

Academic Progress and Graduation Requirements for Ph.D. Policy

Scope

Applies to all Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (MCGSBS) students enrolled in programs in pursuit of a predoctoral (Ph.D.) degree (Ph.D., CARE Ph.D., FAST Ph.D. and M.D.-Ph.D.).

Purpose

To provide students criteria for satisfactory academic progress and to define graduation requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Students are expected to make continuous and successful academic and professional progress toward graduation requirements for the Ph.D. degree.
- The concept of satisfactory progress mandates monitoring of a students' academic and professional performance through items including, but not limited to:
 - Complete and maintain individualized course plan throughout the program:
 - Use [Degree Works](#) (DW) student audit, or;
 - Use [Degree Planning Tool](#) (DPT) if DW not available.
 - Register for courses as planned on individualized course plan.
 - Register for at least one course all terms throughout training.
 - Routine DAC meetings and Progress Reports, minimum every six months.

Residence Requirement

- MCGSBS's goal is for students to successfully complete training leading to the Ph.D. degree within four to six traditional academic years (M.D.-Ph.D. four years, Ph.D. five to six years).
- Regardless of how many transfer credits are awarded, candidates for graduate degrees from MCGSBS must complete a minimum period in residence after admission to their degree program. For Ph.D. degree candidates, the minimum period of residence will be two years (start date to end date).
- A student already enrolled in an MCGSBS Ph.D. degree program must obtain MCGSBS approval to apply to another degree program concurrently, e.g Ph.D. and Certificate.
 - Expectations for dual-degree students are defined in the [Credit Conversion, Transfer, Waiver, and Substitution Policy](#).
 - Students may not be enrolled concurrently in more than one Ph.D. degree program within Mayo Clinic.

- Program extensions are not considered solely to finish a certificate or concentration if PhD requirements have been met.

Graduation Requirements

- In order to graduate, students must meet the following requirements:
 - Pass all required courses and complete required credits as defined by the specific program,
 - Final GPA of 3.0 or greater,
 - Complete all required milestones/non-course requirements:
 - Submit Oral Qualifying Exam Committee Selection Form
 - Submit Advisor Selection Form
 - Submit Dissertation Advisory Committee (DAC) Selection Form
 - Verification Ready to Defend Form
 - Submit Dissertation Proposal (Data to be included in the Ph.D. dissertation must be generated after admission to the Ph.D. program),
 - Submit application for a fellowship award (or equivalent) as defined in the [Fellowship Application and Award Policy](#),
 - Minimum of one peer-reviewed first-authored original paper accepted for publication (unless exception approved - see [Publication Exception Request Procedure](#)),
 - Successfully pass Written Qualifying Exam,
 - Successfully pass Oral Qualifying Exam,
 - Submit written dissertation per MCGSBS Thesis Guidelines for Ph.D.,
 - Successfully pass Final Oral Exam- defense and final dissertation corrections,
 - Complete all graduation clearance, post-defense and check-out requirements within 30 days of defense.

Final Defense Corrections

- Ph.D. appointments must end a maximum 30 days after the dissertation defense date.
- Students are allowed the 30 days to complete any outstanding Ph.D. degree requirements and make final dissertation corrections.
- If a student does not meet the final dissertation correction deadline, they will be required to re-defend their dissertation within six months.
 - Following the re-defense a student will have four weeks to submit the final copy of their dissertation. If this dissertation submission deadline is not met, the degree will not be awarded and there will be no further opportunities to receive the degree from MCGSBS.

- If a student does not defend by defined training end date, and the Dissertation Advisory Committee is not supportive of an extension, the student will be dismissed from the program effective on their training end date.

Graduation Deadlines

- Students must complete all requirements with these defined timelines (this includes additional time for medical accommodation):
 - Ph.D. students: within eight years of matriculation.
 - M.D. – Ph.D. students: within 10 years of matriculation.
- Student degrees are conferred only four times a year with a diploma date in the months of February, May, August, and November. Deadlines for degree conferral are as follows:

For degree conferral in:	Defend by:	All Post-Defense Requirements completed by:
February	January 1	February 1
May	March 15	April 15
August	July 1	August 1
November	October 1	November 1

- A formal commencement ceremony is held annually in May in conjunction with the Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. No ceremony is held in February, August, and November, but students who graduate at one of these times are eligible to participate in the May ceremony.
 - Example: Graduates with diplomas dates of August 2025, November 2025, February 2026 and May 2026 are included in the May 2025 commencement ceremony.
 - Requests to defer participation in the annual commencement ceremony by one year are considered on an individual basis, but only due to extenuating circumstances vs. personal preference. A request requires approval by the MCGSBS Executive Committee.

