of students to interact and share knowledge.

Students must pass four required core courses. A grade of B- is not considered a passing grade for a graduate student. Students must pass the four core courses by the end of their second academic year, unless there are extenuating circumstances that merit a time extension. Students failing to meet this requirement may be asked to leave the program.

Students are additionally required to maintain a satisfactory grade point average of B or greater in all additional coursework. The Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory option is used in some graduate courses. In the event that a student receives an Incomplete in any of the core courses, the deficiency must be cleared by the deadline specified by the graduate advisor. Any extensions of this deadline require approval by the graduate advisor.

Research Units: Students should register for research units under their advisor's section every quarter (EE 200A/B/C). Students must register for a total of 12 units to qualify for full time status; therefore, the number of research units will vary (2 to 12 units) by quarter depending on the student's other courses. A grade of B- or lower in Research Units indicates that the student is not making satisfactory research progress.

A failing grade will result in a review of the student by the graduate advisor and the

possibility of being placed on conditional academic status.

Graduate Core Courses: Students must complete four courses no later than Advancement to Candidacy, but ideally during their first six academic quarters. Two of those courses are: Writing Grant Proposals (EE 204) and Quantitative Methods in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EE 207).

Students must take two additional “breadth” courses (3-4 units each) at the graduate level. The courses should be content-based, rather than method-based, courses and can be taken from any department on campus but must be approved by the student’s committee as relevant to their area of research. Both courses must be taken at the graduate level. A list of potential courses of interest to EEB students can be found here: <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/graduates/graduate-courses/>

Exception Requests: If a student wishes to request an exception to the core courses (an exemption or a substitution), they must submit a written request justifying the reason to the graduate advisor. The graduate advisor, with input from the student’s advisor and committee, will decide whether to grant the request. Once approval has been given, the student must submit a General Petition found at <https://grad.uci.edu/current-students/student-forms/>. Graduate Division makes the final decision on these requests.

Advanced Graduate Seminars: The department offers a number of advanced graduate seminar courses (e.g., EE 210, 221, 230) in evolution, ecology, physiology, microbiology, and education to help students develop a high level of scientific expertise in these areas. Students should discuss which of these courses they should participate in with their advisor.

Departmental Seminar Series: The Department Seminar is a series of seminars presented by research scientists from UCI as well as other universities. This seminar may be taken for credit (EE 201). Students are given ample opportunity to meet and interact with visiting seminar speakers. Some guest speakers are invited and hosted by the graduate students. All faculty and graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend these seminars.

Teaching Requirement

Graduate students are required to serve as a TA for a minimum of two quarters (for doctoral students) or one quarter (for master’s students) during their residence.

Advising and Committee Meetings

The Faculty Advisor

Upon admission, a student is assigned a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor is someone who can help the students realize their research goals through advice and provision of material assistance, such as laboratory space and research materials. On occasion, a student’s interests change to such an extent that the faculty advisor initially chosen is no longer appropriate. While changing advisors is obviously not a trivial

matter, neither is it necessarily a sign of academic vagary. Students contemplating a change to a different faculty advisor should consult with the graduate advisor.

Prescription Committee

Before a student's first Fall quarter, a faculty committee will meet to assess each entering student's academic background and prescribe a first-year course program to ensure that the student has a solid academic foundation. The student should also discuss their plans for coursework with their faculty advisor.

Advisory Committee

Each first-year student, in consultation with their faculty advisor, should form an advisory committee that meets by the Spring quarter of their first year. The advisory committee is made up of the faculty advisor and two additional members. These members can be from outside the department and sometimes, outside the University. The Advisory Committee must meet twice a year, normally during the Fall and Spring quarters. A student's failure to convene their committee may result in termination of enrollment. A student is free to change the composition of their committee with the agreement of the faculty advisor and the new member. The member to be removed need only be given the courtesy of notification.

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

For Ph.D. students, after advancement to candidacy, a three-person doctoral dissertation committee supervises the remainder of the student's program, including completion of the research and dissertation preparation. The doctoral dissertation committee consists of the faculty advisor and at least one other member from the EEB department. In most cases, the dissertation committee members are a subset of the members of the advisory committee and/or the advancement to candidacy committee (see below).

