

The content included here is effective Fall 2017 pending approval of the Laney Graduate School Executive Council.

This handbook outlines program rules and requirements for chemistry graduate program students. Students should also familiarize themselves with the rules and requirements of the Laney Graduate School via their official handbook. Continuing students agree to be bound by the rules and requirements of both handbooks.

[Laney Graduate School Handbook](#)

While we strive to keep the Department of Chemistry graduate handbook complete and up-to-date, the program administration may clarify or change policies as needed. All changes will be announced ahead of time (see Communication Guidelines to understand how important information will be shared with students) and reflected in the copy of the handbook available on the department website.

If you have questions about the handbook, your first point of contact should be the Graduate Program Coordinator.

All forms referenced in this handbook are available from the Graduate Program Coordinator and [on our website](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION.....	4
GOALS FOR GRADUATES.....	5
ORIENTATION	6
RESEARCH ROTATION PROGRAM	7
RESEARCH GROUP SELECTION & ASSIGNMENT.....	9
COMMITTEE SELECTION	10
COURSEWORK.....	11
Course Registration	11
Registering for Non-Chemistry Courses.....	11
Grading	12
Petitioning for Course Credit or a Course Waiver.....	12
Coursework Residency Requirement	13
TEACHING	14
TA Responsibilities	14
TA Probation Procedures	15
Teaching Opportunities for Advanced Students	16
ANNUAL REPORTS	17
SECOND YEAR QUALIFYING EXAM.....	18
THIRD YEAR MILESTONE REQUIREMENT	19
FOURTH YEAR MILESTONE REQUIREMENT.....	21
FIFTH YEAR + DEGREE COMPLETION PLAN	22
FUNDING	23
MERIT AWARDS.....	24

CANDIDACY (ENTRY BEFORE FALL 2017)	25
CANDIDACY (ENTRY FALL 2017 AND LATER)	26
DEGREE COMPLETION	28
Chemistry-Specific Degree Completion Guidelines	28
PROBATION AND APPEAL PROCESS	30
Causes of Probationary Status	30
Review Process	31
Appeal of Probationary Status	31
Termination	31
GRIEVANCE POLICY	32
COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES	33
Email Policy	33
Department Calendar	33
Communicating “Open Door” Events	33

GRADUATE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Emory University Department of Chemistry
Atwood Hall 380

Core Office Hours 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
Many members of our staff are available outside these times.

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GOALS FOR GRADUATES

The James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies at Emory University is committed to education that provides students with deep and broad expertise in their chosen fields, creativity to cross disciplinary boundaries, courage to challenge convention, and confidence to ask unexpected questions and articulate bold new perspectives.

Graduates of the PhD program in chemistry should be able to:

- Pose a research question and formulate an investigative approach using current research methods in chemistry.
- Conduct and communicate independent, original research in chemistry.
- Critically evaluate the research literature in chemistry.
- Communicate concepts and procedures in chemistry effectively — to peers, students, the scientific community, the lay public, and granting agencies.

ORIENTATION

New students are required to attend Chemistry graduate program and Laney Graduate School orientation before starting classes.

International Students will be scheduled for ELSP (English Language Support Program) testing and will attend ISSS (International Student and Scholar Services) orientation as well.

The chemistry program orientation will incorporate a short presentation from all research faculty. Additionally, we will cover:

- parking, mail, and keys
- Emory ID cards
- payroll and compensation
- facilities and stockroom
- safety training
- TA training
- proposal course
- coursework advising with faculty

For more information about Laney Graduate School orientation, please [visit their website](#).

RESEARCH ROTATION PROGRAM

Rotations are 5 week experiences in Emory research groups for the benefit of first year scholars. The rotation program is intended to acquaint students with the research and resources of the Department before they choose a research home for pursuing their PhD. All students are required to complete 3 rotations before joining a research group.

Structure of the Rotation Experience

Attend Research Presentations

Mid-August through Start of Classes

All research faculty will offer 20-minute research presentations during orientation followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer session. Attendance at all presentations is mandatory for all first-year students.

Meetings with Faculty

Before the Start of Classes

Students should arrange a short meeting with each faculty member they are considering for a rotation. Faculty members may also invite students to meet with them for this purpose. A student may not select a faculty member for a rotation without first meeting with that faculty member. Students are also encouraged to meet with graduate students in laboratories in which they are considering rotating.