Optional Master's Degree

- When a student is unable to complete Ph.D. requirements or chooses to resign prior to completion, eligibility for an optional master's degree in biomedical sciences will be considered. Eligibility is defined in the [Optional Masters Eligibility Policy](#).
- An audit to determine eligibility is initiated by student's request to withdraw from the predoctoral program. See [Program Withdrawal Request Procedure](#) and the [Program Withdrawal Request Form](#).

Policy Notes

Consequences for unsatisfactory performance and/or behavior are defined in the [Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#).

Related Procedures

[Publication Exception Request Procedure](#)

Related Documents

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

[Fellowship Application and Award Policy](#)

[Optional Masters Eligibility Policy](#)

[Program Withdrawal Request Form](#)

Definitions

N/A

References

N/A

Owner

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Academic Progress and Graduation Requirements for Professional Master's Programs Policy

Scope

Applies to all students enrolled in a Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (MCGSBS) non-thesis Professional Master's program in pursuit of a Master of Science (M.S.) degree.

Purpose

To provide students in the MCGSBS Professional Master's program criteria for satisfactory academic progress and to define graduation requirements for the M.S. degree.

Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Students are expected to make continuous and successful academic and professional progress toward graduation requirements for the M.S. degree. The concept of satisfactory progress mandates monitoring of a students' academic and professional performance through items including, but not limited to:
 - Complete and maintain individualized course plan throughout the program:
 - Use [Degree Works](#) (DW) student audit, or;
 - Use [Degree Planning Tool](#) (DPT) if DW not available.
 - Register for courses as planned on individualized course plan.
 - Complete and submit [Advisor Selection eForm](#) to declare an advisor prior to registering for MGS 6400.
 - Receive passing grade in MGS 6400 Capstone Final Project.
 - Submit [Professional Master's Program Completion Form](#) after passing grade in MGS 6400 is on transcript.
 - This initiates formal program exit.
 - Once submitted and verified, the program end date will be assigned 30 days after.
 - Consequences for unsatisfactory performance and/or behavior are defined in the [Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#).

Residence Requirement

- Regardless of how many transfer credits are awarded, candidates for an M.S. degree from MCGSBS must complete a minimum period of one year in residence after admission to their degree program.
- A student must have an active primary employment role at Mayo Clinic to be eligible for enrollment in a MCGSBS master's program.

- A student already enrolled in an MCGSBS M.S. degree program must obtain MCGSBS approval to apply to another degree program concurrently, e.g., M.S. and Certificate.
 - Expectations for dual-degree students are defined in the [Credit Conversion, Transfer, Waiver, and Substitution Policy](#).
 - Students may not be enrolled concurrently in more than one M.S. degree program within Mayo Clinic.
- If a student ends their employment with Mayo Clinic before graduation requirements are satisfied, the student will be withdrawn from the program effective on the last date of employment.

Graduation Requirements

- To graduate, students must meet the following requirements:
 - Pass all required courses and complete required credits as defined by the specific program.
 - Hold final GPA of 3.0 or greater.
 - Complete Masters Capstone Project that demonstrates mastery of their chosen track and area of interest. This involves passing grade in MGS 6400 Masters Capstone Project.

Graduation Deadlines

- The goal of MCGSBS is for students to successfully complete the M.S. degree within original appointment dates; duration up to five years depending on Mayo Clinic role and protected time.
- Students must complete all requirements within seven years (this includes additional time for medical accommodation).
- If a student does not complete all graduation requirements by program end date, and the Project Advisor and Program Director are not supportive of an extension, the student will be dismissed from the program effective on their program end date.
- Degrees are conferred four times a year: February, May, August, and November. Deadlines must be met for all Track and MCGSBS requirements. Deadline dates are provided in the table listed below.

