

MEETING WITH NEW CELL STUDENTS. *Updated December 2022.*

Admin Background

The **Cell and Developmental Biology (CELL) Program** is a multi-disciplinary program at UBC: others include Bioinformatics, Genome Sciences, Neuroscience and Oncology. CELL is administered by the Faculty of Medicine.

Therefore, on scholarship and fellowship applications:

Your 'Department' = 'CELL Program'
Your Faculty = 'Medicine'

(please use this regardless your supervisor's department and/or faculty, even if the latter is in the Faculty of Science or the Faculty of Dentistry).

Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies (G+PS) sets the rules & regulations for all graduate students at UBC.

The G+PS website has lots of very useful info – e.g. your responsibilities as a grad student; your supervisor's responsibilities; info re: managing your program; etc.

<https://www.grad.ubc.ca/>

BE AWARE OF AND KEEP TO THE (MANY) DEADLINES ESTABLISHED BY G+PS – eg. transfer to PhD, Comprehensive Exam, etc; we will remind you of these.

Very useful documents at G+PS website are:

- Flyers about the Programs for graduate students that G+PS organizes or is involved in
- Graduate Student Guide
- Handbook of Graduate Supervision
- Supervisor & Student Expectations and Responsibilities.
- COVID-19 Updates

CELL Graduate Program

<http://cell.med.ubc.ca/> Most useful page: '[Current Students](#)'

There are currently ~70 students in the program. Student's supervisors are members of a number of different Departments – e.g. CPS, MEDG, MEDI, DENT, OPTH, PAED, PSYC, SURG, ZOOL – and their labs are located at off-campus (~40%; Eye Care Centre, BC Cancer Research Ctr, BC Children's Research Institute; Women's Hospital) as well as on-campus (~60%; Life Sciences Ctr, Biomedical Research Ctr, Dentistry, Centre For Brain Health) sites.

Cal Roskelley = Grad Advisor: <mailto:roskelley@mail.ubc.ca> LSC 3456 (on UBC Campus)
Cyndi Liu = CELL Program Coordinator: <mailto:cyndi.liu@ubc.ca> LSC 1347 (on UBC Campus)

We have an open door policy and encourage you to contact us about procedures, etc. and any other matters – e.g. financial issues, difficulties with student/faculty relationships, etc. **It's always best to get in touch with us sooner rather than later!**

Course Requirements:

-These vary depending on the way in which you entered your specific degree program.

For MSc Students:

- BIOL 530 and CELL 501, 'Process' courses (6 credits).
- CELL 502 to 513 = 'Content' courses (1.5 credits each) or 3 credits of non-CELL elective courses (6 credits; please contact me at <mailto:roskelly@mail.ubc.ca> if you wish to alter this breakdown)
- Discuss choice of courses with your Supervisor if you haven't already done so.
- If you have issues/difficulties please contact either Cal or Cyndi.

For PhD Students:

- Direct entry students have the same requirements as MSc students detailed above
- Students who enter the program after completing a Cell or Developmental Biology MSc degree are not required to take courses unless they have been recommended to do so by the CELL Admissions committee (this is usually BIOL 530 and CELL 501).

Please note: We have a relatively large intake of new students in the program this year so you may not get your first choice of 'content courses', especially in the first term, if you haven't already registered for them.

Other non-thesis/non-credit course requirements for CELL students:

-Responsible Conduct of Research – non-credit course; The Faculty of Medicine's research office will be in touch with all first year CELL students about registration for this course. Please contact us if you don't hear from them by the beginning of October.

-Present and participate in the 'CELLS' our' student-led seminar series held monthly beginning in October (will be carried out on online during 2022/23).

-MSc students are required to present once in year 2 (i.e. prior to writing up their thesis).

-PhD students are required to present twice, once in year 2 (i.e. prior to their Comprehensive Exam) and once in year 3-5 (i.e. prior to writing up their thesis).

-Led by:

-Aurora Mattison: ajmattis@student.ubc.ca

-Sena Youn: sena.youn@hotmail.com

-Ryan Ghorayeb: Ryan.Ghorayeb@bcchr.ca

-Please note: There are many worthwhile additional programmatic seminar series run by many Departments and Programs that are worth your while participating in.

-Optional participation in the annual CELL Biology Retreat (at 'Loon Lake' or online, in Spring of 2023).

-Set up your 'Research Advisory Committee':

-This Committee's overarching role is to help guide your research/thesis program

-Composition, roles and responsibilities of the Committee are listed on the [CELL website](#) (please look under the 'Current Students' tab)

-Discuss the composition of Committee with your Supervisor; if you have any difficulty please contact us.

-Have your first Committee meeting within 9-12 months (introductory; not data heavy).

-Must meet at least every 12 months thereafter; complete Committee Mtg. report ([form is here](#)) and send it to Cyndi.

Funding

i) Financial Support

- Faculty Members of the CELL Program are committed to supporting full-time graduate students financially during the course of their training.
- Minimum level of financial support is \$30,000 per year, for a minimum of 2 years (for MSc students) or 4 years (for PhD students).
- The minimum funding package can be made up from a number of sources (e.g. Fellowships, Teaching Assistantships, Research Grants, etc.) and is subject to satisfactory academic and research progress.
- Students who receive a scholarship or other award equal to or more than \$8,000 per year receive prorated top-ups at a minimum (at least \$3,000 for \$8-16K award; \$6,000 or \$16K or greater award) see details on CELL website.
- Please complete 'Agreement between Graduate Student and Supervisor' form ([form is here](#)) and return to Cyndi at by October 1st.

ii) Fellowships and other awards

- Lots of information on [CELL](#) and [G+PS](#) websites about competitive funding (eg. from NSERC, CIHR, UBC awards (Affiliated Fellowships, etc.). Affiliated Fellowships are open to international as well as Canadian students.
- Competitive awards are also available from organizations such as the Heart & Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, MS Society, etc. These are announced throughout the year.
- Travel Awards are often available from your Supervisor's home Department as well as Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

iii) Funding available through the CELL Program (open to International and Canadian students).

- 4YF (Four-year Doctoral Fellowships). Doctoral students only. ~\$18k per year + tuition for up to 4 years. Very competitive. CELL Program is allocated 2 4YFs each year by G+PS, with applications (from doctoral students who would be starting their 2nd or 3rd year in Sept.)
- 1YF (One-year Fellowships). Typically we have funding to award ~6 of these Fellowships which provide \$8K to \$16k for one year. Applications from MSc students (who would be starting their 2nd year in Sept.) and PhD students (who would be starting their 2nd, 3rd or 4th year in Sept.)
- The next round of 4YF and 1YF applications will be announced late next spring.
- A limited number of TAs are available through the CELL Program (for students in their 2nd year or later) as well as a number of other Departments.