GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Requirements and Regulations

Attendance

Attendance requirements for regularly scheduled classes, laboratories, and clinic periods are the option and prerogative of the course instructor for that portion of the curriculum. The policy regarding attendance for each course is contained within the syllabus for the course and is discussed by the instructor at the first meeting.

1. Unexcused absences in courses in which attendance is required may be considered sufficient cause for failure. Examples include multiple occurrences of tardiness and/or failure to communicate with the course instructor prior to absence.

2. Excused absences may be granted by the course director in such cases as illness, personal emergency, attendance at a professional conference, school sponsored event, professional school interviews, fellowship interviews or religious reasons.

3. Other reasons for excused absence may be considered by the Program Director. Such leaves are considered on an individual basis, and verification of the reason for the absence may be required. It is the responsibility of the student to take the initiative in arranging with the faculty to make up work that is missed or may be specified in the course syllabus.

4. Pregnant and/or parenting students should request an excused absence and/or an accommodation by contacting the university's Academic, Faculty and Student Ombudsperson & ADA Compliance Office. Students employed by the University should contact the Office of Human Resources. Reports regarding non-compliance with pregnant and/or parenting governing regulations should be directed to the university’s Title IX Office or the Academic, Faculty and Student Ombudsperson & ADA Compliance Office.

5. University holidays will be outlined in the GSBS academic calendar (http://students.uthscsa.edu/registrar/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/12/GraduateSchoolofBiomedicalSciences202122.pdf) located on the registrar webpage. Classes will not be held on designated university holidays. The academic calendar is updated in January each year for the following academic year.

6. Campus closures for inclement weather and catastrophic events will be determined by the president’s office and announced via HSCAlert. Announcements are automatically sent to student LiveMail accounts.

For more information, please visit www.uthscsa.edu/HSCAlert (http://www.uthscsa.edu/HSCAlert/). University closure will be considered an excused absence and students may still be required to complete assigned coursework for days of class that were cancelled. Students should communicate with the course instructor.

Attendance is a professional attribute that the faculty expects every student to demonstrate. Repeated or multiple absences, unexcused absences, and tardiness will be considered unprofessional conduct and may result in faculty review and penalties, including probation, suspension, or dismissal from the program. Course grading requirements may include participation and any absence is considered non-participation.

For student employees, refer to policy 4.3.5 in the Handbook of Operating Procedures for guidance on work-related attendance policies.

Course Syllabus Policy

All course instructors must provide a course syllabus to students and comply with the following:

1. All course syllabi must be posted online in the course’s learning management system and in the syllabus depot located on the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences web page.

2. Course syllabi must be made available to students online on the day web registration begins, but no later than the first class meeting of the semester. After the first class, no changes can be made to the syllabus except for changes to logistical information. If the logistical information is changed, the updated syllabus must be posted within 48 hours so that it remains current.

3. The academic content of a course syllabus remains within the purview of each individual instructor, subject to the program’s curricular needs. However, at a minimum, the following elements must be included in each course syllabus:

   • the course number and name
   • the instructor’s name and contact information (including email address)
   • the instructor’s official office hours and location
   • the course’s learning objectives
   • the course prerequisites (if required)
   • define whether the course is repeatable or non-repeatable
   • a detailed grading scheme, including types of exams/assignments and their weight in determining the final grade
   • a schedule of assignments and exams
   • the textbook, reading assignments and/or reading list
   • the course policies the instructor wishes to impose, such as attendance policies, class participation expectations, late assignment policies, etc.

4. The following Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Health Science Center policy statements for Requests for Accommodations and disabilities, Academic Integrity and Professional conduct as listed below.

   The following Health Science Center policy statements:

   REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

   In accordance with the Handbook of Operating Procedures policy 4.2.3, Request for Accommodation Under the ADA and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA),
any student requesting accommodation must submit the appropriate request for accommodation under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA, form 100) to his/her appropriate Associate Dean of Student Affairs of their School and a copy to the ADA Coordinator.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM
The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences expects all students to exhibit the highest standards of conduct, honesty, and professionalism. Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline as prescribed by the UT system Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents. Academic dishonesty is any activity that undermines the academic integrity of the institution, which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, signing attendance sheets for another student, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or attempt to commit such an act. Policies of academic misconduct apply to all course, department, school, and university-related activities including conferences and off-campus performances as well as research work (including lab experiments, data collection, analyses, and publications). All cases of academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) Dean’s Office who will assess the seriousness of the violation and determine the nature of the penalty required.

Academic Integrity
The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences expects all students to exhibit the highest standards of conduct, honesty, and professionalism as outlined in the Handbook of Operating Policies (HOP 14.1.1 (https://uthealthsa.sharepoint.com/RAC/Pages/HOP/14-toc.aspx)). All cases of academic misconduct must initially be reported to the GSBS Dean’s Office who will assess the seriousness of the violation and determine if the case requires further action. Under certain circumstances, the GSBS Dean’s Office may open an official investigation and follow steps 3 – 6 outlined in the Student Grievance policy described below. Any student who is found to have committed an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline as prescribed by the UT system Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents. Academic dishonesty is any activity that undermines the academic integrity of the institution, which includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, signing attendance sheets for another student, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or attempt to commit such an act. Policies of academic misconduct apply to all course, department, school, and university-related activities including conferences and off-campus performances as well as research work (including lab experiments, data collection, analyses, and publications).

Professional Conduct

1. Students and student organizations are expected to comply with federal, state, and local laws; Institutional policies and procedures; and directives by the student’s academic program.
2. Students must practice the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students must promptly report academic dishonesty or ethical misconduct by others.
3. Students must refrain from harassment or discrimination of any kind and report any instances of observed harassment or discrimination to the appropriate authorities.
4. Students and Student Organizations are expected to refrain from acts of hazing and report any observed acts to the appropriate authorities.
5. Students must follow environmental and campus safety procedures and must not endanger the health or safety of others.
6. Students must adhere to the following professional standards as set forth by the GSBS:
   a. Exhibit professional behavior in the classroom including online and other university settings. Exhibit the highest respect, concern and cooperativeness toward students, faculty, and staff. Show regard for persons of authority in the university setting.
   b. Communicate in a respectful and civil manner with students, staff, and faculty. Formulate written communication with professional content and tone.
   c. Demonstrate regard for differing opinions, values, and abilities.
   d. Demonstrate professional interpersonal interaction regarding culture, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.
   e. Demonstrate sound judgment commensurate with the level of training and experience.
   f. Demonstrate punctuality in academic environments; adhere to established deadlines and reply promptly to requests (written, verbal, telephone).
   g. Demonstrate dependability to complete assigned responsibilities.
   h. Demonstrate high ethical standards regarding graduate education.
   i. Accept responsibility and ownership for work and results; demonstrate willingness to accept suggestions for improvement.
   j. Practice appropriate personal grooming, hygiene, and dress in a manner appropriate for university settings and when representing the university off campus. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about dress expectations in laboratories and classrooms and to comply with them.

