



EMORY  
UNIVERSITY

Graduate Division of  
Biological and Biomedical Sciences  
(GDBBS)

STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Revised 3/3/2025

*This document includes policies and procedures relevant to student milestones and support. Students are expected to be familiar with all policies set forth in the GDBBS Student Handbook and their relevant Program Handbook.*

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## 1 Academic Affairs

### 1.1 Introduction

#### 1.1.1 GDBBS Mission Statement

The Division oversees graduate education in the biological and biomedical sciences, including the recruitment, admission, support, and academic counseling of graduate students. The Division advises the academic Deans of the University on policies regarding graduate education in the biological and biomedical sciences, and on measures for further development of life sciences at Emory. The Division also assists the faculty in obtaining outside sources of support for graduate education. In these capacities, it functions as a special arm of the Laney Graduate School. With respect to other organizational units within the University, it is important to note that the Division is synergistic, not competitive, with its constituent departments, which retain their traditional prerogatives in all areas except graduate education, where their collective interests are represented by the Division.

#### 1.1.2 Governance and Oversight of the GDBBS

Unless otherwise specified, the rules and guidelines governing the GDBBS are the same as those of the Laney Graduate School (LGS) as outlined in the current LGS Handbook available on the LGS website. GDBBS-specific guidelines, rules and regulations are promulgated in consultation with three oversight committees, the GDBBS Executive Committee; the GDBBS Advisory Committee, and the LGS Executive Council. Matters of broad impact may be submitted to the full GDBBS faculty for a vote. The Director of the Division is selected by and reports to the Dean of the Laney Graduate School. The Division Director consults with the Dean of the School of Medicine, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the School of Public Health, the Director of the Emory National Primate Research Center, and the Executive Director of the Winship Cancer Institute, who together form the Deans' Council - a body who evaluates progress within the Division.

### 1.2 Doctor of Philosophy

#### 1.2.1 Degree Requirements

In addition to satisfying general requirements for admission to the Laney Graduate School, students seeking a PhD degree must fulfill specific program requirements before and during candidacy.

#### 1.2.2 Registration

Continuing students should consult with their DGS, their faculty advisor, and/or dissertation committee, as appropriate depending on their stage in training, and register online prior to the pre-registration deadline every semester including summer semester. Students are responsible

for registering themselves correctly and fully for each term (summer, fall and spring) by the deadline set by the LGS, and must be registered for a minimum of nine credit hours. **Students who are not registered for a minimum of nine credit hours are not eligible to receive stipend support and could lose health insurance support.** The GDBBS office sends out reminders to all students well in advance of each pre-registration deadline. It is extremely important for all students to maintain continuous registration throughout their training programs. The Program Administrator only registers students for their first semester at Emory.

### 1.2.3 Qualifying Exams

All GDBBS programs require passing written and/or oral qualifying examinations. Doctoral examinations determine a student's qualifications for advanced study and mastery of the field of specialization. The examinations must verify adequate intellectual knowledge in the student's given area and any required supporting fields. The examinations are prepared and administered by the program, and the program determines the schedule for the qualifying examinations.

### 1.2.4 Admission to Candidacy

All students are required to follow the Laney Graduate School requirements for candidacy. A student may become a candidate for the PhD degree after successfully passing their program's qualifying exam(s) and completing all program course requirements for candidacy.

To be eligible for candidacy, the student must meet the following requirements:

- Complete all program requirements for candidacy: coursework and other training required by the degree program, including program required JPE training
- Complete qualifying examinations required by the degree program
- Select Dissertation Committee and submit LGS Dissertation Committee Form
- Complete TATT 600, TATT 605, and JPE 600
- Resolve any Incomplete (I) or In Progress (IP) grades
- Be in good standing (i.e., not on academic probation), with a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA
- Have earned at least 54 credit hours at the 500 level or above

Students must reach candidacy by September 15th of their fourth year. The candidacy form is available on the LGS website. Students who do not meet this deadline will be placed on academic probation, will not be eligible for PDS funds, and may forfeit financial support. These sanctions will be lifted when the student enters candidacy.

