

# UCLA DGE Academic Disqualification Appeal

## ACADEMIC DISQUALIFICATION APPEALS – PROCEDURAL ERROR

Please explain why you think your academic disqualification decision should be overturned in the context of procedural error.

My academic disqualification is the direct and unavoidable result of a cascade of significant and prejudicial procedural errors by the Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program (NSIDP). These errors are not minor administrative oversights; they are fundamental failures of due process, consistent application of standards, and fair communication that rendered the process and its outcome unjust, directly impacting the decision to proceed with my disqualification.

### 1. Improper Post-Hoc Expansion of Disqualification Rationale

A critical procedural error occurred when the NSIDP fundamentally altered its rationale for my disqualification *after* I had already submitted my internal appeal.

1. The initial, formal recommendation for academic disqualification, dated **April 28, 2025**, cited a single, sole reason: **"insufficient degree progress based on failure to identify a faculty mentor."** (See [Exhibit A: NSIDP Letter of Recommendation for Academic Disqualification](#)).
2. However, after I appealed this decision, the NSIDP's denial letter of **May 30, 2025**, improperly expanded the rationale to three distinct benchmarks from my Academic Plan: the failure to find a mentor, an "Unsatisfactory" grade in my fifth rotation, and the non-completion of NEURO M203. (See [Exhibit B: NSIDP Appeal Decision Response](#)).

This post-hoc shift constitutes a significant procedural error that prejudiced my ability to mount a focused and fair defense against the original charge. It suggests the initial grounds were insufficient and that the program was seeking retroactive justification, which is an arbitrary and capricious action contrary to the principles of fair and consistent evaluation.

### 2. Inconsistent Standards and Improper Influence in Rotation Assessment

My fifth rotation with Dr. Carrie Bearden was subjected to non-standard procedures, suggesting targeted action rather than a fair assessment.

1. In an email dated **February 19, 2025**, Dr. Bearden stated, **"I've never done one of these before for a rotation student but Jenny and Felix suggested documenting the expectations in writing, and I think it's a good idea."** (See [Exhibit C: Email and NEURO 596 Syllabus from Dr. Bearden](#)). This admission of an unusual procedure, directed by program leadership, points to an inconsistent and biased application of standards not applied to other students.
2. Furthermore, Dr. Bearden's email of **April 2, 2025**, in which she accidentally cc'd me while asking Prof. Schweizer, **"...when you say creative ideas I assume you're not talking about something that would allow him to stay in the NSIDP? or is that still on the table?"**, reveals her own uncertainty about my status and suggests that factors beyond my academic performance were the overriding concerns. (See [Exhibit D: Email from Dr. Bearden regarding group meeting](#)). This undermines the legitimacy of the "Unsatisfactory" grade as a purely academic assessment.

### 3. Impossibility of Satisfactory Completion of Academic Requirements

The two academic benchmarks added to the disqualification rationale—the "Unsatisfactory" grade and the non-completion of NEURO M203—were the result of procedural impossibilities and inflexibility.

1. A key deliverable for the fifth rotation required feedback from an external collaborator. I submitted the required project data on **March 9, 2025**. (See [Exhibit E: Email to DGE Case Manager Jaine Park](#)). However, the collaborators did not provide confirmation of receipt until **May 6, 2025**, nearly two months after the rotation concluded, citing "staffing changes." (See [Exhibit F: Email from ENIGMA-DTI Genetics Support Team](#)). This external delay, entirely beyond my control, made it impossible for my work to be fully assessed for satisfactory completion.
2. Regarding NEURO M203, I proactively sought a minor accommodation—a two-day extension on the midterm—due to the concurrent pressure of securing my fifth rotation. This request was denied by the professor, who cited the lack of a "valid medical reason." (See [Exhibit G: Email to Prof. Bisley Regarding Midterm Extension](#)). This inflexibility contributed to the circumstances that led to my dropping the course to prioritize the high-stakes rotation, as mandated by my Academic Plan. Using these outcomes as a basis for disqualification is procedurally unsound.

### 4. Disparate Treatment and Arbitrary Application of Academic Standards

The decision to disqualify me appears to be an arbitrary and capricious application of academic standards, particularly when contrasted with the program's handling of other students.

1. I am aware of more advanced NSIDP students with faculty mentors who remain in the program despite not having completed the same benchmarks now being used against me (e.g., the NEURO M203 course after three years in the program). (See [Exhibit H: NSIDP 8-Year Review Student Survey Responses](#); and [Exhibit I: Additional Arguments and Anonymized Case Comparisons](#)).
2. Furthermore, other NSIDP students have completed four or more rotations before finding a lab but were not dismissed. (See [Exhibit I: Additional Arguments and Anonymized Case Comparisons](#)).
3. This differential treatment, where my failure to secure a mentor—a situation heavily influenced by systemic program flaws and a lack of ADHD accommodation—is met with the ultimate penalty of disqualification while others with arguably more significant academic deficiencies are retained, constitutes an arbitrary and inconsistent enforcement of program requirements.

### 5. Due Process Violations in Communication and Notification

The disqualification process was marred by significant communication breakdowns and a failure to follow expected protocols.

1. After my fifth rotation ended, my attempts to meet with the Program Chair, Prof. Schweizer, were met with a two-week delay, during which he was unresponsive. (See [Exhibit J: Email Correspondence Regarding Procedural Conflict](#)).
2. Crucially, the disqualification process was initiated via an email from the Student Affairs Officer on **April 1, 2025**. This preempted a meeting that Prof. Schweizer had agreed to on **March 31, 2025**, where we were to discuss alternatives. (See [Exhibit J: Email Correspondence Regarding Procedural Conflict](#)). This contravenes the principles of direct and timely communication from program leadership and represents a denial of due process.

These procedural errors are not minor administrative oversights; they are fundamental failures that rendered the process unfair and the outcome unjust. I respectfully request that the DGE overturn this decision on these grounds.

# ACADEMIC DISQUALIFICATION APPEALS – NON-ACADEMIC CRITERIA

Please explain why you think your academic disqualification decision should be overturned, specifying judgements based on non-academic criteria in violation of the University of California nondiscrimination policies.

I am appealing my academic disqualification because I have substantive evidence indicating the decision was based on non-academic criteria, specifically a violation of the University of California's nondiscrimination policies through the NSIDP's and UCLA's failure to provide reasonable and effective accommodations for my documented disability (ADHD), as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

## 1. Systemic Failure to Provide Reasonable and Effective Programmatic Accommodations for ADHD

The core of this appeal rests on the university's failure to meet its legal and ethical obligations. Despite registering with the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) in February 2024, and receiving standard accommodations for coursework and exams, there was a critical failure to address the unique, executive-function-intensive demands of the doctoral program itself.

- 1. Failure to Engage in an Interactive Process for Programmatic Needs:** The process of completing five consecutive lab rotations, networking with faculty, and navigating the high-stakes, ambiguous process of securing a mentor are the very areas most impacted by ADHD. Despite being aware of my diagnosis, the NSIDP failed to engage in the required proactive, interactive process to identify and provide necessary *programmatic* accommodations.
- 2. My Documented Late Awareness of Rights:** A catastrophic failure in university guidance is evidenced by the timeline of my communications. It was not until after my fifth rotation that I began to understand the possibility of programmatic accommodations. This is reflected in my subsequent email on **March 31, 2025**, where I began actively discussing lab placement challenges in the context of my disability with my CAE Specialist and DGE Case Manager. (See [Exhibit K: Email to Jaime Park and Betteena Marco](#)). This lapse directly prejudiced my ability to succeed by preventing me from seeking necessary support earlier, a clear violation of my rights under ADA/Section 504.
- 3. Untapped Support Mechanisms:** My proactivity in seeking support is demonstrated by my application for and receipt of the Will Rogers Scholarship for executive functions coaching. The disqualification has blocked me from applying this university-provided resource in a research rotation where it could have made a material difference. (See [Exhibit E: Email to Jaime Park, re: Will Rogers Scholarship](#)).

## 2. Escalating Stigma and Intensifying Scrutiny Instead of Accommodation

Instead of providing support, the program's response to my struggles was punitive scrutiny, which is itself a form of discrimination when viewed through the lens of my disability.

- The application of non-standard procedures for my 5th rotation suggests I was being managed differently. (See [Exhibit C: Email and NEURO 596 Syllabus from Dr. Bearden](#)).
- The cumulative effect of five rotations, compounded by indirect feedback and a hostile environment evidenced by the Program Chair's inappropriate remark about "internalized self-loathing" (See [Exhibit L: Meeting Notes Regarding "Internalized Self-loathing" Comment](#)), created an environment of escalating stigma. This immense pressure exacerbated the symptoms of my ADHD. The program's response was not to accommodate this escalating challenge, but to penalize the outcome.

### **3. Failure to Consider Significant Mitigating Medical Circumstances**

Throughout my critical third rotation, I suffered from a debilitating, months-long bout of Bell's Palsy. (See [Exhibit M: Email to Prof. Schweizer regarding Bell's Palsy](#); and [Exhibit N: Bell's Palsy Notice of Diagnosis](#)). The program was aware of these issues, but they were not adequately considered as mitigating factors that compounded the challenges of my ADHD and impacted my ability to secure a mentor.

This disqualification is not the result of a lack of academic capability, as evidenced by my High Pass WQE scores, but the direct consequence of the university's failure to provide a properly accommodated educational environment. This constitutes discrimination based on disability, and I urge the DGE to overturn this decision.



**EVIDENCE DOSSIER**

**In the matter of the Academic Disqualification**

**Appeal of: COOPER M. BEAMAN**

**UID: 105692562**

*Neuroscience Interdepartmental Graduate Program (NSIDP)*

**Compiled: August 7, 2025**

**Submitted to:**

**The Dean of the Division of Graduate Education**

**University of California, Los Angeles.**

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Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Cooper - Academic Disqualification Recommendation

1 message

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**Lee, Jenny [BRI]** <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
Cc: "Schweizer, Felix (BOL)" <felixs@ucla.edu>

Mon, Apr 28, 2025 at 4:04 PM

Hello Cooper,

A letter is attached for your information.

Respectfully,

Jenny

Jenny Lee (She/Her)

Graduate Program Coordinator

UCLA Neuroscience Interdepartmental Graduate Program (G-NSIDP)

[JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu)

(310) 825-8153 p

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### 2 attachments



**Pages from GD Standards and Procedures for Grad Study\_Jan 2025.pdf**  
163K



**Cooper Beaman\_Academic Disqualification Letter.pdf**  
141K



INTERDEPARTMENTAL Ph.D. PROGRAM FOR NEUROSCIENCE

The David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA  
1506A Gonda Center  
695 Charles E. Young Drive South  
Los Angeles CA 90095-1761  
Phone: 310.794.5733  
Fax: 310.206.5855  
Email: [felixs@ucla.edu](mailto:felixs@ucla.edu)

April 28, 2025

Dear Cooper Beaman,

The Neuroscience Interdepartmental Graduate Program (NSIDP) is recommending you to the Division of Graduate Education for academic disqualification effective Spring 2025 due to insufficient degree progress. The NSIDP requires that doctoral students make progress towards their degree by identifying an advisor and conducting research. By the end of the Spring Quarter of the first year of study, students are required to find a primary Faculty Mentor to supervise their dissertation research. After five research rotations, the fifth rotation occurring and concluding on March 14, 2025 (the end of the Winter Quarter of your second year of study), a primary Faculty Mentor has not been identified.

The Program Chair met with you on various dates, specifically on June 7, 2024, August 28, 2024, November 13, 2024, November 19, 2024, February 5, 2025, February 18, 2025 and March 31, 2025. You have also met with the Student Affairs Officer, Division of Graduate Education Case Manager and the Center for Accessible Education Case Manager on various occasions regarding your academic progress and support resources. The program supported you with your continuance in the program to pursue a fourth rotation which occurred during the Summer 2024 following your first-year of study, when a faculty mentor was not identified at the end of the fourth rotation, the program further supported your continuance with a fifth rotation to take place during Winter 2025 and as indicated on the letter dated November 19, 2024, if a faculty mentor was not identified by March 14, 2025 recommendation for academic disqualification would occur.

The Interdepartmental Degree Committee carefully considered your degree progress and the absence of a primary faculty mentor. The committee has voted to recommend to the Division of Graduate Education the academic disqualification of your status as a doctoral student in our department effective Spring 2025. This decision is based on insufficient degree progress based on failure to identify a faculty mentor.

On behalf of the department, I wish to convey our regrets about your delayed progression through the PhD program. Our response up until this letter has been flexible and compassionate in supporting your requests for additional research rotations.

We will be forwarding this letter along with supplemental materials to the Division of Graduate Education. You may appeal this recommendation for academic disqualification in writing to the interdepartmental degree committee and may personally present additional or mitigating information to the committee, in person or in writing. If you wish to pursue an appeal with the interdepartmental degree committee, you can submit an appeal within 10 days of receiving this notification. If you wish to appeal in person, please notify us in advance – no later than 10 days from this notice to allow for sufficient time for scheduling.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Felix Schweizer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Felix E. Schweizer, PhD  
Program Chair - Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Neuroscience  
Professor of Neurobiology

cc: Brian Kite and Renate Lux, Graduate Division Associate Deans

Attachment: "[Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#)" excerpt on Academic Disqualification, Pages 39 - 42

**Exhibit B** ..... NSIDP Appeal Decision Response (05/30/2025) (*Demonstrates improper post-hoc expansion of disqualification rationale*)





Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Appeal Response, Recommendation for Academic Disqualification

1 message

Lee, Jenny [BRI] <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>

To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Cc: "Schweizer, Felix (BOL)" <felixs@ucla.edu>, "Park, Jaine" <jpark@grad.ucla.edu>, "Bailey, Tom" <tbailey@grad.ucla.edu>

Fri, May 30, 2025 at 4:50 PM

Hello, Cooper.

A response regarding your appeal is attached.

Take care,

Jenny

Jenny Lee (She/Her)

Graduate Program Coordinator

UCLA Neuroscience Interdepartmental Graduate Program (G-NSIDP)

[JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu)

(310) 825-8153 p

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Cooper Beaman\_Appeal Decision Response.pdf  
226K



Pages from GD Standards and Procedures for Grad Study\_Jan 2025.pdf  
163K



INTERDEPARTMENTAL Ph.D. PROGRAM FOR NEUROSCIENCE

The David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA  
1506A Gonda Center  
695 Charles E. Young Drive South  
Los Angeles CA 90095-1761  
Phone: 310.794.5733  
Fax: 310.206.5855  
Email: [felixs@ucla.edu](mailto:felixs@ucla.edu)

May 30, 2025

Dear Cooper,

I am writing in response to your appeal of the recommendation of academic disqualification effective Spring 2025 due to insufficient degree progress.

Thank you for providing your written appeal and personally presenting additional information to our interdepartmental degree committee on May 23, 2025. Upon reviewing your appeal and the additional information you presented, the committee has determined to uphold the recommendation of academic disqualification effective Spring 2025 and will be forwarding the recommendation to the Division of Graduate Education.

The basis for the recommendation of academic disqualification due to insufficient degree progress was based on the benchmarks that were not met in the Academic Plan letter dated November 19, 2024:

- An Unsatisfactory grade was attained from your fifth rotation with Dr. Carrie Bearden.
- A primary faculty mentor was not identified by March 14, 2025.
- You did not complete the NEURO M203 course.

After careful consideration of your request and consultation with both the CAE and the Division of Graduate Education, the committee finds that the grounds for appeal are not sufficient to warrant rescinding or holding in abeyance the recommendation for academic disqualification.

With regards to the additional points of requested relief, an extension of time to recommend academic disqualification effective Fall 2025 will not be granted. A student must be making degree progress to maintain student status. This is defined by enrolling in coursework and conducting research with a faculty mentor. It has been established that you are not making degree progress, thus an extension to Fall 2025 would be a fundamental change to our program standards which is not allowed by university policy.

