

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN CELLULAR AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

FORMING A DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Timeline:

The committee will be established within **one month** after the student passes the preliminary exam. The first dissertation meeting should be scheduled within **six months**.

Purpose of Committee

- Monitors quality, efficiency and significance of the research,
- Helps keep the research timeline efficient and on track to minimize the time to degree
- Encourages peer-reviewed publication of research findings
- Provides advice on career paths

Requirements of Committee Membership:

- Dissertation mentor chairs the committee
- Committee includes at least 3 additional members – who must each be affiliated with a Ph.D. program.
- At least two members of the committee in addition to the chair must be members of the CMB program faculty.

Approval of Committee:

Students should submit the names of proposed dissertation committee members along with an abstract of the proposed project for approval by the CMB Program Committee. The abstract should be one page, following the format of the Specific Aims page of an NIH research grant, including the following: Background, Specific Aims and Significance of the questions to be addressed.

Changes in the composition of the committee membership at later times may be advisable and will be permitted if approved by the CMB Program Committee.

Areas to be Assessed by the Committee:

- Feasibility of the proposed project/aims
- Quality of the experimental design and results
- Progress on aims
- Focus of the research
- Level of student's effort and productivity
- Quality of the student's writing
- Quality of the student's oral presentation skills
- Progress towards independence
- Progress to publication
- When the student should be expected to begin writing the dissertation
- Ways in which the mentor could facilitate the student's research and professional development