### 1.2.5 Dissertation Committee Membership

In consultation with their advisor, students should form their dissertation committee and meet as soon as possible after choosing a laboratory in which to train, but no later than the end of the third year. Students and advisors should consider the scientific expertise of potential committee members as well their capacity to provide professional support and guidance to the student during training. The committee consists of the dissertation advisor and at least three other qualified scientists; programs may have stricter requirements. The advisor and at least two of the other committee members must be members of the GDBBS faculty. GDBBS emeritus faculty do count towards this GDBBS faculty total, but they can serve on dissertation committees for no more than five years after becoming emeritus. GDBBS adjunct faculty do not count towards this total and fall under the process, outlined below, for scholars at other universities or institutions.

Scholars at universities or other institutions are considered External Committee members and may serve on the committee with the LGS Dean's permission. If a committee member outside Emory is identified, the following steps should occur:

1. The Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies will write a request to seek approval from the Dean of Laney Graduate School. The request should include the proposed member's recent CV and a memo explaining how this member will contribute to the student's committee.
2. The student should submit the written request as part of the dissertation committee approval form.

Students must file a dissertation committee form to obtain LGS approval for their committee. GDBBS students must submit their form by the end of their third year in the program, earlier than the LGS deadline of March 15th of their fourth year. Students who do not meet the LGS deadline will be placed on academic probation, will not be eligible for PDS funds, and may forfeit financial support. These sanctions will be lifted when the student files a dissertation committee form.

If a dissertation committee's membership changes, the student must submit a new dissertation committee form as soon as possible. When a student submits a completed dissertation, the membership of the committee must match the members listed on the most recent dissertation committee form on file with the LGS.

### 1.2.6 Dissertation Committee Meetings

Students must meet with their dissertation committee at least once in the year after passing qualifying examinations, which should be by the end of the third year in their program. Starting in their fourth year, students must meet with their dissertation committee no later than December 31st, and thereafter every six months through their sixth year, until such a time as

their dissertation defense is scheduled. Starting in their seventh year, students must meet with their dissertation committee at least every four months until such a time as their dissertation defense is scheduled. Programs may have more stringent policies; if so, students should abide by their program policy. **Failure of a student to hold committee meetings within these required time frames without prior approval from their DGS will result in the student's research grade being penalized to a minimum of C for the current term;** the final research grade assigned will reflect the student's work in the research advisor's lab and their compliance in holding their committee meetings within the required time frames. Assignment of a C triggers academic probation. In recognition that extenuating circumstances may delay meetings, students are responsible for notifying their Program DGS before the end of a term of any circumstances that have prevented them from holding their committee meeting within the required time frame. The DGS may grant an exception and not penalize the research grade. The DGS should notify the Division Director of the reason for the exception in writing.

Should a student go on probation due to failure to hold required committee meetings, the Assistant Director of Student Affairs and DGS will work with the student to determine what intervention and support may be needed to help the student meet the requirement for holding timely committee meetings.

In general, dissertation committee meetings should be in person, with a hybrid option in case it is needed to accommodate the schedule of a committee member. Students are allowed to have only one committee member absent from the meeting. In those cases, the student must meet with the absent committee member within two weeks to discuss their progress and goals.

Students are required to include Individual Development Plan slides, or a written equivalent, as part of their presentation to their committee at each committee meeting. This is meant to ensure that discussion takes place about the student's career goals and objectives.

If a student is enrolled for any research credits, they should be making academic progress, which includes holding dissertation committee meetings. If a student is registered full-time for an internship, programs can be more flexible.

Within two weeks of the Dissertation Committee meeting, the student must submit to their Program Administrator the Program's Dissertation Committee Meeting Summary form documenting that the Dissertation Committee has met and evaluated the student's progress. The form must include comments from the advisor making clear statements regarding expectations for student progress over the period leading to the next Dissertation Committee meeting. The student should make sure that those comments are addressed at the next Dissertation Committee meeting.

Programs may have stricter policies than the above.

### 1.2.7 Annual Accomplishments Report

All GDBBS Students are required to provide an annual update on their accomplishments. These will typically be provided by updating their profile through the GDBBS web portal. Information provided will influence decisions about awards administered by the programs, GDBBS and LGS.

### 1.2.8 TATTO Program

Emory's Teaching Assistant Training (TATTO) program is a degree requirement for all Ph.D. students and is administered by Emory University's Laney Graduate School. The TATTO program provides graduate students with training and teaching experience. It introduces graduate students to teaching in a graduated manner.

