

University of Montana Incoming DBS Grad Student Survival Guide

- This is a living document! If you have things you struggle with when joining the program please email Evan Stark-Dykema (es180966@umconnect.umt.edu) with a description so it can get added to help future students!

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Registration for classes

- First year grad students are required to register for 4 classes their first semester (3 seminar related and one core class). Class names and CRNs are listed below
 - Biology: Graduate Seminar Series, BIOB 594 01 (CRN 71328)
 - Biology: Noon Graduate Seminar, BIOB 594 03 (CRN 72256)
 - First years will present a “who am I” 5 min talk in the fall so prep a few slides about yourself
 - Biology: 4pm Graduate Seminar, BIOB 594 02 (CRN 72255)
 - OBE Core Course – (Either Ecology or Evolution, they alternate year)
- To be a fulltime student you need 9 credits. Most semesters independent research can fill in the gap and get you to 9 credits. The credit amount for independent research classes can be changed. It will take advisor approval (must happen before you are

allowed to register for the class, just remind your advisor to do an override), then the student goes to cyberbear > student services > registration > select the semester of interest > register for classes > select semester of interest > "Schedule and Options" tab near top of page > click on the "hours" next to the independent study course and change to number of credits desired.

2.) Go to Schedule and Options Tab

1.) Make sure you are registered for the research class

Search Results — 11 Classes
Term: Spring Semester 2024 Instructor: Fishman, Lila

Title	Subject Det	Course	SecId	Hours	CRN	Term	Instructor	Meeting Times	Campus	Status	Instructional Method	Attribute	Linked Sections	Add
Dissertation Independent Study	Biology...	699	10	1 ...	31...	Sp...	Fishman, Lila ...	S M T W T F S	- Type: Class	U...	5 of 5 sea...			Add

Class Schedule for Spring Semester 2024

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6am							
7am							
8am							
9am							

Summary

Title	Details	Hour	CRN	Schedule Type	Status	Action
Biology: 4pm Gradua...	BIOB 594, 02	1	31835	Seminar	Registered	None
Biology: Noon Gradua...	BIOB 594, 03	1	31836	Seminar	Registered	None
Dissertation	BIOB 699, 10	7	31228	Independen...	Registered	None

Total Hours | Registered: 9 | Billing: 9 | CEU: 0 | Min: 0 | Max: 99

1.) Make sure you are registered for the research class

Click on the "1" and put in your desired # of credits

Summary

Term: Spring Semester 2024

Title	Details	Hours	CRN	Schedule Type	Grade Mode	Level	Study Path	Date	Status	Message
Biology: 4pm Graduate Seminar	BIOB 594, 02	1	31835	Seminar	Credit/No Credit	Graduate	None	01/04/2024	Registered	**Registered**...
Biology: Noon Graduate Seminar	BIOB 594, 03	1	31836	Seminar	Credit/No Credit	Graduate	None	01/04/2024	Registered	**Registered**...
Dissertation	BIOB 699, 10	1	31228	Independent S...	Credit/No Credit	Graduate	None	01/11/2024	Registered	**Registered**...

Getting swipe access to campus buildings

- Email Janean Clark (jmclark@mso.umt.edu) or Anne Tolo (anne.tolo@mso.umt.edu) with your 790# and the building you need swipe access to. It might take a couple of days, most buildings close at 5pm.

Getting swipe access to chem stores building

- Email Sarah Colenso (sarah.colenso@msu.umt.edu) to get access, you will need your advisor's permission, just cc them on the email.

Getting physical keys to rooms

- Professor in charge of room, or Janean, will give you a "Key Request and Authorization" form for you to fill out, complete form, and take to police/parking enforcement (32 Campus Dr, Missoula, MT 59812). If the key is available that day it will be \$18, if they have to make the key it will still be \$18 but it will take a couple of days to complete so make sure to do this before you actually need the key. If you keep the receipt they give you, you can get \$13 back when you return the key.

Codes for greenhouses/animal care facilities

- Talk to advisor for specific codes
- Greenhouse is located south of the University Golf Course (accessible through the Lewis and Clark Apartments parking lot)
- Rodent facilities are located in the basement of the Health Science building.

