



Student Handbook

2025-2026

Stony Brook University

**Graduate Program
in
Genetics**

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WELCOME!

As your Graduate Program Director (GPD) and Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC), we are here to assist with your transition to Graduate School, as well as help guide and support you throughout your studies. We hope that you won't hesitate to come to us with questions or concerns. Although we will not always have the answers, we will almost always know where to get them.

As Program Director, Martha will help you with all academic matters, including coursework, rotations, selection of dissertation advisor and research committee, and progress toward the dissertation.

Jen, in her role as Program Coordinator, will help facilitate all sorts of administrative issues including payroll, registration, academic records, tuition scholarships, and filing for graduation.

The website of the [Graduate Program in Genetics](#) is kept up-to-date and should be a tremendous resource for you. It includes listings of faculty and students, Program academic information and policies, important forms, useful links, and much more.

Again, we are here to help and wish you every success as you progress through the program.

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ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Stony Brook University (SBU) is a flagship institution of the State University of New York (SUNY) system. We are fortunate to be considered one of the top research institutions in the nation. Admission to the Graduate Program in Genetics (BGE) is highly competitive. You have been invited to join us because of your unique qualifications and accomplishments and our confidence in your ability to excel in your studies and future careers.

Students in the [Genetics Program](#) are part of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The University is also organized into various academic departments. Faculty and staff are employed by departments, while graduate students are members of graduate programs. This distinction can seem confusing. Faculty typically participate in several different graduate programs, although for payroll and administrative purposes, they are employed by different academic departments. Grad students always 'belong' to their programs, regardless of the department that employs their research mentor. BGE is one of only a few graduate programs on campus that are not based in a single department but rather draw their faculty from multiple departments. For BGE, these departments are located in both the CAS and the School of Medicine. Moreover, the Program includes a number of faculty from our 'sister' institution, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory (CSHL).

Even though BGE is interdepartmental, the [Department of Microbiology and Immunology](#) (MI) generously offers space for its administration. The Program Coordinator's office, the 'Fishbowl' (first-year student office), and many other support services are provided by the MI Department. Students in the Microbiology and Immunology (HBM) graduate program are closely affiliated with the MI Department, since most of the HBM program faculty are members of MI. BGE is considerably more inter-disciplinary and inter-departmental and is not officially part of the MI Department. So, Genetics students' affiliation with the MI Department is not quite as close. However, BGE and HBM share a Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC) and often work together to optimize the experiences of their students, both academically and socially.

As your studies progress and you choose a mentor for your dissertation research, you will become affiliated with CSHL or an academic department at SBU. However, you will still be members of the Genetics Program. The academic policies and procedures that govern your studies will continue to fall under the jurisdiction of SBU's [Graduate School](#). It is the Graduate School that approves your tuition scholarship, determines your academic standing, and accepts your dissertation. The Dean of the Graduate School is Dr. Celia Marshik. Throughout your Ph.D. studies, you must comply with the policies, standards, and deadlines established by the Graduate School, and you should familiarize yourself with the many sections of their website.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

Your Stony Brook ID card and SOLAR ID number are critical forms of campus identification. Please obtain your photo ID as soon as possible. Take your SOLAR ID number, as well as another form of government-issued photo ID (driver's license, passport), with you to the [Campus Card Office](#) located in the Stony Brook Union or Health Science Center.

Please take steps to safeguard your ID card, as you will be charged a fee (\$25 or more) for a replacement. Further, your ID card will be programmed to grant you access to various buildings or facilities.

Your photo ID card, once programmed, provides your access to the Life Sciences/Centers for Molecular Medicine (CMM) complex at night and on weekends. For programming, please send the GPC an email with your ID number, the card ID number, and the 6-digit code on the back of the card.

Note that any keys that you are issued must be returned when you leave the institution or graduate.

PAYROLL APPOINTMENT PAPERWORK

Appointment paperwork is time-critical to ensure your first paycheck is issued as soon as possible. To appoint you to the payroll system, you must provide your local address plus the following forms of identification for employment verification:

US students: Valid passport OR valid driver's license plus Social Security card

Permanent Residents: Proof of permanent residency plus Social Security card

International students: Valid passport, visa (I-94), SEVIS I-20

To enroll in the employee health insurance program, a photocopy of your birth certificate or a copy of your passport is needed.

Note that **if you change your address**, it is important to **notify the GPC**, as well as **update your SOLAR account** immediately. Updating is essential, since payroll, Visa and Immigration Services, and academic records are all tied to your SOLAR account.

