



South TX
Medical Scientist
Training Program

Program, Policies, and Guidelines

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South TX Medical Scientist Training Program

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The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio is accredited by:

- The Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME. Council on Medical Education, American Medical Association, 515 North State Street, Chicago, IL 60654. Telephone number 312-464-4933. Association of American Medical Colleges, 2450 N Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20037. Telephone number: 202-828-0596) to award the MD degree.
- The Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS. 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097. Telephone number: 404-679-4501) to award certificates, and baccalaureate, masters, doctoral, and professional degrees.

MD/PhD Program, Policies, and Guidelines — School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HEALTH SAN ANTONIO
LONG SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

MD/PhD Program

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

The goals of the MD/PhD Program are:

- ***to prepare physician-scientists to become accomplished health care providers and investigators with exceptional problem-solving knowledge and skills***
- ***to train physician-scientists in the conduct of outstanding clinical and translational research in culturally diverse settings***
- ***to develop future leaders in academic health care and biomedical research***

These goals will be achieved through the following:

The MD/PhD program is seven to nine years in length. Students usually begin with two years of curriculum in the School of Medicine. After successful completion of the Step1 USMLE board exam, they enter a three to five year PhD program in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Following this, they return to the School of Medicine for two years of clinical rotations and electives. Traditional MD/PhD students conduct research rotations during the summers preceding their first two years of Medical School. With the guidance and approval of the MD/PhD Program Director and Advisory Committee, students select laboratory rotations, graduate program affiliation, and Supervising Professors from an array of distinguished graduate faculty throughout the institution. Diverse enrichment activities in all years include the *Bench-to-Bedside* seminar series, a monthly program that provides a dynamic learning environment. Continuity of clinical training is integrated throughout graduate training; a 2-week clinical refresher course provides a smooth transition from graduate school into the remaining clinical training years. Opportunities exist for student research during the fourth year of Medical School. With completion of this program, our MD/PhD graduates are well-prepared to engage in successful careers as dual-degree physician-scientists.

Admission Requirements

The Long School of Medicine (LSOM) Medical School Admissions Committee and the MD/PhD Program Admissions Committee determine the acceptance of applicants into the MD/PhD Program. Acceptance to the LSOM is a required first step, but does not indicate acceptance into the MD/PhD program. Acceptance into the MD/PhD Program is contingent upon the completion of all LSOM admissions requirements including required coursework with an outstanding GPA, a competitive MCAT result, strong letters of reference, and a successful interview. In addition to the LSOM requirements, a separate essay and interview is required for the MD/PhD Program (through AMCAS application).

Pre-Requisite Coursework. Each required course must be completed with a grade of C or better. Courses taken Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit do not count towards meeting the requirement. Advanced placement credit is accepted **only** if the school granting the credit lists the specific course(s) and number of units granted per course on an official transcript. In certain circumstances, a limited amount of online course work not required for the major and not a prescribed course for application to medical school may be considered. On-line courses need to be from approved universities *via* the six regional accreditors:

<http://www.neasc.org/>;
<http://www.msche.org/>;
<http://www.sacs.org/>;
<http://www.wascweb.org/>.

Online schools accredited by a regional accreditor recognized by the United States Department of Education can be determined by searching the [United States Department of Education database](#).

Acceptance to the LSOM is conditional upon satisfactory completion of all requirements as

listed by The University of Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS). In particular, if coursework or degree completion is listed as planned in the TMDSAS application, this must be accomplished. Failure to inform the Admissions Office of any changes may result in withdrawal of acceptance. Admission requirements can be waived to be determined on a case by case basis.

The following is required coursework for consideration for admission to the LSOM:

ENGLISH: A minimum of six semester hours.

BIOLOGY: Two years as required for science majors, one year with formal laboratory experience (minimum of 14 semester hours, or 12 hours of lecture and two hours of lab).

CHEMISTRY: One year of general (inorganic) chemistry (six semester hours of lecture, two semester hours of lab) and one year of organic chemistry (six semester hours of lecture and two semester hours of lab) as required for science majors including the corresponding laboratory experience in both years (minimum of 16 semester hours).

BIOCHEMISTRY: Three semester hours or five quarter hours of Biochemistry. This requirement may be used towards fulfilling the Biology or Chemistry requirement. The course may be taught in a Biology, Biochemistry or Chemistry department and cannot be an introductory course.

PHYSICS: One year as required for science majors including a full year of laboratory experience (minimum of eight semester hours, six semester hours of lecture, two semester hours of lab).

Foreign coursework **will not** count towards satisfying any of the required courses. All prerequisites must be taken at a regionally accredited US or Canadian college or university. More information available on foreign coursework can be found on:

http://www.tmdsas.com/medical/foreign_Course_work.html

Failure to gain acceptance into the MD/PhD Program will not jeopardize acceptance of an applicant into the SOM or the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). Once enrolled, MD/PhD students are expected to maintain exceptional academic performance in both the medical school and graduate school components of the program and to fulfill all requirements for both degrees. Affirmation of this requirement *via* a signed form is required prior to admission.

Student Pathways into the MD/PhD Program

Traditional Students. Most applicants into the MD/PhD Program will apply and matriculate into the dual degree program as a first year student in the SOM.

Students who are already engaged in medical or graduate school training at UT Health San Antonio (UTHSA) may apply for entry into the MD/PhD Program. These individuals will be considered on a case-by-case basis in relation to all of the criteria outlined above as well as on the basis of academic performance in their present training program. Note that application into the MD/PhD Program requires independent acceptance by both the LSOM and GSBS as outlined above.

Transfer Students. Students who are already matriculated in the LSOM, GSBS, or an MD/PhD program at another institution may apply for entry into the MD/PhD Program at UTHSCSA. These individuals will be considered on a case-by-case basis in relation to all of the criteria outlined above as well as on the basis of academic performance in their present training program. Note that application into the MD/PhD Program requires independent acceptance by both the SOM and GSBS as well as adherence to the guidelines and time limits outlined by each program with regards to transfer into their program.

