

GSBS Student Handbook 2019-2020

Disclaimer

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this Handbook, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and/or the University reserves the right to change any information without notice or obligation, in keeping with the policies of the Board of Regents and in conformance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Further information is available at <http://www.umassmed.edu/dio/equal-opportunity/>.

Questions concerning this notice can be directed to the Vice Chancellor of Diversity and Inclusion. Questions concerning Title IX may be directed to the designed campus Title IX Officer. Either can be reached at:

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Purpose of this document

This document summarizes the standards, practices and responsibilities attendant to student matriculation in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. The document explains the milestones each student must accomplish in order to advance in their degree or training programs. The document also describes the processes by which students should accomplish each milestone and provides guides to assist students in these tasks.

GSBS Mission

The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) at the University of Massachusetts Medical School is a faculty-initiated and faculty-organized school with a mission to:

- Engage in leading-edge research that advances our understanding of biology in health and disease by
 - engaging in fundamental biological discovery
 - translating discovery into treatments that transform the practice of medicine;
 - determining the effectiveness and outcomes of primary, secondary and tertiary health interventions on patients and populations
- train the next generation of scientific leaders, teachers and science advocates

GSBS Learning Objectives

To accomplish this mission, the GSBS has integrated the following learning objectives into its curriculum and research training programs.

- **Scientific Knowledge and Critical Thinking:** The GSBS graduate is conversant in a common set of biological/biomedical principles and
 - Demonstrates substantial and up to date core knowledge of broad areas in basic biomedical, translational, or clinical research applicable to their area of study.
 - Demonstrates the ability to accurately and critically evaluate their own scientific work and the work of others.
- **Research Skills and Problem Solving Ability:** The GSBS graduate can identify important problems and knows how to address them and
 - Demonstrates advanced understanding of a range of technical and conceptual approaches used in biomedical research.
 - Can design, carry out, and interpret research projects that generate new knowledge that advances the biomedical sciences and human health.
- **Specific Expertise:** The GSBS graduate is competitive in their chosen field, interest area, specialty or discipline and
 - Can articulate the significance of their own work to their chosen research area in both historical and forward-looking contexts.
 - Demonstrates mastery of a range of technical and conceptual approaches used in their selected research area.
- **Communication:** The GSBS graduate has the ability to successfully engage in written and oral discourse with peer and lay audiences and
 - Demonstrates the oral, written and media communication skills required to be effective communicators, teachers and mentors of peers, future scientists and scientifically literate citizens
- **Ethics and Advocacy:** The GSBS graduate applies the highest standards of ethics to
 - Their research (data management, research subjects, stewardship of research funds)
 - Their interactions with colleagues and the public.
 - And advocates for the role of science in medicine and society
- **Career Development:**
 - The GSBS graduate has the ability to choose from a range of career options and
 - Can articulate an appropriate set of desired potential career paths, and is aware of the preparation and initiative required to pursue these paths

Responsibilities and Roles of the GSBS Office

Service to the Mission

The GSBS staff and faculty leadership are committed to helping our students and faculty fulfill the GSBS mission by facilitating the GSBS Learning Objectives

Service to Graduate Students

Curriculum

The GSBS staff and faculty leadership work with faculty and students to design, implement, evaluate and refine curricula and training experiences, which prepares all students to fulfill our learning objectives

Tracking student research progress and professional skills development

The GSBS staff and faculty leadership work with faculty and students to insure that all students in good standing attain their research and professional skills objectives and satisfy GSBS learning objectives in an efficient and timely manner

Service to Postdoctoral Scholars

The mission of the Office of Postdoctoral Scholars (OPS) is to promote, support, and enhance postdoctoral training at UMMS. The OPS works with faculty and postdoctoral scholars to develop and/or strengthen programs of interest, which include professional development, education in the responsible conduct of research, optimization of training environments, and exchange of research ideas.

Career Planning & Development

The mission of the Center for Biomedical Career Development is to prepare doctoral and postdoctoral scholars for success in careers that promote the scientific enterprise in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and beyond.

Service to our Students

The GSBS staff and faculty leadership are committed to

- Advising GSBS students how to select, undertake and succeed in their curriculum and research in a timely fashion.
- Listening to and acting on advice from our students on how we might more effectively recruit, support and train our students.
- Working with faculty and students to provide the very best graduate training experience.

GSBS Technical Standards

Technical standards refer to non-academic proficiencies that are essential for meeting the academic requirements of our graduate programs in the biomedical sciences. Within any area of specialization, students must demonstrate competence in those intellectual and physical tasks that together represent the fundamentals of biomedical research in their chosen discipline.

A candidate for PhD degree in the biomedical sciences must possess abilities and skills that allow for observation, intellectual and conceptual reasoning, motor coordination, and communication. For those programs where laboratory-based research is not a primary requirement, a candidate for PhD degree in the biomedical sciences must possess abilities and skills that allow for observation, intellectual and conceptual reasoning, and communication.

All applicants and graduates must meet the prescribed technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations. Use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable in many situations in that a candidate's judgment will be based on another's power of selection and observation.

Observation

The candidate must be able to acquire and assimilate knowledge by direct observation (visual, auditory, and tactile) of experiences within the research and instructional settings.

Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities

The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, reason, integrate and synthesize information to solve problems.

Motor Skills

The candidate must possess sufficient postural, neuromuscular, and eye-to-hand control necessary to independently use standard laboratory equipment and to execute standard procedures in their field of specialization.

Communication

Candidates must be able to present and discuss their experimental hypotheses and results with research advisors, and publicly before a variety of audiences within the scientific community, at scientific meetings, seminars, Qualifying Examinations, Thesis Research Advisory Committee meetings, Thesis Dissertation defenses, or in the laboratory to the research team.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

The candidate must possess the emotional and mental health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the socio-cultural interactions required for collaborative teamwork, the prompt completion of responsibilities inherent in managing a scientific laboratory, the ability to function under the stress inherent in biomedical research, and the ability to understand and comply with ethical standards for the conduct of research.

Accommodations for Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act, and UMass Medical School policy, no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of that disability, be excluded from participation in UMMS programs or activities. UMMS will provide reasonable accommodation to a qualified individual with a disability.

Accepted students who have a disability and feel they may need accommodations in order to successfully fulfill program requirements must initiate discussions with the Office of School Services as soon as the offer of admission is received and accepted. If a matriculated student develops a disability or the impact of their disability changes during their studies and accommodations may be needed to successfully fulfill program requirements, immediate contact with the Office of School Services is required. The Office of School Services is not able

to issue retroactive accommodations.

If a student would like to request academic accommodations based on a disability, they must make an in-take appointment with Dr. Hines by calling 508-856-2444 or by email at Deborah.harmon.hines@umassmed.edu.

Graduate Student Appointments

By accepting an appointment, a GSBS Graduate Student accepts:

- The Standards and Policies of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences as stated in the GSBS Student Handbook
- The standards and policies of the University of Massachusetts Medical School
- The rules and regulations governing Graduate Assistants of the University as promulgated from time to time by the Board of Trustees under the provisions of Chapter 75 of the General Laws, as amended by Chapter 648, Acts of 1962.

Graduate Assistantships may be awarded by the University of Massachusetts Medical School to graduate students working toward advanced degrees in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences or any future programs so designated by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Dean. All appointments as Graduate Assistants at the University of Massachusetts Medical School are contingent upon availability of funds and satisfactory academic progress.

UMMS MD/PhD students must receive their MD and PhD degrees from the University of Massachusetts Medical School and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences respectively in order to be considered students in the Program and to receive all benefits of the Program. When a student withdraws or is dismissed from either school, they cease to be students of the MD/PhD Program. At this time, all Program benefits end and the Promissory Note for the Special Program Fee is activated.

Definitions of Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress

Good Academic Standing (GAS)

Good Academic Standing requires that GPA \geq 3.0 and all C or MP grades are remediated.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)

SAP status is determined at the start of each semester as described in the table below. MD/PhD students begin this sequence

Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfactory Academic Progress status is given to all first year students unless a grade of F is earned in any course or research rotation or a grade of C or MP is earned in more than 1 course.
Year 2	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has secured a Commitment of Thesis Research Support (CTRS) • Student has received Passing grades for all research courses • For students admitted in fall of 2016 and beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student has completed Core and 2 Elective courses with passing grades, or is actively remediating C grades. • For students admitted in fall of 2015 or earlier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student has completed Core and 1 Elective course with passing grades, or is actively remediating C grades.
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For students admitted in fall of 2016 and beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student has completed a third Elective course with passing grades, or is actively remediating C grades. • For students admitted in fall of 2015 or earlier <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student has completed a second Elective course with passing grades, or is actively remediating C grades. • Student may be actively remediating C grades. • Student has received Passing grades for fall research courses

Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has completed all registered Advanced Topic courses with passing grades • Student has remediated all remaining C grades • Student has received a Passing grade for research • Student has held or has scheduled their Qualifying Examination
Year 3	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has passed Qualifying Exam and is enrolled in Thesis Research • Student has formed TRAC committee.
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has conducted TRAC meeting with an outcome of Pass.
Year 4	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has completed all <i>assignments</i> from Year 3 TRAC meeting
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has conducted TRAC meeting with an outcome of Pass
Year 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has completed all <i>assignments</i> from Year 4 TRAC meeting
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has conducted TRAC meeting with an outcome of Pass
Year 6	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has completed all <i>assignments</i> from Year 5 TRAC meeting
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student has conducted a terminal TRAC meeting with an outcome of Pass with permission to write
Year 7 and beyond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No student in this category is making Satisfactory Academic Progress unless so indicated by the TRAC.

Period of Appointment

Graduate Students receive an annual appointment which is renewed automatically each year until the student completes the degree requirements or withdraws from the school, so long as the student maintains satisfactory academic progress. During the term of this appointment, the appointee may only receive compensation in addition to that specified herein from the University when written approval is obtained from his/her Thesis Advisor and the GSBS Dean.

Student Commitment to Academic and Research Activities

GSBS Graduate Students devote at least 24 hours per week towards their own academic and laboratory research and no more than 16 hours per week (<1,000 hours per year) in assisting their Thesis Advisor and affiliated research program. Students are also allowed no more than 4 hours for mentoring activities per week.

Thesis research demands meticulous attention to detail and often proceeds under circumstances of competition with external research programs. It is not unusual, therefore, for the student to spend more than 40 hours per week their own research.

With that said, it is critical that a student also take advantage of GSBS holiday and vacation periods. These are essential periods of rest and relaxation that are necessary for the student to meet the challenges of pursuing a PhD degree in Biomedical Sciences.

Definitions of Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Progress

University of Massachusetts Intellectual Property Policy

Pursuant to the University of Massachusetts Intellectual Property policy (DOC. T96-040; http://www.umassmed.edu/uploadedfiles/Intellectual_Property_UMW.doc) research data and laboratory notebooks (classified as non-exempted scholarly work) remain the property of the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

Tuition Waiver

GSBS Graduate Students are eligible for a Tuition Waiver so long as they meet the UMMS Waiver Policy guidelines and maintain satisfactory academic progress. This policy requires that the Graduate Students register each semester for one of the following GSBS Research Courses: Laboratory Rotation, Pre-Qualifying Research, Thesis Research, Graduate Research or Developing Solutions to Research Problems. All students are expected to contribute to the University's academic, teaching and/or research functions as part of these courses.

Stipend

GSBS students matriculated in a full-time GSBS degree program are eligible for an annual stipend. The amount is periodically adjusted at the discretion of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. The stipend is paid bi-weekly through the standard UMMS payroll process. It is subject to federal and state withholdings unless the individual is a citizen of a country which has a tax treaty with the United States government. To determine whether you qualify under a tax treaty, please contact the International Student & Scholars Office.

Fees

The following fees are assessed of all GSBS students: Curriculum Fee, Student Services Fee, Program Fee, and Health Services Fee. These fees are paid for them by the Graduate School, by their Thesis Advisor or by their Thesis Advisor's Department. The GSBS pays these fees for MD/PhD students for four years only of medical school.

Insurance – Health, Dental and Disability

All students of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences are covered by Health, Dental and Disability Insurance Plans. Either the Graduate School or the student's Thesis Advisor pays these costs for all students. The GSBS pays for health insurance for MD/PhD students for four years of medical school.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires all students to carry adequate health insurance coverage for hospitalization, emergencies, outpatient specialty care and diagnostic testing. Students have the option to enroll in a plan through the University of Massachusetts or purchase insurance with a company of their choice. If the student selects to purchase their own insurance, UMMS (either the GSBS or the Thesis Advisor) will reimburse the student for the cost of the insurance or the cost of the University Plan, whichever is smallest.

All students are required to complete the online health insurance enroll/waive process by August 1 of each year. Disability insurance is processed automatically by the Graduate School office. Dental Insurance is voluntary and coverage is not automatic; the student must enroll annually through the Graduate School office.

University Health Plans

See: <http://www.universityhealthplans.com/>

UMMS Student Health Services

See: <http://umassmed.edu/studenthealth/index.aspx>

While all costs of attendance, including tuition, fees, health benefits, as described above, are provided by the GSBS to students matriculated in a full-time GSBS degree program, and therefore not incurred by students, we include a breakdown of these costs, for informational

purposes, in the following document: <http://umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/documents/gpbs-student-funding-for-administrators.pdf>

Refund Policy

Refunds are calculated when students do not register for the academic term for which they are charged, take an approved leave of absence or otherwise fail to complete the program on or after the first day of class of the period of enrollment for which charges are assessed.

Students who cease enrollment after 60 percent of the term has elapsed receive no refund and are not required to refund any federal aid received for the term. Students who cease enrollment before 60 percent of the term has elapsed receive a refund for the percentage of the term remaining after the last date of attendance. The percentage is calculated by dividing the number of calendar days elapsed between the beginning of the term and the date the individual ceases enrollment by the number of calendar days in the term. For example, a student who withdraws 57 percent of the way through the first term of enrollment receives a refund of 43 percent of tuition and fees (100 percent minus 57 percent).

If a student received Title IV funds, this refund must be returned to the Title IV program. Additionally, according to federal rules, the student is required to refund 43 percent of aid received as cash or from a credit balance. Failure to return unearned Title IV aid may result in ineligibility for future federal aid.

Allocation of Refunds

A share of the refund will be returned to the financial aid programs that funded students. Refunds and recovered overpayments are allocated to the programs from which an individual received aid in the following order:

- Federal Unsubsidized Stafford Loan
- Federal Stafford Loan
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Other Federal Student Aid Programs
- Institutional Student Aid Programs
- State Student Aid Programs¹⁰⁸
- Private Student Aid Programs
- Student

Students must notify the GSBS Dean and the Registrar in writing of their intent to withdraw. Students who withdraw without notifying the Dean and Registrar of their status will be considered withdrawn as of the last recorded date of class attendance as documented by the University.

Upon request, the School Bursar will provide examples of the application of these policies. Any withdrawn student who believes that individual circumstances warrant exceptions from published policy may make a written appeal to:

Associate Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance, University of Massachusetts
Medical School, 55 Lake Avenue North, Worcester, MA 01655

Note: This policy is subject to change at any time without prior notice if necessary to comply with Federal law.

Termination

This appointment may be terminated by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Dean, for the following reasons:

- The appointee is not in Good Academic Standing and does not maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress in accordance with GSBS standards
- The appointee is found guilty of an Honor Code Violation
- The student withdraws voluntarily

Students on visas must notify the Immigration Services Office of any changes in status. It is the responsibility of the visa holder to remain in compliance with US Federal Law.

Suspensions

Students may be immediately suspended if, in the judgment of Campus Security Authorities, the individual's actions represent a threat to safety or a clear impediment to the work of a research laboratory. After investigation has been conducted and the findings support the prior decision the student may be terminated. Reinstatement is at the discretion of the Campus Security Authorities.

Information for GSBS Students on a Visa

Immigration Services

http://www.umassmed.edu/HR/Immigration_Services.aspx?linkidentifier=id&itemid=115438

Administrative responsibility for the UMMS F, J, and H Visas rests with Immigration Services. It is the responsibility of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the student to work with the UMMS Immigration Services Office (ISO) to complete the necessary documentation for issuing, maintain and renewing a visa.

Any individual who is not a US citizen, or does not have permanent residency, is required to have a valid visa. All new students must complete an employment eligibility verification form (INS Form I-9) establishing his/her ability to work in the United States.

The student should understand that the loss of visa status will automatically result in being placed on Leave of Absence without pay. If a student is unable to return to the United States within the time frame approved by the Graduate School, he or she must inform the GSBS and ISO of the change as soon as possible.

GSBS policies that have provisions for GSBS Students on a Visa

Enrollment, Registration and Course Load

Due to U.S. Department of State regulations, students in the United States on visas must always meet the minimal credit requirements each semester

Leave of Absence and Return from Leave of Absence

Students in the United States on visas must coordinate this leave with Immigration Services. Approval of this leave is dependent on meeting Immigration Services policies. A Leave of Absence invalidates the F1 visa, and a new visa must be obtained before return from Leave of Absence. Return from Leave of Absence can only occur at the beginning of a semester.

UMMS Student Employment for GSBS Students (i.e., employment as a GSBS student mentor)

Due to Federal Regulations, compensation for more than 20 hours per week will be counted against the allowed time for Optional Practical Training (OPT).

International Travel for GSBS Students on a Visa

Prior to any travel outside the US, students in the United States on visas are required to inform their Thesis Advisor, the GSBS, and the ISO of their travel plans. These requirements ensure compliance with immigration policies. The student must take the following steps.

- Complete the GSBS International Travel form, for advanced notice and prior approval for travel outside the US.
- Request a letter of Enrollment Verification, and Official Transcript from the Registrar. Have all documents endorsed by the Immigration Services Office:

- Comply with all current policies over and above those mentioned here, of the Immigration Services Office Check the [Immigration Services](#) webpage for specific Travel policies and Advice.)

Withdrawals: Voluntary, Master's Degree, Involuntary, Suspension

All GSBS students in the United States on visas who are planning to voluntarily withdraw from the Graduate School or leave with a Master's Degree are required to contact Immigration Services before finalizing their decision to withdraw.