Semi-Annual Review

The faculty advisory and dissertation committee members are responsible for submitting, in a timely manner, a written summary of the semi-annual committee meetings. The summary should be addressed to the student, with a copy to the committee, the graduate advisor, and graduate affairs coordinator. The letter should state whether the student's progress is satisfactory or not and summarize the discussion of the meeting. Any problems identified by the student or committee should be described, together with clear guidelines to ameliorate them. This letter will be reviewed by the graduate advisor and placed in the student's file. In addition, the student must submit a Committee Meeting Report form signed by their committee members after each meeting (See [Appendix D: Committee Meeting Report Form](#)). This form indicates whether the student is making satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress.

It is expected that the student will maintain satisfactory progress in the program. Two

unsatisfactory reviews in a row will result in a review of the student by the graduate advisor, as well as being placed on conditional academic status and ultimately, the possibility of dismissal.

Open communication with the faculty advisor and committee is necessary to provide the student with clear guidelines to return to satisfactory progress. If not, the student should seek the advice of the graduate advisor.

A student who disagrees with a committee's assessment and wishes to appeal this decision may:

1. Discuss the matter with the graduate advisor,
2. Write a letter for their file, and/or
3. Present an appeal in person to the committee.

The next review by the student's committee should include a section that addresses the student's progress with respect to any concerns outlined at the previous meeting.

Advisor-student conflicts

It is not uncommon for a student and an advisor to have conflicts. Generally, the earlier a student (or faculty member) reaches out for help to manage the situation, the better. Many conflicts arise from miscommunication, and these are easiest to work before they become too tense.

Students should always feel free to contact the department graduate advisor to privately discuss any issues about conflicts with their advisor, or anyone else. Student-advisor conflicts are more common than students usually assume, and many can be resolved or mitigated. Helping students with such issues is a main job of the graduate advisor.

Of course, there may be reasons that a student does not feel comfortable talking to the graduate advisor. Another good option is to seek support from your other committee members, if relevant. Your committee is not just there to evaluate your degree progress, but to support your progress. They have a unique inside perspective on your academic progress, so they may have some specific ideas that other faculty do not have. They also have a responsibility to make sure you are being treated fairly by your advisor; however, they cannot help to do this if you do not make them aware of the situation.

The EEB department Chair, Travis Huxman, is another good resource. Depending on the type of conflict, he may be able to offer resources that can help mitigate the conflict.

The current EEB DECADE Mentor is Nancy Aguilar-Roca (nmaguila@uci.edu). [DECADE Mentors](#) are committed to fostering an inclusive environment within UCI's graduate programs and promoting diversity within the graduate student population campuswide. They serve as a resource to graduate students and faculty alike, collaborating with Equity Advisors and UCI's Graduate Division to accomplish their program's goals.

Sometimes there are reasons that you might not want to discuss a conflict with someone in the EEB department. In this case, you are encouraged to contact our Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, Craig Walsh (949-824-8487, cwalsh@uci.edu). He

has oversight of all BioSci graduate programs and graduate advisors and can also work to mediate conflicts.

Less formally, an excellent resource is the Graduate Division's [Office of Wellness and Inclusion](#). In particular, the Graduate Division Counselor, Phong Luong, (pbluong@uci.edu, 949-824-0246) can offer outside support, suggest strategies for communication and conflict resolution, and point you to resources. The nice thing about this office is that they are familiar with the types of issues that arise during graduate school.

Finally, the [Office of the Ombuds](#) offers confidential, impartial, and informal dispute resolution services for all of campus (949-824-7256).

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Students are required to complete an individual development plan (IDP) in the Fall quarter of the second year and update it annually in consultation with their thesis advisor. The IDP should be provided to and discussed with the student's committee annually (typically at their Fall meeting). The student can use the IDP form provided by graduate division (<https://grad.uci.edu/home-page/forms-and-applications/>), by AAAS at <http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/>, or another format of their choosing. The IDP should describe the student's career goals, desired training, and specific milestones associated with professional development and academic training, so that the committee can provide useful feedback to the student.

