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 Updates

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2008:  Linda Hegedus and Lindsay Maves
2009:  Linda Hegedus and Anish Purohit
2010:  Linda Hegedus and Michael Bekier II
2011:  Douglas Leaman and M. Adnan Siddiqui
2012:  Carol Hepner and Alan Hammer
2013:  Carol Hepner and Paul Williams
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INTRODUCTION

This is an effort to present useful information to all new graduate students. This handbook covers issues that students may experience on a daily basis and policies that govern their academic maturation. Most information a graduate student needs is not contained in a single document or university department. By combining information from these various sources, we hope to answer questions that may arise during your time at the University of Toledo.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Please see the graduate catalog and Biological Sciences degree requirements for complete information and current policies. Call the Graduate School (x4723) or the Biological Sciences Office (x2065) for specific questions.

Plan of Study

This should be one of the first things that you and your major professor discuss. A Plan of Study lists all the courses that you intend to take, the number of credit hours, and when the course is to be taken. It should contain all the required courses as well as any courses that would aid in your own research. Plans should be submitted early so your schedule can be set, as some courses may not be offered every semester or every year. The Plan needs to be approved by your major professor, committee, the department, and the Graduate School. The form should be updated when any significant changes occur (i.e., M.S. to Ph.D. switch). Blank forms are available in the Department Office. M.S. students must submit their Plan of Study by the end of their first year. Ph.D. students typically submit their DPP (Doctoral Program Proposal) during their second or third year (about the same time they schedule their ‘oral comprehensive exam’(actually a dissertation proposal defense)).

One suggestion: only list courses on the form that you actually intend to take. Any courses not taken by graduation have to be explained. If you think you might like to take a course, but are not sure, leave it off. It is easier to explain that you have taken more than expected than it is to explain why you did not complete the submitted and approved Plan.

Grades

As a graduate student, you must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher at all times. Should you fall below this standard, you will be placed on academic probation. Failure to be removed from academic probation within one semester can result in loss of your teaching assistantship and removal from the graduate program. All classes reported on your Plan of Study form must have a grade of "B" or better. The Graduate School considers grades of “B-” or less unacceptable. There is no academic forgiveness policy for retaking and grade deleting lower grades.
Comprehensive Examination

As of April, 2008, the requirements for the M.S. and Ph.D. were revised. Please see the latest handouts.

Teaching

As a teaching assistant you will be expected to teach each semester. Master’s students typically teach two introductory biology labs each semester and Ph.D. students typically teach one upper division lab each term. TA’s are expected to attend their TA meetings and hold five hours of office hours, at least one of which is held in the Biological Sciences Help Center (WO 1261). Graduate students must be present and available in the Help Center during their assigned times (arriving late, leaving early or sitting in any other place than the Help Center is not acceptable). Everyone has different teaching styles; however, if you are teaching a lab for the first time, seek out a graduate student who has taught the lab before. They can you give you ideas, notes, past quizzes, exams, and general advice on what did and did not work in the past. In most cases, lab formats are very similar from one year to the next, even if changes in content do occur. Most graduate students will be more than willing to talk to you about their past teaching experiences. Make use of this valuable resource!

Grading and Proctoring

Graduate students who receive financial assistance from the Department are required to serve as proctors or graders, as well as teaching assistants, each semester. During the first week of classes, a form for times when one is available will be distributed. Turn this form in by the required deadline to the Department (WO 1235). Students who are required to proctor or grade and fail to complete the form will be scheduled at the Department Chair's discretion.

Policy on Off-campus Work

Graduate students who receive a stipend are not allowed to work outside of the University during the semesters of the award. This includes any weekend and after-hours jobs. The Department, as well as the Graduate School, maintains that students who are TA's or RA's, taking full time credit, and keeping up their GPA, are working full-time. The Department can take away stipends from students. Outside employment takes the most valuable asset a graduate student has ...TIME!
Immigration regulations do not permit international students to be employed outside of the school at any time. However, international students may work between semesters, but only at on-campus jobs. For specific questions, please talk to the Graduate School (UH 3240, x4723), on the web at http://www.utoledo.edu/grad-school/) or someone in the Department Office.

Registration

Registering for classes can be done by one of two methods. The first option is to register at myut.utoledo.edu. That method is convenient and requires no paperwork, but some seminar classes may require the signature of the instructor. Registration after the first week of classes or when a signature is required must be done at Rocket Hall. Add/Drop forms can be found in the Biological Sciences Office WO 1235. The second method is to register in person at Rocket Hall. Students who choose this option will need to fill out the registration form and have an advisor's signature. One can opt out of parking and legal service fees by either registration method.

