



Graduate Student Handbook

**University of South Alabama
College of Medicine**

Fall, 2004

WELCOME

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the University of South Alabama's Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences. The next few years will be exciting and unique ones for you. You will acquire knowledge, meet challenges, and build core relationships that will guide you professionally and personally for the rest of your life.

The Director of the Graduate Program, the Academic Advisor, your mentor, the graduate faculty as a whole, other graduate students, and the departmental staff are here to help you through these next few years and make your experience and studies a positive and rewarding one.

PURPOSE OF HANDBOOK

This handbook provides information relevant to students in the Basic Medical Sciences Interdisciplinary Graduate Program. It is issued at orientation and contains detailed information on policies relating to the College of Medicine's Ph.D. Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences. The handbook should be used in conjunction with the University of South Alabama Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, which contains general requirements of the University's Graduate School, as well as detailed course descriptions.

This publication is not intended to replace the University Bulletin, but rather to serve as a supplement regarding policies and opportunities in the College of Medicine's Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences (BMS). Specifically, this handbook details the responsibilities you have as a graduate student, and what is expected of you as you progress through this program. It is hoped that collectively, the Bulletin and this handbook will make your time in the graduate program as problem-free as possible.

ORIENTATION

Upon matriculation, new graduate students encounter many topics relating to graduate study and have a variety of issues to consider as they embark on their course of advanced study. A number of documents and issues will be addressed during orientation or early in the Fall Semester.

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AROUND CAMPUS

CAMPUS MAP

Maps of the main campus of the University are located on the back cover of the current Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin and in the Schedule of Classes. In addition, copies of maps are available in the University's **Office of Admissions (AD 182)**.

CAMPUS PARKING

Motor vehicles operated on campus by students, faculty, and staff must be registered. Vehicle registration is completed at the **Bursar's Office (AD 160)**. At the time of registration, you will receive a parking hang tag, valid for one year, and a listing of traffic regulations for campus.

POST OFFICE AND E-MAIL

Basic Medical Science Graduate Students, regardless of their permanent residential address, are assigned a mailbox in the College of Medicine for receipt of Program and Department related mail. Mailboxes for students in the core curriculum are located adjacent to the **Graduate Office (MSB 3030)**. Students should check their boxes frequently, as that is a primary source of communication between the Graduate Office and Graduate Students.

Upon matriculation, all student receive access to an email account through the University. The University uses this form of communication to address all university related issues, including registration, grades, financial aid, etc. In addition, the course directors and BMS Graduate Office use the University email system to keep students abreast of events and changes.

All students who live on campus are required to have a personal mail box located in the Campus Post Office.

HOUSING

A wide range of housing facilities is available. The Department of Housing offers shared suites, apartments, efficiencies, and very limited number of private suites and efficiency apartments. Family housing is also available. Students interested in living in campus housing should apply for housing as soon as they receive notification of acceptance to the University, as assignments are made on a "first come, first serve" basis.

The Department of Housing residence hall contract is normally for the duration of the academic year. The contract can only be cancelled if you fail to enroll, withdraw from the University, marry, or graduate from the University. Notice of your intent to cancel must be made in writing on or before the FAILURE TO PAY DATE for the respective semester. Housing fees are due two to three months in advance of the beginning of each semester. For more information regarding campus housing facilities and availability, please contact the **Department of Housing (Area Offices located within the respective Dormitory**

Complex-Beta, Delta, Epsilon, and Gamma) directly or by phone at 460-6185.

Affordable off-campus housing is also available nearby. Students may contact the Chamber of Commerce by phone at 433-6951 or go to the university web site:

(<http://www.mobilechamber.com>) for information.

PAWS

PAWS is USA's new Personal Access Web System at <http://paws.usouthal.edu>. At this site, students are able to update personal information including address and phone numbers, register for classes, view financial aid and other account information, pay fees, and view grade reports and unofficial transcripts.

To access PAWS, you will need a JAG # (user ID) and password (PIN).

STUDENT ID CARDS

All students are required to hold a valid University ID (The Jag Card) during their enrollment at the University. Proof of registration and a picture ID are required to process a request for a University ID. A nominal one-time fee for the ID is charged at registration, and ID's are valid for 5 years. ID's should be obtained in the **University Center (Room 160)**. For more information regarding hours for obtaining your ID, please contact Southpaw Services at 460-6077.

SECURITY- COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

In order to maintain security within College of Medicine facilities, all faculty and students associated with the College are issued access cards for entry. These cards allow entry into the Medical Sciences Building after hours (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.) on weekdays, during the weekend hours and on holidays.

Upon matriculation, Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Students will complete the necessary form and are assigned an access card. Initial cards are issued free of charge. A \$20 fee is charged to replace lost or stolen cards. When a student leaves the program for any reason, the access card should be returned to the **Graduate Office (MSB 3030)** in order to avoid being charged for the card and/or having a hold placed on their academic records.

In addition to the access card, advanced students will be issued keys required for access to sites necessary for completion of required research. When a student departs from the University, those keys should be returned to the issuing authority.

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The Dean's Office of the University Graduate School is located in the **Mobile Townhouse (Room 222)**. The Graduate Dean, Dr. Judy Stout, who is advised by the Graduate Council, directs and administers graduate policies for all Colleges within the University. Academic standards and requirements set by the Graduate School are outlined in the Bulletin.

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE GRADUATE OFFICE

The office for the College of Medicine's Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences is located in the **Medical Sciences Building (Room 3030)**. The office can be reached by phone at 460-6153 or email lflagge@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

STIPENDS

Basic Medical Science Graduate Students are paid an annual stipend, as long as the student is enrolled full-time (registered for a minimum of six hours) and is making satisfactory progress toward completing degree requirements. Stipends are paid on a monthly basis, usually on the 1st of the month, unless that date falls on a weekend or holiday. Otherwise, payment is made on the first business day following the 1st.

Outside employment is not permitted while an enrolled BMS Graduate Student is receiving a stipend.

Students granted a leave of absence from the program for health or other personal reasons will not receive a stipend.

Stipend checks can be picked up directly from the **Bursar's Office (AD 160)** on the first of the month. If you wish to have the **University Payroll Office (AD 1)** deposit your check directly into your designated account, you may complete the Direct Deposit Form and take the required documentation to the Payroll Office. Students will receive the check stub, documenting direct deposit.

TUITION WAIVER AND EXPENSES

Current tuition and fee expenses are listed in the Schedule of Classes. As the College of Medicine provides a waiver of tuition for Basic Medical Science Graduate Students, you are responsible only for payment of fees associated with registration. Though fee amounts may vary, an approximate amount of fees for our students fall in the range of \$250 per semester.

University policy dictates that a student is not officially registered for classes until all fees are paid. It is imperative that all monies relating to registration be paid by the specified deadlines listed in the Schedule of Classes.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Situations may arise that dictate the need for additional monies or financial aid aside from the stipend and tuition waiver. Graduate students are eligible for various aid benefits. To inquire about financial aid (eligibility, deadlines, application process, etc.), please address your questions to the **Office of Financial Aid (AD 260)**. You may also contact that Office via email at finaid@usouthal.edu or by phone at 460-6231.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance coverage is available to students in the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program through Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The program is administered by **Alabama Administrators (478-5412)**. All students are provided with annual single coverage. Students wishing to enroll for family coverage are responsible for the added premium amount (i.e. the difference in premiums).

International students are required to have health care coverage. The premiums for enrollment in the International Student Health Care Plan are charged at registration.

International students in the BMS Graduate Program may elect to participate in the College of Medicine's health insurance plan. In order to avoid being charged for coverage under the International Student Health Care Plan, students must provide evidence of coverage with the College of Medicine to the **Office of International Services (Faculty Court South-Room 3)**. Contact their office at 460-6050 for more information relating to required health care coverage for International Students.