Internet Connection

- Eduroam is the Wireless network available on campus
- Your Username and Password is associated with your NetID
- Username – NetID@umontana.edu
- Password – NetID password

BOX cloud storage

- The university provides grad students with 1TB of cloud storage.
- Login page is here (<https://umt.account.box.com/login>)
- Login credentials are your NetID credentials.
- You can establish a folder on your personal device that automatically syncs up to your box account (follow box prompts upon initial login or google the process). THIS IS AN EASY WAY TO SAVE IMPORTANT/ALL DOCUMENTS TO THE CLOUD. Don't be the person who loses critical data for an experiment because your computer died, back up your work.

Setting up direct deposits (during the school year paychecks)

- Email Janean Clark (jmclark@mso.umt.edu) and ask for an "Employee Authorization for Electronic Direct Deposit of Payroll Wages" form. If one of these forms is not completed paper checks will be made for each paycheck and mailed to your address on file.

Semester fees

- You will have to pay a registration fee every semester. These fees should be ~\$1,300, barring any medical appointments you have through your health or extra fees associated with any classes you want to take. If you check your registration bill as soon as it becomes available and it is much more than \$1,300 do not panic. The bill sometimes becomes available to pay before some TA/RA contracts and tuition waivers are fully processed by the correct offices. Sometimes the best strategy is to wait until the week that the fees are actually due to deal with them. That gives the various administrators the time they need to process your paperwork and adjust your fees in accordance to your TA/RA contract. Email Janean with questions about your fees and contracts (jmclark@mso.umt.edu).

Summer pay (work study)

- Summer pay does not work the same as it does during the school year. Essentially, we are put on “work study” funds for the summer and the university pays part of our salary. Advisors can choose to fund your summer stipend directly from grants if they want but by going through the university, they can get ~\$4,000 of support so the grant money can be used for other things.
- You must fill out the most recent years FASFA. Even if you did this during undergrad or even the year before you have to update your FASFA before applying to summer aid. There are answers that apply to grad students in there so don't worry about being mistaken for an undergrad.
- You will need to complete a “Summer Financial Aid Application” which becomes available in the spring on the University of Montana's Financial Aid website (<https://www.umt.edu/finaid/types-of-aid/work-study/>). You may need to turn this form in as a physical copy to financial aid (that was a past rule) but they may be going towards accepting electronic copies...
- You are expected to turn in a timecard every two weeks. General practice is to fill out all of the days regardless of if you actually worked or not. This is because you are only allotted so much money for your summer funds (usually \$4000 gross funds, ~\$3,500 net funds) and if you don't claim it, you lose it. Better to claim all of it by the end of July and not get any more paychecks than to not claim the full amount.
- You will need to complete a different direct deposit form if you would like your summer funds to be deposited into a bank account. This DD form is called “Direct Deposit Application and Authorization for Accounts Payable”
- Email Ruth Johnson (ruth.johnson@mso.umt.edu) with questions.

Parking on campus

- Parking in any lot on campus requires a parking pass, or payment through the passport parking app (there are signs in the parking lot signifying which lot to select in the app) (<https://www.umt.edu/police/parking/Parking%20Information/Permit%20Options.php>)
- Parking is free in the neighborhood on cross streets (North/South streets) 2 blocks or more away from campus's edge. If you see a white sign that says parking permit required

that street is not available, after a couple of weeks you will begin to tell which streets students are parking on and which ones they aren't. Parking fills up quick so the later you wait to find a spot the longer your walk to campus will be.

- Parking on campus (and in the town of Missoula in general) is free after 5pm and on the weekends

Places to get food on campus (cost of dining hall)/nearby

- On campus food consists of the dining hall, the think tank, and the UC.
- Dining hall is open to students without a meal plan, the menu for a given day can be found here (<https://www.umt.edu/dining/food-zoo-menu.php#/day/2022-08-25>) with prices being breakfast - \$10.75, lunch – \$11.75, dinner – \$12.75.
- Think tank is located in the common area in front of the chemistry building and offers coffee/teas as well as soups.
- The UC has a convenient store like area on the first floor. There are coolers filled with drinks, snacks and basic grocery items, premade sandwiches/wraps, as well as coffee and tea. Additionally, multiple “food court” food options are found on the second floor available for student with and without a meal plan.