The Graduate Division of Biological and Biomedical Sciences requires students to complete two TATTO Stages (TATTO 600 and 605) within their first and second year in the program:

1. TATTO 600 is a short course offered in late summer before the fall semester begins. It should be taken immediately before a student's first teaching experience. No student may engage in any classroom related teaching activities in their training program until they have completed the summer workshop.
2. TATTO 605 requires students to serve as a Teaching Assistant (TATTO 605) for at least one semester during their graduate career, usually during the second year.
  - a. Students should submit the GDBBS TA Request form one month before the time they would like to complete their teaching assistantship (August 1 for Fall, December 1 for Spring). A teaching assistantship placement completed without submission of this form may not count towards TATTO 605 credit.
  - b. Once the Assistant Director of Student Affairs confirms matches, GDBBS will ensure the student is enrolled in TATTO 605 for the correct term.
  - c. At the end of the term, the faculty instructor will complete an evaluation survey noting the quality of the work the Teaching Assistant performed that term. The faculty instructor will note a satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U) grade. A grade of U will result in academic probation, and the student will likely have to repeat TATTO 605 and earn a satisfactory grade.
3. TATTO 610 is an **optional** Teaching Associateship. This is not required by GDBBS and should only be considered with the input of the student's advisor and DGS. Teaching Associateships are allowed for undergraduate courses only and represent a significant time commitment. However, they may be appropriate and beneficial for GDBBS students who strongly desire to pursue a teaching-focused position after graduation.

If a student has had substantial teaching experience, the requirement for TATTO may be waived. Please complete and submit a GDBBS TATTO 605 Exemption Form if you would like to request an exemption.

Additional information about the Laney Graduate School's TATTO program is available on the LGS website.

### 1.2.9 Jones Program in Ethics

The Jones Program in Ethics (JPE) provides broad and deep engagement with the ethical issues of research, scholarship, and professional life for all Ph.D. students in the Laney Graduate School. This engagement will occur within broad, interdisciplinary forums and the student's graduate program. Completion of the JPE program is required for doctoral students.

Additional information about the Laney Graduate School's JPE program is available on the LGS website.

### 1.2.10 Dissertation Completion Timeline

Students are expected to complete their dissertations and apply for graduation within six years. If students do not complete their dissertation by the end of their sixth year, programs may grant a one-year degree extension. Once approved by the program, a milestone extension request form and a program approved detailed timeline for completion must be submitted to LGS.

Degree extensions for years eight and above require LGS approval, and students are responsible for partial tuition payments. A milestone extension request form and a program approved detailed timeline for completion must be submitted to LGS for consideration. Approved degree extensions for years eight and above do not include guaranteed funding; funding decisions will be made in collaboration with the student's advisor and program leadership.

### 1.2.11 Publication and Defense Requirements

Each student is expected to have accomplished an original, significant, and scholarly body of work before the defense of the thesis. The magnitude of this accomplishment is such that the work should result in multiple publications with the student as the first author. Each program may set its own standards for the number and type of publications expected, but it is unlikely that the dissertation defense will be approved in the absence of at least one significant original research paper accepted for publication by a credible professional journal.

Students in the GDBBS Programs give an oral defense of their written dissertation to their dissertation committee as one of the final milestones in their degree progress. This defense is a crucial part of the final stages of acquiring a PhD and should be overseen and approved of by

the student's committee. A student may have no more than one missing committee member at the oral defense.

### 1.3 Rotations and Selecting an Advisor

#### 1.3.1 Laboratory Rotations

The GDBBS Programs are interdisciplinary training programs intended to provide maximum flexibility to students when they are selecting a dissertation project and advisor. To assure that students have this flexibility, students have the option of doing laboratory rotations with any GDBBS faculty member and may do a lab rotation with a faculty member who is not a GDBBS faculty member; however, the student can only select as dissertation advisor a faculty member who is in a GDBBS Program or who has been approved by a GDBBS program to join. Hence, a faculty member that is not yet a member of a GDBBS Program will need to join a GDBBS Program before becoming the assigned dissertation advisor. A founding principle of the GDBBS is that any institutional funds provided for student support follow the student.

