UTSA

Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology

PhD in Neuroscience Policies and Procedures

2023 - 2024

Overview

The information outlined below describes the general policies and procedures of the Neuroscience PhD program as established by the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC) within the Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology (NDRB). These policies and procedures are additions to, but do not supersede, University policies and procedures detailed in the UTSA Graduate Catalog (https://catalog.utsa.edu/graduate/sciences/neuroscience/#degreestext). Changes and updates to this document and to the policies can be made by a majority vote of the DSC. This document supersedes all previous policy statements.

1. Timeline and milestones (for 2023-25 Graduate Catalog)

Years 1+

- Attend Neuroscience Seminars and post-seminar lunches
- Attend fellow PhD dissertation defenses, symposia, and other program events

Year 1

Required Courses/Trainings

- Neurophysiology (NDRB 5453 - Fall)
- Quantitative Biology (NDRB 6233 – Fall)
- Molecular Neuroscience (NDRB 5443 – Spring)
- Written Qualifying Exam (QE) Preparation (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)
- Neuroscience Journal Club (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)
- Three research rotations in 2 or 3 different labs (NDRB 7571 – Fall and Spring)
- Electives (three 3-credit courses needed in total)*
- Doctoral Research (NDRB 721X - Summer)
- Responsible Conduct of Research training (through Office of Research Integrity)
- Training in the ethical treatment of animals (through LARC) and /or Human Subjects Research (through IRB)

Additional Requirements

- Lab rotation presentations
- Pass Written QE
- Attend NDRB Trainee Development Workshop
- Complete an Individualized Development Plan (IDP) through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

Forms

- Milestones Agreement (Form 1)
- Interim Program of Study (Form 2)
- Neuro Rotation Blueprint (Form 3)
- Approval of Dissertation Supervisor (Form 4)

Year 2

Required Courses/Research

- Principles of Biological Scientific Writing (NDRB 7143 – Fall)
- Principles of Biological Scientific Teaching (NDRB 7113 – Spring)
- Neuroscience Journal Club (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)
- Doctoral Research (NDRB 721X – Fall, Spring and Summer)
- Electives (three 3-credit courses needed in total)*

Additional Requirements

- Pass Oral QE. Oral exam is based on a written proposal (F31 format).
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through

the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

Forms

- Appointment of the Oral Qualifying Exam Committee (Form 5)
- Completion of the Oral Qualifying Exam (Form 6)

Year 3

Required Courses/Research

- Ethical Conduct in Research (NDRB 5001)
- Doctoral Research (before signing candidacy forms; NDRB 721X) or Dissertation Research (after signing candidacy forms NDRB 731X) in Fall, Spring and Summer
- Neuroscience Journal Club (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)

Additional Requirements

- Establish dissertation committee with an external member and approval of proposal (Fall)
- Dissertation committee meetings each semester
- Oral presentation for 3rd year students in the NDRB PhD symposium (Fall)
- Submit research proposal for external funding (if you have not done so by now)
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

Forms

- Application for Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree (Form 7)
- Appointment of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee (Form 8)
- Application for Graduate Faculty Special Membership for outside committee member (Form 9)
- First Thesis Committee Meeting Form (Form 10)
- Dissertation Proposal Approval (Form 11)
- Thesis Committee Meeting Student Evaluation (Form 12)
- Thesis Committee Progress Form – used for committee meeting in the Spring (Form 13)

Years 4+

Required Courses/Research

- Dissertation Research (NDRB 731X – Fall, Spring and Summer)

Additional Requirements

- Dissertation committee meetings each semester
- Oral presentation during the 4th year in the NDRB PhD symposium (Spring)
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).
- Defend thesis

Forms

- Thesis Committee Progress Form (Form 13)
- Thesis Committee Meeting Student Evaluation (Form 12)
- Final Program of Study (Form 14)
- Completion of Dissertation Requirements (Form 15)

* Electives should be completed within Years 1-2 (3-credit per course). First year electives provide foundational knowledge for research success and must be approved by the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR). Second year electives must be approved by the PI. An elective can be taken in Year 3+ if there are scheduling conflicts.

2. Admission

Applications for admission to the Neuroscience PhD program will be solicited once per year and will be evaluated in accordance with standard UTSA policy. Applicants must fulfill the admission requirements as described on the UTSA graduate program website (https://future.utsa.edu/programs/doctoral/neuroscience/). Completed applications will be reviewed and discussed by the DSC. Students will be offered admission based on academic strength, motivation and aptitude for scientific research, the projected capacity of the program to provide adequate training funds and resources, and the student's overall fit with the program.

3. Required Courses

It is expected that all students will successfully complete the required course sequence according to the Timeline listed above (see Milestone Agreement – Form 1 and Interim Program of Study – Form 2). To remain in good academic standing, students must abide by the Timeline and receive a grade of B or better in all courses. To be eligible for departmental awards (e.g., merit and travel awards), students must be in good academic standing and attend the weekly Neuroscience Seminars and Student Lunches (>80% attendance or with approved absences). Students seeking a transfer of credit must submit a written request to the DSC, including information on the course(s) and justification, before being admitted to candidacy.

Students are required to enroll in the Principles of Biological Scientific Teaching (NDRB 7113) in Year 2. After fulfillment of the supervised teaching requirement and with approval from the PI, GAR and Department Chair, it may be possible to serve as a teaching assistant (TA). The specific course one can TA for depends on departmental needs.

Students receiving a grade less than B will be placed on academic probation until the deficit(s) are corrected (e.g., retaking the course). Students that have not corrected all deficits within a one-year period will be subject to dismissal from the Neuro PhD program at the discretion of the Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC). The UTSA College of Sciences policies state that graduate students are placed on academic dismissal for the following reasons: (1) GPA of < 2.0 in a semester, (2) earning an 'F' in any course, (3) student was admitted to the program on probation with conditions and failed to meet a condition, and (4) a student who is currently on academic probation would again be placed on academic probation under the provisions noted above. However, if the student's UTSA grade point average for the term is at least 3.0, they will remain on academic probation. A student who has been dismissed from the program may petition for reinstatement after one long semester (fall or spring) has elapsed from the date of dismissal. Students should read and abide by UTSA Student Code of Conduct.

4. Research Rotations

During the first year, students must complete 3 research rotations, each roughly 10 weeks long. The purpose of a research rotation is to expose the students to a diverse set of research environments and opportunities. Students that have already obtained an approved research advisor within their first year are allowed to complete 2 of the 3 research rotations in their thesis lab.

Prior to starting a rotation, the supervising advisor must fill out the Neuro Rotation Blueprint (Form 3) which outlines the rotation project, the skills that will be learned, and the expectations for the student. This form must be sent to the student and approved by the GAR prior to the start of the rotation. At the end of each rotation, every student is required to give a 10-15 minute oral presentation on the project completed during the rotation. The presentation will be given to a group of Neuroscience faculty and students at a designated time and place. The rotation faculty advisor is expected to help prepare the student for the presentation and to attend the final presentation.

5. Selection of Advisor

Faculty associated with the Neuroscience PhD program can be designated as either a Core member or an Affiliate member. Both Core and Affiliate faculty can serve on student committees (Oral QE and dissertation) but only Core faculty can serve as primary advisors for students in the program. All PhD candidates must have an advisor, and any candidate who is unable to secure sponsorship by a faculty member eligible to act as advisor by the end of their first year cannot continue in the program. The selection of an advisor reflects the mutual agreement of the student and the advisor as indicated by signatures on the Approval of Dissertation Supervisor Form (Form 4) and must be approved by the GAR and the NDRB Department Chair. A change in the advisor must be approved by the DSC. Maintaining sponsorship of a faculty advisor is required to remain in the program.

