PNNL-WSU Distinguished Graduate Student Research Program Guidelines

Objective: The Distinguished Graduate Student Research Program (DGRP) is intended to increase the quality and quantity of STEM PhD students across the WSU system, while providing an enhanced research experience by aligning WSU faculty, students, and PNNL scientists with the unique capabilities and research programs at PNNL. The program is particularly interested in helping to recruit outstanding students to WSU graduate programs representing the existing and emerging areas of collaboration with PNNL: nuclear science and engineering; electric power grid; bioproducts; catalysis; environmental, water and soil science and engineering; and other emerging areas of collaboration.

Application: The program is jointly coordinated by the Director of Research Partnerships at PNNL, the WSU Vice President for Research, and the WSU Dean of the Graduate School. Students are nominated to the program by a WSU faculty member and PNNL scientist.

Note: The application process has been restructured to use the DGRP to more efficiently recruit top graduate student applicants to WSU. Interested co-advisors from WSU and PNNL should submit a joint-DGRP application by January 10th, 2020. The two-part application must include:

1. A two-page document (11-point font and 1” margins) that contains:
   a. Statement outlining nature of collaborative research between the WSU faculty and PNNL scientist.
   b. The specific student project within this collaborative research.
2. Two signed letters of intent (one from the WSU faculty and one from the PNNL scientist) to mentor and provide funding support to a student.

These initial applications will be reviewed and screened by the DGRP executive committee. Approved applications may then be used to help in student recruitment. Once a student has been identified and accepted into their respective PhD program, the PIs must submit the student’s curriculum vita and graduate application material for review by the DGRP executive committee. Students selected for participation in the DGRP will receive an additional acceptance letter to augment their official offer letter from their respective PhD program.

Once the DGRP acceptance letter has been received, the WSU faculty advisor is required to submit an eREX on behalf of the DGRP student. Additional information on this process can be found at https://orso.wsu.edu/submit-a-proposal/ and by contacting ORSO@wsu.edu.

Eligibility: Prior to final appointment to the program, the student must be accepted into a PhD program at WSU. The DGRP involves students working on government-funded research at PNNL, a DOE-owned facility. DOE requires that all DGRP candidates and WSU advisors who are foreign nationals be reviewed for meeting DOE access requirements before the student or faculty member is approved for access to PNNL and access to information generated at PNNL. Continued participation in the program is contingent upon meeting the DOE access requirements in effect at the time.

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Financial Support: The program is designed to provide funding support jointly from WSU and PNNL sources. The goal of the DGRP is to help facilitate collaborative research and graduate student training between PNNL and WSU.

- DGRP students are funded through their WSU department and PNNL. **Funding does not come directly from the DGRP.**

- Prior to All But Dissertation (ABD) status, DGRP students will be funded by WSU with means typical of the department and as agreed upon with their WSU faculty advisor. This support can include but is not limited to grant or gift funds from any source, a teaching assistantship, or a state funded research assistantship. Assistantships provide a stipend, a tuition waiver and health insurance (please see Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual, Chapter 9).

- After achieving ABD status, DGRP students will receive a stipend at Step 85, or five steps higher than the department norm—whichever is higher—with funds provided by PNNL for up to 2 years (24 months total) while the student continues his/her dissertation research at PNNL. The student will also receive a full, academic year tuition waiver provided by the WSU Graduate School. The elevated stipend level and tuition waiver are intended to recognize the prestige of the program. **DGRP student research conducted at PNNL must be directly associated with the student’s dissertation research.** Funding will be provided by PNNL through a sponsored agreement to WSU via the WSU Office of Research Support and Operations (ORSO). PNNL will provide funds for the assistantship stipend, insurance and mandatory fees on existing or future research funds.

- The WSU faculty advisor must keep the PNNL co-advisor updated on the student’s academic progress at WSU at least twice a year and must inform the PNNL co-advisor at least 60 days prior to the expected start date for the student at PNNL to allow sufficient time for the funding agreement to be placed for the student’s cost.

- Tuition waivers are not available during summer semesters; therefore, WSU and PNNL may elect to employ the student on a wage basis set equivalent to the stipend and benefit fees.

- If the student requires additional time, beyond the two years of PNNL funding, to complete the his/her dissertation, the responsibility for providing stipend and tuition support reverts to the student’s WSU graduate program.

- Once a student schedules his/her preliminary exam, the student must notify the DGRP Coordinator (DGRP@wsu.edu) to discuss the transition process from WSU to PNNL.

**Summer Funding:** DGRP students are encouraged to take advantage of summer funding opportunities that offer financial support as well as research development and experience. The following terms apply:

- **Pre-ABD:** DGRP students who are pre-ABD status and on a WSU campus are encouraged to leverage available summer funding opportunities if their WSU department only funds a nine-month appointment.

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Pre-ABD summer funding opportunities for DGRP students may include time-slip work through their home department, time-slip work through their advisor’s lab, funding through an advisor’s grant, or applying for funding in the form of a PNNL Internship.

- **Post-ABD:** When DGRP students achieve ABD status, students will move to funding support by PNNL for up to 24 months. During this period of the DGRP where students are funded by PNNL, students are not eligible to apply for funding in the form of a PNNL Internship.

**Thesis Committee and Forms:** Students participating in the DGRP will be advised by individuals from both PNNL and WSU. This can occur by being officially co-advised or having one major advisor from either PNNL or WSU.

- **All DGRP participants starting the program after the 2019 cohort are required have both their PNNL and WSU advisors officially on their graduate committee.**

- **DGRP students must complete the Institutional Transition Form to ensure there is a smooth and transparent transition from WSU to PNNL.**

Additional information is available on the [DGRP website](http://dgrp.wsu.edu) and by emailing DGRP@wsu.edu.