Application to the MD/PhD Program

Application. An [online application](#) for admission into the MD/PhD Program must be processed through TMDSAS (by October 1st) or the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) by November 1st. It is important that applicants clearly indicate the MD/PhD program by checking the appropriate box in the online application.

The MD/PhD Interviews and Recruitment Committee, a subcommittee of the MD/PhD Advisory Committee, will review each application and consider:

- the applicant's undergraduate and graduate course work, academic performance, and degree(s)
- scores on the MCAT (if applicable)
- research experience; emphasis is placed upon prior research accomplishments as an important indicator of success in future research activities
- all other required documentation submitted with the online application including the special essay required by the MD/PhD Program

After review by the MD/PhD Interviews and Recruitment Committee, highly ranked candidates are invited to participate in a day-long interview that includes an orientation to the program, as well as individual interviews with the MD/PhD Program Director and other members or representatives of the MD/PhD Program. Every attempt is made to coordinate this interview date with that of the Medical School admissions process. Subsequently, for all interviewed applicants, the MD/PhD Program Interviews and Recruitment Committee provides recommendations to the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee.

After independent review by the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee and the Medical School Admissions Committee, applicants are formally notified of the outcome by the Deans of the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences of the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

Applicants are invited for interviews between August and December. Prior to December 31st, the MD/PhD program may extend initial offers of acceptance. Applicants may accept offers from more than one school during the pre-match offer period without the risk of an offer being withdrawn by a school.

An applicant who receives more than one offer should decline any offer from a school that he/she definitely does not plan to attend as soon as that decision is made. Offers of acceptance are considered to be valid only if an acceptance letter is received. Verbal offers of acceptance or ranking are not binding to either the applicant or schools.

After December 31st, applicants are notified of the status of their application, *i.e.*, accepted, waitlisted, or rejected. Waitlisted and rejected applicants remain within the SOM applicant pool.

Applicants to a MD/PhD program who have not received a joint degree program offer of acceptance by January 10th, may participate in the TMDSAS match process and be eligible for acceptance into a MD only program at participating schools. To participate in the match, the applicant must have submitted an application to TMDSAS and have been interviewed at the respective school. These applicants, even if accepted into a MD only program, could be accepted into our MD/PhD program if an offer is extended after the match but before the beginning of medical school orientation.

Administrative Oversight of the MD/PhD Program

MD/PhD Program Director and Associate Program Directors. Routine operations of the MD/PhD program are coordinated by the MD/PhD Program Director and two associate program directors. This position serves under the direction of the Deans of both the School of Medicine (SOM) and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). In addition to day-to-day oversight of programmatic operations, the MD/PhD Program Director also serves a vital role in regular communications with all students. He/she meets individually with each student at least twice each year. The Program Director and Associate Program Directors also serve as a liaison to the curriculum and student affairs committees of both the SOM and GSBS.

MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee. The MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee serves as the primary oversight for students in the MD/PhD program. This committee establishes programmatic policies and operations and reviews/approves/takes action upon the recommendations of both the Interviews and Recruitment Sub-Committee and Promotions Board.

The MD/PhD Advisory Committee provides guidance for executive decisions and is responsible for due process in regards to Admissions and Dismissals from the MD/PhD program. An Academic Coordinator provides administrative support to the MD/PhD program.

The MD/PhD Advisory Committee provides direction to the MD/PhD Program Director for all activities of the Program. The MD/PhD Advisory Committee consists of prominent faculty members from both schools. In addition, representatives from the Deans Office from the SOM and GSBS serve as *ad hoc* members of the Committee. Meetings of the MD/PhD Advisory

Committee occur monthly and are chaired by the Program Director. Sub-committees of the MD/PhD Advisory Committee include:

- Interviews and Recruitment
- Curriculum
- Enrichment Activities
- Finances

An independent Promotions Board (see below) provides a regular review of student progress and provides recommendations to the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee. Ultimately, the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee recommends admissions, promotions, and dismissals of students within the program.

Graduate School. The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) provides oversight for MD/PhD students *via* the Committees on Graduate Studies (COGS) and the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC). The Integrated Multidisciplinary Graduate Program (IMGP) as well as the 4 other PhD programs at UTHSCSA have each established a COGS, which is responsible for supervising the progress of PhD students through the didactic curriculum and individual research project; this includes MD/PhD students, enrolled in their respective discipline or program. The COGS is responsible for insuring and certifying that graduate students meet prescribed milestones, including

- Successful completion of course work
- Approval of course substitutions and exemptions
- Approval of the assignment of Supervising Professors
- Approval of membership of dissertation research supervising and advancement PhD candidacy qualifying examination committees

COGS institutes policies for completion of the advancement to PhD degree candidacy examination in accordance with the stipulations for this examination that are established by the

respective discipline or program. COGS is responsible for assuring that meetings of the student's dissertation research supervising committee are held to monitor student progress, approval of the dissertation proposal, and final discipline or program approval of the written dissertation and oral defense.

The Chairperson of the COGS for each program is a member of the GFC. The GFC is chaired by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs of the GSBS and meets monthly to review and adopt policies regarding graduate student activities. The GFC approves all recommendations to the Dean for award of the PhD degree.

Promotions Board. An independent MD/PhD Program Promotions Board reviews the progress of each student every six months throughout medical and graduate school enrollment. Progress is assessed on the basis of academic performance, board scores (Step I exam), research rotation reports, scholarly activities, evaluations from the Supervising Professor (during PhD training), and the student's self-assessment (during PhD training). Specific criteria for promotion within the MD/PhD Program have been established with respect to grade point average (GPA; both overall and during a given semester and/or year), success and appropriate timing of qualifying and licensing exams, and research progress and scholarship (see below for additional detail). The MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee receives recommendations from the Promotions Board for formal action regarding decisions related to student advancement and/or dismissal.

Financial Support

Medical School Years. Financial support includes a stipend throughout all medical school years. Tuition, fees, and benefits are provided through all years of enrollment. As of August 2017, the annual stipend of the MD/PhD Program is

\$26,000. Upon re-entry into Medical School, support is provided for a maximum of four semesters.