PAYROLL DESIGNATIONS: TA, GA, RPA or Fellow

As a graduate student, you will be appointed to the payroll as a Teaching Assistant (TA), Graduate Assistant (GA), Research Project Assistant (RPA), or Fellow. This distinction is important primarily because of the impact it has on your pay periods and health insurance enrollment. The reason for the difference between these classifications is the source of funding for your support.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Graduate Assistants (GAs) are paid from funds provided by the State of New York. All BGE first-year students (except for MSTP trainees) are supported, at least in part, by State funds and are appointed as TAs. The TA or GA designation means that your paychecks will arrive on Wednesdays, every two weeks. As a GA or TA, you are a member of a collective bargaining unit (Graduate Student Employees Union), which has negotiated certain benefits for you (<https://www.stonybrook.edu/human-resources/total-rewards/graduate-student-employee/total-rewards-GA-TA>). You will enroll for your graduate student health insurance when you complete your employment paperwork through the DocuSign system.

After your first year, it is quite likely you will be re-appointed as a **Research Project Assistant (RPA)**, and it is likely this will be your payroll designation throughout your remaining graduate studies at Stony Brook unless you receive a Fellowship appointment. RPAs are paid from research funds managed by Stony Brook University's Research Foundation and are represented by the RPA union (<https://www.stonybrook.edu/human-resources/total-rewards/graduate-student-employee/total-rewards-RPA.php>). Your paychecks will be distributed on Fridays, every two weeks. When you make the change to Research payroll, you will enroll for your graduate student health insurance when you complete your employment paperwork through DocuSign.

Students who choose a mentor at CSHL will receive their stipend and health benefits from CSHL.

IMPORTANT NOTE: When changing payroll status from State funds to Research or Fellowship or vice versa, it is necessary to complete new tax withholding forms, as well as new health insurance enrollment and direct deposit forms. You will complete these forms in DocuSign upon your new appointment.

TUITION AND FEES SCHOLARSHIPS

Doctoral students who are employed full-time as TAs, GAs, or RPAs or who are paid by CSHL receive scholarships that cover their entire tuition. A recent, very welcome change is that employed doctoral students now also receive scholarships that cover all broad-based fees, listed [here](#). **Note that you must be registered as a full-time student by Day 10 of classes to receive your stipend and these scholarships.**

FELLOWSHIPS

Some of you may have, or will receive, appointments as **Fellows**. There are several different types of Fellowships available to students in our program.

NSF and NIH Fellowships

Domestic students are encouraged to apply for their own individual [National Science Foundation](#) or [NIH F31](#) or [NIH F30](#) Fellowships; the latter are for MD/PhD candidates. Recipients of individual fellowships typically receive a bonus, above and beyond the standard Life Sciences stipend. Individual fellowships are also academic awards, as opposed to salaries. Recipients of these fellowships should consult the Internal Revenue Service website (and/or a tax professional) for information on taxation of fellowship stipends.

[W. Burghardt Turner Fellowships](#)

Domestic students in under-represented groups (African American, Hispanic, American Indian, etc.) may qualify for Turner Fellowships, funded by New York State. These fellowships are competitive, and most are awarded during the admissions process. Additional Turner Fellowships are awarded to more-senior graduate students as they near completion of their dissertation research. Unlike federally funded fellowships, stipends from Turner Fellowships are taxable. Turner Fellowships are paid throughout the **academic** year, over the course of 21 pay periods.

[Scholars in Biomedical Sciences](#)

This initiative, nicknamed the 'Med into Grad' program, enables Life Sciences PhD students to engage in translational medicine. This opportunity is available to both international and domestic students.

Students in years two or three of graduate studies may apply for this competitive fellowship. The track aims to give grad students an understanding of the presentation, progression, and treatment of diseases related to their area of research. SBS Fellows are teamed with a clinician and complete additional coursework during the fellowship year. Students in the program receive a stipend supplement and funds to facilitate some training-related expenses.

Additional Fellowships

The University provides information, resources, and assistance regarding [external funding opportunities](#). The [Center for Inclusive Education](#), for graduate students in under-represented groups, also offers assistance and funding opportunities.

Additionally, the University offers information and help in creating an [Individual Development Plan](#). All students should consider composing an IDP early in their careers, and the Graduate Program Director (GPD) would be happy to assist.

PAY DAYS AND TIME REPORTING

Throughout your studies, your stipend may be funded by a Fellowship, State Teaching Assistantship, or Research Assistantship – or a combination of these various sources of funding. After your first year, it is likely you will be paid through the Stony Brook Research Foundation (which administers your mentor's research grant), unless you join a laboratory at Cold Spring Harbor. Students conducting research at CSHL become CSHL graduate student employees and participate in CSHL benefits.

