



PhD



**Oral
Sciences**



**Graduate
Handbook**



**COLLEGE
OF DENTISTRY**



2016 – 2017 UIC COLLEGE OF DENTISTRY - PHD IN ORAL SCIENCES GRADUATE HANDBOOK

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Program Overview

Oral health is a critical element of personal well-being. Research has demonstrated the definitive associations between oral and systemic diseases such as periodontitis, cardiovascular disease and preterm birth. The faculty of the PhD in Oral Sciences program focus on one of three areas of oral health research, all of which integrate the oral cavity with systemic and whole body health: Wound Healing, Cancer Biology and Tissue Engineering. The program prepares students for faculty and research positions in interdisciplinary oral health research. Training emphasizes bench research and the evaluation of scientific data in addition to didactic course work. The curriculum consists of a core based on the University of Illinois at Chicago's Graduate Education in Medical Sciences (GEMS) Program coupled with an option to select one of three curricular tracks: Cellular, Molecular, and Developmental Biology; Biomaterials Science; or, Microbiology/Immunology. Students participate in an oral science topics series throughout the program. In addition, training will include presentation and writing skills, as well as other activities essential for developing an independent researcher. A preliminary (candidacy) exam and a final thesis defense are required.

This program manual is meant to serve as a guide to students of the PhD in Oral Science program and their mentors. It should be used alongside the policies and procedures that have been established by the Graduate College of the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Important Contacts

Director of Graduate Studies	Hervé Sroussi, PhD, DMD Associate Professor sroussih@uic.edu 312-996-8630
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Graduate Studies Committee	
Members	Lyndon Cooper, DDS, PhD Satish Alapati, PhD, DDS Ana Bedran-Russo, PhD, DDS Luisa DiPietro, PhD, DDS Phimon Atsawasuan, DDS, MS, MSc, PhD Xianghong Luan, PhD Salvador Nares, PhD, DDS

Curriculum

A complete description of each course may be obtained via the University's website: <http://www.uic.edu/ucat/courses/> Students may use the curriculum planning sheet available on the departmental website.

The didactic curriculum consists of a core, modeled on UIC's GEMS Program, plus one of three concentrations, either Cellular, Molecular and Developmental Biology, Biomaterials Science or Microbiology/Immunology. Students must also complete a thesis project. Courses are listed below:

Required Core Courses

GCLS 501, Biochemistry
 GCLS 502, Molecular Biology
 GCLS 503, Cell Biology and Integrative Physiology
 GCLS 504, Research Methods I
 GCLS 505, Research Methods II - Spring
 GC 501, Scientific Integrity and Responsible Research
 GC 470, Essentials for Animal Research (if research involves animals)
 BSTT 400, Biostatistics I
 BSTT 401, Biostatistics II (BIOE 480 may be substituted) – spring semesters
 OSCI 580, Advanced Oral Sciences I (Odd Yrs)
 OSCI 581, Advanced Oral Sciences II (Even Yrs)
 OSCI 594, Special Topics in Oral Sciences (minimum of 4 credit hours)
 OSCI 595, Oral Science Research Seminar (continually throughout program)

Required Concentrations

Students must select one of the following:

Cellular, Molecular, and Developmental Biology (12 credit hours)

BCMG 513, Structure of Biopolymers
 GCLS 510, Integrative Biology
 GCLS 515, Receptor Pharmacology and Cell Signaling
 PHYB 586, Cell Physiology

Those that have not chosen a mentor may complete up to three laboratory rotations. For this second option, the student should register for OSCI 583 for a minimum of 6 credit hours (during Fall and Spring semesters) or 4 credit hours (during Summer semester).

Biomaterials Science (minimum of 16 hours)

BIOE 494, Special Topics in Bioengineering
 BIOE 460, Materials in Bioengineering
 BIOE 550, Principles of Cell and Tissue Engineering
 BIOE 560, Processing & Properties of Structural Biomaterials
 BIOE 594, Adv Spec Topics in Bioengineering
 BIOE 595, Seminar on Bioengineering
 PROS 504, Dental Materials

Microbiology/Immunology (12 credit hours)

MIM 551, Advanced Immunology
 MIM 553, Molecular Biology of Viruses
 MIM 560, Microbial Pathogenesis
 MIM 594, Special Topics in Microbiology, Immunology, and Virology
 Plus four hours of additional elective offerings as negotiated with major advisor.

