

*HANDBOOK FOR  
THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF  
PHILOSOPHY IN  
BIOLOGY*

*Executive Committee*

*Biology PhD Program, The City University of New York*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I.</b>	<b>DEGREE REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>General statement</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>B.</b>	<b>Specific Requirements</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Program of Study</b>	<b>7</b>
	Shared requirements	
	Subprogram: Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior (EEB)	
	Subprogram: Neuroscience (NS)/CUNY Neuroscience Collaborative	
	Subprogram: Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology (MCD)	
	Subprogram: Plant Sciences (PS)	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Credits and Course Distribution</b>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>College Teaching and Field Experience</b>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>First Examination</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Foreign Language and Research Techniques</b>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Second Examination &amp; Advancement to Candidacy</b>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Presentation of Dissertation Research in a Public Seminar</b>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Doctoral Research: The Dissertation and Dissertation Defense</b>	
<b>C.</b>	<b>Transfer of Credit</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>D.</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>E.</b>	<b>Time Limit</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>F.</b>	<b>Auditing Courses</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>G.</b>	<b>Maintenance of Matriculation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>H.</b>	<b>Satisfactory Progress in the Biology Program</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>I.</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>J.</b>	<b>Withdrawal</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>K.</b>	<b>Leave of Absence</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>L.</b>	<b>“En Route” Master’s Degree</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO DOCTORAL MATRICULANTS AT THE CITY UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>REGISTRATION: CERTIFICATION AND TUITION LEVELS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>A.</b>	<b>Certification</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Weighted Instructional Units</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Teaching activity</li> <li>b. Non-teaching academic activities</li> <li>c. Examination preparation</li> <li>d. Research activity</li> <li>e. Dissertation Research</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Level I</li> <li>b. Level II</li> <li>c. Level III</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B. Change of Courses in Plan of Study</li> <li>C. Changes in Registration</li> </ul>	
<b>IV.</b>	<b>ADVISORY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>19</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Designation of the Permanent Advisory Committee and Follow-up.</li> <li>B. Role and Responsibility of the Permanent Advisory Committee</li> </ul>	
<b>V.</b>	<b>FIRST EXAMINATION</b>	<b>20</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Philosophy of the Examination</li> <li>B. Areas of the Examination</li> <li>C. When the Examination is to be Taken</li> <li>D. Preparation for the First Examination</li> <li>E. Formulation and Grading of the First Examination</li> <li>F. Mechanics of the Examination</li> </ul>	
<b>VI.</b>	<b>SECOND EXAMINATION</b>	<b>21</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Continuation in the Doctoral Program</li> <li>B. Composition of the Advisory and Second Examination Committees</li> <li>C. Preparation and Procedures for the Second Examination</li> </ul>	
<b>VII.</b>	<b>CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY IN PHILOSOPHY AND THE MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>DOCTORAL RESEARCH</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TEACHING SKILLS, AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>X.</b>	<b>DISSERTATION</b>	<b>24</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Dissertation Proposal</li> <li>B. Advisory Committee Meetings</li> </ul>	

- C. Draft of the Dissertation
- D. Public Seminar
- E. Final Examination Committee
- F. Distribution of Dissertation Copies
- G. Rescheduling
- H. Final Examination Report
- I. Unsatisfactory Performance
- J. Dissertation Submission and Checkout Procedures
- K. Editorial Requirements

<b>XI.</b>	<b>CURRICULUM VITAE AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>XII.</b>	<b>ALUMNI INFORMATION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>XIII.</b>	<b>NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>XIV.</b>	<b>IMPORTANT CONTACTS</b>	<b>28</b>

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Ph.D. Program in Biology is to provide doctoral training in a diverse urban environment with research opportunities focused on specific areas of current biological interest by drawing on the cumulative resources of a consortium of CUNY colleges and independent research institutions in metropolitan New York

## **LEARNING GOALS OF THE CUNY BIOLOGY PHD PROGRAM**

To achieve the doctorate in Biology, students must:

1. Demonstrate both broad and specialized knowledge in the chosen biology subprogram, including the ability to:
  - A. read and critically evaluate the research literature
  - B. explain the experimental, observational, and/or analytical bases for current theories
  - C. design an approach to address a major unresolved research problem
2. Make a substantial and original contribution to the field. In most cases, this will include publication of one or more first-author papers in peer-reviewed journals, in addition to preparation of a dissertation.
3. Organize, format, and present data effectively in both written and oral form, display applicable computational and quantitative skills, and demonstrate excellence in teaching.
4. Interact effectively and collegially with others in the field and conform to the fundamentals of ethical research conduct.

# HANDBOOK FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN BIOLOGY

*This material has been prepared by student and faculty representatives of the Ph.D. Program in Biology. For official information, please check the current Bulletin and Student Handbook of The Graduate Center and University Center.*

## I. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

**A. General Statement** - The Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded for mastery of subject matter and demonstration of research ability. It is awarded in recognition of a candidate's superior attainments and ability in the major field. Students must maintain high levels of academic and research performance to retain matriculated status in a doctoral program. Progress through the requirements will be reviewed regularly by an advisory committee and the appropriate administrative officer or graduate studies committee at the student's campus.

Normally, four or more years of full-time study and research beyond the bachelor's degree are needed to complete a doctoral program. A student may obtain an M.A. from a local campus during the course of study for the Ph.D. upon the completion of at least 45 graduate credits with an average of "B" or better, the acceptance of a major library research paper, and recommendation to the local campus by The Graduate Center (GC). The degree is awarded at the discretion of the local campus. This degree is referred to as the "en-route" master's. Students who have been "advanced to candidacy" are awarded the Master of Philosophy Degree from the GC upon application.

While the general University requirements and academic regulations for the Ph.D. degree are included in the annually revised *Student Handbook* and the *Bulletin of the Graduate Center* (for your convenience, much of this information is included in this Handbook), the specific requirements for Biology are established by the Biology Executive Committee and are included herein. Any changes instituted after the publication of this Handbook are communicated to students by the minutes of the meetings of the Biology Executive Committee and through memoranda. This Handbook will be updated periodically to include such changes. A student, with the consent of his/her Advisory Committee, may petition the Executive Officer in Biology to modify or waive any specific requirement for the Ph.D. degree. It shall be the responsibility of the student to maintain current contact information at the Program Office and to ensure that Program communications have been received.

The Doctoral Program in Biology is operated through the Program Office and the Executive Officer with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee in Biology. Elected and appointed faculty and students comprise the membership of this committee, whose activities follow the Program's Governance document.