The GDBBS expects three laboratory rotations; however, students may do up to four rotations by petitioning the program DGS. More than four rotations are not allowed except in extenuating circumstances. A fourth rotation occurring in the summer might be structured differently and needs to be approved by the program DGS.

#### 1.3.2 Advisor Selection Process

Every student must have an advisor, a full member of the LGS faculty, who will chair the dissertation committee and may or may not direct the student's research project. If a student has more than one member directing their research, the one who is furnishing the majority of financial support will be designated as the Advisor and the other(s) as Co-Advisor. Students training in the laboratories of Affiliate, Adjunct or Emeritus Members must designate a Full Member as their advisor, with the faculty member who is not a full member designated as their co-Advisor. Note, both the Advisor and co-Advisor must sign the GDBBS Advisor-Advisee Agreement Form.

Students and their prospective advisor(s) must complete the GDBBS Advisor-Advisee Agreement form by June 1 of the student's second year in the Ph.D. program. In most circumstances, students are required by their program to identify an Advisor match by the end of their first year, and this form should be submitted as soon as that identification has been made. This form is required to formalize all advisor-advisee mentoring and research commitments. Please note that the signature of the Advisor(s), the student, the Program Director/DGS, and an Administrator from the Faculty Advisor's department are required to complete the advisor-advisee match process.

### 1.3.3 Selecting an Advisor Currently Not in GDBBS

GDBBS students may do rotations with faculty that are not within the GDBBS faculty, but their dissertation advisor must be a GDBBS faculty member. Thus, the selected dissertation advisor must apply for and be approved as a GDBBS faculty member prior to finalizing the advisor-advisee agreement.

### 1.3.4 Selecting an Advisor Currently Not in the Student's Program

If a student elects to join the lab of a GDBBS faculty member who is not a member of the program in which the student originally enrolled, two options are available to accommodate the student's wishes.

- 1) The student's proposed advisor can apply to join the student's Program. The application must be approved prior to finalizing the advisor-advisee agreement.
- 2) A student not on probation can transfer to a graduate program where their proposed advisor holds a training appointment. This can result in changes in required coursework or exam scheduling to meet the requirements of the new Program. See the section (2.11) on transferring to a new program for further information on this process.
- 3) Upon approval of their Program Director, a student may select a faculty member in a different GDBBS program as their advisor.

Problems concerning issues related to program affiliation and Division status will be resolved on an individual basis at the Division level. Decisions will be based on what is best for the student.

### 1.3.5 Changing Advisors

#### 1.3.5.1 *Changing Advisors After Year Two*

Rotation practices in GDBBS are designed so that students will complete their PhD with the faculty advisor and laboratory selected during the rotation process. Occasionally there are circumstances that may necessitate a change in advisors. Should a student and advisor find themselves in this situation, they should review related program policies in the student's program specific handbook and speak with their program leadership and the GDBBS Assistant Director of Student Affairs for guidance.

#### 1.3.5.2 *Conducting Exploratory Rotations for a New Advisor After Year Two*

Not all students changing advisors will need to engage in additional rotations in order to find a new advisor. However, if a student needs to conduct additional rotations, they may request to conduct exploratory rotations.

Students are required to submit their request to the Program Director, DGS, GDBBS Division Director, and the GDBBS Assistant Director for Student Affairs. The request should include an

initial list of faculty members for exploratory rotations that has been previously vetted and discussed with their DGS.

Once the request to conduct exploratory rotations is approved by the DGS and Division Director, the LGS will provide financial support for the student during this period. The team of Program and Division leaders will provide guidance and support for the student as they move through this transitional period. It is the student's responsibility to contact faculty members for the new rotations. The student should note that these rotations are typically one month, and it is expected that they will move through the rotations with not more than a week between each. It is expected that the student will engage in exploratory rotations on a full-time basis since they are usually finished with core coursework, and it is expected they will communicate regularly with their Director and DGS about progress on the alignment with a new advisor. The student's research grade will be assessed based on adherence to an Academic Plan and Exploratory Rotation Agreement for Changing Advisors. Recognizing that each case is unique, the agreement will be shaped within the context of the student's research and program standing.