A breach of professional conduct as outlined in this policy may be considered grounds for disciplinary action or dismissal from the school. The process for disciplinary action is outlined in standards for conduct of the Health Science Center. The Dean may find that the disciplinary process falls under a program’s expectation of professionalism and, thus, may determine that the disciplinary process may be adjudicated outside of the process described in standards for conduct.
Residence Required for Graduation

Each doctoral student must spend a minimum of two full semesters, or the equivalent, as a full-time student in residence at the UT Health San Antonio. Students enrolled in the blended/hybrid doctoral Health Sciences Program are required to complete two semesters of full-time coursework of 6 sch or more to meet the “in residence” requirement. The residence requirement is based on the premise that the scholarship and proficiency necessary for the achievement of a graduate degree in the biomedical sciences are best acquired through endeavors devoted wholly to study and research in the university environment. A candidate for the Ph.D. degree must be registered in the dissertation course for at least two terms. A candidate for the M.S. degree must be registered in the thesis course for at least one term (which can be done via distance education).

Time Limits

The median time for completion of the M.S. degree and the Ph.D. degree in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (gsbs.uthscsa.edu) is 3 years and 5.3 years, respectively. The time to degree for the Doctorate in Medical Physics (DMP) program is 4 years.

Ph.D. Degree: Each program has a written policy on time-to-degree (Plan of Study) that will guide the student. Coursework or major examinations taken more than six years prior to the end of the candidate’s final semester may not be accepted for credit and, if necessary for the degree, must be repeated or specifically approved by the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS).

M.S. Degree: Each program has a written policy on time-to-degree (Plan of Study) that will guide the student. The same six year maximum for coursework or major exams will apply to M.S. candidates.

Credit Hour Requirements

A minimum of 33% of the total semester credit hours taken for an M.S. or Ph.D. degree must be earned at the Health Science Center (http://www.uthscsa.edu/). Specific curricula requirements vary depending on individual programs.

D.M.P. Degree: A minimum of 98 semester credit hours is required for the DMP degree.

Ph.D. Degree: A minimum of 72* semester credit hours is required for the Ph.D. and the Ph.D. component of the dual degree programs. Doctoral students are required to demonstrate intellectual command of the subject area of the graduate program and capability to carry out independent and original investigation in the area. The specific curriculum requirements of each graduate program are defined in the individual programs. The curriculum of each student is supervised by the appropriate COGS.

M.S. Degree: A minimum of 30* semester credit hours is required for the M.S. degree. The student must successfully complete at least 12 semester credit hours of coursework in addition to credit hours awarded in Research, Thesis, and Seminar. All work for the M.S. degree is ordinarily done at the Health Science Center’s Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/).

A maximum of six semester hours of graduate course work from another institution may be applied for credit toward the Master of Science degree, but only with the approval of the COGS in the student’s program. In cases where such credit is approved, the student must still meet the residence requirement for two full semesters. For students participating in a dual degree program, usually six semester hours in the medical or dental curriculum may be credited toward the M.S. degree. As a rule, these semester hours will come from survey courses in the student’s major area. Students in the doctoral Nursing Science Program should consult the Transfer of Credit policies under the Program Policies for the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Program (http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/biomedicalsciences/nursingscience/). Students in the doctoral Health Sciences Program should consult the Transfer of Credit policies under the Program Policies for the Doctor of Philosophy in Health Science Program (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/phd-health-sciences-academics/).

*Some programs may require additional hours

Dual Enrollment

Students enrolled in programs within the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) are eligible to concurrently enroll in the Certificate(s) in Translational Science (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/programs/certificate-translational-science/), Cancer Prevention (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/programs/certificate-cancer-prevention/) and Biomedical Data Science (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/programs/biomedical-data-science-certificate/) programs. Dual enrollment allows current and prospective students to tailor a unique educational and specialty training experience for themselves by simultaneously enrolling in our certificate programs and another GSBS graduate degree program.

To begin the dual enrollment process, the student must complete the GSBS online application (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/what-know-you-apply/) to one of the three certificate programs and send an email to the Certificate Coordinator for CTS, CCP and CBDS programs (Machuca@uthscsa.edu) indicating that she/he is currently enrolled in another GSBS program and seeking concurrent enrollment in a certificate program. The following information must be included in the email:

1. GSBS Unofficial Transcript
2. Name of student’s current program academic coordinator
3. Letter of approval/support from the faculty member in whose lab the student is working

This information will allow the certificate coordinator to work with the student's current program coordinator in establishing a concurrent dual degree plan of study and an estimated timeline to graduation. At the time of graduation, 33% of the courses for each program must be independently applied only to that program. The concurrent dual degree plan of study will be reviewed and approved by the faculty member in whose lab the student is working and then routed to the UTHSA Registrar’s Office for final approval.

Once the online application and required e-mail have been submitted for review, the student will be scheduled for an interview with our Master of Science in Clinical Investigation and Translational Science (MSCI-TS) Admission Review Committee (ARC). The MSCI-TS ARC will review the submitted documents (required e-mail, application, transcripts, personal statements, etc.) and interview the applicant. The ARC will provide an admission recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences for final approval. After sequential review by the MSCI-TS ARC, and the GSBS, successful applicants will receive an official offer letter from UT Health San Antonio’s Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.


• Certificate in Biomedical Data Science - Application Checklist (https://iims.uthscsa.edu/sites/iims/files/Education/CBDS.Ap%20Checklist%20Form%20CBDS%202020%20.pdf)

Non-Degree Program
An individual who wishes to enroll in courses in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences without entering a formal degree program must apply for admission as a non-degree student. The basic requirements for such admission are the same as those for degree-seeking students except letters of recommendation and GRE scores are not required. Non-degree applicants are also required to provide authorization for a security background and sanction check to be performed at the time of admission regardless of affiliation or employment status at the university at the time of application.

A non-degree student must receive approval of registration each semester by the Dean of the Graduate School and by the instructor of each course. The student must maintain a grade point average of at least a B (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) in courses taken as a non-degree student. Non-degree students can register for a maximum course load of nine semester hours in any given academic year. In general, a student may not maintain non-degree status for more than four consecutive semesters. Exceptions to this rule will be decided by the Dean. Non-degree students are subject to the same tuition and fees as degree seeking students. Full tuition and fees can be found in the current tuition and fees schedule (https://students.uthscsa.edu/financialaid/2021/05/2021-2022-tuition-and-fee-schedules/) on the financial aid webpage.

All grades received as a non-degree student will be included in the graduate student’s transcript and in computation of the cumulative GPA if the student is subsequently admitted to a graduate program. Under special circumstances, such as the computation of the GPA to determine academic probation, the Dean may grant exceptions to this policy. The grading policy for non-degree students is the same as those for degree-seeking students.

International students currently residing abroad should consult with the Office of International Services prior to applying for the non-degree program. Only degree-seeking applicants are eligible to apply for a student visa status.

Background Checks
Background checks are required prior to matriculation. Any events that occur after the initial background check that might affect the student’s status in the program must be reported to the program immediately. Students are required to comply with additional requests for background checks at any time during their course of study. Students may be responsible for the cost and fees of any/all required background checks.