Immigration Services will be notified by the Graduate School when any GSBS student is involuntarily withdrawn or suspended. A student who is authorized by the Designated School Official (DSO) by Immigration Services to withdraw from classes will be allowed a 15-day period for departure from the United States.

GSBS Honor Code

Students are embarking on a career in a profession that requires the highest standards of ethical conduct and honesty of its members. The GSBS student body, working with the GSBS leadership, has developed an Honor Code designed to communicate the importance and meaning of the ethical standards and to provide a structure in order to deal with any violations.

In accepting admission to the Graduate School of Biomedical Science (GSBS), students make a personal commitment to abide by an Honor Code exemplifying a standard of behavior that will form a firm basis of future professional conduct as well as respecting the academic environment of the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS). Each student, upon admission to the University, shall sign a document attesting to the fact that he/she understands the Honor Code and shall abide by it.

The GSBS Honor Code is available at: <http://www.umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/documents/honor-code.pdf>

Classroom Courses, Research Courses and Grades

In General, there are two types of classroom courses – Core Courses and Elective Courses

Core Curricula

Purpose and process

The core curricula of the GSBS are designed to develop the foundational knowledge, analytical skills and critical thinking skills that are necessary for student success in the research setting.

Core curricula are taken throughout year 1 of graduate study and comprise classroom, small group discussion, problem solving and communication skills sessions.

Any student receiving a grade of C or lower in any class will be reviewed by the Academic Advancement Committee which may recommend remediation or dismissal. Alternative remediation plans are at the discretion of the course director.

No first-year PhD student may be waived from core curricula classes.

MD/PhD students are exempt from elements of GSBS Core Curricula unless additional course work is required by their selected research track or by their Thesis Advisor. Additional curriculum required by the Thesis Advisor or research track, when taken for credit, must be completed with a passing grade by the end of the Spring Semester of the second year of graduate study.

The Thesis Advisor must advise the MD/PhD student of any curricular requirements in addition to those specified by their Program and the MD/PhD student must agree to these

requirements before finalizing their selection of thesis advisor. MD/PhD students are required to complete all aspects of their curriculum in accordance with GSBS Standards. If a thesis advisor requires an MD/PhD student to enroll in additional courses, the thesis advisor is responsible for the student's stipend, insurance and fees while the student is completing this requirement.

Additional elements of core curricula (Professionalism and Research Conduct, Writing workshops, Career Pathway workshops, Use of Animal and/or Human Subjects etc.) are scheduled at developmentally-appropriate times during graduate study or, in some cases, are available on-line for self-directed study. Each program lists its curricular and research requirements for completion in the GSBS Catalog and on the GSBS web site.

Elective Courses

Purpose and Process

Students must select elective courses that are relevant to their research interests and program requirements. Elective courses are designed to lead the student beyond the foundational material of core curricula into the more specialized material characterizing one or more major foci of the program. Courses may be introductory in nature or may present the student with leading edge developments in the field.

Elective courses introduce graduate students to leading edge content, methodologies and hypotheses in a field of study through lectures, paper presentations, written and oral critiques of scientific articles, grant writing assignments and the use of research methodologies. These topics build on the foundations established by Core Curricula. Electives meet for two or more hours each week for one full semester.

Electives are graded using a letter grade system, provide substantial information content and develop research-relevant student capabilities. These courses provide instruction or training in essential skills such as critical assessment of the literature, integration of knowledge in a specific field, experimental design and interpretation, or hypothesis development and testing. The method of evaluation is explicitly stated in the courses Grading Policy document and assesses student integration of course contents by one or more written exams, or one or more graded, focused writing assignments, proposals or projects. Attendance and participation alone are not adequate for grade assignment

Requirements

1. To meet the GSBS minimum requirement for specialization, all students are required to take two graded electives of 3 credits or more plus one graded elective of two credits or more.
2. All students must have successfully completed (or be currently enrolled and in good standing in) an elective course prior to taking their qualifying exam.
3. Students enrolled in the MD/PhD Program are not required to take any Electives unless so directed by their Thesis Advisor or TRAC.

While all PhD students must take elective courses, not all GSBS Programs may offer their own electives.

First year students admitted through the Umbrella Admissions Program (UAP) in fall 2016 and beyond are required to take two Electives in the spring semester. First year students admitted through the Umbrella Admissions Program (UAP) in fall 2015 and earlier are required to take one Elective in the spring semester. All second year students must choose advanced coursework in accordance with GSBS and Program requirements.

Additional Requirements for MD/PhD students

MD/PhD students must fulfill all of the requirements for both SOM and Graduate School to be eligible for the award of the respective MD and PhD degrees. The MD/PhD Program offers two research tracks; basic biomedical science (BBS) and clinical research (CPHR). The specific curricular requirements of each track are available in the GSBS Catalog and on the program's GSBS web site.

Workshops, Journal Clubs and other

Purpose and process

Individual programs often require students to attend seminars, which offer students the opportunity to see leading edge research presented by senior research leaders in the field. Programs may require students to take a Journal Club course. Individual Programs may have additional requirements above and beyond Elective Courses. These requirements are stated and described on the Program Home Page.

- Journal Clubs (Research Discussions): Courses take a journal club format in which students read and present a series of selected research articles central to a specific field.
- Seminars: Students attend and contribute to Program-specific research seminars and/or are required to give a seminar on a specific research topic.
- Tutorials are designated as such. Please speak with your program director to determine whether particular Tutorial meets the Program requirements. Tutorials may not be used to meet the minimum GSBS requirement.

Faculty members occasionally offer courses or workshops on analytical procedures or on the use of specific organisms in biomedical research. These workshops may be germane to the student's proposed thesis research and may extend across the entire semester or may be concentrated in a shorter period of time.

Each program has specific requirements that must be met in order for their students to proceed into the Qualifying Exam and thesis research areas of their training. Advanced and elective courses are selected by students within guidelines set by the program of specialization. Students should generally meet these requirements upon completion of year two.

Student Evaluation of Courses

All GSBS Core-Curriculum and Elective courses are subject to student evaluation during, or upon completion of the course. These on-line evaluations, initiated and coordinated by the GSBS, play an essential role in our continuing efforts to enhance the curriculum for subsequent student classes.

In order that we obtain a representative evaluation of each course, it is vital that all students contribute to course evaluations.

Research Courses and Grades

All full-time PhD students must be registered for and undertake evaluated Research Courses for the duration of each semester of each academic year. There are 4 types of research courses:

1. Research Rotations
2. Prequalifying Research
3. Thesis Research
4. Graduate Research

Research Rotations

These are taken by first year students admitted through the UAP, by MD/PhD students in Years 1 and 2 of Medical School and by students seeking to identify or change their Thesis Advisor. Rotations are typically 8 weeks long allowing the student to take 2 fall rotations, 2 spring rotations and 1 summer rotation in Year 1.

MD/PhD students must successfully complete two eight-week lab rotations, the first one prior to the start of medical school. These can be broken down into two 4-week or one 8-week rotation each time. The second rotation follows FOM1.

Rotations serve 3 purposes:

- They allow students to assess the suitability of a research program for their own thesis research interests.
- They allow faculty to assess the suitability of a student for thesis research in their specific research program
- They provide students the opportunity for a strongly mentored research training experience in a leading edge area of research.

All GSBS Faculty who accept a student in rotation research have committed to providing a strongly mentored research experience in which the technical, critical thinking and communications skills of the trainee are actively developed. GSBS Faculty do understand that students are also engaged in an intense curriculum that provides the foundation for their future doctoral research and will not require students to miss class for purposes of completing lab work or making research presentations.

Prequalifying Research (PQR)

PQR is taken by all second year students or higher who have selected an approved Thesis Advisor but who have not yet completed their Qualifying Examination. Students register in PQR each semester until which time they pass their Qualifying Examination. For UAP and CPHR students, PQR is typically in year 2. For MD/PhD students, PQR is taken in the first year of PhD study following completion of year 2-of Medical School.

PQR is an opportunity for the student to become immersed in the research program of their selected Thesis Advisor and thereby hone the skills and acquire foundational knowledge that are necessary to develop a successful Qualifying Proposal.

Thesis Research

Following satisfactory completion of their Qualifying Examination, students register in Thesis Research each semester until they accumulate 90 credit hours of training (classroom study and research). This is typically achieved after 9 semesters of study for traditional PhD students and after 12 semesters for MD/PhD students; semesters including year one and two of medical school.

Graduate Research

Upon completing 90 credit hours of training (classroom study and research), students register each semester for Graduate Research.

Assessment of Student Research performance

Faculty provide an assessment of each research course undertaken by a student in their research program. This information is formative for the student providing descriptions of areas of excellence and areas with potential for future growth.

Faculty Expectations of student

- Faculty expectations should be developmental stage appropriate

- Areas for evaluation are outlined in the GSBS Qualifying Examination Outcome and Thesis Research Advisory Committee Report Forms (see <http://umassmed.edu/gsbs/resources/student-forms/bbs-forms/>)
- Expectations for independent experimental design, execution and analysis will increase with each year of study
- Expectations regarding work ethic should be consistently high
- The student should work well with others by:
 - Showing respect for all colleagues as outlined in Institutional Policies and Student Rights & Responsibilities
 - Seeking guidance when appropriate
 - Acting on received advice, guidance or formative criticism from their Thesis Advisor
 - Using available resources in a responsible manner
 - Communicating their research goals, methodologies, outcomes and strategic thinking with their research program colleagues on a regular basis
 - Upholding the standards of the GSBS Honor Code

Schedule of assessments

Year 1

Research Rotation Advisors will evaluate their rotation students after each rotation. This provides important formative feedback to the student regarding their progress and additional information to the GSBS Dean, which when combined with the student's academic record, informs all areas pertaining to student development.

Year 2 (pre-qualifying)

Thesis Advisors will evaluate their pre-qualifying students each semester.

Year 3 to completion

Each student who has passed their Qualifying Examination and has thereby progressed to candidacy will be evaluated at least twice annually

- The student's Thesis Research Advisory Committee (TRAC) shall review the student's progress in fall of each year.
- The student's Thesis Advisor will review the student's progress each spring/summer.

Assessment Outcomes

The student's performance will be judged to meet one of the following:

- Meets Expectations - the student is performing well or exceptionally well in most or all critical areas of their research and professional skills development
- Marginal Pass - the student is performing well in some but not all critical areas of their research and professional skills development. Areas where improvement is necessary will be highlighted, a schedule/strategy for improvement will be formulated and communicated to the student and to the GSBS. The student will be subsequently assessed on their success in achieving remediation.
- Fail - the student will be academically dismissed or, if sufficient research data is judged to be available, may be permitted to seek withdrawal with a Master's degree.

Grading Policy

The Course Coordinator will determine the appropriate grading for a course based on the content, structure and objectives of the course. Grading policy for each course is reviewed by the GSBS Assembly Curriculum Committee and approved by GSBS Assembly. The table below lists GSBS Grading standards.

Letter Grade	GPA Calculation	Explanation
A	4.0	Outstanding performance
A-	3.7	Strong performance
B+	3.3	Good performance
B	3.0	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.7	Less than satisfactory performance
C	2.0	Unsatisfactory performance (Unsatisfactory Grade)
F	0	Failure
Pass (P)	N/A	Satisfactory performance
Marginal Pass (MP)	N/A	Unsatisfactory performance (Unsatisfactory Grade)
Fail (F)	N/A	Failure
I	N/A	See information below regarding incomplete grades
S	N/A	Grade assigned to courses that a student is enrolled in during their final GSBS semester.
W	N/A	See information below regarding Withdrawals

Academic Standards, Academic Standing and Academic Advancement

Student advancement from year 1 to year 2, from year 2 to doctoral candidacy (Thesis and Graduate Research) and from candidacy to completion requires satisfactory academic performance. Student eligibility for financial aid requires that the student is in good academic standing. Good Academic Standing and Satisfactory Academic Performance are defined on page 15.

Administrative Probation

A student may be placed on administrative probation by the Dean for actions considered and found to be in violation of the GSBS Honor Code.

Academic Probation

Any student holding a GPA < 3.0 or a C or MP grade is placed on Academic Probation. This status indicates that the student has not achieved the level of academic performance that the GSBS faculty consider necessary for success in doctoral study.

GSBS Course Directors, Research Rotation Mentors, Thesis Advisors or QEC Chairs whose assessment of the student's performance resulted in the unsatisfactory grade will work with the GSBS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student's Program Director to define a realistic and timely process for remediation of Academic Probation.

Any student who is on academic probation and who receives an additional unsatisfactory evaluation will be reviewed by their TRAC (if their thesis research performance is unsatisfactory) or by the Academic Advancement Committee (if their rotation or curricular performance is unsatisfactory) and may be subject to academic dismissal.

Any student who is on academic probation and who is placed on administrative probation for unrelated reasons is subject to dismissal upon review by the GSBS Dean.

Any student who is on administrative probation and who receives an additional unsatisfactory evaluation (research or curricular) that is upheld upon appeal is subject to dismissal by the GSBS Dean.

Academic Advancement

PhD Students

First Year students

- All first year students who are in good academic standing and who obtain a Commitment of Thesis Research Support (CTRS) are eligible for academic advancement to year 2.
- First year students who obtain a CTRS, but have received a grade of C in any first year course must remediate that C to attain Good Academic Standing.
- First year students who are not in good academic standing but who obtain a CTRS may be allowed to advance to year 2 upon review by the GSBS Academic Advancement Committee. The student will be required to remediate their academic standing in year 2 (achieve a GPA > 3.0) in a manner recommended by the Academic Advancement Committee.
- First year students who are not in good academic standing and who do not obtain a CTRS will be reviewed by the Academic Advancement Committee for likely dismissal.
- First year students in good academic standing but who do not hold a CTRS will be subject to review by the GSBS Academic Advancement Committee. The student will be allowed to take up to 2 additional, consecutive 4-week rotations in order to secure a CTRS subject to GSBS funds availability.
- MD/PhD students must adhere to the following prior to any research work in GSBS:
 - No outstanding remediation from FOM1, FOM2 or Step One Exams prior to full-time research in GSBS (both rotation and thesis lab)
 - Early Clerkship remediation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with no guarantee of transition into GSBS.
 - Step One Exam must be taken prior to clerkships, unless given special permission by the MD/PhD Program Director.
 - Step One Exam must be taken prior to full-time research in GSBS (both rotation and thesis lab).
 - Should the student find it necessary to retake the Step One exam prior to entry into the PQR year for PhD study, the student will register for PhD study but will have 4 weeks unencumbered by research in which to complete their step One exam. The GSBS will pay the student's stipend during those 4 weeks of study.
 - Thereafter the student will engage in full-time research and Preparation for Qualifying Exam.
 - If the student subsequently learns that they have failed their second attempt at the Step One Exam, the student will be placed on LoA and cannot return until receiving notification that they have passed Step One Exam. Return from LoA is only permitted at the beginning of a semester.

Second year students

- A second year student in good academic standing is eligible to take their Qualifying Examination (QE). Students who are not in good academic standing but who are making satisfactory progress must petition the GSBS through their Program Director for

permission to take the QE. The GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs will convene a committee of QE General Examiners to review the student's petition.

- Any student who is judged by their QE Committee to be inadequately prepared for their QE owing to an academic deficiency will be required (on condition of continued CTRS from their mentor) to petition the GSBS for permission to delay the QE, present a justification for the delay and a plan for remediation of the academic deficiency. This must be approved by the Program Director and the GSBS Dean.

Third year students and beyond

- Continuation in doctoral candidacy requires satisfactory:
 - Annual TRAC meeting outcomes
 - Annual Thesis Advisor reports
- Students who receive an unsatisfactory outcome in either will be subject to review by their TRAC with recommendations for:
 - Remediation
 - Petition to complete the program with a Master's Degree, or
 - Dismissal

First year of doctoral study

Progression in year 1 of PhD study to candidacy (doctoral thesis research) requires:

- Satisfactory academic performance in the classroom (if additional curriculum is required by the Thesis Research Advisor)
- Satisfactory academic performance in the research setting
- Selection of a Thesis Research Advisor who provides a departmental chair-approved Commitment of Thesis Research Support (CTRS).
- Successful completion of the Qualifying Examination (QE). Any student who is judged (either at the Specific Aims meeting or following their first QE) by their QE Committee to be inadequately prepared for their QE, will be asked (with continued CTRS from their mentor) to:
 - Self-learn the appropriate foundational material then retest or,
 - Learn the appropriate foundational material by taking the next available relevant GSBS course and achieving a grade of B or higher then retest.

Second year of doctoral study and beyond

- Continuation in doctoral candidacy requires satisfactory:
 - Semi-annual TRAC meeting outcomes
 - Annual Thesis Advisor reports
- Students who receive an unsatisfactory outcome in either will be subject to review by their TRAC with recommendations for:
 - Remediation
 - Petition to complete with a Master's Degree, or
 - Dismissal

Completion requires that the student has satisfied each of the GSBS learning objectives.

PGSP Students

Successful completion of the Pathway to Graduate Study Program (PGSP) requires satisfactory academic performance in the classroom and the research setting. Consideration for admission to the GSBS doctoral program and will be subject to review by the PGSP Director, the appropriate GSBS Admissions Committee and approval by the GSBS Dean.

Course Waiver

Students may petition the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs for a waiver of Elective curriculum requirements of the GSBS.

The waiver request must be for individual courses. The student must work with the appropriate course coordinator to establish the validity of the waiver request before submitting the formal request to the Associate Dean and Program Director.

Each waiver request must be filed prior to the first exam or the Withdrawal Deadline (whichever comes first) of any course for which the waiver is requested. The request must be accompanied by documentation of the content of the graduate level curriculum previously taken by the petitioning student and by a transcript indicating that the grade achieved by the student in that class was a B or higher.

Waivers are NOT given for previous undergraduate level courses. Credit is not awarded for waived course requirements.

Auditing

Individuals who wish to take courses without receiving academic credit may, at the approval of the Course Coordinator, audit a course. The student must officially register for the course. The course will appear on the student's transcript as an audited course.

Core Courses may not be audited by UAP students.

