

Welcome

## Points of contact

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Faculty directors of GS Graduate Program:

Doug Fowler ([dfowler@uw.edu](mailto:dfowler@uw.edu)), Kelley Harris ([harriske@uw.edu](mailto:harriske@uw.edu))

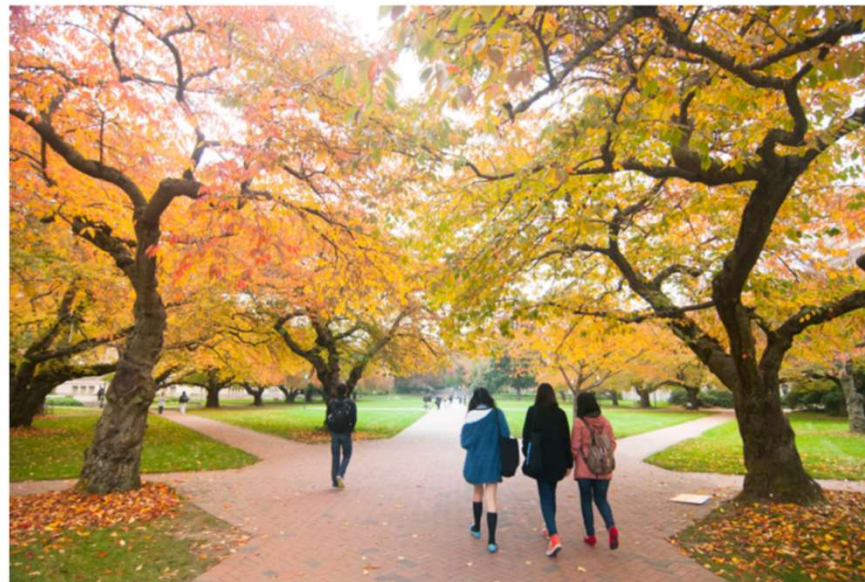
Faculty mentors

Thesis committee

# A great source of information: the student handbook

<https://www.gs.washington.edu/academics/ph-d-program/student-handbook/>  
Student Handbook

<b>Genome Sciences Student Handbook:</b>
<a href="#">general information</a>
<a href="#">first year</a>
<a href="#">second year</a>
<a href="#">third year &amp; beyond</a>
<a href="#">academic schedule at a glance</a>
<a href="#">counseling &amp; mental health resources</a>
<a href="#">anti-harassment resources</a>
<a href="#">student leadership council</a>
<a href="#">GS employment page</a>
<a href="#">Data Science options</a>
<a href="#">CMB program</a>
<b>UW Resources:</b>
<a href="#">MyUW</a>
<a href="#">Time Schedule</a>



	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 and beyond
Autumn	<p>COURSES Genome 501 Genome 550 Genome 552 Genome 555 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER safety training establish WA residency rotation talk research reports &amp; Genome 599 for MSTP students**</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 599 (grant writing) Genome 599 (sci speaking)** Genome 600 Genome events (520, 522, 523) elective if desired*</p> <p>OTHER select supervisory committee establish WA residency research reports presentation**</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER serve as teaching assistant (specific quarter varies; MSTP students may be asked to teach in year 2, depending on total number of teaching assistants needed) research reports presentation (any quarter) journal club (any quarter – seminar speaker lunch)</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER serve as teaching assistant (specific quarter varies) research reports presentation (any quarter) journal club presentation</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER Schedule committee meeting (any quarter) research reports presentation unless you will be graduating this year (any quarter)</p>
Winter	<p>COURSES Genome 501 Genome 551 Genome 561 Genome events (520, 522, 523) Optional: Genome 559 (for those with little or no programming experience) elective if desired*</p> <p>OTHER rotation talk</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 600 Genome events (520, 522, 523) elective if desired*</p> <p>OTHER journal club presentation</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER Schedule committee meeting (any quarter)</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER Schedule committee meeting (any quarter)</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER</p>
Spring	<p>COURSES Genome 501 Genome 553 Genome 560 Genome events (520, 522, 523) elective if desired*</p> <p>OTHER select dissertation lab rotation talk</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 580 (ethics)*** Genome 600 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER general exam (end of spring / early summer)</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>OTHER</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800 Genome events (520, 522, 523)</p> <p>DEFEND students typically defend in year 5 or early in year 6</p>
Sum	<p>COURSES Genome 600</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 600</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800</p>	<p>COURSES Genome 800</p>
Notes	<p>* 18 graded credits needed to take general exam at the end of year 2. Required courses will provide most of this, but most students end up needing to take an elective or two (not everyone takes the exact same set of required courses)  ** MSTP students will give research report during year one (taking the accompanying presentation course at the same time)  *** MSTP students take ethics course at the end of year three</p>				

