

# 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
  - Oral Qualifying Exam Committee Selection
  - Oral Qualifying Exam
  - Submit Thesis Proposal (Data to be included in the Ph.D. thesis must be generated after admission to the Ph.D. program)
  - Mentor Selection
  - Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) Selection
  - Submit application for extramural fellowship award or equivalent.
    - All Ph.D. students must submit a fellowship application, preferably during their 2nd year of study (Applies to students who matriculated in 2020 or after.) See Policy Notes below for exceptions for international students.
    - All M.D.-Ph.D. students must submit an NIH F30 fellowship application (or equivalent) by the end of their 2nd Ph.D. year.
  - Routine TAC meetings and Progress Reports, minimum every six months
  - Individualized Development Plan completed and maintained throughout training
  - 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](#).

## Residence Requirement

- 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), and for Master’s degree candidates the period is one year.

## 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 must complete all requirements with these defined timelines:
  - Ph.D. students: within 8 years of matriculation.
  - M.D. - Ph.D. students: within 10 years of matriculation.
- 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.
- If a student does not defend by defined training end date, and the Thesis Advisory Committee is not supportive of an extension, the student will be dismissed from the program effective on their training end date.

To graduate in:	Requirements must be completed by:
February	January 1

May	April 1
August	July 1
November	October 1

## 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.
- 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,
  - Has not previously received an MCGSBS Master in Science degree within the same track,
  - Any exceptions to the above require both program and school approval.
- The optional master's request is initiated by submission of the [Program Withdrawal Request Form](#).
- Students receiving optional Master's degree must complete MCGSBS checkout requirements, including return of Mayo laptop if applicable. Diploma will be withheld until completed.

## Policy Notes

International students are not eligible to apply for federal funding, but are eligible to apply to some select extramural fellowships. They must either submit an application for an eligible extramural fellowship or submit a F31 templated grant application to the graduate school for continued intramural support. See [Extramural Awards Policy](#) for more information.

## Related Procedures

[Publication Exception Request Procedure](#)

## Related Documents

[Deficiencies and Unsatisfactory Progress Policy](#)

[Extramural Awards Policy](#)

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

[Program Withdrawal Request Form](#)

## Definitions

N/A

## References

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

## Effective Date Current Version

07/05/2021