Transfer of Credit
Credit for coursework taken at another institution may be transferred if the student submits a Course Waiver/Substitution Request Form available in the Office of the University Registrar. The same procedure should also be used to request transfer of credit from other schools within the UT Health San Antonio (http://www.uthscsa.edu/). The transfer of credit is subject to approval by the COGS of the program in which the student is enrolled and by the Dean or the Dean’s designee.

Students in M.S. programs may apply no more than 6 semester hours of transferred credit toward satisfaction of the 30* semester credit hours required for the degree. However, the request form should list all courses taken elsewhere, which are approved by the COGS to satisfy the course requirements for the M.S. degree set forth by the program in which the student is enrolled.

Students in Ph.D. programs are required to fulfill a minimum of 72* semester credit hours of coursework, and students in the DMP program are required to fulfill a minimum of 98 semester credit hours. Transfer of credit for Ph.D. students may be requested to provide evidence on the student’s transcript of the completion of courses taken elsewhere which are approved by the COGS (1) to satisfy the course requirements for the Ph.D. degree or (2) to be appropriate to the specific course of study of the individual graduate student.

*Some programs may require additional hours.

Waiver of Courses: With the approval of the COGS, graduate credit hours from other universities may be accepted in lieu of required courses. In addition, the COGS may waive certain required courses, based on the student’s previous graduate course work. The hours will be accepted in the form of credit for the course material but will not be counted in the total credit hours directly on the student’s transcript.

English Proficiency Requirement
Prospective students who are not U.S. citizens and do not have permanent resident status are subject to the same requirements, procedures, and acceptance considerations that apply to first-time applicants. Additionally, students will have to meet specified requirements by the Office of International Services (http://www.uthscsa.edu/ois/) (OIS).

Only degree-seeking applicants are eligible to apply for a student visa status.

Applicants from countries where English is not the official language are required to submit scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or Duolingo English Test. The minimum required scores are listed below:

TOEFL 84
IELTS 7.0
Duolingo 115

Scores on TOEFL, IELTS, and Duolingo tests taken more than two years prior to the date of application are not acceptable.

Countries exempted from the TOEFL, IELTS, and/ or Duolingo requirement:
Antigua and Barbuda
Australia
Bahamas
Barbados

Countries exempted from the TOEFL, IELTS, and/ or Duolingo requirement:
Antigua and Barbuda
Australia
Bahamas
Barbados
Transcripts from all previous educational experiences (from secondary schools through any post-secondary educational institutions) that are published in a language other than English language must be accompanied with an attachment which translates verbatim the wording on each document into the English language. Transcripts must be evaluated by an approved current NACES member (http://www.naces.org/members.htm) or AACRAO.

**Immunizations**

Immunizations are required of all students. The Board of Regents may require immunizations against additional diseases for some students. Further immunizations may be required by the Board of Regents in times of emergency or epidemic. For a list of required immunizations, reference the Immunizations section of this catalog (http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/institutionalpolicies/immunizations/).

**Ethics Course Requirement**

All doctoral students must take the course TSCI 5070 Responsible Conduct of Research or its equivalent, as a requirement for graduation. Students enrolled in the Nursing Science Ph.D. and Health Sciences Ph.D. will complete the equivalent coursework to fulfill this requirement. See the respective program’s degree requirements for further information. Doctorate of Medical Physics and Radiological Science students will complete Ethics and Professionalism RADI 7077 to fulfill this requirement.

Master of Science students are strongly encouraged to take the TSCI 5070, but it is not a requirement for graduation.
Supervised Teaching
Each graduate program will decide if supervised teaching is required for a doctoral degree in its respective program. If supervised teaching is required, the student must enroll in a program-designated teaching course for a minimum of one semester credit and receive a grade of S (Satisfactory) or H (Honors). BME students are required to enroll in one semester credit hour of supervised teaching. UTSA offers a supervised teaching course, in which students will receive a letter grade.

Student Employment
Full-time doctoral students are strongly counseled against accepting any outside employment. Before seeking outside employment, graduate students are urged to discuss their plans with their faculty advisor.

Full-time graduate students may be awarded stipends as teaching assistants (TAs) or graduate research assistants (GRAs) when funds are available. Student stipends funded from federal sources are governed by federal regulations. Full-time students who are GRAs or TAs are discouraged from taking employment, as stipends serve as scholarships to meet financial need.

There may be circumstances under which part-time graduate student’s desire gainful employment within the UT Health San Antonio (http://www.uthscsa.edu/) or full-time employees desire to pursue part-time graduate studies), students and employees should consult with the program COGS and HR upon review of the student employees policy (HOP 4.3.5.) (https://uthealthsa.sharepoint.com/RAC/Documents/HOP/Chapter04/4.3.5.pdf)

Conflict of management plans should be developed in situations where a full-time employee is enrolled in the same program as their supervisor and/or the supervisor has responsibilities in which the full-time employee is enrolled.

Records
Registration
The Office of the University Registrar (http://students.uthscsa.edu/Registrar/) will announce and provide the registration process to all students, COGS Chairs, Departmental Chairs, and their assistants prior to the start of each semester. For individual registration concerns, students should confer with the program’s COGS Chair.

A student must register each semester that he or she is enrolled in a course. This includes courses in Research, Thesis, and Dissertation. No student can receive credit for a course for which he or she has not registered.

Consequences for Non-Payment of Tuition and Fees
In graduate programs where students are responsible for paying their own tuition and fees, payment must be made by the census date of each semester (which is always the 12th class day). The fall semester has two official start dates for new students, and thus, two census dates are listed on the school’s official Academic Calendar. Students should refer to the Academic Calendar to determine their census date based on their start date. Consequences of non-payment of tuition and fees are listed below. International students who fail to pay tuition by the census date must also contact the Office of International Services (http://www.uthscsa.edu/ois/).

Failure to pay tuition will result in the following:

- Discontinued enrollment in the graduate program
- Termination from the program with loss of pay, benefits, and privileges.
- Necessity to re-apply for admission for the following semester.
- Barred from readmission for the current semester.
- Initiation of loan repayments (if applicable).
- Potential loss of visa status and possible deportation for international students.
- Withholding of a student’s official transcript.
- Withholding of a diploma to which a student would otherwise be entitled.

Waiver of Fitness Fee: Graduate students enrolled at the Health Science Center are required to pay a fitness fee. Only students enrolled in 100% online programs may submit a petition to waive the fitness center fee. Students enrolled in a joint degree program (e.g. Translational Science, Biomedical Engineering) where the home institution is not the UT Health San Antonio may request the fitness fee be waived. Waiver requests must be submitted by the student in writing to the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the Graduate School no later than 10 days prior to the beginning of classes. Students enrolled in full hours may also request the fitness fee to be waived. All waiver requests are forwarded by the Associate Dean of Student Affairs for review by the Vice President for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs, and require the approval of both the Vice President for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs and the Vice President and Chief Financial Officer.

