

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

Guidelines for Completion of a Second Area of Research Concentration (ARC)

Primary Area of Research Concentration

All GSBS PhD students are required to identify a Primary Area of Research Concentration (ARC) which corresponds to the PhD program that the student joins and completes prior to graduation. The primary ARC appears on both the student's transcript and diploma.

Second Area of Research Concentration

At their option, students with interdisciplinary dissertation projects may also obtain pre-approval to complete a second ARC. To do so the student must submit a plan (using attached form) to the GSBS for completing a second ARC that has been approved by their advisor, and the PhD program directors corresponding to the primary and second ARC prior to graduation. The plan will then be reviewed for approval by GSBS Academic Affairs and the Academic Standards Committee. Provided the student completes the plan, the second ARC will appear on the student's diploma (along with the primary ARC) but will not appear on the transcript. **All students must use the attached form and obtain GSBS approval for second ARC before the defense.**

Key points about Second ARC selection and approval:

1. The only available second ARCs are those corresponding to currently active GSBS PhD Programs as approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
2. Only students with interdisciplinary research projects that overlap the second ARC may complete a program in the second ARC.
3. The PhD Program corresponding to the second ARC determines the academic requirements for completing that ARC. The requirements for completion of the second ARC may be reduced from those required of students who are completing a primary ARC with the program. Each student's second ARC plan must be approved by the GSBS.
4. Where it is in the best interests of the student, the PhD program sponsoring the primary ARC may elect to waive specific program requirements to better allow an interdisciplinary student to pursue a second ARC. Any waivers of program requirements should be stated on the plan submitted to the GSBS.
5. The primary PhD Program will determine the format and criteria for the candidacy exam except that at least one faculty member from the second ARC Program must be on the student's Exam Committee.
6. At least one second ARC Program member, other than the research advisor, must serve on the student's Advisory Committee.
7. The student will not be counted as member of the Program for second ARC program and so no budget funds will be allocated for that program. Programs are encouraged, but not required to invite these students to participate in program activities. Programs may specify program seminars and other activities as requirements for completion of the second ARC.
8. Students may submit a plan for the second ARC only after affiliating with a dissertation advisor and a primary PhD Program. With the exception of students who matriculated before the Summer of 2017 any student selecting a second ARC must do so before PhD Candidacy.
9. Submit completed form to gsbs.reports@uth.tmc.edu.

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Plan for Second Area of Research Concentration

Student Name :

Date:

Advisor Name:

Title of Student's Research Project:

**Primary Area of Research Concentration
(program name)**

Option 1. Student will complete all program requirements as currently stated on the GSBS website (attach web page).

OR

Option 2. Student will complete a customized academic program and the primary program waives the following requirements provided that the second programs requirements stated here are completed.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

**Second Area of Research Concentration
(program name)**

Requirements:

The student's dissertation project overlaps the second program's research area (required).

AND

Option 1. All corresponding program requirements as currently stated on the GSBS website must be completed (attach web page).

OR

Option 2. Only the requirements listed below must be completed:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Approval for Plan (signatures)

Program Director (Primary Program) _____ signature _____ print name

Program Director (Second ARC) _____ signature _____ print name

Dissertation Advisor _____ signature _____ print name

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs
(will sign after submisson to GSBS) _____ signature _____ print name

Chair, Academic Standards Committee _____ signature _____ Date _____
(will sign after ASC meeting)

Please note: To complete this process, the student should submit a "Completion of Second Area of Research Concentration" form signed by your advisor and the second ARC program director after the dissertation defense.