Graduate School Years. During the Graduate School phase, the Supervising Professors are expected to provide stipend support as well as tuition and fees. Once MD/PhD students begin the graduate school phase, the annual stipend is \$26,000 for all trainees except for those in the dual institutional UTSA/UTHSA Biomedical Engineering Program (BME). The BME Program's annual stipend is \$21,000 during the graduate school years. However, the MD/PhD Program will supplement the additional funds needed to commensurate the \$26,000 annual stipend for the MD/PhD Program Students

Curriculum

The MD/PhD program at UTHSCSA offers an innovative and integrated curriculum leading to both the MD and PhD degrees in a continuous enrollment. The curriculum is jointly administered and supervised by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) and the Long School of Medicine (LSOM). Traditional students conduct to the first and second years of Medical School; a third laboratory rotation is possible after completion of the initial Medical School curriculum. The basic science portion of medical education is completed within 18 months. Subsequently, students match into the research program/laboratory of a Supervising Professor and complete Graduate School course work and dissertation research requirements to earn the PhD during the next three to four years. After earning the PhD, students complete third year clerkships and fourth year medical school electives and didactic courses, graduating with the MD degree.

MS1	MS2	GS1	GS2	GS3	GS4	MS3	MS4
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Typical sequence of student progression through the MD/PhD Program. MS, medical school; GS, graduate school.

MEDICAL SCHOOL YEARS

Orientation and Lab Rotations. Students begin their educational experience the summer prior to the first year of Medical School. Throughout the first two years of medical school, students are introduced to the research opportunities and laboratories available for dissertation studies at UTHSA. This consists of various presentations by representatives of the Integrated Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program (IBMS) as well as other graduate programs available within the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS).

The IBMS consists of the diverse thematic training disciplines, reflecting the expertise and excellence of focused research activities and clinically relevant biomedical sciences at UTHSA. The IBMS disciplines include:

- Molecular Biophysics and Biochemistry (MBB)
- Neuroscience (NS)
- Cancer Biology (CB)
- Biology of Aging (BA)
- Cell Biology, Genetics, and Molecular Medicine (CGM)
- Physiology and Pharmacology (PP)
- Infection, Inflammation and Immunity (III)

The IBMS disciplines operate under the general administrative oversight provided by several basic science departments within the LSOM. Note that graduate faculty for IBMS disciplines are from throughout the Health Science Center and affiliated campuses.

Three additional PhD degree programs are available to MD/PhD students. These programs operate separately from the IBMS and include:

- [Biomedical Engineering](#) (BME), a program jointly administered by the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and UTHSCSA.
- [Radiological Sciences](#) (RS)
- [Translational Science](#) (TRLS)

Based on information and interest gained from presentations during orientation, students choose a laboratory in which to do their first research rotation. The purpose of laboratory rotations is to determine whether the student and potential Supervising Professor and laboratory would be a good match for subsequent dissertation research. It is anticipated that the highly focused dissertation research activities will be completed in an efficient, productive, and mutually beneficial manner. The precise activities for the student during the research rotation are determined on an individual basis as a result of discussions and decisions between and by the student and the rotation professor.

This first rotation runs from approximately the first week of June to approximately the third week in July. The White Coat Ceremony marks the end of the first rotation and the beginning of the medical basic science curriculum. The second rotation is completed during the summer after the first year of Medical School.

Each rotation experience is evaluated both by the rotation professor and by the student. These evaluations are provided to the MD/PhD Advisory Committee and Promotions Board for evaluation of student performance and progress as well as the suitability of the rotation professor as a potential Supervising Professor. It is highly recommended that the faculty member who will supervise the student rotation be on the roster of Program Faculty approved by the MD/PhD Advisory Committee. If the faculty is not already on the roster, both the faculty member and the student should be aware that the student will not be allowed to select the faculty member as their Supervising Professor until the faculty member applies to and is approved by the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee for inclusion in the

roster of MD/PhD Program Faculty (see below). It is also essential that the potential Supervising Professor have grant funding sufficient to provide graduate student stipend support and tuition/fees during all years of GSBS training (both amount and duration).

Medical School Basic Science Curriculum. The basic science curriculum in the Medical School is an innovative 18-month program in which the basic sciences are taught in a clinical context. The curriculum is designed to teach medical students the skills of clinical thinking, self-directed learning, group decision-making, and values that will lead to lifelong learning. The curriculum is arranged as modules based on organ systems and is directed by module directors and discipline coordinators who ensure that the basic science information is conveyed in a clinically relevant and meaningful way. A typical week in the curriculum consists of the introduction of a case followed by didactic lectures in the middle of the week and culminating with a group discussion of the case. Clinical experiences, including simulated patients, are included in the basic science curriculum.

At the end of the 18-month basic science curriculum in the Medical School, MD/PhD students may conduct an additional research rotation, if necessary. If they are prepared to match in a laboratory (with the approval of the MD/PhD Advisory Committee; see below), they may begin their research activities.

All MD/PhD students must pass the USMLE Step 1 exam before enrolling in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Selection of Supervising Professor. Students consult with their rotation professors regarding the suitability of matching in their laboratories for PhD studies. If the student and potential Supervising Professor are in agreement, the student completes a *Selection of Supervising Professor form* and submits to the Academic Coordinator of the MD/PhD Program for consideration by the MD/PhD Committee. The Supervising Professor must be on the roster of

potential Supervising Professors reviewed and approved by the MD/PhD Advisory Committee. Final approval is provided by the MD/PhD Committee and is based on the potential Supervising Professor's research funding, research productivity, and record of student training. These qualities should be kept in mind by students when they choose rotation professors.

Returning to Medical School after Graduate School. Upon completion of the PhD degree, traditional MD/PhD students return to their clinical training in the third-year clerkships. MD/PhD students should make every effort to coordinate the completion of their PhD with the beginning of third year clerkships on July 1st. However, alternative start dates are possible based upon clinical clerkship scheduling. Students should be aware that starting clerkships on alternative dates could affect their graduation date from Medical School. All medical students including MD/PhD students transitioning back into the medical curriculum must complete a clinical skills refresher course within 12 months of entering clerkships. This course is offered during the month of June; thus, for example, even if an MD /PhD student intends to return to clinical clerkships on July 1st, they must complete the refresher course no sooner than the previous June.