STUDENT HEALTH CARE AND CLINIC

The **Student Health Clinic (HSB 1450A)** is available for ambulatory care services to all students actively enrolled in the University. For current hours of service and/or to schedule an appointment, please call 460-7151. Specialty services are also available on a fee-for-service basis. Fees for such services are due at the time the service is provided.

COUNSELING AND TESTING SERVICES

The **Office of Counseling Services (Alpha East 326)**, staffed by professional counselors, is available to assist students with various problems, including personal, academic, and vocational concerns. There are no fees charged for counseling services; however, in some cases, for certain testing services, a small fee is required. Personal confidences are respected and therefore, counseling records are protected accordingly. Counseling Services can be reached by phone at 460-7051. The Office also houses the Center for Substance Abuse Education and Prevention. Their direct number is 460-7980.

RECREATION CENTER

This site provides a variety of recreational activities to all currently enrolled students of the University. Use of the facility is free, but students must present a valid ID upon entrance to the Recreation Center. For information concerning program available and hours of operation, students may call 460-6065.

ACADEMIC CALENDARS

UNIVERSITY CALENDAR

The University Calendar for the current academic year is shown on the inside cover of the Undergraduate and Graduate Bulletin, the Schedule of Classes, and the University web site (<http://www.southalabama.edu>). The BMS Graduate Program adheres to the University Calendar for setting graduate program courses. As such, most graduate courses will begin and end within the dates listed in the University Calendar for the respective semesters.

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE CALENDAR

The academic calendar for the College of Medicine's M.D. program varies from the University Calendar. Therefore, graduate students enrolled in Medical School courses will follow the calendars/syllabi distributed for those courses.

REGISTRATION

GRADUATE OFFICE PRE-SCHEDULE AND SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

The Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Office Academic Advisor issues course schedule forms to all BMS graduate students a few weeks prior to the actual dates for registration each semester. Using the appropriate SCHEDULE OF CLASSES for the term, students should complete the Pre-Schedule form, obtain the necessary signatures, and return the form to the Graduate Office by the specified deadline.

REGISTRATION

Graduate students are responsible for completing their registration utilizing USA's PAWS online. For more information concerning PAWS and the actual registration process and dates associated with completion of registration and payments of fees, students may refer to the SCHEDULE OF CLASSES or go to the university web site: <http://paws.usouthal.edu>.

Registration is not complete until all required admission documents have been received. Fees are due at the time of registration. If you are paying by credit card, you can pay online through PAWS. Otherwise, fees can be paid through the **Bursar's Office (AD160)**. Failure to satisfy any requirements associated with admission and or registration is sufficient cause for dropping a student from all classes. Additionally, failure to be enrolled is sufficient cause for the Graduate Program to discontinue payment of stipends.

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

The **Registrar's Office (AD 165)** offers a number a services relating to the schedule of classes, registration, transcripts, name and address changes, enrollment certifications, grade reports, holds, graduation, confirmation of degrees, and withdrawal from classes. The phone number for the office is 460-6251. Visit the Registrar's web site: <http://www.southalabama.edu/registrar> for additional information relating to their services.

In certain instances, the BMS Graduate Office may be able to assist with services offered through the Registrar's Office.

LIBRARIES

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SITES

The University of South Alabama libraries include the University Library, the Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library (both located on the main campus), The Medical Center Library, and the Children's and Women's Hospital Library.

CHARLES M. BAUGH BIOMEDICAL LIBRARY

Basic Medical Science Graduate Students primarily use the Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library, located adjacent to the Medical Sciences Building.

The Biomedical Library provides books and journal collections, access to interlibrary loan and the on-line electronic journals collection, a portal for Medline, Science Citation and other electronic databases, and reference services. Forms relating to library use are distributed at orientation.

A current list of available rooms in which Basic Medical Science Graduate Students can study is provided (see Appendix). Some departmental locations have restricted access. The study rooms located in the Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library can be reserved. Policies concerning the use of the rooms located in the library are provided at <http://southmed.usouthal.edu/library/circ/rooms1.htm>.

Student computer laboratories are available in a variety of locations across campus. A designated lab, restricted for use by College of Medicine students only, is located in the Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library.

BMSSO

STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the Basic Medical Sciences Student Organization (BMSSO) is to unify the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program in its interaction with Basic Medical Sciences Faculty, The College of Medicine, the University of South Alabama, the scientific community, and the community at large. Membership in the Basic Medical Sciences Student Organization is automatically conferred to students upon their matriculation into the BMS Graduate Program. A copy of the Constitution for the organization is included in the Appendix.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICIES

ACADEMIC ADVISING

Students entering the first-year core will receive advising and counseling regarding their schedule of classes from the Academic Advisor in the Graduate Office and the Director of the Graduate Program. Beyond the first year, students will be jointly advised by their mentor or major professor, in conjunction with the Academic Advisor of the program.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students must maintain reasonable academic progress toward the completion of their degree program. In addition, all students are expected to abide by the Student Academic Conduct Policy, as well as the standards set forth in the Code of Student Conduct. These Codes are outlines in the student handbook for the University, THE LOWDOWN.

Under the Student Academic Conduct Policy, the topic of plagiarism and cheating is addressed. If a student is involved in an incident of this type, no credit will be given for the work in the course(s) in which they are involved. Additionally, incidents of this nature will be dealt with appropriately with the proper authorities.

Graduate Students should also be aware that the "BUCKLEY AMENDMENT" (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974)" is recognized and adhered to by the University and the BMS Graduate Program. The Privacy Act guarantees students the right of privacy relating to academic (grade and transcript) issues.

CORE CURRICULUM

Students entering the Basic Medical Sciences Interdisciplinary Graduate Program matriculate into a one-year core curriculum. Courses required under the core curriculum include Literature Reports (IDL 576), Basic Medical Science Fundamentals I and II (IDL 580, 581), Introduction to Research Methods (IDL 577), and three laboratory rotations.

ROTATIONS

Laboratory rotations are required in three different laboratories in the Spring Semester in the core program, with each rotation lasting 5-6 weeks; students enroll for 1 hour Directed Studies (IDL 594) for each rotation. Students may choose any available laboratory, regardless of the mentor's departmental or program affiliation. During each rotation, the student undertakes a small research project. The goal of rotations is to learn about the research in a laboratory, to become acquainted with the techniques used, and for the student and the faculty member to become acquainted with each other. The latter is important, since the final selection of a mentor for graduate research training must occur by mutual agreement between the student and the mentor.

To facilitate selection of laboratories for rotations, students are introduced to the research of individual faculty members through the informal “Meet the Discipline” days. Students are also encouraged to interview potential mentors during this time. The Director of the Graduate Program and faculty are available for consultation. Students will submit their prioritized choices for rotations to the Graduate Office no later than three weeks prior to the end of the Fall Semester (**Form #1**).

Forms used to document progress through the graduate program are included in the Appendix.

MAJOR PROFESSOR

Following completion of the first year’s course work, students will select a Major Professor and an area for advanced study (**Form #2**). The Major Professor will aid the student in selecting advanced courses appropriate to the student’s research interest for the Fall Semester of the second year. Only Full members of the graduate faculty may serve as Major Professors.

ADVANCED COURSEWORK STANDARDS

Students in the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program are required to complete a minimum of eight hours of advanced didactic coursework. Hours of directed study, seminar, literature reports, and research/dissertation will not substitute for these hours. Details of the Advanced Coursework Standards are included in the Appendix.

DISSERTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Dissertation Committee should be formed no later than eighteen months after matriculation. In consultation with the major professor, the student will select at least four additional graduate faculty members to serve on the student’s Dissertation Committee. A brief (1 to 2 pages) description of the proposed research should be formulated and submitted to the Graduate Office when the committee is named (**Form #3**). The Committee will advise the student regarding advanced course work required for the student’s area of specialization and regarding the student’s ongoing research.

Two of the faculty appointed to the committee should be selected from the student’s major Department of Program. Two additional faculty should be selected from other Departments or Programs.

Faulty appointed to the Dissertation Committee must be members of the University Graduate Faculty (see the Bulletin).

In some cases, the student and his/her major professor may wish to appoint a faculty member who does not hold Graduate Faculty status or one from another institution. In this case, a specific request for administrative appointment of this individual, including a brief statement as to the rationale for their inclusion in the committee, should be sent in memo form to the Director of the Graduate Program. All such administrative appointments must be approved

by the Dean of the Graduate School.

RESEARCH PROGRESS REPORTS

Students should hold their first Dissertation Committee Meeting (**Form #4**) no later than the end of the second year of study.

Subsequent Dissertation Committee Meetings are required at 6 month intervals to review a student's progress. Each meeting should be documented (**Form #5**) along with a progress report. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that required forms documenting completion of degree requirements are filed with the Graduate Office.

Failure to hold Dissertation Committee Meetings at the noted interval will result in a warning. If the student does not correct the deficiency within 60 days, the student will not be allowed to register. Two offenses of this nature may result in dismissal from the Graduate Program. A student whose progress is found to be unsatisfactory by a majority of committee members at two successive meetings will be placed on probation. If a student's progress is found to be unsatisfactory at a third meeting, the Director of the Graduate Program may take action up to and including a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School for academic dismissal of the student.

QUALIFYING EXAMINATION - ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY POLICY

The Qualifying Examination consists of written and oral portions. The written component of the Qualifying Exam shall consist of a formal proposal written in grant format. The oral component consists of the defense of the written proposal. The vote of the Examination Committee must be reported (**Form #6**) to the Graduate Office. Completion of the Qualifying Examination serves to admit the student to Candidacy for the Ph.D. Degree, allowing the student to enter the final phase of the program. Both portions of the Qualifying Exam should be completed by the end of the student's third year of study. Guidelines for the exam, including the format of the written proposal and the makeup of the Examination Committee, are outlined in the Appendix.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The proposal developed for the Qualifying Examination may be used as the Formal Research Proposal, with the approval of the Dissertation Advisory Committee. The approved document should be submitted to the Graduate Office (**Form #7**) within one month of the student's successful completion of the Qualifying Examination.

DISSERTATION

The form and style of the student's written Dissertation must conform to standards set forth by the Graduate School. The process for the Defense of Dissertation is detailed in the Policies of the Graduate Student Promotions and Evaluation Committee (see Appendix).

A majority of the student's Dissertation Committee must approve the Dissertation at a

Closed Defense (**Form #8**) before the student can schedule the Open Defense of Dissertation.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Upon completion of all requirements listed above, the student should submit the Administrative Certification (**Form #9**) to the Graduate Office. This form certifies completion of all requirements for earning the degree, allows for the final grade for Research and Dissertation to be assigned and acknowledges that the Ph.D. degree in Basic Medical Sciences can now be conferred to the student.

All requirements for the Ph. D. in Basic Medical Sciences should be completed within four to five years from the date of matriculation and must be completed within seven years. A student not completing the degree within a seven-year period must apply for a defined extension to complete the degree. The request for an extension must be approved by the student's major professor, the Chair of the Department/Program the student is completing advanced studies in, the Director of the BMS Graduate Program, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Failure to complete degree requirements in the defined extension period will result in appropriate action up to and including dismissal from the program.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

A students must remain in good academic standing in the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program, in addition to maintaining high academic standards to remain in the Graduate School. A minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 is required to meet this standard.

If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student is placed on probation and has two semesters from that time to achieve good academic standing. If a cumulative 3.0 GPA is not achieved by the end of the posted probationary term, the student will be dismissed from Graduate School and the Graduate Program. In addition, a student accumulating more than 9 semester hours of "C" or 6 semester hours of "D" and/or "F" grades will automatically be dismissed. These standards are detailed in the Bulletin and in the Policies of the Graduate Student Promotions and Evaluation Committee (see Appendix).

The Graduate Office reviews student academic records each semester and in turn forwards a review of student progress to the Student Performance and Evaluations Committee (SPEC). Unsatisfactory performance on preliminary/qualifying examinations, misconduct, or failure to meet other requirements of the Ph.D. program as outlined above in a timely manner can constitute grounds for SPEC to recommend dismissal.

STUDENT APPEALS

A student may appeal a SPEC recommendation for dismissal by presenting their case at a meeting of the SPEC. The student may elect to have a student advocate attend the meeting to speak on their behalf. Following the appeal hearing, SPEC will render a decision in close session. A majority vote of the committee members present at the meeting is required. Recommendations regarding the appeal will be forwarded to the Senior Associate Dean of

the College of Medicine for review. Following administrative review, the Senior Associate Dean will notify the Dean of the Graduate School of the recommendations pertaining to the student's appeal. The appeals process is outlined in the SPEC Policies (see Appendix).

A student dissatisfied with the appeals decision rendered by SPEC may initiate an "administrative appeal" as stipulated in the Undergraduate/Graduate Bulletin. In "administrative appeal" decisions, the Senior Associate Dean will serve as the College of Medicine's final arbitrator.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The leave of absence provides a mechanism whereby a student encountering serious non-academic difficulty may temporarily leave school to resolve his/her problem. Such leaves are granted for medical causes or in extenuating circumstances such as family emergencies, financial crisis, etc.

The leave of absence is not a mechanism for students experiencing academic difficulties to withdraw from classes and re-enter at a later time with that academic record expunged.

The leave of absence is a serious matter. Since each case is unique, the formulation of extensive guidelines is difficult. Therefore, the student requesting the leave will petition SPEC in writing and may be requested to appear before the committee. The appearance before the committee may be waived in cases of severe illness, accident, etc.

After hearing the request, the committee will make its recommendation to the Director of the Graduate Program. If recommending a leave, the committee will state further the conditions of the leave and the mechanism for its termination.

Students who are granted a Leave of Absence from the BMS Graduate Program are required to complete an Exit Interview with the Graduate Office.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Students who wish to withdraw from the BMS Graduate Program must submit a written statement to the Graduate Office and complete an Exit Interview. Withdrawal from the program does not automatically withdraw a student from currently enrolled courses.

RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

The University promotes responsible research practices, including ongoing education for all research investigators, their staff, and students. As part of that training, students are required to complete a course on “Research Integrity” (GIS 501) offered by the Graduate School. This course deals with a number of pertinent issues, including authorship, mentoring, data manipulation and ownership, and academic integrity. Students complete required training modules regarding the protection of human subjects in research, the care and use of animals in research, biosafety, and are introduced to the subject of Radiation Safety during the Fall semester of the core curriculum (IDL 577). Students conducting research that utilizes radioactive materials will be required to complete an in-depth study (6 to 8 hrs.) in Radiation Safety. Completion of additional compliance modules may also be required as students move into advanced research training. In some cases, annual or periodic retraining is required.