Places to get food off campus (nearby)

- Liquid planet grille (liquid planet has multiple locations make sure you are ordering from the correct one on Arthur Street) menu is here <https://liquidplanet.com/pages/lp-grille-menu>
- Tagilare Delicatessen is a very popular sandwich shop ~5 blocks from campus (corner of Beckwith and Higgins) menu is here <https://www.tagliaredelicatessen.com/menu>
- El diablo is a build your own burrito place next door to Tagilare menu is here <https://eldiablomissoula.com/>

Setting up ethernet ports in offices

- Most ethernet ports found in offices are by default inactive. You can activate them by putting in a request with IT. There is a “subscription” like fee that will get charged every month (not sure the price but it's not much). Because of this fee your advisor will need to approve the request and provide a grant code for the fees to be applied to. IT may be nice enough to give you an ethernet cable if you directly ask, but if not, they are not expensive to buy online.

DBS Office information

- The DBS (Department of Biological Sciences) office is on the first floor of the Health Sciences building. As a grad student you have a mailbox there, so check occasionally for updates and sometimes professors you are TAing for will put worksheets or other info in there for you.

- You can get pre-paid shipping envelopes from the office
- You have access to general office supplies from a closet in the office, but you have to record what you are taking and if you ask for too much at once the administrators may be reluctant to provide.
- The current office staff is EXTREMELY understaffed and overworked so as a general rule BE NICE.

Field Work and Travel Paperwork

- In order to get funds before/reimbursement after a trip you need to fill out a RATTER form. This form is two parts the RAT (request authorization to travel) and the TER (travel expense report) and can be obtained from Ruth Johnson (ruth.johnson@mso.umt.edu) in the DBS office.
- The RAT is the half that is filled out **before** you actually go anywhere. This includes information about who is traveling, to where, for what purpose, the mode of transportation, and the *expected* cost of the trip (meal per diem, mileage reimbursement, flights, hotels etc...)
- The TER is the half that is filled out **after** you get back from travel. You have 2 weeks upon returning from a trip to fill out and submit the TER half. This half includes the **actual** expenses you accrued on the trip and reflects how much the trip was in reality. The prices on the RAT and the TER do not have to match but if you have good planning they should be in the same ballpark.
- RATTERS are CONFUSING so ask lots of questions whenever you can.

Grad Student Union

- There is an attempt on campus to unionize it's grad students to enable us to fight for higher pay, less semester fees, and health care. If you are interested in joining the fight, please fill out the following form
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/18QgDrEPlwOHEYxxVaH-gxDGJSpE1aKKm4QWoxybK2jY/viewform?edit_requested=true

Hellgate Cluster login

- Some work may require the use of a computing server. The campus wide server is called the "Hellgate Cluster". You will need to contact IT in order to get an account on the cluster, follow this link to request access (<https://umt.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/2032/Portal/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=53444>). Then to login you will go to terminal (on mac) or on the command line (on windows) and type the following "ssh NetID@login.rci.umt.edu" then login with your NetID password.
- The Good lab (Jeff Good) made a useful user guide for the old Griz cluster (still applicable to Hellgate) and can be found at this link <https://goodest-goodlab.github.io/griz/start.html>

Setting up a VPN

- If you are doing work with the Hellgate cluster and want to work from home, you will need a VPN. To get one you will need to submit a ticket to the IT department. Go to the IT page and click on the “Services Tab” then “VPN Access” then follow the instructions.

