

Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program



Graduate Student Handbook 2025-2026

Welcome to the Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program
University of California, Irvine

We are very happy you have decided to join us.

This manual has been prepared to help you find your way
Around, and help to familiarize you with the INP.
Now, let's move forward together.

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INP Director: Norbert J. Fortin, PhD, norbert.fortin@uci.edu
INP Associate Director: Laura A. Ewell, PhD, lewell@uci.edu
INP Program Manager: Gary R. Roman, gary.roman@uci.edu

INP PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS, DEPARTMENTS & FACULTY

CHARLIE DUNLOP SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

<http://www.bio.uci.edu/>

Dean: Frank M. LaFerla, PhD
Associate Dean of Graduate Education: Craig M. Walsh, PhD

Department of Developmental & Cell Biology

<http://devcell.bio.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department of Development and Cell Biology
2011 Biological Sciences III
Irvine, CA 92697-2300

Department of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry

<http://mbb.bio.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department of Molecular Biology & Biochemistry
3209, McGaugh Hall
Irvine, CA 92697-3900

Department of Neurobiology and Behavior

<http://neurobiology.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department of Neurobiology Biology & Behavior
2205, McGaugh Hall
Irvine, CA 92697-4550

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

<http://www.som.uci.edu/>

Dean: Michael Stamos, MD

Associate Dean of Graduate Studies: Francesco Tombola, PhD

Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology

<http://www.anatomy.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology
Med Surge II, Room 364
Irvine, CA 92697-1275

Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine

<http://www.pathology.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine
D440 Medical Sciences I
Irvine, CA 92697-6574

Department of Physiology and Biophysics

<http://www.physiology.uci.edu/>

MAILING ADDRESS: University of California, Irvine
Department Anatomy and Neurobiology
Medical Science I, Room D340
Irvine, CA 92697-4560

RESEARCH and FACULTY
<https://inp.uci.edu/inp-faculty-list/>

INP faculty come from a diverse and broad ranging background, allowing students a wide array of choices for research areas, animal and human models, and techniques. Indeed, many of the UCI neuroscience faculty rank among the leaders of their particular subfield.

CAMPUS SERVICES

Office of Graduate Division (OGS)

<http://www.grad.uci.edu/>

The **Dean of Graduate Studies** administers graduate education in accordance with academic policies established by the Academic Senate and by the Graduate Council, a standing committee of the Irvine Division of the Academic Senate. The staff of OGS is prepared to answer questions about admissions, academic policies and procedures, graduate programs and degrees, financial assistance, student services, and other matters of concern to graduate students. They are available at Aldrich Hall 120, x4-4611.

Registration / Enrollment

<https://www.reg.uci.edu/enrollment/registration.html>

Your registration at UCI consists of two separate steps that must be completed to be officially registered.

- 1) enrollment in classes with a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 16 units (pending core courses).
- 2) payment of fees: once you have registered, your fees (which are paid for by the department or lab) are electronically transferred to the Cashier's office.

Be sure to register and see that your fees have been paid for each quarter by the deadline online through WebReg (<http://www.reg.uci.edu/registrar/soc/webreg.html>). You will be charged a late enrollment fee of \$50 if you are not enrolled at the end of the second week of instruction. Also be aware, late registration may affect your FICA status. If your account shows a positive balance for fees, contact the department office right away. You will be responsible for all late fees occurred.

A good guide for registration is to mark your calendar in the tenth week of classes to register and see that your fees are paid for the next quarter.

Address Changes

Address information should be updated with the department. Please change your university records via StudentAccess (<https://www.reg.uci.edu/access/student/welcome/>). Campus offices frequently use e-mail to communicate with students so be sure to activate your UCINetID and check your e-mail frequently.

Student Photo ID Card

<https://uci.bncollege.com/shop/uci/home>

UCI photo ID cards are often required when conducting business with various campus services. The IDs are available for all graduate students at **The Hill Book Store** in the Student Center. Once your employment appointment is in place in our personnel records, take your student and employee identification numbers with you to obtain your UCI photo ID card.