6. Written Qualifying Exam

Students must pass the Written Qualifying Examination (Written QE) by the end of the summer following their first year. The Written QE tests the ability of students to demonstrate that they have acquired a solid foundation in core areas of neuroscience. To pass the exam, students must be able to convey this knowledge in written form by answering questions regarding experimental design and interpretation. Students will prepare for the exam by enrolling in a one-hour QE colloquium in each of their first two semesters. The exam is comprised of separate sections (2-4 in the fall semester and two in the spring semester). The exam dates will be scheduled early in each semester. Each portion of the exam is an open book/internet exam prepared by the faculty teaching the QE colloquia and graded either by the QE instructor or by a panel of three faculty evaluators, in consultation with the DSC. To pass, students must receive at least a "satisfactory" result on each section (based on the grading rubric). Students who do not achieve a "satisfactory" score on their initial attempt will be allowed to revise and resubmit their exam. Students who do not obtain a "satisfactory" score following the resubmission will be given a remediation plan. Students who have more than one unsatisfactory exam score will be recommended for dismissal from the program at the discretion of the DSC.

7. Oral Qualifying Exam

Students have until the end of the spring semester of Year 2 to take the Qualifying Exam (Oral QE). The Oral QE is administered by an examination committee consisting of the student's research advisor plus three faculty members selected with the help of the student's advisor. These faculty must have standing as Core or Affiliate members of Neuroscience PhD program. **The advisor cannot serve as the committee's chair** - one of the other faculty members who is a Core member of the program must agree to serve as chair. Members of the examination committee must indicate their willingness to participate by signing the Oral Exam Committee form (Form 5), and the committee's composition must be approved by the DSC at least 1 month before the exam can be scheduled. Students are expected to coordinate with their committee members and the NDRB administrative team to select a day, time and location for the 2-hour exam. Should unforeseen extenuating circumstances appear that prevent a member of the examination committee from participating in the Oral QE, a current faculty member of Neuro DSC will act as an alternate member of the examination committee.

Students must submit a preliminary research proposal to the examination committee one week prior to the Oral QE exam. Usually, this preliminary proposal will be an early version of the student's subsequent dissertation research. The proposal should follow the format of the NIH National Research Service Award (NRSA) F31 predoctoral application. This format includes (A) a set of *Specific Aims*, (B) a *Significance* section, which poses a research problem and includes a critical review of the relevant literature, (C) a section of *Approach*, in which an experimental approach is developed to address the research problem posed, and the specific experimental methods to be employed are described in adequate detail to allow a determination of their feasibility. This section should also discuss possible outcomes of the experiment and their interpretations. In line with F31 proposal instructions, the Specific Aims should be 1 page with the rest of the proposal ~ 6 pages.

The intent of the Oral QE is to assess whether the student has the knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete a PhD dissertation. The exam will generally concentrate on issues raised in the preliminary proposal but may address any topic in the student's Neuroscience education. Typically, the student makes a short introductory presentation that triggers an extended period of question and answer. Students should consult with the committee chair prior to the exam to discuss general expectations for exam day. The Completion of the Qualifying Exam form must be filled out following the successful completion of the Oral QE (Form 6).

A majority passing vote by the committee is needed for the student to pass. The committee may also suggest remediation steps to be taken by the doctoral student to correct deficiencies perceived during the oral portion of the exam. The student also may pass conditionally, in which case the student may be required to take additional coursework or satisfy other requirements to address the deficiency. If the Oral Qualifying Exam Committee is not satisfied with a student's performance, the student must repeat the exam in the summer before the first week of the Fall semester of Year 3. Students failing to complete their Oral QE by this time will be recommended for dismissal from the program at the discretion of the DSC.

8. Advancement to Candidacy
Students successfully completing the Written QE, Oral QE, and required course work (see Timeline: Years 1-2) will advance to candidacy upon receipt of the appropriate forms (Application for Candidacy - Form 7). If there are scheduling conflicts that prevent the availability of a desired elective course during Years 1-2, students can advance to candidacy provided they have completed at least 2 of the 3 elective courses. Note that the Application for Candidacy Form requires the signature of an outside committee member and will typically be filled out when the first Thesis Dissertation Committee meeting occurs (see below). It is expected that students will have advanced to candidacy by the middle of the third year in the program.

9. The Dissertation Committee / First Committee Meeting
After passing the Oral QE, students must form a Dissertation Committee and have their First Committee Meeting by the end of the next semester (typically the Fall semester of the 3rd year in the program). The Dissertation Committee will oversee the remainder of the student's education in the program and must consist of the student's research advisor, who serves as the committee's chair, at least 3 additional faculty members who have standing as Core or Affiliate members of Neuroscience PhD program, and one outside member (Form 8). The outside member may be a member of the faculty of another Department at UTSA or a faculty member at another institution who must be approved by the Graduate Council (Form 9). Additional members may serve on the committee (e.g., specific research expertise needed). The final makeup of the committee must be approved by the DSC. Any changes in the makeup of the dissertation committee must be approved by the DSC.

Students are expected to coordinate with their committee members and the NDRB administrative team to select a day, time and location for the First Committee Meeting (typically 1-2 hours for this meeting). Students must prepare a Dissertation Proposal prior to the First Committee Meeting. The proposal should address two questions: (1) what are the major goals and objectives of this project and (2) what experiments are planned to accomplish these objectives? These questions should be answered at a level of specificity that allows the dissertation committee to assess the scientific merit and feasibility of the proposal. The level of detail should be similar to, or slightly more detailed than, the specific aims page of a typical grant. Proposals should be 1-2 pages in length. Typically, the Dissertation Proposal will be a revision of the *Specific Aims* from the Oral QE.

When the student and advisor have agreed on a Dissertation Proposal, the student will then submit the Proposal to the Dissertation Committee one week prior to the First Committee Meeting (Form 10). The Proposal serves an agreement between the student, the advisor, and the Dissertation Committee about the scope of research needed to constitute an acceptable PhD Dissertation. With all members present, the committee will suggest changes if needed to the proposal and give final approval (Form 11). Forms 7-11 can be completed during this First Committee Meeting. At the end of the meeting or soon after, the advisor must complete the Thesis Committee Meeting Evaluation (Form 12). The student is free to add comments to the form, but this is not required. The advisor and the student should sign the form and forward the approved form to the DSC chair.

If the committee does not approve the proposal, the student should work with the committee to correct any deficiencies noted at the initial meeting. A second meeting will need to be scheduled to obtain approval of the Proposal (should be within ~1-2 month of initial meeting).

10. Dissertation Committee Meetings
Students are expected to coordinate with their committee members and the NDRB administrative team to select a day, time and location for the dissertation meetings. Students should confer with their PI regarding the planned duration of the Committee Meetings. While these meetings typically last 1 hour, they can take more depending on student needs and discussion. At either the beginning or the end of the committee meeting, the advisor will leave the room so the student can freely discuss any concerns/issues they might have with the other members of the dissertation committee. Next, the student will leave, and the advisor will return to the room where they can then discuss any concerns/issues they might have with the other members of the dissertation committee. Committee members should use the information received during these discussions to mitigate any potential conflict between the advisor and the student. Should the student not feel comfortable confiding in the committee in this open forum, they can request a private meeting with individual members of the dissertation committee, the GAR, or the department chair.

Students are required to have at least one meeting with their dissertation committee each semester. If the external committee member cannot attend the committee meeting, the student should schedule a separate meeting to meet one-on-one with the external member. The student should inform the GAR and the program administrator of the time and date of the committee meeting when it is scheduled. Before the meeting, the student must fill out the Thesis Committee Progress Report (Form 13) and send this to members of the Dissertation Committee one week prior to the meeting. The form is intended to update the committee on the student's progress toward the PhD, allowing as much time as possible for the committee to give scientific feedback. At the end of the meeting or soon after, the advisor must complete the Thesis Committee Meeting Evaluation (Form 12). The student is free to add comments to the form, but this is not required. The advisor and the student should sign the form and forward the approved form to the GAR and program administrator.

11. Fellowship Proposal

Ideally by the 3rd year in the program, and no later than the 4th year in the program, the student must submit a research proposal for extramural funding (e.g., NIH F31, NSF GFRP). Note that some fellowships can only be applied to at early stages in one's PhD. There is no requirement on which outside funding agency to apply and there is no requirement to receive funding, but an application must be submitted. International students can find a list of grants / fellowships at https://www.fic.nih.gov/Funding/NonNIH?type=predoctoral.

Through the NDRB incentive funding program, students can receive $500 for applying to competitive fellowships and grants. Additional incentives will be provided for successfully obtaining external funds.