Auditing Courses after Completion of Course Requirements

A student who has met all GSBS and Program course requirements will, in general, only audit all subsequent courses unless the course is required by the student's Graduate Program Director or TRAC.

Add/Drop

Students may drop/add a course no later than 10 days following the beginning of the semester. If a student adds a new course, curricular material missed by the student during the drop/add period is NOT excluded from examination/evaluation. Matriculated students may not fall below 9 credit hours of study without permission from the Dean.

Withdrawal

Students may withdraw from a course and receive a grade of W no later than that date at which $\leq 51\%$ of the semester is complete. After that date a student may only withdraw with the Dean's approval and must show extenuating circumstances. The course will remain on the transcript with a grade of W (withdrawn). Matriculated students may not fall below 9 credit hours of study without permission from the Dean.

Changing Registration from Credit to Audit or Audit to Credit

Students may change their registration from credit to audit or audit to credit no later than 10 days following the beginning of the semester. If a student changes from audit to credit, curricular material missed by the student while enrolled as audit is NOT excluded from examination/evaluation. Matriculated students may not fall below 9 credit hours of study without permission from the Dean.

Registration and Course Load

Registration

All GSBS students matriculated in a GSBS degree program are required to register each GSBS semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) until they graduate. To remain eligible for a Tuition Waiver, students are required to register each semester for one of the following GSBS Research Courses: Laboratory Rotation, Pre-Qualifying Research, Thesis Research, or Graduate Research. MD/PhD students must be enrolled in one of the listed four research courses or in MDP 740A or 740B, which are research-focused, problem-solving courses. All students are expected to contribute to the University's academic, teaching and/or research functions as part of these courses. Students do not need to register while withdrawn or on a leave of absence. Failure to register will result in assessment of late fees and placement on Administrative Probation.

Course Load

All GSBS students matriculated in a GSBS degree program are considered full-time students. As a general rule, prior to completion of nine semesters of enrollment a student will register for at least nine credits in the fall semester and in the spring semesters and at least four credits in the summer semester. After nine semesters of enrollment a student registers for Graduate Research – GR990, unless the student has not yet accumulated 90 credits.

Prior to completion of nine semesters of enrollment the student must receive permission from the Dean to enroll in less than 9 credits in the fall and spring semesters and 4 credits in the summer semester

Due to U.S. Department of State regulations, students in the United States on visas must always meet the minimal credit requirements.

To qualify for Financial Aid or a Stafford loan "in school" deferment, a student must be making satisfactory academic progress. Prior to nine semesters of enrollment a student must be registered for at least five credits per semester in the fall and spring semesters and at least two credits in the summer semester. After nine semesters of enrollment a student must be registered for Graduate Research – GR990.

Non-Degree Student Registration

Depending upon academic background and available space in a given course, courses offered by the GSBS at UMMS may be taken by the following:

- UMMS or UMMHC employees
- Students from the Worcester Consortium
- Students registered as full time students at another University of Massachusetts campus
- GSBS Visiting Non-degree Students

Registration Policy for Non-Degree Students

- A non-degree student is not considered to be pursuing a degree in the UMass Medical School Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.
- A non-degree student is not a full-time student
- Approval from the course coordinator must be obtained prior to registering for the course.
- A non-degree student may register for no more than two courses per semester unless approved by the GSBS Dean.
- Courses may not be audited without the Dean's approval
- A non-degree student who earns a grade of 'C' or 'F' in any course will be unable to take any further GSBS courses.

Registration Instructions

Registration instructions are available from the Graduate School office and are available on-line at: <https://www.umassmed.edu/gpbs/resources/registration/>

GSBS Milestones

Selecting a Thesis Advisor

Students select a Thesis Advisor and Program in accordance with the requirements for their specific Program. This is done upon mutual agreement between the student and the potential Thesis Advisor. The choice must be approved by the Program Director, by the Thesis Advisor's Chair and by the Dean. The Thesis Advisor must hold a faculty appointment within the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at UMass Medical School.

Students admitted through the UAP take 5 different rotations in Year 1 in order to find the most suitable research program. UAP students are required to rotate in at least 2 different research laboratories during Year 1. CPHR students have typically identified their Thesis Research Advisor upon matriculation. MD/PhD students take Research Rotations during summer prior to Year 1 of Medical School, during summer between Years 1 and 2 of Medical School and are expected to have selected their Thesis Research Advisor at the beginning of Year 1 of PhD study.

Acceptance of a student by a Thesis Advisor implies a commitment on the part of the advisor to mentor the student such that by the end of thesis research:

- The student has produced a body of work, which represents a significant advancement to the field and has resulted in and/or justifies publication in an appropriate scientific journal as one or more first-author research articles.

Acceptance of a student by a Thesis Advisor implies a commitment on the part of the advisor and the advisor's primary department (organizational unit receiving and administering the advisor's research funds) to provide adequate financial support for conducting the research project and provision of the student's stipend, fees and benefits support for the student.

In the event that the Thesis Advisor becomes unable to support the student financially, the Thesis Advisor's department or Program assumes responsibility for financial support of the student

Thesis Advisor Responsibilities

The Thesis Advisor provides the resources and manages the training environment in which the graduate student will undertake doctoral research. Thesis Advisors must be GSBS faculty members holding Faculty status, the necessary resources to support their student in doctoral research and the commitment of their departmental chair to continue support to the student during times of resource exigency.

GSBS Contributing Faculty are ineligible to serve as Thesis Advisors. Affiliate Faculty may serve only as Thesis Co-advisors.

The Thesis Advisor must provide a training environment, which upholds and reinforces the GSBS Learning Objectives.

The Thesis Advisor must provide a training environment, which is consistent with Institutional Policies and Student Rights & Responsibilities. These are summarized in the Institutional Policies for GSBS Students handbook.

Deferred Thesis Advisor Selection

In some instances, a student in good academic standing is unable to select a Thesis Advisor. This policy describes the steps that the student and the GSBS undertake to address this situation.

Process

The GSBS is committed to assisting all students in good academic standing to secure a laboratory for thesis research.

Student Commitment

The student must identify (with assistance from the GSBS) two research programs that he/she will rotate in - each for 4-weeks. If the student does not accomplish this charge, they will be dismissed from the GSBS. Use form GSBS02 for further details & requirements

The student will begin the fall semester by undertaking a 4-week rotation in one of the selected research labs.

Prior to week four of the 1st fall semester lab rotation, the student will meet with the Laboratory Rotation faculty to determine whether there is a mutual agreement for the student to remain in that faculty's laboratory and the faculty agrees to become the student's Thesis Advisor.

If this rotation results in the selection of a Thesis Advisor, that faculty will assume responsibility for the student's stipend and fees at the end of the rotation. With the assistance of the Graduate School, the student will process a fall registration change form.

If this first rotation does not result in the selection of a Thesis Advisor, the student will complete the second rotation in the other selected research laboratory. In order to do so, however, the student must receive a satisfactory evaluation of their research effort in the first laboratory.

The student must secure the commitment of a Thesis Advisor before the end of the second rotation and that faculty will assume responsibility for the student's stipend and fees upon commitment.

The student must remain in Good Academic Standing.

Failing this, the student will be dismissed from the GSBS at the end of the second rotation.

GSBS Faculty Commitment

All faculty who serve as rotation advisors for students who are financially supported by the GSBS during the fall semester of year two must meet the following requirements:

- Be in a position to support the student in thesis research (student stipend, fees, health insurance and research expenses).
- Inform the student (prior to the rotation) that they are able and willing to financially support the student in thesis research (subject to satisfactory progress by the student).
- Undertake a review (with the student) of the student's progress at week four and week seven of the laboratory rotation during the fall semester in order to indicate whether the student meets GSBS and laboratory-specific standards for selection for thesis research support. If the student does not meet standards at the time of the first review, the faculty must indicate (using the Laboratory Rotation Evaluation Instrument) those specific areas that require improvement.
- Inform the student at no later than seven weeks of research whether the student has met the faculty's requirements for selection for thesis research support. If, at eight weeks, the faculty is unable to support the student in thesis research, the faculty must release the student for selection of an alternative thesis research sponsor.

The Qualifying Examination

Purpose

Students are required to pass a Qualifying Examination before admission to candidacy (doctoral research). PhD students normally complete this before the beginning of year 3. MD/PhD students on the BBS track must complete this requirement in the first year of research following transition from Medical School to Graduate School. MD/PhD students on the CPHR track must complete this requirement in the second year of research following transition from Medical

School to Graduate School. Specific details of timing are elaborated below. Students must be in Good Academic Standing (GPA \geq 3.0) in order to be eligible for candidacy.

The Qualifying Examination (QE) assesses the student's preparedness for doctoral research in their chosen area of specialization and identifies student attributes (e.g. background knowledge, critical thinking skills, experimental design, communication skills) that may require further development during the course of doctoral study.

Faculty Expectations of student

The student shall prepare a written research proposal and make an oral presentation of the proposal in which they:

- Define and justify an area of study through critical review of the literature
- Articulate the hypothesis or goals to be tested, the rationale for undertaking the studies, alternative hypotheses or approaches to discovery and how the specific aims presented relate to the hypotheses or discovery goals.
- Describe a specific study design that unambiguously addresses each hypothesis or discovery goal. The student should understand and be able to describe the strengths and weaknesses of their approach, the methodologies used and the analytical tools used to interpret raw data. The student must be able to describe expected results and to propose alternative approaches. If the results are not as predicted, the student must be able to describe alternative hypotheses that might explain the outcomes and then create study designs to test alternative hypotheses.
- Communicate using clear, well-organized, written and spoken English and high quality visual aids.

Roles of the Thesis Advisor, the Program Director(s) and the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs

- The Thesis Advisor and the student must identify the broad area of proposed thesis research, and plan learning opportunities, within and outside of the GSBS curriculum, that promote the student's mastery of knowledge in this area.
- The Program Director(s) and the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs will review and approve student course selections to insure that curriculum selection and thesis research are appropriately aligned.

Process

Timing

The year in which the student's QE is first scheduled is called the QE Year and is Year 2 of study for PhD students admitted to the Umbrella Admissions and CPHR programs. MD/PhD students on the BBS track must take their QE in Year 1 of full-time PhD study. Most fulfill their QE requirements during the spring semester of their QE Year but may do so during the earlier, fall semester. MD/PhD students on the CPHR track must take their QE in Year 2 of full-time PhD study. Most fulfill their QE requirements during the spring semester of their QE Year but may do so during the earlier, fall semester. Students who do not complete their QE requirements by the end of the QE Year, are placed on "academic probation."

No later than 2 weeks into the fall semester of the post QE Year, the student provide the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum & Academic Affairs with the following:

1. A justification for the delayed QE
2. A description of steps underway to remediate any academic deficiencies justifying the delay
3. A proposed schedule for QE completion

4. A statement from their thesis advisor signifying continued support throughout the remediation period

These students shall have until the end of the fall semester of the post QE Year to schedule, hold and pass their Qualifying Examination. Upon completion of these requirements their status will be restored to "making satisfactory academic progress." Should any student not accomplish these requirements they will be academically dismissed from the GSBS.

Qualifying Examination Committees

The GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs and the student's Graduate Program Director approve the Qualifying Exam Committee (QEC). All members must hold faculty status in the Graduate School and should represent a broad range of research experience. The committee may contain as few as three committee members but no more than five. Programs may adopt more specific requirements within this range. The Thesis Advisor is an *ex officio* member of the committee and may be present during the Specific Aims defense but may NOT be present during the Qualifying Exam proposal defense. The GSBS strongly discourages faculty who collaborate with the Thesis Advisor from serving on the QEC.

The student must file the completed and signed QEC selection form with the GSBS prior to proceeding to their Specific Aims Defense meeting.

QEC Chair

The QEC Chair is responsible for informing the student of exam procedure, communicating relevant details of the student's academic record to the committee as a whole, ensuring fair treatment of the student during the exam, leading the committee's deliberation to determine exam outcome, and communicating the outcome to the student and the GSBS Office. The GSBS Office will assist the QEC chair to compile the student's academic profile.

The QEC chair must be a member of the student's affiliated program and must be a tenured faculty member. The appointment of the QEC and its chair requires assent of the GSBS Program Director and the GSBS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs who will recommend approval to the GSBS Dean.

QE General Examiners

Each year, the Dean recruits and appoints several senior faculty members to fulfill the role of General Examiners (GE). The most important qualification for GE is experience in graduate student training. The number of GEs is determined by the number QEs to be administered in any given year, with the intention that each GE will sit on 2-3 QEs per year.

The GE has equal standing to other members of the QE, but is not the QE Chair.

The GE lends his/her experience to the committee as a whole, with special emphasis on "big picture" aspects. The primary responsibilities of the GE are to ensure that student assessment is based on the defined learning objectives and that final determination of pass/fail be consistent with other QEs. Accordingly, the GE need not be an expert on the subject of the Qualifying Exam proposal.

The roster of GEs is assigned to each QE Committee by the Dean. Selection and assignments are made early in the academic year, during the Fall semester, to facilitate committee selection and scheduling.

The GEs participate in an annual orientation during which the responsibilities of the role and the standards for the QE are discussed. The orientation session includes an evaluation by returning GEs of the strengths and weakness of the mechanism for ensuring the goals, namely that student assessment is based on defined standards that extend across all graduate programs.

Specific Aims

- The student develops a proposal Specific Aims page whose form resembles the Specific Aims page of an NIH grant proposal.
- The student must present their Specific Aims orally before the QEC.
 - The Thesis Advisor may attend this defense but as an observer only.
 - The Specific Aims presentation and feedback from the QEC should offer the student a preview of the nature of the QE.
 - The QEC will advise the student on recommended modifications to the Specific Aims.
 - The GE will attend the Specific Aims meeting
 - The QEC chair will summarize the Specific Aims outcome and expectations in writing to the student and QEC.
 - No later than one week following the Specific Aims meeting, the student revises their Specific Aims section to address the recommendations made by the QEC and receives final approval of the Specific Aims document. While this process may necessitate additional iterations of the document, final approval of the Specific Aims document must be obtained no later than one week following the Specific Aims meeting.
 - The student submits the written proposal within five weeks of Specific Aims approval.
 - Two weeks after submission of the proposal, the student defends the proposal orally before the QEC.

The Qualifying Examination Proposal

- The Thesis Advisor cannot contribute to the development of the written proposal.
- The proposal may contain data obtained by the student during pre-qualifying research. However, preliminary data by the student is NOT a prerequisite for the qualifying examination proposal. This examination tests the student's ability to think analytically and critically.
- Each GSBS program may provide specific instructions on the length of the written proposal. The GSBS recommends the formats for an NIH NRSA F31 Fellowship application or an NIH F30-individual Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service award (1 page single-spaced Specific Aims; 6 pages single-spaced Research Strategy).

The Qualifying Examination Defense

- The Thesis Advisor cannot attend the oral defense but must provide the QEC Chair with a written or oral assessment of the student and extent of their commitment to support the student in thesis research.
- The GSBS will furnish the QE Chair with a copy of the student's GSBS transcript indicating the student's course selections and GPA.
- The student presents their proposal.
- The QEC may ask any questions pertaining to the proposed research, the student's curriculum or beyond.
- These questions will challenge the proposed hypotheses/goals and the rationale, strategy and technical details of the proposed experiments.
- The student must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the proposed data collection and analysis procedures and must be aware of alternative approaches that might be used to answer the problem.
- The student must be able to interpret expected and unexpected findings within the context of the method of data collection, any tested hypothesis and the broader field.

Qualifying Examination Outcomes

Pass

The student passes outright and is not required to undertake specific remedial actions. This does not mean that specific areas for further student development were not identified by the QEC. Rather, the student performed at a developmentally appropriate level.

Retake

The student does not pass but achieves a level of performance that suggests to the QEC and the GE that the student could succeed in doctoral research. The QEC will recommend 1 of two possible courses of action:

Short-term rewrite and defense

If a specific flaw in the proposal is identified that can be addressed without requiring the student to undertake additional coursework, the student will rewrite the proposal to address the specific shortcomings and present and/or defend their modified proposal before the QEC.

This will occur within 4 weeks of the original defense.

Long-term rewrite and defense

The QEC chair consults with the QEC and GE to identify areas:

- In which the student did not meet expectations,
- Which are germane to the proposal (e.g. background knowledge, analytical procedures)
- Which are absent from the student's academic record.

The QEC then consults with the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum & Academic Affairs to identify one or more additional, selected courses, workshops or assignments which the student must take to remediate the identified area(s) of weakness. These academic exercises must be relevant to the proposal but not previously taken by the student.

The student will not enter into candidacy until he/she has:

- Taken and passed the selected remediations with a grade of B or higher and
- Rewritten their proposal to address its weaknesses and defended the proposal in a second QE.

Long-term remediation must be completed within 1 year of the original QE defense.

Fail

The student does not achieve a level of performance (either first time or upon a retake) that convinces the QEC that the student can succeed in doctoral research. The student will be dismissed from the GSBS.

Qualifying Examination Outcome report

The purpose of the QE outcome report is to provide the student, the student's Thesis Advisor and the student's TRAC with a summary of student strengths and weaknesses. This will form the basis for ongoing student development during doctoral research.

The QEC chair will complete the QE outcome report by soliciting input from the QEC and GE at the QE during the post presentation period when the student is absent from the room.

The QEC will then discuss their outcome report with the student and describe any recommendations they may have for remediation or future student development. The chair and the student will sign the report and the student will file the report with the GSBS office.

The Annual Thesis Research Advisory Committee Meeting

Purpose

This committee is formed shortly after the student passes their Qualifying Examination. It shall advise the student from the time the student has passed the Qualifying Exam and has entered Thesis Research until the TRAC determines that the body of work represents a significant advancement to the field and has resulted in and/or justifies publication in an appropriate scientific journal as one or more research articles. At this time, a Terminal TRAC meeting is convened to review any new data and a detailed outline of the student's proposed thesis. If the TRAC is satisfied that the data and dissertation outline meet the standards for Dissertation Defense, the TRAC authorizes the student to prepare and defend their thesis and the TRAC is disbanded.