Specialized Concentration

The student and advisor may petition the Graduate Studies Committee to develop an individualized concentration consisting of a minimum of 12 credit semester hours. To do so, submit a curriculum plan form to the Director of Graduate Studies with both the student's and advisor's signature.

Only 400 or 500 level courses may be applied towards the PhD. A course may only be applied towards the completion of a single degree whether or not the student is enrolled in two degree programs concurrently.

Research

Students must complete a research project to be used as the thesis project. When enrolled as a PhD student, students should enroll for OSCI 599, Doctoral Thesis Research. To complete the PhD degree, students must register for a minimum of 48 credit hours of OSCI 599.

Academic Procedures

Registration

Registration is completed online. Information on how to register is available on the University's website: www.uic.edu/depts/oar/current_students/registration. All students should visit this website for full information on registration policies.

Students should use the myUIC portal (<http://my.uic.edu>) to view course schedules by semester and to register for courses.

Prior to each semester, all eligible continuing students will receive an email from the University with a date when they are allowed to register (appointment to register). In general, these appointments to register will be sent to students in mid-March for both the Summer and Fall semesters and in mid-October for Spring Semester.

Students who are enrolled in both the PhD and the DMD must follow the registration procedures for the DMD when they are enrolled in the DMD curriculum. Students may add or drop classes up until the second Friday of each semester.

Certain required core courses (eg. BSTT 400 and 401) require the permission of academic coordinators in another college. Students who are experiencing difficulty registering for these classes should contact the Office of Academic Affairs.

Full time students usually register for between 12 and 16 hours during the fall and spring semesters. Students may not register for more than 20 credit hours at a time without prior approval.

When registering for OSCI 599, students should be aware that according to University policy, two 50-minute periods per week for 15 weeks is less than or equal to 1 semester credit hour.

Tuition, Tuition Waivers and Stipends

Tuition

Tuition rates can be found on the University's website:

http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/grad/tuition_grad.html Students are assessed the Graduate Student rate. There is no differential for the Oral Sciences program.

Health Insurance

Students enrolled in the PhD in Oral Sciences are automatically assessed a fee for the CampusCare Health Insurance. Information on CampusCare is available on the University's website:

<http://www.uic.edu/hsc/campuscare/>

Students may opt out of the program if they are receiving coverage from another source. To do so, follow the directions on the Campus Care website. All students must have health insurance while enrolled in the PhD in Oral Science program.

Tuition Waivers

Some students who are enrolled in the PhD program are eligible for one of two types of waivers, either a Graduate College Board of Trustee waiver or a waiver that is granted to students who are supported on either a training grant or an individual F30 or other external fellowship grant.

Board of Trustee Waiver: Students who receive the Board of Trustee waiver will have the following charges waived from their tuition accounts:

- Tuition
- Service fee
- Health service fee
- Academic facilities maintenance fund assessment (AFMFA), if assessed,
- Library and Information Technology Assessment (LITA), if assessed.

No other fees will be covered (such as the CTA UPass fee). Students are responsible for paying these additional fees including the CampusCare insurance fee that is not waived. To receive the waiver, students must sign "Board of Trustees Waiver Acceptance" form by the tenth day of classes of each semester. Failure to do so will result in the lost of the waiver.

Training Grant/F30 Fellowship Waiver:

Students are eligible for a full tuition and fee waiver if they are appointed to a training grant or have received an external grant such as an F30 Fellowship grant from the National Institutes of Health. No action by the student is required for these waivers to be processed.

Taxation of Tuition Waivers:

Students who receive tuition waivers should refer to the Graduate College website for information on the taxability of the amount that tuition waived.

<http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000945>

Stipends

Students who are supported by either a training or a fellowship grant are eligible to receive stipends. The stipend amount is based on the level set by the National Institutes of Health for predoctoral trainees. When a student receives a stipend from a grant source, the student will be appointed in the University as a "predoctoral fellow" implying a non-employee status. As such, the student will not have taxes withheld with each monthly stipend payment or receive a W-2 at the end of the tax year. However, students in a fellowship status must be aware that the stipend may be considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service. Therefore, it is recommended that students consider saving funds in advance of reporting income to the IRS at the end of the tax year.