Exploratory rotations should typically be completed in one term. If necessary, a student can request to continue exploratory rotations for one additional, final term. The student should make this request to the Program Director, DGS, GDBBS Division Director, and the GDBBS Assistant Director for Student Affairs prior to the last day of classes of the current term. The request will only be approved if the following conditions are met:

- 1) The student has provided a list of faculty members for rotations that has been vetted and discussed with their DGS. The student and/or DGS has confirmed that at least one listed faculty member can supervise a rotation student in the upcoming term and has the ability to take on a PhD student as a primary advisor.
- 2) The student has upheld their requirements on the Academic Plan and Exploratory Rotation Agreement for Changing Advisors for the current term.

A student who does not secure an advisor following the completion of the final exploratory rotation term will need to leave the program by the end of the term.

## 2 Academic Policies and Procedure

### 2.1 Transferring Programs

#### 2.1.1 Transfers Within GDBBS

For a transfer within GDBBS:

- A letter of intent requesting the transfer should be sent to the student's current Program, to the intended Program, and to the GDBBS Director. The current Program will acknowledge the program change request; the new Program must approve the transfer.
- The Program the student will be transferring to also should provide the student with written documentation of any Program-specific requirements that the student will need to complete.
- The student must also complete the LGS Program Transfer Request form, and the Dean of the LGS must give final approval of the transfer.

### 2.1.2 Transfers to Another LGS Program

If a student would like to transfer to a non-GDBBS Program, the student needs to discuss this with both Programs and then complete the LGS Program Transfer Request form, which will be reviewed and approved by the Dean of the LGS.

MD/PhD students need to complete this transfer process once they have started their G1 year in the fall.

## 2.2 Master's Degree

### 2.2.1 Terminal Master's

To receive a terminal master's degree, all GDBBS programs require a student to perform a research project and defend an acceptable master's thesis to a committee.

In general, students will only be allowed to discontinue their PhD program and end their academic career with a terminal master's if the student has identified a faculty member who is willing to advise and financially support them during the duration of their master's thesis, and if their Program has approved of the academic status change. A Program's approval is contingent upon the student's academic record and meeting of milestones at the time of the request. To receive a terminal master's degree from a GDBBS program, a student must meet all LGS requirements for a terminal master's, which include 30 hours of course work, at least 15 of which are not dissertation research, and the successful defense of a master's thesis. Details can be found in the LGS student handbook. In addition, programs may have more specific requirements (e.g., passing of a specific course).

Programs must approve a student's request to pursue a terminal master's degree. Once approved, the program should submit a letter to the GDBBS Division Director and LGS Student Affairs at [lgs.studentaffairs@emory.edu](mailto:lgs.studentaffairs@emory.edu) outlining the anticipated advising plan, funding plan, and timeline for completion of the project. A student can file an appeal to the GDBBS Division Director if the Program does not approve the change. The appeal process is outlined in the appeals and grievances section of this handbook.

Once approved by the program (or GDBBS through the appeal process), the student must submit an official request to LGS through the Laney Connect Hub before the degree application deadline in the term that they will defend their thesis. Through the end of this term, the student is considered a PhD candidate, and funding support remains the same. If completion of the terminal master's degree extends beyond the term approved by the LGS for the master's degree, the student may receive a partial tuition scholarship but will not receive a stipend or student health insurance from the LGS. Students will be responsible for the health insurance premium and will remain responsible for all student fees.

The master's thesis committee consists of at least three faculty members. The signatures of the advisor and two GDBBS faculty members are required on the LGS degree clearance form to successfully complete the degree. Programs may have additional requirements.

#### 2.2.2 Interim Master's

GDBBS programs do not offer interim master's.

### 2.3 Withdrawal

To request a withdrawal, see guidelines in the LGS handbook. All requests should be submitted to the Executive Committee of the student's Program, who will then forward the request to the GDBBS Assistant Director of Student Affairs, the GDBBS Director and the LGS Dean.

### 2.4 Leave of Absence

To request a leave of absence, see guidelines set forth in the LGS Handbook. All requests must be approved by the Executive Committee of the student's Program. The Program Director will then forward the approved request to the GDBBS Director for their approval. The Dean of the Laney Graduate School must give the final approval for any leave.

### 2.5 Parental Accommodations

Students with substantial parenting responsibility as a result of childbirth, newborn care, or a newly adopted child can request parental leave. The maximum term of approved paid leave is eight weeks, and up to four of those weeks may be situated before the anticipated birth or adoption date. Students seeking a parental leave accommodation need to speak with their Dissertation Advisor at least three months before the accommodation is anticipated, and then complete the LGS Parental Accommodation Request. See the LGS website for more details.