Completing the Clinical Curriculum MD/PhD students complete the requirements for the MD degree in the same manner as all medical students. They complete clinical clerkship during the MS3 year, and complete didactics and senior electives during the 4th year. However, research opportunities are also available during the 4th year selective; thus, MD/PhD students can continue their research efforts.

GRADUATE SCHOOL YEARS

The curriculum for completing the PhD degree is established by the individual IBMS disciplines or one of the three other UTHSCSA doctoral

programs. Although requirements vary among the various disciplines and programs, they all include the same fundamental elements: advanced coursework, the successful completion of advancement to PhD candidacy exam, preparation of a doctoral dissertation research proposal, a written dissertation, and successful oral defense of the dissertation. The dissertation research must be original; it is anticipated this research will result in publications. Students meet twice a year with their dissertation research supervising committee to evaluate progress. The PhD degree is to be completed in three to four years.

Selection of GSBS Program/Discipline and Research Mentor/Laboratory. As outlined above, students are required to complete at least two, six-eight week lab rotations with prospective Supervising Professors during the summer months before the first and second years of Medical School. These rotations allow students to gain experience in the laboratory, interact with the faculty, and become familiar with a myriad of subjects and projects. Students have the opportunity to complete a third lab rotation; however, a Supervising Professor and lab should be chosen by the end of the third rotation.

Students often parallel their own research interests with those offered by faculty from throughout the Health Science Center (<https://expertise.uthscsa.edu/>). Note that not all faculty are members of the graduate faculty from among the various doctoral programs. Graduate faculty status in affiliation with a given discipline/program is a requirement to serve as a Supervising Professor. In addition, the Supervising Professor of MD/PhD students must also be a member of the MD/PhD Program Faculty.

Laboratory rotations are designed to help students identify the most fitting laboratory for dissertation research. Before initiation of the first laboratory rotation, students attend a GSBS-organized faculty presentation in which faculty members, representing each of the GSBS programs/disciplines, describe current research,

laboratories that are willing to provide oversight for a student rotation, and the requirements of the rotation. After attending this faculty presentation, students typically research and meet with several different faculty members to discuss research interests and potential projects before undertaking a lab rotation.

The UTHSA Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) has diverse PhD programs (<http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/main/academics/gradup rograms/phd/overview.asp>); the IBMS is divided into disciplines. Students may join a research laboratory in one department (e.g., Physiology) while engaged in an IBMS discipline (e.g., Biology of Aging) that encompasses faculty from several departments. This offers the opportunity to learn applications from other fields of study and to become integrated into a robust collaborative network. Once a student has completed laboratory rotations, the selection of an appropriate mentor (Supervising Professor) and laboratory begins. While there are numerous factors to consider when joining a lab, the most crucial aspects are as follows: (1) the relationship between the student and potential mentor, (2) the cohesiveness between the student's goals and that of the mentor, and (3) the quality and quantity of productivity in the lab.

Contract with Supervising Professor/Mentor.

Due to the time constraints placed on MD/PhD students in their graduate school years, it is critical that the student and mentor interact on a weekly basis (minimally) and continue an open line of communication about the progress of their project throughout their graduate school career. To promote efficiency and communication between the mentor and student, the mentor and student complete semi-annual student progress report forms. These forms are then reviewed by the MD/PhD Promotions Board and MD/PhD Advisory Committee. Through this approach, potential problems are identified and addressed by the mentor and student.

Change of Supervising Professor. If a student must change their Supervising Professor/mentor

for any reason, the issue(s) must be approved by the appropriate COGS, the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee, and the GSBS Dean. After completion of all requirements to change a Supervising Professor as established by the COGS for a given PhD program/discipline, a form for notification of the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee should be completed and submitted to the MD/PhD Program Academic Coordinator. The basis for the request to change the Supervising Professor must be described. While it is not ideal for a student to change mentors after committing to a laboratory, the success of our students remain top priorities.

Change of Research Project. Many factors may cause a student to redirect his/her research project. While this "redirection" may be slight in some cases, other situations require more dramatic changes. In these latter cases, the student must discuss alternative research projects with his/her Supervising Professor, and collectively establish a revised plan. The student must also discuss the reasons for this research project change with his/her dissertation committee members and ultimately, gain the approval from them and the Supervising Professor prior to notification of the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee. Note that all programmatic requirements established by the COGS of a given PhD program or discipline must be fulfilled as well.

Mentorship During the early graduate phase, students are formally mentored in the preparation and submission of individual pre-doctoral training grant applications. Students are also mentored by their Supervising Professor and their PhD dissertation committee. Students and mentors are provided with the AAMC *Compact between Students and Mentors* to facilitate a discussion of expectations. The MD/PhD Program encourages students and mentors to meet at least once weekly.

There is a mandatory formal evaluation every six months during the graduate school years (see below). Prior to completion of the qualifying examination, this evaluation requires only the

student and Supervising Professor. Once the student has passed the qualifying examination and established a dissertation committee, this semi-annual evaluation involves the student, Supervising Professor, and intramural members of the dissertation committee.

Clinical Experiences During GS Years During the graduate school years, MD/PhD students will have the opportunity to gain clinical experience similar to medical students in clinical clerkships. Thus, ten half-day sessions per year will be spent in a clinical setting working with a preceptor in the field of the student's choice. The purpose of this experience is to allow the student to gain insight regarding the application of biomedical research to patient care as well as to reinforce clinical skills learned during medical school.

MD/PhD Program Faculty

Requirements and Procedures to become a Member of the MD/PhD Program Faculty

Introduction. Students and faculty within the MD/PhD Training Program are the core intellectual and creative forces of the program. A principal goal of the MD/PhD Program is to develop students into future leaders in academic biomedical research. To achieve this goal, the MD/PhD Program strives to maintain a diverse, high quality faculty capable of effectively mentoring MD/PhD students during the PhD training years. While it is recognized that individuals with long-standing experience in graduate education and large research programs are desirable faculty, younger investigators, those new to the university, or those with smaller programs are also desirable and may be more appropriate for some students. While the MD/PhD program strives towards providing diversity in investigative areas and mentoring styles available to its students, it is also critical to maintain standards for dissertation advisors. Mentor

effectiveness is supported by a team-building concept where new faculty with limited previous experience as a PhD dissertation advisor can be partnered with experienced mentors and other faculty with expertise of value to a student's career development and scientific training. Through this process, students are assured of high quality mentoring in classical and contemporary methods and pathways to scientific discovery, while inexperienced dissertation advisors mature with the counsel of colleagues with advanced mentoring experience.

