

# Doctoral Student Handbook

## School of Graduate Studies

### Rutgers University



**Chemistry & Chemical Biology**



**RUTGERS**

School of Arts and Sciences

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology's (CCB) doctoral program! Beginning with lecture courses, the PhD program provides graduate students with a solid academic foundation before they join a faculty research lab to undertake meaningful and important research. This process culminates with a dissertation.

This student handbook contains an overview of CCB, as well as School of Graduate Studies (SGS), policies, resources, and graduation requirements. It is designed to provide students a ready reference of basic information needed to successfully complete their program. This is a working document that is continuously revised to align with university and program accreditation requirements; please refer to the digital version on the CCB website for the most up-to-date copy.

Many steps involved in the PhD journey involve submitting required forms by specific deadlines so that faculty and staff can monitor degree progress. Required forms are available on the CCB and SGS websites and can be provided by the department upon request. While this handbook is intended to provide common information, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to verify fulfillment of graduation requirements.

CCB departmental policies largely overlap with, but do not supersede, the policies and procedures of SGS. This handbook is meant to supplement, and in some cases clarify, but not replace the policies and procedures listed on the SGS website: <https://grad.rutgers.edu/current-students/policies-procedures-students>.

## GETTING STARTED

All students should conduct themselves professionally and ethically. Candidates are expected to exercise good judgement and exhibit punctuality, personal accountability, and confidentiality. They should also demonstrate strong interpersonal skills, such as handling conflict resolution, accepting constructive criticism, and treating others in a respectful manner regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, (dis)ability, religion, family structure, or any other protected status.

### ***Academic Integrity***

Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the university's educational, research, and clinical missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The principles of academic integrity require that a student:

- makes sure that all work submitted in a course, academic research, or other activity is the student's own and created without the aid of impermissible technologies, materials, or collaborations
- properly acknowledges and cites all use of the ideas, results, images, or words of others
- properly acknowledges all contributors to a given piece of work
- obtains all data or results by ethical means and report them accurately without suppressing any results inconsistent with the student's interpretation or conclusions
- treats all other students ethically, respecting their integrity and right to pursue their educational goals without interference (students can neither facilitate academic dishonesty by others nor obstruct their academic progress)
- upholds the ethical standards and professional code of conduct in the field for which the student is preparing

Adherence to these principles is necessary to ensure that all student research is fairly evaluated, no student has an inappropriate advantage over others, academic and ethical development of all students is fostered, and the reputation of the university for integrity, ethics, scholarship, and professionalism is maintained and

enhanced. The full policy, including different levels of academic violations and the penalties, educational sanctions, and disciplinary actions can be read here: <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>.

### **NetID**

All new students must obtain a NetID, which is a unique identifier within Rutgers that allows access to many of the electronic services available at the university. NetIDs are different than RUIDs, which are used in place of Social Security numbers to identify students on official documents, such as course rosters. Please apply for a NetID at the following web address: <https://netid.rutgers.edu/>.

### **ID Card**

Students will also need a physical ID card for access to the building, libraries, computer labs, recreation centers, on-campus housing, etc. ID cards are issued through the Public Safety office: <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/publicsafety/id-location>.

### **Building & Lab Access**

Please contact the Facilities and Lab Safety Manager, Andrew DeZaio, [adezaio@rutgers.edu](mailto:adezaio@rutgers.edu) for building and lab access. The following lab safety trainings must be completed first:

[https://myrehs.rutgers.edu/online\\_training/covid19/](https://myrehs.rutgers.edu/online_training/covid19/)  
[https://myrehs.rutgers.edu/online\\_training/labbio/intro.php](https://myrehs.rutgers.edu/online_training/labbio/intro.php)

*Log in with NetID, then select Laboratory Safety/Biosafety/Bloodborne Pathogens/Plants Refresher under Training Calendar.*

### **Parking**

Graduate students with an active employee appointment (Fellowship/TA/GA) can purchase a parking permit here: <https://rudots.nupark.com/v2/Portal/Login>. Please note that students residing on campus who already have a resident permit related to campus housing may only register for that permit and must abide by the parking guidelines associated with it.

