MINUTES
Genetics Executive Committee Meeting
April 16, 2025

Attendees:

Semir Bayez (CSHL faculty representative)
Paul Freimuth (BNL faculty representative)
Martha Furie (Graduate Program Director)
Nelson Gautier (SBU student representative)
Luiz Carlos Machado (CSHL student representative)
Howard Sirotkin (SBU faculty representative)
Thomas White (SBU faculty representative)

1. The meeting convened via Zoom at 2:30 PM, with all Committee members in attendance.

2. Martha gave a brief update on the state of the program. Highlights included:
   - 40 students enrolled (24 at CSHL)
   - 6 graduating in May and 1 in August
   - 5 PhD students joining in Fall 2025
   - 108 faculty
   - Finances
     - Income
       - 6 TA lines
       - $14,412 Tuition on Research Grants
       - $55,500 from CSHL
     - Account Balances
       - State account: all encumbered for first-year student stipends
       - IFR: $25,000
       - Stony Brook Foundation: ~$8,000
       - Cost of Education: ~$75,000
     - Genetics' half of Jen's salary has already been paid for this year
   - Retreat held March 10, 2025

3. The Committee unanimously approved the request of Galadriel Hovel-Miner, a new Associate Professor in the Dept. of Microbiology and Immunology, to join the Program.

4. Martha reported that the Graduate School (GS) will require all newly hired faculty who are in graduate programs to receive training in mentoring.

5. The GS is developing a policy regarding multimodal dissertations. The Executive Committee agreed that video and/or audio content can be included in dissertations of the Program's students, subject to finalization of the GS policy.

6. The GS now requires that all programs adopt an explicit policy on the use of generative AI in program activities. The Executive Committee discussed possible policies for Genetics and subsequently refined a policy, which was approved via an email vote. This policy will be placed on the Genetics website and is as follows:

> The Graduate Program in Genetics believes that the use of large language model generative AI tools is acceptable in certain instances. We expect students to become competent in all areas of their degree program, including writing proposals, dissertations, and manuscripts for publication. However, we recognize the potential for generative AI tools to assist in revising and editing written work. In the Genetics Program, students must synthesize their own content for qualifying examination proposals, research proposals, and dissertations. AI tools may be used only to improve the clarity or flow of the existing content. Students must give appropriate credit to generative AI tools whenever used and state the purpose for which they were employed. Failure to do so will be regarded as scholarly misconduct and will result in penalties, including possible dismissal from the Program. In courses offered by the Genetics Program (designated as BGE in the Graduate Catalog), generative AI tools cannot be used for assignments and examinations unless explicitly permitted by the course director. Moreover, course directors are encouraged to implement assessment strategies that preclude the possible use of generative AI.

7. The GS now requires that graduate programs make their formal leave policies explicit, specifically regarding access of students to program resources while away. The Committee discussed this issue and approved a final version of the policy via a subsequent email vote. Again, the policy will be posted on the Genetics website and is as follows:

   > Students on an approved leave of absence from the Graduate Program in Genetics may interact with faculty and staff regarding transitioning back to the program, course enrollment for future semesters, career advice, etc. They also may continue to interact with Genetics Program-specific professional organizations. However, students on leave are not allowed to access previously assigned office and laboratory spaces and must return keys to these areas. They also must remove personal items from these spaces promptly and, if possible, prior to beginning the leave. Requests for exceptions to restrictions on access should be made to the research advisor and Graduate Program Director; written approval of both is needed for continued access.

8. The GS has changed its rules regarding the composition of dissertation committees and no longer requires a member external to the program. The Executive Committee voted to leave the criteria for Genetics dissertation committees unchanged. Dissertation committees will still need five members (including the mentor), at least one of whom must be external to the Genetics Program.

9. Additionally, to avoid perceived conflicts of interest, the Committee decided that no member of a dissertation committee may have a personal or family connection with the student's advisor. The current GS policy applies this limitation only to connections between committee members and the student. The Genetics Proposal Examination Guidelines will be updated accordingly.

10. In response to an inquiry from a Program faculty member, the Committee discussed whether raises to the minimum stipend may be made at the discretion of the research mentor. It was decided that stipends should remain uniform to avoid financial competition among labs. As has been the case, a raise (typically ~10%) may be considered for students who receive external fellowships.

11. 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.

12. The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 PM.