All GSBS doctoral students must complete the requirements of the TRAC meeting annually.

Faculty Expectations of student

Students holding their first TRAC meeting

The student shall prepare and pre-circulate a 2-page written report indicating:

- Specific Goals for the next 6-12 months of research
- The rationale for these goals
- Progress (if any) towards meeting those goals
- Anticipated challenges to and alternative strategies for meeting the goals

More Advanced Students

The student shall prepare and pre-circulate a 2-page written report indicating:

- Specific Goals for the preceding 6-12 months of research identified at the conclusion of the last TRAC meeting
- Progress (if any) towards meeting those goals
- Publications since last TRAC meeting
- Challenges experienced in meeting the goals and alternative strategies developed
- Mid-term course-corrections advised by thesis mentor
- Goals for the next 6-12 months of research
- If the student is in year 5 or beyond, the student must include a rational time-table for completion

Student preparation for the TRAC meeting

The student should register for the TRAC course (BBS/CTS 865) in the preceding summer semester.

The student will complete all assignments associated with the TRAC course. These include:

- Selection of a TRAC and receiving approval from the GSBS
- Scheduling a TRAC meeting in the fall semester
- Completing the 1-2-page pre-circulated report and distributing the report to the TRAC members.
- Completing an Individual Development Plan (IDP).
- Preparing slides for and delivering their presentation
- Preparing the post-meeting report and timeline.
- Filing the completed TRAC Outcome Report (TRACOR) within 1 week following the TRAC meeting

TRAC composition

The TRAC comprises four to six GSBS faculty holding Faculty Status. The TRAC may contain only one member who holds Contributing or Affiliate Faculty status. The TRAC chair must be tenured and hold GSBS Faculty Status. The student's Thesis Advisor is a member of the TRAC. The Thesis Research Advisory Committee shall be appointed by and will report to the Dean, upon the recommendation of the Thesis Advisor, the Program Director and the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs. The TRAC must be approved by the GSBS Dean prior to its first meeting. The TRAC chair cannot be the Thesis Advisor. Not all TRAC members are required to be present at each meeting.

Thesis Advisor role at the TRAC meeting

TRAC meeting attendance by the Thesis Advisor is not mandatory but the Thesis Advisor must provide an evaluation of the student's research progress and professional skills development for review by TRAC members who are present at each TRAC meeting.

Schedule of meetings

TRACs meet in the fall semester of each year. The Thesis Advisor, the doctoral student, the TRAC chair or the GSBS Dean may convene TRAC meetings for a specific student more frequently if necessary. MD/PhD TRAC meetings are scheduled every 6 months.

The TRAC meeting

Procedure

- The TRAC discusses the Thesis Advisor's perception of the student's progress in the absence of the student
- The student delivers his/her presentation describing prior goals, progress, data interpretation and future experiments.
- The TRAC and student discuss the student's progress and the TRAC and student establish a set of scientific research and professional skills development goals for the next 6-12 months
- If the student is in year 5 or beyond, the TRAC and student will discuss the feasibility of the proposed completion schedule
- The TRAC and the student discuss the student's progress in the absence of the Thesis Advisor.

Outcomes

The TRAC Chair is responsible for communicating all TRAC meeting outcomes to the student.

Pass, continue in doctoral research

- Progress is satisfactory, the student has not yet met the standards expected for doctoral research completion and must continue in doctoral research.

Marginal Pass, continue in doctoral research

- Progress is less than satisfactory, the student has not yet met the standards expected for doctoral research completion and must not only continue in doctoral research but must also address a specific course and schedule of remediation outlined by the TRAC and approved by the Dean.

Recommendation to exit the program with a Masters degree

- If the student has collected a significant body of data, but is judged unlikely to complete the requirements for a doctoral degree in the usual time frame, the TRAC may recommend that the student form a Master's Dissertation Committee, write a Master's

Thesis on their research, and submit the thesis for review. Successful review will result in the award of a Master's Degree in Biomedical Sciences.

Fail

- Progress is not satisfactory, the student has received more than one unsatisfactory TRAC report and has failed to remediate their performance as required by the TRAC and Dean. Moreover, the student has not collected a body of data sufficient to justify a Master's Dissertation. The student must withdraw from the GSBS or will be administratively withdrawn.

TRAC Meeting Report

The TRAC Outcome Report is completed, signed by the TRAC chair, the student, and the Thesis Advisor. The form must be hand delivered to the GSBS, or uploaded in the appropriate student portal (preferred).

The completed TRAC form must be submitted within 1 week of completing the TRAC meeting.

Individual Development Plan

Following discussions with mentors (including the TRAC), the student must refine his/her set of goals for the coming year in the areas of research, professional skills development, and career advancement. Each goal or targeted research milestone must have a timeframe associated with it. The IDP must be completed and submitted according to the assignment instructions for BBS865.

The advanced graduate student

If the student is in year 5 or beyond, the student's TRAC Outcome Report must include a timetable for completion which is approved by the TRAC Chair and Thesis Advisor.

The Dissertation Defense

Purpose

The dissertation defense is a 5-step process that examines whether the GSBS Mission and Learning Objectives are realized through the scholarly work developed, presented and defended by the doctoral candidate.

Defense elements

The dissertation defense comprises 5 parts:

1. The Terminal TRAC meeting
2. Scheduling the Dissertation Presentation
3. The Dissertation Presentation
4. The Closed Door Defense
5. Dissertation Edits and Approval

1. The Terminal TRAC meeting

Purpose

To provide a standardized procedure for the Authorization to Write the Dissertation, also known as the Terminal TRAC meeting, that:

- guides both the student and TRAC to prepare and execute a thorough assessment of the degree of completion of research and student development,
- clarifies timeline and expectations for writing the dissertation,
- reinforces high standards for dissertation preparation.

It is expected that:

- No student enters the Dissertation Exam unprepared to present and successfully defend the thesis research;
- All students are held to an appropriately high standard for doctoral research;
- DEC members hold and effectively communicate a common set of expectations by which performance is assessed;
- Thesis revisions and completion of degree requirements will proceed with a predictable timeline.

Preparation for The Terminal TRAC meeting

- The student shall formally petition the TRAC for authorization to cease experimental work and begin preparation of the dissertation by:
 - Informing the TRAC of his or her intention to seek authorization
 - Scheduling a Terminal TRAC Meeting (this may coincide with a regularly scheduled TRAC meeting)
 - Informing the GSBS Associate Dean for Academic Affairs that the meeting has been scheduled
- The student shall prepare and present at or before the meeting:
 - A written copy of the Thesis Abstract, presented to the TRAC in advance of the meeting. The abstract should be as complete as possible from the student's perspective, and should not rely on uninitiated or incomplete experimental data.
 - A detailed Outline of the thesis itself, presented in advance of the meeting, with a focus on the Introduction and Discussion sections.

- A list of publications, including submitted manuscripts, and a plan for how they will be incorporated into the dissertation
- Presentation of unpublished data, acquired since the last TRAC meeting, that will be included in the thesis. It is assumed that this will include little to no raw, unanalyzed data and that the construction of publication-ready figures is well underway
- Figures and/or slides should be of sufficient quality that the TRAC can evaluate the completeness, significance, and analysis.
- The student and Thesis Advisor shall prepare a list of potential Dissertation Examination Committee members (internal and external) for consideration by the TRAC.
- The TRAC chair will use a checklist, designed specifically for the Terminal TRAC meeting, to certify unanimous agreement that:
 - The data, published and unpublished, are sound, complete, and adequate for a dissertation.
 - The committee is satisfied that the student's publication record (including submitted manuscripts) is adequate for completion of the PhD degree.
 - The committee is satisfied that the student's development as a scientist is adequate for completion of the PhD degree.
 - The student may cease experimental work and focus on preparing the dissertation.
 - The committee provided written feedback regarding modifications to the abstract and outline.
 - The committee provided written feedback regarding modifications to the unpublished data.

Outcomes

The TRAC Chair is responsible for communicating all TRAC meeting outcomes to the student.

Pass, continue in doctoral research

Progress is satisfactory, but the student has not yet met the standards expected for doctoral research completion

Pass, halt all research and write doctoral dissertation

- Progress is satisfactory, the student has satisfied the standards expected for doctoral research completion and may now halt research and begin writing their doctoral thesis.
- The student has 4 months to complete this task (an extension may be sought by the Thesis Advisor and the student but requires approval of the Dean).
- No further bench research or data collection is necessary for the completion of the doctoral dissertation during this phase of doctoral study.

The TRAC may delay approval until specific benchmarks are met, such as limited and specified experiments or analysis, submission or acceptance of manuscripts. The TRAC may authorize the TRAC chair to give final approval, or determine that an additional meeting is required.

What does "Authorization to write" actually mean?

"Authorization to write" means that that additional bench work, data collection and significantly new and extensive data analyses are not required for completion of the doctoral thesis or successful execution of the dissertation defense. The TRAC has agreed that sufficient data and analysis exist for the student to write a field-competitive doctoral dissertation and research articles that will positively impact the field of research.

Requests to return to the bench or to extend or open new lines of research during preparation for thesis defense can only be approved by the GSBS Dean upon recommendation by the full TRAC.

2. Scheduling

- The student typically has 4 calendar months of stipend support following Terminal TRAC approval of “permission to write.” This time includes thesis preparation, defense and 3-6 weeks post-defense for revisions. Extensions to this time must be approved by the Dean and must be academically justified.
- The Dissertation Examination Committee (DEC) must be formed 30 days before the scheduled thesis defense.
- The DEC must receive three items at least 21 days before the scheduled defense:
 - **The dissertation** (some DEC members may prefer a printed copy of the dissertation so the student must make the necessary prior arrangements).
 - **TRAC approved thesis outline** developed at the Terminal TRAC meeting.
 - **Certification by the thesis mentor** (via verbal or email communication to the DEC chair) that the student independently wrote the Introduction and Discussion chapters.
- The DEC then undertakes the following within 7 days of receipt of the thesis (DEC members are not required to meet, though they retain the option to do so):
 - **Thesis review** - To affirm that the thesis is free of defects that would prevent the defense from going forward. Such defects include unsound or inadequate data, unacceptable or absent analysis, improper citations, over reliance on secondary sources in the Introduction and Discussion chapters, plagiarism, and language or formatting deficiencies that preclude evaluation of the body of work.
 - **Comparison with the TRAC approved thesis outline** – To determine whether the written thesis is consistent with the TRAC-approved thesis outline and, if not, whether deviations from the outline are acceptable.
 - **Decision to proceed or delay the thesis defense** - The DEC shall inform the student of the approval, or lack thereof, to proceed with the Dissertation Defense and Examination. Should the Committee determine that the defense cannot go forward, the chair will provide to the student a checklist identifying the problem(s).
- The DEC chair and student shall inform the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs of the outcome of this preliminary review at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the defense. The student is responsible for informing the Thesis Advisor and Department or Program staff of any schedule changes.
- The Dissertation Seminar notification must be posted by the GSBS 10 days prior to the defense.
- The student presents the public seminar and then undergoes the closed-door defense of the oral and written thesis dissertation before the DEC.
- The student's stipend will be terminated in three to six months post defense.
- If an approved thesis is not submitted within 4 months of the defense, the Dissertation Examination outcome will be recorded as Fail.

MD/PhD students

- A student will be unable to create their CCE schedule without completing the terminal TRAC meeting.
- Upon completing the Terminal TRAC meeting and receiving “permission to write:”
 - The student’s name is forwarded to the ADSA in School of Medicine. The ADSA will arrange to meet with the student to define a clerkship schedule and to grant permission to register in EVOS.
 - The student will meet with the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs to finalize their timeline to return to medical school
 - Three weeks post-defense will be included in the timeline prior to the return to CCE/medical school for editing/submitting final dissertation and GSBS paperwork
- MD/PhD students returning to medical school must submit their final thesis to the GSBS before they re-enter clerkships **WITHOUT EXCEPTION**
- MD/PhD students who do not submit their thesis within the agreed upon timeline must meet with the Dean of GSBS and the MD/PhD Program Director within 5 days of the missed deadline to arrange plans for immediate remediation or face dismissal from the program.

Role of the Thesis Advisor

The doctoral dissertation should represent the student’s work and should be written by the student. The Data chapters may represent submitted or published manuscripts to which co-authors, including the Thesis Advisor, have contributed, and such contributions should be clearly identified (see Attribution, below).

Dissertation Examination Committee

The Dissertation Examination Committee (DEC) is created to evaluate the student’s suitability for the award of PhD in Biomedical Sciences. The student and thesis advisor should recognize that the DEC serves a very different purpose from the TRAC. The charge of the DEC is to determine whether the student has attained a standard of scholarly accomplishment commensurate with the award of a doctoral degree in biomedical sciences at UMMS. Although the TRAC may become the DEC, it may also contain GSBS faculty who were not on the TRAC.

The DEC shall be appointed by and will report to the Dean, upon the recommendation of the Terminal TRAC, the Program Director and the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs. The DEC shall comprise four GSBS faculty members (including the Chair) and one external member from a doctoral degree-conferring research institution. The Thesis Advisor and co-Advisors shall not be committee members. All UMMS DEC members must hold GSBS Faculty Status. Contributing and Affiliate GSBS Faculty are ineligible to serve on DEC’s.

In order to avoid the appearance or the actual occurrence of a conflict of interest, a maximum of two GSBS faculty members who have or who will co-publish with the student on the thesis project may be members of the DEC. Neither the DEC Chair nor the external DEC member may be co-authors with the student on the thesis project.

The Written Dissertation

Formatting

Standards for length, content and formatting of the doctoral thesis are available at: http://umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/forms/gpbs_12_doctoral_diss_prep_guide.pdf

Attribution

The face-page of each data chapter should include full attribution to each individual who contributed to the data collection, analysis or presentation of the chapter. This should also briefly state the role of the individual in the experimental design, data collection and analysis.

Plagiarism

If a student is found to have engaged in plagiarism, this demonstrates an effort on the student's part to circumvent the educational process and will result in dismissal for unprofessional behavior.

Publication

The completed dissertation will be published on-line as a downloadable, fully text-searchable pdf document. GSBS Theses and publications may be viewed at <http://escholarship.umassmed.edu/gpbs/>

The publication approval form requires signatures from the student and the Thesis Advisor and allows for immediate doctoral thesis publication on the web or delayed publication (up to 1 year). This form is available at http://umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/forms/gpbs_19_escholarship_permission.doc

Defense Time Lines

International students

Optional Practical Training (OPT)

When an international student holding an F-1 visa completes their doctoral study, their visa is terminated and they must leave the US. Students wishing to remain in the US to undertake postdoctoral training may need to extend their visa and may do so by applying for OPT. An F-1 student may be authorized up to a total of 12 months of full-time practical training at each educational level (e.g., undergraduate, graduate and post-graduate).

To be eligible for OPT, the student must:

- Have been a full-time F-1 student in good standing for at least 1 full academic year
- Be currently maintaining F-1 status
- Propose to work in an area directly related to their major area of study.

It can take up to 90 days for OPT to be granted thus a student should plan to apply for OPT 90 days prior to the anticipated graduation date (GSBS Graduation dates are March 31, the first Sunday following Memorial Day (typically early June), August 31 and December 31).

Students should contact the UMMS Immigration Services Office (ISO) in Human Resources to initiate this process. For more information, please see http://www.umassmed.edu/hr/immigration_services/

All students

Post-Completion termination of support

Students who have defended and have only dissertation edits remaining must complete their edits in a timely manner. ISO advises that a period of more than 3 weeks for post-defense thesis edits may trigger external review by the USCIS unless academically justified. Any

extension sought to this period for edits must be based on academic reasons and approved by the Dean.

Once this time has expired, the student's stipend is terminated.

International students who have not yet received or who have not applied for authorization for OPT at the time of completion or termination of stipend support lose their visa status and are required to leave the US within 48 hours.

Understanding Critical Milestones for participation in Commencement

Commencement involves several critical milestones and published materials, which introduce specific deadlines. If a student wishes to participate in Commencement (the first Sunday following Memorial Day) each of the following requirements must be satisfied without exception:

- The student must submit their Dissertation Examination Committee selection form to the GSBS office no later than March 1
- The student must submit their Thesis Defense Notification form to the GSBS office no later than March 10
- The student must submit their Thesis Dissertation to their DEC no later than March 15
- The student must successfully defend their Thesis no later than April 1
- The student must complete their Thesis Dissertation edits, have them approved by the DEC Chair and deliver the signed signature pages indicating this approval to the GSBS office no later than May 1

3. The Dissertation Presentation

- Submission of a written dissertation and preliminary approval by the DEC.
- A one-hour public seminar on the results of the completed dissertation project. This is a formal presentation of the dissertation as a Dissertation Seminar.

Purpose

The dissertation seminar is considered an integral part of the Dissertation Defense, and should be approached with appropriate seriousness. The seminar provides a vehicle by which the student can showcase their:

- Scientific Knowledge and Critical Thinking
- Research Skills and Problem Solving Ability
- Specific Expertise
- Communication Skills
- Professional Ethics and Advocacy

The candidate presents the rationale for their project, their scientific observations, their conclusions and the wider impact of their work. The candidate fields questions from the audience.

The DEC should determine whether:

- The student presented in clear spoken English.
- The student described the scientific question, research goals, hypothesis, or model to be tested, which underlie the thesis project.
- The data presented were of high quality.
- The data presented supported the argument put forth by the student.
- The visual aids clarify central argument, significance and conclusions of the thesis work.
- The student explained the significance of the work to a broad audience.

4. The closed door defense

Only the student and the DEC are present at the closed door defense. The Thesis Advisor cannot be present during the closed door defense. The DEC must determine whether:

- The student placed their research in the larger context of the field.
- The student could explain their original contribution to the research program of their thesis lab.
- The student demonstrated authoritative knowledge of primary literature cited
- The student clearly explained the significance of all experimental work in the thesis.
- The student was able to answer questions tangential to their thesis argument.

