

Transition to GSBS Checklist

The transition to graduate school from medical school can be daunting especially after having your schedule entirely set for you for a full year (if you are coming from MS3). We hope that this checklist can help guide you and make the transition easier and clearer. Also note that after completing your rotations, the MSTP milestone tab on the website is quite complete regarding requirements for transitioning to the first year of graduate school.

- **Submit a leave of absence request (January - February)** - you will have a meeting with Dr. Lahoti and Yolanda Bell to discuss your leave of absence briefly.
- **Identify labs for remaining lab rotations (March - May)** - you should complete a total of at least two rotations before choosing a dissertation advisor (if you are planning on submitting a waiver for the third rotation required by GSBS). Meet with Dr. Francesca Cole or Dr. Natalie Sirisaengtaksin to discuss your plans before making a decision. You will also need to talk to them to get an authorization form for faculty at MD Anderson. If you want to do a 4th rotation, you'll need to contact Drs. Cole and Sirisaengtaksin to discuss your plans and get permission. These are only pursued when the first three rotations do not work out. Plan on rotations that are 5 weeks (if you want to do 2 rotations in one summer) or 8-10 weeks (for one rotation), although GSBS highly encourages one rotation per summer. I recommend doing a 8-10 week rotation if this is your third rotation or if this is your second and you are planning on submitting a waiver for the 3rd.
- **Register for classes (May)** - you need **6 credit hours total** which can be made up of the following courses:
 - GS00 1514: Tutorial Research Experience (**2 h**) - register under your PI for your lab rotation.
 - GS21 1611: Topics in Molecular Medicine (**1 h**) - this is Topics, you must register for it
 - GS00 1410: USMLE Exam Preparation - this basically gives you credits for studying for STEP 2, you can register for 1-4 credits (**usually 3 h**)
 - GS00 1520: Research in Biomedical Sciences - use this if you need additional hours, you likely will not need this unless you register for fewer than the maximum number of credits for the other courses or you are not taking STEP 2 and are only doing one rotation
- **Study for and attempt STEP 2 (May - June)** (if you have finished MS3) - you will need to register for the USMLE prep GSBS course (see above). Most students take 4-6 weeks to study for and take STEP 2 and you should attempt the exam before your rotations start.
- **Complete your remaining lab rotations (June - August)**
- **Submit a third rotation waiver (if applicable) (June - August)** - you can find the form [here](#)
- **Request permission for a fourth rotation (if applicable) (August)** - you will need to contact Dr. Cole or Dr. Sirisaengtaksin if you wish to do so. See [this page](#) on the GSBS website for details.
- **Identify a Research Advisor (June - August)** - You should pick a lab by the beginning of fall semester unless you need to complete an additional rotation during the fall. You should review the MD-PhD GSBS Milestones Document with your new advisor. This is a list of all major academic requirements with due dates. You will need to submit a few forms after choosing an advisor:
 - [GSBS Core Tenets Agreement](#)
 - Accountable Mentorship Agreement - Contact Dr. Natalie Sirisaengtaksin for this
- **Join a GSBS Graduate Program (August)** – You are required to select a GSBS graduate program when you affiliate with an advisor. You should look at programs before the start of the fall semester and before picking an advisor.

- **Register for Fall Classes (June - August)** - This will be highly dependent on your choice of graduate program but there are two additional classes that are required independent of your choice of program:
 - GS21 1611: Topics in Molecular Medicine - this is Topics, you must register for it
 - GS21 1051: The Ethical Dimensions of the Biomedical Sciences - everyone in GSBS has to take this fall semester of their first year
 - Courses required in the first fall semester by your program of choice
 - Also keep in mind that the MSTP requires you to take a scientific writing course (several to choose from) as well as a quantitative course (several to choose from). See the "GSBS Academic Requirements for MD/PhD" pdf from Stacey.
- **Consider Applying for the TL1 (optional) (Due in September)** - I would highly recommend doing this as some of the older students told me MD/PhD students have a decent track record for getting funding through this. You will need not only an advisor, but a clinical mentor you will shadow with once per month. A key point is that the work should be translational.
 - Biosketches
 - Yours
 - Mentor
 - Clinical Mentor
 - Letters of Support
 - Mentor
 - Clinical Mentor
 - Research Proposal
 - Specific Aims
 - Research Strategy
 - Literature Cited
 - Career Goals and Training Plan
- **Have the F30/F31 on your radar (F30 due 48 months from matriculation unless you get a 12 mo extension)** - This is now a **mandatory** requirement for MSTP students at our program. If you want to apply for the F30, you need to do so within 48 months from matriculation if you are not able to get an extension. This will be towards the end of your first year of graduate school if you take the 3-4-1 path. Most places will give extensions, however not all will. You can always apply to the F31. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/research/training/f30-individual-predoctoral-md-phd-fellows>

This should be everything you need to get done by the end of the summer after MS3. You can find further information about the next milestones on the GSBS website. Good luck! You will do great!