Research Foundation employees (Research Project Assistants and most Fellows) will receive their paychecks on Fridays, every two weeks. State employees (Teaching Assistants) will receive their checks on Wednesdays, every two weeks. Remember to **check your pay stub regularly**. Errors *can* occur, so the sooner you notice a discrepancy, the sooner we can resolve any issues or errors. Withholdings (especially for insurance) can sometimes be confusing, so please check with the GPC before becoming too concerned.

Please remember that it is your responsibility to report your attendance every month on SOLAR if you are supported by state funds. You will receive email reminders.

PAYROLL DIRECT DEPOSIT

All graduate students are asked to set up direct deposit of payroll checks. Information on how to enroll is at <https://www.stonybrook.edu/human-resources/my-paycheck/direct-deposit.php>. If you change status from State employee to Research Foundation employee (e.g., from TA to RPA), you must re-enroll in the appropriate Direct Deposit program.

For convenience, students without cars often choose to establish accounts at the [Island Federal Credit Union](#), which has a branch office in the Health Science Center. However, any domestic financial institution will do.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS for International Students

The purpose of a Social Security Number (SSN) is to help the government keep track of an individual's earnings in the US for tax purposes. International students must apply for a SSN as quickly as possible after completing registration, as this number is required for both payroll and insurance enrollment purposes. Detailed instructions are on the Visa and Immigration Services' [Social Security Information](#) webpage. The first step is to fill out an [online application](#), after which you will be contacted to make an appointment at a Social Security office. The list of documents you will need to take to your appointment also is on the VIS webpage. These include an Offer of Employment letter, which the Genetics GPC provides, as well as a SSN Authorization Letter from VIS, which you can request through the [VIS portal](#). We can assist you with transportation to the nearest Social Security office, which is in Patchogue, NY.

As soon as you receive your Social Security Card, please bring it to the GPC's office so she can make a photocopy for your permanent record and for the Payroll and Insurance offices.

FEDERAL AND STATE INCOME TAXES

When completing your original appointment paperwork, you will complete both State and Federal tax withholding forms. You may make changes to your withholding instructions at any time by visiting <https://www.stonybrook.edu/human-resources/change-contact-info/tax-withholdings.php>. Most students will be entitled to a tax refund each year, so it is important to file State and Federal tax returns on a timely basis (April 15 deadline each year). Domestic students must file tax returns prior to filing the FAFSA application. Refer to the Human Resources [Tax Forms and Information](#) page for forms, tax changes for the current year, and information specifically for international students.

Some international students qualify for special tax treatment, depending on whether their home country has entered into a tax treaty with the U.S. You may find it helpful to review information for [Taxation of Nonresident Aliens](#). Use this information to guide you when completing your tax withholding forms. Depending upon your personal circumstance, you may wish to consult with the Human Resources Office for clarification.

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory does not withhold taxes from paychecks of students working under the guidance of CSHL faculty. Instead, students must pay estimated taxes on a quarterly basis.

FAFSA and FINANCIAL AID

All domestic students are encouraged (but not required) to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) each year to ensure eligibility for any student loans that may be needed. The [Office of Financial Aid](#) can assist and has numerous on-line resources to help with the process. You will need your tax return information to complete the FAFSA.

GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE AND BENEFITS

‘Required’ Student Health Insurance and Health Insurance Waiver: Stony Brook requires every student to have basic health insurance. All students are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) or International Student Health Insurance Plan (ISHIP) to ensure no one is overlooked. These plans are intended primarily for undergraduates and provide limited coverage. BGE provides you with **employee** health insurance, so it is **important to waive** the mandatory student health insurance on SOLAR every semester. If you decide to remain on a family health insurance policy, you may do so, and you will still qualify for a waiver of the insurance premium provided you complete the waiver request on SOLAR. **If you discover an insurance charge is still on your SOLAR account in late September, please let the GPC know.**

As a Graduate Student Research Project Assistant (RPA), Teaching Assistant (TA), Graduate Assistant (GA) or Research Fellow, you are provided with **Graduate Student Health Insurance benefits**. There are some differences in the plans for State GAs/TAs versus the plan for Research Assistants and Fellows. Graduate student insurance includes dental and vision coverage, in addition to medical benefits. For specific information, forms, premium rates, and other useful links, refer to the appropriate websites below.

STATE Graduate Students:

Graduate student TAs and GAs (paid with State funds) can find detailed information on their benefits on the Human Resource Services [State Graduate Student](#) website. To view your Benefits Handbook, log in as a ‘graduate student’ at [NYSHIP online](#).