To accomplish this, the DEC will assess the candidate's mastery of 6 specific areas and will review the written thesis:

General knowledge

- Does the candidate demonstrate substantial and up to date core knowledge of broad areas in basic biomedical, translational, or clinical research applicable to their area of study?
- Does the candidate demonstrate the ability to accurately and critically evaluate their own scientific work and the work of others?

Research Skills and Problem Solving Ability

- Does the candidate demonstrate advanced understanding of a range of technical and conceptual approaches used in biomedical research?
- Can the candidate design, carry out, and interpret research projects that generate new knowledge that advances the biomedical sciences and human health?

Specific Expertise

- Can the candidate articulate the significance of their own work to their chosen research area in both historical and forward-looking contexts?
- Does the candidate demonstrate mastery of a range of technical and conceptual approaches used in their selected research area?

In the course of this questioning, the DEC will also develop a deeper understanding of the candidate's abilities in 4 additional areas:

Communication

- Does the candidate demonstrate the oral, written and media communication skills required to be an effective communicator, teacher and mentor of peers, future scientists and scientifically literate citizens?

Professional Ethics and Advocacy

- Has the candidate been an effective steward of their research (data management, research subjects, research funds)?
- Has the candidate interacted appropriately with colleagues and the public?
- Does the candidate advocate for the role of science in medicine and society?

Career Development

- Is the candidate competitive in a range of career options?
- Can the candidate knowledgeably articulate an appropriate set of desired career paths?

Document Review

- The thesis must be presented as a unified whole with respect to font size, line spacing and margin sizes.

- The Thesis must contain all elements required by the GSBS Doctoral Dissertation Preparation Guide.
- All components must be integrated into a cohesive unit with a logical progression from one chapter to the next, providing a cohesive, unitary focus, documenting a single program of research. If submitted manuscripts are included as chapters, connecting text must be provided so that the completed thesis functions as an integrated whole.
- Data or figures generated by others must be appropriately attributed

Outcomes

The outcome of the Dissertation Defense shall be recorded on the appropriate Dissertation Defense Outcome form http://umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/forms/bbs-forms/bbs_08_dissertation_defense_outcome.doc which shall be signed by all required signatories and returned to the GSBS no later than 24 hours post-defense.

Pass

- The student passes the examination only when the oral and written dissertation are acceptable as presented
- The student successfully passes the exam only upon a unanimous decision of the DEC.

In Progress - Minor Revisions

The student has passed the oral exam, all data are acceptable as presented, no further experimentation is necessary, and only minor revisions are required. The student must complete revisions in two weeks. These edits may include:

- Typographical errors
- Missing references
- Inclusion of omitted earlier work of relevance to the dissertation but whose omission does not materially affect the conclusions of the thesis.

In Progress - Major Revisions

The student has passed the oral exam, all data are acceptable as presented, no further experimentation is required, but substantial revisions to the text are required. The student must complete revisions in four weeks. These edits may include:

- Inclusion of omitted earlier work of relevance to the dissertation and whose omission may materially affect the conclusions of the thesis.
- Discussion of additional interpretations of the findings

In Progress - Retest

The student must improve existing data with additional experimentation or analysis, or provide additional data. The revised document must be submitted, and the oral exam re-administered in a specific amount of time to be decided by the DEC.

Fail

- Oral and/or written dissertations are unacceptable and are unlikely to be improved
- The student fails the exam only upon a unanimous decision of the DEC.

5. Completion of dissertation

Edits

- When edits (minor or major) to the thesis are required, all DEC members except the DEC Chair shall sign the signature pages of the thesis.
- The student will be provided clear, written instructions on the edits to be made
- The DEC chair shall sign the signatures pages of the dissertation when the required edits have been verifiably completed.

- The printed thesis (at least 5 copies), signature pages, a CD containing a pdf file of the thesis and a newly completed and signed Dissertation Defense Outcome form shall be delivered by hand to the GSBS Office.

Additional Research

- The DEC shall indicate *only in general terms* the additional research/analysis that is required to complete the thesis project.
- The candidate must then develop an appropriate research/analysis strategy to satisfy the requirements of the DEC.
- The DEC chair and Thesis Advisor will review the strategy and approve a realistic schedule for completion of the research/analysis.
- The candidate will then undertake the research/analysis, incorporate the additional material into the thesis dissertation and schedule a new oral defense.
- The candidate may be permitted only 1 extension to the retest schedule upon recommendation of the DEC chair for approval by the Dean.

Post-Completion termination of support

Students who have defended and have only dissertation edits remaining must complete their edits in a timely manner. ISO advises that a period of more than 2 weeks for post-defense thesis edits may trigger external review by the USCIS unless academically justified. Any extension sought to this period for edits must be based on academic reasons and approved by the Dean.

Once this time has expired, the student's stipend is terminated.

International students who have not yet received or who have not applied for authorization for OPT at the time of completion or termination of stipend support lose their visa status and are required to leave the US within 48 hours.

Understanding Critical Milestones for participation in Commencement

Commencement involves several critical milestones and published materials, which introduce specific deadlines. If a student wishes to participate in Commencement (the first Sunday following Memorial Day) each of the following requirements must be satisfied without exception:

- The student must submit their Dissertation Examination Committee selection form to the GSBS office no later than March 1
- The student must submit their Thesis Defense Notification form to the GSBS office no later than March 10
- The student must submit their Thesis Dissertation to their DEC no later than March 15
- The student must successfully defend their Thesis no later than March 31
- If the student wishes to receive a diploma at Commencement, they must complete their Thesis Dissertation edits, have them approved by the DEC Chair and deliver the signed signature pages indicating this approval to the GSBS office no later than May 1

Student transitions

Student's Thesis Advisor Leaves UMMS

Pre-Qualifying Examination

If a student's Thesis Advisor leaves UMass Medical School (UMMS), the student may also choose to withdraw from UMMS and transfer to the Thesis Advisor's new institution. This is arranged by the student, the Thesis Advisor and the new institution.

If the student wishes to remain in the GSBS but has not passed the Qualifying Examination, the student is required to select another Thesis Advisor at UMMS. This selection must be completed within one semester. The student's Graduate Program Director and the Graduate School Dean will assist the student with this selection. Funding during this transition will be paid by the student's current Thesis Advisor.

Post-Qualifying Examination

If a Thesis Advisor leaves UMass Medical School (UMMS) and the student has successfully passed the Qualifying Examination, formed a Thesis Research Advisory Committee (TRAC) and is currently engaged in Thesis Research, the student may:

- Request permission to pursue his/her UMMS/GSBS degree at the Thesis Advisor's new institution. This will require approval of the Thesis Advisor, TRAC, Program Director and Graduate School Dean. The student must continue to meet all GSBS requirements for graduation including meeting GSBS graduation credit requirements, holding annual Thesis Research Advisory Committee meetings on this campus and the dissertation defense must be held on the UMMS campus. The student will register each semester in the GSBS and will be eligible for a UMMS tuition waiver. The student's stipend, health insurance and fees will continue to be the responsibility of the student's Thesis Advisor and will be paid at the current UMMS rate. A sub-contract may be executed annually between UMMS and the new institution to cover these costs. If the student does not require UMMS health insurance, the student must provide proof of health insurance to the Bursar's office.
- Choose to withdraw from UMMS and transfer to the Thesis Advisor's new institution. This is arranged by the student, the Thesis Advisor and the new institution
- Choose to remain at UMMS and select another Thesis Advisor. The details of this will be negotiated among the current Thesis Advisor, the student and the GSBS Dean

PhD students enrolled elsewhere who wish to become matriculated at UMMS

The GSBS at UMMS does not accept transfer students. Students wishing to become matriculated at UMMS must apply for admission, and must receive favorable review from the Admissions Committee. This process could be expedited if needed, such that review, admission and matriculation could occur off-cycle. Students admitted to the program would have to meet all requirements, though some flexibility can be granted on a case-by-case basis regarding waivers for specific course work or for laboratory rotations. Transfer credits will not be given. Matriculated students must pass the UMMS GSBS qualifying exam; this is not negotiable.

Visiting Students

Students who are enrolled in other institutions but are conducting thesis research in the laboratory of UMMS faculty members may seek a Visiting Non-Degree Student Appointment for the purpose of gaining access to UMMS Student Services and Student Health Insurance (purchased by the student, the advisor or another non-GSBS entity).

Visiting Non-Degree Students are appointed annually, and are not subject to GSBS academic requirements. The conditions for Appointment and renewal are:

1. The appointment must commence at the start of an academic term, and continue

through at least two consecutive terms

2. The student must enroll in BBS990 each term (Graduate Research)
3. Total annual stipend level, from all sources, must meet or exceed the GSBS stipend
4. Student Service Fees must be paid by the research advisor or host department
5. The GSBS Program Fee (\$90) must be paid to offset GSBS administration costs
6. The GSBS must receive annual confirmation from the home institution that the student is enrolled in a PhD program and is meeting all academic requirements of the degree program at the home institution.

Complete the Program with a Masters

Purpose

The Master's degree provides a positive exit strategy for PhD students with adequate research accomplishments, who have decided, on their own or in consultation with the TRAC and thesis advisor, that continued doctoral research is no longer in their best interests.

Upon approval by the Dean, the student enters into Master's Degree study for a maximum of sixty days to complete degree requirements, after which the student's stipend is terminated.

Who can petition to complete with a Master's degree?

The Master's degree is a research-based degree requiring a scholarly analysis of research undertaken by the GSBS student at UMMS.

Candidates for a Master degree are, therefore, GSBS PhD students registered in full-time Thesis or Graduate Research, who have passed their Qualifying Examination and who have, upon review by their TRAC, accumulated sufficient research data and/or analysis to justify the development of a Master's dissertation.

Role of the TRAC

The TRAC (which includes the Thesis Advisor) must determine that the body of work produced by the student will allow the composition of a Master's thesis of sufficient scholarly merit to justify the award of a Master's Degree.

The TRAC may conclude that a student may withdraw and seek a Master's degree under any of several circumstances:

- The student directly petitions for withdrawal with a Master's
- The Thesis Advisor requests that the student withdraw with a Master's
- The TRAC, in its ongoing evaluation of the student's progress, may recommend discontinuation of doctoral study and transition to Master's study

Master's Thesis Committee

If the TRAC supports withdrawal with a Master's degree, the student's Program Director will make a recommendation (including the composition of the Master's Thesis Committee) to the GSBS Dean who will approve or disapprove the request.

The Master's Thesis Committee shall comprise three members as follows: the GSBS Dean, Associate Dean, or GSBS Program Director not of the student's program; a member of the student's TRAC; and, one other GSBS faculty member. The Master's Thesis Committee will meet within fourteen calendar days of receipt of the Master's Thesis to evaluate the adequacy of the thesis.

Master's Dissertation

The Master's Thesis must be submitted to the Master's Thesis Committee within 40 days of the student's entering Master's Degree study or the outcome will be "Fail" (see below). The Master's thesis must be a research report based upon research undertaken by the student. The specific format of this report will be determined by the student's Program; however, the research report must include the following sections: Title, Signature Page, Abstract, Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion and References. The report must also include relevant data in Tabular or Figure format.

For specific formatting details see http://umassmed.edu/globalassets/graduate-school-of-biomedical-sciences/forms/gpbs_24_masters_thesis_prep_guide.pdf

The Master's Thesis should embody original work on the part of the student that has been conducted under the supervision of a member(s) of the faculty of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. It should include a review of literature pertinent to the Thesis problem, properly cited using the documentation style followed by the major journals in the field of specialization.

Outcomes

The outcome shall be decided by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Three outcomes are possible

- Pass
- Fail – this grade is unconditional and is not subject to appeal by the student.
- Revise - indicates that edits are necessary.

All edits must be completed within twenty calendar days of notification that revisions are required.

Within fourteen calendar days from receipt of the revised thesis, the Master's Thesis Committee shall determine if the revisions were sufficient to change the original outcome to "Pass". If not, the outcome is changed to "Fail" and no appeal is possible.

Students are permitted only one Revision cycle.

The completed Master's Thesis will be signed by all members of the Thesis Committee and by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Student seeks to change Research Program

In some instances, a student in good academic standing is unable to continue thesis research under the direction of their existing Thesis Advisor. This policy describes the steps that the student and the Graduate School undertake to address this situation. This policy does not address circumstances resulting from the lack of funding support for a student. That situation must be addressed by, and is the responsibility of the thesis research advisor and the chair of the department in which the thesis advisor's laboratory is situated.

Process

If a student in good academic standing finds it impossible to continue their thesis research in their existing laboratory or, if the thesis advisor finds it impossible to continue mentoring the student, the student may request a change of thesis advisor.

A TRAC meeting must be convened to determine whether the student should continue in research, change to Masters or withdraw from the GSBS.

If continuation in research is recommended by the TRAC and approved by the Dean, and the student has not yet secured a new thesis advisor, the student will be supported for up to 8 weeks during their search for a new thesis advisor. The source of that support shall be one of

the following as recommended by the TRAC and approved by the Dean upon review of the Thesis Advisor's research evaluations of the student.

- the original thesis advisor and/or their department plus the GSBS
- the GSBS

Within 2 weeks of their TRAC meeting and with the help of the GSBS and their Program Director, the student must identify two potential thesis research advisors and register for a 4-week research rotation in each of their research programs.

At the end of the first rotation (or earlier where possible), if the first potential advisor does not accept the student as a thesis research student, the student begins the second rotation.

If the student has not secured the commitment of a thesis research advisor upon completion of the two rotations, the student will be dismissed from the GSBS.

Original Thesis Advisor Responsibilities

The thesis advisor will be contacted by the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs and must provide a frank assessment of the circumstances surrounding the student's request to seek a new advisor.

Systematic, frank, periodic research evaluations of the student by the Thesis Advisor will form a key element in the Dean's decision whether or not the Thesis Advisor or the GSBS will support the student during their search for a new thesis advisor.

Student Responsibilities

All students who are seeking a new Thesis Advisor must:

- Register for up to two 4-week research rotations with a GSBS faculty member. A research rotation agreement form must be completed for each rotation.
 - These rotations may not be undertaken with faculty who have previously indicated that they are unable to support the student in thesis research.
 - Prior to registration, the faculty must indicate via an e-mail to the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs their willingness and ability to support this student as their Thesis Advisor, assuming all parties are in agreement to that outcome at the end of the rotation.
- Maintain good academic standing (grades of Pass in the research rotations and curriculum).
- Prior to the last week of the rotation period, meet with the rotation faculty to determine whether there is a mutual agreement for the student to remain in that faculty's lab and that the faculty agrees to become the student's Thesis Advisor.
- If the student determines before the end of the 8 week period that they are unable to commit to the first laboratory for thesis research, the student may begin the second rotation but only if the first rotation advisor evaluates their work as satisfactory.

GSBS Faculty Responsibilities

All faculty who serve as rotation faculty for students who are seeking a new thesis research advisor must:

- Be in a position to support the student in thesis research (student stipend, fees and research expenses)
- Inform the student (prior to the rotation) that they are able and willing (subject to satisfactory progress by the student) to financially support the student in thesis research.

- Undertake an oral review (with the student) of the student's progress at the mid-point and one week prior to the end of the rotation. This review will indicate whether the student meets GSBS and laboratory-specific standards for selection for thesis research support.
- Complete a written evaluation of the student's progress using the Lab Rotation Evaluation instrument.
- Inform the student at least one week prior to the end of the rotation whether they have met the faculty's requirements for selection for thesis research support. If, at any time during and no later than the end of the rotation, the faculty member is unable to support the student in thesis research, the faculty member must release the student.

Thesis Advisor asks student to change labs

Process

This process is identical to the process described for students seeking to change their Thesis Advisor with one exception:

Financial support for the student during the 8 weeks of rotation research will be provided by the original Thesis Advisor and/or their department.

Voluntary Withdrawals

Withdrawal

A student may elect at any time not to complete his or her PhD studies. If sufficient research has been completed to meet the GSBS Master's Degree requirements, the student can petition to leave the school with a Master's Degree in Biomedical Sciences. If not, the student will be "Voluntarily Withdrawn" from the school. Courses that have been completed at the time of withdrawal but not yet graded will be entered into the academic record following grading by the appropriate faculty.

Students in good standing who formally withdraw from the GSBS may be readmitted into the program by petitioning the GSBS Admissions Committee and obtaining the approval of the Dean. If approved, the student will be allowed to return at the beginning of the next semester.

Students who withdraw while on probation may not be reinstated without resubmission of an application for admission. In this case, the student will follow the standard application process.

Students who undertake an extended, absence from classes or research without approval of their course directors, research mentor, program director or the Dean, may be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from the GSBS. Such students will be terminated effective on the last day of documented attendance.

Involuntary Withdrawals, Probation, Suspension

Academic Dismissal

- Students who are not in good academic standing and/or are not making satisfactory academic progress will be reviewed by the Academic Advancement Committee and may be recommended for Academic Dismissal.
- Students who fail to pass the Qualifying Exam will be dismissed from the school.

If academically dismissed, the student will cease to be enrolled and will not be allowed to complete the current semester or to register for future semesters and will receive no further material or notification concerning University affairs. Students will be withdrawn from all courses in which they are enrolled and will receive a grade of Withdraw (W).

Administrative Dismissal

A student may be administratively dismissed from the University for reasons unrelated to unsatisfactory academic performance. Any of the following conditions may warrant administrative withdrawal:

- Failure to comply with administrative requirements such as registration, terms of administrative probation, submission of health certification, etc.
- Forgery, fraud, falsification or unauthorized review of any official University form or document.
- Failure by a student to satisfy an overdue financial obligation to the University consisting of tuition, loans, fees, library charges, parking tickets or any other student charges that are established.

If administratively dismissed, a student will cease to be enrolled and will not be allowed to complete the current semester or to register for future semesters and will receive no further material or notification concerning University affairs. Courses not completed will receive a grade of Withdraw (W).

Process for Administrative Dismissal

The appropriate faculty member, Program Director or university officer specifies in writing to the Dean the grounds for recommending that a student be administratively dismissed from the school.

An attempt must be made by the Dean to resolve the matter by e-mailing the student indicating the proposed recommendation and reasons for dismissal.

If a student does not respond within 14 calendar days of the mailing of said notice, the Dean shall notify the Registrar that the student's status is changed to Administrative Dismissal.

