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## Academic Progress and Graduation Requirements Policy

### Scope

Applies to all Mayo Clinic Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (MCGSBS) students in the pre-doctoral and M.D. - Ph.D. programs in pursuit of a pre-doctoral (Ph.D.) degree.

### Purpose

To provide students in the pre-doctoral and M.D. - Ph.D. programs criteria for satisfactory academic progress and to define graduation requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

To define criteria to obtain a master's degree for students unable to complete all 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:
  - Register for at least one course all terms throughout training
  - Written Qualifying Exam
  - Mentor Selection
  - Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) Selection
  - Oral Qualifying Exam Committee Selection
  - Oral Qualifying Exam
  - Routine TAC meetings and Progress Reports, minimum every six months
  - Individualized Development Plan
  - Minimum of one peer-reviewed first-authored original paper accepted for publication (unless exception approved- see Publication Exception Request Procedure)
  - Submit thesis per MCGSBS Thesis Guidelines for Ph.D.
  - Final Oral Exam/Thesis Defense
  - Meet any [program specific competencies](#) as defined by track
- The goal of MCGSBS is for students to successfully complete training leading to the Ph.D. degree within 4-6 traditional academic years (M.D.-Ph.D. 4 years, Ph.D. 5-6 years).
- Consequences for unsatisfactory performance and/or behavior are defined in the [Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#).

#### 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
  - Successfully pass Written Qualifying Exam
  - Successfully pass Oral Qualifying Exam
  - Successful pass Final Oral Exam- defense and final thesis corrections
  - Complete all graduation clearance and check-out requirements
  - Final GPA of 3.0 or greater

**Graduation deadlines**

- Students are granted degrees four times a year: February, May, August, and November and must meet the deadlines for requirements listed in the table below.
  - The May date involves a formal ceremony as part of the Mayo Clinic commencement in conjunction with the Mayo Clinic 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.
- Ph.D. appointments must end a maximum 30 days after the thesis defense date.
  - Students are allowed the 30 days to complete any outstanding Ph.D. degree requirements and make final thesis corrections.
- If a student does not meet the final thesis correction deadline, he/she will be required to re-defend his/her thesis within six months.
  - Following the re-defense a student will have four weeks to submit the final copy of his/her thesis. If this thesis submission deadline is not met, the degree will not be awarded and there will be no further opportunities to receive the degree from MCGSBS.

Graduation Month	Requirements must be completed by:
February	January 1
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draft of thesis to advisor by March 1</li> <li>▪ All requirements including final oral examination must be completed by April 1, except final submittal of final thesis</li> <li>▪ Thesis submitted by May 1</li> </ul>
August	July 1
November	October 1

**Optional Master's Degree**

- When a student is unable to complete Ph.D. requirements, eligibility for an optional master's degree in biomedical sciences will be considered.
- To be eligible for an optional master's degree, the student must meet the following minimum MCGSBS requirements:
  - completed all the core and track courses required by the graduate program in which the student is enrolled
  - final GPA of 3.0 or greater
  - passed the written qualifying examination of their graduate program within allowed maximum of two attempts

**Policy Notes**

Applying for extramural fellowships is an important skill for students. All Ph.D. students are expected to submit fellowship applications, preferably during their 2nd year of study. All M.D.-Ph.D. students must submit an NIH F30 fellowship application (or equivalent) by the end of their 2nd PhD year.

**Related Procedure(s)**

[Publication Exception Request Procedure](#)

**Related Document(s)**

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

[Ph.D. Forms and Resources](#)

**Definitions**

N/A

**References**

[Ph.D. Program-Specific Competencies](#)

**Owner**

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Date	Synopsis of Change
07/12/2018	Transferred to new template; changed title from previous "Master's Degree Option for PhD. Students"; expanded Scope; added graduation requirements for pre-doctoral degree.
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