RESEARCH Graduate Students:

Graduate students paid solely with Research funds (RPAs and some Fellows) can find detailed information on their benefits on the Human Resource Services [RF Graduate Student](#) website.

VACATION POLICY

Mandatory first-year laboratory rotations run from the first day of classes through May, so students are expected to be working during this time. We understand that many of you will have holiday plans and/or family obligations. Since you also have laboratory obligations, **absences from rotations during your first year require pre-approval of your GPD and your rotation mentor**. In most instances, a brief trip home during the holidays is very likely to be approved. If there should be an emergency that requires you to travel home unexpectedly, be sure to contact your GPD as quickly as possible.

Once you join a research laboratory, your advisor will be responsible for approving your time off. To remain in good standing, discuss vacation plans with your advisor well in advance. It is suggested that graduate students take a cumulative maximum of 3 weeks off each year. Students needing more time (such as international students returning home for a month) should discuss these plans with the advisor. It is also customary (and advisable) to then take less time off the following year. Most students will find their advisors are willing to help strike a balance between their needs and the needs of the lab. Note that the preparatory course for the qualifying examination is held over the winter session of a student’s second year (or for MD/PhD students, usually in the first year). Accordingly, do not make plans that will require you to be away in January of your second academic year.

PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY

Stony Brook University's Graduate School has established a [Parental Leave Policy](#) that enables students who have been employed for at least two full academic semesters to maintain full-time, registered student status while caring for a new child. The policy also facilitates their return to full participation in class work, research, teaching, and clinical training.

This policy includes provisions for academic extensions, relief from regular teaching, research, or training duties and short-term financial support for students normally paid as Teaching Assistants, Graduate Assistants, or Research Project Assistants. Under this program, the Graduate School pays the student's stipend, so that the mentor's financial resources are not strained during the period the student is not in the lab. Leave is granted for a period of 12 weeks for RPAs or one semester for GAs and TAs. The application for leave and other important information can be found [here](#).

Please note that students must apply for leave at least 30 days before the anticipated start date, and International students need to consult with Visa and Immigration Services.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

There are instances in which a student may need to take a leave of absence from graduate studies, for any number of reasons. A leave of absence may be taken for a single semester or for as long as one year. A leave must be approved by your GPD and the Dean of the Graduate School. The Request for Leave of Absence form can be found [here](#) under 'Forms for Continuing Students.'

NEW YORK STATE RESIDENCY

All graduate students who are US citizens or permanent residents but not residents of New York State **must establish NY residency before the start of the Fall semester following their first year**. If you are not a New York State resident but **are eligible** to establish residency and have not completed this process by then, you will be charged for the difference between in-state tuition and the out-of-state rate (more than \$4,000 per semester). This extra charge will be your responsibility, since, beginning with your third semester, your tuition scholarship is calculated at the in-state tuition rate.

Detailed information on [How to Apply for Residency](#), along with the Residency Application Form, is posted on the Student Financial Services website. To establish residency, you should register to vote (at a local post office) and obtain a New York State driver's license. If you own a car that is registered in your name, and you wish to use free Faculty/Staff parking, you will need to change to New York State registration and register your vehicle in NY State. Other documents that can be used to support your application for residency are a local bank account (with statements mailed to your local address) or a utility bill in your name, showing a local address. Students who wish to remain on their parents' health insurance policy may still establish residency, providing all other documents have a valid NY address.

VEHICLE REGISTRATION

To register a car in NY you need the original title, your social security card, and other forms of identification. If your car is financed, you may have to write to your bank to obtain the title. We suggest you start this process as soon as possible, as it can take several weeks. For information on locations, go to <https://dmv.ny.gov/offices/county-offices> and select 'Suffolk' from the 'Select County' dropdown menu.

Please note that if you have a **vehicle on campus registered to your parents who reside out-of-state, you cannot be considered independent** and therefore will be charged the out-of-state tuition rate. As a result, the vehicle must be leased or **registered in your name**.

PARKING

Please take some time to review the [Mobility and Parking Services](#) website. SBU has recently instituted a new parking management system, which you can read about [here](#). As a Graduate Student RA, GA, or TA, you are entitled to a Faculty/Staff parking permit and can apply online [here](#). Note that you will be eligible for a Staff permit only after you have completed payroll paperwork, because your employee designation must be activated in the SOLAR system. It usually takes a week or so after submission of your paperwork to the Payroll department for this to be accomplished.

Note that parking on campus is strictly enforced. Never park in a spot reserved for the disabled, and be careful to park in designated areas. Also note that you should not park in residential lots, unless you are, in fact, a campus resident and have the proper permit. Parking tickets can add up quite quickly. **Unpaid parking tickets will prevent you from registering** and can delay your graduation or the issuance of your diploma. To prevent these headaches, we suggest you park in the appropriate locations. Consult the [parking map](#) on the Mobility and Parking Services website for detailed information.