The nearest parking zone for the CCB building is Lot 57 A/B.

Busch campus map: <https://rutgers.myuvn.com/busch-campus-map/>

Parking zones: <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/dots/parking-lots>

### **Course Registration**

During orientation, students meet with faculty who advise them on which courses to take during their first year in the program. In subsequent years, the student's advisor and Graduate Vice Chair provide academic advising. This handbook provides a suggested course sequence. Students can use their NetID to access WEBREG (<https://sims.rutgers.edu/webreg/>) and register for courses.

### **MyRutgers**

MyRutgers is a central repository for student information. Students can access their schedule, grades, term bill, parking, housing, paychecks, etc. at <https://my.rutgers.edu/>.

### **Address/Contact Number**

All students should notify the department whenever there is a change in their address and/or contact number. In addition, changes must always be updated using: <https://uhr.rutgers.edu/worklife-balance/change-name-or-address-information>.

### **Term Bill**

Fellows are responsible for student, housing, school, technology, and "other" fees on the term bill.

International students on F-1 or J-1 Visas must inform Student Financial Services (<https://scarlethub.rutgers.edu/financial-services/>) when submitting term bills. These students will need to request the Rutgers SEVIS Administration Fee be waived due to visa status.

### **Health Insurance**

Fellows will receive an email from CCB asking for personal information, such as address and phone number. This information is for insurance enrollment purposes and is provided to SGS. Students who wish to waive fellowship insurance must do it at this time.

After their first year, students receive either a Teaching or Graduate Assistant (TA/GA) appointment, both of which include insurance through University Human Resources (UHR). This insurance (State Health Benefits Program or SHBP) is different than the insurance for fellows (Student Health Insurance Plan or SHIP). Students that do not enroll in SHBP on time will be automatically enrolled in SHIP. These students are responsible for paying the SHIP fee which will appear on the fall and spring term bills of that year.

For questions regarding health benefits and enrollment, please contact UHR at (732) 745-7378 or <https://uhr.rutgers.edu/teaching-assistants-graduate-assistants>.

Coverage for dependents is available at an extra cost to students. For this additional option, students will need to remit the dependent premium payment on a semi-annual basis directly to University Health Plans. Fellows will first need to be individually enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan prior to enrolling dependents.

### **Key CCB Contacts**

Program Website: <https://chem.rutgers.edu/academics/graduate-program>

School of Graduate Studies Website: <https://grad.rutgers.edu/>

General Inquiries: [ccb\\_graduate\\_chair@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:ccb_graduate_chair@chem.rutgers.edu)

Kelly Martini-Hazard: [martini@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:martini@chem.rutgers.edu)

*Senior Graduate Program Coordinator*

Lu Wang: [lwang@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:lwang@chem.rutgers.edu)

*Vice Chair of the Graduate Program*

Julia Colvin: [jcolvin@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:jcolvin@chem.rutgers.edu)

*Associate Director of Academic Operations, ISSS (International Student & Scholar Services) Certifier*

Andrew DeZaio: [adezaio@rutgers.edu](mailto:adezaio@rutgers.edu)

*Facilities & Lab Safety Manager*

Suzanne Squires: [squiress@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:squiress@chem.rutgers.edu)

*Director of Administration*

John Brennan: [bren@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:bren@chem.rutgers.edu)

*Department Chair*

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Chemistry & Chemical Biology curriculum follows a basic formula of required course and research credits. Any courses taken outside of CCB must first be approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate Vice Chair. These courses must be listed at 500 level or higher to count towards degree completion.

