

Department of Microbiology & Immunology Policies on Non-MCRO Research Advisors for MCRO Students

It is highly preferable that MCRO students have as their research advisors faculty members with an appointment in our department. On rare occasions, a MCRO student may have a non-MCRO faculty member as their research advisor. The following policies apply:

- Offers of a non-primary faculty appointment are at the discretion of the Department Chair. MCRO students should only be placed with non-MCRO faculty members if the Department Chair is willing to keep open the possibility of an eventual non-primary appointment for that faculty member. One reason why a non-primary appointment might be viewed as potentially feasible in the future but not the present would be if the research of the faculty member aligned with the interests of the MCRO department, but the faculty member already had commitments to multiple other departments.
If there are reasons why an eventual non-primary appointment would not be appropriate, then a MCRO student will not be allowed to join the lab.
- A key criterion for placing a MCRO student in the lab of a non-MCRO faculty member is compatibility of research with the Department of Microbiology & Immunology. Graduate School policy is that a majority of dissertation committee members must be (non-negotiable requirement) from the student's major academic program. Therefore at least three of the five dissertation committee members would be from MCRO. Is the planned research in the lab of a non-MCRO advisor such that MCRO faculty could give effective advice to the student? If not, then a MCRO student should not be placed in the lab.
- Placing a MCRO student in a non-MCRO lab requires the approval of both the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair. In addition, Graduate School approval is required. Graduate School policy is that the research advisor should be from the student's major academic program, but the Graduate School can waive this requirement in response to a well-justified request from our department.
- As is the case for all MCRO students joining labs not housed in departmental space, in addition to signing the BBSP program/lab choice form guaranteeing financial support for the student, the Department Chair or Center Director for the advisor must sign a MCRO-specific Memorandum of Understanding accepting financial responsibility for the student, including fees that cannot be paid from federal grants.
- By the end of the fall semester of their first year in the MCRO program (second year Ph.D. students, first year M.D./Ph.D. students), the MCRO student must hold a dissertation committee meeting. This meeting is intended as a way for the advisor to become familiar with the expectations of a MCRO Ph.D. research project and for the MCRO faculty on the committee to get to know the advisor a full year before the student seeks formal approval of their dissertation research project (typically by the end of the fall semester of the second year in MCRO).
- Non-MCRO faculty with MCRO students benefit from the effort that MCRO faculty expend on training our students. Therefore, non-MCRO faculty with MCRO students

would be expected to contribute to the intellectual life of the department in whatever ways possible, including attendance at seminars and other departmental events, and membership on dissertation committees. Volunteering to teach in department courses cannot be expected but would be appropriate.

- Subject to the availability of funds, MCRO students in non-MCRO labs are eligible for MCRO training grants, travel funds, or tuition remission,
- Non-MCRO faculty will not be allowed to act as research advisor for more than one MCRO student at a time.
- The non-MCRO research advisor must sign a form outlining:
 - (1) the requirements for a Ph.D. degree in Microbiology & Immunology,
 - (2) restrictions on MCRO students in non-MCRO labs,
 - (3) the commitment of departmental faculty to training our students, and
 - (4) the limits on Microbiology & Immunology financial support for MCRO students with non-departmental research advisors.
- Successful mentoring of a MCRO student combined with a record of participation in department activities are likely to be looked upon favorably in considering an eventual non-primary appointment.