TRANSPORTATION

Stony Brook University [Mobility and Parking Services](#) provides a wide variety of transportation options. It operates a bus service all year long to make it easier to get from one side of campus to another, as well as to off-campus destinations. On weekdays, the buses run from roughly 7:00 am until 11:00 pm. On Sundays, additional 'shopping' service is provided. The latest [Transit Map](#) shows the various routes and times of service. The SBU [ETA Spot app](#) provides real-time locations of all the campus buses.

Biking on campus is encouraged; more information is available [here](#). The Stony Brook train station (on the Port Jefferson [Long Island Railroad](#) line) is located right on campus. For faster train service to/from New York City, many students use the Ronkonkoma line. The Ronkonkoma station is about a 15-minute drive from campus.

E-MAIL ACCOUNT

Please establish a Stony Brook e-mail account as soon as possible, following the instructions [here](#). **The University will use, and requires us to use, your '@stonybrook.edu' email address for all official communications**, so it is essential for you to monitor this account frequently (or forward emails from this account to your preferred email address).

CAMPUS MAIL AND US POST OFFICES

Mail within the University is distributed through the campus mail system. To send campus mail, address it with the individual's name, department, and the **4-digit campus zip code**. You can find this information in the on-line [Campus Directory](#). Your campus zip code is the same as that for the Microbiology and Immunology Department, namely **5222**.

Branches of the US Post Office are located at:

- 129 Main St, Stony Brook, NY - (631) 246-9239
- 325 Lake Ave, St James, NY - (631) 584-4138
- 226 Smithtown Blvd, Nesconset, NY - (631) 265-3278

STUDENT MAILBOXES

You will each have a mailbox in the room next to the copy room on the 2nd floor of the Life Sciences Building. Please check your mailbox occasionally, as some communications might still be sent via 'snail mail'.

RESEARCH COMPLIANCE AND SAFETY

You are responsible for your own safety and for learning which training is required for your specific research. The University offers numerous safety training sessions throughout the year. The MI Departmental Laboratory Director can also counsel you or refer you to the appropriate sources for training that you may need.

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory has its own safety training requirements, and it is your responsibility to obtain the required training if relevant.

GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The [Graduate Student Organization](#) (GSO) is the graduate student government at Stony Brook University. It is incorporated in the State of New York as a nonprofit organization and is legally and structurally independent of the University administration. The GSO's purpose is to identify and protect the rights of graduate students, advance their interests, provide a forum for public debate, and promote graduate student participation in University affairs. BGE is historically well-represented in the GSO, and we encourage you to participate. The GSO sponsors numerous activities, provides various services (tax and legal clinics, emergency loans, and more) and promotes interaction among grad students from various disciplines.

Travel funds: The GSO also assists graduate students with the costs of travel related to their research. The many funding opportunities that the GSO provides are described [here](#) on their website, along with information on how to apply. The competitive [Distinguished Travel Award](#) will provide up to \$1,750 for attendance at prestigious conferences or symposia.

ACADEMICS AND REGISTRATION

GRADUATE BULLETIN

The [Graduate Catalog](#) is updated every semester and includes important information on academic policies and degree requirements. Each graduate program has its own section of the Bulletin. After reviewing [BGE's requirements](#), you may find it useful to scan the course listings of other graduate programs to see what elective courses may interest you.

ACADEMIC CLASSIFICATION

Your academic classification is determined by the number of graduate credits you have completed and the milestones that you have achieved. Each of you entering the Program will be classified as either a 'G3' or a 'G4.' These are classifications assigned by the Graduate School:

- G3 Graduate student who has completed less than 24 graduate credit hours by the start of the semester and is enrolling in a doctoral degree program
- G4 Advanced graduate student who has completed 24 or more graduate credits (including from a master's degree obtained from another institution)
- G5 Advanced graduate student who has been formally advanced to candidacy for the doctoral degree (upon completion of all course work and passing the proposal examination)

These classifications formerly dictated the number of credits for which a student must enroll, but they are now largely without meaning. All full-time graduate students enroll for 9 credits each Fall and Spring semester – no more, no less.

