

# GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Policies and Procedures

### Requirements and Regulations

A student enrolled in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences is subject to all established requirements and regulations of UT Health San Antonio, the graduate school, and the respective graduate program in which they are enrolled. Exceptions to these rules and issues not covered by previously determined guidelines will be decided by the Graduate Faculty Council.

### Attendance

#### Graduate Student Attendance Policy

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

- Unexcused absences in courses in which attendance is required may be considered sufficient cause for failure. Course grading requirements may include participation, and any absence is considered non-participation. Examples of unexcused absence include multiple occurrences of tardiness and/or failure to communicate with the course instructor prior to absence.
- Excused absences may be granted by the course director in such cases as illness, personal emergency, bereavement of an immediate or extended family member, attendance at a professional conference, school sponsored event, professional school interviews, fellowship interviews or religious reasons. Verification of the reason for the absence may be required e.g., note from a physician, confirmation of conference presentation, legal documentation etc. Some reasons for absence are not documentable, and course directors should use their best judgement in evaluating these requests. Please contact the course director or instructor (as appropriate) as soon as possible to make arrangements for missing work. Other reasons for excused absence may be considered by the program director such leaves are considered on an individual basis, and it is the responsibility of the student to take the initiative in arranging with the course director to make up work that is missed.
- Pregnant and/or parenting students should request an excused absence and/or accommodation by contacting the university's Title TIX Office. Students considered university employees 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 TIX Office.
- Military Service Absence is permitted only if the student will not miss more than 25% of the total number of class meetings or the contact hour equivalent (not including the final examination period) for the

specific course or courses in which the student is enrolled at the beginning of the period of active military service. Students expected to be absent from classes for active-duty assignment must obtain approval from their program COGS for a formal leave of absence.

- University holidays will be outlined in the GSBS academic calendar 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.
- 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; however, students may still be required to complete assigned coursework for days when classes were canceled. Please refer to the course instructor for guidance.

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 a review by the program COGS and penalties, such as probation, suspension, or dismissal from the program may be applied.

### Course Syllabus Policy

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

- All course syllabi must be posted online in the course's learning management system and in Syllabus Depot located on the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences web page.
- Course syllabi must be made available to the GSBS Dean's office at least one week prior to the start of web registration and 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.
- 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
- 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.
- 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.

**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 her/his appropriate Associate Dean of Student Affairs of their school and a copy to the Office of Educational Support Services.

## 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 14.1.1 Procedures and Regulations Governing Student Conduct and Discipline (HOP 14.1.1). Any student found to have committed academic dishonesty is subject to discipline as prescribed by the UT System Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents. GSBS Students will be required to sign an acknowledgment of the HOP 14.1.1 policy prior to the start of each semester.

Academic misconduct 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 or an AI text generator, 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 dishonesty and student conduct apply to all course, department, school, and university-related activities including conferences and off-campus performances.

All allegations of academic misconduct must be reported to the GSBS Dean's Office by the complainant (another student, course instructor, research supervisor, or a graduate faculty member) in writing to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will investigate the seriousness of the violation, determine if the case requires action beyond academic program management and

make a recommendation to the Academic Integrity Sub-committee of the Graduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee (GCAC) and GSBS Dean.

Research misconduct involving lab experiments, data collection, analyses, publications etc. shall be immediately reported to the Research Integrity Official (RIO) – the Assistant Vice President for Research Administration following the Institutional Research Misconduct Policy (HOP 7.1.6.). The RIO will investigate the alleged misconduct and make recommendations to the President of UT Health San Antonio. The president will determine the consequences applied to the student.

## Academic Misconduct Review Process

The complainant will submit a report in writing to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs with any supporting documentation within ten (10) business days of the alleged misconduct or the date the complainant was made aware of the alleged misconduct. The complainant will retain original evidence supporting the alleged misconduct. The report will be initially reviewed by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs who will meet with the complainant to determine what further action, if any, is warranted. If necessary, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will interview the individual identified in the complaint, allowing the student the opportunity to respond and to review the available information. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may interview others as needed. All health science center personnel and students must cooperate with the investigation. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will prepare a written report detailing the events and investigative process. If the report details findings or concern for purposeful academic misconduct the results of the investigation will be sent to the Academic Integrity Sub-committee for further review and investigation. All information in the report will be de-identified to avoid conflict of interest. The investigation will take no more than fifteen (15) business days.

## Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Actions

The Academic Integrity Sub-committee will review and provide recommendations for disciplinary actions/sanctions to the Dean of the GSBS within fifteen (15) business days of receiving the report from the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The Academic Integrity Sub-committee has the authority to issue the following actions/sanctions based on the severity of a substantiated violation of the Student Conduct Policy, whether a one-time event or a pattern of misconduct:

- Academic Warning listed on transcript which can be removed upon completion of recommended disciplinary actions/sanctions
- Restitution or reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of UT System or health science center property
- Formal letter of reprimand in the academic file
- Suspension of rights and privileges deriving in whole or in part from the GSBS, including participation in extracurricular activities
- Suspension of eligibility for any student office, honor, or award

- Failing grade or reduction of a grade for an examination, assignment, module, course, or clinical rotation
- Cancellation of credit for scholastic work done
- Withholding of grades and/or degree
- Academic Probation
- Mandated leave of absence
- Suspension from the health science center for a specified period of time
- Denial of degree
- Revocation of degree and withdrawal of diploma
- Prevent readmission to the GSBS programs
- Dismissal from program
- Other sanction(s) as deemed appropriate under the circumstances
- Students must practice the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students must promptly report academic or ethical misconduct by others.
- Students must refrain from harassment or discrimination of any kind and report any instances of observed harassment or discrimination to the appropriate authorities.
- Students and student organizations are expected to refrain from acts of hazing and report any observed acts to the appropriate authorities.
- Students must follow environmental and campus safety procedures and must not endanger the health or safety of others.
- Students must adhere to the following professional standards as set forth by the GSBS:
  - 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.
  - Communicate in a respectful and civil manner with students, staff, and faculty. Formulate written communication with professional content and tone.
  - Demonstrate regard for differing opinions, values, and abilities.
  - Demonstrate professional interpersonal interaction regarding culture, race, religion, gender, and sexual orientation.
  - Demonstrate sound judgment commensurate with the level of training and experience.
  - Demonstrate punctuality in academic environments; adhere to established deadlines and reply promptly to requests (written, verbal, telephone).
  - Demonstrate dependability to complete assigned responsibilities.
  - Demonstrate high ethical standards regarding graduate education.
- Accept responsibility and ownership for work and results; demonstrate willingness to accept suggestions for improvement.
- 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.

Students under the co-governance of professional schools (Pharmacy, Nursing, Medical, Dental, Health Professions etc.) may be subject to additional conduct review under the policies and procedures for those schools or their professional licensing boards.

Any disciplinary action/sanction(s) recommended by the Academic Integrity Sub-committee shall be in accordance with applicable GSBS and UT Health San Antonio policies. If recommended, the student may be offered the opportunity to remediate the portion of the examination, assignment, module, course, or clinical rotation where the academic misconduct was confirmed and/or to complete an online plagiarism training course. Any recommended disciplinary actions/sanctions are required to be completed within the strict timeline as outlined in the decision letter from the Academic Integrity Sub-committee.

The decision of the Academic Integrity Sub-committee is final, pending further appeal to the Dean of the GSBS as outlined in the grievance policy below.

## Professional Conduct

Professional conduct relates to the intellectual, ethical, behavioral, and attitudinal attributes of a GSBS student. Each student is responsible for notice of, and compliance with, the provisions of the Regents' Rules and Regulations, Rule 50101 and the standards for conduct of the Health Science Center.

- 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.

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 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 six school credit hours 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 is 2.11 years and 5.67 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 as stated above 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. 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 complete at least 12 semester credit hours of coursework and 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.

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. 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.

\*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, Cancer Prevention and Biomedical Data Science 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 to one of the three certificate programs and send an email to the Certificate Coordinator for CTS, CCP and CBDS programs indicating that they are currently enrolled in another GSBS program and seeking concurrent enrollment in a certificate program. The following information must be included in the email:

- GSBS Unofficial Transcript
- Name of student's current program academic coordinator
- 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 the 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 Translational Science - Application Checklist
- Certificate in Cancer Prevention - Application Checklist
- Certificate in Biomedical Data Science - Application Checklist

## 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 found in the new and continuing tuition and fees schedule 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 are 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 UT Health San Antonio. 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 coursework. 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 (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, Belize, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada (except Quebec), Cayman Islands, Dominica, Eswatini, Fiji, Gambia, Ghana, Grenada, Guam, Guyana, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritius, Micronesia, Namibia, Nauru, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Tonga, Trinidad-Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, Vanuatu, Virgin Islands, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

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.