As indicated to you previously both by me, and the case manager in the Division of Graduate Education, during this process of academic disqualification and in the future, you are fully eligible to apply for other graduate programs at UCLA. A supplemental document to accompany your UCLA transcript that outlines the results of your Written Qualifying Exam will be provided to you.

The committee acknowledges that you have overcome many obstacles with your functional limitations associated with ADHD and have no doubts about your motivation to pursue a PhD. Through this process you have stated that you have developed your core research interest functional genomics, gene regulation, and computational neuropsychiatric genetics and I wish you all the best in pursuing these core research interests.

We will be forwarding the recommendation for academic disqualification effective Spring 2025 along with your written appeal to the program and response to the appeal to the Division of Graduate Education. Information regarding further appeal with the Division of Graduate Education is included in the attachment.

With my very best wishes for the future,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Felix Schweizer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Felix E. Schweizer, PhD  
Program Chair – Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Neuroscience  
Professor of Neurobiology

cc: Brian Kite and Renate Lux, Graduate Division Associate Deans

Attachment: "[Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#)" excerpt on Academic Disqualification, Pages 39 - 42

**Exhibit C** ..... Email and NEURO 596 Syllabus from Dr. Bearden (02/19/2025) (*Evidence of non-standard procedure initiated by program leadership*)



Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Re: 596 Syllabus and Expectations

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**Bearden, Carrie** <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Wed, Feb 19, 2025 at 12:16 AM

Hi Cooper,

I've never done one of these before for a rotation student but Jenny and Felix suggested documenting the expectations in writing, and I think it's a good idea.

So attached is the 'course description', ie documentation of specific activities and expectations for the rotation.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

It would also be very helpful if, in between the bi-weekly meetings, you can give me a weekly written update on progress.

Thanks,

Carrie

--

Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences & Psychology

Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

Director, Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States (CAPPS)

<https://capps.semel.ucla.edu>

University of California, Los Angeles

[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)

she/her

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**Course Description-Bearden lab rotation.docx**

18K

### **Course Description/Units**

Expectations for Neuroscience 596 (Rotation in Bearden Lab; 5 UNITS)- Directed Individual Study or Research.

*1 unit=3 hours work per week (e.g, 5 units=15 hours/wk). (Note: this ratio reflects requirements from UCLA's accrediting agency and federal policy.)*

### **Expectations/Goals:**

Students must complete the following requirements to receive full credit/pass this course.

#### **Research:**

- Bi-weekly meetings with faculty advisor. Come prepared to meetings with detailed progress on project to report & discuss ; questions
- Timely completion of projects, specifically: 1) accurate completion of pre-imputation pipeline for NAPLS3 data; complete data sent to ENIGMA PI's
- 2) accurate completion of imputation pipeline for ENIGMA DTI GWAS (following completion of #1 above)
- 3) generation and interpretation of multiple polygenic risk scores in NAPLS dataset
- Clear documentation of all methods and results (e.g. post code on GitHub )
- Good communication (preferably 1 month but at minimum 2 weeks in advance) regarding application deadlines/requests for feedback on fellowship materials
- Timely completion of relevant fellowship applications

#### **Scholarly development:**

- Obtain depth/breadth of knowledge in SNP genotyping methods & latest research in psychiatric genetics, particularly genomic structural equation modeling ; to be acquired through reading the relevant literature (posted on lab Slack), websites, and regular meetings with graduate students and PI

#### **Professional development:**

- Participate in weekly lab meetings to discuss literature, ongoing research, & conference presentations.

#### **Professional communication:**

- Present and clearly explain the work done on your project, described above; incorporate feedback (lab meeting scheduled for March 12)

- **Grading**

*A passing grade will be assigned given satisfactory completion of all activities described above.*

**Exhibit D** ..... Email from Dr. Bearden Regarding Program Status (04/02/2025)





Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## meeting with Cooper

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**Bearden, Carrie** <cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu>

Wed, Apr 2, 2025 at 11:31 PM

To: Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu>, "Lee, Jenny [BRI]" <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>, Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Hi Cooper, I apologize, I meant that email as a private communication to Felix , but just for full transparency I am curious what the scope of possibilities it is that we're discussing –

Thanks and glad we'll have a chance to discuss next week

Best wishes,

Carrie

---

**From:** "Bearden, Carrie" <cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu>

**Date:** Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 11:29 PM

**To:** Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu>, "Lee, Jenny [BRI]" <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>, Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

**Subject:** Re: meeting with Cooper

Hi Felix,

Just so we're on the same page, when you say creative ideas I assume you're not talking about something that would allow him to stay in the NSIDP? or is that still on the table?

Best,

Carrie

--

Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences & Psychology

Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

Director, Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States (CAPPS)

<https://capps.semel.ucla.edu>

University of California, Los Angeles

[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)

she/her

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**From:** Felix Schweizer <[felixs@ucla.edu](mailto:felixs@ucla.edu)>  
**Date:** Wednesday, April 2, 2025 at 7:34 PM  
**To:** "Bearden, Carrie" <[CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu)>, "Lee, Jenny [BRI]" <[JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu)>, Cooper Beaman <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)>  
**Subject:** meeting with Cooper

Dear Carrie, Jenny and Cooper,

in our meeting a day or two ago, Cooper asked me whether the four of us could meet to discuss options that he has to move forward. This gather is intended to stick our heads together and come up with creative ideas that none of us could come up with alone. Worst case scenario, we do not. Best case scenario, we have a great idea! I know that the schedule of everybody is tight. I thus created a when2meet based on days that might work for Carrie and added my availability: <https://www.when2meet.com/?29919937-TEFUE>

I might have time on the 10th, but also am hosting a dear visitor, so I don't want to commit at this point.

Felix

--

**Felix E. Schweizer** Professor and Vice Chair for Education Department of Neurobiology Chair, graduate Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program (gNSIDP) David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA 650 Chareles E. Young Drive South, CHS 63-323 Do what is right. Make things better. Be kind.

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**Exhibit E** ..... Email to DGE Case Manager Jaine Park (03/18/2025) (*Documents rotation project submission and receipt of Will Rogers Scholarship*)



cooper beaman <cooperbeaman@gmail.com>

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## Cooper Beaman and Park, Jaine

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**Park, Jaine** <jpark@grad.ucla.edu>

Tue, Mar 18, 2025 at 1:40 PM

To: Cooper Beaman <cooperbeaman@gmail.com>

Event Name: Academic Case Management

Thank you for scheduling a meeting with the Academic Case Manager!

I am available to meet in-person or zoom.

- Mon - Thu: zoom meeting
- Wed/Thu: In-person meeting at Murphy Hall 1255.

Thank you,

Jaine Park

Academic Case Manager

Location: Murphy Hall 1255 - In-person meeting is only on Wed/Thu. If you wish to do zoom meeting, please click Zoom option.

Please share anything that will help prepare for our meeting.:

Hi Jaine, I hope you're well.

Sorry in advance for all of the details. The timeline below may help clarify.

After submitting the data associated with my fifth rotation project to a collaborator on 3/9 and substantially planning the computation analysis approach for my second rotation project, I shared a productive check-in with my fifth rotation PI the same day on 3/11. During this meeting, they indicated openness to serving as my primary advisor, provided I could support myself financially for the foreseeable future (external funding) and demonstrating significant improvement in my time-management and organizational skills. Encouraged by our conversation, I requested a meeting with my program chair (NSIDP) the same day to share the positive news.

However, following a rushed and premature lab presentation on 3/12 that did not adequately reflect my hard work and progress during the rotation, the PI reiterated concerns on 3/17 regarding the readiness of my time-management and other academic skills to commit to serving as my primary advisor, clarifying that requesting additional preparation time would not have changed their decision. At the time this message written (3/18 1:30pm), despite sending a follow-up email after the PI shared their unexpected decision, I still have not received a response from my program chair to discuss this development and my future in the program.

Outside of my rotation efforts, I was awarded a \$2000 Will Rogers scholarship through the CAE (applied: 2/4) to fund executive functions coaching next quarter. Furthermore, although I ultimately dropped Neuroanatomy (M203) on 3/1 after a challenging midterm (2/11) and to prioritize success during my rotation, I submitted a detailed NRSA research training plan for my grant writing course (211A) on 3/11, which directly corresponds to the focus of my second rotation project and was more developed than the version presented during lab meeting. Last, I submitted a T32 application on 2/3, with the PI's letter of recommendation, which is currently under review to receive potential partial funding during the July 1 appointment cycle. I am applying for TAs to support myself financially next quarter, and have prioritized several additional fellowships to apply to (and received a former rotation PI's commitment to provide their LoR for these opportunities 2/27) to support myself during this summer and beyond.

Timeline:

1/31 → Submitted T32 application + PI LoR (1yr support, under review)  
2/4 → Submitted \$2k Will Rogers scholarship application (academic/time-management coaching)  
2/5 → Mid-rotation check-in with NSIDP Chair (expressed concern about Neuroanatomy midterm unpreparedness, agreed not the priority but requested I still take exam)  
2/11 → Failed Neuroanatomy (M203) midterm  
2/27 → Former PI Fellowship LoR commitment  
3/1 → Dropped M203 (rotation priority)  
3/9 → Submitted rot proj1 to collaborator; proj2 planned significantly submitted for review 3/11.  
3/11 → Received conditional primary advisor offer from rotation PI; contacted department chair; submitted 211A NRSA plan (associated with proj2 in lab presentation, still unacknowledged by PI)  
3/12 → Delivered rushed, premature lab presentation  
3/13 → Awarded \$2k Will Rogers scholarship  
3/17 → Primary advisor/GSR request declined (presentation/skills issues; extra prep would not have changed decision)  
3/18 → No chair response (second email)

Reschedule Reason: Case Manager conflict.

Need to make changes to this event?

Cancel: <https://calendly.com/cancellations/4a1d6d76-796f-4d2c-b11f-4419a95c9c92>

Reschedule: <https://calendly.com/reschedulings/4a1d6d76-796f-4d2c-b11f-4419a95c9c92>

Powered by Calendly <https://calendly.com/>

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 **invite.ics**  
7K

**Exhibit F** ..... Email from ENIGMA-DTI Genetics Support Team (05/06/2025) (*Confirms external delay made satisfactory completion of rotation task impossible*)



Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## [ENIGMA-DTI Pre Imputation QC Submission] - NAPLS3\_EUR

8 messages

**Bearden, Carrie** <cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: ENIGMA DTI <enigma.dtigenetics@gmail.com>, Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
Cc: DYLAN HUGHES <hughesdy@g.ucla.edu>

Wed, May 7, 2025 at 12:06 AM

Ok thanks for letting us know!

Best,  
Carrie

--

Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D.  
Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences & Psychology  
Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior  
Director, Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States (CAPPS)  
<https://capps.semel.ucla.edu>  
University of California, Los Angeles  
[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)  
she/her

---

**From:** ENIGMA DTI <enigma.dtigenetics@gmail.com>  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 9:46 AM  
**To:** Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
**Cc:** "Bearden, Carrie" <cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu>, DYLAN HUGHES <hughesdy@g.ucla.edu>  
**Subject:** Re: [ENIGMA-DTI Pre Imputation QC Submission] - NAPLS3\_EUR

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

**ENIGMA DTI** <enigma.dtigenetics@gmail.com>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
Cc: "Bearden, Carrie" <cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu>, DYLAN HUGHES <hughesdy@g.ucla.edu>

Tue, May 6, 2025 at 9:46 AM

Dear Cooper, Carrie, Dylan,

Thank you very much for sending the files, and apologies for the delayed reply as we are dealing with some staffing changes in the core team. The files have been received in good order and we will review them and get back to you as soon as possible.

Also, thank you very much for the details you provided on the protocol.

Best wishes,

Nina Roth Mota, Gabriëlla Blokland

[Quoted text hidden]

**Bearden, Carrie** <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 12:30 PM

Ok !

[Quoted text hidden]

**Cooper Beaman** <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: "Bearden, Carrie" <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>

Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 11:33 AM



Thanks Carrie, of course!

My grant writing class is at 4, but we can cover the updates in 30-45min. 3pm works better for me too, and will help Dylan and I schedule a check in beforehand, and more time to organize my written progress update and agenda for our meeting.

I have not received a response from ENIGMA yet, but will update you and Dylan immediately if they reply without copying someone.

Thanks.

[Quoted text hidden]

**Bearden, Carrie** <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 11:14 AM

Oh, apologies- I have another meeting at 1. Would 3 pm work?

Thx

Carrie

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

**Bearden, Carrie** <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 11:13 AM

Hi Cooper ,

Did you get any response yet?

I realize I have an advisory board meeting at 2 so will need to move our meeting- could you do either 1 pm or 3 pm?

Best,

Carrie

--

Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences & Psychology

Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

Director, Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States (CAPPS)

<https://capps.semel.ucla.edu>

University of California, Los Angeles

[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)

she/her

---

**From:** Cooper Beaman <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)>  
**Date:** Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 6:53 PM  
**To:** "enigma.dtiogenetics@gmail.com" <[enigma.dtiogenetics@gmail.com](mailto:enigma.dtiogenetics@gmail.com)>  
**Cc:** "Bearden, Carrie" <[CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu)>, DYLAN HUGHES <[hughesdy@g.ucla.edu](mailto:hughesdy@g.ucla.edu)>  
**Subject:** [ENIGMA-DTI Pre Imputation QC Submission] - NAPLS3\_EUR

Dear ENIGMA-DTI Genetics Support Team,

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

**Bearden, Carrie** <CBearden@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
Cc: DYLAN HUGHES <[hughesdy@g.ucla.edu](mailto:hughesdy@g.ucla.edu)>

Sun, Mar 9, 2025 at 11:32 PM

Hi Cooper,

Thanks for sending to them and the clear documentation (and Dylan, thanks so much for your help in this process!)

Best,

Carrie

--

Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D.

Professor, Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences & Psychology

Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

Director, Center for the Assessment and Prevention of Prodromal States (CAPPS)

<https://capps.semel.ucla.edu>

University of California, Los Angeles

[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)

she/her

[Quoted text hidden]

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Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Sun, Mar 9, 2025 at 6:51 PM

To: [enigma.dtigenetics@gmail.com](mailto:enigma.dtigenetics@gmail.com)

Cc: "Bearden, Carrie" <[cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cbearden@mednet.ucla.edu)>, DYLAN HUGHES <[hughesdy@g.ucla.edu](mailto:hughesdy@g.ucla.edu)>

Dear ENIGMA-DTI Genetics Support Team,

Our **NAPLS3\_EUR** submission following the completion of the **ENIGMA-DTI Pre Imputation QC Protocol** is attached for review. The **ENIGMA-DTI-genetics-info-preQC** and **ENIGMA-DTI-genetics-info-postQC** forms have also been submitted.

We report the following potential deviations from the protocol, and remain available to perform any reanalysis upon request.

- Study Design and Phenotype Coding:** NAPLS3 is a population-based, unrelated cohort with case-control elements. Thus, PLINK phenotype coding was applied to our .fam files during QC, in order to distinguish clinical high risk for psychosis (CHR) samples ("2") from healthy controls ("1").
- MDS Protocol and EUR Filtering:** MDS analysis was performed per protocol specifications for predominantly EUR ancestry cohorts. All samples with MDS coordinates outside the specified EUR MDS thresholds were excluded. Our sample size decreased commensurately from 528 to 250 (absent the 279 non-EUR samples). Prior to selecting this approach, the following alternatives were considered. For more information about the approximate ancestral composition of our cohort before MDS outlier exclusion, please refer to the additional attachment: **NAPLS3\_ENIGMA-DTI\_Ancestry\_Composition.md**
  - Primary EUR-isolation** via a pre-specified list, followed by **secondary outlier exclusion** via MDS, and finally **remerging** with the non-EUR samples for downstream QC. Concerns regarding residual population stratification and reference panel alignment disfavored this approach.
  - Per-ancestry thresholding** using manual centroid cutoffs and the pre-specified ancestry assignment lists or manual/programmatic ancestry assignment of samples using HapMap3 reference data. These ancestry-specific subsets would remain separate for subsequent QC and submitted separately. Concerns regarding sample sizes disfavored this approach.
- Identity-by-descent duplicate detection** flagged zero non-monozygotic twin duplicates. Thus, QC1 files were linked directly to QC2 [e.g., *ln -sf "\${ANC\_DIR}/\${ANC\_DATA}\_QC1.\${ext}" "\${ANC\_DIR}/\${ANC\_DATA}\_QC2.\${ext}"*] without generating a \*\_QC2 log, yielding 26 total submission files instead of 27.


