

## UMMS Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies Institutional Support Information

### Recruitment & Admissions

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (OGPS) is committed to recruiting a highly qualified and diverse student population for our programs. Our flagship umbrella program, the Program in Biomedical Sciences (PIBS), is the interdisciplinary gateway program to 14 PhD training programs with over 500 faculty mentors. We employ a variety of recruitment strategies including relationship building with majority and minority institutions, coordinating staff, faculty and student participation with local, regional and national information sessions, conferences, graduate and professional school fairs and meetings. For the domestic students in the incoming PIBS Class of 2017, 29% met NIH criteria for underrepresented minorities (URMs), which is the highest percentage in the 19-year history of PIBS. The UM President recently identified greater diversity, equity & inclusion as a major campus initiative. Thus, we anticipate being able to leverage more resources for our efforts to increase the pool of outstanding under-represented doctoral students who can apply for our associated PhD programs. We are grateful for the enthusiastic participation of our program faculty in PIBS recruiting events and offer cost-sharing support to program faculty and students who participate in national recruiting. We are committed to continuing our efforts in recruiting an outstanding and diverse student population and are pleased to work with faculty and students to achieve our collective recruiting goals.

OGPS also supports multiple programs that nurture the development of undergraduate or post-baccalaureate students aiming for a career in the biomedical sciences, including the highly successful Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP). PREP students are outstanding young scholars that are mentored through the in-depth laboratory research experience required for admission to many doctoral training programs in the biomedical sciences. If they choose to apply to PIBS, our PREP students are guaranteed an interview to fully engage them in the admissions process. All PREP students can attend the same breadth of career and professional development programs offered by OGPS that are available for our doctoral and postdoctoral trainees.

### Predoctoral Training

Our students benefit from a range of important training opportunities aimed at student success and retention. Students in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the PIBS program are guided and mentored closely by our PIBS faculty and staff. Once doctoral students finish the 1<sup>st</sup> year of training and join a PhD program, individual programs take the lead on oversight of academic training. However, OGPS continues to provide programming to the broader trainee community, including the doctoral students in all of our 14 PhD programs.

- **PIBS 800 - Surviving and Succeeding in Graduate School.** A course providing training for 1<sup>st</sup> year doctoral students in critical skill development, such as finding the right mentor, science communication, experimental design, time management and self-assessment, including guidance with individual development plans (IDPs).
- **PIBS 503 - Responsible Conduct of Research.** All 1<sup>st</sup> year doctoral students are required to take this course in their first year. This course is also open to MS students, PREP scholars, clinical fellows and postdoctoral fellows. All research trainees are required to take this course every 4 years to be compliant with NIH and UM requirements.
  - This course consists of nine 50 minute discussion sessions on NIH-defined topics (no more than 20 people per discussion), to include a 50 minute discussion with the trainee's mentor/PI regarding ethical practices for specific projects.
- **PIBS 504 – Rigor and Reproducibility.** Starting in 2018, PIBS will offer a 2 hour course on Rigor and Reproducibility. In the first semester the course is offered, it will be open to trainees funded

by NIH training awards. In subsequent offerings, this course will be open to all trainees, including MS students, PREP scholars, clinical fellows and postdoc fellows.

- **Trainee Support:**

- *1<sup>st</sup> Year PIBS Mentoring & Advising:* Starting in 2018, 1st year graduate students will be part of smaller student communities (~23 students each), led by a faculty advisor. In addition, each new student will be matched with a peer mentoring group with an assigned senior graduate student mentor. Student peer mentors will receive training to provide peer guidance and support for 1st year students with the challenges expected in graduate school.
- *Academic Support:* The OGPS student success team assists students in need by matching them with tutors. First year doctoral students may request tutors for any class they are enrolled in. Students are paired with a senior graduate student tutor who previously successfully completed the course. This service is free to 1st year students, and tutors are paid an hourly rate of \$20.
- *Community Building:* We host initiatives aimed at bringing trainees together in fellowship.
  - *Celebration of Graduate Education:* We host an annual event where student milestones are celebrated, and awards are given to recognize student excellence in research, teaching, service and entrepreneurship. An award is also given to recognize excellence in faculty mentorship, based on student nominations.
  - *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.* We host several events a year aimed at building a diverse and inclusive community. Some examples include an orientation workshop on Implicit Bias, and a showing of the recent film “The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks”, followed by a panel discussion about research and medical ethics.
  - *Health & Wellness Initiatives.* In 2017, we hosted a 4 hour health and wellness event for PIBS students aimed at teaching students practical strategies for self-care, in this case focusing on nutrition, cooking and how sharing meals can foster community.
  - *Game Night.* We host game night 5-6 times per year to bring some fun to the graduate experience.
  - *PIBSgiving.* This new initiative by the PIBS Class of 2017 social volunteers was a potluck thanksgiving event for all PIBS and PREP students.
  - *Destress and Re-energize Holiday Event.*
  - *Support and partner with student life organizations:* we work with student groups with the Association of Multicultural Scientists, SACNAS and the Biomedical Alliance of Students in Health to provide planning and logistical support for student events.

