

Choosing an MS Advisor for the BS/MS program

Update: 21 August 2017

Choosing an advisor for graduate research is an important decision. Finding an MS advisor for BS/MS students follows a similar, though abbreviated, procedure to the PhD program. Briefly, before the end of their BS degree, students will rotate in at least two Chemistry research groups (details below) before submitting their requests for graduate research advisors to the Graduate Operations Committee (GOC). The GOC will review the requests and submit a recommendation to the Departmental Executive Committee (DEC), who will make the ultimate decision and inform the student.

Rotations. Brief rotations will be required for all BS/MS students (at least 2 rotations from regular tenure-track Chemistry faculty that are at least 1 week each; at a minimum, these would involve meeting with faculty and graduate students from each group, but could involve more hands-on time at the discretion of the student and potential advisor). Rotations must be completed before the start of the MS degree. These rotations will expose the student to research across the Chemistry department. Rotations may be arranged by the student directly with faculty or via the GOC.

Advisor requests. Students will submit a ranked list for preferred MS advisors to the GOC via Kathy Lucas at least two months before the end of the BS degree. The list must be ranked in order of preference and include at least two potential advisors. Students may, but are not required to, request their undergraduate research advisors as their MS advisor. The request will be reviewed by the GOC and DEC.

For faculty who are not "Chemistry-tenure-track" who are interested in advising BS/MS students: If a student requests a faculty member who is not "Chemistry tenure track" as an advisor, the faculty member is requested to submit 3 documents to the GOC regarding each potential advisee. These documents will be evaluated by the GOC and Executive Committee as part of the advisor decision process.

Recognizing that mentoring a graduate student of any form is a serious responsibility, the GOC requests:

1. Research plan (1-2 pages). This document would outline the key research question(s), motivation and methodologies for chemistry research during the MS portion of the student's experience. In addition, the faculty would provide a summary of facilities/resources needed for the research (e.g. office space, lab space, specific instrumentation) and expected research expenses (e.g. chemicals, cost of instrument time) and the faculty member's approach to providing these facilities and resources.
2. Mentoring plan (1-2 pages). This document would summarize how the faculty member intends to mentor the student, including, for example, group meetings, regular one-on-one meetings, etc.
3. Safety plan (1-2 pages). An outline of safety considerations for the project, and the approach to ensuring that the student not only learns safe practices, but conducts research in a safe environment (e.g. never doing labwork on one's own, chemical safety).

These documents should be submitted to Kathy Lucas no less than 2 months in advance of the start of the student's MS program.