Procards

- Procards are essentially credit cards associated with a lab/grant. As a student you are not allowed to keep the card, regardless most (if not all) lab related purchases will use the procard. Below are some guidelines sent from Laurie Belcher (director of accounting and fiscal operations, laurie.belcher@umontana.edu) in 2023. In general put as many purchases as applicable on the procard (or order through Grizmart). It will be harder to get reimbursed for things that are on a personal card than purchases on a procard.
- **Receipts** should be emailed to cfc-receipts@mso.umt.edu upon purchase but no later than 3 days from purchase and should contain the following information for each receipt:
 - Explanation of purchase. Please provide information on what was purchased and what it is for. Receipts often contain very abbreviated explanations of the purchase and the purchaser has the details on what item(s) were purchased. We do not know this information.
 - Detailed business purpose. For instance: 100 paper bags for sample collection or 2 rolls deep freeze removable tape for sample tubes.
 - Should be shipped to UM Campus address. An explanation is required if sent to an off-campus address.
 - Submit a completed e-approval grid for each charge for pairing with each receipt.
- **Reimbursements**
 - When processing reimbursement requests (other than travel per diem), we are receiving comments from Business Services that items should be purchased either with a procard or through a purchase order in Grizmart with additional information that future reimbursement requests may not be processed. To avoid the chance of not being reimbursed, use a procard or make your purchase through GrizMart. Folks who do not have a procard and/ or access to Grizmart should work with their employer/advisor to complete the process.
 - Recent communications from Business Services for reimbursements that should have been on a procard have indicated that they will process this time only but future reimbursements may not be processed. This applies to folks requesting reimbursement when a procard should have been used, whether the person has or is eligible to apply for a procard or not. It sounds like either choosing not to use a procard or forgetting to use a procard may not be reimbursable in the future.
 - Hotels have a form that can be filled out in order to still charge the departments Procard. The State of Montana mandates that all airfare, hotels, and rental cars

be put on a Procard. Personal cards provide personal benefits to the cardholder for each purchase in the form of personal rebates, increased spending limits, special access when reaching purchase goals, etc. Taxpayer money cannot be used to pay for those purchases or subsidize personal benefits to an individual.

Please

see <https://www.umt.edu/business-services/employees/services/accounts-payable/procardguidelines-11.20181.pdf> for review of Procard Do's and Don'ts.

Please

see <https://www.umt.edu/business-services/employees/services/accounts-payable/travel-guidelines-and-procedures.php#operate> for Travel Review.

- All travel is expected to be paid on a procard (airfare, hotel, rental car, taxi, registration, baggage fees, etc). If your procard is declined when attempting to book travel, work with an Admin to book on their procard. Business Services is indicating that reimbursements for such items may not be processed.
- Employee travel is authorized when the travel is related to University business and is approved by the employee/student's supervisor. Travel should be in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible which still allows for the purpose of the trip to be accomplished.
- **Air Travel:**
 - Seat selection charges and seat upgrade charges are not allowed travel expenses and may not be purchased with UM procard as these are not deemed to be most cost effective. The only exception to this rule is if the website will not allow you to continue without choosing a seat (versus allowing you to select a seat before continuing), you must provide a screen shot that shows you may not continue beyond that point to continue booking your ticket.
 - Explanation of the travel – date, location, purpose of travel
 - Additional travel insurance should not be purchased unless traveling to a foreign destination.

Purchases and Reimbursements

UM Institutional Requirements - updated Jun 2023

Purchases and Reimbursements

[UM Business Services Travel Resources](#)

[UM Business Services Travel Guidelines and Procedures](#)

Request and Authorization for Travel (RAT form)

- RAT must be submitted to DBS office/business services (via Ruth Johnson) before travel-related purchases can be approved (*e.g.* flights, lodging)
- Each traveler requires a separate RATTER
- RAT estimates budget and facilitates per diem advancements if necessary
- RAT submitted to DBS Office (Ruth Johnson) so it can be filed with Business Services

Procard/Procurement

- General Information

Purchase supplies & equipment as in advance as possible to order through GrizMart or charge the procard. Reserve Amazon purchases and personal cards for situations where it's truly necessary or you're in the field (*see 'TER/Reimbursements' section*).
- Procard Spending Limits

Individual procard purchases can only be <\$5,000 (monthly credit limit = \$20,000)