We appreciate your review and look forward to any feedback you may have before we proceed to imputation. Please let us know if a different ancestry processing method is preferred, or if we can clarify any additional details.


Sincerely,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

---

## 2 attachments

 **NAPLS3\_EUR\_CB\_20250309\_ENIGMA-DTI\_FilesToSend.zip**  
201K

 **NAPLS3\_ENIGMA-DTI\_Ancestry\_Composition.md**  
6K

**Exhibit G** ..... Email to Prof. Bisley Regarding Midterm Extension Request (02/11/2025) (*Evidence of proactive request for minor accommodation for NEURO M203*)



Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Midterm Request - [Cooper B.]

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**Bisley, James** <JBisley@mednet.ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
Cc: "Lee, Jenny [BRI]" <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>

Tue, Feb 11, 2025 at 9:24 AM

Hi Cooper,

I am afraid that without a valid medical reason (and doctor's note), I do not feel it appropriate to change the exam day/time, particularly when the request came after the exam officially began. I've looped Jenny in so that she is aware of the situation.

Best,

James

---

**From:** Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 11, 2025 9:06 AM  
**To:** Bisley, James <JBisley@mednet.ucla.edu>  
**Subject:** Midterm Request - [Cooper B.]

Dear Professor Bisley,

Please accept my apology for the delayed notice. I am a second year NSIDP student retaking M203 this quarter and am registered for testing accommodations with the CAE.

When I realized I would be taking M203 again, I could not have imagined the circumstances in which it would take place this quarter. In addition to preparing for the midterm, I am still in the process of securing a dissertation lab rotating with the Bearden lab this quarter, and actively applying for external funding and TAs, while the future of federal funding for academic research hangs in the balance. Compared to last quarter, I have attended all lectures, lab 2, and the midterm review session on time and in person; however, given the demands above, despite continuous study over the last few days, I am very concerned I have not reviewed sufficiently in time for this morning's exam to score >55% (vs 38.1% last year) and ultimately pass the course.

***If at all possible, is there any way I could take the midterm on Thursday instead?*** [Currently scheduled 9-11:15 AM today at Murphy Hall 3256; ***commuting now, will not begin until ~9:30 AM***]. With the additional review today and tomorrow, I am confident I will be able to perform much closer to my expectations last year, and excel during the Final exam.

Personally, if given the choice, I would have waited to retake M203 until my third year after joining a lab, but with my department specifying I enroll again this year, it would be my preference to take the midterm on Thursday and score well enough to pass, than take it this morning and unfortunately, most likely have to retake the course a third time next year. I would also be interested in any alternative grading options that may be available to compensate for my significantly

poorer expected midterm performance than I had anticipated last year, and am confident in my ability to demonstrate during the final.

Thank you for your consideration and understanding.

--

Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

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**Exhibit H ..... NSIDP 8-Year Review Student Survey Responses (05/30/2025)**

# **NSIDP 8-Year Review Student Survey Responses [Archived]**

## **Q1: Please provide any other feedback regarding your satisfaction of the program (courses, student life, etc.)**

Reflecting on my time in the NSIDP, my satisfaction has unfortunately been overshadowed by profound structural and systemic challenges, particularly concerning the process of securing a faculty mentor, which ultimately led to the current recommendation for my academic disqualification. While I successfully navigated the rigorous coursework, including passing the Written Qualifying Exams with High Pass marks in Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience, this academic achievement stands in stark contrast to the difficulties encountered in the lab rotation and mentor selection process.

My primary source of dissatisfaction stems from the opaqueness and lack of consistent support within the rotation system. Despite completing five rotations and diligently applying my extensive prior research experience (including over two years of full-time functional genomics work at UCSF leading to high-impact publications), the process felt like navigating a "hidden curriculum." Expectations from potential PIs were often unclear, and direct, constructive feedback explaining why a rotation would not convert into a mentorship commitment was frequently absent or relayed indirectly through program administration. This created an environment of uncertainty and escalating stress, significantly exacerbated by my documented ADHD, for which I was unaware that accommodations could extend beyond coursework to the rotation process itself until very late in the game.

There appeared to be a recurring ambiguity regarding PI availability, with "funding, space, or mentorship bandwidth limitations" cited frequently, often after a rotation was completed. The financial responsibilities for PIs taking on NSIDP students (e.g., the cost of a GSR, which can be comparable to a postdoc but with greater mentorship demands) were not transparently managed from the student's perspective, nor did it seem there were robust mechanisms or sufficient program-level resources to bridge such gaps when a good scientific match existed. The interdepartmental nature of NSIDP, while a strength in theory, seemed to translate into a diffusion of responsibility when it came to PI commitment, as the program itself cannot compel faculty from various departments to take students. This puts an undue burden on students to not only find a scientific fit but also a PI willing and able to navigate these often-unstated financial and logistical hurdles.

Furthermore, the demanding nature of core coursework, such as neuroanatomy which has historically posed challenges for many students, running concurrently with the high-stakes pressure of lab rotations, contributed to an environment where it was difficult to thrive and truly demonstrate one's potential in the lab setting. The lack of an integrated M.S. option within NSIDP also represents a structural inflexibility, offering no intermediate credential or smoother exit pathway for students who, for various reasons including systemic program issues, may not secure a PhD mentor within the prescribed timeframe.



Overall, while individual faculty members were often supportive, the systemic aspects of mentor selection, communication, financial transparency, and programmatic flexibility have been sources of significant dissatisfaction and, I believe, were primary contributors to my current circumstances.

---

My overall satisfaction with the NSIDP has been significantly impacted by systemic challenges within the lab rotation and mentor selection process, which felt opaque and lacked consistent, direct feedback, creating substantial uncertainty. While I found aspects of the coursework intellectually stimulating and successfully passed my Written Qualifying Exams, this was unfortunately overshadowed by the difficulties in securing a permanent research home due to unclear PI availability, particularly regarding funding and space, and a perceived lack of robust program-level mechanisms to bridge these gaps when a good scientific fit existed. The absence of a structured M.S. pathway within NSIDP also contributed to my dissatisfaction, as it limited options when the PhD mentor search became protracted.

---

## **Q2: Please provide any feedback on potential changes and/or additions to aspects of the program (courses, student life, etc.) that you think would increase satisfaction with the program.**

To increase student satisfaction and mitigate the recurrence of situations like mine, I propose the following changes and additions to the NSIDP:

### **1. Overhaul the Rotation and Mentor Selection Process:**

- **Structured PI Commitments:** Explore mechanisms for NSIDP to secure a certain number of "soft-committed" rotation slots from affiliated faculty annually, with a clearer pathway or higher likelihood of converting to a permanent position if the rotation is successful.
- **Transparent PI Expectations & Availability:** Before rotations begin, PIs should provide clear, written expectations regarding mentorship style, lab culture, funding availability for new students, and specific skills they are seeking. This should be compiled and accessible to rotating students.
- **Standardized & Direct Feedback:** Implement a mandatory, direct feedback session between the PI and student at the midpoint and end of each rotation, with a structured form guiding the discussion. This feedback should explicitly address the likelihood of joining the lab and any concerns. A copy of this feedback (acknowledged by both PI and student) should be shared with the NSIDP advising committee.
- **Active Matchmaking & Support:** Enhance the role of the advising committee or create a dedicated "rotation success team" to actively help students identify PIs, troubleshoot rotation challenges, and facilitate difficult conversations if a fit isn't emerging. This team could also act as a mediator or advocate for students.

- **Early Intervention:** For students who haven't secured a mentor after two or three rotations, the program should proactively intervene with a structured support plan, rather than allowing the situation to escalate through five rotations with increasing pressure.

## 2. Increase Financial Transparency and Support Mechanisms:

- **Clear PI Financial Onboarding:** Provide PIs (especially new or junior faculty) with a clear breakdown of the financial commitments involved in taking an NSIDP GSR, including comparisons to postdoc costs and information on any available departmental or programmatic supplements.
- **Bridge Funding/Incentives:** Develop a small pool of bridge funding or supplemental stipends that NSIDP can deploy to support a student joining a lab where the PI is an excellent fit but faces a minor, temporary funding shortfall. Consider incentives for PIs who take on NSIDP students, particularly those without their own large training grants.
- **Advocacy for Students:** Actively work with home departments of PIs to ensure they honor their commitment to financially support students if a mentor's funding unexpectedly changes, as per existing agreements.

## 3. Improve Communication and Demystify the "Hidden Curriculum":

- **Explicit "Hidden Curriculum" Training:** Incorporate sessions during orientation and ongoing advising that explicitly discuss the unwritten rules of succeeding in graduate school, including navigating PI relationships, lab politics, self-advocacy, and managing expectations during rotations.
- **Enhanced Support for Students with Disabilities:** Proactively inform all students about the full scope of accommodations available through CAE, including those relevant to program milestones like rotations and qualifying exams. Provide clear pathways and NSIDP support for students seeking these accommodations.
- **Centralized Communication Portal:** Create a centralized, regularly updated portal where PIs can list genuine rotation availability and specific needs, and students can track their rotation progress and feedback.

## 4. Enhance Program Structure and Curricular Flexibility:

- **Integrated M.S. Option:** Implement a formal Master's degree pathway within NSIDP. This could be an "M.S. en route to PhD" or an "M.S. exit option" that students can elect or be guided towards if PhD continuation becomes unviable. This provides students with a valuable credential for their time and effort.
- **Curriculum Review for Load Management:** Re-evaluate the timing and load of historically challenging core courses (like neuroanatomy) in relation to the intensive lab rotation schedule. Consider offering more flexibility in course sequencing or alternative assessment formats for certain foundational courses.
- **Strengthen Interdepartmental PI Commitment:** Develop clearer agreements or incentives with participating departments to foster stronger commitment from their faculty to mentor NSIDP students, possibly involving co-funding models or shared TAs/ship opportunities.

## 5. Formalized Mentorship Training for PIs:

- Encourage or require PIs taking NSIDP rotation students to participate in mentorship training workshops that cover effective communication, expectation setting, providing constructive feedback, and supporting students with diverse needs, including those with disabilities.

By addressing these structural, financial, and communication challenges, NSIDP can create a more transparent, supportive, and equitable environment where students have a greater opportunity to thrive and successfully identify a mentor who aligns with their research passions and career aspirations.

---

To enhance student satisfaction and success, I recommend implementing more transparent and structured protocols for lab rotations and mentor selection, including standardized, direct PI feedback mechanisms and clearer upfront communication from PIs regarding their capacity to take students. Greater program-level intervention and support, possibly through active "matchmaking" or bridge funding initiatives, could assist students in securing placements. Furthermore, formally integrating an optional M.S. degree track within NSIDP would provide a valuable alternative pathway and acknowledge student achievements if PhD continuation is not viable, thereby offering a crucial safety net and improving overall program flexibility and support.

---

### **Q3: Please provide any other feedback regarding your experience with NSIDP faculty or staff.**

While individual staff members were often well-intentioned and responsive to direct inquiries, my experience highlighted a systemic issue where crucial feedback regarding PI decisions about lab rotations was frequently communicated indirectly, often through program administration rather than directly from the PIs. This created a buffer that hindered my ability to understand specific concerns or areas for improvement from the PIs' perspectives. A more structured process encouraging or requiring direct, documented feedback from faculty to students after each rotation would be substantially more beneficial for student development and decision-making.

---

My experience with NSIDP faculty and staff has been mixed and, particularly as my situation progressed, became a significant source of frustration due to what I perceived as systemic communication issues and a lack of proactive, individualized support. While some initial interactions with administrative staff were helpful for procedural matters, a pattern emerged where critical information, especially concerning the outcomes of lab rotations and PIs' decisions not to offer a position, was often relayed indirectly, sometimes through the Program Chair or Student Affairs Officer, rather than through direct, substantive conversations with the PIs themselves. This indirectness created a barrier to understanding the precise reasons for a lack of fit or a PI's specific concerns, making it incredibly difficult to learn and adapt effectively for subsequent rotations. There were instances where I felt I was doing all I could to stay afloat and meet expectations, yet the guidance I received in return was generic, dismissive, or, in at least one **profoundly unsettling instance, bordered on personal critique rather than constructive professional advice regarding my research capabilities or fit.** This impersonal and sometimes seemingly disengaged approach, especially when facing the escalating crisis of not

securing a mentor, made me feel more like a problem to be managed than a student to be genuinely supported and advocated for. It appeared that the program's structure did not empower or perhaps require faculty within the NSIDP leadership to engage deeply with the specific, nuanced challenges individual students might face in navigating the complex interdepartmental PI landscape, especially when systemic issues like PI funding or lab capacity were clearly at play. The overall impression was one where the program's administrative and faculty oversight mechanisms seemed more geared towards enforcing procedural timelines rather than actively facilitating successful mentor matches or addressing the underlying barriers individual students, including myself with documented ADHD, were encountering.

---

My interactions with NSIDP faculty leadership and administrative staff, particularly as I navigated the increasingly critical challenge of securing a faculty mentor, evolved from initially procedural and somewhat supportive to feeling profoundly impersonal, disengaged, and at times, deeply undermining. A persistent and detrimental pattern was the indirect relay of crucial information. For instance, feedback from PIs after rotations, or their ultimate decisions not to offer a lab position, were frequently communicated second-hand through the Program Chair or Student Affairs Officer. This practice systematically stripped the feedback of its nuance and context, preventing me from understanding the PIs' specific reasoning or concerns directly. Such indirect communication made it exceedingly difficult to learn from each rotation, adapt my approach, or address any misperceptions effectively. It fostered an environment of opacity and left me feeling like I was shadowboxing with undisclosed criteria.

As my situation became more precarious, the engagement from program leadership felt less like proactive support and more like crisis management with a predetermined trajectory. Meetings often resulted in generic advice or reiterations of procedural expectations, rather than a deep, collaborative dive into the specific barriers I was facing – be they PI funding, lab capacity, or potential misalignments that could have been addressed with more direct intervention. There were instances where comments from program leadership felt dismissive of my efforts and the genuine challenges I was encountering, including one particularly memorable and inappropriate remark about "internalized self-loathing" during a discussion about my difficulties, and another where a PI's highly questionable assessment of my PhD capability was relayed to me as if it were objective fact. These interactions did not feel like genuine attempts to understand or support a student in distress, but rather, at times, seemed to reflect a program leadership more concerned with administrative closure or perhaps its own image than with fostering an individual student's success or well-being. It's crucial for NSIDP faculty and staff, especially those in leadership and advising roles, to receive training and be held accountable for providing direct, empathetic, and constructively engaged support, particularly for students navigating the known systemic complexities of the interdepartmental mentor search. The current system appears to insulate PIs from difficult conversations and leaves students adrift, relying on an administrative layer that may not be equipped or empowered to resolve the core issues of lab placement.

---

## **Q4: Please provide any other feedback regarding meetings, seminars, or publications.**

The program's academic components, such as seminars and the emphasis on scholarly work leading to qualifying exams, were generally of high quality and I was able to meet these expectations. However, the intense pressure to secure a lab rotation and eventual mentor often overshadowed the ability to fully engage with or benefit from these other academic activities as much as one might have hoped, as the uncertainty of one's primary research placement became an all-consuming concern.