REGISTRATION AND DEADLINES

After receiving guidance from your GPD, please register as soon as possible. Calendars and deadlines are posted on the Registrar's [Academic Calendars](#) web page. To avoid late registration charges, **you must always be registered for at least one credit before the first day of classes.**

- The last day to drop a class, without incurring tuition liability, is the end of the first week of classes.
- The **FINAL DEADLINE** to complete any registration changes is **4:00 PM on Day 10 of classes** (weekends and holidays are not counted). **If you are not registered as a full-time student (9 credits) by the end of Late Registration, you will lose your tuition and fees scholarships, as well as jeopardize your full-time student (and F-1 visa) status.** Between Day 10 and Day 15 of classes, you may 'swap' courses of equal credit, but a petition to the Graduate School is required.

Late registration and tuition liability fees are your responsibility, so please make it a point to register early each year. Contact your GPD if you do not know which courses to take or your GPC if you encounter registration difficulties.

You must be registered as a full-time student throughout your graduate studies to receive tuition and fee scholarships and/or maintain F-1 visa status. You will register for 9 credits each semester.* In addition, you must also register for zero (0) credits of Summer Research every year to continue your status as a full-time student. Please be very careful to register for the appropriate number of credits, as significant tuition liabilities will be incurred if you are under or over the proper load and/or miss the critical deadlines. Consult your GPD to obtain permission to register for any additional or alternative courses.

*International students who are required to take Oral Academic English classes may register for more than 9 credits without additional tuition charges.

REGISTRATION BLOCKS

If you are 'blocked' from registration, first check your SOLAR messages and account balance. In most cases, you are prevented from registering if you owe any fees (e.g., parking tickets, student activity fee), have not responded to a SOLAR message, owe documents to the Graduate School, or have not waived the student health insurance. The GPC will work with you to iron out these difficulties, but **please do not wait until the deadline** to let her know that you need help.

LABORATORY ROTATIONS

The laboratory rotation experience is a critical part of your first year of graduate studies, and you are required to complete three rotations. The time you spend in rotation will help you to find the appropriate lab for the duration of your graduate studies. Once you join a lab, your mentor will be responsible for paying your stipend. You are expected to find a permanent laboratory no later than the end of your first academic year (in May). To ensure a fair and orderly process of choosing the lab in which your dissertation research will be pursued, Genetics and other graduate programs in the life sciences have agreed that **discussions about joining labs may begin no earlier than 4/27/26**, and decisions should be made by 5/1/26.

You should make every effort to participate fully in laboratory activities and demonstrate your interest and ability to contribute. The rotation period is a courtship of sorts, as well as a time to make new friends, learn new techniques, and build collaborations. It is also highly recommended that you provide your rotation supervisor with a copy of your class schedule, so that she or he will be aware of times that you will not be at the bench.

Each rotation must be pre-approved by your Program Director. Do not reach out to prospective rotation supervisors until you have discussed your choices with the GPD. At the end of each rotation, the GPC will ask your rotation advisor to complete an evaluation, which will be shared with you and become a part of your academic record.

Not all Life Science graduate programs follow the same rotation schedule, so it is important to inform your rotation mentor of the dates. For 2025-2026, the rotation dates are:

Fall:	Aug. 25 to Nov. 14
Winter:	Nov. 17 to Feb. 6
Spring:	Feb. 9 to May 8

Rotating at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory: Many students choose to conduct a rotation at CSHL. The Winter session is an ideal time, as you have fewer classroom obligations and more time to commute. **CSHL requires that you complete a Rotation Checklist and turn in a Rotation Requisition form** before you begin a rotation there. This procedure ensures that CSHL is aware of your legitimate presence in one of their labs and that you can be informed of important regulations, procedures, and safety information. The GPC will assist you with the 'Rotation Requisition.' If you use public transportation to commute to Cold Spring Harbor, be sure to check out the partial reimbursement available from the Graduate Student Organization. All research mentors at CSHL have Administrators, who assist them with scheduling and other matters. Please contact the GPD for a current list of Administrators.

GRADES AND GPAs

The Graduate School requires all Stony Brook grad students to maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) or higher. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, he or she will be placed on academic probation for one semester. If the overall graduate average has been raised to 3.0 by the end of the semester following notice of probation, the student will automatically return to regular status. A student on academic probation who fails to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of the second semester of probation will not be permitted to re-enroll without permission of the Graduate Program and the Graduate School.

BGE further requires that its students receive at least a B in all three of the required courses and maintain an overall average of B (3.0) or better in their elective courses. A detailed [list](#) of the requirements for the PhD degree in Genetics is available in the Graduate Catalog.

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Stony Brook University recognizes that graduate education is challenging and makes a variety of resources available to assist students. If you're unsure of where to go for help, a good first stop is often the [Student Support Team](#), which can also assist with unexpected emergencies. Other resources are listed below.