**During COVID-19: The Hill is closed- we are processing fall 2020 course material online orders daily. Place your orders early to avoid shipping delays. We do not have Saturday delivery and if you place a expedited shipping order after 12:00pm we cannot guarantee delivery. We have a store "pick up" option from 9/25 thru 10/7 from 11-5pm located across from Ring Road. If you are needing a new UCI id or a replacement email sm8206@bncollege.com for an apt*

Parking

<http://www.parking.uci.edu/>

You may have already noticed that parking is not only at a premium on campus, but that it is also expensive. If you plan to drive to campus it is imperative that you have a valid parking permit. Permits are available at **Parking and Transportation**, 200 Public Services Building, Berkeley Road, x4-7486. In addition, they offer assistance with car problems, keys locked in your car, citation appeals, and getting involved in ridesharing.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

<https://studenthealth.uci.edu/graduate-insurance/>

Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan

In addition to offering a superior educational curriculum, UCI is also pleased to offer one of the best, most comprehensive healthcare packages in the nation to its graduate students. With such a basic yet important need met, students are free to concentrate on their academic studies.

UCI's mandatory plan is one of the best offered in the nation. It provides coverage for medical, dental, vision and worldwide travel benefits with an option to waive coverage if the student has other healthcare coverage which 1) GSHIP determines meets UCI's minimum standards, and 2) provides documentation stating that such coverage exists through a different provider. The University requires, as a condition of registration, that all graduate and professional students, including international graduate students, have medical insurance coverage.

Students are assessed a consolidated fee each quarter on their ZOT Bill and, once the student has paid their fees, coverage is provided year round with the policy term beginning on September 24, 2021 and ending September 21, 2022. Insurance for eligible students enrolled and paying fees in the Spring quarter will extend through the summer until the beginning of the subsequent academic year. In many cases, the university automatically pays 100% of the assessed fee for the Graduate Student Health Insurance Program (GSHIP) through fee fellowships or fee remission programs (for TAs or RAs).

Detailed information on the GSHIP plan can be found on the web at:

<https://studenthealth.uci.edu/uc-ship-benefits-overview/>

Student Health Center is conveniently located on campus, close to graduate student housing, on the corner of East Peltason and Pereira Drives. If you need further direction, you can refer to UCI campus map or call the center at 949-824-5301. On or after the first week of Fall quarter, you can call the UCI Student Health Center at (949) 824-5304 to make an appointment.

More information can be found at: <https://shc.uci.edu/>

Accidents

We always hope that no one will be hurt when they are working or teaching, but accidents do happen. All employees are covered under Workers' Compensation Insurance for injuries and/or illnesses that arise out of or in the course of their employment. If your injury or illness requires medical attention, please go immediately to Student Health Services. If that unit is not open, assistance can be sought from any hospital or emergency unit. Whether or not you seek medical assistance, **an accident report form must be completed within 24 hours**. Please see the Personnel Analyst in the office for these forms.

HOUSING

<http://www.housing.uci.edu/>

The Housing Office, located on the 4th floor of the Student Center (G458), x4-6811, provides a wide variety of affordable housing options on campus with different amenities and living arrangements such as studios, one, two, and three-bedroom units, townhouses, flats, graduate residence hall, laundry rooms, recreation rooms, park, child care centers, gardens, and internet connections.

In addition, they provide information and services to help students locate and obtain off- campus housing, including lists of apartments, houses for rent, rooms for rent in private homes, roommates wanted, roommates available, and temporary housing. The Office publishes "Living Around UCI", a guide to local apartment communities which includes information about rental prices, local realtors, budgeting expenses, roommate selection, and tenant/landlord rights and responsibilities. For more detailed information please visit their website.