12. The Dissertation Defense

The student must present their Dissertation work at a public seminar and pass the Dissertation Defense (Form 14 and Form 15). The Dissertation Defense is a closed-door meeting in which the student will be asked to field questions from the dissertation committee members on topics relating to the relevant literature as well as the methods, results, and conclusions of the student's research. The student will consult with the members of the Dissertation Committee regarding an acceptable date for the seminar and Dissertation Defense. At least one month prior to the exam, the student will request the NDRB department administration (e.g., graduate program coordinator) to schedule the Seminar and Defense on that date. Notices of the seminar are posted by the graduate program coordinator at least one week prior to the Seminar and Defense. The student should provide the written Dissertation to the committee, so they have ample time to read and review the Dissertation before the defense. The student should consult with individual committee members regarding their preference in lead time for receiving the Dissertation (typically 2-4 weeks). The student should consult with the graduate school and be reminded of the required format for the written Dissertation, what requirements must be fulfilled, and important deadlines to obtain the PhD (https://graduateschool.utsa.edu/current-students/).

13. Total Duration in the Program

While it is important that a student's dissertation research be of the highest possible caliber, it is also essential that the student complete all requirements for his/her Doctoral degree in a timely fashion. Students in the Neuroscience PhD program are expected to remain in residency and work full time on their dissertation. Students that are not making satisfactory progress, as judged by their research advisor and dissertation committee, will be referred to the DSC. The DSC may recommend that the student be placed on academic probation, take a leave from the program, or suggest other measures to address the issue. If the problems are not resolved, the student may be recommended for dismissal from the program. It is expected that most students will complete their degree and graduate from UTSA by the end of their 5th year in the program.

14. Miscellaneous

Students are expected to abide by the timelines outlined above. However, exemptions can be made on a case-by-case basis (e.g., medical issues). Variances from the timelines outlined above need to be approved by the DSC.

We encourage all students to make use of the wellness and social resources provided by UTSA:

- Wellness Center: https://www.utsa.edu/students/wellbeing/
- Student Recreation Center: https://campusrec.utsa.edu/
- Student Affinity Groups: https://www.utsa.edu/inclusiveexcellence/our-approach/affinity-groups/

15. NDRB Department Doctoral Student Guidelines for Grievance Remediation

1) **Review University Policies.** Upon identification of a grievance, a doctoral (PhD) student in the NDRB Department (i.e., a student in either the DRS or Neuro PhD programs) should review the relevant university policies and procedures (see list below). If applicable, the student should follow the reporting procedures as outlined on the following links.

    - Campus Resources: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/faq/resources.html
    - Equal Opportunity Office FAQ: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/faq/
    - Title IX FAQ: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/title-ix/faq.html
    - Mandatory Reporter FAQ: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/faq/MandatoryReporterFAQs.html
    - Pregnancy and Parenting FAQ: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/faq/PregnancyandParentingFAQs.html
    - Witness FAQ: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/faq/WitnessFAQs.html
    - Whistleblower and Retaliation Policy: https://www.utsa.edu/compliance-and-risk-services/report-it/whistleblower-retaliation.html

2) **Interpersonal remediation.** If possible, the student is encouraged to speak with the person toward whom the grievance is directed to see if the situation can be resolved interpersonally. If the student is not comfortable speaking directly with the person toward whom the grievance is directed or if satisfactory resolution is not be achieved interpersonally, the student can report the matter to the department.

3) **Departmental reporting of a grievance**. The student should report grievances to the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR) of the relevant PhD program. If the student prefers not to bring the matter to the attention of the GAR, the student should bring the matter to the attention of the Department Chair.

4) **Departmental remediation.** Upon being informed of a student's grievance, the relevant parties within the department (student, GAR and/or Department Chair) will discuss the appropriate course of action. The GAR and/or Department Chair will follow university procedures for Mandatory Reporters: https://www.utsa.edu/eos/MandatoryReporter.html.

    - If the grievance can be addressed at the level of the relevant program and/or Doctoral Studies Committee (DSC), a meeting of the DSC plus the Department Chair will be scheduled at which the student will be invited to present their grievance. The steps for remediation may be discussed during this meeting depending on the nature of the grievance.
    - If the grievance involves a faculty member, or another student enrolled in the program, a separate meeting with the DSC plus the Department Chair will be scheduled at which the target of the grievance will be allowed to present their perspective.
    - Following these meetings, the DSC plus Department Chair will discuss the actions needed to resolve the grievance.
    - Depending on the nature of the specific grievance, the following entities will be informed and asked for input as needed:
        - The College of Sciences Associate Dean for Graduate Education, and, by extension, the Dean of the College of Sciences
        - The UTSA Graduate School
        - UTSA Legal services
        - UTSA Counseling services
        - The VPREDKE's office
        - The Provost's office
    - If the grievance cannot be resolved informally to the satisfaction of the student, the student should follow the Student Complaint Process to initiate a complaint following the steps outlined in the student catalog at: https://catalog.utsa.edu/policies/administrativepoliciesandprocedures/studentgrievances/

Neuroscience PhD Student Timeline (2023-2025 Catalog)

Year 1

NDRB 5453 (Neurophys.)
NDRB 6233 (Quant. Bio.)
NDRB 7041 (QE Prep)
NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 7571 (Rotation)

NDRB 5443 (Molecular)
NDRB 7041 (QE Prep)
NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 7571 (Rotation)
Elective(s)

NDRB 721X (Research)

Fall	Spring	Summer

-Milestones agreement (Form 1)
-Interim Program of Study (Form 2)
-Neuro Rotation Blueprint (Form 3) x3

-Pass Written QE
-Approval of Dissertation Supervisor (Form 4)

Year 2

NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 7143 (Sci. Writing)
NDRB 721X (Research)
Elective(s)

NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 7113 (Sci. Teaching)
NDRB 721X (Research)
Elective(s)

NDRB 721X (Research)

Fall	Spring	Summer

Form QE committee
(Form 5)

Pass Oral QE
(Form 6)

Submit F31

Year 3

NDRB 5001 (Ethics)
NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 731X (Research)

NDRB 7041 (Journal club)
NDRB 731X (Research)

NDRB 731X (Research)

Fall	Spring	Summer

-3rd year research talks
-Advance to candidacy (Form 7)
-Form dissertation comm. (Forms 8-9)
-First committee meeting (Form 10)
-Approve dissertation proposal (Form 11)
-Committee meeting eval. (Form 12)

Committee meeting and evaluation
(Forms 12-13)

Year 4 — Year 5

NDRB 731X (Research) →

Fall	Spring	Summer	Fall	Spring	Summer

Comm. meeting
and evaluation
(Forms 12-13)

-4th year talks
-Comm. meeting
and evaluation
(Forms 12-13)

Comm. meeting
and evaluation
(Forms 12-13)

Defend thesis
(Forms 14-15)

Milestones Agreement Form

Neuroscience Ph.D. Program

This form informs students about the academic milestones that they will be expected to reach in order to earn their Ph.D. degree. Students are expected to reach each milestone within the specified time period in order to make satisfactory progress through the program. Students who are not making satisfactory progress may lose funding, be placed on academic probation, or be dismissed from the program. Pursuit of the Neurobiology Ph.D. degree entails a high amount of effort. It is a full-time job. As such, students in the Neuroscience Ph.D. Program should not keep outside employment.

Academic Advising

Upon entering the Neuroscience Ph.D. program, all students will be assigned an advisor. The advisor will be a member of the NDRB department. All students' first advisor will be the Graduate Advisor of Record, who is the chair of the Doctoral Studies Committee. Additional mentoring and preparation for the written Qualifying Exam will be provided by the faculty teaching the core courses. Upon joining the laboratory of a faculty member of the Biology Department, each student will then have the principal investigator (PI) assigned as his/her advisor.

Academic advising includes the following elements that are designed to ensure that students remain in good academic standing and make satisfactory progress through the program:

- Ensuring that semi-annual reviews between student and advisor and/or supervising committee occur. In addition, all program students will meet individually with the GAR to obtain approval of course enrollment forms for each semester and each summer session. Note that program students who have selected a dissertation advisor will obtain that advisor's approval of their course enrollment form before meeting with the GAR.