If the waiver is approved, the GSBS will forward the waiver to the Bursar’s Office with a copy sent to the Office of Veteran Services & Financial Aid. Waivers are valid for one year after which the student must re-apply.

Full-Time Status
Doctoral students must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 semester credit hours each fall and spring semester in order to be considered full-time (equivalent to 24 semester credit hours for a full academic year). The minimum half-time course load for doctoral graduate students is 6 credit hours per semester.

Master’s students must be enrolled for a minimum of 8 semester credit hours each fall and spring semester in order to be considered full-time (equivalent to 16 semester credit hours for a full academic year). The minimum half-time course load for master’s graduate students is 4 credit hours per semester.

Exception(s) to this policy include:

1. A student enrolled in a THECB-approved Certificate program
2. A student enrolled for Final Hours.
3. A student enrolled in the Ph.D. Nursing Science program or in the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program.
4. A student enrolled in their first two years of the Ph.D. Radiological Sciences program, Human Imaging Track only.
5. A UT Health San Antonio student enrolled in the Translational Science Ph.D. program; Credit hours earned in trailing summer semesters at other participating institutions will count toward the total required credit hours each academic year.
6. A UT Health San Antonio student enrolled in the Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. program or Biomedical Engineering M.S. program; Credit hours earned in trailing summer semesters at other
Students appointed in Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) and Teaching Assistant (TA) positions in the GSBS will be required to enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester, with the exception of a Health Science Center student in the Translational Science Ph.D. and Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. programs, which will require enrollment in a total of 24 credit hours over the fall, spring, and trailing summer semesters each academic year. GRAs and TAs are allowed to enroll in final hours and remain as full-time students per the Final Hours Policy (http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/finalcredithourspolicy/) found in the catalog under General Academic Policies.

The Registrar will record the symbol W for courses dropped after the census date. A student on academic probation will not be allowed to drop a course.

In case of illness and with the consent of the Dean, a student may drop a course without penalty at any time prior to the beginning of final examinations.

Students in M.S. programs may register for the Thesis course XXXX 6098 where XXXX represents one of the following: BIME, CSAT, DENH, IBMS, MMED, MICR, MSDS, RADI, or TSCI. Registration for Thesis is only permitted after the following three actions have been taken:

1. Approval of admission to candidacy for the M.S. degree by the Dean or the Dean's designee;
2. Approval of the thesis research proposal by the COGS of the program and the Dean or the Dean's designee;
3. Approval of the membership of the candidate’s Supervising Committee by the COGS of the program and the Dean or the Dean's designee.

A candidate for the M.S. degree must register for the Thesis course for at least two terms.

Registration for Final Term

It is a requirement that a student be registered for the semester in which he or she graduates.

Final Credit Hours

A student in their final semester registering only for the thesis or dissertation course may register for “final hours”. A Ph.D. student must register for a minimum of 3 semester credit hours; a M.S. student must register for a minimum of 1 semester credit hour. When a student declares “final hours” for a semester, the student shall be considered enrolled in a full-time course load for that semester. The student pays tuition based upon the number of credit hour for which he/she registers.

Because of requirements dictated by certain types of visas, international students must consult with their COGS Chair and the Office of International Services prior to registering for final hours.

A student may register for final credit hours only once during their degree program. The “Request for Designation of Final Hours” form is available in the Office of the University Registrar or on their website (http://students.uthscsa.edu/registrar/2013/03/forms/) and it requires the signature approval of the program COGS Chair.

Registration for Audit

Permission to audit one or more courses is sometimes granted. Auditing convey only the privilege of observing and excludes handing in papers or taking part in a class discussion, laboratory exercises, or fieldwork. An AU grade is given and no credit is reported. Graduate students must obtain permission to register to audit a course from the course director and the COGS chair of the program in which they are enrolled. Others who wish to register to audit a graduate course must apply through the Graduate School’s application system for admission as a Non-Degree Student. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs serves as the program director for the non-degree program.

Grading System

Credit hours are earned in the graduate programs only for the grades A, B, C, and S. All letter grades except H and S are included in the computation of the grade point average. Grade points are assigned as follows:

A = 4 (above average graduate work)
B = 3 (average graduate work)
C = 2 (below average graduate work)
D = 1 (failing graduate work)
F = 0 (failing graduate work)
Grievance Process:

The sequence of procedures involved in the grievance process is outlined below.

An issue is identified through the grievance process. If the issue cannot be resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student and faculty member involved to resolve the issue before proceeding through the grievance process. All efforts should be made by the student and the faculty member involved to resolve the issue before proceeding through the grievance process. The sequence of procedures involved in the grievance process is outlined below.

**Student Academic Grievance Process**

**An Academic Grievance** is a complaint regarding an academic decision or action that affects a student’s academic record. For the definition of terms see: [http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/grievances/](http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/grievances/).

As required by the University of Texas System and the policies of the Health Science Center, a formal grievance procedure is a process to allow students the opportunity to report any perceived act, omission, or issue of an academic nature which may adversely affect the student. The student grievance may include grade disputes or other academically related issues. All efforts should be made by the student and the faculty member involved to resolve the issue before proceeding through the grievance process. If the issue cannot be resolved to the student’s satisfaction, the student is encouraged to submit their grievance through the grievance process.

The grading system described above applies to courses in the medical and dental curricula in which graduate students may be enrolled as well as to courses in the graduate programs. Grades for courses taken to satisfy a contingency or condition of admission or those transferred for credit are not included in computation of the grade point average.

**Student Academic Grievance Process**

**A formal complaint is filed by submitting the Student Complaint Form** to the COGS Chair for the Program with a copy delivered to the GSBS Dean’s office.

**An appeal is filed by submitting to the Dean of the GSBS a letter signed by the student outlining the arguments for the appeal together with the Student Complaint Form and the written summary from the grievance process.**

**The Dean** will represent the GSBS on the committee. If the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is named in the grievance, they should follow the Appeal Process described below.

**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

If a student exhausts the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences grievance process, Evidence may be filed to The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. More information on the types of complaints investigated and processes for investigations can be accessed on The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website. ([http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/)) The complaint form is also available on the website.