PhD/DMD Program

Students who are enrolled in both degree programs will have an extended training period (7 years). Students are either enrolled primarily in the PhD program and secondarily in the DMD program or vice versa. Students need to follow the policies and procedures (such as registration timelines) for the program in which they are primarily enrolled. PhD/DMD students must attend the DMD orientation prior to beginning the DMD program. During the first and second years of the DMD curriculum, PhD/DMD students should prioritize their progress in the DMD curriculum over research progress.

PhD/DMD students should plan to take Part I of the National Boards during the summer after the first year of the DMD curriculum.

Students enrolled in the program should meet regularly with the Director of Graduate Studies (at least four times a year) to discuss progress and plan curriculum for both programs. These meetings must occur in addition to the student's regular meetings with the primary advisor.

Students enrolled in both programs are encouraged to view the PhD/DMD Timeline available on the departmental website to understand timing issues related to the candidacy exam and other requirements.

Seminars

All students enrolled in the PhD in Oral Sciences must attend the Oral Sciences Journal Club that meets weekly during the Fall and Spring Semesters. The Oral Sciences Journal Club includes both PhD and Postdoctoral trainees in the Multidisciplinary Oral Science Training (MOST) Program. Students present research articles as well as their own research. Once a month, a career development activity is planned. Students should register for OSCI 595.

Students are encouraged to attend other regularly-occurring seminars and journal clubs in the College of Dentistry including the Oral Cancer Journal Club and the Wound Healing Seminar Series. Students are also encouraged to attend seminar series offered elsewhere on campus. Information on campus research events is available on the website of the Center for Clinical and Translational Science:
<http://www.uic.edu/depts/mcam/CCTS/>

Advising

Students must select a faculty member to serve as the primary advisor during the PhD program. To do so, students should arrange to complete up to three laboratory rotations with three different PhD faculty. Laboratory rotations last between ½ and a full semester. During the rotation, the student works on a project to understand better the potential advisor's area of research and to allow the student and potential advisor to determine feasibility for working together over the longer term. Students should register for OSCI 583 to receive credit hours for the laboratory rotation.

Laboratory rotations are recommended but not required for students who have completed extensive research in the College of Dentistry with a member of the Graduate Faculty prior to enrolling in the PhD program.

Annual Assessment

Students will complete an assessment on an annual basis, usually scheduled in late spring or early summer. The purpose of the assessment is to ensure that the student is meeting goals of the program in a timely manner as well as receiving the support and resources he or she needs. The assessment also serves as a time when the student can petition for a specialized curriculum track or request that a Graduate Studies Committee member serve as Chair of the Candidacy Exam committee.

The assessment consists of three parts: a self-assessment completed by the student, an assessment of the student completed by the advisor and a brief meeting between the student and the Graduate Studies Committee. Generally the two forms are sent several weeks in advance and then distributed to the committee prior to the meeting with the student.

Candidacy Exam

Purpose

The purpose of the exam is to determine the candidate's readiness to undertake dissertation research, and passing it constitutes formal Admission to Candidacy. The purpose is to test the student's ability to think independently and critically.

Timing

A student will undertake the candidacy exam after completion of most, but not necessarily all, of the coursework, and before making a major investment of time and effort towards the dissertation research project. The timing will be assessed by the student's advisor and the Graduate Studies Committee. The student will submit his/her completed curriculum to the Graduate Studies Committee for evaluation. For PhD students, the exam ideally will be given within two years. For combined PhD/DMD students, the exam ideally will be given after three years. After passing the preliminary examination, a minimum of one year must elapse before the defense of the dissertation. Only students in good academic standing are permitted to take the examination.

PhD students who do not complete the degree requirements within five (5) years of passing the examination must retake it. PhD/DMD students may request an extension to this five year rule.