---

While I successfully met formal academic requirements such as the Written Qualifying Exams (achieving High Pass marks), the broader programmatic elements like regular seminars and meetings often felt disconnected from the most pressing challenge: securing a stable research mentorship. The inherent value of such academic activities is clear, but their impact was significantly diluted by the overwhelming and persistent stress of the mentor search. It was difficult to fully engage with seminar content or leverage program meetings for genuine networking or problem-solving when the fundamental question of my continuation in a lab, and thus the program, remained unresolved quarter after quarter. While the NSIDP curriculum ensures exposure to a breadth of neuroscience, the structure of program meetings and seminars did not seem to provide a dedicated or effective forum for openly discussing or addressing the systemic challenges students like myself were facing in the rotation process—issues like PI funding ambiguities, inconsistent feedback, or the difficulties of interdepartmental lab placements. More integrated meetings, perhaps small group sessions with faculty explicitly designed to troubleshoot rotation strategies or discuss the "hidden curriculum" of finding a mentor, could have been far more beneficial. As for publications, my prior productivity at UCSF demonstrates my capability and commitment to scholarly output, but the ability to contribute to new publications within NSIDP was entirely contingent on finding a lab, a barrier I could not overcome due to the issues already detailed. The program's emphasis on milestones like publications is appropriate, but it must be coupled with robust support to ensure students are in a position to achieve them.

---

While I diligently fulfilled the academic requirements of the NSIDP, including the successful completion of my Written Qualifying Exams with High Pass distinction in two core areas, my experience with other programmatic elements like seminars, meetings, and the pursuit of publications was profoundly shaped and ultimately hampered by the overarching and unresolved crisis of securing a faculty mentor. The intellectual value of seminars and colloquia, or the potential for program meetings to foster a sense of community and shared learning, was consistently overshadowed by the pressing anxiety and uncertainty of my research future. It became nearly impossible to fully immerse myself in these academic activities when the very foundation of my PhD – a stable lab environment – was non-existent.

Program-organized meetings, in my experience, did not adequately serve as a forum to address the significant, systemic challenges that students like myself were encountering in the mentor selection process. There was a palpable disconnect between the formal academic programming and the practical, often harsh, realities of navigating the interdepartmental PI landscape, especially concerning PI availability, funding, and commitment. Opportunities were missed to use these gatherings to openly discuss these "hidden curriculum" aspects, share collective wisdom, or for program leadership to

transparently address known bottlenecks in mentor placement. Instead, these events often felt like perfunctory obligations.

Regarding publications, my track record prior to NSIDP, including co-authorship on high-impact papers from my time at UCSF, clearly demonstrates my capability and commitment to scholarly output. I entered the NSIDP eager to continue contributing at this level. However, the inability to secure a consistent research environment for nearly two years directly precluded any meaningful progress on new research projects that would lead to publications or conference presentations within the NSIDP context. This lack of research continuity and output was not a reflection of my scientific ability or drive, but a direct consequence of the program's structural failure to facilitate a timely and stable mentor match. For a program to rightly emphasize scholarly output, it must first ensure that its students are provided with the fundamental prerequisite: a supportive and stable research home where such work can actually be undertaken.

---

## **Q5: If you have considered leaving the program or taking on additional work, please use the space below to provide any information that you would like to/feel comfortable sharing.**

My current situation, facing a recommendation for academic disqualification due to the inability to secure a faculty mentor after five rotations, effectively means I am being compelled to leave the PhD program. This outcome was not due to a lack of effort or qualification on my part (as evidenced by my WQE performance and prior research productivity), but rather, I believe, due to systemic shortcomings in the NSIDP's mentor placement process, funding transparency, and capacity to support students through an extended search within its interdepartmental structure. I am now actively seeking to transfer to another PhD or MS program at UCLA to continue my studies.

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My current circumstance is not a matter of "considering leaving" the NSIDP; rather, I am facing a program-initiated recommendation for academic disqualification, effectively compelling my departure from the PhD program. This outcome is solely based on the "failure to identify a faculty mentor" after five lab rotations, a situation I assert is a direct consequence of systemic and structural deficiencies within the NSIDP's mentor placement process, communication protocols, and financial transparency for PI commitments, rather than a reflection of my academic capabilities, research potential, or lack of diligent effort. Throughout my two years, I have been fully committed to my studies and the pursuit of a research home, as evidenced by my performance on the WQEs and my proactive engagement in numerous rotations despite mounting challenges and diminishing direct support. The "additional work" I have undertaken has been the immense emotional and logistical labor of navigating five rotations with inconsistent feedback, concurrently managing demanding coursework, independently applying for external fellowships without mentor guidance during my second year, and ultimately, preparing a comprehensive appeal against this disqualification while simultaneously trying to secure a transfer to an alternative program. This entire period has felt like an exhausting, uphill battle against ill-defined expectations and structural inflexibility, culminating in a situation where the program's failure to facilitate

a successful mentorship match is being framed as my personal failure to meet degree progression requirements. The absence of an integrated M.S. option within NSIDP further exacerbates this, as it provides no safety net or alternative credential for the substantial time and effort invested.

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The phrasing "considered leaving the program" does not accurately capture my situation; rather, I am currently facing a program-initiated recommendation for academic disqualification, which, if upheld by the Division of Graduate Education, will compel my departure from the NSIDP PhD track. This is not a path I chose or passively accepted. It is the direct outcome of what I perceive as systemic failures within the NSIDP, primarily its inability to facilitate my securing a faculty mentor despite my exhaustive efforts across five research rotations and my fulfillment of other academic requirements, such as passing the Written Qualifying Exams. The "additional work" I have undertaken during my two years in NSIDP has been extraordinary and largely invisible to formal program metrics. This includes the immense emotional and cognitive labor of repeatedly immersing myself in new lab environments, adapting to different research paradigms, and then facing rejection or ambiguity without clear, actionable feedback. It includes the constant stress and anxiety of an uncertain future, significantly exacerbated by my ADHD, while simultaneously managing a demanding PhD curriculum. It includes the independent pursuit of external fellowships during my second year without the benefit of dedicated mentorship, a task that most supported PhD students undertake with significant guidance. And finally, it includes the considerable work of preparing a detailed appeal to this disqualification and proactively seeking alternative academic pathways within UCLA.

My commitment has been to succeed within UCLA and the NSIDP. However, the program's structure, particularly its mentor selection process, its handling of PI funding and availability issues, and its apparent inflexibility, seems to have created an environment where my "failure to maintain minimum progress" – defined solely by not having a mentor – became an almost inevitable outcome, rather than an anomaly to be rectified with robust institutional support. The basis for this disqualification, "failure to identify a faculty mentor," feels particularly egregious and, from my research, unprecedented as the *sole* justification for dismissal for a student otherwise in good academic standing at UCLA. This is compounded by the program's attempt, only after my appeal was lodged, to introduce other alleged unmet benchmarks, a move that feels both retaliatory and an admission of the initial grounds' insufficiency. The lack of an integrated M.S. option within NSIDP further underscores the punitive nature of this outcome, offering no formal recognition for two years of dedicated doctoral-level work and academic achievement.

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## **Q6: Please provide any other feedback regarding funding.**

A significant barrier encountered during the rotation process was the lack of transparency and consistency regarding PI funding for prospective graduate students. It was often unclear whether PIs had the financial capacity (e.g., ability to cover GSR costs, which are substantial) to take on an NSIDP student, irrespective of scientific fit or interest. Clearer communication from the program to students about PI funding expectations, and perhaps more robust mechanisms for NSIDP to supplement or

bridge funding for promising matches, would alleviate a major source of uncertainty and stress in the mentor selection process.

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Funding appears to be a critical, yet often opaque, structural barrier within the NSIDP that significantly impacts a student's ability to secure a mentor. My experience and observations suggest a "hidden curriculum" around the financial implications for PIs considering an NSIDP student, particularly regarding the costs associated with a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) position versus, for example, a postdoc. Several PIs, either directly or indirectly, indicated that taking me on would necessitate an additional financial contribution from NSIDP or their home department, a contribution that seemed rarely, if ever, forthcoming from NSIDP itself for students in my situation. This lack of financial transparency and programmatic support to bridge even minor funding gaps for otherwise good scientific matches creates immense inequity. It shifts the burden of these systemic financial constraints onto the student, who is often unaware of these complex internal funding dynamics between the IDP, PIs, and home departments until it's too late. The program's apparent unwillingness to invest its own resources in such situations, even when a PI explicitly stated this as a need early in the rotation process, suggests a prioritization of GPB endowment preservation over student retention and success. This can lead to decisions about a student's future being unduly influenced by their perceived financial liability to the program, rather than their academic merit or research potential. Students should not be implicitly or explicitly penalized or made to feel like a financial burden when the root issue lies in how the IDP model is funded and how those financial responsibilities are communicated and managed with prospective PIs.

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Funding, or rather the pervasive lack of transparency and consistency surrounding it, has been a monumental structural barrier throughout my attempts to secure a faculty mentor within NSIDP. It became apparent that a significant "hidden curriculum" exists regarding the financial obligations of PIs wanting to take on an NSIDP student, the specific costs of a GSR, and what contributions, if any, NSIDP or the GPB were willing or able to make to bridge funding gaps. This opacity created a deeply unfair and stressful situation for me as a student. On multiple occasions, promising rotations or expressions of initial PI interest seemingly dissolved when the financial practicalities came to the fore. For example, several PIs explicitly acknowledged to me or to NSIDP leadership that my continuation in their lab would require additional financial contributions from NSIDP, contributions that were evidently not made, leading to the termination of those potential mentorships. This was particularly frustrating in rotations where I believed I had met the PI's primary scientific and research expectations, only to find that unstated or unresolved financial considerations became the ultimate roadblock.

The program's expectation appeared to be that students should somehow intuit or navigate these complex financial landscapes independently, or that PIs should simply have readily available, complete funding packages for any NSIDP student they might consider. This fails to acknowledge the reality of grant cycles, the significant cost of a GSR (reportedly comparable to a postdoc but with higher mentorship demands), and the potential for interdepartmental funding complexities within an IDP. I strongly believe that the NSIDP's evaluation of students, including myself, became intertwined with an assessment of our "anticipated financial liability" to the GPB. This is evidenced by the inconsistent responses to students in similar extended mentor-search situations; it seems that the program is willing to adjust procedural requirements only if doing so incurs no immediate or precedent-setting future financial cost. Even a single sentence from program leadership early in my rotation process, drawing my attention to a PI's need for supplemental NSIDP funding to take me on, would have allowed for a more



informed strategy and potentially avoided this outcome. Instead, I was largely left to discover these financial barriers indirectly and often too late, making me feel as though I was being held responsible for systemic funding challenges that are the program's responsibility to manage transparently and equitably. My independent applications for external fellowships, undertaken without mentor support, further underscore my commitment, yet this effort was also hampered by the lack of a stable research environment to build a compelling grant application.

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## Q7: What are factors that help your graduate experience?

Factors that *would have* significantly helped my graduate experience include a more structured and transparent mentor selection process with clear communication channels and direct feedback from PIs. Proactive advising focused not just on academic milestones but also on navigating the "hidden curriculum" of securing a lab, especially for students with disclosed disabilities like ADHD, would have been invaluable. Furthermore, greater flexibility within the program structure, such as an established M.S. option, could provide crucial support and alternative pathways.

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Reflecting on what *would have* constituted a helpful graduate experience within NSIDP, several factors stand out as currently deficient but critically important. Firstly, genuine institutional commitment to student success that translates into proactive, individualized advising and tangible support—especially when systemic barriers like mentor availability become apparent—would be paramount. This includes transparent communication channels where students receive direct, honest, and constructive feedback from PIs and program leadership, rather than vague or indirect messages. A program structure that offers flexibility, such as an integrated M.S. option, provides not only a safety net but also acknowledges the value of a student's work even if the PhD path is not completed within that specific program. Early, comprehensive, and proactively offered support for students with documented disabilities, detailing how accommodations can apply to *all* program milestones including lab rotations and mentor interactions, would be crucial for equitable navigation of the program. Furthermore, a culture that actively demystifies the "hidden curriculum" of academia—addressing topics like funding, PI expectations, and navigating interdepartmental politics—would empower students immensely. Ultimately, a graduate experience is helped when the program acts as a genuine partner and advocate for its students, particularly when they encounter the inevitable structural and interpersonal challenges of doctoral training, rather than an entity that prioritizes procedural rigidity or its own financial considerations over the student's potential and well-being.

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Based on my experiences, the factors that *would have* critically helped my graduate experience within NSIDP, and which I believe are essential for any student's success, particularly within a complex interdepartmental structure, were unfortunately largely absent or insufficiently implemented in my case. A truly helpful graduate experience would be built upon a foundation of **proactive, transparent, and robust institutional support systems**. This begins with a mentor selection process that is not a mere series of trial-and-error rotations but a guided, strategically managed endeavor where the program actively facilitates matches, ensuring PIs have both genuine interest *and* confirmed capacity (including

funding) *before* a rotation begins. Clear, direct, and timely feedback from PIs, mandated and perhaps mediated by the program, is crucial, rather than the indirect and often vague communications I experienced.

**Individualized advising** that goes beyond tracking course completion to genuinely understanding and helping students navigate the "hidden curriculum" of academia—including the nuances of PI communication, lab dynamics, funding landscapes, and self-advocacy—would be transformative. For students with documented disabilities such as ADHD, this proactive support must include early and comprehensive discussions about how accommodations can be practically applied to all aspects of the program, particularly the unstructured and high-stakes demands of finding a lab and managing multiple rotations. This requires program leadership and faculty to be educated and empathetic regarding such challenges.

Furthermore, **structural flexibility and safety nets** are hallmarks of a supportive program. An integrated M.S. option within NSIDP would provide a dignified and valuable outcome for students who, for any number of reasons including systemic program issues, do not complete the PhD. Financial transparency regarding PI commitments and a willingness from the program to provide **bridge funding or financial solutions** in cases of good scientific fit but minor PI funding shortfalls would demonstrate a commitment to student talent over budgetary rigidity. Finally, a **culture of accountability** for program leadership and faculty in fulfilling their mentorship and support roles, coupled with a fair and consistently applied set of academic standards and progression policies, would create an environment where students feel valued and genuinely supported in their pursuit of scholarly excellence, rather than feeling like they are navigating an arbitrary and capricious system largely on their own.

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## Q8: What are factors that hinder your graduate experience?

The primary factors hindering my graduate experience were the opacity of the lab rotation and mentor selection process, leading to five rotations without securing a permanent lab. This was compounded by inconsistent and often indirect feedback from PIs, ambiguity surrounding PI funding availability and their capacity to take on new students, and a lack of programmatic flexibility or a clear support pathway when the mentor search became prolonged. The intense pressure of this protracted search, alongside demanding coursework, was particularly challenging to navigate with ADHD, especially with a late awareness of how accommodations might apply to the rotation process itself.

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The most significant factor hindering my graduate experience in NSIDP has been the fundamentally flawed and inadequately supported lab rotation and mentor selection system. This was characterized by a pervasive lack of transparency, inconsistent and often indirect feedback from PIs, and a profound ambiguity surrounding PI availability, their capacity to mentor, and particularly their ability or willingness to meet the financial requirements of taking on an NSIDP student. This systemic issue created a protracted and intensely stressful two-year search across five rotations, an ordeal that was especially challenging to navigate with my documented ADHD, for which timely and appropriate programmatic accommodations were not apparent or proactively offered beyond standard coursework considerations. The immense pressure of this constant uncertainty, coupled with a demanding curriculum, made it

exceedingly difficult to showcase my full potential. Further hindering my experience was the program's structural inflexibility, notably the absence of an M.S. "off-ramp" or alternative pathway within NSIDP, which offers no recourse for students who, often due to these very systemic issues, cannot secure a PhD mentor. The perceived inconsistent application of program standards and support, where students in similar or even more precarious academic situations appeared to receive different levels of intervention or leniency, fostered a sense of unfairness and suggested that factors beyond academic merit, possibly related to perceived financial liability to the program, influenced outcomes. Ultimately, a feeling of being systematically failed and abandoned by the program, rather than supported through its inherent structural challenges, has been the defining hindrance.