## 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.

## 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 Health Sciences Ph.D. will complete HSCI 7203#to fulfill this requirement. See the respective program's degree requirements for further information. Doctor of Medical Physics and Radiological Science students will complete Ethics and Professionalism RADI 7077 to fulfill this requirement.

Master of Science students may be required to take the TSCI#5070. Consult the degree plan for program specific requirements.

## 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. The University of Texas San Antonio offers a supervised teaching course, in which students will receive a letter grade.

## Student Employment

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

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.

Full-time master's students may elect to seek employment opportunities with the approval of the faculty advisor. If employment is within UT Health San Antonio, the MS student should be employed as a Teaching Assistant (job code 0463), and their appointment should not exceed 0.5 FTE. Students employed through the university work-study program should not perform duties directly related to their research projects.

There may be circumstances under which part-time graduate students desire gainful employment within the UT Health San Antonio#(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 employee policy (HOP 4.3.5.)

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 and Registration

The Office of the University 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 they are 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.

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 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 final 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 six credit hours per semester.

Master's students must be enrolled for a minimum of eight 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 four credit hours per semester.

Exception(s) to this policy include:

- A student enrolled in a THECB-approved certificate program
- A student enrolled for Final Hours.
- A student enrolled in the Ph.D. Nursing Science program or in the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program.
- A student enrolled in their first two years of the Ph.D. Radiological Sciences program, Human Imaging Track only.
- 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.
- 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 participating institutions will count toward the total required credit hours each academic year.

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 found in the catalog under General Academic Policies.

Students enrolling for less than half-time will be responsible for repayment of federal student loans.

## Adding Courses

Students may add courses during official add days as designated by the Office of the University Registrar each semester. Students are not

permitted to add classes to their schedules after the census date, which is typically the 12th class day of the spring and fall semesters, without approval from the GSBS Dean and the Vice President of Academic, Faculty, and Student Affairs.

## Dropping Courses

A student who is not on academic probation may drop a course at any time prior to final grades being assigned, provided the student is passing the course at the time and has obtained the signed approval of the course director and COGS chair.

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 appointed in Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) and Teaching Assistant (TA) positions in the GSBS should consult with their mentor and academic program coordinator prior to dropping below full-time status.

## Registration for Thesis

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:

- Approval of admission to candidacy for the M.S. degree by the dean;
- Approval of the thesis research proposal by the COGS of the program and the dean;
- Appointment of a supervising committee for the thesis research by the COGS of the program and the dean.

Candidates for the M.S. degree with thesis must register for the thesis course for at least one term, unless they participate in a graduate program with a non-thesis option.

## Registration for Dissertation

Students in Ph.D. programs may register for the Dissertation course XXXX 7099 where XXXX represents one of the following BIME, IBMS, NURS, RADI, or TSCI or in HSCI 7304 for Health Science doctoral students. Registration for Dissertation is only permitted after the following three actions have been taken:

- Approval of admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree by the dean or the dean's designee;
- Approval of the dissertation research proposal by the COGS of the program and the dean or the dean's designee;

- 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 Ph.D. degree must register for the Dissertation 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. and M.S. students must register for a minimum of one 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.

## 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 their 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 can be found on the GSBS Graduation webpage. 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 submit an Add/Drop Enrollment form which can be obtained from the student's Academic Coordinator for registration in INTD 1000 as the registration 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, the student will be required to enroll as a full-time student.

International students do not qualify for in absentia registration under the terms of visa registration requirements. International students do

qualify for final hours and should carefully plan their final term to utilize this benefit.

## Registration for Audit

Permission to audit one or more courses is sometimes granted. Auditing conveys 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)

Grades of D and F are not acceptable for graduate credit. If a course is repeated, the last grade earned is used in computing the cumulative grade point average. The original grade will remain listed on the transcript but will not be used in computing the cumulative grade point average.

A grade of S (satisfactory), U (unsatisfactory), or H (honors) is not included in the computation of the grade point average. S/U and/or H (Honors) may be given in specific courses in specific programs.

Other symbols used in reporting the standing of students in their classes are: W (course dropped after the census date) and I (incomplete).

NI is used only to report cases in which the student has not completed all of the assignments and/or examinations before the conclusion of the course. A grade of Incomplete "I" is not acceptable as a temporizing measure in situations of substandard academic performance. Unless the student has been granted a leave of absence, all work must be completed within one year; at which time, the grade of I (incomplete) will be changed to the appropriate letter grade.

