

Summary of Biology PhD Student Expectations by Year

Full details can be found in the Graduate Program Guide: <https://www.bu.edu/biology/biology-graduate-program/graduate-program-guide/>

Annual reports are due in October and are required for students in their second year and up.

Year 1

- Research
 - CM/Neuro: complete three lab rotations
 - EBE: begin research work in consultation with your advisor
- Enroll in graduate classes, as specified in the [Graduate Program Guide](#).
- Serve as a teaching fellow during spring semester and enroll in BI697, the accompanying pedagogy course.
- Begin Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training: <https://www.bu.edu/researchsupport/compliance/responsible-conduct-of-research/>.
- Attend the Biology Departmental Seminar series (Mondays) and your research group (EBE, CM, Neuro) weekly seminar (day differs by program area).
- EBE: Once you have identified a project area, you may begin forming your faculty committee to take your qualifying exam.

Year 2

- EBE/CM/ Neuro: If you haven't already, begin forming your faculty committee to take your qualifying exam. Your exam may take place in your 2nd or 3rd year.
- Enroll in graduate classes. Ensure you are on track to complete all required courses, as specified in the [Graduate Program Guide](#).
- Serve as a teaching fellow for at least one semester.
- Continue [RCR](#) training.
- Attend the Biology Departmental Seminar series (Mondays) and present in your research group (EBE, CM, Neuro) weekly seminar (day differs by program area).

Year 3

- If you haven't already, complete your qualifying exam by the end of your third year.
- Complete any remaining required courses.
- Serve as a teaching fellow if you haven't completed the 2-semester teaching requirement or funding requires it.
- Continue [RCR](#) training.
- Attend the Biology Departmental Seminar series (Mondays) and present in your area's weekly seminar (day differs by program area).
- Attend professional development events to enhance skill and career training.
- Present your research at conferences.

Year 4 and beyond

- Have at least one committee meeting each year.
- Complete any remaining required courses.
- Serve as a teaching fellow if you haven't completed the 2-semester teaching requirement or funding requires it.
- Complete [RCR](#) training by the end of year 4.
- Attend the Biology Departmental Seminar series (Mondays) and present in your area's weekly seminar (day differs by program area).
- Attend professional development events to enhance skill and career training.
- Present your research at conferences.
- Plan a timeline to graduation. Review the dissertation guidelines and timetable in the [Graduate Program Guide](#). A prospectus is required ~1 year prior to the proposed graduation date and may be discussed at a committee meeting.

In general, the PhD is expected to be completed within seven years.