**Continuation, Probation, and Dismissal**

Continuation in the graduate programs is dependent upon the following conditions:

1. Satisfactory progress in removing any conditions imposed at the time of admission;
2. Maintenance of a minimum cumulative B (3.0) average for all courses taken while enrolled in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences ([http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/](http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/)). A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation and warned by the Dean of the Graduate School that continuation in the graduate program is in jeopardy. A student will remain on probation as long as their cumulative GPA is below 3.0. While on probation, a student must maintain a B average in those courses for which he or she is registered or be considered for dismissal by the COGS. Except in the case of illness, permission to drop courses will not be given while the student is on probation. The length of time a student is allowed to remain on probation is at the discretion of the program Committee of Graduate Studies. The probationary period should not impede on the student’s academic progress in the program. A student on probation may not be admitted to candidacy or awarded a degree. Grades achieved during enrollment as a non-degree student are not used to determine academic probation.
3. A satisfactory rate of progress toward the degree as determined by the COGS is required throughout the student’s enrollment. The
Committee, with the Dean’s consent, may terminate a student’s enrollment for lack of satisfactory progress. Any graduate student who receives two unsatisfactory (U) grades in consecutive semesters will be considered for dismissal by the program COGS. Any recommendation for dismissal requires final approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

4. A student that has been recommended for dismissal from a graduate program can appeal the decision according to the Student Academic Grievance Policy outlined above. If the student decides to appeal the recommendation for dismissal, the student may still register and attend courses in the subsequent semester; however, the student is not required to do so. If the student elects to appeal the dismissal and attend classes in the subsequent semester, an expedited appeal review process may be requested to ensure that a decision on the appeal is reached prior to the census day for the semester in which the courses are being taken. In order to initiate the expedited appeal review process, the process outlined below must be followed:
   a. The student has up to 5 business days from the date the student received the recommendation for dismissal to file a formal appeal by submitting to the Dean of the Graduate School a letter signed by the student outlining the arguments for the appeal and requesting an expedited review process.
   b. The GSBS Dean will assemble a committee consisting of the Program COGS Chair, the Program Director, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the Graduate School. The Program COGS Chair will chair the committee. If the Program Director serves as COGS Chair, the Program Director will appoint a senior graduate faculty member of the Program to serve on the committee.
   c. The Committee will have up to 3 business days following the receipt of the appeal to render a decision and provide a written summary to the Dean. All documentation will be collected by the COGS Chair and provided to the GSBS Dean.
   d. The GSBS Dean will have up to 2 business days to provide a written and signed summary of their decision to the student. A copy of the signed summary will be sent by the COGS Chair.
   e. The GSBS Dean’s decision will be considered final and is not subject to further appeal.

All documents (emails/memos/letters/written summaries) will be maintained by the Graduate School Dean’s Office.

For students enrolled in dual degree programs, please refer to your program’s handbook for additional information concerning continuation in the program.

Withdrawal

Permission for withdrawal from a graduate program may be granted by the Dean upon concurrence by the COGS of the program. The student who wishes to withdraw must complete and sign the **Student Clearance Form** (available electronically in My Student Center [http://cs.uthscsa.edu/]). The form will route to the COGS Chair and the Graduate School dean or designee.

In the case of withdrawal before the end of the semester (and thus the dropping of all courses), the grading symbol W will be recorded for each course not completed. In the case of withdrawal at the end of a semester, the appropriate grade will be recorded for each completed course.

An application for readmission by a student who has previously withdrawn is subject to the same requirements, procedures, and acceptance considerations that apply to first-time applicants.

Leave of Absence

Permission for a leave of absence from a graduate program for a maximum period of one year may be granted by the Dean subject to prior approval by the COGS of the program. Such permission will be granted only for extenuating circumstances and indicates that the student will be allowed to return to the program within the one-year time limit. Stipends will be suspended for the duration of a student’s leave and there is no guarantee that the stipend will be reinstated upon return.

The student should make a written request for a leave of absence to the Chair of the COGS for their program, including the reasons for the request, the last day of class attended, and the expected time of return. The request for leave of absence is approved by COGS, the Chair of COGS will submit the approved request to the GSBS Dean’s Office for final approval. After the request is approved by the GSBS Dean, the student is so notified by a letter from the Dean provided by the Graduate School Dean’s Office. The student must then complete a **Student Clearance Form** available electronically in My Student Center [https://cs.uthscsa.edu/]. The form will route to the COGS Chair and the Graduate School Dean or designee for approval. The form will automatically drop any courses for which the student is currently enrolled.

Return from Leave of Absence

When a student is planning their return from leave of absence, the student should contact the Chair of the COGS for their program, complete a Return from Leave of Absence Form (http://students.uthscsa.edu/Registrar/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/12/ReturnFromLeaveOfAbsenceForm-122021.pdf) and send to the registrar with copy to the COGS, Academic Program Coordinator, and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the Graduate School. Leaves of Absence equal to one year or more will require a new background check to be completed by the Deans office. The student should login to My Student Center (https://cs.uthscsa.edu/) to determine if any holds have been placed on their account which are required to be cleared prior to course registration.

**In Absentia (INTD 1000)**

Students must be registered for the semester in which they graduate, and all fees and tuition apply. In Absentia status is a type of registration that allows students to maintain student status at the university while completing research elsewhere. In Absentia may also allow students who have completed all requirements for graduation to enroll for the purpose of degree conferral.

Registration In Absentia is designated as zero credit hours and the student is assessed a $25 fee. Registration In Absentia is most commonly applied for August or February degree conferral. Students using the In Absentia designation must successfully defend their dissertation, thesis, or manuscript on or before the last day of Fall or Spring term as outlined in August or February In Absentia degree conferral timelines on the GSBS Graduation webpage (https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/student-life/graduation/). All forms required by the Graduate School and the final approved dissertation or thesis must be electronically submitted in accordance with the August or February In Absentia degree conferral timelines, whichever is relevant to the student’s final semester.
The student who expects to defend and enroll *In Absentia* should register for one credit hour for the next semester. Following the successful defense, the student may drop the one credit hour and register *In Absentia* for the coming semester. An Add/Drop registration form must be obtained by the student’s Academic Coordinator for registration in INTD 1000 as the course placeholder, which must be signed by the COGS Chair, student’s supervising professor and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. This must be accomplished before the first day of classes of the new semester, otherwise a W will be added to the students record for the one credit hour.

**Non-registration**

A student who fails to register for two or more consecutive semesters and does not elect to take a leave of absence or to enroll *In Absentia* will be considered for dismissal from the program. The Registrar will notify the GSBS Dean’s Office of the student’s failure to register.

If the COGS of the student’s program votes to dismiss the student, COGS will recommend dismissal to the GSBS Dean. Official notification of dismissal will be sent to the student from the GSBS Dean’s Office. If dismissed, the student may reapply for admission. Such application is subject to the same requirements, procedures, and acceptance considerations that apply to first-time applicants.

**Transfer between Graduate Programs**

Any student who wishes to change the course of study from one graduate program to another must submit an application to that program. The application is subject to the same requirements, procedures, and acceptance considerations that apply to other applicants to the program. Students who are considering such a transfer must have an interview with the GSBS Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Upon approval, a Change of Program form must be signed by all relevant parties and submitted to complete the process.

**Graduation**

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded by the Board of Regents (http://www.utsystem.edu/board-of-regents/) upon the satisfactory completion of a minimum of 72* semester credit hours, the satisfactory completion of a prescribed program of study as documented by the COGS, recommendation of the Graduate Faculty Council, and certification of the candidate by the Dean and the President to the Board of Regents. The degree of Master of Science is awarded upon the satisfactory completion of a minimum of 30* semester hours, the requirements particular to each graduate program as documented by the COGS, recommendation of the Graduate Faculty Council, and certification of the candidate by the Dean and the President to the Board of Regents. The degree of Doctorate in Medical Physics is awarded upon the satisfactory completion of a minimum of 98 semester credit hours, the requirements documented by the COGS, recommendation of the Graduate Faculty Council, and certification of the candidate by the Dean and the President to the Board of Regents.