Advancement to Candidacy

For Ph.D. students, advancement to candidacy is contingent on passing an oral examination administered by the advancement to candidacy committee. Normative time to advancement is after the end of the third year (during the ninth academic quarter), but advancement during the tenth academic quarter (typically the beginning of the fourth year) is acceptable.

Composition of the Advancement to Candidacy Committee

The Advancement to Candidacy (AtC) Nomination Form (See [Appendix C: Advancement to Candidacy Nomination Form](#)) must be submitted to the graduate student affairs coordinator and signed by the graduate advisor before the exam is taken.

This form ensures that the composition of the committee meets the Department and Grad Division's rules and avoids the situation that might require retaking the AtC exam.

The advancement committee must be made up of at least 4 members (additional members are allowed, but not required). The advancement committee includes the members that will be on the student's Doctoral Dissertation Committee (see above;

usually 3 faculty) plus one additional member that is not on the student's dissertation committee. The role of this "external" AtC committee member is to ensure fairness and integrity of the advancement exam, as well as bring an outside perspective to the student's research. Given this role, the external member should be a member of the UC Irvine academic senate, and it is highly recommended that they have experience taking part in many advancement exams. The external member can be a member of the EEB department but should bring a new perspective to the committee. In particular, it is highly recommended that the external member is not a close collaborator of the student's advisor.

Note, a change in Spring of 2023 removes the previous requirement of including a member from outside of the EEB department. A student's dissertation committee can still include members external to EEB and even external to the university. If the student wishes to include a non-voting senate member or faculty from another university (non-UC), the student must submit a written request for exception to the graduate dean prior to scheduling the advancement (academic senate members from other UC campuses do not require a request for exception).

However, as before, a majority of the student's AtC committee members must be appointed in the student's department. Graduate Division is receptive to some flexibility in the departmental affiliation of the committee members if there is an academic rationale. A request for exception and justification should be submitted prior to appointing a committee.

The AtC Exam

The oral examination covers the student's major field of specialization and the proposed research to be developed. Students should consult with members of their AtC committee about the member's expectations well before the exam. The specific goals of the exam are:

- (1) For the student to demonstrate that they have all, or nearly all, the background knowledge and skills to carry out the proposed work. One part of background knowledge is familiarity with the relevant scientific literature, such as that needed to write the Introduction of each chapter/publication that might arise from the student's thesis work. Another part of background knowledge might include baseline data and results about the system being studied to demonstrate the feasibility of the projects proposed. The skills needed to complete the research might include field, laboratory, computational, and statistical skills. Again, each student should consult with members of their advancement to candidacy committee about the member's expectations for the oral exam well before the exam.
- (2) For the student to present their scientific ideas for a dissertation clearly in both an oral and written format. Different advisors and committees may have specific requirements for this delivery. Most require a written proposal to be delivered beforehand and then discussed at the exam. The proposal should be less than 10 pages and delivered 1-2 weeks before the exam, but the exact format is determined by your committee.

- (3) For the committee to confirm that the student is making satisfactory progress towards a PhD and specifically, that if the student carried out the work proposed (or something similar), the body of work would be sufficient to obtain the PhD.

The exact procedure of the exam is up to the committee, but it is recommended that the committee set aside 3 hours so that they are not rushed. A recommended procedure is:

- The meeting begins with the student leaving the room for 5-10 minutes, during which the student's advisor and doctoral committee updates the external committee member about the student's progress to date.
- The external committee member runs the meeting, keeping track of the timing and jumping in if a line of questioning seems unfair, off topic, or has gone on too long.
- The student presents a summary of their dissertation proposal in 20 minutes.
- The committee goes around the room, taking turns asking questions. A typical exam might take two rounds of the committee, between 1-1.5 hours. For instance, the first round might focus on background questions and the second round might focus on the details of the student's research projects.
- The student's main advisor can ask questions like any other member when it is their turn, but they should not jump in to answer questions for the student, unless the committee or student asks the advisor directly.
- The student is then asked to leave the room (10-15 minutes) while the committee deliberates about the outcome of the exam and their recommendations to the student.
- The student returns and the external committee member delivers a summary of the committee. It is suggested that student's advisor takes detailed notes throughout the exam to discuss with their student at a later time.