Degree Requirements - Basic Overview			
<b>Year One</b>	Coursework	Lab Rotation	Individual Development Plan
<b>Year Two</b>	Coursework	Research	Individual Development Plan Qualifiers
<b>Years Three+</b>	Research		Individual Development Plan Annual Progress Report
<b>Final Year</b>	Research		Dissertation Defense

### Coursework

Students must take a minimum of 22 course credits. The following courses are required:

- Introduction to Research, 16:160:603 (1 credit), must be completed in the first semester of graduate study. All full-time PhD students are required to complete and receive a satisfactory grade in this single credit graduate course within their first semester of graduate study. It is only offered in the fall semester.
- Research Colloquium, 16:160:607 and 16:160:608 (1 credit per course), must be taken in the first two years of graduate study. All full-time PhD students are required to complete and receive a satisfactory grade in both courses within their first two years of graduate study. Students are encouraged to take the full sequence in their second year but can begin with 608 in the second semester of their first year if their advisor agrees to it.
- Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:611 (1 credit), must be completed in the third semester of graduate study and is only offered in the fall semester. The focus of this course is the OFRP (described on page 11).
- Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:612 (1 credit), must be completed in the fourth semester of graduate study and is only offered in the spring semester. The focus of this course is the IFRP (described on page 11).
- Advanced Organic Chemistry, 16:160:511 (3 credits), OR Chemical Thermodynamics, 16:160:525 (3 credits), can be taken in the first semester of graduate study. These courses focus on the fundamentals of thermodynamics and kinetics, with different treatments selected depending on the student's interests. At least one of these courses must be completed by the end of the fourth semester.

All students must take at least 12 additional credits of lecture electives (graduate level >500). First semester courses should be approved by a faculty adviser at orientation and by the student's advisor thereafter.

*Please note: Independent Studies in Chemistry, 16:160:601/602, and Lab Rotation, 16:160:605, are considered coursework and credits are by arrangement with your PI and the department.*

Required Coursework			
<b>First Semester</b>	Intro to Research, 16:160:603	Lab Rotation, 16:160:605	Advanced Organic Chemistry, 16:160:511 OR Chemical Thermodynamics, 16:160:525
<b>Second+ Semesters</b>	Research Colloquium, 16:160:607-608		>500 Elective Courses
<b>Third Semester</b>	Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:611		
<b>Fourth Semester</b>	Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:612		

### ***Degree Credits***

Students need a minimum of 72 overall credits to graduate. The suggested path includes 22 course credits (including 603, 605, 607/608, 611, 612). Students may take more, but not less, than 22 course credits. 601/602 can also count towards coursework. Students must also register for fellowship/TA/GA e-credits every semester based on their appointment; these e-credits are neither billable nor counted towards degree completion.

### ***Credit Limit***

Tuition remission beyond 72 credits requires approval from the Graduate Vice Chair. These students should not register for more than one research credit a semester.

International students registering for one credit must complete the Reduced Course Load Form online through the Rutgers Global Portal and request approval from the departmental ISSS representative, Julia Colvin ([jcolvin@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:jcolvin@chem.rutgers.edu)). This should only be done in a student's final semester.

### ***Cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA)***

PhD students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in their graduate courses. Students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 are placed on departmental probation. Failure to raise the GPA to at least 3.0 within the next nine credits will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the graduate program.

### ***Lab Rotations***

All PhD students must do two "rotations" during their first semester. A rotation is a period of six weeks during which the student conducts research in the laboratory of a potential advisor. Students will register for these rotations as course 16:160:605.

- Each rotation is a trial period for both the student and the potential advisor. The nature of the research depends on the lab. The department will reach out to first years regarding which labs they would like to rotate in. A significant commitment of time and effort is required for a successful rotation outcome.
- After rotations, students will complete the Advisor Request Form listing the labs in which they would like to do research. Students not accepted into a lab must complete additional rotations in the spring. These lab rotations are counted as "course credits" and not "research credits."
- A student must have an advisor and be accepted into a research group to remain in good standing. If students do not join a research group/have an advisor by the end of their first year, they will be asked to transfer to the MS track or leave the program altogether.

### ***Annual Progress Report***

Academic progress is monitored, post-qualifiers, via annual progress reports. A student should schedule a meeting every spring semester before April 1, unless the student will defend on or before June 30 of that year.