**B. Specific Requirements** - The following paragraphs enumerate the University and Program requirements for the Ph.D.

**1. Program of Study** - Students must follow an approved program of study designed in consultation with their Advisory Committee. The first year's work will normally include a number of fundamental courses designed to complete a student's basic academic background and prepare him/her for the First Examination. Additional courses relevant to the student's

probable research and dissertation area and second-level courses leading to specialization are taken in subsequent years. A record of the student's progress is maintained at the Program Office and is upgraded as milestones are achieved. Students must fulfill the course requirements in one of the four subprograms (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior; Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology; Neuroscience/CUNY Neuroscience Collaborative; and Plant Science):

**In addition to particular subprogram-specific course requirements (as specified below), students will need to take a portion of the 60 credits required to advance to Candidacy from research lab credits under the following course numbers:**

BIOL 89800	Advanced Study	1 to 10 CR (per semester)
BIOL 89900	Independent Doctoral Research	1 to 10 CR (per semester)

NOTE: Students should register for Biol 89800 unless undertaking research under two different faculty mentors in the same semester (one can be Biol 89800 and the other Biol 89900). These courses are not available to students in their first year in the Program, nor after their third year in the Program

### **Subprogram: Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior (EEB)**

In addition to the regular requirements of the Ph.D. Program in Biology, all EEB students shall meet the following requirements.

#### **Course Requirements for the EEB Subprogram – effective September 1, 2016**

First-year students are required to take one course from each of the following two areas. Courses can be chosen from those listed for each area. Substitution of any other course requires advanced permission of the EEB Advisory Committee Chair or the Chair's designee.

#### **Ecology (3 credits each)**

BIOL 76005 Population Ecology  
BIOL 76001 Ecology  
BIOL 76003 Community Ecology

#### **Evolution (3 credits each)**

BIOL 70901 Population Genetics  
BIOL 70503 Evolution  
BIOL 70803 Molecular Evolution

First-year students are also required to take either of the following two options for Statistics (both lecture and lab):

#### **Statistics (lecture and lab, 6 credits)**

BIOL 78201 Biostatistics I (lecture and lab, 6 credits)



OR

BIOL 78001 Mathematical Biology I (lecture, 3 credits)  
and  
BIOL 78002 Mathematical Biology II (lab, 3 credits)

**All students must also take (in year 1 or 2) at least one 3-credit graduate seminar course** (For example: Seminar in Evolution BIOL U79001, Seminar in Ecology BIOL 79006, Seminar in Biomathematics BIOL 79008, Seminar in Systematics BIOL 79011, Seminar in Zoogeography BIOL 79012, Seminar in Animal Behavior BIOL 79022). These seminar courses are offered periodically by different campuses and will focus on critical evaluation of papers in the various areas.

Finally, any student who has not taken a **basic genetics course** in the past 5 years will be required to take an undergraduate genetics course at one of the campuses.

Any exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the EEB Advisory Committee.

### **Subprogram: Neuroscience (NS)/CUNY Neuroscience Collaborative**

Students must take the following courses in order to be prepared for the First Examination and to fulfill course and other requirements in order to advance to Level III in a timely manner:

First semester	BIOL 72301 Neuroscience I BIOL 79302 CUNY Neuroscience Proseminar BIOL 71101 Lab Rotation (at least two in year 1)
Second semester	Neuroscience II BIOL 79302 CUNY Neuroscience Proseminar BIOL 71101 Lab Rotation (at least two in year 1)
Third semester	Advanced courses relevant to student's chosen research area BIOL 79302 CUNY Neuroscience Proseminar
Fourth semester	Advanced courses relevant to student's chosen research area BIOL 79302 CUNY Neuroscience Proseminar

### **Subprogram: Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology (MCD)**

First Year curriculum:

BIOL 70005	Genetics (lecture)
BIOL 71013	Molecular Biology (lecture)
BIOL 71401	Cell Biology (lecture)
BIOL 75003	Developmental Biology (lecture)

In all cases, a first year MCD student's particular course of study will be determined by the MCD

subprogram Chair.

To ensure that all students have an adequate breadth of exposure to MCD research at CUNY, first year MCD students are also required to complete three 10-week research rotations in participating laboratories on at least two CUNY campuses. Students will receive 2 credits for each research rotation under the following course number:

BIOL 71101      Lab Rotation (MCD)                      2 or 3 Cr

To fully inform students of the scope of MCD research at CUNY and their rotation options, a required weekly MCD colloquium is included in both the Fall and Spring semesters of the first-year curriculum under the following course number:

BIOL 79302 Seminar in Mol/Cell/Dev Biol      2 Cr

In the second year, students are advised to take several 3-credit seminar courses on special topics given by MCD faculty experts. Among many others, some examples of these topics include:

1. Gene Regulation in Development and Disease
2. Genome Integrity
3. Cell Biology of The Nervous System
4. Cancer Genomics
5. Frontiers of Live Cell Imaging
6. Bioinformatics
7. Organization of Nuclear Transport
8. The Ubiquitin/Proteasome Pathway
9. Biology and Immunology of Aids
10. Hot Topics in Developmental Neurobiology

### **Subprogram: Plant Sciences (PS)**

Doctoral students in Plant Sciences are strongly encouraged to take all the graduate courses taught by Plant Sciences doctoral faculty.

**2. Credits and Course Distribution** - At least 60 credits of approved graduate work, including those required in the subprograms, are required for the degree. Advanced-level courses along with seminars, tutorials, and advanced-study courses as well as courses offered by other Ph.D. Programs (Biochemistry, Earth and Environmental Sciences, Psychology, etc.) are included in the menu of offerings from which the students and their advisers may choose. For information on acceptable courses for the first 30 credits, students should consult their subprogram Chair in year one and their thesis adviser and advisory committee after year one (also see Program of Study section above).

Of the 60 graduate credits required for the degree, not more than nine may be 60000-level courses listed in the various college graduate bulletins. The remaining credits must be in 70000 and

80000 level courses. Up to 10 credits per semester can be earned in Advanced Study and/or Independent Doctoral Research in years 2 and 3 in the Program (description below). After advancement to candidacy (defined as passing the 1<sup>st</sup> exam, 2<sup>nd</sup> exam, minimum teaching and 60 credits with B or better average), the candidate must register for 90000 Dissertation Supervision, 1 credit, each semester until completion of all other requirements for the degree.

a. 60000 (Masters-level) courses are listed in the graduate bulletins of the CUNY senior colleges.

b. 70000 and 80000 level courses are creditable toward the doctoral degree. All currently approved courses are listed in the Graduate Center Bulletin. Courses are offered at one or more campuses of the University. Courses listed under the same University number but at different campuses cover substantially similar material at comparable levels. Brief course descriptions will be found in the graduate bulletins of the individual colleges and usually on the Biology PhD Program website. Additional information is available to the student either by writing to or by consulting with the instructor. The prerequisite for admission to all courses is approval by the student's subprogram Chair (year one) or thesis adviser and/or advisory committee (after year one). Upon approval of the student's schedule, the Biology Program office will release the student's registration PIN).

