

GRADUATE STUDENT FAQ

1. How do I join a research laboratory?

First-year graduate students are required to rotate in three laboratories before selecting a faculty advisor, spending one quarter in each laboratory. The purpose of the rotation system is to broaden the students' research experience, to familiarize them with ongoing projects, and to find a laboratory that matches their needs both intellectually and culturally. The fall and winter rotations are performed within the Department of Chemical and Systems Biology; the spring quarter rotations may be within the Department, or alternatively, students may arrange to rotate with faculty in other programs. After the laboratory rotations are completed, students can approach faculty members about dissertation research opportunities under his/her guidance. These discussions guide the final matching of students and faculty advisors.

2. What courses should I take?

Course requirements for The Chemical and Systems Biology Ph.D. program are provided in the Chemical and Systems Biology Student Guide.

3. What are the requirements for graduation?

Students receiving a Ph.D. in Chemical and Systems Biology must complete the following requirements. More information on these requirements is available in the Chemical and Systems Biology Student Guide.

Qualifying Exam

“Admissions to Candidacy” application

Dissertation Reading Committee selection

Two or more peer-reviewed research publications

“Terminal Graduation Registration” petition

University Oral Examination

Ph.D. Dissertation

4. What other educational resources are available?

The Department of Chemical and Systems Biology organizes several events and programs to enhance graduate student training. The Department maintains a vibrant seminar series throughout the academic year, allowing students to hear from and interact with internationally renowned scientists. In addition to these seminars, the Department hosts four special events each year: the Dorfman Lecture, the Cutting Symposium, Stanford Chemical Biology Symposium, and the Stanford Systems Biology Symposium.

Graduate students have regular opportunities to share their research discoveries with the Chemical and Systems Biology community. Throughout the academic year, the Department convenes each week for “pizza talks,” during which students and postdoctoral fellows present their work. The Department also hosts an annual three-day retreat at an off-site location, typically near Monterey or Lake Tahoe. The retreat is held at the beginning of the fall quarter and allows new trainees to rapidly acquaint themselves with ongoing research within the Department to meet current faculty, students, and postdoctoral fellows.

Other Stanford programs are available for students interested in translational medicine, biotechnology, and entrepreneurship. These include the Stanford SPARK Program and courses available through Stanford Ignite and the Stanford Technology Ventures Program.