Dismissal for Cause

All Graduate Students must abide to the standards of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and to the GSBS Honor Code. Any student who is found to have committed a serious violation of the GSBS Honor Code is subject to immediate dismissal. The student will receive a letter from the Dean indicating that they have been dismissed for an Honor Code violation.

Students who are dismissed for an Honor Code violation cannot be employed by UMass Medical School. Students on visas who are dismissed for an Honor Code violation will have 15 days post dismissal to return to their country of origin. It is the responsibility of the student to understand the terms and conditions of their stay in the US and to comply with all federal laws regarding their visa.

Probation

Academic

Students who receive a grade of 'C' or 'MP' in any GSBS course will be placed on probation. They will remain on probation until they have successfully remediated the course within a timeframe designated at the time of probation. Students who fail to remediate within that time will be Academically Dismissed.

A student who has received an incomplete in their Qualifying Exam will be placed on probation until they have successfully passed the exam. Students who do not successfully pass the exam will be dismissed.

A student who has received an evaluation of "MP" in any Research Course will be placed on probation until the next evaluation. If the student's next evaluation is "Pass," they will be removed from probation. If a second "MP" is received, the student will be reviewed by the Academic Advancement Committee.

Administrative

A student may be placed on administrative probation by the Dean for actions considered to be Honor Code violations. The length of time for the probation will depend on the actions and on the remediation designed for that action. Failure to meet the requirements of probation will be Administratively Dismissed. Administrative Probation may not be appealed.

Suspension

A student may be suspended from the GSBS for unsatisfactory academic performance or for reasons unrelated to academic performance. Any of the following may warrant suspension:

- Violation of the student Honor Code.
- Failure to comply with administrative requirements such as registration, submission of health certification, etc.
- Forgery, fraud, falsification or unauthorized review of any official University form or document.
- Failure by a student to satisfy an overdue financial obligation to the University consisting of tuition, loans, fees, library charges or any other student charges that are established.

A suspended student may return to the GSBS only at the beginning of an academic semester. In order to be eligible for re-instatement, the student must pay in full the Curriculum Fees for those semesters in which they are suspended.

A suspended student receives no stipend and will not be allowed to complete the current semester. Courses not completed will receive a grade of Incomplete (I).

Appeal

Appeals – Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Policies

An appeal is a formal request for reconsideration of a decision and can be made solely on the grounds that the initial decision resulted from flawed procedure. This document addresses appeals filed by students in regard to GSBS academic or administrative policies. No student shall be penalized for having filed an appeal.

Every effort shall be made to meet all time limits set forth in these procedures. However, with the exception of the time limit for filing an appeal, all time limits may be extended at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School. The time limit for filing an appeal may be extended only in those instances where the Dean finds that there are extreme extenuating circumstances justifying such an extension and that the appeal process will not be unduly burdened as a result.

Students are encouraged to try all other routes for resolving differences before resorting to the filing of an appeal. The student must produce some evidence of procedural error in the initial decision. Final appeal decisions are not subject to further appeals.

First Appeal: The appeal must be made in writing to the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs. The appeal and state (i) the factual and/or procedural basis for the appeal and, (ii) the resolution the student seeks.

Final Appeal: If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, the next and final level of appeal is to the Dean, again in writing. The Dean of the Graduate School shall review this document and either let the decision stand and reject the appeal, find in the favor of the student and approve the appeal or request more details before reaching a final decision.

Dean's Academic Advisory Committee

The Dean's Advisory Committee comprises the chairs of GSBS Assembly standing committees (Admissions, Curriculum, Academic Advancement, Academic Standards, Research Sustainability, Awards and Recognition). The Dean's Advisory Committee may review some

actions, which if upheld, would lead to student dismissal from the GSBS. This committee will review the First Appeal and shall advise the Dean:

- Whether school policy and standards were followed during the appeal.
- Whether the proposed disciplinary action is appropriate.

If policy and standards are not followed, the Dean will reject the findings of the initial review committee and will re-charge the committee to re-examine the case.

If a termination decision is subsequently issued and a student appeals this decision, the Dean shall review the written appeal and will then issue a final action letter.

Conflicts of Interest in Appeals Process

The GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum & Academic Affairs undertakes the investigation and reports the findings to the GSBS Dean. The Dean reviews the report and recommends an action, which is then vetted by a group of senior advisors (Dean's Advisory Committee) to ensure that the action is appropriate. The Dean then reports the outcome (modified or otherwise) to the appellant and their thesis advisor.

If the GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs (DCAA) is in conflict, the GSBS Dean shall appoint a tenured associate Dean in the GSBS who is not in conflict of interest as DCAA designee.

If the GSBS Dean is in conflict, the Dean shall be recused from the appeal and the Dean's designee is the Chair of GSBS Assembly.

If the Chair of GSBS Assembly is in conflict, the responsibility transfers (chain-wise) to GSBS Assembly Vice-Chair, GSBS Assembly Academic Standards Committee Chair or to GSBS Assembly Curriculum Committee Chair.

The DCAA or DCAA designee undertakes the investigative phase of the appeal (interviewing the course directors, teachers and the appellant) and then forwards the findings to the Dean or to the Dean's Designee to determine an action.

The Dean or the Dean's Designee recommends an action which is forwarded to the Dean's Advisory Committee for review.

The advisory committee reviews the recommended action and forwards their recommendation to the Dean or the Dean's Designee. The appellant and the appellant's thesis advisor are then informed of the final decision.

Appeals – University Policies

UMMS Policy

Americans with Disabilities Act

- First appeals for decisions made regarding UMMS compliance with the American with Disabilities Act are made to the UMMS Academic Accommodations Committee
- Final appeals are made to the GSBS Dean
- See UMMS ADA policy for deadlines related to this policy

Affirmative Action

- All appeals related to violations of the UMMS Affirmative Action or Equal Opportunity Policies are made to the University of Massachusetts at Worcester Diversity & Inclusion Office
- This includes violations related to a Hostile Learning environment.

Appeals Grid

Action	First Appeal	Deadlines	Final Appeal	Deadlines
Failing or "C" grade	Corse Director	3 Academic Days from date of grade receipt	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification
Grades – Core Course	Core Course Director Block Leader	3 Academic Days from date of grade receipt	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification
Unsatisfactory Academic Progress	Graduate Program Director or Associate Dean	3 Academic Days from notification	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Research Evaluation • Thesis Advisor Sponsorship • Qualifying Examination Outcome • TRAC Report • Dissertation Defense Outcome 	That GSBS faculty member who gave the initial negative evaluation.	3 Academic Days from notification	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification
Reported Honor Code violation upheld by primary review.	Honor Board	See Honor Code Policy for time-line of Honor board hearings	Dean	3 days from Dean's letter recommending an appropriate action
Waiver of Advanced Topics	Graduate Program Director	3 Academic Days from notification	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification
Administrative Withdrawal	Graduate Program Director or Associate Dean	3 Academic Days from date of dismissal notification	Dean	3 Academic Days from date of first appeal outcome notification

Student Governance Policies

Graduate Student Body Committee

The Graduate Student Body Committee (GSBC) is an official student representative body of the GSBS at the UMMS. Its purpose is to represent the graduate student body to the faculty and administration of UMMS and to the community. Elections to the GSBC are held once a year by the GSBS. Representatives also serve on one of several standing committees or GSBC subcommittees as part of their GSBC responsibilities.

GSBC meetings are held throughout the year. All students are encouraged to attend and present ideas, viewpoints and/or grievances. GSBC notices, a list of representatives, meeting dates and agenda are posted on the GSBS intranet, outside the Student Lounge and on the GSBC bulletin board outside the GSBS office.

Funds to support this organization are provided by the Graduate School Dean on an annual basis and are derived from the Student Services Fee paid by or for all GSBS students in the fall and spring semesters prior to reaching Continuing Registration. The Dean requires that each year 50% of these funds be used by the GSBC for professional development or educational enrichment programs. Expenses are paid for the GSBC by the Graduate School. All expenses must include a GSBC Expense Reimbursement form approved by the GSBC Treasurer.

The GSBC approves the disbursement of student funds for student activities. Any student requesting GSBC funds must provide a written proposal which should include an itemized budget.

Student Trustee

The Student Trustee to the University of Massachusetts Board of Trustees is elected annually by all UMMS students. Elections for the Student Trustee are held in April. All students are eligible to be on the ballot. The Student Trustee's term of office is from July 1 to June 30.

The Student Trustee is expected to:

1. Provide a University of Massachusetts Worcester student's perspective to the Board
2. Keep the students and the University informed of discussions and decisions made by the Board of Trustees;
3. Review tenure and faculty advancement within the University system;
4. Review the allocation of funds throughout the University system;
5. Assist in the selection of honorary degrees;
6. Review the Hospital Management Board meetings; and
7. Work with the Chancellor on selected projects.

The position offers a UMMS student the opportunity to contribute to the decision making process that affects students on the Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, Lowell, and Worcester campuses.

Student Trustee Election Policy

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Board of Trustees under G.L. c. 75, the following shall constitute the minimally required criteria and procedures for the election of a student trustee by the undergraduate and graduate students of each campus of the University of Massachusetts. Each Chancellor is hereby delegated the authority to implement this policy by approving written campus procedures ("campus procedures") consistent with this policy, which procedures shall be subject to approval by the President.

A. Candidate Qualification.

In order to qualify for election as a student trustee, a candidate shall be a full-time student in Good Academic Standing and shall have maintained satisfactory academic progress as stipulated at each individual campus.

B. Election Process.

Elections of student trustees shall be conducted pursuant to campus procedures, which shall specify the details of the student trustee election process, including provisions for nomination, balloting, the conduct of and procedures for elections, and any appeals procedures; provided, however, that:

- Sufficient notice of the nomination and election process shall be provided to all students prior to the election;
- All matriculating undergraduate and graduate students shall be entitled to vote upon presentation of valid identification;
- An elected student trustee must receive the greater vote of students voting in the election.

C. Upon approval of campus procedures, each Chancellor shall be responsible for their enforcement. Each student trustee shall be elected annually. If a student trustee is not elected by May 1st, the office of the position of the student trustee shall be deemed vacant, and no election for such position shall take place prior to September 15th. .

D. Certification.

Each Chancellor shall certify by May 15th to the Secretary of the Board of Trustees that the elected student trustee is qualified and has been duly elected. The Secretary shall transmit such verification to the Secretary of State. No such verification shall be made if a Chancellor determines that a violation of campus procedures has substantially affected the fairness of an election.

E. Terms and Requirements of Office.

The term of office of each elected student trustee shall be for one year, which shall commence on July first following his or her election and shall terminate on June thirtieth of the following year. If at any time during the elected term of office the student trustee ceases to be a full-time student or fails to maintain satisfactory progress, the membership of said student on the Board of Trustees shall be deemed vacant. The Chancellor shall forthwith notify the Secretary of the Board of Trustees of such vacancy, and the Secretary shall transmit such notification to the Secretary of State.

A vacancy in the office of an elected student trustee prior to the expiration of a term shall be filled for the remainder of a term in the same manner as an election to a full term. A student trustee shall be elected for his or her interest in and ability to contribute to the fulfillment of the purposes of the Board of Trustees, and shall be deemed a member at large, charged with the responsibility of serving the best interest of the University. An elected student trustee shall serve without compensation

Non-Academic Policies

Student Academic Break Days

GSBS Students receive 20 academic break days each academic year; these days are in addition to the official state and national holidays.

GSBS Students who have not completed all 1st year requirements may only take these days when Core Course is not in session and must receive approval from their Lab Rotation Faculty.

GSBS Students who have completed all 1st year requirements may take these days any time during the year with the approval of their Thesis Advisor and the Course Coordinator for any courses in session during the requested period of time.

MD/PhD students in years one and two of medical school can take up to 20 academic break days that include the days already assigned to them by the School of Medicine curriculum; i.e. if there are 12 break days during the academic year of August to May, then an additional 8 days are available during the summer lab rotation. These can be taken only with the approval of the lab supervisor.

MD/PhD students in years 3 and 4 of medical school will follow the medical school curriculum calendar.

UMMS Holidays

The GSBS Academic Calendar includes the standard UMass Holidays. These are considered academic holidays for all GSBS students. All graduate students are eligible for these holidays.

Excused Absences

Personal or Family-Related Health Issues

The school understands that personal or family-related health issues can prevent student attendance at class or in the research setting. Extended health-related absence impacts both a student's academic standing and research productivity. The School's concern is to assist the student to remain in good standing.

For extended or repeated absences (>five days), the GSBS requires a doctor's note indicating that the student (or a family member/dependent of the student) has a health-related issue preventing the student's attendance in class or laboratory. First year students should submit the doctor's note to the Graduate School office. Once a student has selected a Program and Thesis Advisor, the note should be submitted to the student's Thesis Advisor.

Bereavement

The Graduate School considers bereavement a valid reason to postpone required course related activities. The School does not have a standard amount of time permitted for immediate family related bereavement and understands that each student's situation is unique. Students experiencing or anticipating bereavement should contact the Graduate School Office and also their Thesis Advisor if engaged in thesis research.

Leave of Absence and Return from Leave of Absence

Students in good standing may request a leave of absence (LOA) for a period not exceeding one year. All leaves of absence or returns from leaves of absence require a meeting with the Dean or Associate Dean for Curriculum & Academic Affairs. Students on probation (academic or administrative) and granted a leave of absence may have conditions of reinstatement set by the Dean, the Thesis Advisor or TRAC.

If the student does not return to school at the end of the LOA period, the student will be withdrawn by the Graduate School.

A student may only return from a LOA on the first day of a semester. For students taking a full year LOA, the return would be in the first semester following the one year LOA period.

Process to request LOA

- Student completes and submits a Request for Leave of Absence Form to the Graduate School for the Dean's approval.
- Student requests a meeting with Dean to review the request.
- If a LOA is requested in the middle of a semester, the student will receive a grade of either Incomplete (I) or Withdraw (W) for all registered courses for that semester. If an Incomplete grade is received, the student must complete that course upon return from the Leave of Absence.
- All assignments that are due during the period of LOA are suspended. LOA students may still submit their assignments during the period of LOA with the understanding that to do so represents their official assignment submission.
- International students must coordinate this leave with Immigration Services. A Leave of Absence may result in the termination of the student visa, necessitating a new visa application for return.

Process to request a return from LOA

- Student completes and submits a Request for Return from Leave of Absence to the Graduate School for the Dean's approval no later than 30 days prior to the anticipated date of Return from Leave of Absence.
- The student must declare their intent to return 30 calendar days before the start of the term of return. The statement of intent must include a research plan, and evidence of support for that plan from their research advisor.
 - Students who have not yet selected a thesis lab and thesis mentor, must identify labs for rotation prior to return. The rotation mentors must indicate they agree to mentor the student and have the resources to support the student in potential Thesis Research.
 - Students who have identified a thesis mentor, or have progressed into thesis research, must include a letter of support from their existing or newly identified thesis advisor indicating that they agree to support the student in their research.
 - Students who have taken LOA while the QE is in progress must successfully complete the QE by the end of the semester of return.
- All requests for return from LOA will be reviewed by the Dean and by the students TRAC (third year and beyond) or by the Academic Advancement Committee for students who have not yet formed a TRAC.
- Student will request a meeting with Dean to review any academic requirements that must be met upon return from the LOA.
- Resolution of suspended assignments must be arranged with the course director immediately upon return from LOA.

Parental Accommodations

We recognize that certain family responsibilities, such as the birth of a child or the care of family members, may require students to take time away from the research setting. Students can request up to six weeks of time during which they will remain enrolled, with all the rights and

privileges of enrolled students, but are absent from the research setting in order to attend to unusually demanding family responsibilities. The student will continue to receive a stipend for up to six weeks plus any unused academic break days. When that time has been used up, the student may opt to return to the research setting or to initiate a formal, un-stipended Leave of Absence. Students on LOA will be unable to return from the LOA until the beginning of the next GSBS semester.

International students must coordinate formal Leave of Absence with Immigration Services. Approval of this leave is dependent on compliance with Immigration Services policies.

Requesting Accommodation for Religious Holidays and Activities

Principle

The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge the religious diversity of GSBS students by providing opportunities, where possible, for accommodation in cases where genuine conflicts exist between students' religious beliefs/practices and educational activities. Such accommodations must honor the primacy of our commitment to the GSBS Mission and not unduly burden faculty or disproportionately affect the general student population involved in the affected educational activity.

Applicability

This policy applies to any GSBS student who, because of religious beliefs or practice, believes that s/he is unable to attend a class, participate in any examination, or in other ways fulfill an educational requirement of any course, research or other required activity.

Policy

The GSBS will attempt to make accommodations that honor the primacy of its commitment to graduate students and which do not unduly burden faculty or disproportionately affect the general student population involved in the affected educational activity. Students who believe they have a need for religious accommodation during any course, or other required educational activity shall notify the relevant course director and instructor as soon as the impending conflict becomes apparent - preferably prior to or at the beginning of the course or other activity. If it is established that there is a legitimate concern, the affected student(s) shall be provided reasonable accommodation where possible, including the opportunity to make up the conflicting activity if this is indicated.

UMMS Student Employment for GSBS Students

GSBS Graduate Students may only receive additional compensation from the University within the guidelines of the Graduate School.

Requirements:

- Student must be in good standing
- Prior approval is received from the Graduate or Thesis Advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Student may work a maximum of 4 hours per week

Incentive Plan for Externally Funded Students

GSBS students who are awarded competitive, externally funded individual fellowships will receive the greater of the following two options:

- The GSBS standard stipend plus 20% of the stipend component of the awarded fellowship.
- The fellowship stipend.

In the former case, the incentive will be paid either by the student's Thesis Advisor or by the Graduate School, depending on the source of the student's pre-fellowship stipend.

Following completion or termination of the award, the student's stipend will return to the standard GSBS stipend.

Students supported by training grants, are not eligible for this incentive program.

The student's health insurance and fees will be paid by the funding agency (to the extent that health insurance and fees are covered in the fellowship) and/or by the student's Thesis Advisor or the Graduate School, depending on the source of the student's pre-fellowship stipend.