c. Advanced Study (Biol 89800) and Independent Doctoral Research (89900) courses will be graded PASS/FAIL. Letter grades (A, B, C) WILL NOT be utilized and the grade will not be used in computing the GPA (Grade Point Average). For the purpose of evaluating a student who has applied for the "en-route" M.A., however "Pass" will be computed as a "B."

d. 90000 Dissertation Supervision, 1 credit, is to be taken each semester following advancement to candidacy (please refer to Section VII for additional information) until all other requirements for the degree have been met.

e. Interuniversity Cross Registration - The City University of New York is involved in a reciprocal arrangement with several other universities in the Greater New York Region. In the event that a student and the student's advisory committee agree that it would be beneficial for a student to take a course not offered at CUNY, the mechanism for such an arrangement is available at Columbia University, Fordham University, New School University, New York University, Princeton, Rutgers, SUNY Stonybrook, Teacher's College and The AMNH Richard Gilder Graduate School. This is available to students in years 2 and beyond.

**3. College Teaching and Field Experience** - A minimum of two semesters of college teaching experience is required. In those sub-disciplines of biology where field experience is considered to be particularly appropriate by the student's advisory committee, such experience may be required and may substitute, wholly or in part, for the teaching requirement when approved in advance by the student's advisory committee and the Executive Officer. Written certification of the teaching done to satisfy this requirement must be submitted prior to Advancement to Candidacy

**4. First examination** - This examination covers the student's ability to think, synthesize information, and solve problems in one of four areas of biology: Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology; Plant Sciences; Neuroscience; or Ecology, Evolutionary Biology, and Behavior. It should be noted that a student will be deemed not to be making satisfactory progress if

45 credits are accumulated before passing the First Examination. (Please refer to Section V for complete details of this examination.)

**5. Foreign Language and Research techniques** - An individual's research adviser and advisory committee with the approval of the Executive Committee may require a student to acquire the functional mastery of computer programming or a working knowledge of a foreign language or languages in which there is a substantial body of literature relevant to the student's research. Should the student be required to develop such skills, the Executive Officer must be notified of this requirement, in writing by the student's thesis adviser, no later than the student's fourth semester.

**6. Second Examination & Advancement to Candidacy** - Students must demonstrate advanced understanding and research competence in their area of specialization and related fields of biology by passing an oral Second Examination. This examination is administered by an Examination Committee and is to be completed by the end of the fourth semester following the successful completion of the First Examination. Students failing to complete the Second Examination in this prescribed period will not be permitted to register and will be dropped from the Program (see the Student Handbook for policies and procedures for appealing withdrawal from the Program). (Please refer to Section VI for complete details of this examination.) Advancement to Candidacy is defined as: passing the Second Examination and completing formal course requirements of at least 60 credits, fulfilling the minimum teaching requirement of at least 2 semesters at the College level. Students who have advanced to candidacy may, with the permission of the appropriate college or university authority, register as auditors in graduate courses. Students who have advanced to candidacy may also apply for the M.Phil. degree in Biology (contact Biology PhD Program office for details).

**7. Presentation of Dissertation Research in a Public Seminar** - Prior to the dissertation defense, the student shall present a public seminar focusing on the subject of the dissertation. Certification of this event by a letter to the program office by the campus deputy chair (or campus Department Chair) is necessary for the scheduling of the dissertation defense.

**8. Doctoral Research: The Dissertation and Dissertation Defense** - With the advice and consent of the student's advisory and Second Examination committees, the research program will be planned and conducted, culminating in an approved and defended dissertation. (Please refer to Section VIII for details of this phase of graduate studies.)

**C. Transfer of Credit** - A maximum of 30 acceptable graduate credits taken at institutions outside The City University and the Ph.D. Program in Biology may be applied toward the degree, provided the courses were completed with a grade of B or higher within an appropriate period preceding the time of application and are equivalent to comparable courses in Biology at The City University. Exceptions to the above regulations may be considered under special circumstances. An evaluation of previously earned credits will usually be made after passing the First Examination.

Please use the form entitled "Advanced Standing Transfer Credit Recommendation" (obtainable from the Program Office) have it approved by your adviser, and give it to the graduate deputy chair on your campus together with supporting transcripts for transmittal to the Executive Officer for final approval.

**D. Residence** - At least 30 of the credits required for the degree must be taken in residence at the City University. Doctoral students are expected to spend at least one year in full-time residence at the City University. Full-time residence consists of a schedule of no fewer than 7 credits or the equivalent, as certified by the Executive Officer, for each of two consecutive semesters.

**E. Time Limit** - All requirements for the degree must be completed no later than eight years after matriculation. (CUNY Science Scholars are guaranteed funding for 5 years only). A student who matriculates after the completion of 30 credits of acceptable work (transferred credits) must complete all requirements within seven years. Students unable to comply by completing all requirements within the specified limits must submit a detailed advisory committee report including critical time lines to the defense duly signed by the advisory committee. An "Extension of Time Limit" must be approved by the Vice President for Student Affairs. Including leaves of absence (up to 2 years permitted), a student must complete all requirements for the degree within 10 calendar years from matriculation.

**F. Auditing Courses** - When the Executive Officer or graduate adviser recommends it, a full-time graduate student may audit any undergraduate course without credit with the permission of the appropriate undergraduate authority. In addition, students matriculated for the Ph.D. who have been advanced to candidacy may, with the permission of the appropriate college or university authority, register as auditors in graduate courses. In order to receive credit for the course, the student must pay additional tuition at the per-credit rate.

**G. Maintaining Matriculation** - In order to preserve continuity of academic experience, a student who is not On Leave must be registered either as:

- a. Attending courses, or
- b. Working for research credits (Biol. 89800 or 89900), or
- c. registered for Biol 90000 (dissertation supervision) 1 credit, certified as 12 credits

#### **H. Satisfactory Progress in the Biology Program -**

The Graduate Center reviews each student's record every semester. If formal standards of satisfactory progress have not been met, a student may register (and receive financial aid, if otherwise eligible) only upon petition to the Vice President for Student Affairs by the student's Executive Officer. Students whose petitions are approved are considered to be making satisfactory progress toward the degree and are eligible to receive financial aid.

A student is deemed not to be making satisfactory progress if he or she:

1. Has a grade point average below 3.00;
2. Has accumulated more than two open grades Incomplete (INC), Permanent Incomplete (INP), No Grade Recorded (NGR) Absent (ABS) and Permanent Absence (ABP);
3. Has completed 45 credits without having passed the First Examination. (Please refer to Section V for complete details of this examination.);
4. Does not find a thesis adviser among CUNY Biology doctoral faculty members by the time of registration for third semester (beginning of second year as matriculated student). In the absence of mutual agreement between the student and a thesis adviser (signed Mentor Assignment sheet), the student will be dropped from the Program.