Accessibility and accommodations:

- [Office of Equity and Access](#)
- [Student Accessibility Support Center \(SASC\)](#)

Conflict management and resolution:

- [Employee and Labor Relations](#)
- [Graduate Student Advocate](#)
- [Office of Equity and Access](#)
- [Ombuds Office](#)

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

- [Justice for the Underserved in STEM \(JUST\)](#)
- [Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Intercultural Initiatives](#)

Financial challenges:

- [Employee Assistance Program](#)
- [Hardship Fund](#)
- [SBU Food Pantry](#)
- [Student Support Team emergency fund](#)

Graduate student groups:

- [Graduate Student Organization \(GSO\)](#)
- [Graduate Women in Science & Engineering](#)

Health and wellness:

- [Center for Prevention and Outreach](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Krasner Psychological Center](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)

ATTENDING CONFERENCES AT COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY (free!)

As a Stony Brook graduate student, you are welcome to attend the conferences and symposia held at CSHL. If you are just auditing the meeting, you may attend any of the Cold Spring Harbor conferences, free of charge. However, you do need to register online and select 'check to follow,' so that there will be a name tag waiting for you. The name tag will grant you free admission to the meeting, wine and cheese reception (if any), etc., but no meals will be provided.

Before you register online, please contact Val Pakaluk, Conference Coordinator, at pakaluk@cshl.edu and provide the following information:

- Your name
- Your SBU graduate program
- The meeting you plan to attend

FISHBOWL OFFICE

The First-Year Student Office will be your special refuge and study area throughout the first year. We encourage you to make good use of it for study sessions, as well as for good times together. You will need to work together to keep the space reasonably clean and comfortable, as we (faculty/staff) do not intrude unless invited. The cleaning staff will probably empty the trash cans periodically, but other cleaning is up to you.

We have provided a computer and printer, as well as several other conveniences. The previous occupants have left you past exam questions. You can obtain basic office supplies from the MI main office. If there are any technical issues with the computer, or other items needing attention, please let the GPC know. If your carrel is far away from a power outlet, you must use a power strip with surge protection. Use of simple extension cords is a fire hazard and prohibited by the University. If you would like to order any new items for this space, please let your GPC know.



DIRECTIONS TO COLD SPRING HARBOR LABORATORY

From the Port Jefferson Ferry: Follow Route 112 south to the Long Island Expressway (495). Get off at Route 110 North and travel to Route 25 (Jericho Turnpike) and make a left (west). Approx. 2 miles be looking for an intersection with a diner on the left and a gas station on the right. That's Oakwood Road make a right. Follow that to Route 11 make a left. Go down a hill and there's a railroad station (Cold Spring Harbor) on the left. On the right will be the intersection with a signal for Route 108. Turn right and follow this route to the end when it reaches Route 25A. At that point make a left on 25A go up the hill to the signal light and enter the lab on the right. When registering, ask for a temporary parking permit and information on where to park the car.

From NYC and points west: Take 495 East to exit 41N, bear to your right when the road forks and stay on route 106. Travel approximately 4 miles (6.4 Km) north to route 25A and then travel east for 4 miles (6.4 Km). See below...

From points south: Take Southern State Parkway, take the Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway (135) north to exit 14E Jericho Turnpike. Make a left on South Woods Rd and take that to its end. Make a right on Cold Spring Rd. and merge onto 25A going east and travel 1/4 mile down the hill. See below...

From points east/ferries: Take 495 West to the Seaford Oyster Bay Express way (135) north, take the 14E exit for Jericho Turnpike, make a left on South Woods Rd and take that to its end. Make a right on Cold Spring Rd. and merge onto 25A going east and travel 1/4 mile down the hill. See below...

The Laboratory is located on Bungtown Road off route 25A in Cold Spring Harbor, marked by a traffic light and gold Victorian house. Grace Auditorium is the first building on your left.

From the Syosset LIRR Train Station: CSHL offers a shuttle service to the Laboratory as a courtesy to its staff and guests. Though availability for meetings participants cannot be guaranteed, visitors are welcome to use this service on a first-come first-served basis.

DIRECTIONS TO THE CSHL WOODBURY GENOME CENTER

GENOME RESEARCH CENTER, 500 Sunnyside Boulevard, Woodbury, NY 11797

Using the Long Island Expressway (495): go to Exit 46 (Sunnyside Boulevard). At the traffic light turn onto Sunnyside Boulevard and drive north (approximately ¼ mile). You will approach the Genome Research Center's gate entrance.

Using the Northern State Parkway heading east: go to Exit 38 (Sunnyside Boulevard). Turn onto Sunnyside Boulevard and drive north until you can drive straight no further. You will approach the Genome Research Center's gate entrance.