Change from M.S. to Ph.D. program in Biological Sciences

Students in the M.S. program that wish to change to the Ph.D. program must submit a formal application on line prior to the deadline for outside applications. In addition to the information required of all applicants, the student must state clearly his/her reasons for requesting the degree program change, and must provide a supporting statement from their major professor. See the M.S. guidelines for additional information.

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Teaching Assistant Duties

As a new teaching assistant there are many new things for you to learn. Although we will be unable to tell you how to teach or deal with difficult students, we can lend some advice on the daily issues like supplies, photocopying, and finding help.

Teaching Supplies

John Arnold is the lab coordinator (x4588) and is responsible for coordinating all of the department's teaching labs. He is the primary resource for all teaching labs and will provide you with all of your supplies. If you have any comments/concerns, please see John first. Please note that John can also help you find equipment that is shared among several labs (gloves, reagents, glassware). Do not remove any supplies from WO 1217 without asking John Arnold or Brenda Leady.

For any problems that arise with lab instruction after hours you may contact John Arnold on his cell phone (734.735.8324).
Overhead Transparencies

Transparencies for overheads to be used in copiers can be found in the supply room cabinet in the Biosciences office. Please only take as many as you need.

Photocopies

If you need to make photocopies for your students, you may use the photocopier in the department office. Should you require more than 30 copies, fill out a copy request form in the office and give Carol 24 hours notice. If you have an “emergency”, ASK. Carol or a student worker may be able to run copies on the Lanier copier. NOTE: Only office staff may operate the Lanier. Please do not send students to the office to make individual copies.

Secretarial Duties

Currently, the departmental secretary is Carol Hepner. Carol will be your primary contact person for most day-to-day issues. Our departmental business officer is Donna Braswell. Donna handles budget and personnel issues. Below is a guide for you to use to obtain answers to questions and solutions to problems that will occur. Remember, it is only a guide. Feel free to ask either Carol or Donna a question, should the other be unavailable. But please remember to give them the respect they deserve - they make the department run!

Carol:

- Facility problems (overflowing toilets, flooding ceilings, broken doors, etc.); she can help you with work orders.
- Keys (for when you need to order your own, or you need to borrow one)
- Office equipment dilemmas (how to work the fax, photocopier in need of toner, copy machine malfunctions, etc.)
- Graduate School forms (Plan of Study, Registration, etc.)
- Mail

Donna:

- Personnel paper work (including department appointment forms, tuition waivers)
- Financial reimbursement (seminars, travel expenses) from the department
- Ordering

If you are in a research lab with grant support, you may need to interact with Donna on grant purchases or travel reimbursements. Typically she interacts with the Principal Investigator(s) on the grant, or their designees (i.e., technician/postdoc).
Keys

Be sure to contact Carol as soon after arrival as possible to complete a key request form for each key you will need. Only request keys for the rooms to which you will need access; i.e. your lab, office, teaching lab, and front entrance to BO. It may take several weeks before you will receive your new keys. Please safeguard their security, as you are responsible for the replacement cost of any lost keys (a charge of $25 per lost key). When you graduate you must return all your keys to the Transportation Center, Key Control; any unreturned keys will cost you (not the department) $25.

Seminar Duties

During the course of fall and spring semesters, the department invites researchers for seminar presentations on Friday afternoons at 3:30 p.m. (day and time is subject to change). Forty-five minutes before seminar, time is made available for all Biosciences graduate students to meet with the speaker. In addition, there is a small reception with snacks that is to be prepared by one of our graduate students prior to the seminar.

Each Biosciences graduate student is assigned at least one day per year to prepare the snacks. The BGSA president is responsible for assigning these duties. If you are unable to fulfill your assigned task, it is your responsibility to make certain someone else will take over your place and inform the BGSA president and the professor in charge of seminar (not the speaker) who will be taking over your responsibility.

If you are assigned for snacks you must purchase, set-up, and clean up the food and beverages. You will pick up a $30 Kroger gift card from Carol to purchase the food items. The receipt from this MUST be turned in to Carol after the food is purchased.

All food and beverages should be ready by 3:15 p.m. Plates and napkins are kept in WO 3246. Carol Hepner has the key to the cabinet in her desk; please remember to return it. Ice can be obtained from the ice machine on the fourth floor. Responsible students should check the supply in advance. You can be as creative as your $30 maximum and time allow. Please be mindful of the dietary needs of others (diabetics, vegetarians, Kosher, etc.). Provide enough food for about 40 people. A bottle of water for the speaker should be picked up from the office. Some suggested items are vegetables and dip, chips and dip, cookies, cheese and crackers, fruit.