5. Has completed 4 semesters following successful completion of the First Examination without passing the Second Examination. (See Section B.6. above.);
6. Has received two “No Record of Progress” (NRP) grades in succession, or has exceeded the time limit for the degree;
7. Has not completed all requirements for the degree within eight years after matriculation (Note that a student who matriculates after the completion of 30 credits of acceptable work = transferred credits must complete all requirements within seven years.) Including 2 years of permitted leave of absence, students must complete all requirements for the degree within 10 calendar years of matriculation.

**I. Timeline** (Note: this timeline is provided as a reference to students for planning purposes. Details may change with variations in Program requirements.)

**Year 1: Fall Semester:**

Fall Matriculation at Level I

Subprogram Chair acts as advisor to all first-year students

7 to 15 credits (see subprogram recommended courses (Section B1))

**Spring Semester:**

7 to 15 credits (see subprogram recommended courses)

First Examination (in one of four subprogram areas) - Passing grade 70% (<70%, automatic retake following June, if matriculated)

Select thesis adviser: The student selects a thesis adviser from the doctoral faculty in biology who is willing to chair student’s Advisory Committee at a campus or affiliated institution and willing to guarantee support for the next four years.

**Year 2: Fall Semester:**

7 to 15 credits (see subprogram recommended courses)

First semester of college teaching requirement.

Complete Advisory Committee: During year 2, in consultation with the student’s thesis adviser, student selects two additional doctoral faculty in biology willing to serve on the student’s Advisory Committee. At least one member of the committee must be a member of the CUNY-line doctoral faculty in Biology. A “CUNY-line doctoral faculty” is a faculty member with a formal appointment to The City University of New York at one of the CUNY campuses.

Hold Advisory Committee meeting, prepare progress report and submit signed report to Program Office (This must be done at least once per year after year 1 – Second Examination can substitute for this meeting) -- **Required before registration each Fall.**

Note that up to 30 qualifying credits may be transferred from relevant Master’s program courses taken prior to entering the Biology doctoral program. A total of 60 credits is required for the PhD degree.

**Spring Semester:**

7 to 15 credits (see subprogram recommended courses)

Second semester of college teaching requirement.

Advance to Level II upon completion of First Examination and 45 credits

Student prepares thesis proposal and takes Second Examination. (This must be accomplished within 4 semesters following successful completion of the First Examination.)

IRB approval should be sought upon scheduling the Second Examination if **human subjects will be involved in the research proposed**. If human subjects are involved, IRB approval is required before research can commence.

**Year 3: Fall Semester:**

Hold Advisory Committee meeting, prepare progress report and submit signed report to Program Office.

Advancement to Candidacy and Thesis Research (if student already has 60 credits and has met all other requirements except the dissertation - this also advances student to Level III for tuition purposes)

Or 7 to 15 credits per semester until student has completed 60 credits

**Spring Semester:** Same as above.

**Year 4:** Hold Advisory Committee meeting and submit signed report to Program Office.  
Thesis Research

**Year 5:** (but not later than year 7 for students who arrived with a Master's degree or year 8 for all others)

Hold Advisory Committee meeting and submit written report to Program Office.

Present dissertation research in a properly scheduled and announced public seminar. (Must be scheduled to take place **before** Final Exam.)

Prepare Doctoral Dissertation

Final Examination (Dissertation Defense – Must be scheduled with Program Office **1 month in advance**. Graduate Center Provost sends invitations.)

Submit Approved Dissertation to the Graduate Center Librarian

Graduation

**J. Withdrawal** - Written notice of voluntary withdrawal from the Program must be approved by the Executive Officer. The withdrawal cannot be granted until the student has been cleared by the Director of Financial Aid, the Chief Librarian, the Bursar, and the Assistant Business Manager. To resume doctoral study, a former student must apply to the Program for readmission. A student who applies for readmission must do so in writing and pay a fee by the end of the first week in August for the Fall semester and second week in January for the Spring semester.

**K. Leave of Absence** - A student wishing to interrupt doctoral study for one or two semesters may be granted a leave of absence upon application to the Executive Officer. The reasons for requesting the leave must be clearly presented, in writing, and approval of the student's advisory committee and the local campus graduate studies committee be indicated. The period of an authorized leave is not included within the time limit for completion of degree requirements. A Leave of Absence form must be approved and signed by the Executive Officer and cannot be granted until the student has been cleared by the Financial Aid Office, the Librarian, the Bursar, and the Assistant Business Manager. Any student subject to induction or recall into military service should consult the appropriate veteran's adviser (the Senior Registrar) before applying for an official leave. An extension of a leave of absence, which will be granted only under unusual circumstances, must be authorized by the Executive Officer.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Students who do not comply with requirements of paragraph H and who are not on an officially approved leave are deemed to have left the Program. They will not be permitted to resume their studies unless their application for readmission is approved by an Admissions Committee of the Ph.D. Program in Biology.

**L. "En-Route" Master's Degree** - The award of a master's degree is recommended to a four-year CUNY college by the GC for enrolled doctoral students who have fulfilled certain requirements. Generally, these requirements include a minimum of 45 credits with an average grade of B (*in this Program the grade of P is awarded only for work regarded as B or better although it is not counted in the GPA*), passing of the First Examination, and satisfactory completion of a major library research paper that has been approved by the thesis adviser. Those seeking an en-route master's should bring their request to the Executive Officer who will initiate the proper application. It is important to remember that the final decision regarding the degree rests with the four-year college.

## **II. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO DOCTORAL MATRICULANTS AT THE CITY UNIVERSITY**

Support packages (CUNY Science Scholarships and Neuroscience Fellowships) for students admitted as applicants for Fall 2008 and subsequent years are as described in their award letters from the Office of Financial Aid. These support packages are contingent upon the doctoral student's remaining in good standing in the Program, including their identifying a doctoral thesis adviser by the end of the first year in the Program.

After Year 5, financial assistance is available to GC doctoral students through campus departments (e.g. teaching adjunct appointments), through the Doctoral Student Research Grant (DSRG) program at the Graduate Center, the travel award program at the Graduate Center, and Dissertation Fellowships from the Graduate Center. The DSRGs and Dissertation Fellowships are competitive awards that require applications that are reviewed (and funding decisions made) by a committee of doctoral faculty. The filing offices and deadline dates of these awards are provided to students through emails to their Graduate Center email accounts. Those students interested in teaching assistantships and/or teaching adjunct positions should file an application with the chair of the department of the CUNY unit at which they wish to teach. For additional information, applicants for financial assistance should consult with the GC Financial Aid Office.