*Some programs may require additional hours

**Commencement**

Graduation exercises are held each year in May.

The Dean of the Graduate School, or his/her designee, will be present to address the students and participate in the presentation of diplomas.

Candidates for graduation in the Health Sciences Ph.D. program, Nursing Science Ph.D. program, Pharm.D. program, Master’s in Dental Science program, and Master’s in Dental Hygiene program also participate in the Graduate School (http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/) Commencement.

**Sequential School**

**Doctor of Philosophy degree**

**Phase I - From matriculation through admission to candidacy**

1. **Assignment of faculty advisor:** The COGS assigns a member of the graduate faculty as an advisor to each student entering a program. The advisor serves as a counselor on academic matters and monitors the student’s progress in (a) successfully completing contingencies of admission and course requirements of the program and (b) selecting an area of research specialization.

2. **Selection of the supervising professor:** A member of the program’s graduate faculty who will serve as the supervising professor of the dissertation research shall be decided upon by mutual agreement among the student, the faculty member, and the COGS.

3. **Approval of research advisor (supervising professor):** When the student selects the area of research specialization and the faculty member to serve as research preceptor, the COGS reviews the proposed selections. If the selections are approved, the faculty member is designated by the COGS as the student’s research advisor in concert with, or in replacement of, the original faculty advisor. The faculty advisor may, of course, be selected as the research advisor.

4. **Compact and Milestone Agreement:** No later than one month after the student selects their faculty mentor, Compact and Milestone Agreements between the student and mentor are required. The student and mentor will discuss and sign the Compact and Milestone agreements. The Compact and Milestone documents will be reviewed by the Program Director and/or COGS Chair of the respective program. Following this initial process, Milestone accomplishments should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Program Director and/or COGS Chair. If Milestones are not being adequately met, the Program Director and/or COGS Chair along with the supervising professor should create a plan of action to correct the deficiencies. If the issue(s) remain and/or are not adequately being resolved after six months then the GSBS Dean’s Office should be notified of the issue(s) and be provided with a proposed plan of action to ensure student success in the program.

5. **Qualifying examination:** The Qualifying Examination is comprehensive in nature and may be written, oral, or both. The COGS or it’s designee determines the format of the examination and the composition of the Qualifying Examination Committee, with the proviso that one member is not on the graduate faculty of the student’s program. The Qualifying Examination Committee administers the examination(s), evaluates the student’s performance, and reports its judgment on whether the student passed (indicated by a grade of "Satisfactory") or failed (indicated by a grade of "Unsatisfactory") to the COGS or it’s designee.

6. **Admission to candidacy:** Recommendation by the COGS that the student be admitted to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree requires the following:

   a. Satisfactory completion of all required courses; in exceptional cases, permission to proceed to Phase II without having completed all required courses can be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School.

   b. Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all coursework undertaken since matriculation in the program.
c. Report by the Qualifying Examination Committee that the student has passed the examination.
d. Report by the student's research advisor and other graduate faculty members, as appropriate, that the student has clearly evidenced the potential for productive and independent investigation.

If, in its overall evaluation of the eligibility of the student for admission to candidacy, the COGS is in favor of admission, it shall submit a Petition of Admission to Candidacy Form to the Dean for approval with documentation of satisfactory completion of the requirements listed above. Each research advisor is required to sign the form to certify their view of the student's potential for productive and independent investigation. The Dean may approve or disapprove the recommendation or request further documentation. When the Dean has approved admission of the student to candidacy, the candidate enters Phase II of the program.

In the event a student does not advance to candidacy, the student is given the opportunity to repeat the Qualifying Examination to earn a "Satisfactory" grade. If the student fails the second attempt at the Qualifying Examination then the COGS will recommend to either dismiss the student from the program or to allow the student to enter a Master's granting program.

Phase II - From admission to candidacy through granting of the degree

1. Draft of dissertation research proposal: The candidate shall identify a research question that will serve as a focus for the dissertation research. The candidate shall prepare a draft of a research proposal that specifies the research to be undertaken, its significance in the scientific field, and the general methods and techniques to be utilized. The proposal shall be submitted to the supervising professor for review and modification. Subsequent drafts of the proposal should then be submitted for review and modification to other faculty members who have knowledge and expertise in the area of the research proposal. The final draft of the dissertation research proposal is subject to review and approval by the COGS, which may specifically designate a group of faculty members to review the proposal draft(s).

2. Composition of the dissertation supervising committee: Submitted concurrently with the research proposal, the supervising professor and the candidate shall make recommendations to the COGS regarding the composition of the Supervising Committee for the dissertation research. Recommendations may include adjunct faculty members who have been approved as Graduate Faculty of a program at the UT Health San Antonio and are eligible to serve on a dissertation supervising committee. The Supervising Committee must consist of at least five persons, as follows:
   a. The supervising professor, who has a primary faculty appointment at UT Health SA and is a member of the program's graduate faculty, designated as Supervising Professor and Chair of the Supervising Committee;
   b. Three members must be members of the graduate faculty of the program in which the student is enrolled;
   c. One member must be from outside of UT Health SA with no affiliation to the institution and should have expertise in or similar to the field of the proposed dissertation and/or provide a unique perspective or point of view on the proposed dissertation.

The COGS may nominate additional members in categories (b) or (c) if necessary. Nomination is contingent upon the willingness of

1. Approval of the dissertation proposal and supervising committee:
   Upon selection of the Supervising Committee, the Research Proposal and Supervising Committee form must be signed by each member of the supervising committee in IMPACT and submitted to the Graduate School Dean's Office. Committee member signatures certify the committee's approval of the proposal and their approval to serve on the committee. A copy of the proposal must be uploaded along with the form. The Dean (or a designee of the Dean) will review the recommendation of COGS on the proposal and supervising committee. After approval by the Dean (or a designee of the Dean) of both the proposal and the Supervising Committee, the candidate may register for their respective program's Dissertation course. An electronic addendum is required for any subsequent change in the Composition of the Supervising Committee or research proposal and must be approved by the COGS and the GSBS Dean (or designee or the Dean), who will then report the change at a regularly scheduled GFC meeting.

2. Supervision of the dissertation research: Within one month after formal approval of the Supervising Committee, the Supervising Committee shall convene to discuss with the candidate the progress of the dissertation research and the projected future work. At appropriate intervals thereafter (at least every six months), the Supervising Committee shall meet with the candidate for presentation of progress reports (written and/or oral), so that current status of the research may be evaluated and direction of future work planned. If the external Committee member is unable to attend these meetings, it is the responsibility of the candidate and the Supervising Professor to provide this member with progress reports for review and recommendations. It is essential that the Supervising Committee be fully informed of the research progress and be able to provide continued supervision throughout and that the COGS receive reports of the research progress from the Supervising Committee after each of its meetings with the candidate. The Supervising Committee and/or the COGS may approve or direct alterations in the research plans within the general context of the dissertation proposal. Major changes in the candidate's research status (such as selection of a new Supervising Professor, new Supervising Committee members, or a new research question) must be reported to the Graduate Faculty Council and the Dean for consideration.