E.g., flights have to be purchased individually (instead of together) if the total exceeds >\$5,000, even if one ticket is <\$5,000
- Procurement Rules: Lodging

A lodging rental for >2 weeks requires direct rental contract according to Risk Management & Business Services

Update Apr 2023: Overcame issue to rent long-term AirBnB by increasing Ruth's procard limit
- Procurement Rules: Flights

Purchase flights on a US air carrier whenever possible

Purchase refundable/changeable fares whenever possible

Per Diem Advancements

- General Information

Per diem/travel advancements are cash advances from the University for travel. It is only applicable to meals and lodging but not for any other costs that may be rendered (e.g. gas, rental car)

Request per diem advances by submitting the RAT to the DBS Office/Business Services and specifying the amount on that form

The per diem advancement arrives in the mail as a check to your listed UM mailing address.

In order to receive a group travel per diem advancement (that combines multiple individuals' per diem advancement to the trip leader), those individuals must have the exact same travel dates listed on the RATTER.

- International Per Diem

Meals: \$36/day/person (source: UM Business Services - see link above)

All Receipts / Pre-travel Reimbursements

- Trip-Related Expenses

In Drive, see "Reimbursement Template" for tracking trip-related expenses. This is still pertinent for expenses rendered before travel that are trip related, and procard expenses that help track the trip budget.

- Receipts

Compile ALL RECEIPTS (digitized; procard & personal) with appropriate traveler, index #'s & send to appropriate parties before the end of each month.

Specify if receipts are for undergraduate travel so it can be applied to the appropriate index.

Send pre-travel personal expenses with name, grant index, student number to DBS Office (Ruth Johnson) → DO NOT LIST ON TER FORM

- Entertainment Approval Forms

Entertainment Approval Forms permits the University to cover meals for non-affiliated guests.

Plan ahead for any meals that would require us to file an entertainment approval

Travel Reimbursements/TER

- TER: Travel Expense Reports

TER is the complimentary form to the RAT. It is for expenses rendered during travel by that individual.

Submit TERs to DBS Office (Ruth Johnson) so Business Services can send reimbursements.

DO NOT list procard purchases or purchases made before travel on the TER.
Convert the cost of items to USD.

ALL TERs MUST BE SUBMITTED TO BUSINESS SERVICES WITHIN 3 MONTHS OF RETURNING FROM TRAVEL.

- Receipts

Compile ALL RECEIPTS (digitized; personal) with appropriate traveler, index #'s & send to appropriate parties before the end of each month.

Specify if receipts are for undergraduate travel so it can be applied to the appropriate index.

Keep all receipts, translated, summarized, and include transaction/exchange fees when necessary.

- Alcohol

DO NOT make Ruth/DBS Office have to figure out alcohol with foreign travel entertainment. Do not ever supply alcohol to anyone under 21, even if the legal drinking age is different in the field.

- Reimbursements

Reimbursements arrive in the mail as a check sent to your listed UM mailing address.

Travel Registration (for international travel)

[UM Travel Registration Instructions](#)

[UM Travel Guidelines](#)

In Drive, see "Traveler Registration Steps" document for more details.

Risk Management Plan

- File Risk Management Plans (RMP) for *each* traveler
- After RMP submission, register travel and purchase international health insurance (this is regardless of risk level of the country you're traveling to, but for high risk you have to get RMP approved)

- Example RMP from 2022 Sweden trip:

I will be following CDC and WHO COVID19 travel precautions, as well as conference guidelines and Swedish/EU guidelines. I am triple-vaccinated for COVID19 and up to date on other vaccines needed for travel to Europe. I will be bringing two forms of ID and my passport is valid through 2027. I will have at least some cash in local currency (krona) and will have my international settings turned on for my debit and credit cards. I will register my travel with the US embassy in Sweden and sign up for alert traveler notifications. I know the nearest

hospitals and urgent care clinics to my conference and air bnb (max 15 mins away near Bromma, Stockholm, Sweden). I will get GeoBlue international health insurance and I have enough financial leeway to navigate unforeseen monetary or disruptive travel situations. I will also be meeting up with close colleagues/friends at the conference that aren't affiliated with the University of Montana but I won't be traveling alone which will decrease my risk. I have also traveled internationally before and am comfortable in these settings.