# Your first year: rotations, coursework, selecting a lab

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- What is the purpose of rotations?
  - find a scientific 'home'
  - assess level of comfort with PI's management style and lab environment
  - assure PI and lab members that you will be a productive lab citizen
- How to select labs for rotations?
  - approach PIs with research interests similar to yours
  - use the retreat to get to know PIs and their work
  - take advantage of the faculty talks in the Fall quarter
  - as your interests may change, do not organize all your rotations in the first quarter
  - consult older students

# Rotation structure and expectations

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- 3 rotations follow quarters (4 rotations are possible)
- quarters end with short rotation talks (10 min)
- rotation and thesis labs: choose a core or joint faculty member as PI or anyone listed in “other training faculty” section: <https://www.gs.washington.edu/faculty/index.htm>

## What you can/should expect of your rotation mentors:

- PI will outline one (or more) possible projects and expected outcomes
- PI will provide a work plan and identify lab members (or PI) for day-to-day guidance
- PI will be available for regular meetings during the rotation and advise on rotation talk
- PI will give you verbal feed-back about your rotation
- PI will generate a rotation evaluation available to all faculty at the annual student evaluation in April
- **Please note decision on lab choices are made at the end of Spring quarter!**

# Rotation structure and expectations

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## What we expect of you:

- have fun
- be actively engaged both in pursuing your research and in communicating with PI and lab members
- produce a draft of your rotation talk for input by your mentors
- be actively engaged in the lab's and the department's activities

## Rotation talks:

- 10 minutes, background and motivation, some data
- rotation projects are often exploratory – data is secondary to your experience in the lab

# Departmental Events – Science is a social activity

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- Annual Retreat
- Genome Sciences Seminars on Wednesdays
- Combi Seminars on Wednesdays
- Research Reports on Fridays
- Thesis defenses



Events are posted here: <https://www.gs.washington.edu/news-events/event-calendar/>

AND in the Lobby & near elevators

# Make time for social events and get to know everyone

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- Social hour after Research Reports most Fridays
- Monthly Community Coffee
- Outreach and social events
- Hang out after seminars/RR to chat
- Get to know your cohort and classmates!



# Course work

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## Goals:

- provide a sound foundation in concepts relevant to genome sciences
- ensure a 'common language' among all students and faculty
- prepare you for conducting your thesis work and pursue your career beyond GS

## Fall quarter:

**Genome 520: Seminar**

**Genome 523: Research Reports**

Genome 501: Lab rotation

Genome 550: Methods & Logic in Genetics (10 weeks) – Jay Shendure and Christine Queitsch

Genome 555: Proteomics (5 weeks, first half of quarter) – Judit Villen

Genome 552: Genomics (5 weeks, second half of quarter) – Lea Starita

# Rotation and Course work balance

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## Common concern – where to put the most effort?

- communication is key
- seek support from your cohort unless discouraged (*etc.* for take-home exams)
- course instructors have policies for making up for a missed class or assignment
- accepted reasons for missing class/assignments/rotation activities: illness and instructor/PI-approved scientific meetings or family obligations

Remember that rotations are about finding your scientific home.

# How to choose a thesis lab

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- Do not agonize over your decision – there is good science in all GS labs
- Trust your gut feeling:
  - Are you excited about the research?
  - Do you feel welcome and supported in the lab? By the PI?
  - Does it feel right?
- We suggest primarily basing your decision on YOUR research interests and personal chemistry with the lab
- Consult with older students

# First year and beyond – a time line

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- choose a thesis lab at the end of Spring quarter
  - thesis advisor must be core, joint or training faculty
  - you and your advisor will sign the 'Summary of Mentor Responsibilities' form and submit to Brian Giebel
- 2. year, end of Fall quarter
  - Select thesis committee (minimum of 4 faculty members, including your PI), inform Brian Giebel
  - One of your committee members will be the Graduate School Representative, they are unaffiliated with GS and serve as your advocate
  - committee meetings are annual
- 2. year, Spring or early Summer quarter
  - General Exam, includes written and oral components
  - thesis proposal similar to federal grant proposals, guidance by PI

# Expectations for PhD degree

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- published original research
- time to degree – anywhere between 3.5 years to 6.5 years, average time to graduation over the past 10 years 5.12 years
- decision between you, your advisor and your committee
- 94% graduation rate in past 10 years