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My graduate experience within NSIDP was profoundly hindered by a constellation of interconnected systemic and structural factors, primarily rooted in a flawed, opaque, and inadequately supported lab rotation and mentor selection process. The expectation to secure a mentor after an arbitrary number of rotations, without sufficient programmatic infrastructure to ensure PI availability, commitment, and transparent communication, created an environment of chronic stress and uncertainty. The **lack of direct, consistent, and actionable feedback** from PIs after each rotation was a major impediment; I was often left guessing the true reasons for not being invited to join a lab, or received feedback so indirectly and belatedly that it was of little practical use for subsequent rotations. This communication vacuum made it incredibly difficult to adapt, improve, or address potential misunderstandings.

A significant hindrance was the pervasive **ambiguity surrounding PI funding and capacity**. It became clear that many PIs, while perhaps scientifically aligned, either did not have the current funding to support an NSIDP GSR or were unclear about the financial commitments required by NSIDP/GPB. The program's apparent unwillingness to proactively clarify these issues *before* rotations or to step in with financial solutions to bridge gaps for well-matched students created an arbitrary barrier that had little to do with my scientific merit or effort. This contributed to a deeply unsettling feeling that my value to the program was being weighed against my perceived financial liability/burden, a sentiment exacerbated by observing apparently inconsistent application of program standards and support levels among peers in similar situations.

The **rigidity of the program structure**, particularly the absence of an M.S. "off-ramp" or alternative pathway, made the high-stakes mentor search even more punitive. Furthermore, the program's response to my documented ADHD felt insufficient. While CAE accommodations are available for coursework, there was no proactive guidance or apparent mechanism for applying or considering accommodations for the intense executive functioning demands of managing multiple rotations, complex interpersonal dynamics with potential PIs, and the overall stress of an extended and uncertain mentor search. This lack of tailored support for navigating the *process* itself, not just the academic content, was a critical failing. The culmination of these factors—opaque processes, poor communication, funding uncertainties, structural inflexibility, and inadequate support for my specific needs—created what felt like an insurmountable and deeply unfair set of obstacles to my progression in the NSIDP.

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## Q9: Any questions you believe the review team should raise and/or areas they should examine.

The review team should critically examine:

1. The effectiveness, fairness, and transparency of the current NSIDP rotation-to-mentor pipeline, including the mechanisms (or lack thereof) for ensuring students receive direct, actionable feedback from PIs.
  2. The financial models and actual costs/benefits for PIs taking on NSIDP students (e.g., GSR vs. postdoc costs/support), and how these impact mentor availability.
  3. The adequacy of support systems and clear accommodation pathways for students, particularly those with documented disabilities, navigating the high-stakes mentor search process.
  4. The feasibility and potential benefits of establishing a formal, integrated M.S. degree option within the NSIDP structure.
  5. The consistency of communication and delineation of responsibilities between NSIDP administration, PIs across various home departments, and students during the lab search process to prevent students from falling through systemic cracks.
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I urge the review team to meticulously examine the following areas and raise critical questions:

1. **Efficacy and Equity of Mentor Placement:** What is the actual success rate of the NSIDP rotation system in placing students within the initially stipulated timeframe (end of year one)? How does NSIDP's process, including the directness and utility of PI feedback to students, compare to other successful IDPs or departmental PhD programs at UCLA? Specifically, investigate the mechanisms—or lack thereof—for ensuring PIs provide substantive, actionable feedback directly to rotating students.
2. **Financial Disincentives and Transparency:** What are the precise financial implications and potential disincentives for faculty (especially junior faculty or those in less well-funded departments) to take on an NSIDP student versus a student directly admitted to their home department or a postdoc? The review should audit the flow of funding for NSIDP students, the true cost to PIs, and the transparency of these arrangements to both PIs and students. Is the GPB endowment being prioritized over student support in borderline cases?
3. **Consistency in Policy Application and Student Support:** The team should request anonymized data on student progression, particularly focusing on cases where students required extended rotation periods or faced academic difficulty. Is there evidence of inconsistent application of program requirements or levels of support offered, as I have anecdotally observed and experienced? How does the program's response to students facing disqualification compare, and what factors appear to drive these differential outcomes?
4. **Support for Students with Disabilities:** How does NSIDP proactively ensure that students with documented disabilities (like ADHD) are made aware of and can effectively utilize accommodations for *all* aspects of the program, including the high-stakes, executive-function-intensive process of lab rotations and mentor securement, beyond just coursework and exams?
5. **Justification for "Failure to Find Mentor" as Sole Grounds for Disqualification:** The review should question the appropriateness and precedent (across UCLA) of recommending academic

disqualification *solely* on the basis of failing to secure a mentor, especially when other academic benchmarks (like WQEs) are met or exceeded. How does this align with the university's commitment to student success, particularly for an interdepartmental program designed to bridge disciplines?

6. **Feasibility and Impact of an Integrated M.S. Option:** Investigate the structural changes required and potential benefits of implementing a formal M.S. degree pathway within NSIDP, either as an en-route option or an alternative credential for students who invest significant time but do not continue to the PhD.
  7. **Addressing "Hidden Curriculum" and Communication:** What concrete measures does NSIDP take to make the "hidden curriculum"—regarding PI expectations, lab dynamics, funding realities, and navigating interdepartmental complexities—explicit and navigable for all students, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds or those who may be less familiar with the unwritten rules of academia?
  8. **PI Accountability and NSIDP Leverage:** What leverage, if any, does NSIDP have to encourage or ensure that affiliated faculty actively participate in mentoring its students or provide clear reasons if they cannot? How is PI participation incentivized or monitored?
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Given my experiences and the serious implications of my pending disqualification, I strongly urge the review team to conduct a rigorous and unflinching examination of several critical areas within NSIDP, raising the following pointed questions:

1. **Precedent and Justification for Disqualification Grounds:** The review team must investigate whether there is *any* precedent across UCLA doctoral programs, particularly within other IDPs or Biomedical Sciences programs, for recommending a student for academic disqualification *solely* on the basis of "failure to identify a faculty mentor," especially when that student has otherwise met academic benchmarks such as passing Written Qualifying Exams. How does NSIDP's application of this criterion compare to established university norms and best practices for student retention and support? Is the program's attempt to introduce additional unmet benchmarks post-appeal indicative of a flawed initial justification?
2. **Comparative Audit of Student Cases and Consistency of Policy Enforcement:** It is imperative to conduct a comparative audit of how NSIDP has handled students in similar or demonstrably more challenged academic circumstances over the past 5-8 years (e.g., students requiring more than the standard number of rotations, those with academic plans, those failing/retaking core courses or qualifying exams multiple times). What objective criteria determine the level of support, flexibility, and financial intervention offered by the program? Is there evidence of inconsistent or selective enforcement of program requirements, potentially influenced by factors such as a student's perceived "financial liability" to the GPB?
3. **Financial Transparency and PI Incentives/Disincentives:** The review must demand full transparency regarding the financial arrangements for NSIDP students. What are the actual costs to a PI for taking an NSIDP GSR versus other trainees? What financial contributions or guarantees does NSIDP/GPB make, and under what specific conditions? Are there structural financial disincentives for PIs, particularly those in certain departments or without large training grants, to mentor NSIDP students? How are decisions about programmatic financial support for students in jeopardy (e.g., needing bridge funding to join a lab) made, and by whom?
4. **Rotation System Efficacy and Feedback Mechanisms:** The team should critically evaluate the actual functionality of the rotation system. What mechanisms are in place to ensure PIs provide

direct, timely, and constructive feedback to students? Is this feedback documented and reviewed by NSIDP to identify struggling students or problematic PI dynamics early? How does the program ensure that PIs offering rotations genuinely have the intent and capacity (funding, space, mentorship bandwidth) to take on a student?

5. **Support for Neurodiversity and Students with Disabilities:** Beyond formal CAE registration, what proactive, specific, and *individualized* support structures and accommodation strategies does NSIDP implement to assist students with documented disabilities, such as ADHD, in navigating the inherently unstructured, high-stress, and executive-function-intensive aspects of the program, particularly the lab rotation and mentor search process? Is there adequate training for NSIDP leadership and faculty in understanding and supporting neurodivergent students?
6. **Impact and Feasibility of an Integrated M.S. Option:** What are the genuine barriers to, and potential benefits of, establishing a formal, integrated M.S. degree pathway within NSIDP? How would such an option align with UCLA's broader goals for graduate education and student success, providing a crucial safety net and recognizing substantial student effort?
7. **Accountability and Oversight of Program Leadership:** What mechanisms exist for students to provide confidential feedback on program leadership and administration without fear of retribution? How is NSIDP leadership held accountable for addressing systemic issues that negatively impact student progression and well-being? The review should assess whether the program's leadership culture fosters genuine student support and problem-solving or if it tends towards administrative rigidity and defensiveness when faced with complex student cases.

**Exhibit I** ..... Additional Arguments and Anonymized Case Comparisons (*Details precedents of disparate treatment for similarly situated students*)

# DGE Appeal Detailed Arguments and Evidence

1. Dr. Bearden emails inconsistent standards, sent because she was advised to. Then telling Felix she has no idea how I could have gotten the impression of still being able to join during week 9 (conveyed to Felix after positive rotation meeting with Bearden, AND PRIOR to poor rotation presentation, which she claims impacted her choice, but funding was cited throughout as primary concern) Then emailing shocked about group meeting request and possibility of continuing in program still being on the table.
  - A. "I've **never done one of these before** for a rotation student but **Jenny and Felix suggested documenting the expectations in writing**, and I think it's a good idea."  
**-Carrie E. Bearden [5th Rotation PI], Ph.D. 02/19/2025 (halfway through rotation)**
  - B. "Hi Felix, just so we're on the same page, when you say creative ideas **I assume you're not talking about something that would allow him to stay in the NSIDP?** or is that still on the table? Hi Cooper, I apologize, I meant that email as a private communication to Felix, but just for full transparency I am curious what the scope of possibilities it is that we're discussing"  
**-Carrie E. Bearden [5th Rotation PI], Ph.D. 04/02/2025**
2. Impossibility of satisfactory completion of all activities described in Bearden Course Description [NEURO 596] for assignment of passing grade (S) given the response from collaborator following successful completion of rotation project 1 (2 weeks before end of rotation, 03/09/2025) was not received until 2 months after submission 05/06/2025.
  - A. "Dear Cooper, Carrie, Dylan, Thank you very much for sending the files, and **apologies for the delayed reply as we are dealing with some staffing changes in the core team**. The files have been received in good order and we will review them and get back to you as soon as possible. Also, thank you very much for the details you provided on the protocol."  
**-ENIGMA-DTI Genetics Support Team [Dr. Bearden Rotation Project Collaborator] 05/06/2025**
3. The academic plan letter only provided a single 10-week rotation period during my fifth rotation, during which I was required to secure/identify a faculty mentor. However, given the nature of my challenges and the identical process that ensued due to insufficient accommodations following the second (i.e., feedback provided was vague/impractical to apply/scarcely if any, and often relayed second-hand after private meetings between each P.I. and Chair Schweizer or Jenny Lee. Furthermore, several of these rotations were impossible to convert into a permanent GSR placement and faculty mentorship agreement (i.e. Rotation #5 with Dr. Bearden), as academic research funding was undergoing significant cuts, which limited P.I.'s and/or the NSIDP/GPB's ability to provide the mandatory financial obligations required to hire new GSRs, without an already established extramural funding source and/or successive TAs already secured by prospective students. Furthermore, there was no essential reason provided to justify how additional rotations, rotation extensions, or accommodated rotations would all "fundamentally alter the nature of the program or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden." In fact, one attempt to extend my third rotation with Dr. Hernandez was rebuffed without justification. As a junior faculty member, she still lacks any graduate students after 3 years, and shortly after my rotation, has since solely prioritized hiring a postdoctoral scholar.
  - A. "While I appreciate what you've accomplished over the last two weeks, I am not going to be able to extend your rotation or serve as your primary advisor. I'm sorry, but I don't think it's a good fit for the reasons I expressed to you on May 9th."



**-From: Dr. Hernandez [Slack] 05/25/2024**

- B. "I received closure from Leanna shortly after we met last week. She confirmed she will not be extending my rotation or offering me a position with her lab..."

**-To: SAO Jenny Lee 05/27/2024**

- C. After Dr. Hernandez's denial, I continued to work on my rotation project with her consent, concurrently during my accelerated 7-week summer rotation with Dr. Ophoff. After meeting to discuss my additional progress, she initially expressed an openness to reconsider my joining her lab, but ultimately declined again, without justification.

"I'm considering asking Dr. Hernandez if she may be open to reconsidering, assuming her initial concerns could be addressed. I've improved my computational skills significantly since rotating with her, and am entirely comfortable pursuing exclusively computational research moving forward. As these were the two areas she shared her decision was based on, and she has no GSRs or rotation students at the moment, I feel there could still be a possibility for reconsideration. I also met with her last week about concluding the rotation project I worked on in her lab. I had continued working on it intermittently when I had availability following the rotation, and the final stage can be completed quickly by implementing a solution we discussed. Aside from Dr. Hernandez, or a negotiation with Roel, other possibilities could include Dr. Olde Loohuis, or another lab with availability from my list. Regardless, I need your guidance and wisdom to proceed most effectively."

**-To: Felix Schweizer [NSIDP Chair] 09/04/2024**

"Since our meeting, Felix, I also discussed the situation with Dr. Hernandez. I shared updates regarding my experience and the outcome of my rotation with Dr. Ophoff, and my plans in response to the news. We also spoke about the possibility of her reconsidering my GSR appointment and her reassessment of our compatibility following my rotation. She expanded on her initial concerns, emphasizing her communication expectations and her initial uncertainty regarding my commitment. Since rotating, I feel our shared communication concerns can be addressed, as we identified and clarified their source. My commitment, potential, and maturity with respect to her lab's research has also been established further, as I continued working on and completed our project beyond the end of my rotation. That said, given Dr. Hernandez's current pursuit to hire a suitable postdoc, new financial concerns have potentially emerged, which we also addressed. Given this development, I feel additional input would likely be required from either of you to address any remaining concerns Dr. Hernandez may have, financial or otherwise. We concluded with my commitment to share any updates regarding Felix's efforts to identify avenues for a GSR position with Drs. Wells and Ophoff. If both are still unable to host, it was my understanding, taking the above into consideration, that Dr. Hernandez may reconsider serving as my primary mentor."

**-To: Felix Schweizer [NSIDP Chair] 09/13/2024**

"Hi Cooper, After reflecting on our conversation, I wanted to follow up and confirm that joining the lab would not be a good fit. I appreciate your interest in the project you began during your rotation. However, at this stage, it seems best for other lab members to take over the analyses and complete the research."

**-From: Dr. Hernandez 09/16/2024**

"Unfortunately, I also received confirmation from Leanna today, "I wanted to follow up and confirm that joining the lab would not be a good fit." I have been reflecting deeply with friends and family about where I fell short during the previous rotations, and how and where I must significantly improve during my fifth and final rotation. I am carefully considering candidate faculty for my fifth rotation, and will schedule meetings as soon as

possible. I will keep you updated. When each of you have availability, ideally before 9/24, can we schedule an appointment to discuss further? I sincerely appreciate your support during this challenging time.”

**-To: Felix Schweizer [NSIDP Chair] 09/16/2024**

- D. “Failure to Accommodate means failure by the University to make reasonable modifications to its practices, policies, and procedures... unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the program or would result in an undue financial or administrative burden.”

**-UCLA Procedure 230.2 Pg. 2**

- 4. I have remained open to the possibility of continuing my graduate training within a different program via Change of Major/Classification.

- A. I compiled an exhaustive list of viable alternative UCLA graduate programs here: [UCLA Program Outreach Tracker](#)

- B. On April 17, 2025, DGE Case Manager Jaine Park shared that Felix had contacted the Director of the Human Genetics PhD Program, Paivi Pajukanta prior to 4/15, a point which he never acknowledged despite multiple opportunities when I referred to this specific action.