Rotation Advisor Selection

First Week of the Fall Semester

Students will select groups in which to rotate by returning the **Rotation Advisor Selection** form to the Graduate Program Coordinator by the announced deadline.

(continued on next page...)

Rotation Assignments

Second Week of the Fall Semester

The Director of Graduate Studies (in consultation with the Graduate Program Coordinator) will assign the rotation groups and arrange the order of the rotations for each student. In most cases, students are assigned to all of the groups they select. Occasionally, students may be asked to consider other research groups. Priority will be given to scheduling students as evenly as possible across all of the rotation periods.

Rotations

Approximately 5 weeks per rotation

Faculty have considerable flexibility in assigning rotation activities. At a minimum, satisfactory completion of the rotation will require attendance at all group meetings, seminars, student seminars, and/or journal club activities scheduled during the rotation period. Faculty will provide rotation students with a supervised laboratory experience during the rotation period. Faculty may set a minimum hour-per-week requirement for student engagement.

During the time a student is engaged in a rotation, the student's total research effort should be focused on that rotation. Faculty cannot require that students participate in research activities in a group outside their current rotation assignment. Students are expected to complete coursework and TA responsibilities during rotations. With these requirements in mind, students should feel free to participate broadly in the intellectual life of the department.

Additional Guidelines

- A student may change their choice of the second and/or third rotation group during an earlier rotation. The student must submit a petition letter to the DGS stating the reasons for the requested change. The DGS will discuss the petition with all faculty involved and advise the student of the outcome.
- Students who have completed a summer rotation have two options. 1) They may request to extend the summer through the first rotation period, pending available space in the group; 2) They may select three new rotation advisors, completing a total of four rotations.

RESEARCH GROUP SELECTION & ASSIGNMENT

Prior to research advisor selection, students should consider the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Program Coordinator as primary contacts for questions and concerns.

Students will be informed of a research advisor selection deadline before the conclusion of research rotations. Students should indicate the groups that they wish to join in order of preference by returning the [Research Advisor Selection](#) form to the Graduate Program Coordinator before this deadline.

The entire faculty will meet to review student selections and assign students to groups. In most cases, students are assigned to their first-choice group. When the first choice does not accept a student, the second and third choices are considered. Students will be informed of their group assignment by the Graduate Program Coordinator following the faculty meeting.

If a student is not accepted into any of the groups in which they expressed an interest, they may be asked to consider other groups with openings and complete a fourth rotation. Students who fail to join a group by the end of the spring semester of their first year may be asked to leave the program.

Changing Research Groups

1. Student submits a letter to the Graduate Committee describing the reason for the requested change AND an up-to-date research progress report.
2. Student's current advisor submits a letter to the Graduate Committee outlining the student's research progress and the length of continuing support.
3. Student's new advisor submits a letter to the Graduate Committee outlining conditions for completion of the degree and the status of support.

COMMITTEE SELECTION

At the beginning of a student's second year, the graduate committee—in consultation with the research advisor—will assign a committee to the student. The committee selections will be finalized by the DGS, with possible adjustments that take into account the distribution of responsibility across the faculty.

In addition to acting as a resource for advice throughout the PhD, the committee will:

- Serve as the student's Annual Report Committee
- Contribute to any other required reports of student progress
- Serve as the student's dissertation committee

The student's responsibility to the committee includes:

- Provide regular reports of research progress, including, but not necessarily limited to, the annual report and milestone requirements.
- Respond to email from the committee in a timely manner—within 24 hours on regular working days.
- Take responsibility for scheduling of activities that require the committee to collaborate, including reserving rooms, providing at least one week of notice when the committee needs to meet.

When applying for candidacy, students should submit the Laney Graduate School **Dissertation Committee Signature** Form. This form must be submitted as soon as possible but no later than September 15th of the 4th year.

COURSEWORK

Coursework is an opportunity to delve deeper into the science of your chosen research area as well as the discipline of chemistry more broadly. Required skills-based coursework in proposal preparation, library research, pedagogy, and ethics, among others, will help prepare you for your thesis work and for the job market.

Course Registration

All students should meet with their advisor to decide on necessary coursework and return the [Course Selection Form](#) to the Graduate Program Coordinator OR register themselves online via [OPUS](#). Students are responsible for ensuring that they are enrolled prior to the enrollment deadline each semester.

New Students

New students will meet with faculty advisors during orientation to select their coursework for the first semester. A signed [Course Selection Form](#) is required. Enrollment in two courses is considered a full load during rotations. Students wishing to take a third course should discuss this plan with the DGS prior to enrollment.