Research in the College of Medicine is regulated via a number of federal and state agencies. Information regarding offices within the college which coordinate research compliance can be found at <http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/index/>. These include:

Office of Research Compliance and Assurance	140 CSAB 460-6625	The Office of Research Compliance and Assurance oversees the Institutional Review Board, Institutional Biosafety Committee, Institutional Animal Care and Use and the Committee to ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements related to research activity.
Institutional Review Board (IRB)	138 CSAB 460-6308	The IRB deals with research that in any way involves human subjects, materials or information from a human source. Links to more information and training materials are available on the web: http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/humansubjects/
Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)	134 CSAB 460-6863	The IACUC oversees and approves all use of animals in research and teaching. No animals may be purchased or used without prior approval of an animal protocol by the committee. Investigators using animals must have appropriate training. The University polices regarding the use of animals in research are available on the web at: http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/animalcare/ohp

Occupational Health Program (OHP)	140 CSAB 460-6625	The OHP is designed for individuals who may be required to have contact with animals or animal products, their body fluids tissues, wastes or contaminated living quarters during the course of their work. Links to the OHP Manual and forms are available on the IACUC website: http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/animalcare/
Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)	140 CSAB 460-6625	All research using biological hazards must be registered with the IBC. These hazards include 1) human or primate blood, body fluids or tissues, 2) pathogenic organisms such as viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, etc. which may infect humans, and 3) specified recombinant DNA activities. Information regarding biohazards can be found in the Biosafety Manual and Exposure Control Plan available in all research laboratories. The Plan also identifies appropriate procedures for handling and disposal of biohazards. Information regarding biosafety training is available on-line: http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/biosafety/
Radiation Safety	261 CSAB 460-7063	All users must be licensed and trained. There is a comprehensive Radiation Safety Procedures Manual available in research laboratories or the Radiation Safety Office. More information regarding policies and forms is available at: http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/radiation/
Safety and Environmental Compliance	332 CSAB 460-7070	The University is committed to a comprehensive Safety and Environmental Compliance program. A comprehensive list of safety policies and guidelines, as well as training opportunities can be found on the departmental website: http://www.southalabama.edu/environmental
College of Medicine Research Office	118 CSAB 460-6307	Researchers applying to federal, state or local governmental agencies, as well as to private foundations or industries, for extramural research or fellowship funding must obtain appropriate approvals within the institution before submission. The College of Medicine Research Office provides assistance with budget preparation and proposal processing. In addition, the office may provide assistance with obtaining grant application materials. Other useful links can be found at the Office of Sponsored Programs web site: http://www.southalabama.edu/osp/ .

Any individual in the College of Medicine, including students, who believes that research misconduct is occurring is required to report such an incident to the Department Chair or the Dean's Office. Such reports will be evaluated by the Committee on Standards for the Conduct of Research (see http://www.southalabama.edu/com/research/research_conduct/).

OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES

CAREER SERVICES

The **Office of Career Services (6420 Old Shell Road)** aids students and alumni in all aspects of exploring and developing career opportunities and job search strategies. They can provide assistance with development of CV's and other workshops.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

The University of South Alabama Office of International Services provides services and programs for non-U.S. Citizens. Inquiries and questions should be addressed to the **Office of International Services (Faculty Court South, Room 3)**. Students may also contact the office by phone at 460-6050 or by email: intlserv@jaguar1.usouthal.edu.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL)

The English Language Center provides English-language instruction to individuals whose native language is one other than English. Matriculation in these courses is limited; credits earned in ESL courses will not be counted toward meeting degree requirements within the University.

International Students who do not test proficient in areas in the English language may be encouraged to register for ESL courses. This test is administered during International Student Orientation. For more information regarding matriculation into ESL courses, please contact the department at 460-7185.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

A directory of phone numbers for various offices and departments on campus is provided for your convenience. In addition to the University listing, the Graduate Office distributes a listing of graduate student phone numbers among BMS Graduate Students only. For emergency purposes, the Graduate Office should be kept up to date concerning your current emergency contacts at all times.

Campus Service Offices

Admissions	460-6141
Athletics	460-7121
Bookstore	460-7011
Bursar	460-6195
Campus Ministries	460-7075
Campus Police	460-6312
Career Services	460-6188
Counseling & Testing Services	460-7051
Credit Union	406-0255
Dining Services	460-6292
Emergency Student Loans	460-6494
Enrollment Services	460-6494
ESL Program	460-7185
Financial Aid	460-6231
Graduate School.	460-6310
Health Services	460-7151
Housing	460-6185
Delta Area Office	460-6315
Epsilon/Delta 6 Area Office	460-7870
Gamma/Beta Area Office	460-6465
International Student Services	460-6050
Libraries (Information)	460-7028
Biomedical Library	460-7044
Minority Student Services	460-6895
Payroll	460-6471
Post Office	460-6279
Publication Services	380-2828
Registrar's Office	460-6251
Special Student Services	460-7212
Student Affairs	460-6171
Student Center	460-6452
Student Center Services	460-6077
Student Health Services	460-7151
Student Rec Center	460-6065
Telecommunications	460-7114
USA Weather	460-7281

University Writing Center	460-6480
Veterans Affairs	460-6230

College of Medicine

BMS Department/Program Offices

Graduate Office	460-6153
Biochemistry/Molecular Biology	460-6402
Cancer Biology	460-6153
Cell Biology/Neuroscience	460-6490
Lung Biology	460-7086
Microbiology/Immunology	460-6339
Pharmacology	460-6497
Physiology	460-7004

PUBLICATIONS

THE HANDBOOK is distributed to all incoming Basic Medical Science graduate students, and highlights information concerning campus resources, as well as policies and requirements of the Graduate Program.

Students should be familiar with the contents of THE UNIVERSITY BULLETIN and SCHEDULE OF CLASSES. As dates and deadlines change from semester to semester, the SCHEDULE OF CLASSES should be reviewed each semester to ensure timely completion of registration, payment of fees and graduation deadlines relating to dissertation reviews and defenses. A detailed description of the policies of the Graduate School is provided in the UNIVERSITY BULLETIN, as well as descriptions of the courses.

THE GRADUATE is a periodic newsletter, published by the BMS Graduate Office. News concerning events, awards, and other items relating to the Graduate Program is circulated to Basic Medical Science Graduate Students, Faculty, and Post Doctoral Fellows via this publication.

The BIOFEEDBACK is a newsletter publication of the Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library.

THE LOWDOWN is the official University student handbook and highlights campus policies, such as the Student Academic Conduct Policy and the Code of Student Conduct, as well as organizations and activities of the University.

THE VANGUARD, the student newspaper, is distributed free to all University students.

WEB

The web site (<http://southmed.usouthal.edu/com/bmsphd>) provides information relating to all aspects of the Basic Medical Science Graduate Program.

APPENDIX

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
REQUIREMENTS

[Copies of all forms will be provided to: Student, Major Professor, Department Chair, and Director of Graduate Studies (Graduate Office)]

I. By END of Year #1:

Complete Three Rotations (Form #1)
Complete Core Curriculum
Choose Major Professor and Advanced Program (Form #2)

II. After one and a half years of study:

Advanced Coursework
Establish Dissertation Committee (Form #3)
File Research Description (Form #3)

III. By END of Year #2:

First Dissertation Committee Meeting and Coursework Plan (Form #4)
Advanced Coursework

IV. Dissertation Committee meets every 6 months (Form #5)

V. By END of Year #3:

Complete Qualifying Exam (Form #6)
File Formal Research Proposal (Form #7)

VI. At End of Program

Write the Dissertation
Complete Closed and Open Defense of Dissertation (Form #8)
File Administrative Certification (Form #9)

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
CORE CURRICULUM - ROTATION PLAN

Student

Rotations are required in the Spring semester of the first year. Rotations are to be scheduled for non-overlapping 5-week blocks. Students are responsible for interviewing faculty and submitting a rotation plan to the Graduate Office prior to the beginning of the Spring semester. Students will enroll for 3 cr Interdisciplinary Directed Studies (IDL 594) or 1 cr for each rotation.

Students wishing to add rotations to the Fall semester of the first year should petition the Director of the Graduate Program during Fall registration.