- A student's selection of a dissertation advisor must be approved by the Neuroscience GAR and the Department Chair.

- Upon advancement to candidacy, program students will have convened a Dissertation Committee, and will meet with that committee at least twice each year: once during the fall semester, and once during the spring semester.

- Clarification of the timetable for completing any remaining course requirements, examinations, and other requirements.

- Program students are normally expected to complete the Neuroscience PhD program within five years. Requests to extend this period of matriculation must be approved by the student's dissertation advisor, the members of the Dissertation Committee, the Neuroscience DSC, and the Department Chair.

Requirements for all Students in the Neuroscience Ph.D. Program

Years 1+

- Attend Neuroscience Seminars and post-seminar lunches
- Attend fellow PhD dissertation defenses, symposia, and other program events

Year 1

Required Courses/Trainings

- Neurophysiology (NDRB 5453 - Fall)
- Quantitative Biology (NDRB 6233 – Fall)
- Molecular Neuroscience (NDRB 5443 – Spring)
- Written Qualifying Exam (QE) Preparation (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)
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- Three research rotations in 2 or 3 different labs (NDRB 7571 – Fall and Spring)
- Electives (three 3-credit courses needed in total)*
- Doctoral Research (NDRB 721X - Summer)
- Responsible Conduct of Research training (through Office of Research Integrity)
- Training in the ethical treatment of animals (through LARC) and /or Human Subjects Research (through IRB)

Additional Requirements

- Lab rotation presentations
- Pass Written QE
- Attend NDRB Trainee Development Workshop
- Complete an Individualized Development Plan (IDP) through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

Forms

- Milestones Agreement (Form 1)
- Interim Program of Study (Form 2)
- Neuro Rotation Blueprint (Form 3)
- Approval of Dissertation Supervisor (Form 4)

Year 2

Required Courses/Research

- Principles of Biological Scientific Writing (NDRB 7143 – Fall)
- Principles of Biological Scientific Teaching (NDRB 7113 – Spring)
- Neuroscience Journal Club (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)
- Doctoral Research (NDRB 721X – Fall, Spring and Summer)
- Electives (three 3-credit courses needed in total)*

Additional Requirements

- Pass Oral QE. Oral exam is based on a written proposal (F31 format).
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/

(preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

Forms

- Appointment of the Oral Qualifying Exam Committee (Form 5)
- Completion of the Oral Qualifying Exam (Form 6)

Year 3

Required Courses/Research

- Ethical Conduct in Research (NDRB 5001)
- Doctoral Research (before signing candidacy forms; NDRB 721X) or Dissertation Research (after signing candidacy forms NDRB 731X) in Fall, Spring and Summer
- Neuroscience Journal Club (NDRB 7041 – Fall and Spring)

Additional Requirements

- Establish dissertation committee with an external member and approval of proposal (Fall)
- Dissertation committee meetings each semester
- Oral presentation for 3rd year students in the NDRB PhD symposium (Fall)
- Submit research proposal for external funding (if you have not done so by now)
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).

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- First Thesis Committee Meeting Form (Form 10)
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- Thesis Committee Meeting Student Evaluation (Form 12)
- Thesis Committee Progress Form – used for committee meeting in the Spring (Form 13)

Years 4+

Required Courses/Research

- Dissertation Research (NDRB 731X – Fall, Spring and Summer)

Additional Requirements

- Dissertation committee meetings each semester
- Oral presentation during the 4th year in the NDRB PhD symposium (Spring)
- Work with your advisor on your IDP through https://myidp.sciencecareers.org/ (preferred) or through the UTSA Graduate School Annual Review (less preferred).
- Defend thesis

Forms

- Thesis Committee Progress Form (Form 13)
- Thesis Committee Meeting Student Evaluation (Form 12)
- Final Program of Study (Form 14)
- Completion of Dissertation Requirements (Form 15)

* Electives should be completed within Years 1-2 (3-credit per course). First year electives provide foundational knowledge for research success and must be approved by the Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR). Second year electives must be approved by the PI. An elective can be taken in Year 3+ if there are scheduling conflicts.

I have read this form and have had the opportunity to discuss the information contained in it with my advisor. I understand the academic milestones that I am expected to reach in order to successfully complete the Neuroscience Ph.D. program, as well as the expected timeline for completing these milestones.

_____ _____

Student's Signature Date

_____ _____

Advisor's Signature Date

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

Interim Program of Study for the Doctor of Philosophy

Student Name: _____ Student ID: @

Program of Study for Doctor of Philosophy

Catalog: **2023-2025** Major: Neuroscience Concentration:

The following courses are required for the degree indicated below:

Core Courses (18 credit hours required)

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 5001	Ethical Conduct in Research	3			
NDRB 5443	Molecular and Cellular Neurobiology	3			
NDRB 5453	Neurophysiology	3			
NDRB 6233	Quantitative Biology	3			
NDRB 7113	Principles of Biological Scientific Teaching	3			
NDRB 7143	Principles of Biological Scientific Writing	3			
NDRB 7571	Research Rotations	1			
NDRB 7571	Research Rotations	1			
				Total Credits:	**18**

Colloquia (8 credit hours minimum):

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
				Total Credits:	**8**

Doctoral Research and Dissertation (minimum of 44 credit hours required)

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours		Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 7211	Doctoral Research	1			
NDRB 7212	Doctoral Research	2			
NDRB 7213	Doctoral Research	3			
NDRB 7214	Doctoral Research	4			
NDRB 7215	Doctoral Research	5			
NDRB 7216	Doctoral Research	6			
		Total Research Credits			
NDRB 7311	Doctoral Dissertation	1			
NDRB 7312	Doctoral Dissertation	2			
NDRB 7313	Doctoral Dissertation	3			
NDRB 7314	Doctoral Dissertation	4			
NDRB 7315	Doctoral Dissertation	5			
NDRB 7316	Doctoral Dissertation	6			
		Total Dissertation Credits			
				Total Credits:	**44**

Electives (9 credit hours required)

These can be selected from any 5000-7000 level lecture courses with the approval of the Neuroscience Doctoral Studies Committee

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
				Total Credits:	**9**

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS: **79**

*Minimum of 79 hours of courses with B or above.

**Indicates course used towards MS degree (maximum of 30 hours, comparable to core and elective courses).

Upon completion of the above requirements, in addition to meeting the University-wide requirements for all Doctoral degrees, the above named student has satisfied all requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience.

Supervising Professor's Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor of Record's Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____
Doctoral Program Committee Chairman

Signature _____ Date _____
Dean of College of Science

Signature _____ Date _____
Dean of Graduate School

NOTES:
Dissertation Committee: Chair: _____ Member: _____

Member: _____ Member: _____

Member: _____ Outside Member: _____

THE ORIGINAL COPY OF THIS FOR MUST BE FILED WITH THE REGISTRAR

---------- DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE ----------

Applied for degree	_____	Time Limit (8yr)	_____	Hours of A _____ x 4 _____	
Advanced to Candidacy	_____	Comprehensive Exam	_____	B _____ x 3 _____	
Admission Cleared	_____	Dissertation Filed	_____	C _____ x 2 _____	
				Total _____: GPA (3.0 min) _____	

Neuro Rotation Blueprint

PI:

Student:

Dates:

Summary of the planned research project:

-

Student will receive training in:

-

Goals/expectations for the student:

-

UTSA The University of Texas at San Antonio™

College of Sciences | Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology

Date: _____

To: **NEURO Doctoral Studies Committee**

From: _____

Student

RE: ***Request to Approve Doctoral Supervisor***

I wish to inform the NEURO - Doctoral Studies Committee that I have chosen

Dr. _____

to be my supervising Professor with his/her consent.