- Presentations during the annual committee meeting should be concise, clear, and approximately 20 minutes long. The entire meeting should last no longer than one hour.
- Students should use the annual committee meetings as an opportunity to both summarize their research progress in the past year and practice their presentation skills. Individual Development Plans will also be discussed during this time.
- Committees should provide personalized feedback and research/academic recommendations. Committees will determine if students are making satisfactory progress towards PhD completion.

### ***Individual Development Plans***

SGS requires all PhD students to submit an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP). IDPs are intended to contribute to effective mentoring, planning, and communication. IDP entries are saved in the online portal, so that in each consecutive year, a new IDP can be pre-populated with the entries from the prior year. Directions on using the IDP portal can be found on the CCB website:

[https://chem.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/grad/CCB\\_Individual-Development-Plans.pdf](https://chem.rutgers.edu/images/PDFs/grad/CCB_Individual-Development-Plans.pdf).

### ***Language Training for International Students***

The department needs to be notified that international PhD students have passed their ESL/ELL exam, are coded as a 1 or lower (i.e. may teach), and are cleared to teach by the end of their first semester. The TA Seminar & Practicum, 16:356:591, is required for international students. They can take the course in either fall or spring of their first year in preparation for a potential TA appointment in their second year. Based on ESL/ELL testing scores, students may also need to take additional “English as a Second Language” courses.

### ***Academic Dismissal***

All students must maintain satisfactory academic progress at all times; failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress for more than one semester will lead to dismissal from the program.

Satisfactory academic progress requires:

- Minimum GPA of 3.0
- No more than 9 credits of C+/C
- No more than one “U” grade in research
- No more than two IN (incompletes)
- Acceptance into a research group before the end of the second semester
- Completion of Intro to Research (603), Lab Rotation (605), two semesters of Research Colloquium (607/608), and both halves of qualifying exam (611/612) by the end of the fourth full-time semester
- Fulfillment of Teaching Assistant (TA)/Graduate Assistant (GA) duties

Normally, all full-time PhD students must be supported as a teaching assistant, graduate assistant, or fellow to remain in good standing. By accepting a TA position, the PhD student agrees to maintain professional behavior in the classroom, including all proctoring, teaching assignments, and grading responsibilities. International PhD students must be cleared to teach by the end of their first year, before they are assigned as a TA. Fulfillment of TA duties requires the student to be present and active for the duration of the assigned semester. Please refer to Scheduling’s [academic calendar](#) for dates.

Written warnings will be issued each semester, within two weeks of final posted grades, to any student who is not maintaining satisfactory academic progress, as outlined above.

Such warnings will be accompanied by recommended steps to improve performance, including a consultation with program faculty/staff as well as opportunities to find other appropriate resources within the university, such as the Learning Centers; Office of Disability Services (ODS); Counseling, Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance Program & Psychiatric Services (CAPS); etc. However, the department expects a timely response to these communications. A student who neglects to respond to such requests within two business days will be further violating the terms of satisfactory academic progress.

In the second consecutive semester that a student fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress, the department will notify the student in writing that the process for academic dismissal has begun.

## **CORE CURRICULUM**

### ***Typical Timeline and Deadlines***

#### **YEAR ONE**

*First Year Fellowship, Fall Semester: 12 credits*

- Fellows must register for Graduate Fellowship (16:160:811). This is a non-credit course used to track funding. Students are typically supported on fellowships with no teaching duties, allowing them to focus on their coursework and identify a suitable research advisor.



- Fellows are expected to complete six-week rotations in at least two labs during the first semester; the rotations help students and faculty assess interest in a subject area and the prospect for success. Every effort is made to accommodate both student and faculty to ensure the best fit possible.
  - To register for Lab Rotation (16:160:605), students will need to request a SPN (special permission number) from the program coordinator.
  - Please make sure to submit the Advisor Request Form before finals of the first semester. This is necessary to place the student in a lab.