For degree conferral in:	Graduation Clearance Form submitted by:	Complete Capstone by:	All Graduation Requirements completed by:
February	November 1	January 1	February 1
May (Commencement)	January 15	March 15	April 15
August	May 1	July 1	August 1
November	August 1	October 1	November 1

- Commencement is held annually in May in conjunction with Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. Those who confer in August, November, and February will be invited to participate in the May commencement.
- All student appointments end 30 days after the capstone/final project date to allow for any needed corrections and complete graduation requirements. If a student does not complete all requirements, they will be required to repeat their capstone project within six months.
 - If capstone is repeated: Following the repeated capstone, a student is allowed 30 days to make any needed corrections and complete any outstanding graduation requirements. If deadlines are not met, the M.S. degree will not be awarded and there will be no further opportunities to receive it.

Policy Notes

N/A

Related Procedures

N/A

Related Documents

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

Definitions

N/A

References

[Master's Forms and Resources](#)

Owner

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Academic Progress and Graduation Requirements for Thesis Master's Programs Policy

Scope

Applies to all students enrolled in a Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (MCGSBS) thesis-based master's programs (Research and Resident) involving preparation and defense of a thesis in pursuit of a Master of Science (M.S.) degree.

Purpose

To provide students in the MCGSBS thesis-based master's programs criteria for satisfactory academic progress and to define graduation requirements for the M.S. degree.

Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Students are expected to make continuous and successful academic and professional progress toward graduation requirements for the M.S. degree. The concept of satisfactory progress mandates monitoring of a students' academic and professional performance through items including, but not limited to:
 - Complete and maintain individualized course plan throughout the program:
 - Use [Degree Works](#) (DW) student audit if eligible to use, or;
 - Use [Degree Planning Tool](#) (DPT).
 - Register for courses as designated on individualized course plan in Degree Planning tool or Degree Works.
 - Declare an advisor by submitting the [Advisor Selection eForm](#). Required within six months of program start.
 - Select a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) by submitting the [Advisory Committee Selection eForm](#). Required within six months of Advisor Selection.
 - Progress meetings and reports submitted every six months are required after TAC established until program completion. See details in the [Progress Report Submission and Research Grading Procedure](#).
 - Register for MGS 6840 Masters Research every term after approval by the program, e.g., may include approval of the research proposal and/or when the TAC is established. Continue to register up until the term in which the defense is planned.
 - Submit the [Research and Resident Master's Graduation Defense Audit Form](#) to start the graduation clearance process conducted by MCGSBS administration staff. (Required at least six weeks prior to planned defense date, but preferred at least three months prior.)
 - Submit Degree Works student audit if eligible to use.

- Submit completed DPT and non-official MCGSBS transcript if not eligible to use DW.
- Complete and submit Verification via the [Thesis Ready to Defend Form](#) (VTRD) (preferred four weeks, but no later than three weeks) before the defense date.
- Submit the [Research and Resident Masters Program Exit Form](#).
- Consequences for unsatisfactory performance and/or behavior are defined in the [Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#).

Residence Requirement

- Regardless of how many transfer credits are awarded, candidates for a M.S. degree from MCGSBS must complete a minimum period of one year in residence after admission to their degree program.
- A student must have an active primary employment role at Mayo Clinic to be eligible for enrollment in a MCGSBS master's program.
- A student already enrolled in an MCGSBS M.S. degree program must obtain MCGSBS approval to apply to another degree program concurrently, e.g. M.S. and Certificate.
 - Expectations for dual-degree students are defined in the [Credit Conversion, Transfer, Waiver, and Substitution Policy](#).
 - Students may not be enrolled concurrently in more than one M.S. degree program within Mayo Clinic.
- If a student ends their employment with Mayo Clinic before graduation requirements are satisfied, the student will be withdrawn from the program effective on the last date of employment.

Graduation Requirements

- To graduate, students must meet the following requirements:
 - Pass all required courses and complete required credits as defined by the specific program.
 - Final GPA of 3.0 or greater.
 - Complete all required eForms (as listed above).
 - Successfully Pass Written Qualifying Exam.
 - Applies to Resident Masters students.
 - Discontinued for Research Master's effective May 2026.
 - Successfully pass Final Oral Exam- defense and final thesis corrections.
 - Complete all post-defense and check-out requirements within 30 days of defense (as communicated by MCGSBS administration during coordination of defense).