PI Funding Source _____

Signature _____

Ph.D. Student

Signature _____

Supervising Professor

Approved by:

Signature _____

NEURO-DSC Chair/GAR

Signature _____

Department of Neuroscience, Developmental & Regenerative Biology

UTSA The University of Texas at San Antonio™

College of Sciences | Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Science

Memorandum

Date: _____

To: Neuro Doctoral Studies Committee

_____
Supervising Professor

From: _____
Ph.D. Student

RE: ***Proposed members of Qualifying Committee***

_____
Chair

_____
Member

_____
Member

_____
Member

☐ Approved

☐ Denied

Approved by: _____
DSC Chair

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The University of Texas at San Antonio

COMPLETION OF QUALIFYING EXAM

Completion of the Qualifying Exam for the Doctor of

_____

STUDENT INFORMATION

_____ _____ _____
Name *Degree Program* *myUTSA ID*

UTSA ACADEMIC RECORD:

Semester of entry into program (semester/year): _____

Total number of semester hours completed: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____

All required courses completed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Passed Qualifying Exam: Written: _____ Oral: _____
Date *Date*

SIGNATURES OF QUALIFYING EXAM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

_____ _____ _____
Exam Committee Chair, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

_____ _____ _____
Exam Committee, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

_____ _____ _____
Exam Committee, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

_____ _____ _____
Exam Committee, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR

_____ _____ _____
Supervising Professor, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

DEPARTMENT

_____ _____ _____
Department Ph.D. Advisor, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

_____ _____ _____
Chair, Doctoral Program Committee, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

_____ _____ _____
Department Chair, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

COLLEGE

_____ _____ _____
Associate Dean of the College, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

_____ _____
Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, Signature *Date*

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The University of Texas at San Antonio

APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name _____ myUTSA ID _____

Anticipated Graduation Date _____ Degree Sought _____ Program of Study _____

Title of Dissertation (Subject to Change) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

☐ Level of English proficiency is satisfactory
☐ Scholarship to date is satisfactory
☐ Program of Study is satisfactory
☐ Qualifying exam administered

Supervising Professor for Dissertation, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Dissertation Committee Member, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Dissertation Committee Member, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Dissertation Committee Member, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Dissertation Committee Member, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Outside Examiner, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Supervising Professor, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon this student's performance to date and the attached Program of Study:

☐ We recommend that the student be advanced to candidacy ☐ We do not recommend advancement to candidacy at this time

Chair, Doctoral Program Committee, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Department Chair, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

Associate D ean of the College, Signature _____ Print Name _____ Date _____

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Based on the College's recommendation, I hereby ☐ Approve ☐ Deny Candidacy.

Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, Signature _____ Date _____

UTSA The Graduate School
The University of Texas at San Antonio

APPOINTMENT OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Please Choose One: ☐ New appointment of committee ☐ Change of committee member(s) **STUDENT INFORMATION**

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name _____ *my UTSA ID* _____

Department _____ *College* _____ *Date* _____

PROPOSED DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

			Graduate Faculty	If Applicable Membership Approved
Chair, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Outside Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No
Supervising Professor, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No

DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

☐ We recommend that the Dissertation Committee be approved ☐ We do not recommend that the Dissertation Committee be approved

Department Ph.D. Advisor, Signature _____ *Print Name* _____ *Date* _____

Chair, Doctoral Program Committee, Signature _____ *Print Name* _____ *Date* _____

Department Chair, Signature _____ *Print Name* _____ *Date* _____

Associate Dean of the College, Signature _____ *Print Name* _____ *Date* _____

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Based on the College's recommendation, I hereby ☐ Approve ☐ Deny the request.

Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, Signature _____ *Date* _____

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The University of Texas at San Antonio

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE FACULTY SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP

*THIS APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT IN ITS ENTIRETY—PARTIAL APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED TO DEPARTMENTS

I. APPLICANT

Full Name _____ UTSA Department _____

Requesting College _____

Status:
- ☐ Initial Appointment as a Special Member to the Graduate Faculty
- ☐ Reappointment as a Special Member to the Graduate Faculty Date of initial appointment: _____
- ☐

Teaching:
- ☐ Not Applicable
- ☐ Application to teach at the Master's level
- ☐ Application to teach at the Doctoral level and Master's level

Service:
- ☐ Not Applicable
- ☐ Application to serve on Master's committee(s)
- ☐ Application to serve on Doctoral and Master's committee(s)

Areas of Expertise: _____

II. JUSTIFICATION

Explanation of the department need for this Special Membership in the UTSA Graduate Faculty:

_____

III.CURRICULUM VITA

Please attach a copy of a current Curriculum Vita.

Current nonA UTSA Position/Title (if applicable) _____

Current nonA UTSA Affiliation/Employer (if applicable) _____

(continued)

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATE FACULTY SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP

a) Highest Degree Earned:_____

b) When and Where Obtained:_____

c) Discipline or Area of Specialization:_____

d) Does the applicant hold a terminal degree in the field of this application? ☐ Yes ☐ No Explanation of the applicant's qualification for this special membership if the applicant does not currently possess a terminal degree in the field of this application:

_____

_____

_____

_____

e) Is there a potential conflict of interest regarding the applicant (e.g., a UTSA Ph.D. serving on a former classmate's committee or a postdoc paid with grant money who serves on a committee with another member who controls his or her funding and employment)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Explanation of how the department will minimize or avoid the potential conflict of interest:

_____

_____

_____

_____

IV. SIGNATURES & RECOMMENDATIONS

_____ Number of Department Graduate Program Committee members

_____ Vote (for/against)

_____ Date of Vote

APPROVALS

_____	_____	_____	☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove
Graduate Program Chair, Signature	Print Name	*Date*	
_____	_____	_____	☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove
Department Chair, Signature	Print Name	*Date*	
_____	_____	_____	☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove
Associate Dean, Signature	Print Name	*Date*	

Neuro PhD Progress Report for First Thesis Committee Meeting

The main agenda item for a student's first committee meeting is for the student, the Supervising Professor, and the Dissertation Committee to agree on a plan to successfully complete a PhD Dissertation. This includes an evaluation of the general scope of research, the approach taken, and an anticipated timeline for completion. The student should fill this form out and send it to the PI, committee and GAR before the meeting.

Student:

PI:

Thesis Committee:

Tentative Thesis Title:

Date of meeting:

1. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

This should be at the level of a specific aims page with added details as needed (~1-2 pages). Please make sure you address: (1) What are the major goals and objectives of this project and (2) What experiments are planned to accomplish those objectives.

2. PROGRESS

Please outline what experiments have been performed to date (bullet point format)

-

3. CHANGES/PROBLEMS

Describe any major difficulties encountered to date and plans to resolve them.

4. ANTICIPATED PROGRESS IN THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD

Please outline what you plan to do during the next six months to accomplish your goals and objectives (bullet point format). Please also outline publication and funding plans (if applicable).

-

5. TIMELINE

What is the current anticipated timeline for completing your dissertation?

6. PRODUCTS AND PRESENTATIONS (Provide aggregated list since entering the program, with most recent first. Provide anticipated date of submission for products in preparation.)

A. Manuscripts

B. Grants and Fellowships (submitted and funded)

C. Presentations

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The University of Texas at San Antonio

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

STUDENT INFORMATION

Name _____ myUTSA ID _____

Department _____ College _____

Title of Dissertation Proposal _____

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair, Signature _____	Print Name _____	Department _____
Member, Signature _____	Print Name _____	Department _____
Member, Signature _____	Print Name _____	Department _____
Member, Signature _____	Print Name _____	Department _____
Outside Member, Signature _____	Print Name _____	Department _____

DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE ACTION

Doctoral Program Committee Review Date: _____

Doctoral Program Committee Chair, Signature _____	Print Name _____
Department Chair, Signature _____	Print Name _____
Associate Dean of the College, Signature _____	Print Name _____

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Based on the College's recommendation, I hereby ☐ Approve ☐ Disapprove Dissertation Proposal.

Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, Signature _____ Date _____

Attachments:

1] Dissertation Proposal

Thesis Committee Student Evaluation

This form should be filled out the PI (with comments as needed from the student). Both the PI and the student need to sign the document and send to the GAR.

Student:

PI:

Date of committee meeting:

Committee members present:

A. Does the committee agree that the current proposal and timeline reflect a realistic plan for completing a dissertation?

B. Are there specific issues that need to be addressed or clarified before the next meeting?

C. The PI and student are expected to have an individual meeting specifically related to the evaluation of student progress related to each thesis committee meeting. What was the date of this meeting?