International Health Insurance

- University affiliates are required to set up meeting with travel nurse and purchase GeoBlue travel health insurance

[GeoBlue Insurance Enrollment - UM](#)

[GeoBlue website](#)

- Cost: ~\$14/week and can be submitted for reimbursement

Vehicle rental

- You may find yourself renting a vehicle for field work, conference travel, or even classes you are TAing!

- **Confirm payment and account information with DBS office staff:**

- Enterprise account #: XZ63UOM
- Billing #: 18045006
- Index #: MBI003

- **Make a personal Enterprise Emerald Club Account:**

- Follow this link:

<https://www.nationalcar.com/en/emerald-club/enroll/complete-your-enrollment.html>

- Enter DBS procard details (as of '23 → Ruth Johnson)

Billing address:

DBS UM

32 Campus Dr.

Missoula, MT 59812

- Email unique Emerald Club Account # to:

Madilyn McMahon at Madilyn.C.McMahon@ehi.com

- Rent the vehicles (***repeat process for each vehicle***):

- Access Enterprise via UM link:
<https://www.umt.edu/facilities-services/rent-a-vehicle/default.php>
 - Select 'Missoula' location, relevant dates/times
 - Select 'Minivan' rental (there are too few Suburbans/larger vehicles); *will have to repeat process for each vehicle*
 - On 'Review' page, enter Billing and Index numbers in relevant boxes, and select 'Drop off/Pick up' option (only available if you are renting for ≥ 2 days)
 - Send confirmation details to Kelby Wegner at Enterprise at kelby.wegner@ehi.com → when *larger* vehicles (i.e. Suburbans) become available, she will switch them out automatically for that week
- Picking up the vans:
 - Retrieve and return vans and keys from Parking/Campus Police facilities building near UC before lab (keys are held behind the desk on the right-hand side of the door)
 - Each week, have students meet at the vans at Campus Police parking lot
 - Vans are picked up by Enterprise at the end of each week because facilities leaves keys in drop box (if they aren't picked up, call *facilities* to place the keys in drop box)
- Driver and gas policies:
 - Any student/staff over 21 can drive without additional paperwork
 - Acquire 'gas cards' from DBS Office to charge gas (can check out for entire semester)
 - Refill gas in vehicles before they collect
 - Email DBS Office receipts by the end of every calendar month:
 - as of '23: DBSProcards@umontana.edu (Ruth Johnson)
- Book rental cars in advance to avoid the issue of one not being available. There are rental cars set aside for UM with the Enterprise UM contract. In order to receive the high mileage reimbursement rate for personal vehicle use, **a screenshot showing that there are no cars available** must be included with your RATTER. If the screenshot is not included, we will only pay at the Standard Rate of \$0.315. Link to Enterprise rental car booking: <https://www.umt.edu/facilities-services/rent-a-vehicle/>
 - Personal Vehicle Authorization Forms are required anytime a personal vehicle is used for travel. This form is to be completed and approved **prior** to travel and submitted with travel documentation. https://www.umt.edu/business-services/employees/services/accounts-payable/personal_vehicle_use_auth_form.pdf

- Stating only that use of the personal vehicle is in the best interest of the state is no longer accepted. You must provide a screenshot showing no rental vehicle is available in addition to including the statement that use of the personal vehicle is in the best interest of the state.
- **Domestic car rentals: refuse additional Comp/Collision insurance coverage, you are covered by the State of MT and Visa.** If you purchase additional liability & comprehensive/collision insurance this cost may not be put on the UM Procard or paid by the university. Personal property is not covered under the state's property insurance. When renting a vehicle from a car agency, individuals who wish to have their personal items covered during their travel may choose to do so at their own expense through the rental car agency or their personal insurance policy. This cost may not be put on the UM Procard or paid by The University of Montana.
- **Foreign car rentals: accept the additional coverage through the rental car agency.**