Potential outcomes of the advancement exam:

- The student passes.
- The student fails. In this case, the student will be placed on ACS (academic conditional status). The student and their advisor will meet with the department graduate advisor and Associate Dean to discuss and agree upon the expectations for passing the AtC. The student has one quarter to retake and pass the exam.
- An informal option is a provisional pass. This may be appropriate when the committee has a specific concern that a student can address relatively quickly. For instance, the committee might ask the student to revise their written proposal to reflect the committee's input, or they might ask the student to review some specific literature and present part of the research proposal again.

After the AtC Exam

Paperwork and a filing fee must be submitted after completing the exam. Consult with the graduate affairs coordinator. Doctoral students who advance to candidacy and meet

the requirements for the master's degree, can also receive a master's degree by submitting two forms: a master's degree advancement form and, in the subsequent quarter, a master's degree completion form.

Defense of the Ph.D. Dissertation

Format

At an appropriate time, the doctoral dissertation committee will supervise the final examination. At this exam, the candidate will give a public defense seminar. The public is invited and may pose questions towards the end of the seminar.

Immediately after the public seminar, a final closed conference between the candidate, the doctoral dissertation committee, and sometimes other faculty at the invitation of the doctoral dissertation committee will be held. The committee will indicate that the final examination is satisfactory by signing the final degree paperwork.

Timing

Completion of the doctoral degree should normally occur before the beginning of the sixteenth academic quarter (i.e., not counting summer quarters). The maximum time to complete a doctoral degree is before the beginning of the twenty-second academic quarter (by the end of the seventh year). The School of BioSci policy on seventh year students is as follows:

- Seventh year students must prepare a detailed timeline for degree completion with their advisor during Fall quarter, and present the plans for degree at a thesis committee meeting early in Fall quarter.
- Seventh year students must have quarterly thesis committee meetings, and should plan a pre-defense meeting during winter quarter.
- Students must complete the degree by the end of the seventh year, and may not enroll in the eighth year under any circumstances.

Submitting the Dissertation

The library is particular about the format of the thesis or dissertation. Instructions on how to submit it are available at the Libraries Research Resource website (<https://guides.lib.uci.edu/gradmanual/submission>).

Master's Degree Program

Master's Degree Courses

A minimum of 28 quarter units in upper division and graduate classes approved by the advisory committee is required, at least 20 of which must be earned in graduate (200-level) courses exclusive of credit given for thesis research and preparation.

Students will complete the core courses, and expectations of achievement in these courses are the same as those for doctoral students (described in [Graduate Core Courses](#) above).

Research Requirements and Timeline

Master's (M.S.) students (thesis option) must also prepare a thesis on the basis of original research and give a public presentation of the research defending this thesis before the advisory committee. M.S. students are also required to have semi-annual advisory committee meetings. They do not have an advancement exam.

A written research proposal should be presented to and reviewed by the advisory committee and the student's major professor by the end of the Spring quarter of the first year. The advisory committee must consist of at least three department faculty members.

The research thesis is normally completed by the end of the second year of residency. All requirements for the master's degree should be completed within two years, with a maximum of three years allowed for completion of the program.

Residence

A master's degree student must be in residence for at least three quarters. Waiver of residence requirements is at the discretion of the central administration, i.e., the Dean of the Graduate Division, following policies set down by the Graduate Council. It is anticipated that most students will require two years (six quarters) to complete the Master's degree.

Departure from UCI

Before candidates leave UCI, they are expected to do each of the following:

- Sign all personnel and payroll forms. Make an appointment with the principal personnel analyst (see <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/people/staff/>) at least 5 days before leaving.
- Provide the department with the title and location of the first position accepted after graduation.
- Return all departmental and school property (e.g., keys, key cards, etc.) to your faculty advisor or to the administrative office.
- Provide the department with an email and forwarding mail address, and complete the [EEB Exit Form](#). This form, used for future alumni events and to obtain forwarding addresses, must be completed before the student leaves UCI. Please submit this form to the graduate student affairs coordinator.