*First Year Fellowship, Spring Semester: 12 credits*

- Students should begin taking research credits under their PI's section (16:160:701/702) for five credits. *Please do not register for 602 unless your PI or a department administrator instructs you to do so.*
- A student must have an advisor and be accepted into a research group to remain in good standing. Students who do not yet have an advisor mid-semester should meet with the Graduate Vice Chair.
- After choosing a primary advisor, students must select the rest of their PhD advisory committee, preferably early in the second semester in consultation with their advisor.
- Students should complete an Individual Development Plan in the SGS IDP portal. This can be reviewed by the advisor digitally or printed out and discussed during a one-on-one meeting.

## YEAR TWO

*Second Year, Fall Semester: TA/GA Appointment*

- After the first year, PhD students should work on completing all coursework necessary to graduate and focus on their research project(s). They should meet with their advisor to plan out their credits.
- Students should register for eight research credits if TA. Please consult with advisor if GA.
- The OFRP form should be signed by the student's committee and submitted to the department before final exams begin.

*Second Year, Spring Semester: TA/GA Appointment*

- Students should register for nine research credits if TA. Please consult with advisor if GA.
- The IFRP form should be signed by the student's advisory committee and submitted to the department by mid-April.
- Students should complete an Individual Development Plan in the SGS IDP portal. This can be reviewed by the advisor digitally or printed out and discussed after the IFRP presentation.

## YEARS THREE and above

*Fall and Spring Semester: TA/GA Appointment*

- Once students have been admitted to PhD candidacy, they continue developing their research, typically preparing manuscripts for publication, presenting their research results at conferences, and helping to prepare grant proposals.
- Students should register for ten research credits if TA or three research credits if GA.
- The student's progress report should be signed by the full advisory committee and submitted to the department before April 1.
- Every spring, students should complete an Individual Development Plan in the SGS IDP portal. This can be reviewed by the advisor digitally or printed out and discussed during the annual progress report.
- By the fifth year, a student has typically progressed far enough in their research to write and defend their dissertation, which is the last step before they are awarded their PhD. Sometimes, a student will need an additional year or two to finish. This needs to be agreed upon with the student's advisor.

**Suggested Course Sequence**

<b>YEAR ONE</b>				
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Fall</b>	Intro to Research	16:160:603	1	
	Thermodynamics and Kinetics OR Adv. Organic Chem	16:160:525	3	
		16:160:511		
	Lab Rotation	16:160:605	2	Advisor Request Form
	Two 160 electives	16:160:XXX	3,3	
	Graduate Fellowship	16:160:811	0	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>12</b>	
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Spring</b>	Research Colloquium	16:160:608	1	
	Two 160 electives	16:160:XXX	3,3	
	Research Chemistry	16:160:702	5	Committee Selection
	Graduate Fellowship	16:160:811	0	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>12</b>	

<b>YEAR TWO</b>				
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Fall</b>	Seminar in Chemistry	16:160:611	1	OFRP Form
	Research Colloquium	16:160:607	1	
	Research Chemistry	16:160:701	8	
	Full Time TA or GA	16:160:866/877	6	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>16</b>	
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Spring</b>	Seminar in Chemistry	16:160:612	1	IFRP Form
	Research Chemistry	16:160:702	9	
	Full Time TA or GA	16:160:866/877	6	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>16</b>	

<b>YEAR THREE and BEYOND</b>				
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Fall</b>	Research Chemistry	16:160:701	10 (TA) or 3 (GA)*	
	Full Time TA or GA	16:160:866/877	6	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>9 or 16</b>	
	<b>COURSE NAME</b>	<b>COURSE #</b>	<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>REQUIRED FORMS</b>
<b>Spring</b>	Research Chemistry	16:160:702	10 (TA) or 3 (GA)*	Annual Progress Report
	Full Time TA or GA	16:160:866/877	6	
<b>Total Credits</b>			<b>9 or 16</b>	

\* Students should speak with an administrator in the Graduate Office regarding questions about coursework or how many credits to register for - especially when nearing the 72 credits required for graduation.

