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## Ph.D. Chemistry Program Handbook

### Welcome

Welcome to the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at UNLV. Our graduate programs (Ph.D., M.S. and M.S. in Biochemistry) offer exceptional research opportunities for advanced training in a wide variety of chemistry related disciplines including Organic, Physical, Analytical, Computational, Materials, Biochemistry, and Chemical Education. The Ph.D. program in Chemistry places special emphasis on materials and molecular science and on a broad range of applications in energy, research, materials science, nuclear materials, environmental sciences, biology, and biochemistry. The graduate student to faculty ratio in the department is nearly one-to-one. Consequently, our diverse student body receives a high level of individualized interaction with excellent faculty through customized research projects, specialized course work, professional development, and graduate seminars. In addition, many of our research programs offer exciting interdisciplinary collaborations with local scientists, as well as with scientists nationally and internationally.

### College Mission Statement

The mission of the College of Sciences is to serve the students of UNLV, the citizens of Nevada and the United States, and society worldwide through research and discovery that expands knowledge in the natural, physical, and mathematical sciences. We communicate this knowledge to students in a rewarding learning environment, and to communities beyond the university through active engagement of diverse constituencies.

The College of Sciences endeavors to develop and nurture a community of scientists and scholars who are among the world leaders in their disciplinary areas, and who generate knowledge at the forefront of science. Research and discovery, in symbiosis with education, are our hallmarks. Addressing fundamental questions related to earth sciences, biological systems, physical and chemical systems, mathematics, and the universe will continue to be core focus areas. In conjunction with colleagues within and outside of the university, faculty and students participate in the application and exploitation of our scientific discoveries and expertise to the benefit of the university, the citizens of Nevada, and society at large.

The College of Sciences creates innovative and engaging learning environments in which students are educated to the full extent of their abilities. Our programs produce highly skilled and knowledgeable scientists educated in a premier research environment. In addition, we provide the education needed by diverse student populations, ranging from formal grounding in the sciences for technical disciplines, to a general appreciation and understanding of the sciences for non-specialists. We strive to develop comprehensive educational initiatives and services, and engage our alumni and friends in mutually beneficial relationships in support of teaching, research, and community service activities.

“The eternal mystery of the world is its comprehensibility.”

— Albert Einstein

## Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#). Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#), as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: [valarie.burke@unlv.edu](mailto:valarie.burke@unlv.edu) or [GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu](mailto:GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu).

## Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the [UNLV Graduate Catalog](#). Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

## Program Information

[Doctor of Philosophy - Chemistry](#)  
[Post-Bachelor's Track, Post-Master's Track](#)

## Contact Information

UNLV Chemistry

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## Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog](#).

## Advisory Committee Guidelines

The Doctoral Advisory Committee must consist of the faculty advisor (chair), chemistry graduate faculty in the discipline of study, one additional chemistry graduate faculty member, and one graduate-college representative from outside the department. The use of committee members external to UNLV is allowed with approval from the examination committee. External members without graduate faculty status at UNLV will be non-voting members of the Ph.D. examination committee.

## Degree Program Benchmarks

1. A dissertation advisor must be chosen by the end of the [first semester](#).
2. The Doctoral Advisory Committee must be appointed prior to the end of the [second semester](#). All students are required to schedule a diagnostic interview with the Doctoral Advisory Committee before the end of the 2nd semester. The purpose of the interview is to develop a list of recommended courses and design the student's degree program, which must be submitted prior to completing 16 credits of course work toward the degree.

3. An approved graduate degree program must be filed prior to the beginning of the third semester of enrollment.
4. All Ph.D. students are required to develop and defend a dissertation prospectus no later than the fourth semester of enrollment
5. Students will advance to candidacy if the Comprehensive Examination (oral and written) is passed and the enrolled coursework is successfully completed based on the evaluation of the students Doctoral Advisory Committee. The comprehensive exam will consist of written and oral components as defined by the Ph.D. Examination Committee. Students will advance to candidacy by the end of the sixth semester.

If a student fails any part of the Comprehensive Examination, the Ph.D. Examination Committee will determine if the student is allowed to retake the portion of the comprehensive exam that is not passed.

- a. Students who fail to pass any part of the Comprehensive Examination or Proposal Defense on the first attempt must successfully complete a second attempt (as specified by the Ph.D. Examination Committee) within the next six months to remain in the program.
- b. Failure to advance to candidacy by the end of the sixth semester of enrollment will result in the student being placed on academic probation. Failure to advance to candidacy by the end of the seventh semester will result in the student being separated from the program.
- c. Students who enter the program with a baccalaureate degree and who fail the second examination may be allowed to continue as a Master of Science student with the consent of the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

After advancement to candidacy, subsequent years of study will be required for the graduate student to complete their degree. The duration of this period will depend on the success of the research project as defined by the Doctoral Advisory Committee.

Satisfactory performance on the final examination will consist of the presentation and defense of the dissertation research. The defense will consist of an oral presentation open to the public, a short period of questions from the public, a closed session of questions from the Doctoral Advisory Committee, and a closed deliberation and vote by just the Doctoral Advisory Committee members. Any graduate faculty member may attend the closed session of questions of the defense.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the [graduate catalog](#).

Annual Review Procedures

Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead. Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner. Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track metrics related to the annual productivity of all students. This online form will be sent by the Graduate College to the student's Rebelmail account. The mandatory review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

## Probation

If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the **Probation and Separation** section of the [Graduate Catalog](#) for more information.

In addition, all chemistry graduate students must meet with their advisory committee on a yearly basis, and all students must complete the departmental annual evaluation form.

## Additional Program Information

It is expected that each chemistry Ph.D. student be a teaching assistant for a minimum of two courses prior to graduation. It is also expected that each student publishes research-based manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals.

## University Resources

### The Graduate Academy: Innovative Leadership, Professional, and Career Development

The goal of the Graduate Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

### Alumni Engagement

With an alumni base 150,000+ strong, the UNLV Alumni Engagement offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

### Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the [commencement office](#) is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for [graduation on time](#) and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College [Student Services Team](#) and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College [RPC Team](#).

### Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the [Office of Diversity Initiatives](#) is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

### Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The [DRC](#) is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

### Office of International Student and Scholars Services

[International Students and Scholars \(ISSS\)](#) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

### The Care Center

The [Care Center](#) is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

### The Intersection

[The Intersection](#) is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

### **UNLV Libraries**

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

### **Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)**

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

### **Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities**

The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

### **Military and Veteran Services Center**

The Military and Veteran Service Center is staffed with veterans and veteran education benefits-experienced staff to assist more than 1,800 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists attending UNLV. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

### **The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office**

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

### **Writing Center**

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

## **University Policies and Procedures**

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito.

The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the [online reporting form](#), by email at [titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu), by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

*Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.*

### Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Changes summary
12-17-2014	Kathleen Robins	
March 2020	Dong-Chan Lee	Updated contact information and policies.
March 2024	Balakrishnan Naduvalath	Updated contact information; updates unanimously approved by faculty vote on 03/22/24