All students, regardless of whether they anticipate filing for any kind of financial aid, should consider filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) once every academic year. Visit the Financial Aid page on the Graduate Center website for more information.

**Student Travel** – Conference Presentation Support awards are offered each Fall and Spring semester. Funds are available for students for cost of travel to professional meetings or conferences and to present papers or posters or to participate in scheduled sessions. Funds up to \$300 are provided per student. Limited funds are available so that not all applicants will be granted a travel award. Note: the student's presentation must include as an affiliation: Biology PhD Program, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York.

**Doctoral Student Research Grants (DSRGs)** - These awards are offered yearly for up to \$1500 to cover activities that enhance student research experiences. This may include travel to conferences,



travel to a research site to gather data, travel to visit other research facilities in a research collaboration, etc. Students cannot receive an award in two consecutive years. A review panel of Biology doctoral faculty reviews all applications and makes awards to those judged to have the greatest merit. Prior to completing an application, students should ask for a list of Biology's "additional requirements/recommendations" from the Biology Program office.

**Dissertation Fellowships** – These awards are offered yearly for up to \$24,000 to provide a living allowance to students in their last year of work (finishing research and writing the dissertation). A review panel of Science doctoral faculty (not limited to Biology) reviews and makes awards to those judged to have the greatest merit

American Museum of Natural History **Graduate Student Fellowship Program** - The AMNH Richard Gilder Graduate School accepts applications from students who will pursue a Ph.D. at CUNY's Graduate Center and have an AMNH curator as their primary adviser. The fellowship award is for three (3) years of funding starting in the student's second year and renewed based on maintaining satisfactory progress in the CUNY Ph.D. program and AMNH fellowships reviews; a 4th year of AMNH fellowship funding may be provided if the student agrees to perform a comprehensive teaching or educational assignment (such as developing and teaching an entire elective course, or designing and implementing a Museum public education program or project). Application must be submitted prior to admission to the CUNY PhD Program. However, a continuing student seeking to include an AMNH curator as their adviser or co-adviser may apply for this program and a decision on funding will be made on a case-by-case basis after consultation with CUNY to determine the full funding plan for the student; equivalent support may be provided through grants to the AMNH curator (individuals must make contact first with the curator-adviser). If approved by both AMNH and CUNY, the fellowship is equivalent to the CUNY Science Scholarship in years 2-5. Appointments to this competitive program are made by the American Museum's Academic Affairs and Fellowships Committee. For further information visit the Richard Gilder Graduate School and/or call the Assistant Director of Student Affairs and Fellowships, (212) 769-5017.

The New York Botanical Garden **Herbarium Assistantships for Graduate Study** - Assistantships in systematic botany and related fields are offered by The New York Botanical Garden to students engaged in full-time study in the Ph.D. Program in Biology, with a specialization in plant sciences. Holders of this award are expected to devote half-time to formal graduate study and half-time to research and herbarium assistance during the time that funding is provided by NYBG. Assistantships are assigned in coordination with CUNY's support packages, and students are provided with an annual financial aid fellowship equal to the CUNY Science Scholarship during years two through five of the Ph.D. program (all student support during the first year is provided by CUNY Graduate Center). Applications and additional information can be obtained from Lawrence M. Kelly, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Studies, The New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458, Telephone (718) 817-8171, e-mail: lkelly@nybg.org.

### III. REGISTRATION: CERTIFICATION AND TUITION LEVELS

**A. Certification** –CUNY Science Scholarship (CSS) Fellows and Neuroscience Fellows should enroll for 12 or more course credits per semester for the first 2 years. **No student should be enrolled for fewer than 7 credits/semester (minimum for “full-time” status).**

The "Student Status Form" generated by the Program Office each semester must be completed and submitted to the Executive Officer for processing at each registration. The eligibility for and the amount of various types of financial assistance are dependent upon the classification. The "Student Status Form" must be completed by the student and includes the number of credits enrolled, the teaching or other work commitments that semester, and the amount and nature of any fellowship or assistantship received. The WIUs (weighted instructional units) are completed by the Executive Officer, as is the certification. **WIUs do not count toward the 60 credits for the PhD.**

**1. Weighted Instructional Units** - The following definitions explain those research and study categories for which a student may receive WIUs.

**a. Teaching activity** - Students engaged in teaching activity relevant to their academic program and supervised by a faculty member may receive three WIUs for a one-fourth time assignment and a maximum of six WIUs for a one-half time or greater assignment.

**b. Non-teaching academic activities** - Students engaged in duties that are related to their academic program and supervised by a faculty member, such as non-dissertation research, clinical activity, grading papers, laboratory assistance, computer programming, etc., may receive one to six WIUs.

**c. Examination preparation** - Students engaged in preparation for a major doctoral examination may receive up to six WIUs. (Maximum of six per examination; may be allowed all in one semester or distributed over two or more semesters.)

**d. Research activity** - Students engaged in research that is relevant to their field and that is prior to advancement to candidacy may receive up to six WIUs.

**e. Dissertation research** - Students who are candidates for the Ph.D. engaged in full-time dissertation research may receive 12 WIUs per semester. Candidates for the Ph.D. who are engaged in half-time dissertation research may receive 6 WIUs.

**2. Levels** - Students are classified for tuition purposes according to three levels defined as follows:

**a. Level I** - Students who have not yet completed 45 credits, fully earned and evaluated, which may include approved advanced standing transfer credits, and/or have not passed the First Examination.

**b. Level II** - From semester following completion of 45 credits, fully earned and evaluated, and passing the First Examination to advancement to candidacy. Note that once students reach the second level, they must register at full tuition levels; per-credit

tuition payment is not permitted.

**c. Level III** - From semester following advancement to candidacy to completion of the degree. N.B.: Level III doctoral students may take additional courses for credit with the payment of an additional per-credit tuition charge. They may audit courses at no charge.

**B. Change of Courses In Plan Of Study** - All doctoral students should meet with their adviser or (during the first year in the Program) with the subprogram Chair before each registration period and decide which courses they plan to take. Subsequent program changes require adviser (or, in year one, subprogram Chair) approval. The Biology PhD Program Office should then be notified of any change in course registration. Failure to follow this procedure may compromise the student's eligibility for financial aid or teaching assistantships.

**C. Changes in Registration** - Actual registration at GC is conducted online with the registration materials being sent to the student from the Program Office. The completed materials are to be properly approved by the adviser (or, during first year in the Program, the subprogram Chair) and submitted to the Program Office. Should circumstances, such as course cancellation, time or date conflicts, etc., necessitate a change in the courses and/or number of credits, the student should discuss the changes with the adviser and notify the the Biology PhD Program office.