“After our meeting, I informed Felix and Jenny about the options that we went through together on Tue, 4/15, in hopes to make your outreach to them easier and continue the conversation. Since the academic dismissal process currently resides within the department's internal procedures, right now is the time to explore other options with Felix and Jenny further. Felix informed me that he contacted Human Genetics, so I hope they hear back from the dept soon. It wouldn't hurt for you to reach out to other potential departments as well since we're in a tight timeline.”

**-From: Jaine Park [DGE Case Manager] 04/17/2025**

Furthermore, on May 1, 2025, I emailed NSIDP Chair Felix Schweizer about the **possibility of a change of major/classification** (PhD to PhD in another field, or PhD to terminal Master's) and requested support in making such a transition.

“Dear Felix, I reviewed the NSIDP's April 28 letter and appreciated your outreach to Human Genetics as we explore potential paths forward... Is pursuing a Graduate Petition for Major/Classification Change to a different program (Doctoral to Doctoral or Doctoral to Master's) considered by NSIDP as a viable pathway in my circumstances?” Felix responded “You would transfer completely and get a degree through another program”

**-To: Felix Schweizer [NSIDP Chair] 05/01/2025**

- C. The Human Genetic PhD Program told Felix they could not accommodate me via change of major/classification due to funding concerns, and that the same would apply to most traditional terminal masters and doctoral programs across biosciences departments are scaling back enrollment.”

**-Notes from meeting with Jaine Park [DGE Case Manager] 05/05/2025**

- 5. During our **02/05/2025 mid-rotation check-in** for my 5th rotation with Dr. Carrie Bearden, in accordance with “Meet with Felix during Week 5 (February 2) to update him on the research rotation progress.” - **Academic Plan 11/29/2024**, I notified Felix of my apprehension and the nonconducive environment to succeed in M203 during this second attempt [Winter 2025] due to the stress associated with my high-stakes concurrent rotation. Given these circumstances, I also requested to drop M203 and take it during Winter 2026 [Y3] instead, in order to prioritize my success during this crucial rotation. While Felix agreed that my success during this rotation was paramount, he insisted that I at least attempt taking the first midterm for M203, and agreed to grant conditional procedural flexibility to drop and retake it during Winter 2026, should my

performance be insufficient to pass that quarter, in the event I were to succeed in securing Dr. Bearden's Faculty Mentorship/GSR support by the end of the quarter. I ultimately scored even lower on the midterm during this attempt than I had the first time, due to the ongoing stress, pressure, and stigma I experienced in attempting to secure a faculty mentor.

- A. "02/05/2025 → Mid-rotation check-in with NSIDP Chair (expressed concern about Neuroanatomy midterm unpreparedness, agreed not the priority but requested I still take exam)"

**-To: Jaine Park 03/18/2025**

I also requested an extension of time to take the M203 midterm from Prof. James Bisley, which was ultimately denied in a reply cc'ing SAO Jenny Lee, who never responded.

- A. "I am very concerned that I have not reviewed sufficiently in time for this morning's midterm exam to score >55% (vs 38.1% last year) and ultimately pass the course. If at all possible, is there any way I could take the midterm on Thursday instead?"

**-To: Dr. James Bisley 02/11/2025**

"I am afraid that without a valid medical reason (and doctor's note), I do not feel it appropriate to change the exam day/time, particularly when the request came after the exam officially began. I've looped Jenny in so that she is aware of the situation."

**-From: Dr. James Bisley 02/11/2025**

- B. The NSIDP Graduate Program Requirements / Mentor & Mentee Guidelines document stated flexibility in retaking Core Courses including M203 if necessary without specifying by when they must be completed or how many times they could be attempted.

"Complete core courses (Neuro 201, M202, M203, 205) with achievement of at least a B- in these courses or repeat the course."

**-From: Jenny Lee 05/17/2024 in NSIDP Mentor and Mentee Agreement, May 2024.pdf; Core Courses Row**

- C. The [program requirements for my year \[2023-2024\]](#) also grant students the flexibility to take M203 multiple times

"A student must receive at least a B- in each core course or repeat the course. A student who receives three B- grades in the core courses... may be recommended for academic disqualification by vote of the entire interdepartmental degree committee."

**-In: UCLA Graduate Program Requirements for Neuroscience, 2023-2024; Special Departmental or Program Policy Section**

- 6. There are more advanced NSIDP students who did succeed in identifying a faculty mentor, and remain in the program despite experiencing similar academic challenges to my own. Particularly, these students were afforded significant procedural flexibility to overcome challenges experienced with the written qualifying exams and NEURO M203 (Neuroanatomy) course.

- A. Student 1 [Entering Year: 2022; Thesis Lab X] did not pass their written qualifying exams during their second year in the program, and was permitted to at a later date. The same student has not passed NEURO M203 after 3 years in the program (3 potential attempts, some of which were not undertaken).

- B. Furthermore, while I am the first case in the NSIDP's (possibly UCLA's) history of dismissal solely "based on insufficient degree progress based on failure to identify a faculty mentor", I know of at least two NSIDP students who remain in the program despite completing 4 rotations, and ultimately a 5th. Student 2 [Entering Year: 2022; Thesis Lab Y] joining the fourth, ultimately left due to insufficient funding, and then completing a 5th, which they joined. Student 3 [Entering Year: 2023] joined their third rotation lab, ultimately realized it was a poor match and separated, completed a fourth which did not offer an opportunity to join, and at the time of this appeal, is currently engaged in a 5th rotation. If

unsuccessful in converting into a permanent lab placement, I fear student 3 is likely to experience the very same excessively punitive and undue consequences as I have. This could set a dire and potentially unjust precedent, especially in light of the NSIDP's upcoming Academic Senate [Program Review](#) (site visit with external reviewers) scheduled to occur during the 2025-26 academic year (see [NSIDP 8-Year Review Student Survey Responses \[Archived\]](#)) and the ongoing federal cuts to academic research funding, recently culminating in Chancellor Frenk's [July 31, 2025 Message](#) conveying, "the federal government... is suspending certain research funding to UCLA."

7. It is likewise noteworthy that three GPB students known to have an ADHD diagnosis either work in Lab X or face analogous lab-placement and mentor-identification challenges (despite having chosen not to register for accommodations to avoid potential discrimination).
  - A. Student 3 [Program: NSIDP; Entering Year: 2023; Pursued additional rotations beyond the expected maximum]
  - B. Student 4 [Program: NSIDP; Entering Year: 2021; Thesis Lab X]
  - C. Student 5 [Program: Human Genetics; Entering Year: 2024; Thesis Lab: X]
8. Jenny (SAO), not Felix (NSIDP Chair) was the one to officially inform me of the disqualification process being initiated following a substantial delay (over Spring break) after my fifth rotation despite emailing to schedule a meeting to discuss immediately after I was informed.
  - A. "Hi Felix, I have some positive news to share"  
**-Cooper Beaman 03/11/2025**
  - B. "Hi Felix, It appears I spoke too soon. This afternoon, Carrie shared that she will not be able to serve as my primary advisor at this time."  
**-Cooper Beaman 03/17/2025**
  - C. "I have been trying to coordinate a meeting with Felix since March 11, but have not received a reply."  
**-Cooper Beaman 03/30/2025**
  - D. "Dear Cooper,  
I deeply apologize that I did not respond to this email. Please do let me know when we can meet... I am not sure that I can be helpful in the way forward, but talking sometimes helps"  
**-Felix Schweizer [NSIDP Chair] 03/31/2025**
  - E. "Hello, Cooper.  
I understand that you have had a chance to meet with Felix and he has updated you on your status in the program... In the event that the recommendation for academic disqualification is approved by the Associate Dean in the Division of Graduate Education, you will receive a refund of 100% of the Tuition & Fees, except for the Student Health Insurance premium."  
**-Jenny Lee [NSIDP Student Affairs Officer] 04/01/2025**
  - F. "Hi Jenny, To clarify, Felix did not inform me of a recommendation for academic disqualification yesterday. We agreed I could first meet with my disability specialist (now scheduled for tomorrow afternoon) and case manager to discuss options. Then, by the end of this week or early next, Felix agreed to coordinate a group meeting with yourself, Carrie, and Jaime or my CAE specialist."  
**-Cooper Beaman 04/01/2025**
9. Attempts to request a disability based extension/accommodation adjustment for the appeal/program outreach/rotation process, beyond the Will Rogers scholarship were denied.
  - A. "Dear Cooper, I have met with Jaime and we have determined that there are no other accommodations available through the CAE to support you in your program. Your

responsibilities as a graduate student are to manage your academics and program requirements with reasonable accommodations. We do not have additional accommodations to provide at this time. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please let me know.”

**-Patty Violi [Associate Director for Student Services UCLA Center for Accessible Education] 04/10/2025 4:43 AM**

- B. “Dear Cooper, Thank you for reaching out. I have included my director, Spencer Scruggs, on this email as I will be unavailable for a portion of next week. The CAE is not postponing the Grad Division's administrative processes, as appropriate notice has been given on your standing in your degree program.”

**-Patty Violi [Associate Director for Student Services UCLA Center for Accessible Education] 05/09/2025 7:49 AM**

- C. “Dear Directors Violi and Scruggs, Thank you for your response. I want to clarify that my May 8 request did not seek postponement or modification of the Graduate Division's administrative processes, but rather the specific extension of only the NSIDP's internal 10-business-day appeal deadline. Could you please clarify the CAE's position regarding my original request for an accommodation of the NSIDP internal appeal timeline, as distinct from the Graduate Division's processes? I remain available to engage interactively, and would appreciate your prompt response, given the approaching May 12 internal appeal deadline.”

**-Cooper Beaman 05/09/2025 6:00 PM**

10. I was blocked from joining the virtual appeal and it began 25 minutes late.

- A. “Dear Felix and Jenny, I briefly joined the meeting at 2pm, but I was immediately removed and could not join. Could you please resend the link or clarify how I can connect.”

**-Cooper Beaman 05/23/2025 2:06 PM**

- B. “Cooper – we’re going to restart. Everyone has left the meeting and we will begin again at 2:25pm. I’m so sorry about this. Please use the same link.”

**-Jenny Lee [NSIDP Student Affairs Officer] 05/23/2025 2:19 PM**

- C. “Hello, Cooper. My sincere apologies regarding the technical difficulties with zoom. I can only imagine that added to an already stressful situation and I am so very sorry. I commend you for gathering yourself and proceeding as professionally as you did.”

**-Jenny Lee [NSIDP Student Affairs Officer] 05/23/2025 3:55 PM**

11. I applied for several funding opportunities during my final two quarters and was prepared to apply for others

- A. [UCLA Extramural Funding Tracker](#)
- B. [FA'24 NSF GRFP Cooper Beaman Personal and Research Proposal Final](#)
- C. [GATP Application Packet Complete Cooper Beaman 2025-26](#)
- D. [CB F31 Research Training Project Current](#)

12. Several other PIs beyond those whose labs I rotated in were contacted. Many viable Faculty Mentors remained uncontacted. And furthermore, I remain willing to recruit the assistance of my former UCSF PI (Dr. Yin Shen), an 08' UCLA Human Genetics Alumna, who has several faculty contacts and collaborators at UCLA, and may be able to provide the necessary assurances to accelerate a faculty mentorship arrangement and GSR opportunity.

- A. [UCLA Faculty Outreach Matrix](#)

One promising brand new PI, contacted about a potential Fa'24 or Wi'25 rotation, was open to hosting me, but only during a later quarter (e.g., Sp'25 or Fa'25). However, due to the NSIDP's inflexibility, my rotation in Dr. Coley's lab during any other quarter besides Fa'24 was deemed impermissible.

- B.** “I chatted with Felix about the graduate program and rotations for neuroscience students, and now understand the process. We agreed it would not be a great fit for you to rotate in my lab while I'm ordering things and organizing the lab, and it would be wise for me to take students when I actually have mice to run experiments... I would need to properly evaluate you as a PhD student to take in my lab, and at this time I cannot evaluate you for doing lab manager duties (which I have already recently hired people for). And you would need to properly evaluate me as a mentor. I don't plan on ordering mice in lab until about January, and from my understanding you need to find a lab position immediately, like this this quarter. So waiting on my lab to do a real rotation is not an option.”

***-Austin Coley [Candidate Rotation PI Fa'25] 10/03/2024 7:49 AM***

**Exhibit J ..... Email Correspondence Regarding Procedural Conflict (03/30/2025 - 04/01/2025)**



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## End-of-Quarter Check-in

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Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: "Lee, Jenny [BRI]" <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>

Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 11:06 AM

Hi Jenny,

To clarify, Felix did *not* inform me of a recommendation for academic disqualification yesterday. We agreed I could first meet with my **disability specialist** (now scheduled for **tomorrow afternoon**) and case manager to discuss options. Then, by the end of this week or early next, Felix agreed to coordinate a group meeting with yourself, Carrie, and Jaine or my CAE specialist. I was very grateful for his willingness to facilitate, because I have wanted to participate in a group conversation for some time, but until then, had not provided the opportunity to. I believe this format could be uniquely beneficial to clarify any misconceptions, expectations, formal GSR requirements, or any other details for all in attendance, hopefully increasing the likelihood of reaching a solution together.

Regarding Tuition & Fee support and course enrollment for this quarter, I enrolled in two NS215s more as placeholder units while I consider my options. If permitted, I plan to cover these expenses during *this* quarter, while continuing to pursue TAs (including any Felix could match me to directly) or other forms of campus employment.

Finally, well before proceeding with disqualification, Felix offered to aid in the process of my transferring to a different program (e.g., MCIP or another Masters program, during which, Dr. Ophoff had previously agreed to serve as my advisor) or in the absolute worst case, extending the option to voluntarily withdraw instead.

I hope my understanding is still accurate. If any availability opens up today, please let me know as I am flexible to meet any time virtually or in person. Otherwise, 3pm or 4pm tomorrow in-person should work.

Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

On Tue, Apr 1, 2025 at 9:27 AM Lee, Jenny [BRI] <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu> wrote:

Hello, Cooper.

I understand that you have had a chance to meet with Felix and he has updated you on your status in the program. Here are some times this week that I am available to meet and discuss questions that may have come up since meeting with Felix.

Wednesday, in-person or zoom: 1pm, 3pm, 4pm

Friday, in-person or zoom: 10am

Most immediately, for the current Spring term, you can continue with your enrollment and registration. However, there is no further financial support to cover your Tuition & Fee balance. In the event that the recommendation for academic disqualification is approved by the Associate Dean in the Division of Graduate Education, you will receive a refund of 100% of the Tuition & Fees, except for the Student Health Insurance premium. We can discuss this and additional details when we meet.

For specific details, please reference the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study, Page 38:



<https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/standards-and-procedures-for-graduate-study/>

Thank you,  
Jenny

Jenny Lee (She/Her)

Graduate Program Coordinator

UCLA Neuroscience Interdepartmental Graduate Program (G-NSIDP)

[JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu)

(310) 825-8153 p

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**From:** Cooper Beaman <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 30, 2025 10:24 PM  
**To:** Lee, Jenny [BRI] <[JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: End-of-Quarter Check-in

Hi Jenny, I hope you are well.

I have been trying to coordinate a meeting with Felix since March 11, but have not received a reply. If you have availability this week, I would appreciate if we could schedule a check-in. Thanks.

Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cooper Beaman** <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)>  
Date: Mon, Mar 17, 2025 at 6:32 PM  
Subject: Re: End-of-Quarter Check-in  
To: Felix Schweizer <[felixs@ucla.edu](mailto:felixs@ucla.edu)>

Hi Felix,

It appears I spoke too soon. This afternoon, Carrie shared that she will not be able to serve as my primary advisor at this time. Last week, I did receive some positive news however, in the form of a \$2000 Will Rogers scholarship to cover the cost of executive functions coaching next quarter (attached). Furthermore, while I ultimately dropped M203, I submitted my [NRSA research training plan](#) for 211A, which is significantly more developed than I was able to describe during my lab meeting presentation. Finally, I am still uncertain about the status of the GATP T32 I submitted with Dr. Bearden's help earlier this quarter, but as far as I am aware, it is still under consideration for the July 1st appointment cycle. I'm still a bit shocked by the turn of events, and would appreciate any insight, ideas or advice you can share. Could we please schedule a time to meet? I am available 11am-5pm any day this week.