D. General recommendations/evaluation (to be filled in by the PI with student comments optional). Please provide a general evaluation of the student's progress toward a PhD. Be specific about any obstacles and what should be done to address them. Student comments/responses welcome but not required.

E. Electronic signature of Student and PI:

Neuro PhD Student Progress Report

This form should be filled out by the student and sent to the PI, the committee, and the GAR prior to the meeting.

Student:

PI:

Thesis Committee:

Tentative Thesis Title:

Date of meeting:

Have there been any changes to the proposal or timeline since the last meeting? YES NO
(If YES, please comment on changes below.)

1. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL
Please copy/paste from your previous meeting and update as needed. Note substantive changes by using a different colored font.

2. PROGRESS
A. Copy/paste your bullet point responses for Anticipated Progress from your last report. Please update your progress on each point (~1 sentence).

-

B. Please outline any additional progress here.

-

3. CHANGES/PROBLEMS
Describe any difficulties encountered during the last reporting period and plans to resolve them.

4. ANTICIPATED PROGRESS IN NEXT REPORTING PERIOD
Please outline what you plan to do during the next six months to accomplish your goals and objectives (bullet point format). Please also outline publication and funding plans (if applicable).

-

5. TIMELINE
What is the current timeline for completing your dissertation?

6. PRODUCTS AND PRESENTATIONS (Provide aggregated list since entering the program, with most recent first. Provide anticipated date of submission for products in preparation.)

A. Manuscripts

B. Grants and Fellowships

C. Presentations

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO

Final Program of Study for the Doctor of Philosophy

Student Name: _____ Student ID: @

Program of Study for Doctor of Philosophy

Catalog: **2023-2025** Major: Neuroscience Concentration:

The following courses are required for the degree indicated below:

Core Courses (18 credit hours required)

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 5001	Ethical Conduct in Research	3			
NDRB 5443	Molecular and Cellular Neurobiology	3			
NDRB 5453	Neurophysiology	3			
NDRB 6233	Quantitative Biology	3			
NDRB 7113	Principles of Biological Scientific Teaching	3			
NDRB 7143	Principles of Biological Scientific Writing	3			
NDRB 7571	Research Rotations	1			
NDRB 7571	Research Rotations	1			
				Total Credits:	**18**

Colloquia (8 credit hours minimum):

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
NDRB 7041		1			
				Total Credits:	**8**

Doctoral Research and Dissertation (minimum of 44 credit hours required)

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours		Grade	Use Towards Degree
NDRB 7211	Doctoral Research	1			
NDRB 7212	Doctoral Research	2			
NDRB 7213	Doctoral Research	3			
NDRB 7214	Doctoral Research	4			
NDRB 7215	Doctoral Research	5			
NDRB 7216	Doctoral Research	6			
		Total Research Credits			
NDRB 7311	Doctoral Dissertation	1			
NDRB 7312	Doctoral Dissertation	2			
NDRB 7313	Doctoral Dissertation	3			
NDRB 7314	Doctoral Dissertation	4			
NDRB 7315	Doctoral Dissertation	5			
NDRB 7316	Doctoral Dissertation	6			
		Total Dissertation Credits			
				Total Credits:	**44**

Electives (9 credit hours required)

These can be selected from any 5000-7000 level lecture courses with the approval of the Neuroscience Doctoral Studies Committee

Discipline and Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Semester Taken	Grade	Use Towards Degree
				Total Credits:	**9**

TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS: **79**

*Minimum of 79 hours of courses with B or above.

**Indicates course used towards MS degree (maximum of 30 hours, comparable to core and elective courses).

Upon completion of the above requirements, in addition to meeting the University-wide requirements for all Doctoral degrees, the above named student has satisfied all requirements for Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience.

Supervising Professor's Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor of Record's Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____
Doctoral Program Committee Chairman

Signature_____ Date_____
Dean of College of Science

Signature _____ Date _____
Dean of Graduate School

NOTES:
Dissertation Committee: Chair: _____ Member: _____

Member: _____ Member: _____

Member: _____ Outside Member: _____

THE ORIGINAL COPY OF THIS FOR MUST BE FILED WITH THE REGISTRAR

---------- DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE ----------

Applied for degree	_____	Time Limit (8yr)	_____	Hours of A _____ x 4 _____	
Advanced to Candidacy	_____	Comprehensive Exam	_____	B _____ x 3 _____	
Admission Cleared	_____	Dissertation Filed	_____	C _____ x 2 _____	
				Total _____: GPA (3.0 min) _____	

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CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS FOR A DOCTORAL DEGREE

To Registrar: This is to certify that the student named below has completed all requirements for the dissertation associated with the degree indicated, and that the dissertation has been filed with this office.

STUDENT INFORMATION

_____ _____

Name *myUTSA ID*

_____

Dissertation Title (as it is to be listed on the student's official records)

Semester hours of credit to be awarded for dissertation: _____

Grade to be awarded for dissertation credit: _____

Date dissertation approved by committee: _____

Degree to which dissertation applies (Ph.D., Ed.D, area and concentration): _____

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*
Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*
Outside Member, Signature	*Print Name*	*Department*

DEPARTMENT

_____ _____ _____

Department Chair, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

COLLEGE

_____ _____ _____

Associate Dean of the College, Signature *Print Name* *Date*

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Based on the College's recommendation, I hereby ☐ Approve ☐ Deny the request.

_____ _____

Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School, Signature *Date*

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

A] Credit and grade entered on student's record? _____ B] Dissertation title entered on student's record? _____

C] Graduation check updated? _____ D] Student notified? _____ E] Notes _____

Appendix: Additional Forms

1. NDRB incentive funding program for applying to trainee fellowships/grants
2. NDRB trainee travel award guidelines
3. NDRB student award application

NDRB incentive funding (NIF) for applying for trainee fellowships/grants

Graduate students and postdocs have an opportunity to receive a $500 bonus for applying for nationally competitive fellowships and grants. Financial incentives ($2,000) will also be provided to the trainee as well as the PI's lab who successfully obtain an externally funded fellowship or grant. The purpose is to encourage a culture in the NDRB department where our trainees and their mentors prepare and submit competitive application for national programs.

Eligibility and Instructions:

1. Submission of NIF application (pg. 2) must be made at the time of your initial application.
2. The fellowship application must be nationally competitive. To help trainees (and their PIs) in preparing fellowship applications, an annual workshop will be held.
3. Get feedback on a written draft from a Committee of Faculty Reviewers (see below) ***before*** submitting your nationally competitive fellowship application.
4. Submit your fellowship application to the funding agency and keep proof of submission. Proof of submission must include: (1) your name and PI's name, (2) the date and year, and (3) verification of receipt of the application by the funding organization (e.g., confirmation email).
5. Must agree to inform the Department Chair (email Wanda.Guntz@utsa.edu) the outcome of the application. You do not need to have a successful application to receive the $500 bonus, just proof you submitted.
6. To receive the additional $2,000 bonus ($1,000 to the trainee and $1,000 to the PI's lab) for a successfully awarded fellowship or grant, you need to show proof of award (e.g., Notice of Award).
7. Graduate students must be enrolled in the Neuroscience or DRS (formerly CMB) PhD program and be working in an NDRB faculty member's lab.
8. Postdocs must be working in an NDRB faculty member's lab.
9. Applicants are limited to 1 NIF per fiscal year (e.g., September 1, 2021-August 31, 2022).
10. New grant submissions or resubmissions can be eligible if you meet all eligibility requirements.
11. Due to stipulations from the Scholarships Office, international students will be subject to tax.
12. Any questions, email NDRB@utsa.edu.

Committee of Faculty Reviewers: a committee of at least 2 faculty members who have reviewed your proposal and provided feedback to make submitted proposals more competitive. For graduate students, your committee could be members of your doctoral dissertation committee, including your PI. For postdocs, your committee could be your PI and/or collaborating faculty. These faculty members do not have to be within NDRB or at UTSA but should have appropriate expertise to critique the application.

Incentive funds are subject to availability of funds in any year and are not necessarily guaranteed from year to year. NIF is funded by a combination of philanthropic and general operating funds of NDRB and is not funded through federal research funds. Program guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Department. Chair.

