The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

2018 Milestones Agreement: PhD Program

Students in the PhD degree program must reach a number of academic milestones in order to earn their degrees. Adhering to the schedule of these milestones ensures a timely progress to completing the program.

Academic Advising

Upon entering the GSBS PhD program, all students will be assigned an interim academic advisor from the GSBS Deans' Office. New students are also encouraged to seek advice from the GSBS Program Directors or their designees. Once a student selects his or her dissertation advisor, this faculty member will take over the advising role. Any first year student who has not found a research advisor by the time that this form is due should contact the Office of Academic Affairs to set up an appointment with a GSBS advisor.

Academic advising includes the following elements that are designed to ensure that students remain in good academic standing and make satisfactory progress through the program. Students and their advisors are mutually responsible for working together to ensure that the student accomplishes the following:

- Assemble advisory and candidacy examination committees with guidance from the advisor.

- Meet with the advisor and advisory committee every 6 months or more often.

- Select appropriate courses based on degree requirements and suggestions from the student's advisory committee.

- Review and understand all of the degree requirements and progress consistently with the expectations of the program, reaching milestones according to the timeline provided on this form; work with the Office of Academic Affairs, the student's Advisory Committee or Program Director if modifications are necessary.

- Meet regularly with the advisor to clarify the timetable for completing any remaining course requirements, examinations, and other requirements.

- Understand the requirements for the writing and successful defense of the dissertation.

- Benefit from experiences and information provided by the advisor to optimize the student's career opportunities and success. To that end, the student is required to complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP) annually.

Requirements for Students in the GSBS PhD Program

Milestone	**Expected Time of Achievement[1]**
• Complete *Ethical Dimensions of the Biomedical Sciences*	End of Fall term of 1st year
• Complete tutorial rotations	End of Spring term of 1st year[2]
• Identify a research advisor	End of Spring term of 1st year[2]
• Join a GSBS Graduate Program[3]	End of Spring term of 1st year[2]
• Obtain approval from ASC for Advisory Committee	End of Summer term of 1st year[2]
• Hold first advisory meeting	End of Fall term of 2nd year
• Hold Advisory Committee meeting	Every 6 months
• Complete GSBS pre-candidacy course requirements	End of Summer term of 2nd year
• Complete Program pre-candidacy course requirements	End of Summer term of 2nd year
• Complete online ethics modules[4]	End of Summer term of 2nd year
• Complete a scientific writing course[5]	End of Summer term of 2nd year
• Petition for Ph.D. candidacy	End of Summer term of 2nd year
• Take candidacy exam	End of Fall term of 3rd year
• Complete all Program-specified requirements	Before defense
• Submit a minimum of one first-authored scientific paper in a peer-reviewed journal[6]	Before defense
• Submit a signed petition to defend dissertation	2 weeks prior to defense
• Defend dissertation	Before graduation
• Publish a minimum of one first-authored scientific paper in a peer-reviewed journal[7]	Before graduation
• Submit final signed dissertation and complete all exit paperwork	Before graduation
• Complete all degree requirements	Within 7 years of admission

[1]The expected timing listed is based on matriculation in the Fall Semester of the academic year

[2]It is permissible for students in some Programs (e.g., Medical Physics) to meet these requirements on a slightly different schedule (e.g., the third tutorial may be done during the summer term, the advisor may be selected by the end of the summer, etc.)

[3]Required of students who matriculated in Fall 2012 and thereafter

[4]Required of students who matriculated in Fall 2011 and thereafter

[5]Required of students who matriculated in Fall 2014 and thereafter

[6]Required of students who matriculated between Fall 2010 and Summer 2014

[7]Required of students who matriculated in Fall 2014 and thereafter

Degree-Completion Checklist for Students

- Maintain active student status by registering as a full-time student for courses every Fall (9 credit hours minimum), Spring (9 credit hours minimum) and Summer (6 credit hours minimum) term

- Successfully complete all Milestones listed on the previous page

- Each year complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP).

- <u>Each year</u> complete the *Milestones Agreement Form* with advisor by August 31.

We have read this form and discussed the milestones. The student understands that completion of these academic milestones according to the stated timeline is necessary in order to successfully complete the GSBS PhD program.

Student's Name: _____

_____   _____
Student's Signature   Date

Advisor's Name: _____

_____   _____
Advisor's Signature   Date

To complete this assignment, upload and submit the signed PDF form to Canvas. Name the PDF file with the student's name (last name/first name) to make it identifiable.

Manual signature procedure: Print this form. Student and advisor should sign and date it (both signatures should be on the same form). A scanned PDF file can then be uploaded to Canvas by the student.

The GSBS computer lab, BSRB S3.8112, is equipped with printers and scanners. Alternatively, mobile devices with cameras can be used.   Visit [this page](#) (links to an external site) for suggested apps. Make sure that the entire document is in the photo and that the image is focused with enough lighting for the text and signatures to be legible.

Digital signature procedure: This PDF file may be signed using digital IDs in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Clicking on the signature field(s) will trigger a prompt to attach a digital ID file, if one has been created. The PDF should then be saved and uploaded to Canvas by the student.

For technical advice, email gsbs.support@uth.tmc.edu.

NEITHER ELECTRONIC NOR PAPER VERSIONS OF THIS FORM WILL BE ACCEPTED DIRECTLY BY THE GSBS – THE STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO UPLOAD THE SIGNED FORM TO CANVAS