A minimum of two different rotations are required. Three different rotations are strongly encouraged. Rotations need not be within the same department, but may only be completed with Full members of the BMS Graduate Faculty.

Proposed Rotation Schedule:		Signature of Faculty Member	Signature of Dept.Chair
Rotation 1	Dates _____ Faculty _____	_____	_____
Rotation 2	Dates _____ Faculty _____	_____	_____
Rotation 3	Dates _____ Faculty _____	_____	_____

Date Received in Graduate Office _____

Signature
Director, BMS Graduate Program _____

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
 CALENDAR - ADVANCED STUDIES

Student: _____

Date of Entrance: _____

Advanced Program: _____

Major Professor Appointed:¹ _____

Date Dissertation Committee Appointed:² _____

Dissertation Committee Reports/Meetings:³

	Date Required	Date of Meeting
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____

Date Qualifying Exam (W/O):⁴ _____

Date Doctoral Dissertation Formal Research Proposal:⁵ _____

Date Closed/Open Dissertation Defenses: _____

1. A Major Professor is normally selected by the end of the first year.
2. The Dissertation Committee normally shall be established after a year and a half and should have its first meeting no later than the end of the second year.
3. It is the graduate student's responsibility to set up the Dissertation Committee meetings. One is required every 6 months with a written progress report submitted to the Committee prior to the meeting. Students will be warned if there is a failure to meet and if not corrected within 60 days, the student will not be allowed to register the following semester. Two offenses may result in dismissal from the Graduate Program.
4. Students should normally take the Qualifying Exam no later than the end of their third year in the program. Any delay beyond the third year must be approved by the Chairman of the Department and the Director of the Graduate Program.
5. Formal Research Proposals must be submitted to the Dissertation Committee no later than 1 months following the Qualifying Exam.

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
STUDENT REPORT
FIRST DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Student: _____ Advanced Program: _____

Date of Meeting: _____

1. Committee Recommendations:

2. Course Plan:

A. Courses Taken

B. Suggested Future Coursework

Signature of Committee Members:

Major Professor

Faculty Member

Faculty Member

Faculty Member

Faculty Member

Faculty Member

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
 DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
(Meeting held every six months)

 Date of Meeting

 Date of Last Meeting

 Student

 Advanced Program

Title of Dissertation Research:

Attach Student Progress Report:

Committee Recommendation:

Signature of Committee Members:

Progress of Student:

Satisfactory Unsatisfactory*

 Major Professor

 Faculty Member

 Faculty Member

 Faculty Member

 Faculty Member

 Faculty Member

* Those members indicating unsatisfactory progress should present their concerns in writing.

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORMAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL

The Research Proposal (Prospectus) is a formal document that is required by the Graduate School. The Graduate Program has adopted the policy that the written proposal used for the Admission to Candidacy (Qualifying Examination) will be submitted to the Graduate School as the Research Proposal after successful completion of both the written and oral examination. The final Research Proposal must be approved by the Dissertation Committee and should be filed in the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Office within **one month of the student's successful completion of the Qualifying Examination**.

Students will not be permitted to register for Dissertation Research (799) until the requirement is satisfied. The Research Proposal submitted to the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Office must also be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Guidelines for the Research Proposal are detailed in the Admission to Candidacy Examination policy. Form #7 must be completed, signed by authorizing parties, and used as the cover page of all Research Proposals submitted to the Office of the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program. Two copies must be submitted. One copy will be forwarded to the University Graduate School for authorization.

The proposal should relate to the student's approved research project. The proposal will be written completely by the student based on his/her knowledge of the research. It shall be a hypothesis-driven proposal prepared along the guidelines of a standard National Institutes of Health grant proposal (i.e., R01), as outlined below. Prior to undertaking preparation of the proposal, the student must submit a short abstract or outline of the proposal to the dissertation advisory/examination committee for approval. The proposal will include:

- **Specific Aims.** Describe the broad objectives of the research plan; outline the overall hypothesis and specific questions to be addressed. One page is recommended.
- **Background and Significance.** Briefly sketch the background literature leading to the research proposal; critically evaluate existing knowledge and identify the gaps in knowledge that this proposal is intended to fill; state the significance of the proposed work. Two to four pages are recommended.
- **Preliminary Studies.** Include preliminary data which support the feasibility of the project. NOTE: preliminary data are not expected for all components of the proposal. One to four pages are recommended.
- **Research Design and Methods.** Describe the research design and procedures, including the rationale for the experimental design, specific methods to be employed, potential problems and pitfalls likely to be encountered, and a timetable.
- **Overall Format.** Total length of the proposal is limited to 20 pages (single-spaced), including references. Font size must not be smaller than 11 point and type density must be no more than 15 cpi (characters per inch).

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
FORMAT FOR BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCE DISSERTATION PREPARATION

The organization of the text of your dissertation (University of South Alabama Graduate School Manual) should closely parallel the style for scientific papers required by a major refereed journal in the field of study.

This style is reasonably standard for the various disciplines and should include the following sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Background, (3) Methods and Materials, (4) Results, (5) Discussion, (6) Summary, and (7) Conclusions. The introduction should briefly describe your research problem, the significance of the problem, and your approach to its solution. The background should be an in depth, historical review of the literature in the area of your research. Discussion of the results should be minimal in the Results section and confined primarily to the Discussion section. The discussion should begin by discussing your results and how they are unique in advancing knowledge in the area of your research. This should be followed by a detailed comparison of your data with previously published data, pointing out agreement and disagreement of the data with your data and how the total knowledge either supports your hypothesis or the theories of other investigators.

If your research does not fit neatly into one package, you have the freedom of organizing the text into chapters using the above style in each chapter.

Carefully study the Guide For Preparing Theses and Dissertations, (**NOTE: You must use the current Edition, published by the Graduate School, University of South Alabama.**) Be sure all details of form, margins, pagination, and the required bond paper are adhered to prior to typing or printing the final draft. Photocopies of glossy prints or original art work are permissible, but should be copied on bond paper.

You should have a draft of your dissertation in the hands of your committee, your department chair, the Director of the Graduate Program, and the Dean of the Graduate School at least 25 days prior to your proposed date of open defense of dissertation. You should have your final draft of your dissertation completed 10 days prior to the date of the closed defense. Likewise, you should ensure that your committee's final approval of the dissertation and dates for your open and closed defenses are scheduled prior to or coincide with the dates specified by the Graduate School for submission of the written document for the courtesy check. Please see the university calendar, available in the schedule of classes and University Undergraduate/Graduate Bulletin, for the applicable dates for courtesy check and final submission of dissertations per semester.

Each literature citation in the bibliography must include all authors names, the complete title of the article and the page numbers must be inclusive (e.g., 512-527).

1. The dissertation must represent an original, independent effort by the student.
2. The hypothesis must be clearly stated and supported by an in depth, historical review of the literature in the area.
3. The results should support or refute the hypothesis using acceptable research techniques.
4. The final document must be acceptable to the major professor and a majority of the members of the dissertation committee, the chair of the student's department, the Director of the Graduate Program, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION

The Defense has two components. Candidates for the Ph.D. degree will be required to undertake a rigorous Defense of Dissertation. The first part is closed to the public and is a requirement set forth by the Basic Sciences Departments of the College of Medicine. The candidate must pass this Closed Defense of Dissertation before proceeding to schedule the Open Defense of Dissertation required by the Graduate School. The second and final component of the defense is open to the public.