CAMPUS RECREATION

<http://www.campusrec.uci.edu/>

The Anteater Recreational Center (ARC) is equipped with two different gymnasiums, an elevated running track, a rock climbing wall, a fitness lab, and several activity rooms. Its Aquatics Plaza contains a 25 by 25 yard heated recreational lap pool and a 10,000 square foot weight and cardio room. Students can pursue their own fitness programs or participate in a full myriad of campus recreation programs. These programs include in-line skating, scuba, kickbox aerobics, Aikido, sailing and more! Tours of the ARC are available by calling x4-5346 to make an appointment.

RESIDENCY

<http://www.reg.uci.edu/residency/classification.html>

To be classified as a California resident for tuition purposes, you and/or your parent(s) must have established a permanent domicile in California for more than one year immediately preceding the residence determination date of the term you propose to attend the University. You and/or your parent(s) must provide evidence that all ties to the former out-of-state residence have been severed and that California has been the primary residence for more than one year.

Your status as a resident or nonresident student is determined by the UCI Residence Officer who is located in the Registrar's Office.

This must be complete prior to your second year of academic studies.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

<https://www.police.uci.edu/emergency-mgmt/>

UCI endeavors to protect employees and students, to minimize program interruption, and to reduce property damage during disaster. An Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been established and will be activated as the central command center for managing a campus emergency or disaster. Every building has a "Building Coordinator" and each floor of each building has a "Floor Warden." In a disaster, Floor Wardens will assist in evacuation and report damage to Building Coordinators, who in turn, coordinate efforts with "Zone Captains". In a disaster response situation, Zone Captains provide the prime linkage between each campus zone and the EOC. To find out who your disaster response team is, contact your lab advisor or e-mail your request to prepared@uci.edu.

Advance planning is your best protection and your responsibility; forethought and preparation prevent panic. Use the following guide to develop your own personal disaster plan if you have not already done so.

At Work

- Know who the Floor Warden and Building Coordinator are and what they expect of you in a disaster.
- During an earthquake, get under a desk or table.
- When safe, evacuate the building. If you detect the odor of gas or any other unusual odors, do not use matches or candles. Open windows, shut off power, and leave the building immediately. Do not use elevators, use the stairs.
- Move cautiously and observe surrounding hazards.
- Assist the disabled.
- Assemble at your pre-determined meeting point.
- Report any problems to your Floor Warden or Building Coordinator.
- Tune in to local radio stations for information and reports.

Emergency Supplies

The following supplies need to be assembled and packed so that they can be quickly taken when exiting the building.

- A three-day supply of un-spoilable food and water
- A first-aid kit that includes your prescription medications
- Emergency tools, including a battery-powered radio, flashlight, gloves and extra batteries
- Sanitation supplies

In Laboratories

- Secure items that could present a hazard during an earthquake, such as heavy equipment, furnishings, chemicals, and gas cylinders.
- A two-chain securing device (either welded links or straps) must secure gas cylinders at all times. Experience shows that the force of moving gas cylinders can easily snap a single twisted chain or strap.
- Make sure all chemicals are stored properly on shelves equipped with seismic restraining cords or in cabinets with positive latching doors. "Bungee" cords stretched across the front of chemical shelves are an effective means of restraining bottles.
- Separate acids and bases to an extent that will reduce the likelihood of their mixing if spillage occurs in a seismic event.
- Move heavy overhead storage to a lower level.
- Secure experimental apparatus firmly to racks or other stabilized hardware.
- As TV coverage of the Kobe earthquake revealed, fire can contribute to as much loss of life and property as ground-motion. The above measures pertaining to chemical storage and gas cylinders can markedly reduce the risk of fire or explosion. In addition, make it a safety practice to affix sources of

open-flames against seismic tip over. (Building Coordinators can provide advice and assistance in this regard.)

- Know the location of emergency exits, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers. Hold meetings periodically with your Floor Wardens, Building Coordinators, and Zone Captains to discuss emergency procedures and the course of action during emergencies.