Registering for Non-Chemistry Courses

Students who wish to register for courses outside of the Department of Chemistry must complete the [External Coursework Petition](#). This form requires signatures from the advisor, the Instructor of Record for the requested course, and the graduate committee.

Grading

Courses are graded as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) or on a letter grade basis (A, A-, B+, B, B-, C, or F).

The following courses should be taken on an S/US basis:

CHEM 504, CHEM 597R, CHEM 599R, CHEM791R, CHEM 792R,
CHEM 793R, CHEM 794R, CHEM 798R, CHEM 799R, JPE 600

All other courses should be taken for a letter grade.

Petitioning for Course Credit or a Course Waiver

Students may petition to receive course credit for graduate courses taken at another institution **or** a course waiver for a maximum of 9 credit hours. The student should submit the [**Petition for Course Credit and/or Waiver**](#) form to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Petitions will be forwarded to the Graduate Committee for review. Transfer credit requests must also be approved by the Laney Graduate School Dean.

What is the difference between transfer credit and a waiver?

Course *credit* may be given only for courses that were not used to satisfy the requirements of any previous degree. Transfer credit may also reduce the number of courses required at Emory by an equivalent amount—a waiver. A course *waiver* alone may be requested to reduce the usual six credit course load required for candidacy but the courses themselves will not be reflected on the Emory transcript.

Students wishing to use non-chemistry coursework as part of a transfer or waiver request should include a rationale from their advisor indicating the relevance of the course to the chemistry degree. This should be signed by the advisor.

All requested waivers and petitions will be reviewed. However, students should be advised that in most cases, it benefits the student to take a full slate of courses at Emory.

Due: Coursework petitions must be submitted by the end of the first semester of coursework and will be accepted as early as the first graduate committee meeting of the semester.

Coursework Residency Requirement

Students in the graduate program are required to maintain a full course load consisting of at least 9 units during the fall, spring and summer semesters. Pre-candidacy, students can add hours of CHEM 599R to reach 9 credits. Post-candidacy, students should add hours of CHEM 799R to reach 9 credits.

TEACHING

Emory seeks to ensure that every student's education as a scholar is balanced with thoughtful and thorough preparation in the art of teaching. All chemistry students will serve as Teaching Assistants as part of their education. Additional teaching opportunities are available on a competitive basis to those who are interested.

Teaching Requirements

- All students will complete the Laney Graduate School TATTO (Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity) Program—including the two day TATT 600 workshop during graduate orientation.
- All students will serve as a Teaching Assistant for two semesters—once in the Fall and once in the Spring of the first year. Assignments are made by the Graduate Committee.

TA Responsibilities

- Provide classroom instruction as needed
- Develop laboratory course materials as needed
- Lead a lab section (if applicable)
- Grade homework and quizzes
- Proctor exams
- Work closely with your faculty supervisor to ensure duties are completed to a high standard of excellence
- Other duties supportive of University instruction as assigned

TA assignments are intended to comprise approximately 10 hrs/week for a TA earning two credits (TATT 605). Graduate TA assignments are graded on an S/US basis.

TA Probation Procedures

Students are expected to achieve an “S” grade for their work as a TA. If a student receives—or is advised that they are on track to receive—a “U” grade, the following probationary procedure will be followed.

1. Graduate student must re-take any failed assessments.
2. Graduate student must arrange a meeting with their lab/course director, advisor, the DGS, and the Graduate Program Coordinator to collaboratively develop a plan to achieve an “S” grade.

Advanced Students

Complete and submit the [Advanced Graduate Student TA Commitment Request Form](#) each year (**August**) in consultation with your P.I. Available advanced TA support depends on the total number of courses requesting TA assistance (based on enrollment). TA support will only be offered to advanced students when all first year students have received TA assignments and additional TA slots remain unfilled.

In the event that there are more requests for Advanced TA support than there are available positions, the Director of Graduate Studies will assign available lines in consultation with the Department Chair.

Teaching Opportunities for Advanced Students



- Dean's Teaching Fellowship
- SIRE for Natural Sciences
- ORDER
- Service Instructorships
- TA for upper level lecture courses (internal chemistry opportunities)

For the most up-to-date opportunities, visit the Laney Graduate School [Advanced Student Fellowships](#) page.

ANNUAL REPORTS

It is the responsibility of the student to track their progress towards the PhD. Annual report and milestone requirements will assist you in this process. If you don't know where you stand—ask!