### 2.6 Remote Academic Arrangement

A student wishing to complete their degree off campus must first discuss this with their advisor and Program leaders and have the support of their Program. Then they, their advisor, and their Program leaders should contact the Assistant Director of Student Affairs and Division Director to discuss the arrangement before it takes place. Details must be worked out for continuation

of stipend, maintenance of active status with the University, health insurance, completion of requirements, and dissertation defense.

## 2.7 Standards of Academic Performance

### 2.7.1 GPA Standards and Probation

All GDBBS students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in each term (i.e., fall, spring and summer) of graduate work. If a student's term GPA is below 3.0 in any one term of work, that student will be placed on academic probation. Grades of U or F in a course, regardless of credit hours, will also lead to the student being placed on academic probation.

With regards to cumulative GPA, GDBBS students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.7 throughout their time in the Program, as required by the LGS. A cumulative GPA of less than 2.7 will trigger academic probation.

### 2.7.2 Causes for Recommending Dismissal

The Division Director will immediately recommend a student's dismissal to LGS for the following reasons:

- Two consecutive terms of probation or four terms of probation at any point in the student's graduate career.
- a grade of F in 597R, 599R, 699R, 799R or Directed Study, regardless of probation status.
- failure to pass the qualifying exam.
- after year seven, a one-year dissertation extension was not approved by the program and LGS Dean.

In rare circumstances, programs can request a policy exemption to the Division Director that the student not be dismissed. The request must carefully outline steps that have been taken to remedy the situation.

### 2.7.3 Meeting Required Milestones

Students must meet LGS, GDBBS, and Program required milestones within specified time frames. Students must document their progress in meeting these requirements by submitting the associated forms.

## 2.8 Grading and Grade Appeals

GDBBS courses are typically graded by letter grade (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, or F) or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U). The grading basis for each course is determined by the Program, and students should consult the syllabus for each course for guidance on how they will be graded. While S/U graded courses count towards the 54 credits required to reach candidacy, they are not factored into a student's GPA. Students should consult the "Minimum

Standards for Academic Performance” portion of the handbook to reference important connections between grades, GPA, probation and dismissal.

Students who believe that an assigned grade is incorrect should first discuss the assigned grade with the course instructor. After discussion, students who do not think the problem has been resolved in this manner should address their concern to the Program Director or DGS, who will seek to resolve the matter with the instructor and the student. Consistent with principles of academic freedom, responsibility for evaluation of a student’s course performance rests with the course instructor. Use of this procedure for resolution of a grade dispute will not prejudice in any way a student’s rights to file a grievance with the LGS if they believe that a Program, GDBBS, Laney Graduate School, or University policy has been violated in regards to the grade assignment.

## 2.9 Appeals and Grievance Policy

### 2.9.1 Overview of Appeals and Grievances

If a student disagrees with a decision by their advisor or dissertation committee that impacts their progress towards a degree, they should first seek to resolve the issue directly with their advisor and/or dissertation committee. The Program Director, Program DGS, GDBBS Director and GDBBS Assistant Director of Student Affairs will provide guidance and support when feasible. If the issue cannot be resolved, the student should then follow their Program’s appeal policy. Students may also follow these same steps to file an appeal of a Program decision that impacts their progress towards a degree in the Program. Examples of decisions that can be appealed include not allowing a qualifying exam retake, not allowing a thesis defense to be scheduled, and recommending dismissal from the program. If an appeal is denied at the program level and the student feels that the issue is not resolved, there are two pathways to seek resolution:

- 1) If the Program decision on the appeal was unanimous, the student may seek resolution using the LGS grievance procedure found in the LGS Handbook. The student should take this action within two weeks of receiving the appeal outcome from their Program Director.
- 2) If the Program decision was not unanimous, the student can elevate their appeal to the GDBBS Executive Committee. The student should email the GDBBS Director about their desire to file an appeal to the GDBBS EC and copy their Program Director within two weeks of receiving the appeal outcome from their Program Director. This email should include any additional documentation or letter the student would like to provide for their Division-level appeal proceedings. The Program Director should also provide the same documents that were presented to the Program to the GDBBS Director. The GDBBS Director may gather additional relevant information or documentation, as

needed. Appeals will be reviewed by the GDBBS Executive Committee, which consists of the Program Directors of the eight graduate programs and the GDBBS Director, minus the Program Director of the Program directly involved in the appeal. The GDBBS Director will distribute the appeal materials and chair the meeting but will not vote on the outcome except in the need of a tie-breaker. The Program Directors and GDBBS Director will review the materials and meet to discuss. A majority of the Program Directors must be present at the meeting, and only those who are present can vote. Votes will be taken by confidential ballot. In all cases, appeals decisions are confidential and should not be shared outside of the meeting. The GDBBS Director will notify the student and Program Director of the outcome. If the student does not feel the issue is resolved, the student may seek resolution using the LGS grievance procedure found in the LGS Handbook. The student should take this action within two weeks of receiving the appeal outcome from their Program Director.

In some cases, conflicts arise that do not fall under the academic and procedural scopes of appeals and grievances. If conflicts arise with an advisor, other faculty member, or other program member, students should reach out to their DGS or program leadership for support and guidance in mediating the conflict. If the conflict concerns the Program Director or DGS, or if the student feels that the Program Director or DGS have a conflict in the matter, the student should bypass their Program and reach out to the GDBBS Director or GDBBS Assistant Director of Student Affairs. If the conflict concerns the GDBBS Director, the student should bypass the Program and Division and reach out to the LGS Assistant Dean of Student Affairs.

## 2.10 Honor and Conduct Code

All students should familiarize themselves with and adhere to the Laney Graduate School Honor Code and Conduct Code as outlined in the LGS Student Handbook. This deals with the professional standards and conduct demanded of all graduate students and the procedures for reporting and adjudicating any violations. **Continuance of stipend support is predicated upon adherence to the Honor and Conduct Codes.**

# 3 Financial Information

## 3.1 Tuition and Stipend Information

Stipend levels are determined annually by the Laney Graduate School. GDBBS students starting their PhD in Fall 2024 or earlier will receive their first 21 months of stipend support from the LGS. GDBBS PhD students entering Fall 2025 will receive approximately their first 16 months of stipend support from the LGS. GDBBS PhD students entering in Fall 2026 and after will receive their first 12 months of stipend support from the LGS. Other Schools (e.g., School of Medicine

and Emory College of Arts and Sciences) may provide additional support. MD/PhD students will receive 9 months of support from LGS. In the absence of extramural resources, such as NSRA or T32 grants, the advisor is responsible for acquiring resources to cover the student's stipend and sponsored tuition starting after this institutional support period until the student graduates or is dismissed, except under the following circumstances:

1. If a student has defended and is no longer working on their research, their advisor can request to not pay the student for the time between the degree defense and graduation. This request should be submitted to the GDBBS Division Director for consideration.
2. If a student in the sixth year or beyond is placed on probation, they may become ineligible for stipend support. Within two weeks of receiving a probation notice, the student must submit the LGS Milestone Extension Request form and upload a document explaining the extenuating circumstances that contributed to the probationary status and a completion plan and timeline. Failure to comply with these actions may result in the student's stipend loss. If stipend support is suspended, returning to satisfactory academic standing the following term will result in reinstatement of stipend support.
3. Degree extensions for years eight and above require LGS approval (see section on dissertation completion timeline). Approved degree extensions for years eight and above do not include guaranteed funding; funding decisions will be made in collaboration with the student's advisor and program leadership.

A resident student's support cannot be unilaterally terminated. Advisors may refer to the "Faculty Financial Responsibilities" document for current sponsored tuition and stipend details and direct questions to the GDBBS Business Manager.

Graduate study is a full-time endeavor. Students receive a stipend and are expected to be actively attending classes or conducting research and working toward the degree year-round, including the period between terms. The time between terms (along with Fall and Spring Break) is considered an active part of the training period. Students should discuss breaks with their DGS (if in the first year) or Dissertation Advisor (after advisor selection) and receive approval in advance. Breaks should typically be limited to two weeks per year. Unauthorized absences may result in an unsatisfactory research grade for the term (i.e., in fall, spring, or summer), and could thereby lead to probation.

## 3.2 External Funding

### 3.2.1 Stipend Supplements

Any fellowship awarded as part of the offer of admission will continue to be paid as a supplement to the student's regular stipend (independent of the source of the stipend).