# Conference participation

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- Conference participation is an essential part of your training
- Identify conferences that may facilitate your research and discuss with your PI
- Identify funding sources
- Conference participation implies that you submit an abstract to present a poster or short talk on your research
- Smaller, more targeted conferences allow better access to speakers and other researchers in the field

# A common concern – funding

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- all eligible GS grads receive ~\$49,392 per year (as of 2026), plus a tuition waiver and health insurance (annual increase 2-4% anticipated)
- funding is provided by the department during the 1. year and by your lab thereafter
- Applications for outside funding are encouraged
  - NSF
  - NIH F31 grants
  - various training grants on campus (GTG, Aging TG, CMB)
  - Ford Foundation

# GS is committed to building an inclusive community

<https://www.gs.washington.edu/about/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>

The Department of Genome Sciences is committed to creating an environment that is welcoming and inclusive. Our goal is to foster a place of learning and working where all members can thrive and where diversity is recognized and celebrated. At Genome Sciences, we aim to create supportive spaces for those who are marginalized in higher education or society. To achieve this, we recognize that it is our ongoing responsibility to understand, acknowledge, and challenge systems of privilege and disadvantage in higher education such as those based on race, color, creed, caste, religion, national origin, citizenship, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, veteran status, or socioeconomic status.



# GS is committed to building an inclusive community

[DEI home](#)

**[policies & reporting](#)**

[recruiting](#)

[organizations](#)

[resources & training](#)

[outreach & community](#)

[engagement](#)

[DEI committee](#)

[UW Human Resources DEI](#)

[UW Medicine Healthcare](#)

[Equity Toolkit](#)

## Policies & Reporting

Members of the Genome Sciences community may report incidents of harassment, discrimination, incivility or aggression to any of the following individuals:

Doug Fowler, Associate Professor, [dfowler \[ a t \] uw.edu](mailto:dfowler@uw.edu)

Brian Giebel, Graduate Program Coordinator, [bgiebel \[ a t \] uw.edu](mailto:bgiebel@uw.edu)

Atom Lesiak, Lecturer, [alesiak \[ a t \] uw.edu](mailto:alesiak@uw.edu)

Serena Newhall, Human Resources Manager, [serenn2 \[ a t \] uw.edu](mailto:serenn2@uw.edu)

Christine Queitsch, Professor, [queitsch \[ a t \] uw.edu](mailto:queitsch@uw.edu)

Alternatively, the following tools are available for reporting such incidents:

## Reporting tools

### **[GS Anonymous Incident Report \(GS AIR\)](#)**

This is an anonymous reporting tool for the Department of Genome Sciences (GS) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine. GS AIR is for use by all members of Genome Sciences: faculty, staff, students, postdocs, and volunteers. You may report any incidents related to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, age, genetic information, protected veteran or disabled status. You may also report any category of discrimination, bias, microaggressions, macroaggressions, unfairness, bullying, harm, neglect, crime, harassment, etc. No incident is too big or too small.

This anonymous reporting tool is for non-emergencies only. If this is an emergency, please dial 911. To report criminal activity to the UW Police, there are two numbers: Non-Emergency - 206-685-UWPD (8973) and Anonymous Tips at 206-685-TIPS (8477)

The goal of this anonymous reporting tool is to better address and respond to non-emergency incidents in-house, soon after they occur. Anything submitted through this tool will go to our HR Manager, Serena Newhall, for review and follow-up.

# Campus resources and hot lines

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- UW SAFE CAMPUS: catch-all resource hotline for violence prevention
- UW Sexual Assault Resources: counseling, medical care, and community resources
- UW Counseling Center: a variety of mental health resources at UW
- UW Title IX Resources : resource for navigating and filing a Title IX report
- UW Office of the Ombud: confidential advocates for students
- UW Non-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment Policy: toward a diverse workforce and a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment.
- UW Race & Equity Initiative: headed by the UW Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity
- GO-MAP : the Graduate Opportunities and Minority Achievement Program offers networking and educational, professional and personal development opportunities

# Participation in departmental activities

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- Retreat organization (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Graduate student recruitment (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Summer REU
  - mentors
  - speakers
  - course instructors
- Student representatives

# Building supportive networks in graduate school

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## Student groups at Genome Sciences:

- COGS

## Thinking about careers outside of academic research:

- Bioscience career seminar series with monthly talks  
facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BiosciCareers/>  
website: <http://courses.washington.edu/phd/>  
contacts at GS: Taylor Wang and Dani Faivre
- GS Alumni meetings
- eScience Institute – a central hub for all things data science, offers career fairs