## PHD GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### **Qualifying Exam**

To maintain good academic progress and be admitted to candidacy, a student must complete both parts of the qualifying exam by the end of the fourth semester of full-time graduate study. The qualifying exam consists of:

1. successful oral defense of a written “Out-of-Field Research Proposal” (OFRP) based on research (a recent paper from the literature) that significantly differs from research conducted in the laboratory of the student’s advisor (16:160:611 Seminar in Chemistry), AND
2. successful oral defense of a written “In-Field Research Proposal” (IFRP) based on the student’s PhD thesis project (16:160:612 Seminar in Chemistry)

### **“Out-of-Field Research Proposal” (OFRP, Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:611)**

The purpose of the OFRP is to ensure that all PhD candidates demonstrate an ability to (a) understand, in depth, papers in the chemical literature that are outside the immediate thesis research field; (b) understand the broader context of such papers; (c) reason analytically and critically, and interpret data properly, and (d) independently formulate well-designed experiments or theory as a continuation of prior work.

The purpose of the OFRP does not necessarily include learning in depth about a field of chemistry entirely outside that of the student’s major field, in addition to the above requirement. Therefore, a student may choose a paper within the same sub-field of chemistry (bioinorganic, nanochemistry, organometallic chemistry, structural biology, etc.) as their thesis research (defined as the “research conducted in the laboratory of the student’s thesis advisor”).

Students will choose a paper from outside of the immediate thesis research field and will describe it at the level of depth expected if the students were describing their own research projects. Students will then propose and defend an original research project based on this paper. The project will be based on research that significantly differs from research conducted in the laboratory of the student’s thesis advisor. In general, it must involve either a different type of system or different experimental or computational methods (or both), from those studied in the advisor’s laboratory. The student’s thesis advisor must approve the choice of paper but is not to be involved in either the formulation or evaluation of the OFRP.

The letter grade for 611 will be based largely, but not exclusively, on the OFRP grade. The 611 instructor will take into account the student’s written component, oral presentation, participation in class, and other course requirements.

### **“In-Field Research Proposal” (IFRP, Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:612)**

The purpose of the OFRP is to ensure that all PhD candidates demonstrate an ability to (a) make satisfactory progress in their thesis research to date; (b) understand the broad context of their field and can identify the major issues, the main tools, and the current publications of the field; (c) present a concise statement of the overall goal of their own current research; (d) review in a coherent manner their specific results (to date); (e) reason analytically at a fundamental level and critically interpret their own results as well as the work of others working in their area; (f) propose a well thought out series of experiments or calculations that can address a significant scientific problem.

Unlike the OFRP, the letter grade for 612 will be based on the IFRP grade; “High Pass” and “Pass” correspond to an A grade with “Low Pass” as a B grade. Students who fail the IFRP will receive a grade for the course of C+ or lower, depending upon the committee’s evaluation. If the student fails, the committee will also have the option to provide the student with one additional try.

*Please see the CCB website for full OFRP/IFRP requirements.*

### **OFRP & IFRP Scheduling**

Students should register for OFRP under the course Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:611, only offered in the fall, and for IFRP under the course Seminar in Chemistry, 16:160:612, only offered in the spring. 611 is the prerequisite for 612.

611's designated instructor will facilitate scheduling. However, scheduling the 612 oral defense, based on the student's PhD research project, is the responsibility of the student and should be completed before finals.

### **Candidacy**

The student's advisory committee will meet to discuss progress and make a recommendation to the Graduate Vice Chair on advancement to candidacy. Students must pass *at least* the IFRP to be considered for advancement to candidacy. If a student has two low passes, advancement to candidacy will be denied.

The committee should submit the required IFRP candidacy form to the department before finals, so the program coordinator can submit the official candidacy form to SGS on the student's behalf.

### **Final Oral Examination (Dissertation Defense)**

A student's final thesis committee must include one "outside member" selected by or with the approval of the student's advisor. The outside member must hold a PhD.

Dissertation defenses will be in the form of a public seminar, typically lasting an hour, followed by discussion. The student should share their dissertation details with Loretta Lupo [lal275@chem.rutgers.edu](mailto:lal275@chem.rutgers.edu) at least one week in advance, so she can circulate the details to the CCB community. Room arrangements for an in-person defense should be made through the department at least one month in advance of the proposed defense date. If a student needs or wants to offer virtual participation, it is the student's responsibility to create and provide a Zoom link.

