

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

Guidelines for the Master of Science Thesis Defense

The purpose of the thesis defense is to facilitate a thorough evaluation of the student's thesis and 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 thesis 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 Deans.

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 Deans 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 Deans 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 Deans will take into consideration the recommendation of the Advisory Committee and other comments received from GSBS Faculty. In particular cases, the Deans may solicit additional evaluations of the thesis from experts in the field either within or outside the GSBS Faculty.

The decision of the Deans will be communicated to the student and the Advisory 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 Area of Research Concentration for GSBS M.S. / S.M.S. Diplomas

- **Individualized MS (prior to Fall 2019):** Students admitted prior to Fall 2019 who previously affiliated with the Cancer Biology or Therapeutics and Pharmacology programs may select their program as the primary Area of Concentration (ARC). Those affiliated with any other program or no program will select Biomedical Sciences as the primary ARC and may select their previously approved program affiliation as the secondary ARC.
- **Individualized MS (Fall 2019 and after):** Students admitted Fall 2019 and after will select Biomedical Sciences as the primary ARC and may select their previously approved program affiliation as the secondary ARC.
- **Specialized MS (Genetic Counseling or Medical Physics):** Select Genetic Counseling or Medical Physics as the primary ARC. No Secondary ARC's are allowed.
- **PhD Student receiving terminal MS:** A student who was admitted into the PhD program, but is receiving a terminal MS, will select their corresponding program as the primary ARC. If the PhD student is continuing with the PhD degree after completion of the MS, the student must indicate Biomedical Sciences as the primary ARC.

I wish to have the following displayed on my diploma:

Indicate Primary ARC:	Indicate Secondary ARC:
<input type="checkbox"/> Biomedical Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Biochemistry and Cell Biology <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer Biology <input type="checkbox"/> Genetic Counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Genetics and Epigenetics <input type="checkbox"/> Immunology <input type="checkbox"/> Medical Physics <input type="checkbox"/> Microbiology and Infectious Diseases <input type="checkbox"/> Neuroscience <input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutics and Pharmacology	<input type="checkbox"/> Biochemistry and Cell Biology <input type="checkbox"/> Cancer Biology <input type="checkbox"/> Genetics and Epigenetics <input type="checkbox"/> Immunology <input type="checkbox"/> Microbiology and Infectious Diseases <input type="checkbox"/> Neuroscience <input type="checkbox"/> Quantitative Sciences <input type="checkbox"/> Therapeutics and Pharmacology

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.

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

 Program Director, Print name and sign

 Program Director, Print name and sign