Appointment of the Examination Committee

The committee is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College upon the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee. The student may recommend up to four members (inclusive of the student's advisor) to the Graduate Studies Committee. The Graduate Studies Committee will assign one of its members as Chair of the student's

Examination Committee. The Graduate Studies Committee will make the final recommendation for appointment to the Dean of the Graduate College.

Composition of the Examination Committee

The Examination Committee consists of at least five (5) members, three of whom must be UIC Graduate Faculty with at least two tenured.

Membership must include the following:

- 1) Chair, member of and assigned by the Graduate Studies Committee
- 2) Student's advisor
- 3) External faculty whose primary appointment is outside the College of Dentistry
- 4) Member of the COD PhD in Oral Sciences faculty, with tenure
- 5) One additional member who meets requirements of the Graduate College.

The Examination Committee is not the same as the student's Thesis Committee. After passing the preliminary exam, the student is not obligated to retain all members (with the exception of his or her advisor) on his/her Thesis Committee.

Registration

The student must be registered for credit the term (more than 0 hours) when the exam is taken. The student must register for the summer term if taking the preliminary exam during that term. After passing the candidacy exam, the student who is eligible for a stipend must register each term to continue to receive the stipend.

Examination Format

The exam will consist of both a written and oral section. The written format will follow the Abstract and Research Plan Components guidelines for submitting a R21 proposal to the National Institutes of Health. Students should refer to the guidelines posted on the following site for component descriptions, page limits, font size and other limitations.

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/424/index.htm>

If the student has submitted an F30 proposal, he or she may use the Research Plan Components from his/her F30 submittal for partial fulfillment of the written portion. In this case, the student should also submit a new Specific Aims component for the Candidacy Exam. This second Specific Aims component must be unique from the first Specific Aims and offer a new research direction from that proposed in the Specific Aims of the F30.

The student is allowed to deviate from the research topic he or she plans to pursue for the thesis; however, it is strongly recommended that students work with their advisors to select feasible and appropriate topics for their exams.

The Specific Aims portion of the written exam must be submitted to the Examination Committee for review six weeks prior to the oral exam. The Committee will provide feedback, and if no substantial re-direction is recommended, then the final draft will be submitted to the Committee two weeks prior to the exam. The exam will be rescheduled if substantial re-direction is recommended.

The oral section will include two parts: a 20 minute presentation and a question and answer portion that may last up to two hours.

Examination Procedures – Candidacy Exam

The following table describes the procedures and timing of the exam:

Semester prior to intended Candidacy Exam date	Student submits curriculum plan to Graduate Studies Committee for approval. The plan must include all courses that the student will apply towards the PhD curriculum requirements with course titles, credit hours and semesters. The curriculum track must be indicated.
Semester prior to intended Candidacy Exam date	Student, working with advisor and following composition requirements, makes recommendation for committee members to Graduate Studies Committee. Graduate Studies Committee submits final names to Graduate College for appointment.
10 weeks prior to exam	Examination Committee Chair schedules examination with student and committee members.
8 weeks prior to examination	Student submits Specific Aims portion of written exam to Committee Chair for distribution. Members remit feedback to Committee Chair.
6 weeks prior to exam	Committee Chair meets with student to communicate feedback. If feedback indicates need for substantial re-focus, Chair postpones exam.
2 weeks prior to exam	Student submits final draft of exam to Committee Chair for distribution.

Dissertation and Defense

Purpose

The PhD in Oral Science program culminates in the thesis project and the oral defense. The dissertation and defense test the student's ability to formulate a hypothesis, develop appropriate means of testing the hypothesis and other skills that serve as the intellectual foundation of independent, critical-thinking scientists. The dissertation and defense follow the policies and procedures described by the Graduate College. <http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000360>

Timing

Soon after successful completion of the candidacy exam, the student should work with the advisor to create the thesis committee. The committee should meet regularly (at least twice annually) to review the student's progress on the thesis project. The defense occurs during the semester prior to graduation. Students must adhere to the Graduate College's timeline, including the following:

- A minimum of one year has to elapse before the defense of the dissertation after the student passes the preliminary examination,
- The defense must occur early enough in the intended semester of graduation to allow time for revisions prior to the Graduate College's deadline for thesis submission. These deadlines are generally the following: mid-March for Spring semester, mid-July for Summer semester and mid-October for Fall Semester.