Alumni Email Forwarding

All UCI graduates have the opportunity to set up a permanent email address "UCInetID@alumni.uci.edu" that will forward your alumni email to an address of your choice. Please note this is only an email forwarding service, not an email account. The service is provided by UCI at no cost to you – it does not require membership in the UCI Alumni Association. It's a way to stay connected with the University, friends, and colleagues. To set up your @alumni.uci.edu address, visit: <http://signup.alumni.uci.edu>. UCInetID Login is required.

Part 6: The Administration

Departmental Administration

Department Chair

EEB's department chair is Dr. Travis Huxman. His responsibilities include representing the department to the dean of the school and to the chancellor, coordinating and planning departmental goals and objectives, and having final authority in many departmental decisions.

(449 Steinhaus Hall, ext. 4-2594, thuxman@uci.edu)

Department Vice Chairs

EEB's department vice chairs are Dr. Matthew McHenry and Dr. Cascade Sorte. Their responsibilities include teaching assignments for both faculty and graduate students, serving on the Schools' undergraduate curriculum committee, and acting as chair in the absence of Dr. Huxman.

(5232 McGaugh Hall, ext. 4-4676, mmchenry@uci.edu / 359 Steinhaus Hall, ext. 4-6971, csorte@uci.edu)

Departmental Staff

Graduate Student Advisor

EEB's graduate advisor is Dr. Matthew Bracken. He is in charge of graduate student affairs, such as the annual review of student progress and the stewardship of the policies and procedures governing graduate studies. He also serves as a liaison between students and faculty, representing students' interests (a function shared with the grad student reps). If you have questions or problems related to your tenure or treatment as a graduate student, consider discussing them with Dr. Bracken. (457 Steinhaus Hall, ext. 4-6976, m.bracken@uci.edu)

Graduate Student Representatives

The graduate student representatives (grad reps) are elected by the grad students, typically once a year. They serve as the second mechanism of graduate representation to the faculty and staff, by attending faculty meetings as the graduate voice and coordinating faculty reviews by the grad students. They also relay information from the faculty to the students. If you have ideas or complaints about the way the department runs, problems with particular faculty members, or similar issues, your first stop should be the Grad Reps (listed on the Foreword page).

Other Advising

The University provides a number of support services for graduate students. Throughout their graduate career, graduate students within the department should feel

free to contact the graduate student advisor to discuss any issues of concern and/or to help guide the student to other appropriate services. Other offices that offer support services include:

- The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (issues of discrimination and harassment, <http://www.eod.uci.edu/>, 949-824-5594)
- The academic counselor in the graduate dean's office: (Phong Luong, 949-824-0246)
The UCI Counseling Center (personal issues <http://www.counseling.uci.edu/>, 949-824-6457)
- UCI Office of the Ombuds (dispute resolution services, <http://www.ombuds.uci.edu/>, 949-824-7256)

Paperwork and Details

A variety of services and equipment are available through the School of Biological Sciences; most will require a Kuali Financial System (KFS) account number. The department staff has prepared the following guide to help you deal with necessary paperwork. It is extremely important to understand procedures, so please read this section carefully.

Purchasing

PI Approval Limit Removed: To streamline the purchasing process across departments and expedite order processing, we will be removing the PI approval step for purchases under \$5,000. Going forward, we will assume that lab staff submitting purchase requests via KFS requisition or PALCard are authorized purchasers and are responsible for consulting with their PI as needed before submitting a request. This change will help reduce administrative layers while maintaining accountability within each lab.

Packing Slips: Are no longer required for backup. You do not need to submit packing slips with your PALCard backup documents.

PALCard: Please download and use the updated [PALCard Request Form](#). PALCard holders must upload all PALCard backup documentation (PALCard Request Form and quotes/invoices) to KFS in a timely manner. The reconciler role has transitioned from the Fiscal Officers to the Purchasing team. For any questions, please reach out to biosci-purchasing@uci.edu going forward.