### 3.2.2 Supplements for External Fellowships

The stipend of any student who obtains a competitive individual fellowship from an external source (e.g., NIH NRSA, NSF GRFP, etc.) will be supplemented by \$2,000 for the duration of the award if the award provides more than 70% of the current GDBBS stipend level. Appointment to Institutional Training Grants or Diversity Supplements to faculty grants do not qualify a student for this supplement. The LGS is responsible for the supplements during the first 21 months. The advisor is responsible for the supplement beginning with the 22nd month.

### 3.3 Student Fees

The cost of attendance is an estimate of the total amount it will cost a student to go to school for an academic period and is determined using rules established by law. The cost of attending Emory University includes tuition and student fees, living expenses, health insurance, parking fees, and incidentals, such as purchasing textbooks and supplies. All tuition and fees are determined by the Board of Trustees and are subject to change without notice. Information about tuition and fees can be found on the [Tuition and Costs](#) page of the Laney Graduate School website.

Doctoral students who have reached Tuition-Paid Status are exempted from Athletic and Recreation fees.

### 3.4 Outside Employment

Doctoral education demands full-time effort. Students receive stipends and tuition fellowships in order to allow them to commit the necessary time to their studies and research. Unrelated employment can be a distraction and thus interfere with the ability of students to meet degree requirements in a timely manner. For these reasons, employment not directly related to students' degree requirements and professional development goals is strongly discouraged.

If additional income is necessary while a student is enrolled in the degree program, they must receive **prior** approval from their advisor and Program Director. The Program Director has the prerogative to bring the request to the program's Executive Committee for discussion. Requests to work 10 or more hours a week require written approval from the GDBBS Director and the Dean of the Laney Graduate School. Students who wish to request permission to seek employment should allow 30 days for review. In cases in which approval is granted, students must ensure that employment does not interfere with research performance, progress toward degree, or any program requirements, including seminar attendance.

## 4 Student Support Services and Resources

### 4.1 Academic Support Resources

As soon as concerns arise, programs must inform the Division when students are not meeting required standards. This information should be provided to the Division Director and to the GDBBS Assistant Director of Student Affairs. The GDBBS will work with the programs to ensure that proper GDBBS and LGS policy and procedures are followed in a timely manner and that the student is aware of all available resources to support them.

#### 4.1.1 Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is available to all GDBBS year 1 and year 2 students who may be facing academic difficulties. Students should contact their Program Administrator or Director of Graduate Studies if they want to provide or receive this instructional assistance.

### 4.2 Health, Wellness, and Accessibility Support Services

#### 4.2.1 Health and Wellness

Graduate school can be a stressful time on your body and mind. Students, faculty and staff can visit the [Laney Graduate School Student Resource page](#) and the [GDBBS Student Resource page](#) for links to all student support services available, which include:

- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Student Health Services (SHS)
- Student Case Management and Intervention Services (SCMIS)
- Ombuds Office

#### 4.2.2 Financial Support

If students experience financial difficulty, there are several resources available, including the:

- Laney Graduate School Emergency Loan
- Student Hardship Fund
- Office of Financial Aid

#### 4.2.3 Accessibility Support Services

Emory's Department of Accessibility Services (DAS) is committed to advancing an accessible and "barrier-free" environment for students, faculty, staff, patients, guests and visitors by ensuring that the principles of access, equity, inclusion and learning are realized in and by the Emory community. If students need accommodations, they should contact DAS directly or visit the [DAS website](#) for additional information.

Emory is an equal opportunity employer, and qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, protected veteran status or other characteristics protected by state or federal law. Emory University does not discriminate in admissions, educational programs, or employment, including recruitment, hiring, promotions, transfers, discipline, terminations, wage and salary administration, benefits, and training. Students, faculty, and staff are assured of participation in university programs and in the use of facilities without such discrimination. Emory University complies with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act, and applicable executive orders, federal and state regulations regarding nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action (for protected veterans and individuals with disabilities). Inquiries regarding this policy should be directed to the Emory University Department of Equity and Civil Rights Compliance, 201 Dowman Drive, Administration Building, Atlanta, GA 30322. Telephone: 404-727-9867 (V) | 404-712-2049 (TDD).