Dissertation Advisor Credentials. To become a dissertation advisor / Supervising Professor for a MD/PhD student (MD/PhD Graduate Faculty), the following requirements must be met:

1. The faculty candidate must have an appointment at the level of Assistant Professor or higher at UTHSCSA or an affiliated Institution and must be a member of the graduate faculty of one of the PhD granting programs at UTHSCSA. The departmental appointment may be primary or adjunct (often termed "secondary"), but the individual must satisfy the requirements to be a dissertation advisor in the given program.
2. The faculty candidate must have significant extramural funding at the level of an NIH R01, VA MERIT award, NSF grant, Project leader on an NIH-funded Program Project or SCOR, or the equivalent. If such extramural funding is lost prior to completion of the student's PhD requirements, the MD/PhD Advisory Committee will consider the adequacy of the environment on an individual basis.
3. The faculty candidate must have served, or be serving on a dissertation committee of at least one PhD student. This can be from any department including those outside UTHSCSA.
4. The faculty candidate must have a record of ongoing meritorious publication in his or her field. At the time of application,

reprints from two such publications should be submitted.

Procedure for New Applications to the MD/PhD Program Faculty. Applications are accepted at any time and reviewed within 30 days of submission by the MD/PhD Advisory Committee. The application consists of (1) curriculum vitae, (2) complete list of funding sources (active and pending), (3) cover letter summarizing previous mentoring experience, current graduate program affiliations, statement of the applicant's desire to be involved with the MD/PhD program, and a concise description of the research program, and (4) two representative reprints of recent publications.

Procedure for Renewal Applications. MD/PhD Program faculty will be reviewed every three years on the basis of a renewal application to the MD /PhD Program. It is expected that if there is a change in status that affects the minimal requirements (such as faculty appointment or funding) that the Committee will be notified at once.

Prospective Dissertation Advisors without Previous Experience. Faculty meeting the requirements to become a PhD dissertation advisor, but who have not previously graduated a student, will be accepted as MD/PhD Program Faculty with the stipulation that a co-principal advisor be named and serve on the Dissertation committee. Co-principal advisors must be MD/PhD Faculty with previous mentoring experience.

Academic Performance and Advancement

Meetings with the Program Director. The MD/PhD Program Director meets with each student twice a year across the medical and

graduate phases to provide additional mentoring, career development advice and assurances for an optimal educational experience of each dual-degree student.

Each student will be primarily subject to the academic guidelines of the School (Medical or Graduate) in which they are registered at each stage of the MD/PhD Program. However, they will be subject to additional requirements as specified by the MD/PhD Program in order to remain members of that program.

Advancement of individual students through the MD/PhD Program is subject to satisfactory achievement of a series of milestones and criteria established by the MD/PhD Advisory Committee. Failure to meet or achieve the established standards will result in the student being denied advancement and recommended for dismissal from the MD/PhD Program.

Primary responsibility for achieving the requirements for advancement lies with the student. The academic standards for successful completion of each course are determined by the school, department, or program under which the course is administered.

The MD/PhD program has a dedicated Promotions Board whose sole responsibility is oversight of all academic activities of students at every phase of the program. The Promotions Board will make recommendations for promotion, graduation, academic warning, probation, dismissal, or implementation of special academic programs and thus, advancement of students within the MD/PhD Program to the Advisory Committee who will make a final recommendation regarding advancement. These recommendations are then submitted to the appropriate Dean???

The overall objective is to achieve completion of the combined MD/PhD degree in 7-8 years of study.

Specific requirements as detailed below are attached in the appendix.

Acceptance of Academic Standards. Upon matriculation into the MD/PhD program, each student will sign the form (Appendix) stating acknowledgement and acceptance of the academic standards and requirements for advancement within the MD/PhD program.

MS1-MS2 ACADEMIC YEARS

Year MS1:

- Satisfactory completion of all first year medical school courses and an overall GPA of at least 3.00. No grade below C in any course. Students falling below a GPA of 3.00 will be allowed one semester for remediation.
- Satisfactory attendance at required Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Satisfactory completion of laboratory rotations and semi-annual review forms.

Year MS2:

- Satisfactory completion of all 2nd year medical school courses and an overall GPA of at least 3.00. No grade below C in any course. Students falling below a GPA of 3.00 will be allowed one semester for remediation.
- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Satisfactory completion of laboratory rotations and choice of PhD mentor (Supervising Professor) and graduate program/discipline.
- Satisfactory completion of semi-annual review forms.
- USMLE Step 1 examination taken by June of year 2 with subsequent passing grade.

GS ACADEMIC YEARS

Year GS1:

- Satisfactory completion of year GS1 coursework with GPA of at least 3.00.
- Completion of training in responsible conduct of research.
- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities, including F Troop.
- Completion and submission of NIH F30 or F31 National Research Service Award (NRSA) application or equivalent.
- Satisfactory completion of semi-annual review forms.

Year GS2:

- Satisfactory completion of year GS2 coursework with GPA of at least 3.00.
- Successful pass of qualifying examination (graduate program specific requirements).
- Satisfactory attendance is required monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Satisfactory completion of semiannual review forms.

Year GS3:

- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Satisfactory completion of semiannual review forms.
- Presentation of work at annual, UTHSCSA Medical Student Research Day.
- If intending to graduate by end of year GS3, completion and submission of dissertation by July 1st of that year.
- Completion and submission of a 1st author manuscript.

- Completion of clinical skills refresher course prior to return to Medical School.