Live Animal Purchases Reminder: Must be processed through ULAR. Please visit the ULAR page for specific instructions. [Animal Purchasing - ULAR](#)

For purchasing inquiries, please email biosci-purchasing@uci.edu.

Travel

Listed in this section are some guidelines to help you in planning your trips for University business.

You can use the preferred online service provided by Connexus Travel Program. Please refer to the following link for additional information: <https://travel.ucop.edu/connexus/book-online>. If you find a lower cost alternative, please print the comparable airfare for the same flights of Connexus and include it with your travel reimbursement request, which can be found at: <https://www.bio.uci.edu/administrative-staff/finance/>. Additional questions may be directed to the Finance team biosci-reimbursement@uci.edu.

Required Notes and Attachments to the Travel Reimbursement Form

Airfare

Please know that the availability of a flight at less cost is not an adequate justification to use a foreign carrier service.

Travel that is to be reimbursed from federal grants and contracts must be booked through U.S. air carriers except in the following circumstances.

When one or more of the following circumstances apply, you are required to provide an explanation indicating the appropriate exception in the **Notes** section of the form when

traveling to and from the U.S. where the use of a U.S. airline service would:

- extend travel time (including delay at origin) by 24 hours or more
- increase the number of aircraft changes required by two or more
- extend travel time by at least six hours
- for short distance travel (3 hours or less), require twice the travel time of a foreign carrier.
- when the costs of transportation are reimbursed in full by a third party such as a foreign government or an international agency.

Required Attachment(s): The original plane ticket receipt or invoice/itinerary showing payment and ticket number.

Passenger Receipts

Required Attachment(s): All passenger receipts, invoices, itinerary, and other flight paperwork (as back-up proof of travel) are required even if you requested an advance from the department and you had no out-of-pocket expense.

Hotel and Lodging

If you are sharing a room, please ask for two copies of all the receipts.

Required Attachment(s): All original hotel and lodging paperwork and receipts.

Automobile Expenses

Required Attachment(s): All original receipts for rental car expenses and fuel.

Meals

Required Attachment(s): All original itemized receipts for any meals paid for with

personal funds.

Airport Parking and Taxi/Airport Shuttle Service

Required Attachment(s): All original receipts for airport parking and/or taxi/shuttle to and from the airport.

Conference Expenses

The documentation provided varies greatly between conferences. It is best to save ALL conference documentation.

Required Attachment(s): A copy of your registration form, including your agenda and an itinerary/receipt for specific events).

Miscellaneous Expenses

Required Attachment(s): All other original miscellaneous receipts and related paperwork.

Tips on Receipts and Documentation

A receipt should contain the following information: name and address of business, an itemization of services, total amount due, statement of the type of payment, and a zero

balance. When you register for a conference, online or otherwise, please print the receipt showing payment and any confirmation emails. Too much information on

travel/conference paperwork is better than not enough. Please arrange all receipts digitally or tape them to a piece of paper. Itemize your receipts on the department travel form or in a spreadsheet.

Plan Ahead

Plan ahead for your trip as much as possible. Advance notice helps you obtain your preferred flights at a lower cost, and also helps the administrative staff prepare the required paperwork and guide you through the process. Arrangements for out-of- state travel should be made a minimum of one month ahead of time, and for in-state travel, a minimum of two weeks ahead.

Deadline for Submitting Travel Reimbursement Form

Your trip must be reconciled and closed within a week after your return. Please turn in all the required items along with your travel reimbursement form as directed above. Submit this packet to your finance analyst for approval after it has been signed by your faculty advisor.

Support for Travel

EEB provides support for travel to meetings and presenting papers. Currently, up to \$500 per student per academic year (July 1 through June 30) is available to cover costs such as airfare, hotel, and registration for scientific meetings where you are presenting a talk or a poster.

Although funding levels vary each school year, it is still highly recommended that you

submit a request for funds **prior** to your trip. To request a travel award, submit a travel request form addressed to the Associate Dean and submit it by email to the graduate student affairs coordinator.