Other Sources of Information

- The UCI Environmental Health & Safety Office coordinates campus training programs for disaster preparedness (<http://www.ehs.uci.edu/>).
- The UCI Emergency Preparedness website at <https://www.police.uci.edu/emergency-mgmt/index.php> is also a warehouse of information.

CURRICULUM

<https://inp.uci.edu/curriculum/>

Prior to the start of each year the INP Executive Committee will appoint one Student Advisory Committee for every incoming trainee for that year. Student advisory committees will assist trainees in tailoring an appropriate course of study based on trainees' academic backgrounds, interests and research focus. The advisory committees will adhere to the following guidelines:

Core Classes

The framing committee has identified a set of existing graduate level courses as either Molecular- (M), Systems- (S), or Cellular- (C) focused neuroscience courses, which correspond to three major areas of a modern neuroscience curriculum. A table of these courses is presented below along with the appropriate designation (M, S, or C). The Executive Committee will periodically review and adjust this list to reflect changes in courses offered, or in course curricula.

To fulfill the requirements of the program, a trainee must successfully complete one course from each of the categories: molecular, systems, and cellular. Those courses that carry more than one designation (see table below) can only be counted as fulfilling one of the three category requirements for any given trainee.

FALL	WINTER	SPRING
Systems Neuroscience (N&B 208A and A&N 210A)	Systems Neuroscience (N&B 208B and A&N 210B)*	Behavioral Neuroscience (N&B 209)
Foundations of Neuroscience (NB 202)	Foundations of Neuroscience (NB 202)	Conduct of Research (M&MG 250) Physiology of Ion Channels (PB232) (instead of NB209)

Additional Class Requirements

All trainees will also participate every quarter in a 2-unit/quarter course that will be called *Foundations of Neuroscience*. This **mandatory** course will meet in the Fall and Winter quarters and is intended to expose students to critical reading and analysis of the primary literature. **Grades will be assigned on a S/U scale.**

Conduct of Research/250 is a mandatory course in addition to all core classes and meets in the Spring quarter and does not qualify as one of the major groups.

Behavioral Neuroscience/209 is not required in the first year but is required if you're entering the Department of Neurobiology & Behavior ONLY.

Rotations

Students will be encouraged to carry out three laboratory rotations of 10 weeks each. With permission from his/her Advisory Committee, a student may carry out fewer rotations. The student advisory committees should work with their advisees to ensure that the rotations provide an appropriate training experience. Rotations will be graded on a S/U scale. Rotation Proposal and Rotation Reports are required by the student and rotation P.I.

Students can start rotations during the summer prior to matriculation, on an informal basis. However, stipend support will start only upon official enrollment in the program (Fall Quarter).

The Program is designed with THREE lab rotation during the academic year (2025/26). The program does not provide funding, nor an additional rotation after July 1.

Teaching Assistant

TA'ing is not required as part of the INP in your first year of Graduate School.

TRAINEE ADVISING

Composition of Student Advisory Committees

Each trainee will be assigned an advisory committee that will be appointed by the Executive Committee prior to the trainee's matriculation in the program. The committee will consist of three participating faculty members, one of whom will be designated as chair by the Executive Committee. If a committee member cannot complete his/her term, the Executive Committee will appoint a replacement.

Duties of Student Advisory Committees

Students will meet with the INP director upon his/her matriculation for first rotation and select first quarter curriculum. Each committee will meet with its advisee during the first quarter to select a curriculum from approved course options, and a rotation schedule. Subsequent meetings will occur at the end of each quarter during the year. At each meeting, lab and course performance for the just completed quarter will be discussed and classes/lab rotations for the coming quarter adjusted as necessary.