Every student should submit the [Annual Report Survey](#) and the [Annual Committee Evaluation](#) every year.

Students should obtain signatures on the Annual Committee Evaluation during an in-person meeting scheduled on or before **April 30th** each year. At this in-person meeting, students should be prepared to discuss any milestones submitted during the year (second year qualifying exam, third year milestone, etc.) In addition, they should be prepared to answer the following questions:

- What did you accomplish this year?
- Where are your future plans and goals?

SECOND YEAR QUALIFYING EXAM

Qualifying Exams are an important checkpoint meant to show that you are on a promising research track toward the Ph.D. degree.

The Second Year Qualifying Exam is comprised of a written report and an oral defense (closed door; committee only) intended to assess:

- basic research skills
- knowledge of the literature
- work ethic and motivation.

Student Responsibilities

- Coordinate scheduling with the committee.
- Reserve a room for the report.
- Ensure that the research committee completes an assessment and that the advisor submits the assessment to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

Due: The written report must be submitted at least one week prior to the scheduled oral defense and no later than **November 1st** in the first semester of the second year. The oral defense must be completed by the last day of classes in the fall semester.

For more information, review the [Second Year Evaluation Requirements](#) on the website.

THIRD YEAR MILESTONE REQUIREMENT

Proposal development is a critical skill for scientists. The ability to recognize problems and creatively address them is key to success in research and teaching. Students who develop research proposals also practice critical thinking, learn to evaluate the work of others, and become more familiar with the scientific literature.

In the third year, students will be required to write three one-page research proposals.

Topic Requirements

- One proposal may be an optimized form of the student's proposal from the proposal writing course
- Two proposals must detail an idea for research outside of what is being conducted in the student's home group

Content Requirements

1. Identify the problem.
2. Identify known approaches to solving the problem and assess the merits and demerits of each.
3. Propose a solution to the problem.
4. Describe expected outcomes and implications of the proposed studies.

Format Requirements

Each proposal should be one page or less. Students should consult their advisor to select an appropriate format within these parameters (examples: quad sheet, narrative, PowerPoint, etc.).

Assessment Criteria

Faculty feedback will be provided based on the following:

1. Importance of the problem and the need for a new approach
2. Logical development of the problem and the student's new idea
3. Creativity of the student's solution to the problem
4. Quality of the writing

Assessment Timeline

- **By February 1st of the third year:** Students will submit all three proposals to their committee (at least two weeks prior to their scheduled annual report.)
- **During the third year annual report:** Proposals will be presented by the student in an open presentation, and discussed and assigned a pass/fail grade by the committee in a subsequent closed exam. The student should submit the **Third Year Milestone Requirement Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator.
- **Spring of the third year:** Students may revise proposals that did not pass assessment. Revised proposals must either a) be signed off on by each committee member; 2) be examined and passed in a second committee meeting.
- **Note:** Students who fail to have three proposals approved by the end of the spring semester in the third year will be placed on academic probation.

FOURTH YEAR MILESTONE REQUIREMENT

Taken together, the third year proposals, the original research proposal, and the proposal writing course provide students with a solid foundation in creating and communicating original research. The original research proposal is the penultimate outgrowth of these efforts, followed by the dissertation.

All fourth year students must present and defend an original research proposal. It is essential that the proposal not overlap significantly with any ongoing research at Emory.

The Original Research Proposal **must be completed by April 30th of the fourth year**. The written component is due to the committee at least one week before the oral presentation.

Guidelines

- Students should use the NIH Research Training Proposal requirements as a guideline for the written proposal.
- The oral presentation should:
 - Clearly define the proposed problem and how the proposed research would be accomplished
 - Include approximately one dozen PowerPoint slides or other visual aids

The student is responsible for scheduling a date, time, and location for the oral defense with their committee and for ensuring the location meets any A/V needs.

FIFTH YEAR + DEGREE COMPLETION PLAN

A student in their fifth year who is not graduating must submit a graduation plan and have it approved by their committee. The plan should be presented as a written timeline to graduation and must be signed by all committee members. The student should submit this plan to the Graduate Program Coordinator along with their annual report form.

FUNDING

All chemistry graduate students are admitted with a stipend, 100% health insurance subsidy, and 100% tuition waiver. Funding is guaranteed as long as the student continues to make satisfactory progress towards the degree.

