

**MINUTES**  
**Genetics Executive Committee Meeting**  
**August 11, 2022**

Attendees:

Semir Bayez (CSHL faculty representative)  
Chuankai Chen (SBU student representative)  
Paul Freimuth (BNL faculty representative)  
Martha Furie (Graduate Program Director)  
Shruti Iyer (CSHL student representative)  
Howard Sirotkin (SBU faculty representative)  
Thomas White (SBU faculty representative)

1. The meeting convened via Zoom at 1:00 PM, with all Committee members in attendance.
2. Martha gave a brief update on the state of the program. Highlights included:
  - a. 43 students enrolled for Fall 2022
  - b. Incoming class of 4 PhD students and 2 MSTP students
  - c. One student deferred enrollment for a year due to family issues
  - d. 26 students based at CSHL
  - e. 101 faculty, 33 at based at CSHL
  - f. Two students entering in Fall 2020 left after the first year
  - g. Some leeway was given for proposal exams due to pandemic shutdowns, but almost all students are now on track with respect to completing milestones
3. Martha also provided an overview of the Program's finances:
  - a. Expenses are supplementation of first-year TA stipends during the academic year, Jen's salary, recruitment, and occasional social events
  - b. Income streams are TA lines, Tuition on Research Grants (ToRG), per capita contribution from CSHL (\$3,000 each), and tuition capture from NIH Fellowships
  - c. Budget is in very good shape
    - i. Minimal recruiting expenses during the pandemic
    - ii. Rise in value of a TA line to \$22,500
  - d. Current stipend for SBU life sciences programs is \$31,000
  - e. In addition to covering tuition, scholarships now include broad-based student fees for all supported students
4. Martha reported updates of items that were discussed in the Executive Committee meeting of 7/8/19
  - b. Use of GRE scores in admissions is now 'opt-in' for all graduate programs
  - c. Reduction of requirement for BGE 691 Readings in Genetics from 3 semesters to 2 was approved by Graduate Council
  - d. The Graduate School agreed to allow defenses to be held at CSHL without getting case-by-case approval as long as the defenses are also offered remotely to those interested
5. All SBU doctoral programs can grant the Master of Philosophy in their discipline to students who have advanced to candidacy but withdraw before defending the dissertation. The Genetics Program imposes an additional requirement for the MPhil in Genetics, namely preparation of a written thesis. It was unanimously decided to eliminate the requirement for a thesis, since students who are leaving the Program prematurely are often not in a good position to prepare a thesis.

6. A majority of students in the program are now pursuing research in laboratories based at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. Whether this shift is cause for concern was discussed. While it was acknowledged that there needs to be a strong core of trainees on the SBU campus, the benefits of having a freely inter-institutional program were also mentioned (e.g., increased collaboration). There was also general concern that limiting the number of students who can study at CSHL, as another program does, is unfair to students who chose the Genetics Program because of its ties to CSHL. The excellent participation of CSHL faculty who have recently joined the Program was additionally pointed out. It was decided to keep the current unrestricted approach and wait to see whether this trend continues.
7. Student representatives left the meeting, and the faculty representatives discussed academic issues pertaining to individual students. Where appropriate, decisions for resolving these issues were made.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.