

## Mission

The UCSF Graduate Division strives to foster the highest quality of graduate education and postdoctoral training; to help graduate programs grow and evolve to meet the changing demands of science and needs of society; and to ensure that every graduate student and postdoc at UCSF can look forward to a productive, successful career.

---

To fulfill its mission, the Graduate Division:

- **Coordinates admissions:** The Graduate Division, referred to below as "GD," coordinates and processes graduate student online applications, ensures adherence to University and Academic Senate policies, and provides information to prospective students regarding UCSF graduate programs and campus admission requirements.
- **Oversees academic progression:** The GD reviews and approves student petitions, requests for leaves of absence, and applications for admission to the qualifying examination and advancement to candidacy. The GD also monitors student academic progression; reviews theses and dissertations and accepts these documents for library archiving; and certifies the completion of degree requirements.
- **Allocates student and postdoc financial support:** The GD is responsible for the award and administration of several merit and diversity fellowships from a variety of funding sources as well as the management and allocation of return-to-aid funds. The GD also awards and administers research and travel awards for students and postdocs, as well as a childcare grant program for students with dependents. In addition, the GD administers the Initiative to Maximize Student Development (IMSD) program, which provides financial support, training and career development for a number of students in the basic science PhD programs.
- **Institutes and guides the development of new academic degree programs:** The GD works with faculty to craft proposals for new academic degree programs and helps to guide them through the campus and system-wide approval processes.
- **Manages the review of existing programs:** UCSF is known for its exceptional graduate programs, many of which are ranked among the top five in the nation. The periodic review process, conducted under the guidance of the GD, helps to maintain the high standards of these programs by identifying areas of strengths and weaknesses, enabling programs to make adjustments for continual improvement.
- **Facilitates outreach and recruitment:** The GD strives to draw the best and brightest students and postdocs from diverse backgrounds. To this end, the GD organizes and implements the Summer Research Training Program and the UC LEADS (Leadership Excellence through Advanced Degrees) program. The GD sends representatives to recruit students and postdocs at annual conferences such as SACNAS and ABRCMS,

and supports the graduate programs in their own outreach and recruitment efforts. It also works with other UCSF departments to advocate for science education and science research at the community and national levels.

- **Enhances access, representation, and the educational experience of underrepresented students:** In addition to financial support, the IMSD program (referenced above) provides a variety of academic enrichment opportunities both on and off-campus. Fellows receive advice and mentorship through many channels, and participate in co-curricular activities related to developing research, communication, and developing work-life balance. The GD has a full-time director of diversity and student success, who directs programs dedicated to supporting underrepresented undergraduates and PhD students ? including IMSD and the Summer Research Program, spearheads efforts to understand and evaluate the needs of students, and develops and implements new diversity and inclusion initiatives across the graduate programs. The director also partners with other offices dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion at UCSF, including the Multicultural and LGBT Resource Centers.
- **Provides a ?postdoc hub?:** The UCSF Office for Postdoctoral Scholars, part of the Graduate Division, serves as a central resource and information conduit for all postdocs as well as faculty and staff who work with postdocs at UCSF. The Postdoc Office holds quarterly postdoc orientations; conducts career development activities and mentoring programs; trains campus staff on postdoc policies and labor contract interpretation; and grants exceptions to policy when warranted. It also advocates for postdoctoral representation in campus and system-wide organizations, committees, and activities.
- **Engages with alumni and fundraising:** Together with the University Development and Alumni Relations Office, the GD works to increase philanthropic support for student fellowships. The GD has also independently written and obtained several grants to support programs such as the Summer Research Training Program and the IMSD program.
- **Hosts and organizes events for students, postdocs, faculty, and alumni:** Annual events managed by the GD include the Fall Celebration, to welcome new and returning graduate students and postdocs to campus; the fall Retreat in Building Community for first-year students; a Third-Year *Re*-Orientation, which reintroduces PhD students to their campus resources and features an experienced student panel, who offer advice on common issues that come up during this transitional period; the annual commencement celebrations for graduate students; the Grad Slam and Postdoc Slam research communications competitions; and at least some one-time-only events each year. The GD also provides assistance to other campus organizations, such as the Associated Students of the Graduate Division, the Science Policy Group, the Office of Career and Professional Development, Postdoctoral Scholars? Association, and University Development and Alumni Relations, in relation to events like student and postdoctoral scholar orientations, research seminars and talks, career development workshops, networking activities, and community-building social events.
- **Fosters career development:** The GD recognizes the broad range of possible career options for PhD-trained graduates in both the public and private sectors. The GD and its Office for Postdoctoral Scholars partners with the Office of Career and Professional Development to develop and enhance new programs that facilitate career exploration and career development/planning for our students and postdocs.
- **Communications:** The GD reaches out to constituents on and off the UCSF campus to raise the profile of graduate education. We are listening to the student and postdoc communities we serve in order to respond effectively to their needs, and we are collaborating more and more with other campus units to improve and expand upon the

services we provide to graduate students, postdocs, and graduate program faculty and staff.

- **Provides transparency:** The GD continually collects, analyzes, and shares data in relation to graduate student and postdoc demographics, progression, and ? importantly ? career outcomes, in order to help our graduate programs to assess performance and progress, and to aid prospective students and postdocs in making decisions about pursuing graduate or postdoctoral training. UCSF is a founding member of the Coalition for Next Generation Life Science.

---

See a list of Graduate Division contacts <sup>[1]</sup>.

\*/

UCSF Main Site

© 2013 The Regents of the University of California

---

**Source URL:** <https://graduate.ucsf.edu/mission>

**Links**

[1] <https://graduate.ucsf.edu/graduate-division-contacts>