Year GS4 (If required):

- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Satisfactory completion of semi-annual review forms.
- If intending to graduate by end of year GS4, completion and submission of thesis by July 1st of that year.
- Completion and submission of a 1st author manuscripts.
- Completion of clinical skills refresher course prior to return to medical school.

** Exceptionally, an additional year (GS5) may be requested for completion of the PhD dissertation. This request must be made at least 6 months prior to completion of the GS4 year and be accompanied by letters from the Supervising Professor and dissertation committee explaining the nature of the extenuating circumstances leading to the request. The PhD must be completed within five years in the graduate program.

MS3-MS4 ACADEMIC YEARS

Year MS3:

- Correction of submitted manuscripts, if required, to ensure publication.
- Satisfactory completion of required core clinical clerkships.
- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench-to-Bedside seminars, the Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.

Year MS4:

- Satisfactory completion of elective clinical clerkships and acting internships.
- Satisfactory attendance is required at monthly Bench to Bedside seminars, the

- Annual MD/PhD Program Retreat, and other program activities.
- Take USMLE Step 2 examination and clinical skills examination
- Application to and selection by a residency program suitable to a career in academic medicine.

Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) National Medical Honor Society

[Alpha Omega Alpha](#) is a national medical honor society. Membership is lifelong and signifies a commitment to scholarship, leadership, professionalism, and service as well as recognition for a physician's dedication to the profession and art of healing.

Oversight for the UTHSCSA chapter of the AOA is provided by Glen Medellin, MD, Associate Professor/Clinical/Greehey Distinguished Chair in Palliative Care for Children in the Department of Pediatrics.

UTHSA Election Process

Eligibility for Junior AOA Election

- Students in the top 10% of their class, based on their GPA at the end of the end of December of their MS3 year. Students must have completed three of the required clerkships by December.
- Of the eligible students, 10 will be selected for nomination during their Junior year.
- *Example: in a class of 220 students, 22 students are invited to apply. Of those 22 students, ten students would be chosen for Junior AOA.*
- If class rank does not allow a meaningful breakpoint for eligibility determination, USMLE step 1 scores will be used for secondary stratification of rank.

- Students who are not selected for Junior AOA will be eligible for reconsideration for Senior AOA Election as long as they meet criteria for eligibility for Senior AOA elections during their senior year.

Eligibility for Senior AOA Election

- Students in the top 25% of their class, based on their GPA at the end of the end of their MS3 year. Students must have completed all of the required clerkships by July.
- Of the eligible students, up to 15% (minus students already selected during their Junior year) will be selected for nomination during their Senior year.
- *For example, in a class of 220 students, 55 students are eligible to apply. Since 10 were already selected during their Junior year, an additional 45 students will be eligible to apply during their Senior year. Of those 45 students, 22 students would be chosen for Senior AOA. This will give a total of 15% of the class selected for AOA (22 Senior AOA + 10 Junior AOA).*
- 1-2 students can be nominated at the end of their senior year if they demonstrate notable achievements during the final year of undergraduate medical education.

Selection criteria for AOA

- Must be in top 25% of class based on GPA to be eligible.
- Students who are eligible are then nominated by chapter AOA members based on activities they have done during medical school.
- Must be in good standing as determined by the Vice Dean for Undergraduate Medical Education (*i.e.*, no documented professionalism issues, letters of reprimand, arrests, convictions, etc.).
- Application must address activities during medical school, highlighting the student's achievements. These achievements include activities demonstrating a potential for

achievement in and advancement of medicine:

- Service to the community, to fellow students, and to the Health Science Center
- Advocacy
- Leadership
- Research and Scholarship.
- A commitment to professionalism.
- Other special considerations determined by the student

Process

- Students will be notified if they are eligible to apply.
- They then fill out the application and submit electronically to the chapter councilor
- Students are chosen based on information contained in the application. Comparative
- GPA and USMLE performance are not considered in the selection process.

Timeline for applications and nomination

Week 1:

- Eligible students will be e-mailed letting them know they can apply.
- Student applications are due at end of week.

Week 2:

- Student applications are de-identified by AOA chapter councilor and scrubbed of class rank and exam score information.
- Student applications are then released securely to all AOA faculty and student members with a voting form
- Voting forms are due at end of week.

Week 3:

- The Selection Subcommittee will then review all voting forms returned and rank students.
- The Selection Subcommittee will make final selections for nomination.

Week 4:

- Meeting of AOA faculty and students to review and validate election results
- Announcements will be made identifying those students nominated to

Academic and Research Evaluation

Laboratory Rotation Evaluation. Students will be evaluated following each laboratory rotation. In parallel, students will provide an evaluation of the rotation experience. These written and signed evaluations must be submitted on the form created by the MD/PhD Program (see Appendix) within two weeks after completion of each laboratory rotation.

Medical School Progress Evaluation. During medical school years, students must complete a *MD/PhD Promotions Board Report for Medical Students*. These semi-annual reports must be submitted to the MD/PhD Program Academic Coordinator by **August 1st and February 1st** of each year. Requests for extension of the deadline for submission of this report will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A written request for extension should be directed to the MD/PhD Program Director through the MD/PhD Program Academic Coordinator and should describe the reason for the request. Requests must be received at least two weeks **prior** to the due date. Failure to submit completed forms or to provide a letter requesting an extension of the deadline will be a consideration in the review of a student's progress by the MD/PhD Program Promotions Board.

Semi-Annual Student Research Progress Evaluation. Once a student has selected a Supervising Professor and initiated research activities, they will be evaluated by their Supervising Professor and/or dissertation committee *at least once every six months until they have successfully defended their PhD dissertation*. These in-depth, semi-annual progress reports must be submitted to the MD/PhD Program Academic Coordinator by **August 1st and February 1st** of each year and accompanied by a *MD/PhD Promotions Board Report for Graduate*

Students. Once a student has completed all requirements for completion of the PhD and received COGS approval, no further semi-annual evaluations will be required.

Requests for extension of the deadline for submission of all documents associated with the semi-annual evaluation (see below) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A written request for extension should be directed to the MD/PhD Program Director through the MD/PhD Program Academic Coordinator and should describe the reason for the request; this letter must include the signature of the Supervising Professor. Requests must be received at least two weeks **prior** to the due date of the evaluation. Failure to submit completed, signed forms included in this required semi-annual evaluation or to provide a letter requesting an extension of the deadline will be a consideration in the review of student progress by the MD/PhD Program Promotions Board.

