

Choosing a Graduate Program for MD/PhD Students

After passing Step 1, completing the MD program's TTCE course, and completing 1-3 research rotations, MD/PhD students should choose a mentor and lab to join. Students will also need to finalize their graduate program choice, although this may be done before Spring term if there are program courses that would be beneficial to take Spring term. Students can select between the following graduate programs:

- Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience Graduate Program
- Biomedical Engineering Graduate Program
- Biomedical Informatics Graduate Program - two tracks:
 - Health & Clinical Informatics
 - Bioinformatics & Computational Biomedicine
- Neuroscience Graduate Program
- Program in Biomedical Sciences (PBMS) – research hubs include:
 - Biochemical, Molecular, and Structural Biology
 - Chemical Physiology
 - Development, Differentiation, and Disease
 - Genome Sciences
 - Infectious Disease and Immunology
 - Integrated Cancer Biology

Please see the [Graduate Programs in MD/PhD web page](#) for links to any of these program websites.

Discussion of possible programs and mentors with your SOC and the appropriate graduate program director(s) should take place prior to your transition in winter/spring of MS2. **As an incoming student**, reach out to program directors and their coordinators of all prospective programs to understand curriculum options. **As MS2 the summer prior to Step 1**, reach out to program directors and their coordinators to ensure you understand curriculum changes, requirements, and any flexibility options. **As Grad1 after rotations**, decide on a lab and PhD program to join.

Email the grad coordinator of the program of your choice and mdphdadmin@ohsu.edu to inform the MD/PhD program of your decision.

Rotations and Coursework

During Spring term you'll be registered for CONJ 601-MD/PhD Research or research credits related to your graduate program of choice. During this term, you'll need to

complete any remaining research rotations in order to identify a permanent mentor and a particular graduate program, if not already decided.

Choosing a Rotation Mentor

Faculty rotation mentors should be faculty within the graduate program that you are considering. However, if they are not already faculty, talk to them and the program director(s) about the possibility of them being graduate faculty to be your mentor. You should meet with the director of your preferred graduate program, your SOC, and the MD/PhD program director to get their input on selecting rotations and mentors. Ideally, students should select a mentor and pick a specific graduate program by the end of Spring term, but no later than the end of Summer term.

Work with your SOC, mentor, and graduate program director and/or graduate program academic advisor to develop a plan for required coursework within your selected graduate program. Please note that you must complete all requirements of your chosen graduate program. Continue to work and meet with your SOC until your dissertation advisory committee (DAC) is officially formed. Students should meet with their SOC and DAC every 6 months after committee formation.

Changing Graduate Programs

The best time to vacillate between programs is the Winter through Summer terms of your second year, and most importantly *before* you officially join a program. If for some reason you decide you want to switch graduate programs after you officially join a program, you will need to go through a formal petition process with the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. You must receive approval from both the graduate program you are leaving and the graduate program you are entering in an official letter request to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. This process is not recommended, however we prize student success above all else and recognize that there may be extenuating circumstances leading to this decision.

Please consult with the MD/PhD Director and Coordinator before starting this process.