Also, if the seminar is your responsibility, please make arrangements to get the seminar flash drive/CD from the seminar speaker by 3:00 p.m. to make sure that it uploads correctly and all equipment is in working order.
COMPUTER CLUSTERS

Departmental Computers

Currently, there is a computer in the Graduate Student Lounge in WO 1261 and one printer. The lounge also has a large flat screen TV display for practicing talks and presentations. The office copier has scanning and faxing functions.

Public Computer Clusters

There are several public computer clusters that serve the entire campus. The closest cluster to the BO-WO complex is in BO 2051 and in the basement of Carlson Library. There are also computers in BO 1099 that are available to Biological Sciences students. You will need your Rocket Card and a UTAD account in order to use these facilities. An individual UTAD account can be created at no cost at myUTaccount.utoledo.edu.
BGSA/ GSA

Biology Graduate Student Association (BGSA)

All graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences are expected to participate with the BGSA by attending at least one meeting/semester and helping in the following areas.

1) Picnics/Parties

Each year the BGSA hosts three major functions: welcome barbeque in September, holiday party in December and the end of the academic year party in late April or early May. Every graduate student is expected to participate in one of the following capacities for at least one departmental picnic or party: cooking, clean-up, set-up, shopping, and entertainment.

2) Organization

BGSA administration: taking attendance at meetings, proctoring and snack/slide assignment scheduling, or taking care of the graduate student lounge.

Graduate Student Association (GSA) – located in Student Union Room 3514

All graduate students are members of the GSA, and as members are eligible for travel grants. Students presenting papers or posters at a conference are eligible for $175, while those who attend a conference are eligible for $75. Deadlines for submission are near the middle of the semester; the BGSA will notify graduate students of the deadlines as soon as the dates become available. It is important to remember that the monies will not be released until the semester after the application has been submitted. More information can be obtained by contacting the GSA at ext. 2373 or visiting the GSA web site http://utoledogsa.com.

Other Funds

The Biosciences department awards up to $250/year for students who give paper/poster presentations at conferences. Grants can also be used to pay for travel expenses. Talk to your advisor about applying for grants and obtaining other sources of funding. Travel grants from the host society can often be awarded to graduate students presenting at national/international meetings; be sure to apply early for these. Students are eligible for no more than one travel award from the department per year.
STUDENT PERKS AND OTHER INFORMATION

Biology Graduate Student Lounge/Tutoring Center

WO 1261 serves as a dual function: a Graduate Student Lounge and as the Biological Sciences Help Center. The cleanliness of this area is dependent on everyone. The custodians will empty the trash and occasionally mop the floors, but graduate students are all responsible for keeping the area clean.

E-Mail

E-mail is available free of charge to all registered UT students. To access accounts, you must first go to email.utoledo.edu. Check on Secure Access and enter your utad login ID or name and your password. You must maintain a UT e-mail account and check it regularly for university or departmental messages.

Student ID Cards and Account

For many different services (library, athletic events, computer clusters, registration, etc.) you are required to present your student ID card and/or account. You will be issued one free card at Parking Services, Rocket Hall 1917, ext. 5843. If you lose or have your card stolen, you will need to purchase a new one. Similarly, an individual fee account can be created at Rocket Hall.

Student Recreation Center

All UT Students are entitled to use the Student Recreation Center free of charge once you have your ID. The facilities include a half Olympic-sized pool, a diving well, swirly slides, sauna, hot tub, nautilus machines, indoor soccer, basketball, volleyball, squash and racquetball courts, running track, climbing wall, foosball, pool and table tennis, as well as many other activities. Memberships are available at reduced rates for family members, spouses, and significant others. You can call x3700 for information on these memberships and to find out times of operation that vary through the year.

Library Services

The Carlson Library (CL) offers several different services to students. In order to check out books and use facilities you will need your student ID card. The library has a web page with an electronic card catalog serving books, journals, and audio-visual materials. One feature that is free is the Interlibrary Loan services. To obtain a book that our library does not have, you can order it over the Internet on the library home page http://www.cl.utoledo.edu/. To obtain a journal article that our library does not from the Northwest Ohio Depository you must file a request through the CL website.

For further questions regarding Carlson Library call ext. 2324, or visit the information desk.
The University of Toledo’s Health Science Campus also houses many resources that may be of particular interest to our graduate students. These include updated textbooks, online journals and other resources, which can be found at the Mulford Library. Mulford Library’s phone number is 419-383-4225 and it is located at 3045 Arlington Ave.

**Payroll Deductions**

Any graduate student receiving a paycheck from the University is entitled to only one type of payroll deduction: 1) University of Toledo Student Health Care Insurance. You may have to re-register for the deduction every semester, just before summer only, or not until the following school year. Proper forms can be obtained from the Graduate School at UH 3240 or contact Mary Main (Business Services Officer 1) at Ext. 2283, or go to the web site http://utoledo.edu/graduate/.