Student Travel for Presentations; Student Publication Costs

Faculty Financial Support Guidelines:

Financial support for student travel for posters and presentations at meetings, or for publication costs, will be provided by the GSBS faculty with whom the work was performed, whether the thesis advisor or the research rotation faculty. Students should arrange in advance with the faculty for any financial support they will need to attend a meeting or for publication costs. Final approval of support is contingent on the student's work being accepted for presentation at the meeting.

Once students have officially selected a thesis advisor, that faculty is responsible for covering all thesis advisor approved incidental research communication costs of the student such as computing or analysis needs, publication costs, travel to meetings and meals (standard UMMS reimbursement rates apply). If the faculty is unable to cover these costs they should be covered by the advisor's primary department (organizational unit receiving and administering the advisor's research funds).

The Riccio-GSBS Travel Award Fund

In July of 2013, a GSBS Student Travel Fund was established through a very generous donation of one of our alumni Dr. Diane M. Riccio (2003) and her husband Mr. Daniel J. Riccio Jr. The purpose of the Fund is to provide students from UMass Medical School Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences with ongoing travel expense support to attend national and international scientific conferences.

¹Eligible students seeking support should contact the GSBS Dean with the following information:

- Intended Conference Title, Dates, Sponsor and venue
- Registration costs
- Registration confirmation details (when available)
- Intended Title, Authors and Abstract of the student presentation (poster or stage).
- Name of the thesis mentor supporting the research and conference participation.
- A brief nomination letter from the Thesis Advisor explaining how this conference will advance the student's scientific and professional growth and why they seek support from the fund.

Two solicitations occur annually – one in March and one in October,

¹ Eligibility requires that the student has passed their Qualifying Examination, is in good academic standing, is making satisfactory academic progress and is actively engaged in Thesis Research or Graduate Research under the direction of a GSBS-approved Thesis Advisor. A student is eligible to receive only one Riccio-GSBS Travel award.

A ²committee of senior GSBS faculty will review all requests and up to 4 qualified students per year may receive subsidized support.

The bases for selection include:

- Scientific merit
- Financial need
- Professional development impact potential

Funds will be distributed upon confirmation of registration.

Student Insurances

Student Health Insurance Plan & Health Fee

Your health care, while you are a student at the University of Massachusetts Worcester, is covered by two separate payment systems: the Student Health Insurance Plan and the Student Health Fee.

Student Health Insurance

University Health Plans Web Site

<http://www.universityhealthplans.com/intro/UmassWorcester.html>

The Student Health Insurance Plan for the University of Massachusetts Worcester students is underwritten by Blue Cross Blue Shield Student Health Insurance Plan and is managed by University Health Plans. Participation in the Student Health Insurance Plan is required for all full-time students unless they are covered under another comparable plan. All students must either enroll or waive the University's health insurance plan each year. Student Health Insurance is effective until 8/31 of each Academic Year. Students who take a leave of absence during the academic year will have continuous coverage until 8/31 of that academic year. All insurances will terminate on that date. Please refer to the Student Health Insurance Plan Brochure for complete details of this plan.

- Massachusetts state law requires all students to carry health insurance to cover hospitalizations, emergency room care, outpatient\specialty care, and diagnostic testing. The University offers one health insurance plan for your consideration. If you plan to arrange health coverage through another company, you need to waive the insurance at enrollment time.
- The student health insurance plan covers most services received outside of Student Health Services including: all specialty care as long as there is a referral signed by your primary care physician (PCP), most medications with a small co-pay for generic medications or a slightly higher co-pay for brand name medications, and laboratory and other diagnostic tests. Refer to the student health plan brochure for more details and a summary of the benefits.
- All students may elect to have their immediate family (spouse, children) covered under the student health plan at an additional cost.

Student Health Fee

The Student Health Fee covers your primary care needs through the Student Health Services division of Family Medicine Service, on campus or on one of the three separate off-campus sites. The Student Health Fee also includes the on-campus Student Counseling Services.

² The committee shall review eligible applicants and will comprise two faculty from the GSBS Leadership and two GSBS program directors. The committee will make their recommendations to the GSBS Dean who will then inform the awardees.

The student health fee is different from the student health insurance plan. This fee is mandatory for all students whether they have the student health insurance plan or their own insurance. Half of this fee goes to Student Counseling Services and the other half goes to SHS. This half helps pay for required immunizations, infectious disease titers, paperwork, administrative support, and all primary care visits without a co-pay. The student insurance plan does not cover any PCP visits, so the health fee covers the cost of all of these visits. The students have four different sites from which to choose within the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health to receive their primary care services.

Student Health Services

Location: The Student Health Service (SHS) is part of the Family Medicine office and is located in the 1st floor of the Benedict Building on the university campus

Student Health Clearance requirement

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) requires all students admitted to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences to complete the Student Health Clearance process prior to matriculation. This policy was developed to decrease risk of transmission of potential infectious agents, and it is part of each student's professional responsibility to maintain this clearance throughout his/her educational experience at UMMS. Student Health Services (SHS) is responsible for tracking this clearance process for all students and notifying students who need updated clearance information.

Any student who fails to comply with SHS requests to complete the clearance process by the first day of class will be reported to the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and the Registrar's Office for further action including suspension of registration which would result in being withheld from all classes and laboratory work.

Website: <http://umassmed.edu/studenthealth/index.aspx>

Student Dental Insurance

The Student Dental Insurance for the University of Massachusetts Worcester students is Delta Dental DHMO (known as "**Delta Care**" on their website) and is managed by University Health Plans. Please refer to the following websites for complete details of this plan.

Website: http://www.universityhealthplans.com/letters/letter.cgi?school_id=161

All GSBS students will be offered enrollment each academic year in dental insurance by the Graduate School office and the premium for the insurance is paid by the Graduate School for the student. For questions about dental insurance, contact the Graduate School office at 508-856-4135.

Student Dental Insurance is effective from 9/01 thru 8/31 of each academic year. Students who take a leave of absence during the academic year will have continuous coverage thru 8/31 of that academic year.

Health Insurance Reimbursement

Graduate students who can provide proof of insurance coverage may opt to waive the Student Health Insurance that is offered as part of the graduate student compensation package. A graduate student may receive funds from the university for his/her coverage from a private health/hospitalization insurance plan up to the cost of the UMMS Student Health Insurance Plan. The funds disbursed will be no more than the amount of Student Health Insurance Premium for that year, and will only be disbursed at the end of the fiscal year. The funds disbursed are considered taxable income.

For students who have not yet selected a Thesis Advisor or who are funded through the Graduate School, this information should be submitted to the Graduate School office.

For students who have selected a Thesis Advisor and who are funded through that Thesis Advisor, this information should be submitted to the Department/Program Administrator. The Proof of Coverage letter must be submitted with this form. A "Reimbursement Voucher" is prepared by the funding department and sent to Accounts Payable for payment.

The reimbursement is processed at the end of the academic year, usually in July or August. Please see the reimbursement form (GSBS50) for instructions.

Student Support Services

Student Counseling Service

Website: <http://www.umassmed.edu/psychiatry/studentcounseling.aspx>

The Student Counseling Service (SCS) provides evaluation counseling, psychotherapy, medication management, assistance with stress management, and educational programs on emotional well being for graduate, medical, and nursing students. People come to SCS seeking personal growth and greater self-understanding, as well as healthier psychological functioning. Many students using the service want to cope more effectively with difficult or stressful academic situations, while others seek counseling to deal with broader life issues. Some students come because of more serious, troublesome, and/or chronic difficulties in their lives.

Center for Academic Achievement

Website: <http://www.umassmed.edu/oea/center-for-academic-achievement>

This program is open to all students at UMMS. Services include academic counseling, tutoring and a series of learning seminars which focus on test-taking, reading, memorization, communication and synthesizing information. The GSBS Associate Dean for Curriculum & Academic Affairs and staff of the Center for Academic Achievement works with individual students to identify learning needs which can be met through tutorials designed with learning specialists, educational psychologists and graduate students. The academic achievement program at UMMS is oriented toward prevention of academic problems through systematic needs assessment, mobilization of resources and continuity of the support experience.

University Policies and Student Rights & Responsibilities

Access, Solicitations, Demonstrations

The University of Massachusetts recognizes the rights of members of the University community to freedom of assembly and speech, and strongly believes in fostering discourse and the free exchange of ideas at the University. However, as a matter of law and University policy, these rights and interests are restricted, and must be exercised on University property in a manner consistent with the mission and operation of the University and the rights of other members of the University community. Demonstrators will be held accountable for any actions which violate University Policy and Regulations.

Guidelines include but are not limited to:

- Demonstrations may not include material that will disrupt or interfere with instructional activities, other University business and campus events;
- Demonstrations may not include actual or threats of physical violence, or other forms of harassment, or destruction of University, other public or private property;
- Demonstrations must not interference with free entry to or exit from University facilities and free movement by individuals; and
- Demonstrations may not interfere with the rights of other members of the University community to freedom of speech and assembly, and other rights.
- Demonstrations are limited to appropriate public forums, which do not include, among other locations, faculty and administrative offices, classrooms and other instructional facilities. (Public forums are locations which by tradition or policy are available for public assembly and speech – such as a student union lobby where students have traditionally gathered to debate issues.) To the extent that a public forum exists within a University building, any demonstrations within that forum shall take place only during the building's normal operating hours.
- Where appropriate, the University shall endeavor to maintain open lines of communication with demonstrators and to provide opportunities for discussion of matters in dispute so long as the demonstrators act consistent with University policy and the rights of others. However, as a general rule, the University shall not negotiate with individuals who occupy any University facility, or with associated demonstrators, while any such occupation continues, and shall never negotiate within an occupied facility.

These guidelines are intended to support, not supplant, existing University policy. They apply to all members of the University community, including undergraduates, graduate students and employees, as well as guests and visitors. Please see Human Resource Policy #5000.

Access to UMass Medical School Facilities

1. UMMS facilities may be utilized to provide care and treatment of patients, to conduct research and to teach and train health-care and research professionals. In support of these goals, the facilities may be used by the following:
 - a. Recognized internal organizations for purposes which promote the health-related, educational, research and service and development goals of the organization; and
 - b. Non-Profit outside organizations which are public service or health related sponsored by a recognized internal organization and approved by the Associate Vice Chancellor for University Relations. Such sponsorships of outside organizations shall not interfere with programs or activities conducted by UMMS.

2. A recognized organization must send a request, in writing, to the Office of Public Affairs thirty days in advance of the event or program for permission to use the facilities if an outside organization is being sponsored and will participate in the event. The outside organization must be identified in the request and its proposed participation described.
3. Commercial use of UMMS facilities is prohibited. Please note that the entire UMMS Policy on "ACCESS AND SOLICITATION" can be located via the intranet on the UMMS Human Resources website.

Alcohol Policy

All members of the University of Massachusetts community shall abide by the laws of the Federal Government, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the regulations of the Alcohol Beverages Control Commission and local ordinances and regulations relative to the possession, consumption, distribution, transportation, manufacture and sale of alcoholic beverages or products, on land or premises owned or occupied by the UMMS. (Trustee Document T97-112) Students must also be in compliance with Alcoholic Beverages on Campus policy 1.2.01 from the Vice Chancellor of Operations (copy of this policy is available in the Office of Student Affairs).

Alcohol can be consumed on the campus of the University of Massachusetts at Worcester only by students of legal drinking age at University-sponsored student events in designated areas. Any student-sponsored event that includes alcoholic beverages must be reviewed and approved through the Executive Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance. Student sponsored events shall prohibit under-age drinking, excessive drinking, and shall stress safety and individual accountability by those who choose to drink. No advertisement, sale or promotion of alcoholic beverages of any kind is permitted on campus. Outdoor public drinking on premises owned, occupied or controlled by the University of Massachusetts is forbidden, except at University-sponsored events in designated areas. The University will take disciplinary action against any student who violates federal, state, city or University regulations.

In summary:

- There is no advertisement involving alcohol for this event.
- You cannot sell individual drinks (if you hire a caterer, the caterer may sell individual drinks using their license; however, you still may not).
- You cannot serve anyone who is underage.
- You cannot serve anyone who is intoxicated or on the way to getting there.
- You must also provide and display equivalent non-alcoholic drinks (for example; cans of soda if you're offering cans of beer, or pitchers of non-alcoholic beverage if you're offering pitchers of beer. You cannot set up a situation where the beer is free and to get a non-alcohol drink the student has to purchase it out of a machine.)
- You MUST stay in the designated area for the event. Students CANNOT take alcohol outside of the designated area (i.e. NO drinking outside the building or in the lobby or in the halls).

Further, the University will provide educational programs for the campus community relative to the dangers of alcohol use/abuse. These programs will be provided by the academic departments as part of required courses in all three Schools. The Student Health Service and Counseling Service will provide information about counseling and treatment programs for individuals in need of such intervention.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse (Summary of Legal Sanctions)

Specific findings of alcohol impairments as identified by federal studies have been compiled and distributed to all members of the campus community to meet the requirements of the Drug-Free

Schools and Communities Act. In addition to this policy, other University of Massachusetts policies which relate to inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs remain in force. (see AIMS policy).

Local, state and federal laws make illegal use of drugs and alcohol serious crimes. Conviction can lead to imprisonment, fines and assigned community service. Courts do not modify life prison sentences in order for convicted persons to attend college or medical school or to continue their jobs. A felony conviction for such an offense can prevent you from entering many fields of employment or professions.

Cities and towns in Massachusetts prohibit public consumption of alcohol and impose fines for violation. The Metropolitan District Commission also prohibits public consumption of alcohol in its parks.

Massachusetts laws prohibit sale or delivery of alcohol beverages to persons under 21 with a fine of up to \$2,000 and six months imprisonment, or both. Misrepresenting one's age or falsifying an identification to obtain alcoholic beverages is punishable by a fine of \$300. First conviction of driving under the influence of alcohol has a \$1,000 fine, one-year revocation of driver's license, up to two years in prison, and mandatory alcohol rehabilitation.

Massachusetts has criminal penalties for use of controlled substances, or drugs, with penalties varying with the type of drug. In general, narcotic and addictive drugs with a high potential for abuse have heavier penalties.

Possession of drugs is illegal without valid authorization. While penalties for possession are generally not as great as for manufacture and distribution of drugs, possession of a relatively large quantity may be considered distribution. Under both state and federal laws, penalties for possession, manufacture and distribution are much greater for second and subsequent convictions. Many laws dictate prison terms and the full minimum term must be served.

Massachusetts makes it illegal to be in a place where heroin is kept and to be "in the company" of a person known to possess heroin. Anyone in the presence of heroin at a private party or dormitory suite risks a serious drug conviction. Sale and possession of "drug paraphernalia" is illegal in Massachusetts.

Persons convicted of drug possession under state or federal law are ineligible for federal student grants and loans for up to one year after the first conviction, five years after the second; the penalty for distributing drugs is loss of benefits for five years after the first conviction, ten years after the second, permanently after the third conviction.

Under federal law, distribution of drugs to persons under age 21 is punishable by twice the normal penalty with a mandatory one year in prison; a third conviction is punishable by mandatory life imprisonment. These penalties apply to distribution of drugs in or within 1,000 feet of a college or school. Federal law sets greatly heightened prison sentences for manufacture and distribution of drugs, if death or serious injury results from use of the substance.

Drug-Free Schools and Community Act Amendments of 1989

The University of Massachusetts, in accordance with both federal legislation and existing University policy, is committed to providing a drug-free, healthful and safe environment for all faculty, staff and students.

The Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989, Public Law 101-226, require that as a condition of receiving funds or any other form of financial assistance under any federal program, an institution of higher education adopt and implement a program to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance, and the unauthorized possession or use of alcoholic beverages on the University of

Massachusetts Medical School campus or as part of any University activity or business off University premises is prohibited. If it is determined that a violation of this policy has occurred, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, expulsion of students and referral for prosecution may result as deemed appropriate. Applicable legal sanctions for the unlawful possession or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol are summarized in the following section.

The University recognizes alcohol and drug dependency as an illness and a major health problem. Alcohol is the number one drug problem in this country and on campuses. Drinking alcohol has acute effects on the body. It impairs judgment, vision, coordination and speech and often leads to dangerous risk-taking behavior. These may include drunken driving, injuries and serious accidents. Nearly half of all accidental deaths, suicides and homicides are alcohol-related. The misuse of alcohol is often involved in violent behavior, acquaintance rape, unintended pregnancies, and the exposure to sexually transmitted diseases. Long-term excessive drinking and drug use can lead to a wide variety of health problems in many different organ systems.

The use of drugs and alcohol can cause physical and psychological dependence. They can interfere with memory, sensation and perception. Drugs impair the brain's ability to synthesize information. Regular users of drugs develop tolerance and physical dependence often experienced by withdrawal symptoms. The psychological dependence occurs when the drug taking becomes central to the user's life.

Students with substance abuse problems are encouraged to use the full range of educational and treatment services provided by the University Health Services at 508-856-2818.

Americans with Disabilities Act

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) a disability is defined as an impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual; a record of such an impairment; or, the perception that one has such an impairment.

The University of Massachusetts Medical School is firmly committed to providing full access to individuals with disabilities. In so doing, UMMS intends to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, EEOC guidelines, and Human Resources policies. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that disabled applicants, students, staff, faculty, visitors, volunteers, and vendors do not experience discrimination in any way. The Equal Opportunity Office, working in conjunction with the Department of Human Resources and the School Services Office, develops policies, procedures and training programs to ensure UMMS complies with all applicable federal and state regulations relating to individuals with disabilities. In addition, the Affirmative Action Committee evaluates policies regarding employees with disabilities, assesses adherence to these policies and makes recommendations for improvement to the Chancellor.

The Medical School, the Graduate School of Nursing, and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences consider all applicants who meet the admissions requirements, and will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations. It is UMMS policy to comply with all the provisions of Chapter 15 1 C, Section 2B of the Massachusetts General Laws, as well as with all other applicable federal and state laws. Students who avail themselves of the provisions of this section will not be treated with prejudice or adversity. The School Services Office, working in collaboration with the Equal Opportunity Office, shall coordinate all student disability issues for the schools.