### **Postdoctoral Training**

OGPS provides support to 600+ postdoctoral fellows doing research in basic science and clinical laboratories throughout the Medical School. While research training and building a record of scholarship are the highest priorities for postdoctoral training, we aim to provide a complete professional development experience for our trainees. In conjunction with our new Career and Professional Development Team and the U of M Postdoctoral Association (UM PDA), we help to organize a series of seminars and panels on career skills and planning. We provide opportunities to network and interact with representatives from research and teaching academic institutions, non-profit organizations, government, and a variety of industries. These important connections assist postdoctoral trainees in shaping their careers. Career development activities draw on the wide pool of highly successful former trainees from the University of Michigan, helping to connect past and current Michigan scientists. Newly appointed postdoctoral trainees at UM are given a thorough orientation program developed by our faculty director in partnership with the Rackham Graduate School. The orientation emphasizes that in addition to the high level of scientific discovery and accomplishments of our investigators, postdoctoral trainees benefit from the numerous research and educational resources at UM, as well as a large international community of peers. Our

mission is to empower each trainee to be proactive in planning career exploration and professional development.

Another component of our strong postdoctoral training is our outreach to recruit an excellent and diverse pool of applicants. Over the last several years, we have held Postdoc Preview recruiting events. These events are advertised nationally, and from a competitive national pool of applicants. During a two day visit to UM, Preview invitees have the opportunity to meet with faculty and current postdoctoral scholars, tour University facilities, and learn about the support and rigorous training that a UM postdoctoral experience provides. A special reception for the Preview invitees to network with UM Training Grant Directors to share information about the available training opportunities.

### **Career and Professional Development**

OGPS is committed to the career and professional development of our post-baccalaureate, graduate, and postdoctoral trainees. The dedicated career and professional development team in OGPS has created and implemented weekly offerings, including workshops, panels, walk-in clinics, and individual advising. The activities range from career exploration, increasing awareness of academic and non-academic job opportunities, skills assessments and creating Individual Development Plans (IDPs), communication skills building, identifying and strengthening transferrable skills, networking opportunities, job application review, interview preparation, and more. Each offering has clear learning objectives that are catalogued and tailored for that activity. Post-activity survey data is used to refine quality and quantity of offerings to best serve our trainee needs. OGPS is actively collaborating with campus partners in overlapping areas of interest (including Rackham Graduate School, the Career Center, FFMI and MICHR) to optimize and share resources, including individualized opportunities for experiential learning and PhD Career Days. Mentoring and training programs further the success of our trainee career and professional development through participation in a newly created Peer Mentorship Program, the availability of Career and Professional Development Awards, and Career Clubs. We also provide financial and logistical support for cross-campus initiatives that offer important professional skills for our students, such as Software Carpentry.

### **Training Grant Support**

OGPS provides guidance and support for our training grant programs and faculty directors. In addition to covering 50% tuition shortfall for all of our trainees on NIH training grants (Rackham covers the other 50%), Dr. Jessica Schwartz, a highly experienced former director of a large NIH T32 training program, is available to consult individually with T32 faculty directors and administrators in the preparation of training grant applications. Dr. Schwartz also holds workshops to inform T32 directors and administrators about recent advances and requirements in training grant proposal preparation.

### **Marketing & Communications**

OGPS establishes and maintains contact with faculty, academic advisors, departments, research programs, alumni, prospective students and minority contact groups through various communication channels such as email, phone, web site, and personal communication. OGPS also manages a social media ecosystem to foster an online community of prospective PIBS students, current students, alumni, faculty and staff. PIBS social media accounts showcase professional development opportunities, science news, and the success of our students - including outstanding activities and achievements of our under-represented scientists.