In the event a trainee receives a grade lower than a B in any course during any quarter, or an unsatisfactory rotation grade, this will result in the trainee being recommended for academic probation. The committee will discuss the situation with the student and may also confer with relevant course director/s or rotation advisors regarding the student's performance. The committee will inform the Executive Committee of the academic probation, and recommend action/s that should be taken to remedy the situation. Such recommendations may vary from proposing remedial work to expulsion from the program.

The spring quarter meeting of Student Advisory Committees will be used to evaluate each trainee's performance in classes and rotations throughout the year, and to review his/her choice of thesis advisor. When a trainee has received grades and evaluations meeting the standards for successful completion of the program (see Section 6), the committee will confirm that the student is making satisfactory progress.

In the event that a trainee fails to successfully complete the program--as defined in Section 6--the trainee will not be automatically assured admission to continue graduate training in each of the participating departments.

Dissolution

The responsibilities of each Advisory Committee will be concluded after its meeting at the end of spring quarter, and when the trainee whom the committee advises selects and is accepted by a thesis mentor and enters a departmentally based graduate program.

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS

Following the completion of the INP and during the second year and beyond, students participate in the departmental doctoral program. Students are required to meet all doctoral degree requirements associated with the thesis advisor's department or program, and may be required to take additional course work, and participate in journal club and seminar series. The normative time for completion of the Ph.D. is five years, and the maximum time permitted is seven years. Further information is available in the *Catalogue* sections of the participating departments and through the INP program office.

Anatomy and Neurobiology: Students entering the A&N program are required to participate in: <https://anatomy.uci.edu/graduate-program/graduate-program/requirements/>

Developmental and Cell Biology: Students entering the Dev and Cell Bio program are required to: <https://devcell.bio.uci.edu/graduate-programs/>

Molecular Biology and Biochemistry: Students entering the Molecular Biology and Biochemistry program are required to: <https://mbb.bio.uci.edu/graduates/ph-d-degree-biological-sciences/>

Neurobiology and Behavior: Students entering the Neuro Bio program are required to: <https://neurobiology.uci.edu/about>

Pathology and Laboratory Medicine: Students entering the Experimental Pathology Graduate Program are required to: <http://www.pathology.uci.edu/experimental-pathology-graduate-program.asp> .

Physiology and Biophysics: Students entering the Physiology program are required to: <http://physiology.uci.edu/graduate-program/timeline-for-degree.asp>.

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS, Cont'

Please review each Departments web page AND/OR contact the Graduate Advisor for current requirements if unclear, as you will be held responsible for your future and Transfer Agreement is required upon completion of the INP.

<http://catalogue.uci.edu/>

Note: For all rotations, you are expected to be present full time in the lab, except when attending courses. Any time off should be approved by the lab PI and INP administration.

Second Year and Beyond

Students are required to complete requirements of the entering participating department of the INP as outlined above prior to their Ph.D. dissertation defense. If you have any questions, please consult with the Graduate Advisor.

Advancement to Candidacy

Prior to advancement to candidacy, students must establish any financial conflict of interest. The student, faculty mentor/advisor, departmental representative (either the graduate advisor or chair), or the campus Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee can complete the form to address a perceived conflict of interest.

Focus for the advancement to candidacy exam is an area review and research proposal that will include a concise description of the proposed experiments to be the basis for the doctoral dissertation. You are expected to complete this by the end of the third year (i.e., before the beginning of the 10th academic quarter).

The advancement committee, which must be approved in advance by the Graduate Advisor, generally consists of your research advisor, 2-3 other "Department" faculty members and one "outside" member, for a total of five. The committee must follow all department guidelines.

Dissertation Defense

Students are expected to successfully defend the dissertation and complete the Doctoral degree, normally by the end of their fifth year (i.e., before the beginning of the 16th academic quarter). The policy of the School of Biological Sciences is that the maximum time to complete a doctoral degree is by the end of the seventh year (before the beginning of the 22nd academic quarter). Two of the department faculty (from the Advancement to Candidacy committee) plus the student's research advisor will serve on the Ph.D. dissertation committee.

