Welcome!!!
Molecular & Cellular Biology in Seattle
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY Ph.D. PROGRAM OFFERED THROUGH UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON and FRED HUTCH

**UW:** Rich Gardner, PhD
Department of Pharmacology
206-685-0506
gardnerr@uw.edu

**Fred Hutch:** Nina Salama, PhD
Division of Human Biology
206-667-1540
nsalama@fredhutch.org
MCB Program Manager
Nomi Odano
206-685-3156
odano@uw.edu

MCB Graduate Program Specialist
Maia Low
206-685-3155
maialow@uw.edu

MCB Communications Specialist
Teresa Swanson
206-221-4581
tmswan@uw.edu

MCB Office
206-543-0253

Fred Hutch Program Administrator Graduate Programs
Andrea Brocato
206-667-1811
ajbrocat@fredhutch.org

Fred Hutch Research Administrator Graduate Programs
Laura Masserman
206-667-2425
lmasserm@fredhutch.org
Orientation outline

• Rotations
• Faculty Talks and Retreats
• Advisors
• Classes
Rotations

Picking a lab is the most important thing you will do in your first year!

This is the goal of rotations!
Rotations

• Choose a lab after three rotations

• A fourth rotation in the summer is possible, but requires discussion with the MCB directors

• A successful rotation is one in which you can definitively say whether or not you would like to join the lab
Rotations: questions to think about

- Are you excited by the kind of research done in the lab?
- Does the mentoring style of the advisor suit you (very important!)?
- What is the lab environment like (keep in mind lab environments change)?
- The purpose of the rotation is to find out if you like the lab or not!
Rotations: expectations

- You will be working full time during each quarter on classes, seminars, and rotations
- Attend and be involved in your lab’s group meetings, special meetings, and seminars
- Devote yourself to thinking about your project and the other projects in the lab
- Learn something new
- Talk to everyone in the lab about their projects
- Connect with your PI
How to find rotations

• Use the MCB website
• Faculty are listed by Areas of Interest
• Big question: Is the lab taking students?
  Faculty should have indicated which quarters and whether they want a permanent student
• However, faculty might not indicate a permanent student because they are waiting for funding/other issues …
How to find rotations

• Meet faculty at the mandatory faculty talks
  – Sept 5: Fred Hutch, Thomas Building, B1-072/74/76, 10 AM -12:30 PM
  – Sept 6: UW main campus, T-435 Health Sciences Building, 10 AM - 12:30 PM
  – Sept 7: UW South Lake Union, Room 130A E building, 10 AM - 12:30 PM
  – Oct 23: Poster session, Foege Vista Cafe, 5 PM

• Ask Rich or Nina or one of the Area of Interest Directors for advice
How to find rotations

• Use current MCB students for advice!
  – come to the MCB BBQ Saturday: Sept 9, 12:30 PM, at Gas Works Park, shelter 1
  – come to the MCB Student Panel: Sept 19 5:30 PM, UW Health Sciences Building, I-132
  – talk to current students, but make decisions based on talking to faculty as well
  – do not disregard labs that don't have current MCB students (~250 labs, far fewer students)
How to find rotations

• Departmental Retreats
  – Talk to faculty at the retreats! This is a great chance to speak to many faculty easily
  – Talk to students and post-docs in labs that might interest you
  – Have fun
  – If you have signed up for a retreat, YOU NEED TO GO!
Important Rotation Dates

• Email Maia and Andrea with your rotation lab
  – Include a confirmation email from the rotation PI

• Rotation Lab Decision Dates
  – Fall Quarter: Wednesday, Sept 26, 2017
  – Winter Quarter: Tuesday, Jan 3, 2018
  – Spring Quarter: Friday, March 23, 2018
Rotation Talks and Poster Session

• You will present a rotation talk in fall and winter and a poster in spring.

• Rotation Presentation Dates
  – Fall Quarter: Tuesday, December 12, 2017
  – Winter Quarter: Tuesday, March 13, 2018
  – Spring Quarter: Tuesday, June 12, 2018
Your first-year faculty advisor

• We are your initial advisors

• You can talk to both of us, or choose one of us, it is up to you

• Use the Areas of Interest Directors too

• Feel free to find an MCB faculty member
Areas of Interest Directors

• Biophysical and Structural Biology: Roland Strong (Fred Hutch)
• Cancer Biology: Valera Vasioukhin (Fred Hutch) and Barry Gumbiner (UW)
• Cell Signaling & Cell/Environment Interactions: Sandy Bajjalieh (UW)
• Computational Biology: Jesse Bloom (Fred Hutch)
• Developmental Biology, Stem Cells & Aging: Matt Kaeberlein (UW) and Cecilia Moens (Fred Hutch)
• Gene Expression & Chromosome Biology: Linda Wordeman (UW) and Toshi Tsukiyama (Fred Hutch)
• Genetics, Genomics & Evolution: Celeste Berg (UW) and Roger Bumgarner (UW)
• Microbiology, Infection & Immunity: Michael Lagunoff (UW) and Andrew Oberst (UW)
• Neuroscience: Olivia Bermingham-McDonogh (UW) and Jihong Bai (Fred Hutch)

Areas of Interest Directors will also provide advice on classes and rotations
Student Areas of Interest Directors