Thanks.

Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

On Tue, Mar 11, 2025 at 8:11 PM Cooper Beaman <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)> wrote:

Hi Felix,

I have some positive news to share, and would like to discuss funding options, primarily TAsip opportunities for next quarter. Are you available for a check this week? I am completely free on Friday, and any time except 12-1:15pm on Thursday (schedule attached).

Thanks.

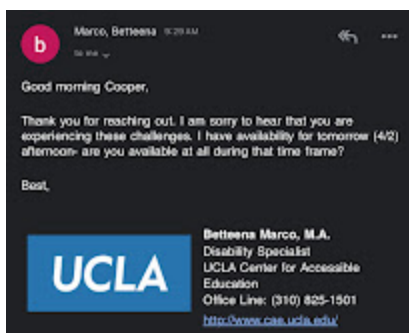
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Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

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166K

**Exhibit K** ..... Email to Jaine Park and Betteena Marco (03/31/2025) (*Demonstrates timeline of awareness regarding programmatic accommodations*)

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## Lab Placement Challenges and Accomodations [Cooper Beaman, NSIDP Y2]

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Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Mon, Mar 31, 2025 at 2:52 PM

To: bmarco@saonet.ucla.edu

Cc: jpark@grad.ucla.edu

Hi Betteena,

I am Cooper Beaman, a second year NSIDP student. I saw you were assigned as my new disability specialist and **would like to schedule an appointment to discuss ongoing lab placement challenges and to reevaluate my accomodations at your earliest convenience**. During my first two years at UCLA, I satisfied the majority of my program's degree requirements, maintained a satisfactory GPA, and received a top (High Pass) written qualifying exam score. However, I have continued to experience challenges in meeting the conventional expectations of a 10-week research rotation, and five consecutive PIs declined to serve as my primary advisor during the final week of each rotation, despite my partial fulfillment of the expectations during each. Consistently, I have not received any indication of performance or other misalignment until the final two weeks if at all (sometimes, learning about concerns from my program chair or SAO after the rotation), and by then, I have typically felt overwhelmed, rushed, and ultimately unable to complete the rotation confidently, or make a compelling case for each PI's primary advisory or GSR appointment to continue pursuing my dissertation research. Feeling exhausted and blindsided, I have then scrambled, and fortunately succeeded in coordinating tuition, fees and stipend support, while contacting potential PIs to pursue a rotation with during the following quarter. Overall, I have not felt recognized for the work I *did* contribute during each rotation, nor have I observed a willingness from PIs or my program to compromise toward aiding me in securing this critical advisory relationship. I can't help but sense that factors beyond my control, funding or otherwise, *may* have played a role in at least a subset of these decisions.

Recognizing that my challenges with time-management, organization, and planning (associated with my ADHD diagnosis) have been the most significant obstacle preventing me from fulfilling my potential, despite ongoing symptom management via medication and my best efforts to work harder and learn, after four consecutive and increasingly demanding rotations, I applied for and received a generous \$2000 Will Rogers scholarship last quarter to support executive functions coaching and address these challenges directly (which I intend to do this quarter). However, I am concerned that without the flexibility of a prior PI or my program to align expectations in support of my academic development, at least during this stage, where I have ultimately experienced an unwillingness to consider my attempts or potential to improve and contribute to the scientific community, I may be at risk of academic disqualification. I have copied my academic case manager, Jaine Park, who is familiar with my case, and who has been exceptionally helpful over the last few months as I attempt to navigate these challenges. I have also included several attachments to provide additional context. Please let me know if I can answer any questions. I look forward to speaking further. Thank you.

--

Best,

Cooper Beaman  
Doctoral Student, Neuroscience Interdepartmental Program  
University of California, Los Angeles

**Exhibit L** ..... Meeting Notes Regarding "Internalized Self-loathing" Comment (10/05/2024)  
*(Evidence of a hostile and unprofessional environment)*

# Fifth Rotation Master Plan - Cooper Beaman - Fall 2024

1. *Personal goals:*
2. *accept complete responsibility for decisions moving forward, deeply considering their rationale while anticipating most likely outcomes and challenges*
3. *Therapy*
4. *Interrogate your self-loathing/Internalized self-hated*

## Version history

All versions ▾

> October 7, 2024, 3:53 PM

● cooper beaman

> October 7, 2024, 2:31 PM

● cooper beaman

> October 7, 2024, 3:50 AM

● cooper beaman

> October 6, 2024, 9:37 PM

● cooper beaman

October 6, 2024, 4:17 AM

● cooper beaman

▾ October 5, 2024, 12:59 PM ⋮

● cooper beaman

←

October 5, 2024, 12:42 PM

Restore this version

🖨️

200%

Accessibility

# Fifth Rotation Master Plan - Cooper Beaman - Fall 2024

*Goal: accept complete responsibility for decisions moving forward, deeply considering their rationale while anticipating most likely outcomes and challenges*

Version history

All versions

▼

October 5, 2024, 12:59 PM

● cooper beaman

October 5, 2024, 12:58 PM

● cooper beaman

October 5, 2024, 12:58 PM

● cooper beaman

October 5, 2024, 12:42 PM

● cooper beaman

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## Fifth Rotation Logistics

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Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu>

Sat, Oct 5, 2024 at 11:53 AM

Adding top questions and faculty notes to my list. I will join at 12. Thanks.

On Sat, Oct 5, 2024 at 11:51 AM Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu> wrote:

I am on: <https://ucla.zoom.us/j/5763165853?pwd=YIFhQ29RVXU1dzVWeDNiTEhqZjN3Zz09&omn=99085826720>

as I said, no hurry. And If I stepped away from the screen I'll be back in a minute or two

On 10/5/2024 9:25 AM, Cooper Beaman wrote:

Of course

On Sat, Oct 5, 2024 at 9:22 AM Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu> wrote:

not right now, but I'll email once I am ready

On 10/5/2024 9:14 AM, Cooper Beaman wrote:

Free at 10 after all, if then works better for your schedule today.

On Sat, Oct 5, 2024 at 6:51 AM Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu> wrote:

Apologies, I meant to say 11:30-1pm.

I am applying to the MCDB 138 TAsip now (and searching for available alternative TAsips), have contacted Austin for his input, and compiled the following detailed plan to facilitate our discussion:

[Fifth Rotation Master Plan](#)

On Fri, Oct 4, 2024 at 9:58 PM Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu> wrote:

Thank you, Felix,

I am available any time 10 am - 1 pm tomorrow.

On Fri, Oct 4, 2024 at 3:57 PM Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu> wrote:

Hi Cooper,

I agree with you but did not have the bandwidth and need to hurry to another meeting. How about a quick zoom tomorrow, Saturday? My day is very flexible between 10am -6pm

my advise is to take all stops out and contact all the people you mention. Don't wait for the answer from one before contacting the other. Also grab that TAsip so your stipend is covered. TAsing is not research and unless you 'land' a rotation, you would be not making satisfactory progress in finding a mentor and in being registered for research.

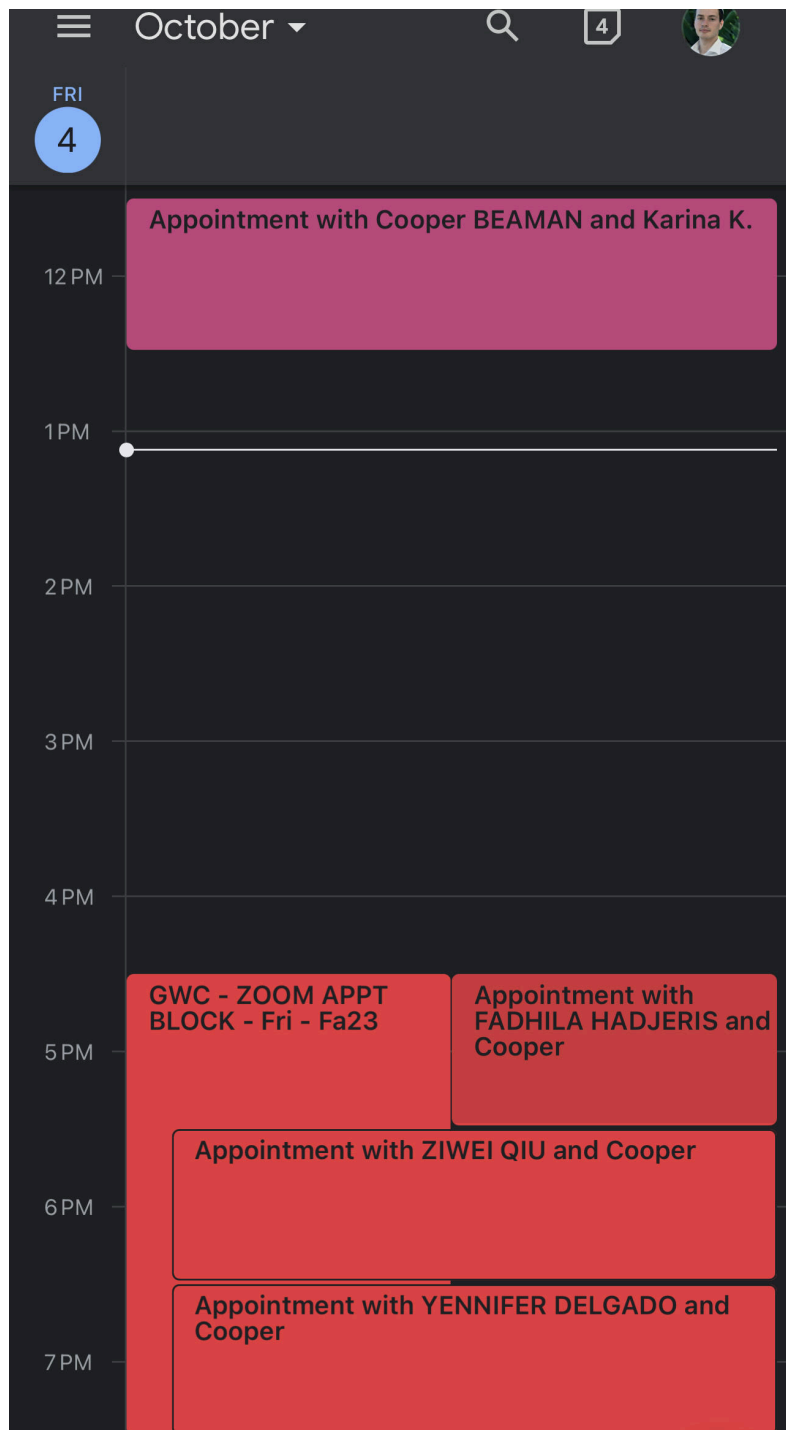
Felix

On 10/4/2024 1:13 PM, Cooper Beaman wrote:

Although we both prefer the in-person format, given my schedule and the time sensitive nature of this conversation, I think it would be easiest to meet via Zoom today:

<https://ucla.zoom.us/j/2258247817>





Thanks.

On Fri, Oct 4, 2024 at 7:00 AM Cooper Beaman  
<[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)> wrote:

Thanks, Felix.

I can meet 2:30-3:30.

Dr. Coley did reach out. I will respond today.

This is my understanding of the solution space:

Facts (to my knowledge):

1. Wed Oct 9th - Thu 10th deadline to finalize a decision
2. I must enroll in at least 12 units to remain eligible for departmental tuition and fees support. These may

comprise a combination of TAs, units, coursework, or rotation units.

3. Dr. Coley can not accept a rotation student this fall
4. Stipend support will not be provided during any subsequent rotation, until I am hired as a GSR. Thus, financial aid or loans will be required, at least this Fall. External funding may be possible to secure by winter quarter.
5. I can TA until the winter if Austin is a uniquely aligned match, and willing to commit to concrete operational criteria, that, upon completion, would all but guarantee his permanent primary advisory and my GSR affiliation.
6. Suitable TAs are still available (Jenny sent one yesterday) and would provide stipend-level support until winter quarter.

Unknowns:

1. The status of Austin's winter rotation availability
2. If I rotate with a different PI this fall, would they be expected to assume primary advisor responsibilities and hire me as a GSR immediately after my rotation?
3. How could the above be realistically established and mutually agreed upon?
4. Net impact of the TA + winter rotation with Austin option on my time to degree and other aspects of my graduate training and post-graduate career.
5. Which single PI would be optimal to ensure a seamless post-rotation conversion to permanent affiliation? I am currently considering Drs. Bearden, Balliu, Uddin, Arboleda, Samarasinghe, Novitch, Peterson, and Olde Loohuis. Also, Dr. Geschwind, as he is the only prior rotation PI we did not contact.

- Note – All students must complete three rotations as part of the program requirements. All students must officially join a lab by June 13, 2025.

**Academic Year 2024-25 Available Rotation Faculty**

Rotation available all quarters unless otherwise noted.

i.e. W = Rotation available in Winter only

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Abderemane-Ali, Fayal	F, W, S
Ajjola, Olujimi A.	F, W, S
Andrews, Anne	F, W, S
Arac, Ahmet	F, W, S
Balliu, Brunilda	F, W
Bearden, Carrie	F, W, S
Bhaduri, Aparna	F, S
Bisley, James	F, W, S
Bitan, Gal	W, S
Blank, Idan	W, S
Buonomano, Dean	F, S
Butler, Samantha	F, W, S
Cahill, Catherine	F, W, S
Cross, Kathryn	Not Available
Daboussi, Lydia	F, W, S
Deters, Kacie	Not Available
DiPoppa, Mario	F, W, S

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Donlea, Jeff	F, W, S
Field, Greg	F, W, S
Fogel, Brent	F, W, S
Fried, Itzhak (John Sakon)	W, S
Frye, Mark	W, S
Golshani, Peyman	Not Available
Green, Shulamite	W, S
Haltem, Elissa	Not Available
Hernandez, Leanna	F, W
Hinman, Jason	Not Available
Ho, Tiffany	W, S
Hoftman, Gil	Not Available
Hong, Weizhe	W, S
Huk, Alex	F, W, S
Krantz, David	W, S
Leuchter, Andrew	W, S
Maidment, Nigel	Not Available

As of 7/17/2023

[Continued on next page.]

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Masmanidis, Sotiris	W, S
Massaly, Nicolas	W, S
Nathanson, David	F, W, S
Novitch, Ben	F, W, S
Ophoff, Roel	F, W, S
Paul, Ketema	Not Available
Peng, Chao	F, W, S
Portera-Cailliau, Carlos	W, S
Ray, Lara	F, W, S
Ringach, Dario	F, W, S
Rissman, Jesse	Not Available
Samarasinghe, Ranmal	F, W, S
SamPATH, Alapakkam	W, S

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Silva, Alcino	Not Available
Trachtenberg, Joshua	F
Uddin, Lucina	W, S
Voskuhl, Rhonda	F, W, S
Wassum, Kate	W, S
Wells, Michael	F, S
Wikenheiser, Andrew	F, W, S
Wilke, Scott	F, W, S
Zeiger, William	F, W, S
Zhang, Chuchu	F, W, S
Zheng, Jie J.	F, W, S
Zhou, Z. Hong	S

On Thu, Oct 3, 2024 at 10:07 AM Felix Schweizer  
<felixs@ucla.edu> wrote:

Dear Cooper,

I had a good discussion with Dr. Coley yesterday. He does not have his lab set-up and thus is really in no position to take you on as a graduate student as there is no project to be involved in. He is at the stage of unpacking boxes and setting up equipment. While you might be able to help with that, he has two undergrads and a lab manager that are doing this. He was not aware that you need to find a home now and thought there might be an opportunity for a Spring or Summer rotation when he might be further along. But that is really too late for you. He suggested that you should stick closer to what you had done at UCSD and UCSF. Maybe you could get in touch with your previous advisors who might be able to give a first-hand account of your strengths to prospective mentors as you are running against the clock and against this being your fifth rotation.