1. The written dissertation is distributed to all members of the candidate's dissertation committee no later than two weeks prior to the date of the Closed Defense of Dissertation.
2. The Closed Defense will be administered by the candidate's dissertation committee. The candidate's Departmental Chair may appoint a mediator for the Closed Defense other than the Chair of the dissertation committee.
3. The general format of the Closed Defense will begin with the student's succinct presentation of the results of their dissertation research without interruption, followed by two or more rounds of questioning by faculty that probe the student's ability to defend the hypothesis, methodology, conclusions and significance of the offered research.
4. A successful defense will require approval from the majority of the examining committee members. A department can allow additional members of its faculty to attend and participate in the questioning, but the decision on satisfactory completion of the Closed Defense will ultimately be determined by majority vote of the candidate's dissertation committee.
5. Approval of the Closed Defense of Dissertation allows the candidate to apply for the Open Defense of Dissertation.
6. Should the candidate's Closed Defense of Dissertation not be approved, the candidate's dissertation committee can declare the candidate ineligible for the Open Defense of Dissertation, or specify that additional experimentation or writing be completed and reviewed before the candidate can proceed further.
7. The successful completion of the Closed Defense of Dissertation will be recorded with the dated signatures of all members of the candidate's dissertation committee as part of the application (Form #8) for scheduling the Open Defense of Dissertation.
8. Form #8 must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date for the Open Defense.

BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES GRADUATE PROGRAM
FIRST SUBMISSION APPROVAL FORM

The attached dissertation has been approved by the committee, chair, and graduate director for

_____/J00_____. An electronic version of the
(Students' Name and J Number)

dissertation has been checked with the plagiarism software and has met the approval of the committee.

Type or Print Names

Signature

Major Professor

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Committee Member

Department Head/Program Director

Director, BMS Graduate Program

Ph.D. PROGRAM IN BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES
ADMINISTRATIVE CERTIFICATION

_____ has completed all of the requirements for the Ph.D. degree in the Graduate School and the College of Medicine at the University of South Alabama. These requirements include satisfactory completion of the Core Curriculum, a written and oral Qualifying Examination, a Dissertation, approved by the Major Professor and the Dissertation Committee, and closed and public defense of the research presented in the dissertation.

Approved:

Date:

Departmental Chair/Program Director

Director, BMS Graduate Program

Dean, College of Medicine

Dean, Graduate School

Policies of the Graduate Student Promotions and Evaluation Committee (SPEC)

(1) Defense of Dissertation as a requirement for completion of the Ph.D.degree

The Defense has Two Components. Candidates for the Ph.D.degree will be required to undertake a rigorous Defense of Dissertation. The first part is closed to the public and is a requirement set forth by the Basic Sciences Departments of the College of Medicine. The candidate must pass this Closed Defense of Dissertation before proceeding to schedule the Open Defense of Dissertation required by the Graduate School. This second and final component of the defense is open to the public.

Administration. The written dissertation is distributed to all members of the candidate's dissertation committee no later than two weeks prior to the date of the Closed Defense of Dissertation. The Closed Defense will be administered by the candidate's dissertation committee. The candidate's Departmental Chair may appoint a mediator for the Closed Defense other than the Chair of the dissertation committee. The general format of the Closed Defense will begin with the student's succinct presentation of the results of their dissertation research without interruption, followed by two or more rounds of questioning by faculty that probe the student's ability to defend the hypothesis, methodology, conclusions and significance of the offered research. A successful defense will require approval from the majority of the examining committee members. A department can allow additional members of its faculty to attend and participate in the questioning, but the decision on satisfactory completion of the Closed Defense will ultimately be determined by majority vote of the candidate's dissertation committee. Approval of the Closed Defense of Dissertation allows the candidate to apply for the Open Defense of Dissertation (Form #8), which must be submitted to the Graduate Office at least two weeks in advance of the Date of the Open Defense. Should the candidate's Closed Defense of Dissertation not be approved, the candidate's dissertation committee can declare the candidate ineligible for the Open Defense of Dissertation, or specify that additional experimentation or writing be completed and reviewed before the candidate can proceed further.

Documentation. The successful completion of the Closed Defense of Dissertation will be recorded with the dated signatures of all members of the candidate's dissertation committee as part of the application (Form #8) for scheduling the Open Defense of Dissertation.

(2) Management of graduate student dismissal and probation within the College of Medicine and mechanism for a student appeals process.

Academic Dismissal. When informed by the Graduate Office of a student whose grades do not meet minimum academic standards set by the Graduate School, SPEC will automatically recommend dismissal to the Director of the Graduate Program. The Guidelines of the Graduate School stipulate that grounds for academic dismissal include (1) receiving six semester hours of D or F,(2) accumulating any combination of 9 semester hours of C or less or (3) failing to raise a GPA above 3.0 within two consecutive semesters of being placed on probationary status.

Other grounds for dismissal. At the request of the Director of the Graduate Program, SPEC will meet to review any other potential case for student dismissal. Grounds for dismissal include two unsuccessful attempts to pass the Ph.D.Qualifying Exam or unsatisfactory progress at two consecutive meetings of the student's dissertation committee. Dismissal can also be recommended

for unsatisfactory performance on the preliminary qualifying examination administered by some departments, unethical scientific conduct or failing to comply with the College's Graduate Guidelines in the timely completion of other scheduled requirements for obtaining the Ph.D. degree. When appropriate, SPEC will meet with the involved student before rendering a decision, by majority vote in closed session, to recommend action or no action to the Director of the Graduate Program.

Probation. A student whose GPA falls below 3.0 is automatically notified by SPEC of placement on academic probation and the minimum requirement of raising their GPA to 3.0 within the following two consecutive academic terms (fall, spring or summer terms). Performance deemed unsatisfactory by a student's dissertation committee at two successive dissertation committee meetings will also place a student on automatic probation. In addition, SPEC may elect to recommend probation instead of dismissal for non-academic reasons (listed above). When appropriate, SPEC will meet with the involved student before making a recommendation to the Director of the Graduate Program on probationary action and the period of time and conditions required for removal from probationary status.

Appeals process. A student wishing to appeal an automatic academic dismissal or SPEC recommendation for dismissal or probation on other grounds must present their case at a special called meeting of SPEC at the request of the College of Medicine's Director of the Graduate Program. An advocate of the student, e.g. a Departmental Chair or other designated member of the College of Medicine faculty, can also attend this hearing and have voice. Following the hearing, SPEC will render a decision on the appeal in closed session with a majority vote required of members in attendance. Decisions favoring appeals will be forwarded to the Director of the Graduate Program and Senior Associate Dean of the College of Medicine. Following administrative review, the Senior Associate Dean will be responsible for appealing any further action to the Dean of the Graduate School. If dissatisfied with an appeals decision rendered by SPEC, an "administrative appeals procedure" can be initiated by the student as a last resort, as stipulated in the University Bulletin. In this event, the Senior Associate Dean will serve as the final arbitrator for the College of Medicine.

Approved by the Graduate Executive Committee: 02/01

ADVANCED COURSEWORK STANDARDS

The Graduate School requires a minimum of 60 credit hours accumulated towards the completion of the Ph.D. degree. It is expected that this be comprised of a combination of didactic coursework, directed studies, and research/dissertation hours. As of the 2002-2003 academic year, the doctoral program in Basic Medical Sciences (BMS) has instituted a common interdisciplinary core curriculum for all entering graduate students. Students will complete 18 hours of didactic work in the core curriculum.

The requirements for advanced students are as follows:

1. **Advanced coursework to be completed will be determined by the student in consultation with the student's major advisor and dissertation advisory committee.** This will allow the student flexibility in designing their graduate training, yet assure appropriate oversight and recommendations for didactic work based on the student's background and their research focus.
2. **This discussion and development of the coursework plan should occur at the student's first committee meeting.**
3. **The coursework plan (Form #4) will be filed with the Graduate Office.**
4. **A minimum of 8 hours of advanced didactic coursework will be completed.** Hours of directed study, seminar, literature reports, and research/dissertation will not substitute for these hours.
5. **Advanced students are required to attend the College of Medicine's Distinguished Scientist Seminar series (no credit).**
6. **Students are required to enroll in 1 credit hour of either Seminar or Literature Reports (journal club) every Fall and Spring semester.** Students may choose from seminar series/literature reports offered by a research focus group, a Center, or a discipline.

