

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

**Guidelines for the Master of Science Defense**

The purpose of the defense is to facilitate a thorough evaluation of the thesis and the student's understanding of the research, as well as the student's ability to report information to the scientific community in a well-organized and interesting form.

The defense consists of two parts: a public seminar and an examination. In the public seminar, the student will deliver a 45 to 60 minute public presentation, including a detailed description of the background, rationale, materials and methods, results and conclusions appropriate to the research. Following the presentation, the student will respond to questions from the audience.

Immediately thereafter, and at a location announced at the end of the seminar, the Advisory Committee will examine the student on the thesis. Any member of the GSBS Faculty who attends the public presentation may participate in the examination to the extent described below. Others wishing to attend must be approved by the Advisory Committee.

The student's Advisor will serve as moderator of the examination. The student will be expected to respond to questions from those attending on any aspect of the written thesis or the material presented at the seminar.

After the defense, the student will meet privately with the Advisory Committee to discuss the results. Finally, the Advisory Committee (in executive session, if desired) will determine what recommendation to make to the Dean and the ASC.

**The Committee may conclude that the student has passed, or it may require additional research, modifications to the thesis, and/or another defense.**

Following the defense, the results of this meeting will be communicated through the Office of Academic Affairs to the Dean and the Academic Standards Committee for their information and approval.

Within one week of the defense, any GSBS faculty member who has read the student's thesis and has attended the defense may write directly to the Dean to provide an evaluation of the student's performance. In reaching a final decision on whether to award the M.S. or require further work and/or another defense, the Dean will take into consideration the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and other comments received from GSBS Faculty. In particular cases, the Dean may solicit additional evaluations of the thesis from experts in the field either within or outside the GSBS Faculty.

The decision of the Dean will be communicated to the student and the Supervisory Committee within one month of the defense.

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**Results of the Defense of the M.S. Thesis**

*This form is to be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs within two weeks after the M.S. defense.*

We, the undersigned, as the Advisory Committee in charge of the Defense of the M.S. Thesis for

\_\_\_\_\_ (student's name), report that we have examined the  
candidate on his/her thesis research on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

**We recommend that the candidate be granted the Master of Science degree.**

If the Committee has attached any conditions to the recommendation, e.g., requiring that the thesis be rewritten, the signing of the thesis by the Committee members indicates the conditions have been met.

**The Advisory Committee is satisfied with the evaluation of the student's thesis by Turnitin.**

**The Advisory Committee agrees that the candidate understands and has acted appropriately on ethical issues related to the thesis project.**

**The Advisory Committee attests that the student contributed substantially to the text of any previously published work incorporated into the thesis.**

**The Advisory Committee attests that any figure taken from the student's publication(s) and used in the thesis is the result of work done by the student him/herself.**

**We do not recommend that the candidate be granted the Master of Science degree at this time.**

[Please attach a letter to indicate the reason(s) for this decision.]

***(Please type each committee member's name and degree(s) under signature line.)***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

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**Selection of Areas of Research Concentration for GSBS M.S. Diplomas**

GSBS students may elect, with the approval of their Advisory Committee and the Program Directors, to have none, one, or two Areas of Research Concentration (ARC) displayed on their diploma. If any ARC is displayed, the first one must be Biomedical Sciences, and no Program Director approval is needed.

**I wish to include    zero,    one or    two ARCs on my diploma.**

<b>Indicate 1<sup>st</sup> ARC:</b>	<b>Indicate 2<sup>nd</sup> ARC:</b>
Biochemistry and Cell Biology Biomedical Sciences Cancer Biology Genetics and Epigenetics Immunology Medical Physics Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Neuroscience Quantitative Sciences Therapeutics and Pharmacology	Biochemistry and Cell Biology Cancer Biology Genetics and Epigenetics Immunology Medical Physics Microbiology and Infectious Diseases Neuroscience Quantitative Sciences Therapeutics and Pharmacology

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We, the undersigned, as the Advisory Committee in charge of the Defense for \_\_\_\_\_  
 approve of the above listed selection of ARC(s) to be placed on this student's GSBS diploma.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chair, Advisory Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

The signature(s) of the Program Director(s) is/are required in order to list Program ARCs on the diploma. Approval is denoted by their signatures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Program Director, Printed name and signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Program Director, Printed name and signature