To help you prepare for your first advisory committee meeting and future committee meetings, here are a few pointers for drafting your curriculum and research proposal. The following ideas and questions are intended to be helpful starting points for planning your degree program.

**Preparing for your committee meetings**

The MLI program requires you to assemble a committee of faculty members who will monitor your progress in the degree program, advise you in your research, and suggest course work that may be helpful to you each semester. A committee includes a minimum of three faculty members, one of which will be your mentor. Each semester you are responsible for coordinating a committee gathering. During this meeting, you will be expected to present the progress of your research and coursework. Please submit the appropriate documentation to the program coordinator stating that you have satisfied your committee's expectations each semester. Please find the form attached to this guide.

In the beginning, your committee members will likely want to hear about your ideas for research, interest in courses, and general motivations for pursuing the degree. Later as you get deeper into your research, you should expect your faculty members to ask more questions and to suggest new areas for you to consider in your research. In the later stages of the program, the committee will take on more of an evaluative role. If you choose not to write a thesis or present your research, the committee will administer either an informal oral exam or a more formal written exam to monitor your progress in coursework and techniques.

**Drafting your curriculum proposal**

You may include a cover sheet with your name, your mentor's name, your committee members’ names, and the latest revision date. Each time you meet with your committee you can begin by revising your last proposal with changes and new directions. If your research has an aim, you could list it on the cover.

You will need to decide which track you would like to pursue within the degree program.

- **Research with thesis track**: Designed for those interested in developing a research project under the direction of a mentor and committee. Students who choose this track will register for twelve semester hours of research over the course of the degree. To complete this track, you must write a thesis and present it to your committee for approval.

- **Modified research track**: Designed for those interested in developing a research project for a formal presentation. Students who pursue this track are not required to write a thesis, but are expected to present their research to a formal audience, which may include a conference gathering or poster presentation around the University. This track requires six semester hours of research and at least six hours of technique training modules.

- **Techniques track**: Designed for those who have a strong academic/research background, but are interested in strengthening their laboratory techniques. This track requires twelve semester hours of advanced technique modules.
Your curriculum proposal should state the track you have selected. Your course selection and research proposal should be a reflection of your chosen track. It is often difficult to determine when a specific graduate school course will be offered; therefore, it may be better to have a two part proposal. In one section, you could state your intentions to enroll in specific courses for the upcoming academic year. In another section, you could include a general mapping of the sequence of courses that you hope to take for the remainder of your degree program.

**Areas for you to consider**

- What is my academic background? How many upper-level basic science courses have I taken in the past? How did I do in those classes?

- Overall, what courses will enhance my research and professional goals?

- Do these courses have prerequisites? What will be the sequence of courses that I will follow during my three-year program?

**Drafting your research proposal**

If you have chosen one of the research tracks, you will need to present your ideas for potential research projects. Each semester your proposal should be revised to reflect the research that you have completed over the past semester.

Possible details to include as your proposal develops each semester:

- Central hypothesis
- Clear statement of your research goal
- Introduction and background for your research
- List of aims of your research
- Experimental procedure
- Outcomes/Results
- Alternative methods
- References

*These are only suggestions from other students.*

*Please design a format that is adequate to present the progress of your research.*

**Planning your degree program**

Graduate degree programs are often less structured than undergraduate degree programs. You have the freedom and responsibility of planning your own schedule and managing your workload each semester. Some students may choose to take a small number of research hours every semester for three years. Other students may choose to register for their research hours only in the summer. When you are interested in many courses in a semester, your research workload may be a bit lighter. When there are fewer courses that you would like to take, your research will likely take more time.

Completing the degree program will require balancing one's professional, personal, and academic commitments each semester. To ease the transition into the MLI degree program, the MLI advisory committee recommends effective communication with your mentor as plan your course and work schedule each semester.

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**Welcome to the MLI degree program!**

*We are excited to have you in our program.*
Master of Laboratory Investigation
Semester Committee Report

Student Name____________________________________

Committee Meeting held on _________________________

__________Fall    ___________2005/2006 academic year

__________Spring    ___________2006/2007 academic year

__________2007/2008 academic year

I have met with my committee and presented the progress of my coursework, research, and techniques.

Student Signature:____________________________________

Committee Members
Printed Name:      Signature
_______________________________  ______________________________
_______________________________  ______________________________
_______________________________  ______________________________
_______________________________  ______________________________

We deem the progress of ____________________________________ to be

________satisfactory   ____________below expectations

With respect to future coursework and research, we suggest the following:

Please submit this form to Lindsay Meyers (322.3770), the MLI program coordinator, in Light Hall 340.