

CTR-CAQ PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

General

Who is eligible to participate in the CTR-CAQ program?

The program is for graduate students who are in their second or third year of graduate school at Baylor College of Medicine. Graduate students apply in the spring of the preceding academic year. The deadline this year is June 1.

How many students are accepted each year?

Enrollment is capped at 30 students to allow for small group work.

How long is the program and will it affect progress on my graduate studies and research?

The CTR-CAQ program takes two years and all activities are organized in parallel with the primary graduate program requirements. Our experience with clinical research training in the legacy Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine Program has shown that it does not slow progress on your thesis research.

How many credits are required to complete the program?

You must complete 12 credits, a subset of these can be co-credits with elective requirements for your primary PhD program, with approval of your program director.

What is the funding for this program? Will I or my thesis advisor have to pay tuition or fees to participate?

There is no extra tuition or fee for participating in this program. Some students can be supported by the program's institutional T32 training grant.

Is there a defined career objective for students following completion of this effort?

Students will receive a certificate of added qualification. We know that evidence of clinical translational research training benefits students when they apply for a postdoctoral positions or other positions outside of academia where this experience is valued. We expect this training will appeal to students who are interested in conducting translational research after graduation.

Application

How will participants be selected?

Students complete and submit an application by the deadline June 1 of the preceding academic year. We have a committee who will review the submitted applications and select the strongest applicants. There will not be an interview as a part of the selection.

If we apply and are not admitted in the first year, can we reapply the following year if we are currently a first year student?

Yes

If we do not yet know who our major advisor will be because of the Corona virus college closure, can we still apply?

We prefer that you have an advisor, but understand the difficulties this year. We will be happy to provide individual guidance.

If we do not apply in our first year, because we have not picked a lab, can we apply in our second year?

Yes, second year students can apply to this program, for entry in their third year. We know not every student will be ready to begin this program at the beginning of their second year.

May students who are in their 3rd year apply?

At this time, no; however if someone wants to petition us for an exception we are open to discussing it, depending on space availability.

Can a student participate if their PhD thesis advisor does translational research?

Yes, and we believe that these students would benefit greatly from being in this program, because the CTR-CAQ training will complement what they learn from their thesis research

T32 Funding

Is there a separate application for T32 support?

Students apply for a slot on the T32 training grant along with their application to the CTR-CAQ program. Students must be US citizens or permanent residents to be eligible to apply.

Is the decision about the T32 slots made at the same time as the decision about admission to the CTR-CAQ program?

There is an area in the application where students can indicate their interest in being considered for T32 funding. The applications of interested students will be ranked as a part of the application review. Graduate students eligible to apply for T32 funding must be US citizens or permanent residents and this particular T32 is not available to MSTP students.

Are there any different requirements for students in the CTR-CAQ program who are funded by the T32 and other students?

No, there is no difference.

CTR Mentor

Does the CTR mentor need to currently be a member of the graduate faculty?

No, the CTR mentor does not have to be a member of the graduate faculty. In addition to the selected CTR mentor, students will be assigned a CTR-CAQ faculty advisor who is a member of the graduate school faculty.

Will we receive a list of available CTR mentors?

There is a list of clinical mentors on the website, but you are not restricted to only those people when selecting a CTR mentor. Your mentor may have suggestions and we encourage you to reach out to the CTR-CAQ Director with questions about mentor selection when you prepare your application.

Do we contact the person we are interested in having as a Clinical Translational Research (CTR) mentor directly?

Yes. If they need more information about the program, you can share the information session video with them or they may contact Dr. Van den Veyver directly with questions.

If my PI is a physician scientist who does translational research, can they also serve as my Clinical Translational Research (CTR) mentor?

Having a different clinical mentor adds to the richness of your training experience, and students must select a separate CTR mentor, but we welcome discussion with students and thesis advisors on how best to individualize their experience and mentorship.

Project**How do you envision the relationship between capstone and thesis projects once we are already established in labs?**

Your capstone project will be a smaller more clinically oriented research project. It can but does not have to be directly related to your thesis project. It should not take excessive time away from your thesis research.

Can a capstone project be in the area of student's general area of research?

Yes, but it does not have to be. There can be benefit to the student from integrating the capstone project with their thesis research.

Could the capstone project be an aim of your thesis?

Yes, if your thesis research is translational and that aim fits within the scope of this program. You will work with your CTR mentor on developing the project during your first year. Your individual guidance committee and your CTR-CAQ faculty advisor will provide additional guidance on the capstone project.

Courses**Is there more information available about when courses will meet?**

The overall schedule is in the information slides you can review. The exact days and time that the courses will meet have yet to be determined, but every effort is made to avoid conflict with other courses.

Which of the CTR-CAQ courses count as didactic credits towards the 30 didactics hours for candidacy?

There are two courses that are didactic: OCTR and the PSTRW1 and 2. With approval of the primary graduate program, they can satisfy elective credit hours. Students must communicate with their graduate program about their wishes to have these count as elective credit hours.

Due to COVID19 social distancing, do you expect any delay in starting these clinical experience requirements?

We will follow guidance from the college and the graduate school as to when and how students can be in a clinical environment. We will adapt experiences and didactic courses as needed to provide the students the best possible experience under the circumstances.

Will there be flexibility on the workshops or are they already prescribed by the program?

The workshops are a course, and the topics listed for PSTRW1 (year 1) are already decided. There will be other workshops in PSTRW2 (year 2). We welcome suggestions and feedback for those workshops. As the program grows, we will consider more and different workshops and welcome faculty participation.