Fall 2025 Academic Calendar

Date	Details
Sun, Aug. 24	Semester Cancellation: Last day students can cancel all classes by dropping via SOLAR .
Mon, Aug. 25	Semester Start: First day of classes. Late Registration: \$50 fee if not enrolled in at least one class before semester start.
Fri, Aug. 29 4:00 PM	Waitlist: Last day to waitlist a class. Students are responsible for any tuition liability incurred if registered from a waitlisted class.
Mon, Sep. 1	Labor Day: No classes in session.
Fri, Sep. 5	Waitlist Process Ends: Last day to be enrolled from the waitlist process pending seat availability. Students must contact the appropriate academic department after this date.
Mon, Sep. 8 4:00 PM	Late registration ends for Graduate/SPD Students (includes SPD Online Session): Last day to process enrollment changes such as adds, swaps, credit changes, and drops via SOLAR . Last day to drop/withdraw from the university without a "W" (withdrawal) recorded via SOLAR . Petition to the respective college/school required after this date. Undergraduate students enrolling in Graduate/SPD courses: Last day to petition to the Graduate School/SPD .
Tues, Sep. 9 to Mon, Sep. 15 4:00 PM	Swaps by Petition Only: Graduate School and SPD students must petition to the respective school.
Mon, Oct. 13 to Tue Oct. 14	Fall Break: No Classes in Session.
Sun, Nov. 2	SPD Online Classes End
Mon, Nov. 3	Advanced Registration: Tentatively to begin for Winter and Spring in accordance with enrollment appointments .
Wed, Nov. 26 to Sun, Nov. 30	Thanksgiving Break: No classes in session.
Mon, Dec. 1	Graduation Application: Last day for Masters & Advanced Graduate Certificate students to apply for graduation. Students apply via SOLAR .
Mon, Dec. 8 4PM	Semester Withdrawal: Last day students can submit a withdrawal form to the Graduate School/SPD. Classes End: Last day of classes.
Tue, Dec. 9	Reading Day
Wed, Dec. 10 to Fri, Dec 12	Finals
Sat, Dec. 13	Final Exams for Saturday Classes/Reading Day
Mon, Dec. 15 to Thurs, Dec. 18	Finals
Thur, Dec. 18	Semester End: Official End of Term Official degree conferral date for Fall 2025: Degree clearance begins once final grading has concluded. However, it may take up to one month to complete posting all degrees. Please take this timeline into account when ordering transcripts and submitting degree verifications and/or state licensing forms. Check your unofficial transcript on SOLAR to see when your degree has been awarded.

USEFUL LINKS:

GENERAL

[Academic Calendar](#)
[Campus Card Offices](#)
[Campus Directory](#)
[Center for Inclusive Education](#)
[Department of Microbiology and Immunology](#)
[Financial Aid](#)
[Graduate School](#)
[Graduate Student Organization \(GSO\)](#)
[Island Federal Credit Union](#)
[New York State Residency](#)
[Student Financial Services](#)
[Tuition and Fees](#)
[Visa and Immigration Services](#)

PROGRAM INFORMATION

[Genetics \(BGE\) Program Website](#)
[Graduate Catalog - Genetics](#)
[Graduate Catalog Home Page](#)
[Individual Development Plan Toolkit](#)

BENEFITS, PAYROLL, TAXES

[Direct Deposit](#)
[Graduate Student Employee Benefits - RF](#)
[Graduate Student Employee Benefits - State](#)
[Non-Resident Alien Tax Information](#)
[NYSHIP Online Insurance Information](#)
[Parental Leave](#)
[Request for Leave of Absence Form](#)
[Social Security Application Form](#)
[Social Security Information](#)
[Tax Forms and Information](#)

TRANSPORTATION, PARKING, PERMITS

[Biking on Campus](#)
[Department of Motor Vehicles offices](#)
[Long Island Railroad](#)
[Mobility and Parking Services](#)
[SBU Transit - Bus Routes](#)
[SBU ETA SPOT - real time locations of SBU buses](#)

FELLOWSHIPS

[External Scholarships and Fellowships Advising](#)
[National Science Fndn Graduate Research Fellowship Program](#)
[NIH F31 Predoctoral Training Fellowships](#)
[Scholars in Biomedical Sciences Fellowship](#)
[W. Burghardt Turner Fellowships](#)

SUPPORT RESOURCES

[Center for Prevention and Outreach](#)
[Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
[Employee Assistance Program](#)
[Employee and Labor Relations](#)
[Graduate Student Advocate](#)
[Graduate Women in Science & Engineering](#)
[Hardship Fund](#)
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