#### **IV. ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**A. Designation of the Permanent Advisory Committee and Follow-Up** – Prior to the end of the student's second semester (usually May 1), the student should have chosen a doctoral thesis adviser (also known as thesis mentor). The adviser will serve as the chair of the student's permanent advisory committee. At this point, the student and adviser will sign a formal "Mentor Assignment" form. The Graduate Deputy Chair at the relevant campus will submit this signed form to the Program Office as per established procedure.

The student and adviser will then decide upon the other two members of the student's permanent advisory committee. One of these three advisory committee members must be a faculty member with a formal appointment to The City University of New York at one of the CUNY campuses ("CUNY-line faculty member"). Students should identify their additional two advisory committee members as soon as possible (i.e. during their third semester in the Program), and must have met with this committee by the end of their fifth semester in the Program. Once the student's permanent advisory committee has been established, any change should be communicated in writing to the faculty members concerned and copies filed with the Executive Officer at the Program Office.

**B. Role and Responsibility of the Permanent Advisory Committee** – All members of the advisory committee must meet with the student at least once every academic year. The first such meeting will take place in the student's fifth semester (or earlier). At each meeting, a written report must be submitted, detailing the student's progress and his/her research and professional development plans for the coming year. This document (Report of Advisory Committee meeting) must be signed by the student and the advisory committee members and submitted to the Program Office. It is the student's responsibility to schedule these meetings in a timely fashion.

The Executive Officer must have complete and up-to-date information on each doctoral student, and the annual reports from the student's advisory committee are an important means of communicating that information. These data are valuable for ensuring timely progress of the student toward the degree. The progress of each student is evaluated by the Program Office each semester, and lapses are brought to the attention of the local Graduate Deputy Chair and advisor.

If the student has taken acceptable graduate work in another CUNY program or at another institution before matriculation in the CUNY Biology PhD Program (e.g. masters courses taken prior to entry into the Program), an "Advanced Standing Transfer Credit Recommendation" form should be completed by the student and submitted to the Biology PhD Program office. The Executive Officer will decide which credits can be applied to the Biology doctoral program only after the student has passed the First Examination.

As outlined in the following pages, the student's advisory committee plays an essential role in recommendations concerning appropriate courses, the Second Examination, the Thesis Proposal, and the Thesis Defense.

Each semester, students should register for the courses agreed upon with their advisers in accordance with their plan of study. The "Student Status Form" must be approved by the adviser *and submitted to the Executive Officer*. The Program Office will, upon approval of the Executive Officer, release the advisement PIN to the student for online registration. Any changes in registration for courses or credits must receive approval from the advisor and then the Executive Officer (same process as above).

## V. FIRST EXAMINATION

**A. Philosophy of the Examination** - The First Examination tests a graduate student's ability to think, synthesize information, and solve problems in one of four areas of Biology. The academic level of the examination presupposes that a student has had thorough undergraduate training in biology and has had one year of graduate-level training.

**B. Areas of the Examination** - The student will be examined in one of the following areas:

**Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology:** Examinations may include all relevant subject matter agreed to by the Examination Committee including cell structure, physiology, development, genetics, and biochemistry of prokaryotes and eukaryotes.

**Plant Sciences:** Examinations may include all relevant subject matter agreed to by the Examination Committee including development, physiology, morphology, cytology, anatomy, ecology, taxonomy, and evolution.

**Neuroscience:** Examinations may include all relevant subject matter agreed to by the Examination Committee including areas of neuroscience, cognition, and behavior as covered in the first year required courses of the subprogram

**Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior:** Examinations may include all relevant

subject matter agreed to by the Examination Committee including mechanisms, processes, and patterns of ecology and evolution.

**C. When the Examination is to be Taken** - The examination is given at the GC. The date of the examination is determined annually. In recent years, the examination has been administered during the second or third week in June. Students are expected to take this examination after their first year in the program. Students who do not take this examination at that time will be judged as having failed the examination.

MCD Students who accept an offer of admission into the Program in Spring (for Fall matriculation) and who have taken the required first-year MCD courses at a CUNY campus can request to take the MCD First Exam in June (before matriculating in the doctoral Program) with MCD doctoral students. If the student passes this exam, the student will not be required to take the First Exam again the following June. If the student fails the exam, there is no penalty to this and the student's First Exam requirements are like those for all other entering MCD students.

**D. Preparation for the First Examination** - Reading lists and topical outlines for the First Examination and copies of previous examinations are made available online (usually during the month of January).

**E. Formulation and Grading of the First Examination** – Elected faculty comprising the subprogram Advisory Committees shall be responsible for arranging the assembly and grading of the First Exam. The content of the exam is often drawn from faculty outside of the Advisory Committees, and grading is also done by faculty inside and outside of the Advisory Committee.

At least two graders will independently evaluate and comment on each question. In the event that differences in judgment exist that are not readily reconciled, a third grader will be called upon. The performance of each student is individually evaluated by the Executive Committee following recommendation from the subprogram advisory committee.

**F. Mechanics of the Examination** - Students will take the First Exam in the subprogram into which the student was admitted. The examination will usually consist of two four-hour sessions administered in the morning and afternoon of a single day, respectively. An application form must be completed and signed by both the student and the subprogram chair, and submitted to the Program Office by May 31.

The First Examination will be graded on a 100-point scale and designed in such a way that a passing grade is a score of 70 or higher. Students who achieve less than a 70 will be permitted one additional opportunity to take and pass the examination at the next time it is given.

## **VI. SECOND EXAMINATION**

A. Continuation in the Doctoral Program - The student must demonstrate advanced understanding and research competence in the area of specialization and related fields of biology by passing the Second Examination. The chair of the student's advisory committee serves as the chairperson of the Examination Committee. This examination is to be completed by the end of the fourth semester following the successful completion of the First Examination (usually, this is the 6<sup>th</sup>

semester in the Program). Students failing to complete the Second Examination in this prescribed period will not be permitted to register and will be dropped from the Program. The Executive Officer, or a designee, will remind the student by letter that this obligation is to be fulfilled.

### **B. Composition of the Advisory and Second Examination Committees -**

1. Before registration for a second year in the Program, the student must select a member of the CUNY doctoral faculty in Biology who is willing to act as an adviser. The student's adviser serves as the chair of the advisory and examination committees. The student's advisory committee consists of an adviser and at least two other members of the CUNY Biology doctoral faculty. At least one member of the advisory committee must be a member of the CUNY line doctoral faculty in Biology (see section IV-A).

2. The student's Second Examination Committee will consist of the above advisory committee and at least two additional examiners from campuses or institutions other than the student's home campus. At least two members of the Second Examination Committee must be members of the CUNY line doctoral faculty (defined in Section IV-A) in Biology. Note that for the Third Exam (Thesis defense), at least one examination committee member must come from outside of CUNY; this is not required for the Second Examination (but is allowed for the Second Examination).