Students must enroll and pay fees every quarter until they complete the requirements for the degree. If all the degree requirements are satisfied except for submission of the final version of the dissertation or completion of the final exam, you may petition to pay only the filing fee.

Fellowships

First and second year students are encouraged to apply for NSF GRFP awards. Information can be found on the website of Grad Division; Additional information about the Broader Impacts criteria is provided at: <https://www.grad.uci.edu/funding/index.php> Also see; Curriculum tab on INP web page.

Submitting Your Manuscript

The library is very particular about the format of the manuscript. A manual has been prepared for you to follow and is available for purchase from The HILL Bookstore. The manual is also available at the Libraries Research Resource website located at: <https://etd.lib.uci.edu/>

Matriculation

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

- Manuscript, check for department requirements.
- Pay all departmental liens.
- Return all departmental and school property (e.g., keys, etc.).
- Sign all personnel and payroll forms.
- Provide the department with the title and location of the first employment opportunity.
- Provide the department with a forwarding address.

- Advise the department of the disposition of reprint requests (i.e., forward or refer elsewhere).
- If at any time during their training, candidates received support from the training grant or a fellowship, they must file a termination report with the supporting agency.
- Meet all Office of Graduate Studies requirements.

THE MIGHTY DOLLAR

Stipend Check

All students admitted to the Program are offered full financial support, which is distributed on a monthly basis. The stipend is provided during the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters to students in good academic standing. As all INP students must identify a permanent lab in which to conduct their doctoral research by the end of the spring quarter of the first year, the stipend during the summer quarter (effective July 1) will be provided by the thesis advisor in accordance with his/her departmental policies.

The stipend amount stated in your admissions letter (F2025 \$37,200.00 approx) is spread out over an annual year to cover living expenses. In addition, we will also cover the cost of the University fees and health insurance, as well as tuition for out-of-state and foreign students. (more about stipend will be explained during Welcome Week and throughout the AY)

Funding is contingent upon the student making satisfactory progress toward the degree and securing a home lab by July 1, 2026.

Service Limitations-Outside Employment

Graduate students are encouraged to voluntarily participate in worthwhile University or community activities such as community outreach, but they must make satisfactory progress toward their primary academic degree objectives. Accepting additional compensated obligations is not allowed and frowned upon. Graduate students are urged to consult their Graduate Advisor and/or the Associate Dean of their academic program.

ONE MORE THING

Here at The UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE things can sometimes change quickly. Before taking advantage of any of the services or luxuries offered, please use your best judgment and discretion as anything could have changed after this manual was completed.

Quarterly Dates to Note

INP Welcome Activities:

September 22-25, 2025: INP Welcome Session
September 22, 2025 (4 pm – 6 pm): Dunlop Bio Sci Welcome

Fall quarter:

September 25, 2025: Report to first rotation lab

October 6, 2025: Prospective research plan due

Date TBD: Advisory meeting (multiple meetings if needed)

December 12, 2025: Last day of rotation & final research reports due

*Be sure to schedule exit interview and evaluation discussion with the lab PI prior to December 6, 2024

Winter quarter:

January 5, 2026: Report to second rotation lab

January 12, 2026: Prospective research plan due

Date TBD: Advisory meeting (multiple meetings if needed)

March 20, 2026: Last day of rotation & final research reports due

*Be sure to schedule exit interview and evaluation discussion with the lab PI prior to March 14, 2025

Spring quarter:

March 30, 2026: Report to third rotation lab

April 6, 2026: Prospective research plan due

Date TBD: Advisory meeting (multiple meetings if needed)

June 12, 2026: Last day of rotation & final research reports due

*Be sure to schedule exit interview and evaluation discussion with the lab PI prior to June 6, 2025

June TBD, 2026: INP Annual Symposium & Celebration

June 15, 2026: Begin in Home Lab

July 1, 2026: Official paperwork deadline for Home Department