The University of Texas at San Antonio

UTSA Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology

College of Sciences

NDRB Incentive Funding (NIF)
$500 Bonus for Application and $2000 for Funding

Instructions:

- Submission of this NIF application must be made at the time of your initial application
- The fellowship or grant application must be nationally competitive
- To this cover page, attach a copy of the application.
- Attach proof of submission: confirmation email, screenshot of online submission page, etc.

Submit for Review:
Wanda.Guntz@utsa.edu. Questions may be directed to NDRB@utsa.edu.

Requirement to Receive NIF Award:

You must agree to notify the NDRB Office of the final decision from your fellowship application. I AGREE (sign here): _____

Applicant's information

Name: _____ Department: _____

abc123: _____

E-mail address: _____

Proposal information

Name of proposal: _____

Amount of proposal:_____Anticipated begin date:_____

Name of PI/advisor:

_____

Advisor's signature: _____

Date: _____

Don't forget:

☐ To include a copy of the complete application

☐ To agree to tell us the outcome of the application

NDRB trainee travel award guidelines – updated 27 June 2022

UTSA graduate students and postdocs can benefit from many opportunities to receive financial support for travel. If you need funding to attend a conference or for other research-related travel (e.g., learn a new technique in a collaborator's lab), we encourage you to discuss with your PI and exhaust any research funds that can be used for the trip (startup, sponsored research, endowed chairs, etc). There may also be sources around campus, e.g., Graduate School Professional Development Awards. To supplement these sources, NDRB will grant travel awards to eligible Students (UG, Masters, PhD) and Postdoctoral Fellows.

Deadline: Applications for NDRB supplemented travel awards will be evaluated by the Department Chair and/ or a representative from the Trainee Development Committee in three cycles: Fall semester (**due Oct 1**), Spring semester (**due Mar 1**), and summer semester (**due Jun 1**). Outside of these deadlines, we will consider applications for NDRB travel awards on a case-by-case basis. Individuals can earn one *departmental* travel award per year from the last time the individual received an award (up to $1,000).

To apply for students:

- Email your CV and scientific abstract to Wanda.Guntz@utsa.edu
- Student must be working in the lab of a NDRB primary faculty member
- Student must be in good academic standing
- Student must be the presenting author* on a scientific abstract at the meeting for which you are requesting an award. **If you are not the presenting author of a scientific abstract, please attach a strong justification from your PI (e.g., financial hardship, etc).*
- Other research-related travel: please attach a strong justification from your PI

To apply for postdocs:

- Email your CV and scientific abstract to Wanda.Guntz@utsa.edu
- Postdoc must be working in the lab of a NDRB primary faculty member
- Postdoc must be the presenting author* on a scientific abstract at the meeting for which you are requesting an award **If you are not the presenting author of a scientific abstract, please attach a strong justification from your PI (e.g., financial hardship, etc).*
- Other research-related travel: please attach a strong justification from your PI

Examples of allowable expenses for student or postdoc travel awards:

- Registration fee* *(*note that membership fees cannot be reimbursed using these funds)*
- Airfare – economy airfare to/from the conference
- Transportation – to/from airport, hotel, conference site
- Lodging & Meals – per UTSA/COS guidelines
- Receipts should be submitted within 60 days of purchase/travel
- International travel – note additional rules/guidelines may apply

Any questions, email Wanda.Guntz@utsa.edu.

Travel funds are subject to availability of funds in any year and are not necessarily guaranteed from year to year. Travel funds are funded by a combination of philanthropic and general operating funds of NDRB and is not funded through federal research funds. Travel fund guidelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Department Chair.

NDRB Student Travel Checklist

Departmental award submission checklist:

_____ Application submitted for Graduate School Professional Development Award

_____ Date of Submission

_____ Amount awarded (if applicable)

_____ CV mailed to Wanda

_____ Scientific abstract mailed to Wanda

Travel forms checklist (students with a paid, Graduate Research Assistant appointment):

_____ College of Sciences Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

Travel forms checklist (students with an unpaid, 0% Research Affiliate GRA appointment – held by students with external funding, grants, etc.):

_____ College of Sciences Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

_____ UTSA Student Travel: Request for Authorization

_____ UTSA H.O.P. 518 Release and Indemnification Agreement

_____ List of Student Participants, Emergency Contacts and Activity/Event Leaders

Please send all documentation to Antonio Alvarez at antonio.alvarez1@utsa.edu and he will submit the appropriate paperwork to the BSC on your behalf. You can leave the cost center information on the RTA form blank and he will add that. Once the BSC has your COS request for a travel authorization in place, they will contact you for details needed to book your travel.

Also, if you have not traveled / been reimbursed for travel before, there are new regulations put in place in order to receive university funds:

Disbursements and Travel Services requires completion of two trainings for all employees who travel for the first time, to include student employees.

A new policy was implemented by Disbursements and Travel Services (DTS) on September 1, 2017, which can be found on the DTS website; whereas, all employees **who will travel,** must complete the two travel online courses: **Online Travel Authorization Workflow (PS 0307)** and **Online Expense Report Workflow (PS 0308)** training courses before traveling. Once these courses are completed, the employees can send the .pdf copies to TEAM 1 COS BSC cosbsc1@utsa.edu, to attach to their travel reimbursement, or send an email stating that travel trainings have been completed. This travel training is required by DTS as part of the FMOG: https://www.utsa.edu/financialaffairs/resources/financial-guidelines/0904.html.

(cont. to page 2)

How to navigate to these courses:

- https://training.utsa.edu/
- Select the 'Log in now' button under Online Training.
- Select the Business Processes picture.
- Then select the Online Courses picture.
- Locate PS0308 and PS0307, and Login by entering your abc123 and passphrase in the space provided.

Each training may take 15-30 minutes to complete. It is not necessary for the BSC to hold copies of these training certificates. However, when possible, they would like to keep them on file.

UTSA Business Service Center
College of Sciences

Request for Travel Authorization (RTA)

RTA must be final approved before the first day of travel; otherwise the travel is considered unauthorized and treated as an exception requiring Vice President approval. The following information is needed to complete the RTA:

Traveler's Name		EMPL ID (begins with 100 or 600)	
Departure Date		Return Date	
Destination (city, state)		Cost Center/ Project ID	
Purpose for Travel	Select an option from this dropdown list:		
Benefit to UTSA	Select an option from this dropdown list		
Disposition of Duties while traveling	Other (Specify in the comment section below)		

Estimated expenses for travel. For registrations, please send attachments of conference itinerary, event flier, or invitation.

Registration	$ 0.00	Airfare	$ 0.00
Lodging	$ 0.00	Lodging Tax	$ 0.00
Meals	$ 0.00	Rental	$ 0.00
Parking	$ 0.00	Other Transportation	$ 0.00
Mileage:	$ 0.00	Incidentals. Please explain in the comments below.	$ 0.00

Total Travel Requested: **$ 0.00**

Additional information such as conference name, split expenses, no cost to the university, etc.

Requestor's Name: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor's Approval (This is needed if the cost center or project does not route to the Supervisor).

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

The University of Texas at San Antonio – Student Travel: Request for Authorization

HOP 5.18 - Travel or Events that Involve Students and Other Non-Employee Participants

I. Requestor/Organizing Department Information	
Name of University Employee Responsible for Trip	
Position/Title	
Organizing Department	
Office and Cell Phone Numbers	
Email Address	
II. Trip Information	
Activity or Event	
Destination	
Purpose of Trip	
Dates of Travel	
Number of Student Participants	
Number of Non-Student Participants	
Lodging Arrangements ☐ N/A	Indicate address and telephone number:
Transportation Arrangements ☐ N/A	Indicate type: ☐ Rental Vehicle ☐ University Owned Vehicle ☐ Personal Vehicle ☐ 12 Passenger Van ☐ University Leased Vehicle
Names of Authorized Drivers ☐ N/A	
Airline ☐ N/A	Indicate carrier and flight numbers:
Bus ☐ N/A	Indicate charter name:

III. Required Documentation and Processes for Organizing Department for activities or events which are covered by HOP 5.18.

