

Registration

Registration for the three academic terms (fall, spring, summer) following the student's matriculation is the responsibility of the student. **Please consult the [VCU academic calendar](#) for add /drop and withdraw deadlines.** Overdue financial obligations, failure to comply with health policy requirements, etc. may interrupt the registration process. **Should a late fee be applied, the student is responsible for payment** unless mitigating circumstances can be demonstrated. Similarly, the student is responsible for compliance with University policy and standards that may impact registration. Students are registered in the Oral Health Research PhD program. <http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-dentistry/oral-health-research-phd/>

Once students have selected their dissertation topic they can request moving to a concentration in the PhD program. Each concentration has specific course requirements.

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-dentistry/oral-health-research-phd-concentration-cancer/>

<http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/school-dentistry/oral-health-research-phd-concentration-infection-immunology/>

Course Load

Full-time students register for a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 15 credit hours in the fall and spring terms and 3 credit hours in the summer. **Please consult with your PI or program director before registration each semester to confirm course load and schedule.** Enrollment must be continuous during the training period.

The didactic courses defined by the program are the minimum requirements. Students may be advised to take additional course work depending on their academic backgrounds and are expected to comply with academic advice; failure to do so may be considered grounds for dismissal. Completion of the required number of credit hours does not automatically confer a degree. The decision to award a degree takes place at the dissertation defense.

Registration for less than the minimum required number of credit hours may be permitted for students in the final stage of completing a doctoral dissertation. Such exemption must be requested by the Research Advisor with approval of the Program Director. Request for such an exception is made by submission of a Special Action Form. Such exemption is not automatic.

Students in receipt of financial aid must not attempt more than 150 percent of the hours required for their degree program.

Initial Course Registration

Students should register for the following courses:

Laboratory Safety Canvas <https://virginiacommonwealth.instructure.com/courses/48902>

This is an online course to be completed prior to starting your laboratory rotations. Please inform the program director when you have completed this course. The course consists of a series of slides designed to acquaint you with proper laboratory conduct and procedures as well as personal health and safety. This will be supplemented by laboratory specific procedures.

Laboratory Opportunities (OCMB 703)

The course exposes you to the research opportunities available for your PhD. Representatives from each laboratory will present overviews of the research in their lab to provide you with information for selecting your laboratory rotations. This is a 1.0 credit course requiring attendance at all sessions.

Laboratory Rotations (OCMB 705)

Laboratory rotations will help you decide where you would like to conduct your dissertation research. You may do a minimum of two and a maximum of four rotations. During the rotation, you will participate in some aspect of the

research and prepare an oral presentation to be delivered at the end of the rotation. You are evaluated both on your efforts in the laboratory and the quality of your presentation. This is a variable credit course.

Oral Biology Seminar Series (OCMB 704)

Students attend Philips Institute seminars presented by faculty, researchers or visiting lecturers. For each seminar, students must review a paper by the presenter for discussion. This is a 1.0 credit course. **Students must also attend all research in progress talks.**

Oral Microbiology and Disease (OCMB 701)

A comprehensive introduction to the oral microbiome including tissue and bone development, oral microbial systems, and microbial-induced oral diseases and treatments. 2.0 credits.

Additional course requirements and registration will be discussed during orientation.

Laboratory Rotations

The selection of a laboratory and dissertation advisor is one of the most critical decisions that a graduate student will make. The principle investigator (PI) is responsible for both the rotation experience and an evaluation that fully documents the student's performance.

During the first few weeks of the fall semester, OCMB 703 introduces the students to research opportunities. By the end of OCMB 703, students should have identified three faculty members with whom they would like to rotate. The student then writes a short (~1000 word) paper on why they would like to rotate through those labs. The students will contact the PI and alert the program director (PD) of their choices. A student may change their rotation selection any time before the rotation begins by notifying the PI and the program director. The rotations are subject to the agreement of the laboratory PI and the department chair. On completion of the laboratory rotation, students will be asked to complete an evaluation.