

Governance of the  
Molecular and Cellular Biology Program

**January 1, 2020**

**Revised March 30, 2022**

## **1. General**

- 1.1. The Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) Program is an interdisciplinary graduate program administratively housed in the Graduate School and jointly administered by the UW (through the Graduate School and School of Medicine), and the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (FHCRC). It was formally established as a degree-granting program in 1994.
- 1.2. Program leadership consists of two Program Directors, supported by Administrative Staff, and advised by the MCB Steering Committee. Program Directors will report, on an annual basis, program outcomes to the Graduate School.
- 1.3. The Interdisciplinary MCB Group (“Voting Members”) has formal oversight of the program in accordance with the Graduate School Memo 5. The group votes on all formal program decisions and its members are also members of the Steering Committee. MCB program directors serve as the Chairs of the Interdisciplinary MCB Group.
- 1.4. The program is supported by MCB faculty members (“MCB Faculty”) from ten basic science departments at UW and five divisions at FHCRC, as well as selected faculty at the Benaroya Research Institute (BRI), Seattle Children’s Research Institute (SCRI), Pacific Northwest Research Institute (PNRI), and the Allen Institute. MCB Faculty provides support for admissions, curriculum, student advising and mentoring, and recommends graduation for Ph.D. students. The MCB Faculty may offer coursework under the prefixes CONJ or MCB to support the program.

## **2. Revisions**

- 2.1. Revisions to this document are by quorum majority vote of the Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting Members”) with notification to the Graduate School and School of Medicine.

## **3. Program Administration and Governance**

### **3.1. MCB Faculty Members**

MCB Faculty Members are Graduate Faculty engaged in research, teaching, advising, and mentoring students in the field of Molecular and Cellular Biology. The group includes members from the participating departments and institutes: FHCRC, BRI, PNRI, SCRI, AI, Biochemistry, Biological Structure, Biology, Genomes Sciences, Global Health, Immunology, Laboratory Medicine and Pathology, Microbiology, Pharmacology, and Physiology and Biophysics. The Program Directors and Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting Members”) are members of MCB Faculty.

By requesting MCB faculty membership, faculty commit to active participation in the MCB program. MCB faculty are expected to contribute to graduate teaching, serve on student committees, participate in admissions and recruitment, and serve as area directors. Our commitment to faculty professional development, including training in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, enables faculty to be effective and thoughtful mentors.

The MCB Program Directors report to the Dean of the Graduate School regarding matters pertaining to the academic program and MCB Faculty structure.

#### 3.1.1. Selection and appointment

The Program Directors approve new members of the MCB Faculty. New members are confirmed when approved by the directors and endorsed as graduate faculty who can chair committees as per Graduate School Memo 12: Membership in the Graduate Faculty and Endorsement to Chair Doctoral Supervisory Committees. Although students may rotate with non-MCB faculty upon approval of the program directors, faculty must apply to become MCB program members within one quarter of accepting rotation students.

#### 3.1.2. Conduct admissions review

MCB Faculty will serve on the Admissions Committee at least once during their service to the Program. Co-Directors chair the admissions committee. Each year, committee members are selected from the annual faculty participation survey.

#### 3.1.3. Participate in program events

MCB Faculty are required to participate in annual MCB events. As of this writing, these events include student orientation faculty talks, literature review class, MCB faculty fall poster session, recruitment dinner, and a recruitment poster session. See section 6 for requirements.

#### 3.1.4. Contribute to MCB curriculum

MCB Faculty will endeavor in good faith to teach at least one core or elective class for MCB students during their service to the MCB program. They will also advocate within their unit or division for the assignment of appropriate faculty to teach core courses.

#### 3.1.5 Area of Interest Directors

Nine areas of interest serving subdisciplines within MCB each have 2 faculty serving as area-of-interest directors. Area-of-interest directors evaluate curricula annually to recommend changes or additions. Area-of-interest directors also provide student advising and mentoring in the different scientific areas of interest represented within MCB. Area-of-interest directors are selected by the MCB directors and confirmed on an annual basis.