Deborah Harmon Hines, PhD, serves as the ADA Student Coordinator. All inquires should go directly to Dr. Hines (508-856-2444). Once admitted, the student is responsible for notifying the Student ADA Coordinator of their disability, requesting academic accommodations in writing and providing appropriate documentation of the disability. A student may request accommodations at any time during matriculation. All requests for accommodations are reviewed and acted on

by the Academic Accommodations Committee (see below). It is always the student's choice whether or not to accept any recommended accommodation. Confidentiality is a strict practice of the Academic Accommodations Committee. Accommodations are not granted retroactively.

Academic Accommodations Committee

After receiving and reviewing all requests for accommodations, the Academic Accommodations Committee (AAC) designs, implements and monitors individual accommodation plans for students with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Academic Accommodations Committee designs and monitors individual accommodation plans for all students with disabilities and makes accommodations in compliance with ADA. For more information visit: <http://www.umassmed.edu/schoolservices/ada.aspx>.

Appropriate Treatment of Students

In 2004, the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS), developed a policy and complaint procedure to help ensure the appropriate treatment of students (ATS) in the School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Graduate School of Nursing and Graduate Medical Education.

As a student or post-doctoral scholar, you should expect to be treated with respect, and to learn and work in a safe environment. All individuals who interact with students and post-doctoral scholars are expected to behave in accordance with the ATS policy, which applies to faculty, administrators, nurses, house staff, postdoctoral students, technicians, other learners, and other volunteer or paid staff.

Inappropriate treatment occurs when behavior shows disrespect for the dignity of others and unreasonably interferes with the learning process. It can take the form of physical punishment or threat, sexual harassment, psychological cruelty, and discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or veteran status.

Please note that separate school-wide policies are in place covering sexual harassment, consensual amorous relationships, and discrimination based on protected-class status.

For more information, including definitions, policies and procedures for reporting suspected inappropriate treatment, students and post-doctoral scholars are encouraged to contact the Diversity and Inclusion Office (DIO) located at H1-728, 508-856-2179.

The DIO is responsible for coordination and monitoring of all ATS complaints. DEOO also is responsible for training faculty members to serve as resource persons for students and post-doctoral scholars with ATS-related inquiries and concerns, and for ongoing oversight and periodic review of the training process.

Clery Act

The Clery Act is a federal law originally known as the Campus Security Act that requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. It is named in memory of 19-year-old Lehigh University freshman Jeanne Clery.

A requirement of this act is that all schools must disclose and report crime statistics on campus and in unobstructed public areas immediately adjacent to or running through the campus on an annual basis. This information is then reported to the Department of Education and can be accessed via the Office of Postsecondary security statistical Web Site at

<http://ope.ed.gov/campussafety> (The name of our school on that Web site is University of Massachusetts Medical School - Worcester.)

Schools must also publish an annual security report that contains three years of campus crime statistics and certain security policy statements including sexual assault policies which assure

basic victims' rights, the law enforcement authority of campus police and where students should go to report crimes. This report is available by request through the Office of Public Safety

<http://www.umassmed.edu/publicsafety>

Consensual Amorous Relationships (Guidelines For)

The University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) strives to provide a friendly and supportive working and learning environment for its employees and students. As well, it must promote an environment where all work/academic decisions are made professionally and fairly, unencumbered by the effect of personal relationships. Nevertheless, in any work or academic setting, it is possible - even likely - that consensual romantic relationships may develop. UMMS recognizes this potential, particularly in an academic health care milieu where individuals work closely together in circumstances that are frequently demanding and complex.

There are certain potential risks inherent in all workplace romantic relationships between individuals in unequal positions within the institution, such as faculty /student. Such relationships may compromise or be perceived as compromising the fairness and impartiality of a faculty member's conduct toward the student or to others in subordinate positions. Further, there is potential impact on the learning environment and potential damage to the supervisory individual's credibility and standing, within the department and within the organization as a whole.

Given the power imbalance between the two individuals, the relationship may in fact be far less voluntary for the subordinate than it appears to the supervisory individual. Also, circumstances may change and conduct that was previously welcomed by the subordinate may in fact become unwanted and unwelcome. Initial consent by both parties to the relationship may not prevent later charges of sexual harassment by the subordinate. Legally, the supervisory individual and the organization could be challenged if a consensual amorous relationship results in allegations of sexual harassment or hostile work or learning environment by the subordinate or by any others in the department who feel they themselves have been treated unfairly as a result of the relationship.

The UMMS policy with regard to faculty and students is:

- A UMMS faculty member should not date, or have a romantic relationship with, a student over whom s/he has a direct or indirect teaching/advisory/ mentoring/evaluative responsibility, or over whom there may be a perception of such responsibility.
- A faculty member with questions/concerns should consult promptly with his/her department chair, or may choose to consult with other individuals such as his/her dean, the Vice Provost for Faculty Administration, the Vice Provost for Research, or the Associate Vice Chancellor for Diversity and Equal Opportunity. A student with concerns should consult with his/her Dean, Advisor or the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Office.
- The Dean (or designee) will recommend a resolution in consultation with DEOO.

Students and faculty are encouraged to contact the Diversity and Inclusion Office (508-856-2179) with any questions about these guidelines. (April 2006)

Criminal Background Checks (CBC)/ Criminal Offender Records Information Checks (CORI) Checks

As an applicant, you may have been subject to a criminal background check (CBC). A repeat CBC may be required for participation in certain activities, by one of our clinical affiliates, or by the School. If a subsequent CBC reveals some contact with the criminal justice system since the time of the initial CBC, the school will review that history and the student's response. The school has a process which governs these matters.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in a manner which is appropriate for their particular work environment. For example, shoes with open toes are acceptable in the classroom but not in the laboratory setting.

Electronic Mail Use Guidelines

The University makes e-mail facilities available to both students and staff. Campus E-Mail Users are encouraged to use these communications resources to share knowledge and information in furtherance of the University's missions of education, research, and public service. Students are free to use e-mail for personal use. E-mail is made available to employees for the purpose of conducting University-related business, but occasional social/personal use is allowed providing it does not interfere with an employees' job function. An employee's university e-mail address, however, should not be considered the same as a personal e-mail address. Violation of e-mail policies and guidelines may result in disciplinary action.

Please review University policy located on the Information Services website.

[http://inside.umassmed.edu/uploadedFiles/policies/Vol7-1 Information Services and Technology/070102email%5b1%5d.pdf](http://inside.umassmed.edu/uploadedFiles/policies/Vol7-1%20Information%20Services%20and%20Technology/070102email%5b1%5d.pdf)

The University cannot control the content of electronic mail. If an individual receives electronic mail that they consider harassing, threatening or offensive, they should promptly contact one of the following departments; Information Services, Equal Employment Office, Human Resources and/or the Graduate School office.

Hazing

University of Massachusetts Medical School in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19 (Jan. 5, 1988) does not tolerate any form of hazing. Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18 and 19 contain the following:

Section 17

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term 'hazing' as used in this section and in Sections 18 and 19, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section 17 and is at the scene of such a crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law endorsement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student organization, a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and Section 17 and 18 to unaffiliated student organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student organizations.

In addition, hazing is not compatible with the School's Technical Standards for Admission, Continuation and Graduation. Students accused of hazing will be reviewed by a Technical Standards Subcommittee and may be subject to sanctions by the Medical School up to and including dismissal. (See Honor Code).

Identification of Students

Identification cards are issued to all students at the time of registration during the first year and should be worn at all times. Students may be asked to present their Identification Card for identification by UMMS Police, library personnel, cafeteria personnel, etc. It is important to report a lost or stolen card to the UMass Police as well as the parking and Access Control Office at 6-5934. Lost cards can be replaced by the Parking and Access Control Office. Cards must be returned when the student leaves the school. Cards temporarily assigned at rotation sites must be returned once the student is no longer participating in a rotation at that site.

International Travel under the auspices of the University of Massachusetts Medical School

All students planning international travel must [contact Immigration Services](#) at least 30 days before intended travel to schedule an appointment. In the event of unplanned, emergency international travel, students should [contact Immigration Services](#) immediately.

In addition to any requirements of Immigration Services, students must also complete the form: [Notification of International Travel for GSBS Student on Visa](#) (GSBS48).

For additional information regarding international travel see:

https://www.umassmed.edu/hr/immigration_services/immigration-visa-travel/travel-visa-information/

<https://www.umassmed.edu/international-support-services/>

International Travel Insurance

<https://www.umassp.edu/hr/international-travel-insurance>

Jury Duty

It is not unusual for students residing in Worcester County to be summoned to serve as trial jurors. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has a statewide one-day/one-trial system. Under this system, trial jurors serve either one day or, if selected, one trial. After juror service has been satisfied that juror is disqualified from serving again for a minimum of three years.

Students are NOT automatically excused from jury duty. Most jurors called do not have to serve more than 3 days (the majority fulfill this obligation in one day). If you are selected for a jury pool for a longer period of time, you will have the opportunity to explain how this may constitute a hardship to the judge who may or may not excuse you from that trial. The Graduate Office can assist students by providing them with a letter of support if needed.

Grand Jury or Federal jury assignments do not fall under this one-day/one-trial umbrella. If you received a summons for Grand Jury or Federal Jury duty, contact the Graduate School Office

for assistance. Students should carefully read all materials they receive with their summons to service, which contains helpful information about confirming, postponing, rescheduling, or relocating service, and can address many of the most frequently asked questions. Jury duty is an important legal obligation, and those who fail to respond are subject to criminal prosecution.

Students who must miss class in order to fulfill their jury service requirement should notify each of their course coordinator of the summons and make arrangements to complete any missed work.

If you have any questions about jury duty, including confirming, postponing, rescheduling, or limiting your service, contact the Office of the Jury Commissioner (1-800-THE-JURY/1-800-843-5879). Further information can be found on the Office of Jury Commissioner's website at www.massjury.com.

Logos, Usage of UMass Medical School Logos

Use of the school logo or name on t- shirts, totes, baseball caps etc. is generally "not allowed" as it is protected by copyright and trademark rules which can be found at https://www.umassp.edu/sites/umassp.edu/files/content/policies/board/fiscal-admin/Trademark_and_Licensing_Policy.pdf

Patient Rights under HIPAA

In addition to information concerning the HIPAA Privacy, Confidentiality of Patient-Related Information and Security Regulations found in this Handbook, students must read and be familiar with the "UMass Memorial Health Care / UMass Memorial Medical Center Joint Notice of Information Practices" brochure distributed to all patients at the time of their first clinical visit, students must also read and be familiar with the privacy notices of all other clinical sites visited for clinical experience. HIPAA requires that written notice be presented to patients to inform them, among other things, of their privacy rights and to make them aware of how the Medical Center and its affiliates can use and disclose their protected health information. It also includes a point of contact for answering questions or receiving complaints.

Patient rights afforded by HIPAA include:

- Right to Access (inspect/copy) Designated Record Set.
- Right to Amend Designated Record Set.
- Right to Accounting of Disclosures of Protected Health Information.
- Right to File a Complaint regarding alleged Privacy Violations.
- Right to Request Restrictions on Uses and Disclosures of Protected Health Information.
- Right to Confidential Communications.
- Right to the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Right to Revoke Authorizations for the disclosure of Protected Health Information.

Confidentiality of Patient Information - Related Materials Used in Teaching

Policy Statement: Faculty, students and staff are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of information about, and materials related to, patients at UMass Memorial, its affiliates and other clinical sites, and must abide by the privacy and security policies and procedures of all clinical facilities visited during clerkship assignments. The UMass Memorial Notice of Privacy Practice information is available at:

<http://www.umassmemorial.org/systemip.cfm?id=2782>. This Policy applies to the use of such information and material in educational activities outside of the clinical care setting, such as grand rounds, lectures, patient reports and clinical case correlations taking place within UMass Medical School, or outside UMass Memorial or other clinical sites.

We are required by law to keep confidential and secure patients' "protected health information." Protected Health Information (PHI) has two components: (1) one or more personal identifiers; and (2) information about or relating to a person's health condition, provision of health services, or payment for health services.

In these educational settings, patient-related materials, such as medical records, radiographs, or pathology specimens, may be used freely for educational purposes only if all personal identifiers are removed. This may require concealing or otherwise eliminating patient names and/or other identifiers. When materials which in any way identify patients are used for educational purposes outside of the clinical care setting, an Authorization for the Disclosure of Protected Health Information must be signed by the patient(s) prior to the presentation.

What elements are considered Identifiers? The following is a list of data elements that are considered to be personal identifiers under HIPAA:

- Name;
- All geographic subdivisions smaller than a State, to include street, address, city or town, county, precinct, zip code, geocode, and three-digit zip code tracts where less than 20,000 people live;
- Names of relatives and employers;
- All elements of dates (except year), to include birth date, admission date, discharge date, and date of death;
- Telephone and fax numbers;
- E-mail addresses;
- Social security number;
- Medical record number;
- Health plan beneficiary number;
- Account number;
- Certificate/license number;
- Any vehicle or other device serial number;
- Web URL;
- Internet Protocol (IP) address;
- Finger or voice prints;
- Photographic images; and
- Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code.

Also please note that, while the age of a person in years is generally not considered to be an identifier, ages of 90 and over must be aggregated to a category of 90+ to avoid identification of individuals within this population. Other demographic information, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and marital status are not identifiers.

A Consent for Educational Use of Visual Images form, i.e., photographs or videos that reveal patient identity, must be signed before these images are obtained and an Authorization for the Disclosure of Protected Health Information form must be signed before the images are

presented. UMMS Consent for Educational Use forms are available from the Office of Public Affairs & Publications at 508-856-2000. UMMC Authorization for the Disclosure of Protected Health Information forms are available through the UMMC Health Information Management Department at 508-334-5700, Option 1. Other clinical sites will require patient signature on similar forms.

As with all matters regarding patients' confidentiality, all participants attending educational programs and activities are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of patient-related information.

As a prerequisite to accessing patients' protected health information held by UMass Memorial and its affiliates, all students must complete the UMass Memorial security training course known as the "E-Learning 4 U HIPAA Privacy & Security Module" and sign a UMass Memorial Confidentiality / User Access Agreement as noted in the HIPAA training section of this Handbook. Other clinical sites may have similar requirements.

Breaches of Protected Patient Information:

This policy establishes a process for addressing the handling of all alleged breaches of patients' confidentiality. All alleged breaches will be investigated, documented and acted upon. The facility where the alleged breach occurred will be engaged in the investigation as appropriate. Disciplinary action will be implemented based on the severity of the breach and will consider any prior breaches involving the individual in the allegation. Sanctions may be applied up to and including dismissal from the Graduate School.

Issues of Confidentiality

All members of the academic community, including students and faculty, are encouraged to bring their concerns regarding confidentiality in the use of patient information and medical records in teaching to the attention of individual faculty members, the course directors and/or the GSBS Dean. The Director of Patient Care Services, Susan Tarrant, will also be available as a contact for students who wish to report on issues of confidentiality in the use of patient records in teaching.

Other resources available to discuss confidentiality issues are the UMass Memorial Privacy Officer at 508-334-8096, the UMMC Privacy and Information Security Hotline at 508-334-5551, the UMass Memorial Health Care Privacy and Information Security e-mail account at privacyandsecurity@ummhc.org, as well as the UMMS Office of Compliance and Review at 508- 856-6547 or by e-mail account at compliance@umassmed.edu or by calling the UMMS Confidential Reporting Line at 508-856-6432.

Snow and Other Weather Emergencies

Notification

For up-to-date information about snow cancellations, call the GSBS weather line at 508 856 8111. Decisions regarding delays or school closures will be made no later than 6 a.m. of the morning in question.

Security 508-856-3311 will also be notified about current school delays or closures.

Media sources are:

- WSRS/WTAG Radio
- NEWS 7 and WRKO AM/680 "Storm Force"
- WCVB-TV Boston/Channel 5 News Center 5

If classes are canceled during the day, announcements will be made over the public address system or by email.

Financial Conflict of Interest Policy

The Public Health Service (PHS) has promulgated a Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI) Regulation in the *Federal Register* which takes effect August 24, 2012. The UMMS Policy for Promoting Objectivity in Biomedical Research is the means by which the University of Massachusetts Medical School will comply with the FCOI Regulation, making it applicable to all sponsored-research funding sources at UMMS.

One requirement of the newly implemented regulation is that all investigators must complete FCOI training before engaging in research. **An investigator is defined as the principal investigator and any other person, regardless of title or position, who is responsible for the design, conduct or reporting of the research.** UMMS Principal Investigators will determine who meets this definition on their projects. UMMS provides training in Financial Conflict of Interest for medical-school investigators via the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI).

All GSBS students who are undertaking federally supported research must take this training. Details may be found at:

<http://www.umassmed.edu/ccts/irb/CITI-GCP>

Faculty and Student Vendor Relations Conflict of Interest Policy

This policy seeks to prevent conflicts of interest between commercial Vendors doing business with the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) and UMMS' Faculty Members, and Students. Such potential conflicts can be viewed as influencing patient care and/or purchasing/procurement. This policy, working in tandem with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Ethics Laws (M.G.L. c. 268A), strives to ensure that relationships between the UMMS Faculty Members or Students and commercial Vendor representatives enhance the University's mission as a center of excellence for teaching and research.

This policy recognizes that some UMMS Faculty Members provide patient care and/or conduct research in various hospitals, outpatient settings, and research centers that may have their own policies governing Vendor relations and conflicts of interest. Such policies may vary from this policy. When two or more policies govern the relationships of UMMS faculty members with commercial vendors, the faculty member must comply with all restrictions. Each faculty member must identify and adhere to the applicable policies.

The full policy is available at:

http://inside.umassmed.edu/uploadedFiles/policies/Faculty_Administration/Faculty%20and%20Student%20Vendor%20Relations%20COI%20Policy.pdf

If GSBS students and faculty have further questions regarding this policy please contact Dr. Mary Ellen Lane in the GSBS (MaryEllen.Lane@umassmed.edu)