**Health Insurance**

Health insurance is mandatory for domestic students with 6 or more on-campus credit hours and international students with 1 credit hour, unless you show proof of insurance on a waiver form. The deadline for waiving health insurance is the last day of add/drop, September 2, 2013. This form will be available on the UT web portal website under Registration until September 2, 2013, for the fall term. Effective fall term 2008, international students may waive health insurance on line. International students must have medical evacuation, repatriation and no more than $100 deductible. In addition, since this is an annual waiver, international students must have health insurance coverage for 12 months. **Health insurance deductions are based on a 12-month policy.** Only Graduate Assistants attending both in fall and spring may enroll in the payroll deduction plan. There are strict cancellation rules regarding insurance. You may not change levels of insurance or cancel the insurance until the beginning of the next term. The website address for the Student Medical Center is http://www.utoledo.edu/healthservices/student/index.html. If you have any other questions or concerns, contact Tonya Tressler, Insurance Management Representative, at the Student Medical Center, at Ext. 3474. Additional medical charges may be incurred that will be the responsibility of the student and not the department. Please note that purchasing the plan through the University of Toledo does not ensure that all doctors at UTHSC will accept that insurance. Always ask before scheduling a visit with any doctor, since additional medical charges may be incurred that will be the responsibility of the student and not the department.

To be eligible to waive the UT-sponsored health insurance plan you must be:
- covered on your own health care plan;
- covered on your parent’s health care plan;
- covered on your spouse/domestic partner’s health care plan’
- covered by a COBRA plan on one of the three above; or
- covered by Medicaid or Medicare.
Here are instructions if it is necessary to waive the mandatory health insurance:

1. Go to UT’s web portal at myut.utoledo.edu.
2. Enter your my UT Username and Password in the fields provided.
3. Click Login.
4. Click on Self Service Tab.
5. Under “Registration” click on Health Insurance Waive or Enrollment Link
6. Provide your information requested.

At that point you have now waived your health insurance coverage for the selected term. All waiver requests will be validated with your insurance company. If the insurance status cannot be verified, the waiver is revoked and the insurance premium will be assessed. If you have questions about the on-line waiver, please contact the Student Medical Center Student Health Insurance Office at (419) 530-3466 or (419) 530-3474.

The UT policy does not cover dental care, but there is a local dental hygiene clinic run by Owens Community College that is very reasonable. Cleanings are usually $25 and include a full exam with both regular and panoramic x-rays. The clinic’s staff is final year dental hygiene students supervised by dentists. They will also do discount fillings, reconstructions and repair. They do not perform oral surgery. The only draw back is that visits take longer than a regular dentist and you may need to make an additional appointment to finish the cleaning but at no additional cost. For more information or to set up an appointment call (567) 661-7294.

**Parking**

Parking on campus can be challenging, especially if you come to school in the middle of the day. The best times to find a spot are early in the morning, late in the afternoon, 10 minutes before the hour and 5 minutes after any hour.

Student parking permits for fall 2013 are a flat rate of $125 for all incoming and returning students, with the exception of Health Science Campus students. The website for parking services is [http://www.utoledo.edu/parkingservices/index.html](http://www.utoledo.edu/parkingservices/index.html). Go to CLICK HERE FOR A TUTORIAL for information on how to obtain your permit. Parking Services can be contacted at Ext. 5846, RH 1917.

There is a shuttle service available on campus as well. For schedules and fare information call the Transit Services Office at Ext. 1026, or visit their website at [http://www.utoledo.edu/facilities/transit/](http://www.utoledo.edu/facilities/transit/).

**Housing**

The Office of Residence Life now offers housing for graduate students, but there may be a waiting list. Payroll deduction is also available for housing. For more information on this living option, contact the Office of Residence Life (ext. 2941) or refer to the website at [http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/index/](http://www.utoledo.edu/studentaffairs/reslife/index/).
Textbooks

There are various places to buy and resell your textbooks. The UT Bookstore, located on the second floor of Barnes & Noble at Gateway, Secor/Dorr, carries supplies and has reasonable prices. Your second choice is the off-campus Bancroft Student Bookstore. A third option may be found on the Internet at any of the bookstore sites. You will need to have the correct title and it is helpful to have the authors and edition or ISBN numbers. You can easily get these by asking the professor who is teaching the class. Books ship within 1-5 days after the order is placed and usually cost less than or the same as the UT Bookstore (Barnes & Noble) on campus.

Website

Additional information about the Department, BGSA, graduate programs, and faculty research can be found on our website http://www.utoledo.edu/nsm/bio/.