



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

MEDG 548 DIRECTED STUDIES - GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN THE MEDICAL GENETICS GRADUATE PROGRAM

Purpose:

The purpose of Directed Studies / MEDG 548 is to formalize, with a grade, the requirement that first year students work in the laboratory and begin developing their research project early in their graduate training. The lighter course load resulting from a reduction of more structured courses is intended to substantially assist students to initiate their thesis work in the first year. It is anticipated that students will do bench work and reading related to their potential thesis project.

Time spent:

Active research should be viewed as the most important training for students and should not be given lower priority than other regular course work. Although it may vary among laboratories, people, and course load of the student, **it is reasonable to expect a student to spend half their time on laboratory-related work while taking other first year course work.**

Goals/assignments:

The goals of the work should be discussed by the supervisor and student as soon as the student enters the program and will vary depending on the background of the student. Some students may spend much time just learning new techniques. Others may have begun a project in the summer and will be actively collecting data. Likewise, a new student may also spend more time reading very basic scientific papers relating to the area of work, whereas an experienced student will be more focused on scanning the literature for recent related publications. Some suggestions of possible methods to monitor student progress on an ongoing basis:

- Monthly short written summaries of techniques learned; experiments performed; data collected; data analyzed, etc.
- Submission of lists of scientific papers read relevant to topic.
- Regular short written or oral summaries of a relevant paper or topic.
- Regular meetings with supervisor and/or review of lab book.

Final grade/evaluation:

The grade should be based on work performed while the student is taking courses [i.e. from September through April for students starting in September, and from January through April plus September through December for students starting in January]. A grade for the directed studies will be assigned for each term (i.e. end of December and end of April) and the final grade will be an average of both marks. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to assign a mark. However, he/she should discuss the mark with the other members of the Student's Advisory Committee, preferably after the student has presented their research work at a committee meeting.