The assignment of an "IP" grade indicates that the course is in progress, and may for logistical reasons span two or more grading periods, whether contained within one semester or spanning two or more semesters. These grades are replaced with iterations of the final grade once it is earned, or in some schools, the final grade is issued in the term in which it is earned, and the previous IP grade remains on the transcript.

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

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/>.

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. It is preferred that efforts 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 sequence of procedures involved in the grievance process is outlined below.

Grievance Process:

- The student has up to 10 business days from the date he/she was issued the grade or evaluation in question to file a formal complaint.
- 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.
- A committee consisting of the COGS Chair, the program director and the GSBS Associate Dean of Academic Affairs\*, will have up to 30 business days to investigate the grievance. The COGS Chair will chair the committee. If the Program Director also serves as the COGS Chair, the program director will appoint a senior graduate faculty member of the program to serve on the committee. Documentation from the student and faculty will be collected as well as face-to-face meetings scheduled by the COGS Chair.
- A written and signed summary of the decision rendered will be provided to the student by the COGS Chair and a copy of the signed summary will be sent by the COGS Chair to the GSBS Dean's Office.
- If the student is not satisfied with the final decision reached by the COGS Chair, program director and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, they should follow the Appeal Process described below.
- All documents (emails/memos/letters/written summaries) will be maintained by the GSBS.

\*If the formal academic grievance is filed against the COGS Chair or program director then the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or designee will serve as the chair of the grievance committee and will identify a senior faculty member as the third member to serve on the committee. If the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is named in the complaint, then the Associate Dean of Student Affairs or their designee will represent the GSBS on this committee.

## Appeal Process

The student has up to 10 business days of receiving the written summary of the formal grievance process to file an appeal.

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 have up to 30 business days following the formal grievance process to render a decision. The dean's decision will be considered final and provided to the student in writing.

## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

If a student exhausts the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences grievance process, a complaint 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. The complaint form is also available on the website.

## Continuation, Probation, and Dismissal

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

- Satisfactory progress in removing any conditions imposed at the time of admission;
- Maintenance of a minimum cumulative B (3.0) average for all courses taken while enrolled in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. 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.
- 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.
- 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:

- The student has up to five business days from the date he/she 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.
- 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.
- The Committee will have up to three 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.
- The GSBS Dean will have up to two 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.
- 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). The form will route to the COGS Chair and the Graduate School dean or designee.

In the case of withdrawal before grades have been assigned (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 up to a 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. Students who meet the criteria for non-registration of one or more terms may not apply for a leave of absence. 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 COGS chair for their program, including the reasons for the request, the last day of class attended and the expected time of return. If a student is not currently enrolled in courses, the request for a leave of absence must be submitted prior to the census date for the current term. Students currently enrolled in courses may submit a request for a leave of absence at any time in the semester. If the request for leave of absence is approved by COGS, the COGS chair 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. 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. Students taking a medical leave of absence should denote this in the comment section of the clearance form.

## 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 and send it to the registrar with copy to the COGS, Academic Program Coordinator and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the Graduate School at least one month prior to web registration for the upcoming term. 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 to determine if any holds have been placed on their account which are required to be cleared prior to course registration.

## Non-registration

Non-registration is a status assigned to students who fail to register for one or more consecutive terms without requesting a leave of absence or enrolling in Absentia. The registrar will notify the GSBS Dean's Office of the student's failure to register.

Students who fail to register for two or more consecutive terms and do not elect to take a leave of absence or to enroll in Absentia will be considered for dismissal from the program.

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 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 academic year in May.

The Dean of the Graduate School, or her/his 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 UT#Health#San Antonio Commencement.

## Sequential Procedures

### Doctor of Philosophy degree

Phase I - From matriculation through admission to candidacy

- 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.
- 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. This selection will be entered by the student into the graduate school electronic tracking system.
- 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.