The letter is typically used to request funds for travel to meetings or for fieldwork. Although the funds provided are a maximum of \$500, you should include all your anticipated major expenses in your budget. For conferences, be sure to indicate that you will be presenting a talk or poster. This form is used for internal purposes to determine eligibility for travel funds.

The letter goes to both the department and the UCI School of Biological Sciences, since funding is typically provided by both sources. Once you receive approval of your request, you will work with the graduate student affairs coordinator and a BioSci financial analyst to use these funds.

Important: Save all original itemized receipts so you can account for your expenses and be aware that these travel funds expire at the end of the fiscal year (June 30). Travel funds are available starting second year.

Reimbursement for Travel

Your reimbursement will be issued in the same manner in which you receive your paychecks, usually direct deposit to your bank account. Please note that reimbursing travel is a lengthy process. However, if you have not received your reimbursement after one month of submitting your reimbursement request, contact your advisor's finance analyst.

Travel Advances

It is possible to receive a travel advance to pay for airline tickets, lodging and registration (except when receiving BioSci travel funding).

If the purpose of your trip is to attend a conference, see the [Required Notes and Attachments to the Travel Reimbursement Form section](#) above that lists all the items you need to attach to your reimbursement request form.

Your trip must be reconciled and closed no later than one week after your return.

Part 7: Resources for Teaching and Research

Equipment

Audio/Visual Equipment

Several projectors in the department office are available for use by members of the department. You may reserve these by contacting BioSci Facilities team prior to your desired reservation date.

Physical Science Stores

Physical Sciences Stores (PS Store) stocks a large inventory of chemicals, glassware, electronic components, and other lab supplies. You can pick up items from the PS Store if you are authorized to sign on a grant. It is located in B003 Rowland Hall and can be reached at x4-5889.

You will need a KFS account number from your advisor for any supplies and/or materials purchased and picked up from the PS Store. Please submit receipts to the EEB office after the purchase.

Facilities and Natural Reserves

Dishwashing and Autoclaving

Dishwashing and autoclaving self-serve facilities are located in SH 390, MH 4311, BS3 2421, NS1 2334, NS2 3341, and Greenhouse 109D. Ask your advisor for recharge numbers.

Natural Reserves

One advantage of belonging to a system as large as UCI is that the University possesses enormous resources of many different types. One such resource is the system it maintains of natural reserves throughout the state. There are more than 40 reserves ranging from forest to desert, and from sub-marine to alpine habitats. If your work involves natural systems, these reserves offer numerous advantages, such as sites that are off-limits to the public, lab and living facilities, and special grants.

Research resources and facilities are listed at <http://www.bio.uci.edu/research/natural-reserves-and-environmental-facilities/>.

Talk to the Executive Director of UCI Nature for more information: <https://nature.uci.edu/>.

Vivarium

Animal care facilities are located in several areas on campus. Access to these areas is restricted; the vivaria manager must grant permission. If you have a need for these facilities, please be certain to check with your faculty advisor who will give you instructions about the care and handling of research animals. All laboratories have protocols approved and on file.

Further Facilities

Many other research facilities are available on campus and are too numerous to list here. See <https://www.bio.uci.edu/research/research-facilities/> for resources associated with the School.

Services

ImageWorks

ImageWorks is operated by the UCI School of Biological Sciences. It specializes in digital imaging, photographic, and copy services, as well as the design and preparation of posters for scientific meetings. Visit its website <http://imageworks.bio.uci.edu/> for more information. ImageWorks is located at 2112 Nat Sci I. You will need a KFS account number from your advisor for payment for their services.

Network and Telecommunications

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) operates UCI's campus network and telephone system, which includes computing, network, and telephone services. Check out OIT services at <http://www.oit.uci.edu/>.

The School of Biological Sciences Computing Services provides a help desk and other related services for assistance with questions, problems, and computer purchasing. It can be reached at X43555. See the list of staff and helpful links at <http://comp.bio.uci.edu>.

