

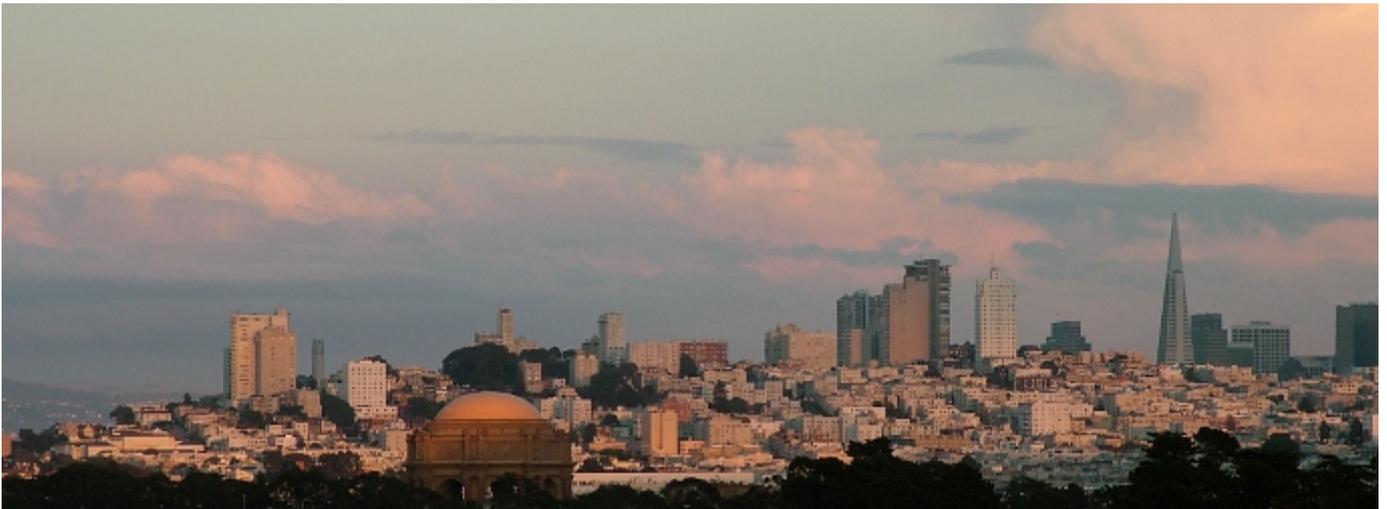
# UCSF Medical Scientist Training Program

Published on *UCSF Medical Scientist Training Program* (<https://mstp.ucsf.edu>)

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## Why Choose UCSF MSTP?



*San Francisco Skyline*

The UCSF MSTP offers the combination of an outstanding public medical school with an innovative curriculum, committed and renowned faculty, and a collection of premier graduate training programs. The Program's guiding principles have been and continue to be:

1. Selecting outstanding students who are committed to careers as physician-investigators and who have the academic ability and interpersonal skills to excel in medicine and science.
2. Offering the best possible training leading to combined MD and PhD degrees without compromising the quality of either degree.
3. Actively engaging the School of Medicine (SOM) and Graduate Programs to optimize the training path of each student and to encourage efficient completion of both degrees.

## Why our program?

The MSTP is designed to produce highly qualified physician scientists who will pursue outstanding careers in academic medicine and research. Sponsored jointly by the National Institutes of Health, the School of Medicine, and the UCSF graduate programs, the MSTP provides:

- financial support to cover all medical and graduate tuition and fees
- a yearly stipend of \$38,000 (as of the 2018-19 academic year), as its students explore the full range of coursework and research opportunities available at UCSF

- health insurance

The MSTP training sequence generally consists of the two pre-clerkship years of medical school, followed by four years of graduate research leading to a doctoral dissertation, and the final five quarters of medical-school clinical clerkships. At each phase of this process, special efforts have been made to optimize and integrate the combined training experience. Graduate requirements are streamlined to enable MSTP trainees to complete coursework and begin full-time thesis research early in their third year, and a unique series of clinical preceptorships ensures continued exposure to clinical medicine throughout the graduate years. This curriculum enables students to complete their MD/PhD training as efficiently as possible while maintaining the highest standards for both degrees; as a result, our graduates have been exceptionally successful in competing for prestigious residencies, fellowships, and careers.

See Our Program <sup>[1]</sup> for more information on the specifics of the UCSF MSTP.

## Time to Degree

The MSTP has implemented policies to reduce the time to degree, which include:

- optional summer lab rotation prior to start of medical school and early choice of a thesis lab
- temporal integration of graduate program course opportunities with the medical school curriculum
- reciprocal acceptance of BMS and PIBS program courses during the first two years of medical school
- reducing required graduate program electives
- decreasing required lab rotations from three to two
- requiring earlier qualifying exams
- timely reviews by thesis committees (every six months)

The role of the thesis committee is to assist the trainee and the thesis advisor in designing and implementing a focused research plan, and each of the graduate programs has in recent years emphasized the need for the thesis committee to enhance the focus and productivity of their trainees. In this regard, many of our PhD degree granting programs are following the lead of the MSTP. Dr. Anderson has also stipulated that: 1) each thesis committee must include at least one member of the MSTP Council; and 2) that students meet with the Director or with one of the Associate Directors at least yearly during the first two years of medical school to insure that they are actively defining research goals and meeting with potential thesis advisors. Together these changes have contributed to a continued shortening in the time-to-degree from 8.9 to 8.3 years within the last ten years.

Contact Us  
UCSF Main Site

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**Source URL:** <https://mstp.ucsf.edu/why-choose-ucsf-mstp>

**Links**

[1] <http://mstp.ucsf.edu/program-timeline>