- 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 facilitate student success in the program.
- Qualifying examination: The Qualifying Examination is comprehensive in nature and may be written, oral, or both. The COGS or its designee determines the format of the examination and the composition of the Qualifying Examination Committee, with the provision 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 its designee.
- Admission to candidacy: Recommendation by the COGS that the student be admitted to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy degree requires the following:
  - 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.
  - Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all coursework undertaken since matriculation in the program.
  - Report by the Qualifying Examination Committee that the student has passed the examination.
  - 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

- 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 by the dissertation supervising committee (see section below) . 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).
- 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:
  - 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;
  - Three members must be members of the graduate faculty of the program in which the student is enrolled;
  - 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 the designated person to serve on the Supervising Committee. The composition of the Supervising Committee should, in principle, provide a group of research scientists who constitute an important resource to the candidate and their dissertation research. Their functions are, with the supervising professor, to provide feedback and guidance to the candidate to ensure progression towards their degree in a timely manner. Specific responsibilities include critique and approval or denial of a candidate's research proposal; attendance of the dissertation defense to approve or deny the degree to the program COGS; and to certify to the COGS that the candidate has, in fact, carried out a meritorious research investigation of the caliber appropriate for a Ph.D. dissertation and, in their opinion, defended it satisfactorily. Upon selection of the supervising committee, the chair of the COGS will submit to the Graduate School Dean's Office a completed Recommendation for Approval of Dissertation Research Proposal and Supervising

Committee. A copy of the proposal must be uploaded along with the form.

- 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 the graduate school electronic tracking system. 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- Final oral examination: When the Supervising Committee judges the dissertation to be suitable for defense, the Request for Final Oral Examination Form, 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 graduate school electronic tracking system to request 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 must sign the Report on Final Oral Examination in the graduate school electronic tracking system. 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.
- Recommendation for granting of the degree: If the COGS approves the favorable recommendation by the Supervising Committee, the COGS chair shall so indicate by signature on the Report on Final Oral Examination in the graduate school electronic tracking system 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

- 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
  - successfully completing contingencies of admission and course requirements of the program and
  - selecting an area of research specialization.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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:
  - Satisfactory completion of all required courses;
  - Cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all coursework undertaken since matriculation in the program;
  - Report by the Qualifying Examination Committee that the student passed the examination or that the examination has been waived;
  - 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

- 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, 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 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.
- 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:

- The supervising professor, also a member of the program's graduate faculty, designated as supervising professor and chair of the Supervising Committee;
- Two members must be members of the graduate faculty of the program;
- One member must be a graduate 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.

The COGS may nominate additional members in categories (b) and (c) if necessary. Nomination is contingent upon the willingness of the designated person to serve on the Supervising Committee. The composition of the Supervising Committee should, in principle, provide a group of research scientists who constitute an important resource to the candidate and their thesis research. The committee functions are, with the supervising professor, to provide feedback and guidance to the candidate to ensure progression towards their degree in a timely manner. Specific responsibilities include critique and approval or denial of a candidate's research proposal; attendance of the thesis defense to approve or deny the degree to the program COGS; and to certify to the COGS that the candidate has, in fact, carried out a meritorious research investigation of the caliber appropriate for a M.S. thesis and, in their opinion, defended it satisfactorily. Approval of the thesis 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 and submitted via the graduate school electronic tracking system 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 designee of the dean) will review the recommendation of COGS on the proposal and supervising committee. After approval by the dean (or designee of the dean) of the proposal and the supervising committee, the candidate may register for their respective program's thesis course. An electronic addendum is required for any subsequent changes in the Composition of the Supervising Committee or research proposal and must be approved by the COGS and the GSBS dean (or designee of the dean).

Supervision of the thesis research: Within one month after appointment of the Supervising Committee, the Supervising Committee shall convene to discuss with the candidate the progress of the thesis research and the projected future work. At least once per semester, the Supervising Committee shall meet with the candidate for progress reports (written and/or oral) so that current status of the research may be evaluated, and direction of future work planned. 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.

Submission of a thesis or manuscript:

- Submission of a thesis: 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.

- Submission of a manuscript: After approval by the Supervising Committee, 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 in accordance with the manuscript graduation timeline for the graduating term. 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:
  - The completed Manuscript Approval Form
  - A dated notice (letter or email) from the publisher that indicates manuscript submission or acceptance.
  - A copy of the letter from the supervising professor
- 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 in the graduate school electronic tracking system 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 the graduate school electronic tracking system. 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.

- 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 or other rights. This request must be supported by a written recommendation from the supervising professor. The graduate dean

in consultation with the supervising professor will make the final decision regarding delayed publication.

Instructions for Preparation and Submission of Electronic Theses,  
Dissertations, Research Abstracts and Manuscripts

The candidate should obtain these instructions and graduation timelines from the GSBS website from ## before writing the thesis or dissertation.

<https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/student-life/graduation>

<https://www.uthscsa.edu/academics/biomedical-sciences/dissertationthesis-guidelines>