For students with a thesis adviser at an Affiliated Institution, the outside members must be drawn from two distinct CUNY campuses or from one CUNY campus and one institution outside of CUNY (not including the Affiliated Institution).

### **C. Preparation and Procedures for the Second Examination -**

1. Students must complete at least 30 credits of course work before taking the Second Examination.

2. The "Application for the Second Examination" form must be completed and submitted to the Executive Officer at least one month prior to the examination date. This is essential so that the composition of the Examination committee can be approved by the Executive Officer and so that formal invitations to the examiners can be sent. The Biology PhD Program Office will provide Second Examination instructions to the student and the student's advisor, including the required format for the written thesis proposal, a document explaining how to avoid plagiarism, and the grading rubric for the exam.

3. The student prepares a thesis proposal, which as part of the "application" will be distributed to the Program Office and to the examiners at least two weeks before the scheduled exam. If examiners do not receive a copy of the thesis proposal by this deadline, the examination must be rescheduled. The Program Office will scan the proposal document for any evidence of plagiarism.

4. Any research involving human subjects fall under the CUNY Human Research Protection Program (<http://www2.cuny.edu/research/research-compliance/human-research-protection-program-hrpp/>). Visit the CUNY Central site on HRPP to learn about required forms and applications that must be filed BEFORE students begin any research involving human subjects. Any research involving non-human animals must be approved by an Institutional Animal Care and Use

Committee at the campus where the work will take place. This approval must be obtained BEFORE beginning any research involving non-human animals.

4. The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will:
  - a. define at least two reasonably restricted and related areas that, in addition to the proposed thesis, are the subject of the examination. These two areas are not the same thing as proposal "aims" – they are general areas of biology relevant to the research that will be undertaken.
  - b. recommend two examiners from campuses or institutions other than the student's home campus
5. The examination will be oral in form, usually lasting two to three hours.
6. Should more than one member of the examination committee or should the adviser be absent from the examination, the Second Examination must be rescheduled. At least three affirmative votes of those present at the examination are required to pass. A minimum of three CUNY doctoral faculty in Biology, including two CUNY-line doctoral faculty in Biology (defined in Section IV-A) must be present at the examination.
7. The chair of the advisory committee shall, at the completion of the examination, fill out and forward to the Executive Officer with appropriate signatures, the results of the examination on the form entitled "Report of the Second Examination." The committee shall also fill out and submit the "Second Examination Evaluation Tool" to the Program Office, providing a copy to the student.

8. The results of the Second Examination will be one of the following:

     **Pass**

We certify that the candidate has passed the Second Examination. We accept the dissertation proposal as presented.

     **Pass with minor conditions** (*will allow a student to advance to Level 3*)

We certify that the candidate has passed the Second Examination. In addition to any other condition we will consider the dissertation proposal acceptable after minor revisions are approved by the Chair [*specify conditions explicitly and procedure and date for fulfilling*].

     **Pass with major conditions** (*will **not** allow a student a student to advance to Level 3*)

We certify that in addition to any other condition, in our judgment, the candidate's dissertation proposal requires major revisions. It must be resubmitted for approval by the Chair and at least two members of the examining committee including the members of the Advisory Committee [*specify conditions explicitly and procedure and date for fulfilling*].

     **Fail**

We certify that the candidate has failed the Second Examination, and make the following recommendations [*specify recommendations explicitly*].

## VII. CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY IN PHILOSOPHY AND THE MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Students who have fulfilled all the requirements for the degree except those pertaining to the dissertation are eligible to be advanced to candidacy and to receive an “Advancement to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree” certificate. The student should apply to the Executive Officer in writing. A certificate of candidacy will then be issued by the Registrar. Such students may also receive the Master of Philosophy Degree upon application to the Registrar.

## VIII. DOCTORAL RESEARCH

Prior to Advancing to Candidacy, doctoral students undertake research in their first year in lab rotations (Biol 71101) and in their second and third years, in independent doctoral research or advanced study (Biol 89800 or Biol 89900). After advancing to candidacy, students register for one credit/semester in Dissertation Supervision (Biol 90000).

## IX. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TEACHING SKILLS, AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Students should visit the Graduate Center’s **Office of Career Planning and Professional Development** as early in their career in the Biology PhD Program as possible. The office provides individualized career counseling and helps students develop plans that will make them best-situated for obtaining post-doctoral work in academia or in non-academic institutions/organizations. Workshops are offered regularly, throughout the year. <https://careerplan.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>

All Biology PhD students must teach at least one college course per semester for two semesters before Advancing to Candidacy. Many students teach more than two semesters, and some are interested in future teaching careers. **The Teaching and Learning Center** at the Graduate Center provides many workshops and courses centered on the skills needed for effective teaching. <https://tlc.commonsgc.cuny.edu/>

All doctoral students at CUNY must complete an online course on Responsible Conduct of Research and attend a workshop on the same subject. These are CUNY-wide requirements. The online course must be completed by the end of the first semester in the Program. The workshop should be completed as soon as possible, but not later than the 4<sup>th</sup> semester in the Program. Information about the online course and workshops can be obtained at <http://www2.cuny.edu/research/research-compliance/responsible-conduct-of-research-rcr/>.

## X. DISSERTATION

At the time that a student is advanced to candidacy, a document outlining the current dissertation requirements will be sent to the student by the Registrar. The following link is current at the time of the production of this *Handbook* and is included for your information <http://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/dissertations>

**A. Dissertation Proposal** - The dissertation proposal that has been examined and approved as part of the Second Examination is filed with the Executive Officer. Should there be any



substantive changes in the proposed thesis, such changes, approved by the adviser, advisory committee, and deputy chair, should be submitted to the Executive Officer. Changes in, or additions to, the advisory committee considered necessary as the study develops are to be similarly reported. Such changes must first be approved by the entire advisory committee. The faculty members involved in such changes must be notified in writing.

**B. Advisory Committee Meetings** - The graduate student is responsible for arranging regular meetings at least once per year between the student and the entire advisory committee to evaluate the direction taken and progress being made. A progress report of that meeting bearing the date and signatures of the members of the committee will be required before registration for the Fall semester. (See part IV Advisory Committee, part C. Role of Advisory Committee)

**C. Draft of The Dissertation** - The dissertation is submitted to the members of the advisory committee in draft form. After the committee approves the draft, it recommends advancement to the Final Examination.

**D. Public Seminar** - A public seminar on the dissertation presented at the GC, a participating campus, or an affiliated institution prior to the formal defense is a requirement for the degree. Timely announcement of the seminar is to be sent to advisory committee members and all affiliated campuses and institutions as well as the Program Office. A thesis defense will not be scheduled unless this requirement is met. The seminar may take place on the same day as the thesis defense but must be public and must end (with questions taken from the audience) before the thesis defense begins.