Graduate student stipend support comes from a number of sources, including:

- Laney Graduate School fellowships
- Teaching Assistantships
- External fellowships
- Faculty research grants

Students receiving any form of stipend support are expected to devote themselves full time to graduate work and research. Outside employment is not permitted. The only exception is tutoring which must be kept to ten hours or less per week. Breaks should be discussed with the research advisor and should be limited to two weeks per year. Students who take extended breaks may have their stipend terminated.

[Professional Development Support](#) (PDS) funding is available for research travel, conferences, and training via the Laney Graduate School. Students should familiarize themselves with program guidelines and take advantage of this support. Two additional travel grants of \$250 each are available by application to the [Graduate Student Council](#) (GSC).

MERIT AWARDS

Keep track of these awards! While they cannot self-nominate, students are encouraged to make their research advisors aware of awards for which they may be eligible. The Department of Chemistry awards outstanding students a total of over \$15k each year above and beyond stipend funding.

Quayle Outstanding Student Award

1 per year, \$6k per award

Awarded to the best PhD student in the department. Research advisors may nominate only one student. Nominees must be in their fourth year or above and nominations must be accompanied by an advisor letter and one additional letter.

Quayle Senior Student Awards

2 per year, \$3k per award

Awarded to exceptional students in their third year or above. To qualify, students must demonstrate ongoing excellence in graduate research.

Quayle Student Achievement Awards

5-6 per year, \$2k per award

Awarded to students who have demonstrated excellent research accomplishment in the past academic year. There are no restrictions as to class year.

Outstanding TA Awards

4 per year, \$500 per award

Awarded by the organic, general chemistry, analytical, and physical lab directors to TAs who demonstrated strong communication and interpersonal skills as well as professionalism in the lab.

CANDIDACY (ENTRY BEFORE FALL 2017)

What is Candidacy?

Candidacy status is an indication that a doctoral student has developed sufficient mastery of a discipline to produce an original research contribution in their field.

Eligibility

PhD students are eligible for candidacy when they have earned at least 54 credit hours at the 500 level or above.

Students must also complete the following before entering candidacy:

- Rotations
- LGS Ethics course (JPE 600)
- Chemistry JPE Requirements
- Second Year Report
- TATTO (TATT 600 & TATT 605 plus 2 semesters of TA)

Please submit the candidacy application (available on the Laney Graduate School website) as soon as you fulfill these requirements.

CANDIDACY (ENTRY FALL 2017 AND LATER)

What is Candidacy?

Candidacy status is an indication that a doctoral student has developed sufficient mastery of a discipline to produce an original research contribution in their field.

Eligibility

PhD students are eligible for candidacy when they have earned at least 54 credit hours at the 500 level or above. All incomplete (I) and In Progress (IP) grades must be resolved. Candidates must be in good standing with the program.

Students must also complete the following before entering candidacy:

- Rotations
- LGS Ethics course (JPE 600)*
- Chemistry JPE Requirements
- Second Year Qualifying Exam
- TATTO (TATT 600 & TATT 605 plus 2 semesters of TA)
- Six chemistry courses (or equivalent course release based on transfer coursework) with a minimum G.P.A. of 2.7

*TATTO 610 may be completed *after* entering candidacy.

Timing

Students should enter candidacy as soon as all requirements have been completed. **Students must reach candidacy by September 15th of their fourth year.**

Students who do not meet this deadline will be placed on academic probation, will not be eligible for PDS funds, and may forfeit financial support. These sanctions will be lifted when the student enters candidacy.

How to Apply

Students enter candidacy by submitting the application to enter candidacy, available on the LGS website. Chemistry will confirm that all program requirements have been met and LGS will confirm that remaining requirements have been met.

Students are considered “in candidacy” when the Dean has approved the application to enter candidacy.

DEGREE COMPLETION

The dissertation is the culmination of a student's Emory training. And after it's over, most students throw a party! Many of the degree requirements must be completed well ahead of the actual defense, so make sure to familiarize yourself with the procedures well in advance.

The Laney Graduate School sets the requirements for the completion of the graduate degree. Students should familiarize themselves with [these requirements](#). The Graduate Program Coordinator is available to assist students in navigating the degree completion procedures and can provide students with a packet of required paperwork.

Chemistry-Specific Degree Completion Guidelines

- The dissertation must be submitted to the student's entire committee at least seven days in advance of the scheduled defense.
- The date, time, and location of the defense must be publicly advertised at least seven days in advance.
- All committee members must be present at the defense.

