General Mentor Responsibilities

In addition to guiding your student through his/her dissertation research, the Molecular Medicine Program requests your assistance in several additional aspects of the student’s doctoral training process. Student progression expectations are outlined in our Student and Faculty Handbook which can be found at:

http://lifesciences.umaryland.edu/molecularmedicine/student.aspx

Financial support

As mentor, you will be expected to support the student for the duration of his or her studies and research. You will be responsible for securing funds to cover the student’s stipend and medical insurance for the duration of their graduate career. To ensure equity among our students, the stipend may not exceed the level determined by GPILS which is currently $28,000 pre-candidacy and $29,000 following admission to candidacy.

- You will begin funding your student on ___________. Your Administrator will need to provide the Program Manager (Marcina Garner, mgarner@som.umaryland.edu) with the project ID for the account from which the student’s stipend will be covered.

- Please note that a project ID will also be required on the student’s tuition remission form each fall and spring semester, though the account will not be charged as the student will be supported through the employee pool.

- The student will require a project ID and account code each fall and spring semester on a Payment by Grant Funds form. This form will include the student’s health insurance for the semester. It will also include the student’s fees if the mentor agrees to cover them.

Fellowships

The Molecular Medicine Program strongly encourages all students to apply for individual fellowships from Federal and/or private sources. In addition to reducing the mentor’s financial burden, the process of applying for a fellowship, receiving feedback and potentially being awarded funding for dissertation research provides an important experience for our students. It is anticipated that the student’s Thesis Proposal will provide the basis for an external grant application. Please see the Molecular Medicine Student and Faculty Handbook for more detail.

Dissertation and Thesis Advisory Committee

You, as mentor, along with the Thesis Advisory Committee, are primarily responsible for guiding the student’s dissertation research. Here are some guidelines for you and this committee:
• The Thesis Advisory Committee should be composed of faculty members who have the necessary expertise to assist you and your student in the design and execution of the dissertation research. Specific committee composition requirements are outlined in the handbook.

• In order to take full advantage of the committee’s expertise, the Thesis Advisory Committee is expected to meet with the student at least once every semester. In addition to providing a forum for the committee to offer guidance to the student, these meetings create an excellent opportunity for the faculty to assist the student in professional development and for the student to train in oral presentation of their research results. Students will be required to track progress and submit a form after each meeting.

• Students are required to present 2 formal seminars prior to their Dissertation Defense. Each student must prepare a written Thesis Proposal for review by their Thesis Advisory Committee after collecting sufficient data in the laboratory to support the feasibility of their thesis. This should occur within 12 -15 months of passing the Qualifying Exam and prior to the student’s Molecular Medicine Student Seminar Presentation. The Thesis Proposal includes a written document (NIH style, less than 15 pages) and an oral presentation in a public forum. The Student Seminar presentation should occur in the fall of the student’s 5th year in the Program and after the Thesis Proposal. The presentation should be about 40 minutes and will be critiqued by faculty and peer review. Additional details are provided in the handbook.

• Students are required to hold one final Thesis Advisory Committee meeting 3-6 months before they plan to defend. During this meeting, the student will be seeking the permission of the committee to write up and schedule the final Dissertation Defense.

Program activities

Although students are expected to spend most of their time and efforts conducting research, it is essential that they continue to keep abreast of progress in the field of molecular medicine. For this reason, it is imperative that students attend and actively participate in our Molecular Medicine Seminar, as well as in other career-development activities offered by the Program. Your assistance in encouraging students to attend these activities would be appreciated.

You are encouraged to consult our Faculty and Student Handbook and student progression timeline periodically, as it is updated regularly. Feel free to contact the Program Director, Manager and/or Track Leaders with suggestions for improvement, for clarification on expectations of students, or for any other assistance you may require.

The success of our training program ultimately depends on the quality of mentoring provided by our faculty. The Program in Molecular Medicine will extend all possible assistance to you in this important process.

By signing below, I am indicating that I agree to the terms of this document.

Mentor’s signature: ____________________________________________ Date: ____________

Dept. Chair/Institute/ORC Dir signature: __________________________________ Date: ____________

Program Director’s signature: __________________________________ Date: ____________