**E. Final Examination Committee** - The Final Examination Committee is proposed after consultations among the members of the student's advisory committee. The five-member (minimum) Final Examination Committee shall include the members of the advisory committee (defined in Section VI.B.1) and at least two other specialists. One of these two specialists must have the equivalent of a faculty appointment at an institution outside of The City University of New York and its affiliated institutions (AMNH, IBR, and NYBG). Additional outside specialists may be designated as "readers" and need not be present at the actual defense. At least three members of the Final Examination Committee must be members of the CUNY doctoral faculty. At least two members of the final examination committee must be members of the CUNY line doctoral faculty in Biology (defined in Section IV-A). On specific questions regarding committee composition, consult with the Executive Officer, whose decision will be final. The student and/or the adviser will communicate with the proposed participants in the Final Examination to ascertain their willingness to serve and to establish a suitable meeting date. This information is communicated to the Executive Officer for approval at least six weeks before the scheduled examination date. The invitations to the members of the Final Examination Committee come from the GC Provost. Forms necessary in processing the examination results will be sent to the chair of the Final Examination Committee from the Program Office prior to the date of the examination.

**F. Distribution of Dissertation Copies** - The copies of the dissertation provided to the Final Examination Committee should be printed legibly and in good order, but they need not be in final form. Any clear method of reproduction may be employed. Copies must be distributed to committee members at least one month before the scheduled thesis defense (Final Examination). If this deadline is not met, the Final Examination must be rescheduled.

**G. Rescheduling** - If unforeseen circumstances arise (even at the last moment) so that all invited members of the Final Examination Committee are not able to be present, the examination must be rescheduled. One member of the final examination committee (not including the adviser) may attend the meeting remotely by video conference.

**H. Final Examination Report** - The chair of the Examining Committee will record the student's performance in a "Report of Final Examination" (a sample form is included in Appendix S) to the Executive Officer. If a dissertation requires at most minor revisions, it must subsequently be approved by the chair of the examination committee. If major revisions are required, the dissertation must be resubmitted to the chair and two members of the Examining Committee for approval before passage of the Final Examination can be recorded. An outline of the required major revisions must accompany the Report of Final Examination when it is submitted to the Biology Program Office. The chair informs the Executive Officer and the Senior Registrar when the revisions have been completed by submitting an "Approval of Revised Dissertation" form.

**I. Unsatisfactory Performance** - If the student's performance in the Final Examination is judged unsatisfactory, the student may be reexamined at the discretion of the Executive Committee in Biology and with the approval of the GC Provost.

**J. Dissertation Submission and Checkout Procedures** – Go to the following website (Graduate Center Library webpage on Dissertations & Theses) for deadlines and procedures for submitting the final version of the dissertation (<http://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/dissertations>). All submissions are made online. You must indicate your intent to deposit at least two weeks before the deadline for degree (intent is done online as per instructions provided at the site indicated above).

Once the Dissertation has been uploaded, the library will review and approve the submission (information about copyright and embargoes, etc. are provided on the library website referenced above). Once approved, the student will be emailed an approval page. The approval page must then be signed and delivered to the Library for authentication and safe keeping. The deposit is not final until the signed approval sheet has been received by the Library's Dissertation Office. Within 1-2 business days after this, the Library will contact both the student and the Registrar to say that this aspect of the doctoral degree requirements has been met.

Diplomas will be prepared for distribution only at the University's commencement. At any time after depositing the dissertation, the student may request from the Registrar an interim certificate testifying to the completion of the degree requirements.

**K. Editorial Requirements** - Please refer to the "Instructions for Preparing the Ph.D. Dissertation" which will be sent to you by the Registrar at the time of advancement to candidacy.

## **XI. CURRICULUM VITAE AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

As described in the Graduate Center Student Handbook, "The Graduate Center has partnered with a company named Interfolio to provide online dossier services. As is now common practice, student portfolios can be placed online in an Interfolio account and accessed 24/7. The student works directly with Interfolio to establish a portfolio that can include letters of recommendation, curriculum

vitae, writing samples, dissertation abstracts, teaching certifications, student evaluations, and more. The Interfolio system accepts and stores almost any type of information. Interfolio is an excellent way to store and deliver materials to an academic search committee or for further study. Interfolio maintains robust technological safeguards to keep documents private and safe. Once you sign up and upload your documents, the process for sending out materials becomes as simple as telling Interfolio where you want to apply and when.

The Graduate Center will pay for a one-time three-year membership for currently registered students in addition to subsidizing mailing credits. For more information, visit <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Prospective-Current-Students/Student-Life/Resources> or <http://www.interfolio.com>. The Office of Career Planning and Professional Development will no longer be sending out dossier materials by mail. Please contact [careerplan@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:careerplan@gc.cuny.edu) for more information.

## **XII. ALUMNI INFORMATION**

Upon completion of all requirements, it is requested that individuals complete an "Alumni Information" form in the Biology PhD Program office. These data are very important for summary information about the Program and for the Program office to maintain contact with our graduates.

The Graduate Center also requires that all students who deposit the thesis fill out an exit survey (instructions provided online upon filing the dissertation).

## **XIII. NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION**

The Graduate Center and University Center of The City University of New York is an equal opportunity and affirmative action institution. The GC does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender, sexual orientation, alienage or citizenship, race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, veteran status, or disability in its student admissions, employment, access to programs, and administration of educational policies.

The GC is committed to promoting pluralism and diversity and combating racism and bigotry. Concerns, questions, complaints, and suggestions about affirmative action and equal employment may be addressed to any member of the GC Affirmative Action Committee through the Affirmative Action Officer.

The City University of New York prohibits sexual harassment and has instituted policies, procedures, and educational programs to prevent and address sexual harassment. For more information, please contact the coordinator of the Sexual Harassment Panel (see contact information below).

Employees and applicants are protected from coercion, intimidation, interference, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation concerning discrimination or harassment.

## **XV. IMPORTANT CONTACTS**

**Compliance and Diversity issues:** <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Compliance-and-Diversity>

**504/ADA Coordinator:** <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Compliance-and-Diversity>

**Title IX Coordinator:** <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/TitleIX>

**Sexual Harassment complaints:** <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Compliance-and-Diversity>

**Ombuds Officer:** <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Ombuds>

**Executive Director for Human Resources:** <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Administrative-Services/Human-Resources>

*Revised by the Biology Executive Committee, April 19, 2005.*

*Revised by the Biology Executive Committee, May, 2008.*

*Revised by the Biology Executive Committee, March 2017*