Completion Guidelines

If a student has not completed the degree at the end of the seventh year, the program may grant a one-year extension. The program must submit notice of this extension to the Dean, no later than August 1 of the seventh year (before the eighth year). The notice must contain a completion timeline signed by both the

student and the dissertation committee chair or co-chairs. Students who enroll for this extension year will be responsible for some tuition.

If a student has not completed the degree at the end of the eighth year, the student may continue work for at most one additional academic year and only with approval from the Dean. To obtain approval, the program must submit a request to the Dean no later than August 1 of the eighth year (before the ninth year). The request must (a) outline the reasons the student has not completed, (b) consider whether the student needs to repeat any part of the qualifications for candidacy or obtain approval of a new dissertation prospectus, and (c) present a detailed completion timeline signed by both the student and the dissertation committee chair or co-chairs. Students who enroll for this extension year will be responsible for some tuition.

Note: These completion requirements are effective for students entering fall semester of 2017 or later. Students who started before then remain covered by the policy in effect when they first enrolled, available in full on the Laney Graduate School [handbook website](#).

PROBATION AND APPEAL PROCESS

We want all students to succeed. If you are concerned about falling into probationary status, be sure to communicate with the Graduate Program Coordinator and your research advisor to determine your best path forward.

Causes of Probationary Status

Students whose work causes them to fall into probationary status will receive notification from Laney Graduate School. Students who receive a semester or Cumulative G.P.A. of < 2.7 will fall into probationary status. In addition, students will receive a “U” grade for the following courses (thus falling in to probationary status) when they fail to meet a program requirement:

- CHEM 504 for failure to complete rotations or join a research group
- CHEM 798 for failure to complete the Second Year Qualifying Exam
- TATT 605 for unsatisfactory TA performance
- CHEM 599 (pre-candidacy) or CHEM 799 (post-candidacy) for insufficient research progress
- CHEM 599 (pre-candidacy) or CHEM 799 (post-candidacy) for failure to meet a milestone requirement or submit an annual report

Students in probationary status are not eligible for merit awards or service instructorships.

Review Process

All students will be reviewed at the end of each semester by the faculty. Students who fall into probationary status due to a negative review will be informed of their status in writing by the Laney Graduate School. Consequences of a negative review may include:

- Withdrawal of financial support
- Repetition of research, coursework, and/or examinations
- Termination from the program

Appeal of Probationary Status

Students in probationary status may petition for one additional semester to improve their record by following the departmental appeal process.

1. Write a letter to the Graduate Committee detailing any extenuating circumstances that contributed to the probationary status and requesting a one semester extension.
2. Ask the research advisor to submit a letter of support, including a plan for ongoing financial support.

The Graduate Committee will review appeals and make recommendations. Students may petition for a maximum of two semester-long extensions.

Termination

Students whose appeal is not approved will be recommended for termination from the program by no later than the end of their second semester on probation.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students that have a grievance related to some aspect of their treatment in the chemistry graduate program should address a comprehensive written account of the grievance to the Director of Graduate Studies. The Graduate Committee will consider the grievance on the basis of the written complaint. The student will also be afforded the opportunity to present their case to the committee in person. As part of the decision-making process, the Graduate Committee may consider other sources, including, but not limited to, the research advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator. The Graduate Committee will then inform the student of their response to the grievance.

If it is impossible to resolve the grievance within the Graduate Committee or within the broader framework of the Department of Chemistry administrative structure, the Director of Graduate Studies will forward the grievance to the Associate Dean of the Laney Graduate School. From this point forward, the grievance will be handled according to the procedures outlined in the Laney Graduate School handbook. If the issue is with the Director of Graduate studies, the student should go directly to the Associate Dean of the Laney Graduate School.

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Email Policy

Email is the primary medium for official communication between students, faculty, and staff in the Department of Chemistry at Emory University. Official Department of Chemistry communications will be sent to your emory.edu address. Time-sensitive communications will be sent to your email with the expectation that they will be reviewed within 24 hours or less.

Department Calendar

Events of interest in the department, including weekly seminars, are posted on the Google Calendar that appears on the front page of chemistry.emory.edu. Students are encouraged to subscribe to this calendar. Events are also posted throughout the department and announced via email.

Communicating “Open Door” Events

For any event that is open to the public (including the dissertation), it is the student's responsibility to advertise the time and place of the event via the department website. Events must be advertised at least one week in advance. An unadvertised defense, report, or other event may be considered incomplete.