Composition of the Thesis Committee

According to the rules of the Graduate College, the thesis committee must consist of at least five members, of whom at least three are UIC Graduate Faculty with full membership, and two of whom must be tenured graduate faculty at UIC. At least one member must have a primary appointment outside the College of Dentistry. The

student's primary advisor serves as the Chair. The student must complete the Committee Recommendation form and submit it to the Director of Graduate Studies for signature and approval. The form should be submitted as soon as the committee is formed. If the outside member is appointed at another University, a complete Curriculum Vitae must be submitted along with the Committee Recommendation form.

Registration

Students must be registered from the term the Preliminary Examination is taken through the term of a successful defense of the dissertation, unless the defense occurs in the Summer term.

Advertisement

Students must advertise the place, time, thesis title and their names and that of their advisors to the College of Dentistry community at least a week in advance of the defense. It is recommended that students post fliers in prominent places throughout the College of Dentistry. Dr. Sroussi will facilitate the distribution of electronic notices that are forwarded to her.

Thesis

The thesis must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval prior to submission to the Graduate College. An electronic copy may be forwarded to Dr. Sroussi at least two weeks in advance of the deadline for submission to the Graduate College (see Graduate College calendar). Information on how to submit the thesis to the Graduate College is available at the end of the Graduate College's Thesis Manual, available on their website:

<http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000027> The Graduate College only accepts electronic submissions of the thesis. Students must enter Dr. Sroussi's name and email (sroussih@uic.edu) when prompted in the online submission system for "Departmental Reviewer."

Examination Procedures – Thesis Defense

The following table describes the procedures and timing of the exam:

Within three months after successful candidacy exam	Student, working with advisor and composition requirements, makes recommendation for committee members to the Director of Graduate Studies. Student submits Committee Recommendation Form to DGS. Upon approval, DGS submits names to the Graduate College for final approval.
Two years prior to defense (or earlier)	Student convenes committee on a biannual basis (at minimum) to review research progress.
10 weeks prior to exam date (or earlier)	Student and advisor schedules exam with committee members.
8 weeks prior to exam date (or earlier)	Student forwards draft of thesis to advisor.
4 weeks prior to exam date (or earlier)	Student forwards revised draft of thesis to committee members.
2 weeks prior to exam date	Student meets with advisor to review feedback by committee members. Student postpones exam if substantial revision is required.
1 week prior to exam (or earlier)	Student advertises defense to College and University community (include student name, thesis title, degree and program name, date, location, advisor name)
Within 2 weeks of successful defense	Student works with advisor to revise thesis based on committee feedback during the exam. Student submits revised thesis to Ashley Burton for Program Approval.
Within 3 weeks of successful defense	Following directions in Graduate Thesis Manual, students submits thesis to Graduate College.

Laboratory Safety and Training

The University of Illinois at Chicago requires that all students who participate in laboratory research complete appropriate laboratory training prior to beginning research. Students should work with their mentors to identify appropriate training based on the research project. However, all students must complete an in-person training at the earliest date possible. Visit the UIC Office for Environmental Health and Safety for [upcoming training dates](#).

Additional training may be required depending on the type of research that the student will conduct. Students participants should consult with their mentors to determine what training is required. The list below indicates online training links according to type of research.

Chemicals:

<http://research.uic.edu/education-training>

Patients or human subjects:

<http://research.uic.edu/education-training>

Protected health information:

<http://research.uic.edu/education-training>

Animal (in addition to GC 470):

<http://research.uic.edu/education-training>

rNA and Infectious Agents:

<http://research.uic.edu/education-training>

Human Subjects and Animal Research

If the student's research involves either human or animal subjects, students must comply with all regulations set by the University related for human subject or animal research. All students who undertake animal research must enroll in the GC 470 course "Essentials of Animal Research." This course is only offered during the Fall semester. Students can only perform human or animal research under a protocol approved by the University.

Students may be added as personnel to their advisor's existing protocols. This action requires the student complete training as described on the University's website for human subjects : <http://research.uic.edu/compliance/irb/education-training>

Animal research protocols:

(<http://research.uic.edu/compliance/acc>).