Graduation Deadlines

- The goal of MCGSBS is for students to successfully complete the M.S. degree within original appointment dates; duration up to five years depending on Mayo Clinic role and protected time.
- Students must complete all requirements within seven years (this includes additional time for medical accommodation).
- If a student does not complete all graduation requirements by program end date, and their Advisory Committee is not supportive of an extension, the student will be dismissed from the program effective on their program end date.
- Degrees are conferred four times a year: February, May, August, and November. Deadlines must be met for all Track and MCGSBS requirements. Deadline dates are provided in the table listed below.

For degree conferral in:	Graduation Clearance Form submitted by:	Defend/present by:	All Post-Defense Requirements completed by:
February	November 1	January 1	February 1
May (Commencement)	January 15	March 15	April 15
August	May 1	July 1	August 1
November	August 1	October 1	November 1

- Commencement is held May of every year in conjunction with Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine. Those who conferred, August, November, and February, will be invited to participate in the May commencement.
- Master's appointments must end a maximum of 30 days after the date of the final project.
 - Students are allowed the 30 days to complete any outstanding degree requirements and make final project corrections.
- If a student does not meet the post-defense deadline, they will be required to re-defend their thesis within six months.
 - If defense is repeated: following the re-defense, a student is allowed 30 days to complete any outstanding degree requirements and make final thesis corrections. If deadlines are not met, the M.S. degree will not be awarded and there will be no further opportunities to receive it.

Policy Notes

N/A

Related Procedures

N/A

Related Documents

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

[Progress Report Submission and Research Grading Procedure](#)

Definitions

N/A

References

[Degree Works](#)

[Master's Forms and Resources](#)

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Academic Progress and Graduation Requirements for Certificate Programs Policy

Scope

Applies to all students enrolled in a Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (MCGSBS) certificate program in pursuit of a certificate.

Purpose

To provide students in the MCGSBS certificate programs criteria for satisfactory academic progress and to define certificate award criteria.

Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress

- Students are expected to make continuous and successful academic and professional progress toward requirements for the certificate.
- The concept of satisfactory progress mandates monitoring of a student's coursework, GPA, and timely completion of program milestones.
- Consequences for unsatisfactory performance and/or behavior are defined in the [Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#).

Residence Requirement

- A student must have an active primary employment role at Mayo Clinic to be eligible for enrollment in a MCGSBS certificate program.
- A student already enrolled in an MCGSBS PhD or Masters (MS) degree program must obtain approval from their Advisory Committee to apply to an MCGSBS certificate program. Once enrolled, extensions of the degree program will not be granted to finish requirements for the certificate.
- Students may not be enrolled concurrently in more than one Certificate program within Mayo Clinic.
- If a student ends their employment with Mayo Clinic before certificate requirements are satisfied, the student will be withdrawn from the program effective on the last date of employment.

Completion Requirements

- In order to be awarded a certificate, students must meet the following requirements within their appointed certificate program dates.
 - Pass all required courses and complete required credits as defined by the specific program.
 - Final GPA of 3.0 or greater.
 - Other requirements as defined by the program, such as a final project.
 - Submit [Certificate Completion Request Form](#) two to four weeks prior to start of final term in which requirements will be completed.

- Complete all requirements on check-out form and submit to graduate school on or before program end date.

Program Deadlines

- The goal of MCGSBS is for students to successfully complete training leading to certificate within two years of the original appointment dates.
- If a student does not complete all program requirements by a defined training end date, and the Program Director is not supportive of an extension, the student will be withdrawn from the program effective on the last date of employment.

Certificate Awarding

- Certificates are printed only four times a year in the months of February, May, August, and November, typically on third Friday of the month. All requirements must be completed by the following dates to meet these award/print deadlines:

Certificate Award:	Complete Requirements by:
February	January 1
May	April 1
August	July 1
November	October 1

- Upon receipt of the [Certificate Completion Request Form](#), graduate school staff will conduct an audit of requirements and coordinate receipt of the certificate.

Policy Notes

N/A

Related Procedures

N/A

Related Documents

[Certificate Completion Request Form](#)

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

Definitions

N/A

References

[Academic Catalog - Certificate Programs](#)

[Certificate Program Forms and Resources](#)

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