### **3.2 Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting Members”)**

Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting Members”) members are Graduate Faculty as outlined in Graduate School memo 5. They are voting members of the MCB Steering committee who vote on all formal decisions made on behalf of the program. Formal action on the curriculum, leadership, and appointment of new Interdisciplinary Faculty Group members is by quorum majority vote of current Voting Members. Votes may be held in person, digitally, or by paper ballot, at the discretion of the Program Directors.

### 3.2.1 Selection and Appointment

Members are generally department or division chairs or their representatives, and partner institute representatives. New members are voted in by existing members of the Interdisciplinary Faculty Group. The Graduate School is notified of new members. MCB past co-directors are members until they relinquish membership or are voted off the committee.

## 3.3 MCB Steering Committee

### 3.3.1 Steering Committee Composition

The MCB Steering Committee includes two student representatives, a representative from the MCB DEI committee, staff, and the Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting members”).

### 3.3.2 Provide academic and curricular oversight

The MCB Steering Committee advises program directors on new initiatives and curricula changes. MCB Faculty provides curricular development, student advising and mentoring, and recommends graduation for students.

### 3.3.3 Lead academic program review and any required accreditation reviews

The program directors in consultation with the MCB Steering Committee will lead the ten-year academic program review and any required accreditation reviews.

## 3.5 Program Directors

### 3.5.1 Selection and appointment

MCB Co-Directors serve a 5-year term. A director may be reappointed for a second full or partial term with approval by the MCB Steering Committee and appointment by the Dean of the Graduate School in consultation with the School of Medicine Dean’s Office. New directors must be an Associate or Full professor or member with an actively funded research program, and they are identified based on their well-established involvement in the MCB program and solid history of mentoring graduate students. Incoming directors of the MCB program are nominated by MCB faculty and students, or they may self-

nominate. A selection committee of MCB faculty, staff, and students reviews the nominations and selects the top candidates, who meet the MCB student body at an MCB Townhall. The selection committee forwards the student input and their own recommendations to the MCB Steering Committee for final selection by the Interdisciplinary Faculty Group (“Voting Members”). The nomination is then forwarded for recommendation and appointment by the Dean of the Graduate School.

### 3.5.2 Roles and responsibilities

The MCB program is overseen by two Directors: one at UW and one at FHCRC. The Directors make policy decisions, and in their role as Graduate Program Coordinators (GPC) guide and approve each student’s program of study, make final decisions on admissions, and serve as course directors for MCB 514, MCB 515, and MCB 516. Directors also recruit area directors.

## 3.6 Administrative Staff

### 3.4.1 Oversee day-to-day operations

The MCB Director of operations oversees the day-to-day operations of the MCB degree program.

### 3.4.2 Budgetary oversight

The MCB Director of Operations oversees the annual budget of the MCB degree program in coordination with the Director of Operations at Fred Hutch, MCB Co-Directors, and the Graduate School. Annual budget meetings are required with The Graduate School.

### 3.4.3 Hiring and supervision of staff

The MCB Director of Operations supervises and coordinates hiring of MCB program staff. The co-directors and Graduate School select and hire the director of operations.

## 4 Students and Student Support

### 4.1.1 Process for reviewing and selecting students.

Each Fall, the MCB directors identify 25-30 MCB faculty members who will serve on the Admissions Committee that reviews and evaluates students for the MCB degree program. The Admissions Committee’s evaluations are the basis for the program directors’ choices of which applicants to interview and subsequently admit to the program. Program leadership will report these outcomes to the Graduate School on an annual basis.

### 4.1.2 General student profile

The MCB program’s goal is to recruit students of high aptitude and skills to conduct research in the labs of MCB faculty members. In their first year, MCB students are required to enroll in three laboratory rotation courses. After completion of their first year, students are expected to select a

permanent academic advisor in whose laboratory they will pursue dissertation research.