3. Submission of the dissertation: After agreement by the members of the Supervising Committee that the research has progressed sufficiently for submission of the dissertation, a draft of the dissertation shall be submitted to the Supervising Professor. Additionally, the candidate will be required to upload their dissertation into a plagiarism detection software through the learning
management system course specifically created by the Graduate School Dean’s Office for the purpose of safeguarding the institution’s reputation and integrity. After uploading their dissertation into the plagiarism detection software, the candidate will receive a similarity report and score that will help to determine the originality of the work. This report should be submitted to the Supervising Professor along with the draft of their dissertation. Following discussion of the report with the mentor, recommended changes will be made to the dissertation including those intended to lower the similarity report score (if necessary). After the necessary edits have been made, the dissertation draft will be submitted to all other members of the Supervising Committee for review and recommendations for modification of content. It is the responsibility of the candidate to follow the guidelines of preparation of the dissertation provided by the Graduate School Dean’s Office as outlined in the Dissertation/Thesis Workshop and in the Rubric for Preparation & Submission of the Electronic Theses, Dissertation, and Abstracts. If the alternative chapter format is preferred, the candidate must obtain approval for such format from the Supervising Committee and the COGS.

4. Final oral examination: When the Supervising Committee judges the dissertation to be suitable for defense, the Request for Final Oral Examination Form (GSBS Form 40), which needs to be signed by all members of the Supervising Committee and the Chair of the COGS for the program, should be submitted to the Dean via IMPACT for request of scheduling the Final Oral Examination. A copy of the Abstract and Curriculum vitae must accompany the Request for Final Oral Examination Form at the time it is submitted to the Graduate School Dean's Office. Public announcement of the Final Oral Examination is made by the Graduate School Dean’s Office. This examination is conducted by the Supervising Committee. All members of the Supervising Committee are expected to participate in the final oral examination. Interested persons may attend the public defense and have the right to question the candidate. After the public defense, the Final Oral Examination continues with an oral examination by the Supervising Committee that is not customarily open to the public. The Supervising Committee members vote on the candidate’s success or failure of the Final Oral Examination; more than one vote for failure signifies failure of the examination. All members of the Supervising Committee sign the Report on Final Oral Examination Form (GSBS Form 43) in IMPACT. In the event of a failing performance by the candidate, the Supervising Committee shall also submit to the COGS and the Dean a recommendation regarding remedial action; in such case, the COGS shall decide on the recommendation or other action to be taken. In the event of a successful performance by the candidate, the COGS shall vote on whether to approve the recommendation by the Supervising Committee for granting of the degree.

5. Recommendation for granting of the degree: If the COGS approves the favorable recommendation by the Supervising Committee, the Chair of the COGS shall so indicate by signature on the Report on Final Oral Examination in IMPACT and submit the Report to the Graduate Faculty Council for consideration. Within two weeks following the candidate’s defense, the candidate shall submit to the Graduate School Dean’s Office the final electronic version of the dissertation via ProQuest as well as submit a final upload to the plagiarism detection software. The dissertation Approval Page signed by the Supervising Professor and Committee members must also be submitted to the Graduate School Dean’s Office. When the Report, Approval Page(s), electronic dissertation approved in ProQuest, final upload of the plagiarism detection software, and the Survey of Earned Doctorates have been received in the Graduate School Dean’s Office, the Graduate Faculty Council will consider the recommendation for granting of the degree. If the Council does not approve the recommendation, it will refer the matter to the COGS with a recommendation for remedial action. If the Council does approve the recommendation, the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will notify the Office of the University Registrar that the candidate has fulfilled all requirements of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Upon the candidate’s certification by the President, the degree is conferred by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System. (See “Registration for Dissertation,” “Registration for Final Term,” and “Graduation” previously discussed in this section.)

Dissertations will be made available to the public. A candidate may request permission from the graduate dean to temporarily delay making the dissertation available to the public in order to protect patent or other rights. This request must be supported by a written recommendation from the Supervising Professor. The graduate dean makes the final decision regarding delayed publication.

Master of Science Degree

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences offers Master of Science degrees with some programs offering either a thesis, non-thesis or manuscript option. The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences does not require a comprehensive Qualifying Examination or a Petition for Admission to Candidacy form for the Master of Science Degree. The Sequential Procedures for each program can be modified to correlate with the curricula and requirements of that individual program. The general Sequential Procedure for the Master of Science degree is listed below but the appropriate Sequential Procedures may be obtained from the Graduate Advisor of the specific program.

Phase I - From matriculation to admission to candidacy

1. Assignment of faculty advisor: The COGS assigns a member of the graduate faculty as an advisor to each student entering a program. The advisor serves as a counselor on academic matters and monitors the student’s progress in
   a. successfully completing contingencies of admission and course requirements of the program and
   b. selecting an area of research specialization.

2. Selection of the supervising professor: A member of the graduate faculty of the program who will serve as the supervising professor of the thesis research shall be decided upon by mutual agreement among the student, the faculty member, and the COGS. Normally, the research advisor who guided the student’s preliminary research activities continues as supervising professor, but this arrangement is not obligatory.

3. Approval of research advisor (supervising professor): By the end of the first semester a student will select the area of research specialization and the faculty member to serve as research preceptor, and the COGS will review and document the proposed selections. If the selections are approved, the faculty member is designated by the COGS as the student’s research advisor in concert with, or in replacement of, the original faculty advisor. The faculty advisor may, of course, be selected as the research advisor.

4. Compact and Milestone Agreement: No later than one month after the student selects their faculty mentor, Compact and Milestone Agreements between the student and mentor are required. The student and mentor will discuss and sign the Compact and Milestone agreements. The Compact and Milestone documents will be reviewed.
by the Program Director and/or COGS Chair of the respective program. Following this initial process, Milestone accomplishments should be reviewed on an annual basis by the Program Director and/or COGS Chair. If Milestones are not being adequately met, the Program Director and/or COGS Chair along with the supervising professor should create a plan of action to correct the deficiencies. If the issue(s) remain and/or are not adequately being resolved after six months then the GSBS Dean’s Office should be notified of the issue(s) and be provided with a proposed plan of action to ensure student success in the program.

5. **Qualifying examination**: The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences does not require a comprehensive Qualifying Examination for the M.S. degree. However, the COGS for particular programs may require the student to pass a written and/or oral Qualifying Examination prior to consideration for admission to candidacy. The appropriate Sequential Procedures should be obtained from the Graduate Advisor of the specific program.

6. **Admission to candidacy**: The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences does not require M.S. students to advance to candidacy; however, the COGS for particular programs may. Recommendation by the COGS that the student be admitted to candidacy for the Master of Science degree requires the following:
   a. Satisfactory completion of all required courses;
   b. Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all coursework undertaken since matriculation in the program;
   c. Report by the Qualifying Examination Committee that the student passed the examination or that the examination has been waived;
   d. Report by the student’s research advisor and other graduate faculty members, as appropriate, that the student has clearly evidenced the potential for productive and independent investigation. Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy should be submitted to the Graduate School Dean’s Office for approval.