Approved 11/12/02

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY EXAMINATION

Background: The Graduate School requires successful completion of a comprehensive examination prior to admission to candidacy to the Ph.D. degree. The Doctoral program in Basic Medical Sciences has required that the student pass (1) a comprehensive written examination (no format provided) and 2) an oral examination (no format provided). In addition, both the Graduate School and the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences require a Dissertation Prospectus to be approved by the student's Ph.D. advisory committee.

Rationale: The Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences Program has moved to implement interdisciplinary training. This *exam* format will allow us to test the student's writing skills, their ability to apply their knowledge of basic medical science to address a research problem, their knowledge and understanding of pertinent primary literature, and their ability to devise a hypothesis-driven mechanistic experimental plan. These are all skills which are critical to the success of candidates for the Ph.D. degree as they complete the program and to their success following graduation. The proposal should serve as a focus to allow the examining committee to explore the student's understanding of the basic medical science discipline underlying the research problem. Finally, this approach has the advantage of fulfilling both the Qualifying Exam and the Prospectus simultaneously.

Policy: The format for the Admission to Candidacy Exam (hereafter known as the Qualifying Exam) will allow students to accomplish both the Qualifying Exam itself and the development of the Prospectus.

1. **The Qualifying Exam will be completed no later than the end of the third year** in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences
2. **The Qualifying Exam will be composed of two separate parts: a written examination and an oral examination.**
3. **Departments/programs may wish to retain a separate written exam testing the student's overall knowledge in that discipline or focus area. If so, this written exam will not replace any portion of the requirements outlined below.**
4. **For the written component of the Qualifying Exam, the student shall prepare a written research proposal. The proposal should relate to the student's approved research project.** The proposal will be written completely by the student based on his/her knowledge of the research. It shall be a hypothesis-driven proposal prepared along the guidelines of a standard National Institutes of Health grant proposal (i.e., R01), as outlined below. Prior to undertaking preparation of the proposal, the student must submit a short abstract or outline of the proposal to the dissertation advisory/examination committee for approval. The proposal will include:

- **Specific Aims.** Describe the broad objectives of the research plan; outline the overall hypothesis and specific questions to be addressed. One page is recommended.
 - **Background and Significance.** Briefly sketch the background literature leading to the research proposal; critically evaluate existing knowledge and identify the gaps in knowledge that this proposal is intended to fill; state the significance of the proposed work. Two to four pages are recommended.
 - **Preliminary Studies.** Include preliminary data which support the feasibility of the project. NOTE: preliminary data are not expected for all components of the proposal. One to four pages are recommended.
 - **Research Design and Methods.** Describe the research design and procedures, including the rationale for the experimental design, specific methods to be employed, potential problems and pitfalls likely to be encountered, and a timetable.
 - **Overall Format.** Total length of the proposal is limited to 20 pages (single-spaced), including references. Font size must not be smaller than 11 point and type density must be no more than 15 cpi (characters per inch).
5. The student shall submit the completed proposal to his/her **Examination Committee** for an evaluation of the written document at least two weeks prior to the oral examination.
- The **Examination Committee** will include the regular members of the student's Dissertation Advisory Committee and one member of the Graduate Faculty in the College of Medicine who is not a regular member of the student's Dissertation Advisory Committee. The outside member appointed by the Department Chair or Program Director shall chair the Examination Committee and shall have a vote. The student's Major Professor shall not have a vote on the Examination Committee.
6. If the written document is acceptable, the student shall schedule the oral examination.
1. The Examination Committee shall administer the oral component of the Qualifying Exam.
 2. **The student's oral defense of the written proposal and their knowledge of the underlying basic medical science discipline will comprise the oral component of the Qualifying Exam.**
 - Following the oral examination, there will be a discussion in the student's absence as to whether the student has passed the Qualifying Exam.
7. **Should the student fail the Qualifying Exam, the student will be allowed to retake the exam once more.**
8. **Upon satisfactory completion of the Qualifying Exam, the student will be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D.**

Approved by the BMS Executive Committee 8/12/03
 Revised 6/8/04

**CONSTITUTION
OF THE
BASIC MEDICAL SCIENCES
STUDENT ORGANIZATION**

**COLLEGE OF MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA**

Article I: Name

The name of this organization shall be the Basic Medical Sciences Student Organization (BMSSO).

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the BMSSO is to unify the Basic Medical Sciences program in its interaction with the faculty of the Basic Medical Sciences, the College of Medicine, the rest of the university, the scientific community, and the community at large.

Article III: Membership

The BMSSO shall consist of all students seeking the Ph.D. degree in Basic Medical Sciences at the University of South Alabama, membership being conferred automatically upon matriculation.

Article IV: Government

Section 1: The affairs of the Basic Medical Sciences Student Organization shall be conducted by all its members, each member having equal rights and authority through his/her representatives.

Section 2: The elected officers of the BMSSO shall be:

- a) President
- b) Vice President
- c) Secretary-Treasurer

Section 3: The governing body of the BMSSO shall be the Governing Council which shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, one representative from each department of the Basic Medical Sciences, and one at-large representative for graduate students not committed to a particular department.

Article V: Election of Officers and Representatives

Section 1: Elections

- a) Elections of officers - During the spring of each year, the President and Vice President will call for nominations for President and Secretary-Treasurer. Members have 30 days to submit nominations for President and Secretary-Treasurer to their representatives who will provide these to the President. The President shall be elected through written ballot by a plurality vote of all returned ballots. The runner-up shall automatically become Vice President unless declined. If the office of Vice President is declined, then a separate nomination and election will occur within a time not to exceed 14 days. Upon election, the candidates will become President elect, Vice President elect, and Secretary-Treasurer elect and become non-voting members of the Governing Council. These officers will assume office on September 1st of each year and will remain in office for one (1) year
- b) Elections for Departmental representatives will be conducted by the President and Vice President during the summer quarter. One representative from each department shall be elected by a majority vote of all graduate students committed to the department. Departmental representatives will assume office on September 1st of each year and will remain in office for one (1) year.

- c) The Governing Council shall select by majority vote a member of the BMSSO to represent all non-committed graduate students. This At Large representative shall remain in office concurrent with the Departmental representatives.
- d) The Governing Council shall select by majority vote a member of the BMSSO to act as Standards Board representative. The term of office shall continue until completion of graduate program or fulfillment of duties.

Section 2: Qualifications of Officers

- a) President - must have completed one (1) full year of graduate training since matriculation into the graduate program upon assumption of office.
- b) Vice President - must have completed one (1) full year of graduate training since matriculation into the graduate program upon assumption of office.
- c) Secretary-Treasurer - must be a member of the BMSSO.
- d) Departmental representatives - must be committed to the department of representation.
- e) At Large representative - must be a member of the BMSSO.
- f) Standards Board representative must have completed and passed the appropriate departmental qualifying examinations.
- g) Members must be in good academic standing with the University in order to be elected to office.

Section 3: In the event of an officer resigning or being unable to fulfill his duties the following procedure shall be carried out:

- a) Should the office of President be vacated the Vice President shall assume the office of President and the Governing Council shall appoint a new Vice President from the membership to serve until the next monthly meeting of the Governing Council when a special election for Vice President may be held.
- b) Should the office of Vice President or Secretary-Treasurer be vacated, the Governing Council shall appoint a member of the BMSSO to fill the vacancy until the next monthly meeting of the Governing Council when a special election for that office may be held.
- c) Should the office of Departmental representative be vacated, the departmental graduate students shall convene and elect a new representative to serve until the annual election in spring.
- d) Should the At Large representative be vacated, the Governing Council will select a replacement at the next monthly meeting.