In the case of a student who receives an individual fellowship award or creates a distinct project, the student may be advised to apply for an individual protocol. Information on how to do so is available on the University's website:

Human: <http://research.uic.edu/compliance/irb>

Animal: <http://research.uic.edu/compliance/acc>

External Funding

All students are encouraged to pursue external funding sources of support for the duration of their research training. Students who are either U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents of the U.S. are eligible for fellowship funding from the National Institute of Craniofacial and Dental Research. Students should apply for funding as soon as the research project is formulated, usually after the first year for students enrolled in the PhD and after the second year for those enrolled in both the PhD/DMD.

NIH has set three deadlines each year for submission of individual fellowship applications: April, August and December. Students should plan substantial preparation time prior to the intended date of submission.

Student Research Group

Students enrolled in the PhD in Oral Science program are encouraged to participate in the local chapter of the National Student Research Group, organized under the American Association of Dental Research. The Student Research Group organizes activities that support student research. Information is available on the departmental website:

<http://most.uic.edu/students/student-research-group/>

Graduation

Intent to Graduate

Students must file an intent to graduate with University within the first three weeks of the semester in which they intend to graduate. Information on how to complete this process is available on the Graduate College website: <http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1000030>

Diploma

Diplomas are conferred by the University of Illinois at Chicago and, as such, are mailed to each student according to the procedures detailed on the Office of Admissions and Records website: http://www.uic.edu/depts/oar/student_records/diplomas.html

Students must provide their correct mailing addresses to the University via the University's online system.

Forms and Paperwork

At different points throughout the PhD program, students must complete various forms and paperwork. Some of the forms are required by the Graduate College and some are required by the Oral Science program's Director of Graduate Studies. Following is a list and short description of some of the forms that must be completed. These do not include forms that may be required by the University's Office for Research Services (human or animal research, proposal application form, etc) or forms required by the National Institutes of Health (training forms, grant application forms).

Advising Sheets

Curriculum Planning Sheet: used to plan curriculum. Required by the Graduate Studies Committee at the time of the annual assessment. Recommended as a continuous resource for students and mentors.

Timeline (PhD or PhD/DMD): provided as a resource for students and their mentors to determine program expectations and to plan annual goals. Not required for submission.

Annual Assessment

Self- Assessment Form: completed annually by student, requires advisor's signature. Submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies prior the meeting with the Graduate Studies Committee, usually in June or early July.

Mentor's Assessment of the Student: completed by the advisor. Submitted by advisor to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the student's meeting with the Graduate Studies Committee.

Candidacy Exam

Committee Recommendation Form: required by the Graduate College. Completed by the student at prior to candidacy exam and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for signature prior to submission to the Graduate College. Also requires the advisor's signature.

<http://grad.uic.edu/exams-defense-forms>

Change in Title or Committee Form: completed after Committee Recommendation Form and required by Graduate College only if either the title or committee members must be updated. Not required for changes in expected exam date. Requires advisor's signature. Must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to submission to the Graduate College.

<http://grad.uic.edu/exams-defense-forms>

Exam Report: Completed by the Chair of the Candidacy Exam committee and submitted directly to the Graduate Studies on the same day as the candidacy exam. The form is paper with carbon copies and sent by campus mail to the Chair of the committee in advance the exam date.

Thesis

Committee Recommendation Form: Same as form for candidacy exam. Required by the Graduate College. Completed by the student at prior to candidacy exam and submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies for signature prior to submission to the Graduate College. Requires the advisor's signature.

<http://grad.uic.edu/exams-defense-forms>

Change in Title or Committee Form: Same as form for candidacy exam. Completed after Committee Recommendation Form and required by Graduate College only if either the title or committee members must be updated. Not required for changes in expected exam date. Requires advisor's signature. Must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies prior to submission to the Graduate College.

<http://grad.uic.edu/exams-defense-forms>

Online Resources

For more information, please visit the PhD in Oral Sciences Web page at,

<https://dentistry.uic.edu/programs/phd-oral-sciences>

For more information on research, please visit:

<https://dentistry.uic.edu/research>

and to learn more about our research faculty, please visit:

<https://dentistry.uic.edu/research/researchers-staff>