To accomplish this semi-annual evaluation, the student shall submit to the Supervising Professor a written report of progress on their research work, including statements of objectives of the research, methods used, major results obtained, conclusions drawn, pre- or reprints of papers submitted for publication, and proposed direction of future work. This will be required for completion of the *MD/PhD Semi-Annual Student Evaluation Form* (by the student and Supervising Professor). The Supervising Professor is expected to establish the time and place of a formal meeting to discuss the Evaluation Form. The student is expected to provide a brief overview of his/her research and training activities as well as plans for the future completion of the requirements in fulfillment of the MD/PhD Program. The Supervising Professor will evaluate the research progress made by the student and, if satisfactory, endorse both the progress and the direction of future work to be undertaken. This semi-annual evaluation will include consideration of student participation in and satisfactory completion of

required MD/PhD course work, research, seminars and other MD/PhD Program activities.

If progress is unsatisfactory, the Supervising Professor shall discuss the reasons for this decision with the student. Then, the Supervising Professor and student shall develop a plan for remediation. In this case, the student shall present an updated *MD/PhD Semi-Annual Student Evaluation* Form to the Supervising Professor within three months.

The Supervising Professor will follow up each meeting with a memorandum specifying the decisions regarding the outcome of student evaluation including research progress and future work. A copy of this memorandum should be provided to the MD/PhD Program Director through the MD/PhD Academic Coordinator together with a copy of the *MD/PhD Semi-Annual MD/PhD Student Evaluation* Form (see Appendix) for processing and further review by the MD/PhD Promotion Board prior to presentation to the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee.

Failure of a student to show satisfactory progress toward his/her degree goal may be grounds for dismissal from the Program. The MD/PhD Promotion Board will make a recommendation for student dismissal. This recommendation will then be considered by the full MD/PhD Advisory Committee prior to a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. The Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences will be notified of any student who receives unsatisfactory evaluations in two consecutive periods.

The Supervising Professor, with the advice and consent of the Supervising Committee, shall decide when the student has completed a body of research work that meets the degree requirements for MD/PhD Program. Each graduate of the MD/PhD Program should make a significant contribution to the peer-reviewed biomedical or clinical literature as required by their PhD Program and/or discipline.

Required Programmatic Enrichment Activities

Bench-to-Bedside. Bench-to-Bedside (often shortened to “B2B” in verbal communication) is a meeting designed to enrich the student’s understanding of the professional development and diverse roles of physician-scientists in clinical practice, research, academia, industry, and society. B2B is held monthly and required of MD/PhD students throughout the entirety of medical and graduate school training. This vital enrichment activity insures connectivity both among students and with the program during all years of MD/PhD training. Of particular importance, these robust, interactive meetings facilitate group discussion of topics directed at optimizing physician-scientist training at UTHSA. The format of these meetings varies, but includes seminar, workshop, interactive group activities, self-reflection and always includes group dialogue. Seminar topics vary widely and include panel discussions, trainee research presentations, meeting reports, and literature discussions.

MD/PhD Journal Club. Journal Club is a required one-hour monthly meeting for all MS1, MS2 and GS1 students. At this seminar, guest faculty are invited to present an article. Students are expected to provide critical analysis, insight, personal experience, and critique to add to discussion. The purpose is to enhance and support research and literature consumption throughout medical school years.

Annual MD/PhD Retreat. Twice a year the MD/PhD students come together for a one-day retreat. The fall retreat consists of community building and provides an introduction for newly matriculated students. The spring retreat brings together students, mentors, Advisory Committee and Promotions Board spend a day discussing research. This retreat offers students the opportunity to learn from their fellow classmates and to interact with faculty members from within and outside of their research fields. The spring

retreat generally occurs in mid March and includes poster presentations by MS1-GS2 students and oral presentations (15-25 minute talks) by GS3-GS4 students throughout the day. These presentations demonstrate work completed in recent lab rotations or dissertation labs. In addition, a keynote seminar is provided by a well-regarded physician and/or scientist; this presentation includes a description of the speaker's career and research interests and provides advice on how to excel as a physician-scientist. While the general theme is "progress in science," the retreat is an exciting event filled with great minds, food, and camaraderie.

MS Student Research Day. The UTHSCSA School of Medicine offers a superb opportunity for medical students and MD/PhD students (through GS2 level) to share their most recent research projects with faculty and fellow classmates. The Medical Student Research Day is held each fall semester and involves over eighty student poster presentations (which is continually on the rise), two keynote seminars, an award ceremony, and a lovely concluding reception. Carefully selected faculty members judge the student posters, and several monetary awards are given to commend the work done by the students. The vast display of research projects spans the subjects of epidemiology, public health, biochemistry, molecular biology, orthopedics, biomedical engineering and numerous others. Medical Student Research Day is an excellent time for students in the initial phases of their academic careers to learn to effectively communicate their science with others and appreciate the bridge between science and medicine.

Individual Fellowship Grant Application. UTHSCSA MD/PhD students are required to apply for individual fellowship grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and/or from other national or local organizations. The skills of persuasion, articulation, and communication in grant preparation are important in the career development of the nascent physician-scientist. Indeed, success in obtaining biomedical research

funding is an essential survival skill in academic medicine. For this reason, MD/PhD students must submit an application for an individual National Research Service Award (NRSA) to the NIH or an equivalent by the end of their GS1 year. While there is no programmatic penalty if research funding is not achieved, the experience provided through the process of grant application preparation, submission, and review is invaluable towards the skills required to sustain a career in the biomedical research enterprise. This process also provides an outside review of the training environment.

To assist students in the process of proposal preparation, UTHSCSA offers invaluable training in the form of a grant-writing workshop, the F-Troop (explained below).

Historically, numerous UTHSCSA MD/PhD students have received individual fellowship support from the NIH or other organizations.