Appendices

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Appendix A: School of Biological Sciences/EEB PLOs

School of Biological Sciences Ecology and Evolutionary Biology M.S./Ph.D.

PLO1: Core Knowledge PLOs

- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of central concepts in the biological sciences
- Understand the current concepts in ecology, evolutionary biology, and organismal physiology
- Demonstrate knowledge of a specialized discipline within ecology and evolutionary biology sufficiently to carry out substantive independent research

PLO2: Research Methods and Analysis

- Read and critically evaluate the scientific literature
- Formulate hypotheses based on current concepts in the field
- Design, conduct, and interpret their independent research projects
- Understand the range of tools appropriate for research in their sub-field
- Understand and follow research ethics

PLO3: Pedagogy

- Communicate effectively to large and small groups in pedagogical settings including teaching, research seminars, and other formats
- Identify and effectively deploy suitable technologies for use in all aspects of instruction

PLO4: Scholarly Communication

- Review and discuss relevant literature and their significance
- Publish research results in peer-reviewed publications and in a dissertation
- Communicate research results effectively through oral presentations at scientific seminars, conferences, and other venues
- Make clear and cogent oral presentations, including effective use of technology

PLO5: Professionalism

- Write compelling abstracts describing their research for consideration at research conferences
- Prepare oral presentations suitable for presentation at a research conference
- Make effective contributions to research teams and learning seminars
- Make effective contributions to department, university, community, and professional service
- Mentor junior researchers (e.g., undergraduates, beginning graduate students)

PLO6: Independent Research


- Develop their own research projects that meet high standards of theoretical and methodological rigor with lasting impact
- Produce scholarship that is comparable in scope and format to articles that appear in leading peer-reviewed journals in ecology, evolutionary biology, and organismal physiology

Supervise junior researchers (e.g., high school students, undergraduates, beginning graduate students) effectively

Appendix B: Advancement to Candidacy Nomination Form

Find departmental forms at: <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/graduates/graduate-resources/>

Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Charlie Dunlop School of Biological Sciences



ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY NOMINATION FORM
Submit to the graduate affairs coordinator one month prior to Advancement to Candidacy exam.

_____ is ready to proceed to the
qualifying examinations for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biological Sciences.
Date by which examination is to be completed: _____
Proposed title of dissertation: _____

The following faculty members are recommended as a candidacy committee, the first to
serve as chair. Any changes in the committee after it has been approved must be
submitted to the departmental graduate advisor.

Name / Academic Unit

1. Chair _____ / _____
2. _____ / _____
3. _____ / _____
4. _____ / _____
5. _____ / _____
(outside academic Unit)

Recommended by (please sign):

| | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| Student's Faculty Advisor | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Student | Date |
| _____ | _____ |
| Graduate Advisor | Date |

Appendix C: Committee Meeting Report Form

Find departmental forms at: <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/graduates/graduate-resources/>

Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Charlie Dunlop School of Biological Sciences



COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

Quarter and Year student entered graduate school: _____

Date of advancement to candidacy: _____

Expected Quarter and Year of thesis defense: _____

Date of previous committee meeting: _____

Comments:

The thesis advisor is required to email a summary of the meeting to the student, cc'ing the committee members, graduate affairs coordinator, and departmental graduate advisor. The student and committee members are encouraged, but not required, to send comments separately and/or respond to the thesis advisor's comments.

Student Progress:

Committee Members and Student Signatures (Required).

| | Name | Signature | Satisfactory Progress |
|------------------|------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Student | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thesis Advisor | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Committee Member | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Committee Member | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Committee Member | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please return this form by Docusign to the graduate affairs coordinator.

pendix D: EEB Exit Form

Find departmental forms at: <https://ecoevo.bio.uci.edu/graduates/graduate-resources>

Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Charlie Dunlap School of Biological Sciences



EEB EXIT FORM

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Student Name: | |
| Faculty Advisor: | |
| Date Leaving UCI: | |
| New Position: | |
| New Mailing Address: | |
| Email address (Not UCI email): | |
| Date Keys Returned to Lab: | |