**Phase II - From Admission to candidacy through granting of the degree**

1. **Draft of thesis research proposal**: The candidate shall identify a research question that will serve as a focus for the thesis research. The candidate shall prepare a draft of a research proposal that specifies the research to be undertaken, it’s significance in the scientific field, and the general methods and techniques to be utilized. The proposal shall be submitted to the supervising professor for review and modification. Subsequent drafts of the proposal may then be submitted for review and modification to other faculty members who have knowledge and expertise in the area of the research proposal. After approval of the final proposal draft by the supervising professor, the proposal is submitted to the COGS for consideration of approval.

2. **Appointment of the supervising committee**: Submitted concurrently with the research proposal, the supervising professor and the candidate shall make recommendations to the COGS regarding the composition of the Supervising Committee for the thesis research. Recommendations may include adjunct faculty members who have been approved as Graduate Faculty of a program at the UT Health San Antonio and are eligible to serve on a thesis supervising committee. The Supervising Committee must consist of at least four persons, as follows:
   a. The supervising professor, also a member of the program’s graduate faculty, designated as Supervising Professor and Chair of the Supervising Committee;
   b. Two members must be members of the graduate faculty of the program;
   c. One member must be a faculty member of UT Health San Antonio in a supporting area outside the program or a person outside of UT Health San Antonio who is an expert in the field of the proposed thesis.

3. **Submission of a thesis or manuscript**: When members of the Supervising Committee agree that the research has progressed sufficiently for submission of the thesis, a draft of the thesis shall be submitted to the Supervising Professor. Additionally, the candidate will be required to upload their thesis into the plagiarism detection software through the learning management system course specifically created by the Graduate School Dean’s Office for the purpose of safeguarding the institution’s reputation and integrity. After uploading their thesis into the plagiarism detection software, the candidate will receive a similarity report and score that will help to determine the originality of the work. This report...
should be submitted to the Supervising Professor along with the draft of their thesis. Following discussion of the report with the mentor, recommended changes will be made to the thesis including those intended to lower the similarity report score (if necessary). After the necessary edits have been made, the thesis draft will be submitted to the other members of the Supervising Committee for review and recommendations for modification of content. It is the responsibility of the candidate to follow the guidelines for preparation of the thesis provided by the Graduate School Dean's Office as outlined in the Dissertation/Thesis Workshop and in the Rubric for Preparation & Submission of the Electronic Theses, Dissertation, and Abstracts. If an alternative chapter format is preferable, the candidate must obtain approval for such format from the Supervising Committee and the COGS. The candidate also has the responsibility to ensure adequate time for review and modification of the thesis.

b. Submission of a manuscript: When members of the Supervising Committee have approved the manuscript, the candidate must submit the manuscript to a peer reviewed scientific journal. The manuscript must be written within the publication specifications of the selected journal. The manuscript must be submitted, in press, or published during the interval that the candidate was enrolled in the program. Manuscripts unrelated to the approved research project, such as case reports or book chapters, are not acceptable for completion of the manuscript requirement. The manuscript should be provided to the Supervising Committee for review and approval prior to submission to the program COGS. The manuscript can be submitted to the program COGS at any time, however, in cases with impending graduation deadlines, the approved manuscript should be provided to the program COGS at least one month prior to the regularly-scheduled graduation date established by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). The candidate also has the responsibility to ensure adequate time for review and modification of the manuscript. When a manuscript is submitted to the GSBS Dean's Office, it should be accompanied by:
   i. The completed Manuscript Approval Form
   ii. A dated notice (letter or email) from the publisher that indicates manuscript submission or acceptance.
   iii. A copy of the letter from the Supervising Professor

4. Final oral examination: The Graduate School requires that the thesis be defended by the candidate in a Final Oral Examination conducted by the Supervising Committee; the format in which this examination is conducted (see Options 1 and 2 below) shall be decided by the COGS. It is recommended that the format be uniform for all M.S. candidates in a specific program. All members of the Supervising Committee are expected to participate in the final oral examination.
   • Option 1: The COGS may elect to require that the thesis be defended in a formal Final Oral Examination scheduled through the Graduate School Dean's Office and open to all interested persons. The following procedures apply.
   • Option 2: The COGS may choose a non-public notification due to intellectual property concerns, without public notification through the Graduate School Dean's Office. The following procedures apply.
   • The Request for Final Oral Examination Form (GSBS Form 40), signed by the Supervising Committee members, should be submitted to the Chair of the COGS, who shall indicate approval by signature via IMPACT and transmit the Request to the Graduate School Dean's Office for approval by the Dean.

   • A copy of the Abstract, Vita and CV should be submitted with the request for the candidate's file in their department, the Office of the University Registrar, and the Graduate School Dean's Office.
   • The Supervising Committee members vote on the candidate's success or failure on the Examination; more than one vote for failure signifies failure on the Final Oral Examination. The Supervising Committee submits the Report on Final Oral Examination (GSBS Form 41) via IMPACT to the COGS. In the event of a failing performance by the candidate, the Supervising Committee shall also submit to the COGS and the Dean a recommendation regarding remedial action or further examinations; in such cases, the COGS shall decide upon the recommendation or other action to be taken. In the event of a successful performance by the candidate, the COGS shall vote on whether to approve the recommendation by the Supervising Committee for granting of the degree.

5. Recommendation for granting of the degree: If the COGS approves the favorable recommendation by the Supervising Committee, the Chair of the COGS shall so indicate by signature on the Report on Final Oral Examination and submit the Report to the Graduate Faculty Council for consideration. Within two weeks following the candidate's defense, the candidate shall submit to the Graduate School Dean's Office the final electronic version of the thesis in ProQuest as well as submit a final upload to the plagiarism detection software. The thesis Approval Page signed by the Supervising Professor and Committee members must also be submitted to the Graduate School Dean's Office. When the Report, Approval Page(s), final upload to the plagiarism detection software, and the electronic thesis approved in ProQuest have all been received in the Graduate School Dean's Office, the Graduate Faculty Council will consider the recommendation for granting the degree. If the Council does not approve the recommendation, it will refer the matter to the COGS with a recommendation for remedial action. If the Council does approve the recommendation, the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will notify the Office of the University Registrar that the candidate has fulfilled all requirements for the degree Master of Science. Upon the candidate's certification by the President, the degree is conferred by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System.

Theses will be made available to the public. A candidate may request permission from the graduate dean to temporarily delay making the thesis available to the public in order to protect patent of other rights. This request must be supported by a written recommendation from the Supervising Professor. The graduate dean makes the final decision regarding delayed publication.

Instructions for Preparation and Submission of Electronic Theses, Dissertations, and Dissertation Abstracts

The candidate should obtain these instructions online at https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/dissertationthesis-guidelines/ before writing the thesis or dissertation.