- Biophysical and Structural Biology: Derrick Hicks
- Cancer Biology: Andrea Lim and Alex Salter
- Cell Signaling & Cell/Environment Interactions: Amanda Bradley
- Computational Biology: Sidney Bell
- Developmental Biology, Stem Cells & Aging: Lauren Loh and Lauren Saunders
- Gene Expression & Chromosome Biology: Lori Koch and Amy Lanctot
- Genetics, Genomics & Evolution: Sidney Bell, Ashley Hall, and Michelle Hays
- Microbiology, Infection & Immunity: Kristin Middlesteadt, Nick Maurice, and Alex Salter
- Neuroscience: Laura Taylor
Your 1st-year faculty advisor(s)

• Advice about potential rotation labs
• Advice about classes
• Make sure that you are on track
  – MCB directors get copies of your rotation reports
  – If there is a problem, let us know before it becomes a crisis!
• MCB directors give final approval for anything you want to do that is not on the usual lists
Classes: requirements

• First Year MCB class: Career Development, Lit Review, and Grant Writing
  – Attendance REQUIRED, and you MUST BE ON TIME!
  – Wednesdays 4-5:20 PM (UW in the Fall, Fred Hutch in the Winter and Spring)
  – Only for MCB students: get add code from MCB office

• You need 18 graded course credits
  – Must be a 500-level course
    • Rarely, we grant an exception to this and let you substitute a 400-level course. Ask the MCB directors for permission.
  – Must be graded (no exceptions)
Classes: definitions

- **Conjoint:** Typically a 5 week, 1.5 credit course. Usually 2 x 1.5 hours per week
- **Other Courses:** Typically a 10 week, 3 credit (but sometimes 2-4 credit) course
- **Foundational Courses:** These are courses we think are crucial for a particular Area of Interest. We highly encourage you to take these courses if it falls in your Area of Interest.
- **Model Curriculum:** List of courses suggested for students in each Area of Interest.
Classes: Model Curriculum

- Each Area of Interest has a Model Curriculum
- These are meant to guide you in choosing classes
- They are not requirements!!
- We highly encourage you to take the Foundational Courses in an Area of Interest
- Electives are more specialized or cross between Areas of Interest
Classes: Model Curriculum, exceptions

- We realize that you may switch Areas of Interest or will work in a subject that straddles between different Areas of Interest.
- The Areas of Interest Directors can help you design an individualized curriculum.
- Some courses are still under development.
- Some courses are every other year.
Classes: Model Curriculum, classes you should take

- **Foundational Courses:** ~9 credits
- **Biostatistics:**
  - UCONJ510 this summer or next (2.5 credits)
  - **Alternatives:** STAT502 if you have a strong math background or BIOSTAT517 if you are interested in Epidemiology
- **Electives:** This is more specialized and depends on your particular research interest. **Methods courses** are more generally applicable to everyone.
- **Career Development Courses:** Generally, take only in Year 2 (or later)
- You are welcome to take more than 18 credits, and it is likely you will do so.
Some classes have limited enrollments. **Sign up early** to avoid getting shut out. Some courses require an “add code” to register. Email for the add code.

Some classes are only offered every other year. If it is a Foundational course in your Area of Interest, take it now rather than when you are a 3rd year.

Use the current 2nd and 3rd year students for suggestions on courses.
Classes: suggestions to consider

- Pace yourself!
- Make sure that you do an excellent job on your rotations. WE CANNOT EMPHASIZE THIS MORE!
- You do not need to finish all of your class requirements in your 1st year!
- Take a good look at schedules. Make time for your rotation!!
  - for example, if your first rotation is at the UW consider taking classes at the UW, if it is at the Fred Hutch, look for classes at the Fred Hutch
  - try to avoid having a class in the morning, and then one in the afternoon on the same day
Grades and the graduate student

- Your ultimate success in graduate school is determined by your research and not by your grades!
- Although some fellowships do consider grades
- You **must** get at least a 2.7 for a class to count for your graduate credit
- You **must** stay above a 3.0 average to stay in graduate school (you get one quarter to bring it up)
September 2017 To Do List

• Register for classes

• Choose a lab for fall rotation
  – You don’t have to do this until just before the quarter starts
  – Keep an open mind for winter and spring rotations
The 1st year in review

- Three rotations
- Mandatory: MCB 1st year class (514/15/16)
- Take elective classes. Aim for 9-12 credits by the end of spring quarter in your 1st year.
- Join a thesis lab (typical start is the summer quarter)
- Attend summer bioethics seminar series
- Take Conj510 (or another appropriate Biostatistics class) in the summer quarter
- Establish Residency with the University of Washington by the Fall quarter of year 2
  - Review information in packet, THE PROCESS Begins Now!
And beyond . . .

• **Year 2**
  – TA (teaching assistantships, we will provide more info later)
  – Take classes as necessary for your 18 graded credits
  – Work in lab full time
  – Form your thesis committee by end of Winter quarter (very important)
  – Have 1st committee meeting by the end of Spring quarter
  – Graduate school is over 12 months – there is no summer break

• **Year 3**
  – Work in lab full time
  – Take general exam (by the end of Fall quarter)
  – Take any additional classes necessary

• **Year 4**
  – Publish paper(s), extend initial findings

• **Year 5+**
  – Publish paper(s), write and defend thesis

*We expect you to graduate with a PhD within 5-7 years*
Common first year problems

• The “Imposter Syndrome”
• Finding the right balance of spending your time between classes and rotations
• Classes are different from undergrad
• Homesickness
• Life balance
Questions?