Section 4: Removal from office

- a) The President, Vice President, or Secretary-Treasurer may be removed from office by a three fourths vote for removal by the entire membership of the BMSSO at a specially called meeting.
- b) A Departmental representative may be removed from office by a three-fourths vote of removal by the graduate members of that department.
- c) The At Large representative may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Governing Council.

Article VI: Duties:

Section 1: The duties of the Governing Council shall be:

- a) to direct the general policy of the BMSSO and transact such other business as

pertains to the BMSSO.

- b) to establish ad hoc committees.
- c) to pass bylaws and resolutions when necessary.
- d) to supervise all elections and votes concerning the government of the BMSSO.
- e) to elect a Standard Board representative.
- f) to maintain and enforce the Honor System of the College of Medicine.

Section 2: The duties of the President of the BMSSO shall be:

- a) to be a spokesman for the BMSSO.
- b) to chair all Governing Council and special meetings.
- c) to vote at meetings of the BMSSO in order to make or break ties.
- d) to call special meetings of the BMSSO or Governing Council.
- e) to appoint special committees and define their duties, these committees shall be dissolved at the end of the term of office of the appointing President unless their commission is completed at a sooner date or unless continued by the new President.
- f) to perform other such duties delegated to him/her by the membership or Governing Council.
- g) to ensure that all elected officers carry out their appointed duties.

Section 3: The duties of the Vice President shall be:

- a) to chair BMSSO and Governing Council meetings in the absence of the President.
- b) to act as Graduate representative to the College of Medicine Student Assembly and report on all such meetings to the Governing Council.
- c) to perform other such duties delegated to him/her by the President.

Section 4: The duties of the Secretary-Treasurer shall be:

- a) to conduct financial matters of the BMSSO and maintain financial records subject to audit.

to take minutes of all BMSSO and Governing Council meetings and see that each member receives a copy of the minutes of these meetings. The form of the minutes shall be:

- date, time, and location of meeting
- type of meeting
- name of chair
- record of all motions
- record of all official acts
- to handle the records and correspondence of the BMSSO.

Section 5: The duties of Departmental representatives shall be:

- a) to represent their departments at the Governing Council meetings.
- b) to keep their respective departments informed of the decisions of the Governing Council.
- c) to be a voting member of the Governing Council.

Section 6: The duties of the At Large representative shall be:

- a) to represent those students who have not committed to a department at the Governing Council meetings.
- b) to keep same students informed of the decisions of the Governing Council.
- c) to be a voting member of the Governing Council.

Section 7: The duties of the Standards Board representative shall be those assigned by the Honor System of the College of Medicine.

Article VII: Meetings

Section 1: The Basic Medical Sciences Student Organization Governing Council shall have regular monthly meetings.

Section 2: Special meetings of the BMSSO or the Governing Council may be called by:

- a) the President.
- b) a majority of the Governing Council.
- c) a petition of 25% of the membership submitted to the President.

Section 3: Members of the BMSSO shall be notified in a timely manner of all meetings of the BMSSO and special meetings of the Governing Council.

Section 4: Meetings of the Governing Council shall:

- a) consist of officers, Departmental representatives, At Large representative, and any student requested to attend by the President.
- b) be open to all members of BMSSO.
- c) conduct official business only when a quorum of voting members and one officer are present.
- d) have as order of business:
 - call to order
 - reading and approval of minutes
 - treasurer's report
 - reports of standing committees
 - reports of special committees
 - old business
 - new business
 - announcements
 - adjournment

Section 5: Resolutions

- a) each member may introduce resolutions, a written copy having been presented to the chair prior to a meeting.
- b) resolutions are passed on a 50% vote plus one of the Governing Council.
- c) passed resolutions will be drafted in a letter explaining the resolution and signed by the President.
- d) signed resolutions will be dispersed by the Secretary-Treasurer to the Faculty Advisor and the Director of the graduate program.

Section 6: Quorum

- a) A quorum of the BMSSO shall be greater than 50% of its membership, or greater than 25%, with two-thirds the Governing Council in attendance.
- b) A quorum of the Governing Council shall consist of two-thirds of the voting members and at least one officer.

Article VIII

Should the Governing Council take such action that is deemed unfavorable to the membership, a special meeting of the BMSSO should be called in the above prescribed manner to discuss the issue. Decisions of the Governing Council may be changed by majority vote at a special meeting.

Article IX: Finances

Section 1: All monies received by the BMSSO shall be placed in a BMSSO account to be maintained by the Secretary-Treasurer.

Section 2: The membership of the BMSSO has the option to allow or disallow disbursement of money from the BMSSO account.

Article X: Faculty Advisor

Section 1: The Governing Council shall elect a Faculty Advisor.

Section 2: The Faculty Advisor must be a member of the Graduate Faculty.

Article XI: Amendments

Section 1: Any member of the BMSSO may propose amendments to the constitution which must be submitted to the Governing Council for ratification.

Section 2: Ratification of an amendment shall be voted on by written ballots to be distributed to all members. An amendment will be passed by a two-thirds majority of all written ballots returned to the Governing Council by the stated deadline.

Article XII

All debates and votes, unless stated otherwise herein, shall be conducted and settled by Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

Approved by Student Body
June, 1991

STUDY ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR USE BY BMS GRADUATE STUDENTS

DEPARTMENT	ROOM	POLICY GOVERNING ROOM USE	EQUIPMENT/ FURNISHINGS
BIOCHEMISTRY	MSB 2132 MSB 2360	Secured; no use overnight; usage must be scheduled with Departmental office (Connie) due seminars, classes, etc. being held in room; 2360 - power point/ projector	Large table; multiple chairs
CELL BIOLOGY & NEUROSCIENCE	MSB 1202	CBN students have office space affiliated with lab in which they conduct research; other students have to schedule usage with Departmental office (Bonni)	
MICROBIOLOGY	MSB 2080	Secured; no keys issued; usage must be scheduled with Departmental office (Patricia) due to lab and departmental meetings, classes, conferences, etc. being held in location; must be left in same order received; otherwise privileges are revoked	Large table; multiple chairs; couches; refrigerator for staff usage only
PHARMACOLOGY	MSB 3360	Not available on weekends, as no one is present to unlock room. Scheduled through departmental office (Alma)	Large table-can be converted to 1 round or 2 rectangular tables; multiple chairs; counter area
PHYSIOLOGY	MSB 3012	Secured; not available on weekends. Used for classes, seminars, etc. Schedule through departmental office (Sandy).	Large table; multiple chairs;
BIOMEDICAL LIBRARY	Library Rooms 1-4 (218, 219, 331, 332) Library Rooms 5-7 (321, 329,330) Library Classroom 217 *and 3rd floor Special Collections Room	1-4 can be reserved in advance for up to 4 hours at a time by student (Allied Health, Nursing, BMS Grad. Students). May advance reserve one 4-hr. Block per day up to one week in advance (call 460-7043); if key is not secured within 15 minutes of your reservation, library may give space to someone else. When rooms 1-4 aren't reserved, students (AH, Med., and Nurs.) may use on an available basis. 5-7 same policy as above, except that these rooms are normally kept for COM MD students only; When not reserved; AH, COM BMS Graduate Students, & Nurs. students may use on an as available basis. Classroom 217 (*and 3 rd floor Special Collections Room) can be used only on an as available basis during unscheduled times, as this classroom is primarily used for group meetings, seminars, and classes.	Table, chairs for up to 4

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