#### 4.1.3 Supervisory Committee

After students select a permanent academic advisor, they will form a supervisory committee with their academic advisor as Chair and at least 4 additional faculty, of which 2 must be MCB faculty. MCB students must meet with their supervisory committee each year and the supervisory committee will assess continued academic progress as per the supervisory guidelines <https://mcb-seattle.edu/program-requirements-3/annual-committee-meeting/>

#### 4.1.4 Graded Credits

MCB Students must complete 18 graded credits of coursework prior to taking their general exam. Students are further required to attend three lectures and two discussion groups of the Biomedical Research Integrity Program.

#### 4.1.5 Teaching Experience

MCB Students are required to serve as Teaching Assistants for 2 quarters in their second year. One quarter must be an academic TAship and the other quarter an academic or community outreach TAship. MCB students do not receive stipend compensation for teaching.

#### 4.1.6 Funding

The permanent academic advisor or the academic advisor's department or division shall provide tuition and stipend support as long as students remain in good academic standing.

#### 4.1.7 Probation

Probation is the mechanism by which the Supervisory Committee can communicate serious concerns about a student's ability to achieve a timely PhD in MCB, within the 5-6 year time frame as per the probation process: <https://mcb-seattle.edu/program-requirements-3/annual-committee-meeting/>

## 5 Diversity Training Plan

Our commitment to work toward a program that values diversity requires that we promote and undertake activities and training that enhance our understanding of individual and group diversity.

MCB faculty are expected to engage in activities and/or training designed to promote welcoming environments for students traditionally underrepresented in Science as defined by the NIH <https://diversity.nih.gov/about-us/population-underrepresented>. Participation in the MCB program diversity training and activities can be demonstrated in various ways.

### 5.1 Diversity Activity/Training Requirements

MCB faculty are required to participate in 2 equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) trainings\*, every three years. New MCB faculty are required to have a minimum of 2 hours of diversity and/or mentor training when applying to the program or complete the training within the first 12 months of membership.

## 5.2 Training Resources and Tracking

MCB will provide information about workshops and will track participation through the annual MCB Faculty Survey. MCB faculty can also provide updates by sending an email with details of participation to [mcb@uw.edu](mailto:mcb@uw.edu). Faculty who participate in similar training in their home department will satisfy the MCB requirements.

## 6 Program Participation Requirements

In addition to EDI training, MCB faculty are expected to participate in program activities which include but are not limited to graduate teaching and mentorship, service on supervisory committees and as area directors, and participation in orientation and recruitment events.

### 6.1 Program Participation Requirements

MCB faculty are required to participate in **5 units** of activities over three years (See Appendix A for list of activities).

## 7 Membership Withdrawal and Reinstatement

Faculty who are inactive over a 3-year period will have the opportunity to withdraw their membership from the program. If faculty wish to maintain their membership, they will have 12 months to complete program participation and training requirements.

### Appendix A\*\* Updated 11/17/21

| Participation Activities  |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| Teaching a 500-level class in which MCB students are enrolled = 1 unit per each hour of class time for a maximum of 5 units. Course organizer = 5 units | 5 units            |
| BRI (lecture or discussion)   | 2 units            |
| Area Director   | 2 units            |
| Orientation (talk or poster)  | 1 unit             |
| MCB Thesis Committee for student not in your own lab  | 1 unit per student |
| National Conferences  | 2 units            |

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| Recruitment (talk, poster, dinner/lunch) | 1 unit  |
| Admissions Committee                     | 3 units |
| DEI Committee                            | 4 units |
| Steering Committee                       | 1 unit  |
| Mentor training facilitator              | 2 units |
| Ad hoc events (e.g., 10 Yr. Review)      | 2 units |

*\*Appendix A is a guide only. Faculty can participate in other activities.*

*\*\*training can include mentor training*

*MCB Director of Operations is responsible for updating Appendix.*

*Please contact MCB program directors with questions about acceptable activities at [mcb@uw.edu](mailto:mcb@uw.edu)*