Typically, copies of the written dissertation are distributed to all members of the student's committee at least two weeks before the defense date. In addition, a copy of all material to be presented (e.g. a copy of the slides) should be distributed to all committee members at least 24 hours before the defense date (minor changes may still be made to the presentation material prior to the defense).

Students must communicate their expected graduation date with the Graduate Program Coordinator and Graduate Vice Chair as they near degree completion. The defense and exam must be taken at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline date set by the School of Graduate Studies for the awarding of a May, October, or January degree to allow required forms to be submitted on time.

Please access the SGS website for the PhD degree checklist:

<https://gsnb.rutgers.edu/academics/checklist-phd-degree>

## FAQ

### ***Can a student submit an academic complaint or appeal grades?***

CCB seeks to provide educational and scholarly opportunities to all students in a constructive and harmonious environment, but students have the right to appeal academic actions, such as assignment/course grade(s), advancement to PhD candidacy, and thesis committee decisions. The student should first attempt to resolve the matter through direct discussion with the relevant instructor(s). If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved, the student may specify the appeal, in writing, to the Vice Chair of the Graduate Program.

Students who wish to appeal departmental decisions may do so, in writing, to Barbara Bender, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Support and Graduate Student Services. Students will be referred back to the department should they contact the Dean before contacting the instructor(s) and then the Vice Chair. The most informed resolution of such matters is typically available within CCB.

### ***How does CCB accommodate students with (dis)abilities?***

CCB welcomes students of all levels of abilities into our graduate program. Students with (dis)abilities are entitled to the same benefits, the same quality of student life, and are subject to the same academic requirements as other students. The university provides extensive and supportive resources. Rutgers is committed to providing equal educational access in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008. The university will make reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and procedures unless doing so would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, activity, or pose an undue hardship.

For any student who has been deemed eligible for special services, Rutgers provides reasonable accommodations in order to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to participate in all Rutgers programs, services, and activities. For more information, please visit: <https://ods.rutgers.edu>.

### ***Does Rutgers offer mental health counseling?***

Rutgers University has several nationally accredited health centers, operating with board certified physicians and skilled clinical staff. Students may be referred to one of the counseling centers on campus, but they may access these services directly without referral. Services offered by the various centers include treatment of depression or anxiety, difficulties establishing and maintaining relationships, feeling pressures from home, handling academic demands, stress and time management, eating issues, grief management, self-help, surviving exams, and individual/group therapy. Each center can be accessed centrally through: <https://health.rutgers.edu>.

### ***Can a student take a leave of absence?***

Yes, students should contact the Graduate Vice Chair if they are considering a leave of absence. This option is only available once a student has completed one full calendar year in the program.

### ***Can the department help with taxes?***

Rutgers University bars departments from giving tax advice of any kind. CCB administrative staff are not licensed, qualified tax professionals. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to meet tax obligations and do so accurately.

***When is a PhD candidate officially a graduate?***

The School of Graduate Studies offers three degree cycles: January (deadline: January 1), May (deadline: April 1), and October (deadline: October 1). During the interim between when the student defends and when the degree is conferred, they maintain active student status.

***Can the department confirm graduation if a student gets a job before receiving a diploma?***

Should a student defend between cycles and obtain employment that requires proof of graduation, the department can provide an official letter explaining our degree cycles and confirm the student has completed program requirements.

***Does a student need to be actively enrolled in the semester they defend?***

Students need to be actively enrolled in the semester in which they defend, with two exceptions. If a student defends over the summer, they do not need to enroll in summer credits. If a student defends in September, they do not need to enroll in the fall semester, granted they submit their paperwork before the October 1 deadline.

***Who can answer employment related questions, such as payroll, insurance enrollment, etc.?***

University Human Resources and Payroll Services have partnered to plan, design, and operate a service center to support Rutgers community members. This effort will simplify processes, improve the customer experience, and redefine our delivery of HR and Payroll services.

<https://uhr.rutgers.edu/onesource/home>