☐	Copy of itinerary for trip to include all dates of travel
☐	List of participants, emergency contacts and activity/event leaders
☐	Signed release and indemnification agreement for participants
☐	Successful completion of the UTSA Campus Security Authority Training online course (EP 502) for faculty and staff identified as an activity/event leader attending the trip ☐ N/A
☐	Approved UTSA PD motor vehicle record check of driving record for faculty, staff or a student-employee when a vehicle is owned, leased or rented by the university for travel to the activity or event ☐ N/A
☐	Successful completion of the UTSA Defensive Driving Awareness online course (SA 505) for faculty, staff or a student-employee when a vehicle is leased or rented by the university (also required for use of 12 passenger vans) ☐ N/A
☐	Successful completion of UTSA driver training course which includes on-road training (for 12 passenger vans only) ☐ N/A
☐	Copy of a valid driver's license when vehicles are owned, leased or rented by the university ☐ N/A
☐	International travel to a non-restricted region (registration with International SOS is required for all participants) *Participants are automatically enrolled if travel arrangements are completed using a UT System contracted travel agency* ☐ N/A

IV. University Employee Certifying Request

☐	I certify that all required documentation and processes are complete for this student travel authorization HOP 5.18 request.

	Printed or typed name	**Signature**	**Date**
University Employee Certifying Request			
V. Administrator Approval			
Department Chair, Director, Faculty/Staff Sponsor or Designee			

(1) The organizing department emails a copy of the Student Travel: Request for Authorization, the List of Participants, Emergency Contacts and Activity/Event Leaders and the itinerary to the Office of the Senior Vice Provost and Dean of Students at studentaffairs@utsa.edu and University Police Dispatch at Police.Communications@utsa.edu. (2) The organizing department attaches copies of the same information to the electronic document(s) in PeopleSoft for expenses incurred on behalf of students. Original copies are retained by the organizing department.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT SAN ANTONIO ("UTSA")
HANDBOOK OF OPERATING PROCEDURES (HOP) 5.18 RELEASE

Name of Participant	
Student Identification Number if Enrolled at UTSA	
Name of Parent/Guardian if Participant is < 18 years old	
Age of Participant	
Emergency Contact/Phone Number	
Description of Activity/Trip (including all associated travel)	
Location of Activity/Trip	
Date of Activity/Trip	

By signing below, I consent to the participation in the above-described ("Activity/Trip"). I acknowledge that the nature of the Activity/Trip may expose Participant to hazards or risks that may result in Participant's illness, personal injury, death or property damage, and I understand and appreciate the nature of such hazards and risks. For minors, I understand that there may be unsupervised access to the internet while on the UTSA campus or while otherwise participating in the Activity/Trip.

For University-sponsored activities greater than 25 miles from applicable campus and subject to HOP 5.18, UTSA will either provide or arrange a third-party to provide transportation or reimburse for the cost thereof. For all other events, I understand that UTSA will not provide transportation during travel to and from the Activity/Trip nor during any additional or incidental travel associated with the Activity/Trip. If the Participant chooses to drive or to be a passenger in a personally-owned vehicle for any travel associated with the Activity/Trip, my signature below also acknowledges the following:

- UTSA assumes no liability or responsibility for the use of such vehicle during any such travel and that UTSA has neither inquired about nor confirmed (a) the driving history, training or licensure of the driver or (b) that the vehicle is covered by a private automobile insurance policy;
- UTSA carries no insurance that could cover any damages, injuries, claims or other liabilities associated with the use of such vehicle during such travel; and
- Any third-party private insurance policy covering such vehicle or the driver personally will be responsible for any damages, injuries, claims or other liabilities that may arise from the use of the vehicle during any travel associated with the Activity/Trip.

In consideration of Participant being permitted to participate in the Activity/Trip, I hereby accept all risk to Participant's property or health, including any illness, injury or death to Participant that may result from such participation, which participation includes all travel associated with the Activity/Trip, and I hereby release UTSA, its governing board, officers, representatives, employees and agents from any and all liability to Participant, Participant's personal representatives, estate, heirs, next of kin, and assigns for any and all claims and causes of action for loss of or damage to Participant's property and for any and all illness or injury to Participant's person, including his or her death, that may arise from or occur during Participant's participation in the Activity/Trip, WHETHER CONTRIBUTED TO OR CAUSED BY ANY NEGLIGENCE OF UTSA, ITS GOVERNING BOARD, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES OR REPRESENTATIVES, OR OTHERWISE.

I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless UTSA, its governing board, officers, representatives, employees and agents from liability for the illness, injury or death of any person(s) and damage to property that may arise, in whole or in part, from Participant's negligent or intentional act or omission while participating in the described Activity/Trip, WHETHER CONTRIBUTED TO OR CAUSED BY ANY NEGLIGENCE OF UTSA, ITS GOVERNING BOARD, OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES OR REPRESENTATIVES, OR OTHERWISE.

Signature of Participant or Parent/Guardian	Printed Name of Signatory	Date

Participant signs if a UTSA student or at least 18 years of age; Parent/Guardian signs if Participant is under the age of 18 and not a UTSA Student

UTSA - Received By (Signature)	UTSA - Received By (Printed Name)	Date

The University of Texas at San Antonio

Student Travel: Request for Authorization

List of Student Participants, Emergency Contacts and Activity/Event Leaders

In the event of an emergency, (such as, but not limited to, a health concern, injury, accident, natural disaster), local police must be called at 911 immediately and the UTSA Police Department must be notified at (210) 458-4242. Download the LiveSafe App to communicate with local emergency services and the UTSA Police Department.

Activity/event leaders must carry an itinerary for the activity or event and a list of all participants at all times during the activity or event and all associated travel.
Participants must carry an itinerary and the names and telephone numbers of all activity/event leaders during the activity or event and all associated travel.
Faculty and staff designated as activity/event leaders are required to successfully complete Campus Security Authority online training (EP 502) prior to departure to the activity/event, but at least once a year.

Activity/Event with Date(s) of Travel and Location:						
Full Name of Student Traveler	**Mailing Address**	**Phone Number**	**Emergency Contact**	**Phone Number**	**If University travel requires you to miss a class/lab, have you notified your professor(s)? Yes/No/N/A**	**Designated as an Activity/Event Leader Yes/No/NA**

Organizing department emails a copy of the List of Student Participants, Emergency Contacts and Activity/Event Leaders to University Police Dispatch at Police.Communications@utsa.edu and the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at studentaffairs@utsa.edu. *Note: This form must be typed.*

Applying for the Merit Award and the Outstanding Citizen Award for PhD students

The NDRB department will honor outstanding students in both the DRS and Neuroscience PhD programs on a yearly basis. Up to two awards will be given out for each program. The **Merit Award** will recognize a student who has strong record of research achievements while in the program. The **Outstanding Citizen Award** will recognize a student who has excelled at providing outreach to the PhD program, the scientific community, or the San Antonio community. These awards will be presented at the annual NDRB retreat and will come with a $500 prize. To be eligible you must be in good standing with your program and registered as a student in Spring Semester. A student can receive at most one Merit and one Outstanding Citizen during their time in the program. **Applications and your current CV should be emailed to Janice Marshall (Janice.Marshall@utsa.edu) by May 1st.**

Merit Award application:

1. Have you attended >80% of your program's seminars in the past academic year? If not, please explain why.

2. Please list in bullet points your research accomplishments. This can include publications, posters and talks (including those accepted but not yet presented), grants/fellowships you have applied for, successfully awarded grants/fellowships, etc. Please also highlight or use a different colored font to note the accomplishments that occurred in the past year (June – May).

3. Please provide a brief narrative (~500 words or less) outlining what you feel are your greatest research accomplishments from the list above and/or provide any further information you feel the review committee should know.

Outstanding Citizen Award application:

1. Have you attended >80% of your program's seminars in the past academic year? If not, please explain why.

2. Please list in bullet points your contributions to the program, the scientific community, or the San Antonio Community. If applicable, note the time commitment for each activity. Please also highlight or use a different colored font to note the accomplishments that occurred in the past year (June – May).

3. Please provide a brief narrative (~500 words or less) outlining how your activities have made an impact on your PhD program, NDRB, UTSA, or the greater community and/or provide any further information you feel the review committee should know.