F-Troop. To facilitate the preparation of an individual F30/F31 grant application, attendance at weekly meetings of the UTHSCSA F-Troop is required. F-Troop is a hands-on grant-writing workshop that targets pre- and post-doctoral trainees who are in the process of preparing an individual National Research Service Award (NRSA) grant application (F30/31/32). At this workshop, special attention is given to the NIH and the five scored components of the fellowship application, *i.e.*, the candidate, mentor, research training plan, training potential and institutional environment/commitment to training. This workshop is also applicable to grant/fellowship applications to other funding agencies as well.

Students are required to attend F-Troop during the first year of graduate school for up to three cycles or until submission of NRSA application, whichever comes first. F-Troop workshops typically meet weekly for 1-2 hours and are conducted in an informal small group setting. Sessions include discussions of the NIH peer-review process, including consideration of study section selection and communications with NIH

officials. Significant peer-reviewed efforts and constructive feedback are given to help each student improve the quality of their writing for the submission of a competitive NRSA application.

Information on NRSA awards can be found at:
http://grants.nih.gov/training/F_files_nrsa.htm

The F-Troop handbook can be found at:
http://iims.uthscsa.edu/sites/iims-drupal/files/Education/F-troop/F_handbook.pdf

Career Planning and Residency Applications. Student attendance is required at two annual meetings where residency and/or fellowship directors will discuss residency and fellowship choices available to students. These programs will also include discussions of the structure, content and requirements of different residencies/fellowships and provide advice on the application/interview process. A rotation will be established such that representatives of each specialty present every three years.

During regularly-scheduled meetings with the MD/PhD Program Director, students are encouraged to explore career options. During the third and fourth years of medical school, students are paired with a faculty member in the field in which they plan to pursue residency. Discussions address plans of action with respect to applying to residency programs and anticipated training after residency. Thus, MD/PhD students receive personalized guidance from the MD/PhD Program Director and a faculty mentor on how to effectively apply and interview for residency. This personalized approach is focused on achievement of individual goals to obtain the chosen residency as well as to anticipate the subsequent steps towards a successful career as a physician-scientist.

Reporting Absences (Excused and Unexcused) Students are expected to be actively

involved in all programmatic activities. This will insure that individual MD /PhD students and the program excel to support the needs of physician-scientists-in-training. Therefore, attendance requirements have been established to ensure student participation, and events include Bench-to-Bedside seminars, Journal Club, F-troop, and other events that are deemed important and required by the MD/PhD program. Absences must be reported in a timely manner to the MD/PhD program. If an absence is planned, the program must be informed in advance. The program will review the request and determine whether it is excused or unexcused; the student will be notified of the decision. *Unexcused absences will be included in the student record and provided to the MD/PhD Promotions Board during the regular semi-annual review of student progress.* It is understood that certain absences are unavoidable, such as illness of self or immediate family, and other unforeseen situations that may prohibit attendance. Students are expected to report these situations in a timely manner to the MD/PhD program. Students must also fulfill all attendance requirements of the school in which they are enrolled at any time in the program.

Ethics/Professionalism Policy

The MD/PhD Program expects all students to exhibit the highest standards of conduct, honesty, and professionalism. Academic misconduct includes activities that undermine the academic integrity of the institution. The University may discipline a student for academic misconduct as outlined in the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio Catalog and Handbook of Operating Procedures. Academic misconduct may involve human, hard-copy, or electronic resources. Policies of academic misconduct apply to all course-, department-, school-, and university-related activities including conferences and off-campus performances as well as research work

(including lab experiments, data collection, analyses, and publications). All cases of academic misconduct must be reported to the Deans of the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) and the seriousness of the violation may be taken into account in assessing a penalty. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Cheating. Any attempt to use or provide unauthorized assistance, materials, information, or access in any form and in any academic exercise or environment is considered cheating and is expressly forbidden.

Fabrication. A student must not falsify or invent any information or data including, but not limited to, records or reports, laboratory results, data analyses, and citation to the sources of information.

Plagiarism. Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own. Ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. The adoption or reproduction of ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or research results of another person without acknowledgment is expressly forbidden. Credit must be given to the originality of others whenever:

- Quoting the works of another
- Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories
- Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, results, or theories of others
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material
- Offering materials assembled or collected by others

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty. A student must not intentionally or knowingly help another student commit an act of academic misconduct, nor allow another student to use his/her work or resources to commit an act of misconduct.

Leave of Absence Policy

For all leave of absences, either during medical or graduate years, the MD/PhD Program Director must be informed and consulted. Consideration for continuation in the MD/PhD Program will be determined by the MD/PhD Program Advisory Committee with advice provided by the MD/PhD Program Promotions Board.

In addition to the above, a leave of absence during medical or graduate school years must be independently provided by either the Dean of the School of Medicine (SOM) or Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS), respectively.

A leave of absence during medical school years may be granted by the Dean of the SOM or his/her designee if such absence is considered to be in the best interest of the student. The Dean's designee to monitor this activity area is the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Requests for a leave of absence must be made in writing by the student to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. If approved, the student must complete a Student Clearance Form, available from the Registrar's Office (319L MED). Contact information for this office is:

LONG SCHOOL OF MEDICINE | STUDENT AFFAIRS | Mail Code 7790 | 7703 Floyd Curl Drive | San Antonio, Texas 78229-3900 | Phone 210.567.0558 | Fax 210.567.6962 | http://studentservices.uthscsa.edu/GI_catalog.aspx | MedStudentAffairs@uthscsa.edu

The Dean of the SOM relies not only on the student's expressed wishes, but also on the opinion of the student's faculty advisor, the Medical School Promotions Committee, or other individuals familiar with the circumstances of the case. While the exact length of the leave of

absence will vary from case to case, it shall, under normal circumstances, not exceed one year. This information is available online at <http://som.uthscsa.edu/StudentAffairs/documents/AbsenceDismissalandReadmission.pdf>

A leave of absence during graduate school years is the ultimate responsibility of the Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS). Students should first consult their Supervising Professor, or if they do not yet have one, the Associate Dean of the GSBS. For students in a given PhD program or discipline, a leave of absence will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS); the COGS then provides a recommendation to the GSBS Dean.

MD/PhD Administration

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