I am sorry for the bad news. Dr. Coley will hopefully get in touch with you soon too. This is a busy time for all that close to the SfN meeting. And I am frantically trying to not fall behind in preparing for a (to me) new undergradutate class of 280. Tomorrow 11-12 or 2:30-3:30 probably works, otherwise next week

Felix

On 10/3/2024 8:00 AM, Cooper Beaman wrote:

Hi Felix,

Have you had an opportunity to speak with Dr. Coley yet? He mentioned you had planned to meet on Tuesday. I am emailing him to follow up today.

I understand you are quite busy this quarter, but when possible, I would like to schedule our meeting once your schedule permits.

Thank you.

On Wed, Sep 25, 2024 at 7:22 PM Cooper Beaman <[cobeaman@g.ucla.edu](mailto:cobeaman@g.ucla.edu)> wrote:

Thank you, Felix. I'm happy you like the recommendation!

Could we meet Monday or Wednesday next week? I'm flexible regarding the time, and expect that we should not need more than 30 min.

On Tue, Sep 24, 2024 at 6:21 PM Felix Schweizer <[felixs@ucla.edu](mailto:felixs@ucla.edu)> wrote:

Dear Cooper,

glad to hear that things are moving forward. I am sure that Jenny helped you create a valid time-line that keeps you in the academic system and has some financial support. I have available times throughout the week next week, but also unmovables, like Tue/Thu when I teach 4-6pm.

I highly appreciate you pointing to the 'Hidden Curriculum.' One difficulty is that trainees do not know what they do not know and teachers do not know what trainees don't know. I agree that the best path forward is to make as many things explicit as possible and to lower the barrier for and empower trainees to asking. Thanks for the PDF!

Felix

On 9/23/2024 3:13 PM, Cooper Beaman wrote:

Hi Felix,

With Jenny's guidance during our meeting today, I have significantly solidified my plans for the Fall quarter.

To keep you updated:

1. I will meet with Dr. Ophoff this Thursday. I believe he is planning to share constructive feedback based on my rotation, in service of my continued professional and academic development.
2. I will meet with Dr. Coley this Friday to discuss the prospect of a Fall rotation.
3. I am currently drafting my NSF GRFP.

Following my discussion with Dr. Coley, ***could we schedule a follow-up meeting, ideally early next week. I am available 10am-6:30pm M-F.*** Specifically, I want to clarify the flexibility of this rotation's timing (e.g. max duration and start date, etc.), the possibility of Nov-Dec stipend support, and any other logistical details to ensure a successful ***final*** rotation.

Thank you.

Best,

Cooper

o.

In my opinion, some of the guidance Dr. Calarco offers, particularly her disambiguation of the “hidden curriculum”, could be invaluable for future incoming NSIDP students.



Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Fall 2024 MCDB TA Application

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**Cooper Beaman** <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: Jenny <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu>

Mon, Oct 7, 2024 at 8:00 AM





Hi Jenny,

Just confirming I applied for the MCDB 138 and Psych 116B TAs. Please let me know if you come across any others. Additionally, Felix and I discussed the following on Saturday:  
[Fifth Rotation Master Plan](#)

Thanks.  
[Quoted text hidden]

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### 4 attachments

-  **Beaman, Cooper\_Resume.pdf**  
186K
-  **Beaman, Cooper\_Graduate.pdf**  
60K
-  **Beaman, Cooper\_Undergrad.pdf**  
1342K
-  **Beaman, Cooper\_Fall\_2024\_MCDB\_TA\_Application\_MCDB\_138.pdf**  
340K



FW: [UCLA-ASE/GSR-positions] Fall 2024 Developmental Biology TA Position Available

Lee, Jenny [BRI] <JenniferL@mednet.ucla.edu> Mon, Oct 7, 2024 at 11:16 AM  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Hello Cooper,

I reviewed the master plan info, thanks for sharing.

If you are offered a TA position, there are no units allocated to the actual TA position. There is however, a concurrent seminar you enroll in (LIFESCI 495) that is 2 units that first-time TA's are required to participate in while they have their TA appointment. I can reach out to the coordinators to see if you can be added late.

495 - Preparation for College-Level Teaching in Life Sciences

NOTE: To see all sections for this class, you must select a Seminar.

Select	Section	Status	Waitlist Status	Info	Day(s)	Time in Pacific Time	Location	Units	Instructor(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sem 1	Open 44 of 50 Enrolled 6 Spots Left	No Waitlist		W	10am-11:50am	Dodd Hall 167	2.0	Robin, A.N. Sigar, P.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sem 2	Closed Class Full (50), Over Enrolled By 2	No Waitlist		W	4pm-5:50pm	Dodd Hall 146	2.0	Robin, A.N. Zuercher, M.E.

I'll keep an eye out for other relevant TA positions for the Fall, but most likely departments are all settled with TA positions since it's Week 2 of the Quarter.

Take care,

Jenny

[Quoted text hidden]

# Fifth Rotation Master Plan - Cooper Beaman - Fall 2024

## Questions

1. Any additional clarification regarding criteria for Dr. Coley to be a viable winter rotation option? He may not reply given SfN etc. so any information would be helpful. I am not ready to give up on him personally and proposed a potentially viable solution below [\(4a\)](#)
  2. If I rotate with a different PI this fall, would they be expected to assume primary advisor responsibilities and hire me as a GSR immediately after my rotation?
    - a. How could the above be realistically established and mutually agreed upon?
  3. Anything I may not have considered?
  4. Any additional fellowships/grants you can suggest that might provide more immediate short-term support?
  5. Any information regarding the relevance of DGE's new transitional funding pilot program?
- 

## Preferred Course

1. ~~TAs~~ ASAP (e.g., MCDB 138, Psych 116B)
2. **Enroll** in any **remaining units** to satisfy **12** unit minimum (e.g. 215 seminar coursework, TAship required LIFESCI 495) for continued departmental tuition and fees support
3. **Confirm winter rotation** with **Austin** (and likelihood of post-rotation acceptance)
4. Simultaneously **contact candidate fall** quarter rotation **PIs** to demonstrate **“satisfactory progress in finding a mentor and in being registered for research”**
  - a. to **establish collaborations** and **acquire** new **skills** aligned with **Coley** lab if **confirmed**
  - b. and/or as **potential alternate primary advisors**
5. Continue pursuing **external funding** opportunities



# Primary Advisor Ranking (with details)

## FA'24 Fifth Rotation Outreach Spreadsheet

Tier (1-3)	Faculty	Contacted? (Date)	Notes	Fall Availability
Tier (1-3): 1				
1	Bearden (W,S)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "we don't have any student for the winter rotation yet"</li> <li>• "two rotation students this quarter, and the lab is getting pretty full."</li> <li>• "the two rotation students haven't indicated their interest to join the lab officially"</li> <li>• "possible Carrie will take a new student after summer"</li> </ul>	No
1	Coley (W,S)	9/20/24-Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only Winter</li> </ul>	No
1	Uddin (W,S)	6/10/24 for Sum'24 rotation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding barriers</li> <li>• Lack fMRI research experience</li> </ul>	
1	Flint		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
1	Freimer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
1	Zaitlen		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
1	Olde Loohuis (N/A)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
1	Mirella Dapretto		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
1	Katherine Narr		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
Tier (1-3): 2				
2	Samarasinghe (F,W,S)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	Arboleda ()		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	Pimentel ()		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	Scott Wilke (F,W,S)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	Steve S. Lee		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	Michelle G. Craske		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
2	William Yang		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
Tier (1-3): 3				
3	Zeiger (F,W,S)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Denardo ()		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Novitch		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Masmanidis		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Torre-Ubieta		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Brent Fogel		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
3	Samantha Butler		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	

## 1. Bearden (W,S)

- Unavailable for the fall quarter
- Hoki, a current graduate student confirmed she likely has availability for the winter
- Very good mentor
- Currently hosting two rotation students this fall
- Perfectly aligned with my interests
- Prior 215 professor
- Collaborations with Dr. Hernandez and other relevant faculty aligned with my interests/experience
- I know one of her graduate students, Hoki, through Dr. Hernandez and could inquire before emailing her
- She did not admit a student last year
- Two of her students graduated last year

## 2. Wells (F,S)

- **Felix:**  
"I have been in contact with Wells... [he is not] willing to take you on as a graduate student at this point. From my discussion... there is no additional information on the 'why' that I can share with you..."
- **Rotation Lab Friend:**  
"stressed again lately about funding and not having any papers published so I feel like he doesn't want to grow the lab right now but idk."  
"I feel like it's unlikely he would let you join"

## 3. Geschwind (N/A)

- May have evolved since
- Highly competitive
- Unlikely, but I feel he may be willing to help significantly in other ways beyond a GSR position/primary advisory

## 4. Bhaduri (F,S)

- "Aparna already... [has] a rotation student this quarter"
- "She could take another grad student soon but only if it was an exceptional fit"

## 5. Balliu (F,W)★

- "Unfortunately, we do not have any funding available to hire more students as there are already four students rotating in the lab this year." *[Thu Oct 10th, 2024]*
- "Unfortunately, I no longer have any available positions **this** academic year." *[Thu, Jun 6th 2024]*
- Initial choice for spring rotation, and top priority for fourth following hernandez
- Had already established rotation plans

## 6. Uddin (W,S)

- "I don't have funds to accept a new grad student in the fall, so unfortunately I wouldn't be able to accept you into the lab at this time."
- "I'd be happy to work with you as a co-mentor once you have picked another lab to complete your PhD in."
- Very good mentorship potential
- Research emphasis mostly fMRI, wouldn't make the most sense as primary advisor however given my lack of training there etc.

## 7. Samarasinghe (F,W,S)

- "He is really focused on epilepsy"

- “Good guy, super smart”
- “high expectations”
- “He is very nice but pretty tough”

## 8. Olde Loohuis (N/A)

- Overlaps significantly with Ophoff and Hernandez’s work
- Ophoff encouraged me to take the computational bias among my interview committee as a sign of potential and demand to guide my future research directions and fifth rotation options
- Unknown availability, funding, space, demand for students etc.
- Unknown impact of Ophoff rotation not converting to primary advisory given their closer relationship

## 9. Arboleda ()

•

## 10. Novitch (-)

•

## 11. Pimentel ()

- Wells collaborator
- Helped with my rotation project
- Good mentor
- Compatible personality and communication style

## Notes

*\*Depending on realistic odds of immediate conversion to primary advisory and permanent GSR affiliation*

*\*\*Roughly prioritized to maximize fulfillment of the following criteria, by descending priority: mentorship potential, likelihood of satisfying the immediate conversion expectation, research or method alignment with my prior experience and goals*

- Note – All students must complete three rotations as part of the program requirements. All students must officially join a lab by June 13, 2025.

**Academic Year 2024-25 Available Rotation Faculty**  
Rotation available all quarters unless otherwise noted.  
i.e. W = Rotation available in Winter only

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Abderemane-Ali, Fayal	F, W, S
Ajijola, Olujimi A.	F, W, S
Andrews, Anne	F, W, S
Arac, Ahmet	F, W, S
Balliu, Brunilda	F, W
Bearden, Carrie	F, W, S
Bhaduri, Aparna	F, S
Bisley, James	F, W, S
Bitan, Gal	W, S
Blank, Idan	W, S
Buonomano, Dean	F, S
Butler, Samantha	F, W, S
Cahill, Catherine	F, W, S
Cross, Kathryn	Not Available
Daboussi, Lydia	F, W, S
Deters, Kacie	Not Available
DiPoppa, Mario	F, W, S

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Donlea, Jeff	F, W, S
Field, Greg	F, W, S
Fogel, Brent	F, W, S
Fried, Itzhak (John Sakon)	W, S
Frye, Mark	W, S
Golshani, Peyman	Not Available
Green, Shulamite	W, S
Hallem, Elissa	Not Available
Hernandez, Leanna	F, W
Hinman, Jason	Not Available
Ho, Tiffany	W, S
Hoftman, Gil	Not Available
Hong, Weizhe	W, S
Huk, Alex	F, W, S
Krantz, David	W, S
Leuchter, Andrew	W, S
Maidment, Nigel	Not Available

As of 7/17/2023

[Continued on next page.]

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Masmanidis, Sotiris	W, S
Massaly, Nicolas	W, S
Nathanson, David	F, W, S
Novitch, Ben	F, W, S
Ophoff, Roel	F, W, S
Paul, Ketema	Not Available
Peng, Chao	F, W, S
Portera-Cailliau, Carlos	W, S
Ray, Lara	F, W, S
Ringach, Dario	F, W, S
Rissman, Jesse	Not Available
Samarasinghe, Ranmal	F, W, S
Sampath, Alapakkam	W, S

Faculty Name	Rotation Qtr
Silva, Alcino	Not Available
Trachtenberg, Joshua	F
Uddin, Lucina	W, S
Voskuhl, Rhonda	F, W, S
Wassum, Kate	W, S
Wells, Michael	F, S
Wikenheiser, Andrew	F, W, S
Wilke, Scott	F, W, S
Zeiger, William	F, W, S
Zhang, Chuchu	F, W, S
Zheng, Jie J.	F, W, S
Zhou, Z. Hong	S

## Personal Goals

1. *Accept complete responsibility for decisions moving forward, deeply considering their rationale while anticipating most likely outcomes and challenges*
2. *Therapy*
  - a. *Interrogate feelings of shame/Internalized self-loathing/insecurity/people-pleasing/boundaries, and questions surrounding direction/presence/ownership/worth*

**Exhibit M .... Email Notifying Program of Bell's Palsy Diagnosis (04/30/2024)**



Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

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## Todays lecture 210C

3 messages

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**Cooper Beaman** <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: Felix Schweizer <felixs@ucla.edu>

Tue, May 7, 2024 at 2:00 PM

Hi, Felix.

Unfortunately, I'm still recovering my ability to speak normally, but a friend in our cohort explained the current assignment, so I'll prepare to present hopefully next week or later. Per my doctor's advice, I've decided to continue working and attending classes remotely this week.

Thank you.

Best,

Cooper  
[Quoted text hidden]

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**Felix Schweizer** <felixs@ucla.edu>  
To: Cooper Beaman <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>

Tue, Apr 30, 2024 at 2:50 PM

Hi Cooper,

I am sorry to hear that. Please get some rest!

Felix

[Quoted text hidden]

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**Cooper Beaman** <cobeaman@g.ucla.edu>  
To: felixs@ucla.edu

Tue, Apr 30, 2024 at 1:24 PM

Hi Felix,

Unfortunately, I was diagnosed with Bell's Palsy today, which has made it harder for me to speak normally, so I'm planning to stay home today. I just started medication, so hopefully it will be cleared up or at least improved enough for me to participate during next week's class. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance for your understanding.

Best,

Cooper

**Exhibit N** ..... Bell's Palsy Notice of Diagnosis from Angela Ruman, MD (04/30/2024)

## ASSESSMENT

Diagnoses

Bell's palsy (G51.0)

Encounter Code

NEW PATIENT, LIMITED (20) 99202

## PLAN

left sided facial weakness c/w left bells Palsy: less likely  
Ramsey Hunt

advised pt maximal facial weakness/paralysis occurs  
within 3 weeks of symptoms onset

initial treatment: prednisone 60 mg/d x 7 days

will also initiate valtrex 1000 tid x 7 days

sent secure message to pt. schedul eone week f/u appt  
advised ED for worsening symptoms, headache,  
weakness in other parts of body

if the eye dryness does not improve i can refer you to an  
ophthalmologist

general course should be one of stability by three weeks  
and gradual improvement by two to three months

f/u with me in one week

f/u pcp to establish care

## ORDERED PROCEDURES

[Ordered Procedure Sheet](#)

Signed by Angela Ruman, MD on 4/30/2024 1:03:04 PM