



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

# Graduate Program Handbook - 2023/24 PhD Biomedical Sciences

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Reference this handbook to learn about the unique policies, requirements, procedures, resources, and norms for graduate students in the PhD Biomedical Sciences Program.

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March 2023 • Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences



# Welcome to the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program at UCF!



We are excited that you have chosen UCF and our Graduate Program to continue your training and education in Biomedical Sciences. We offer a wide range of training opportunities in important areas of biomedical research including Cancer Biology, Cardiovascular Disease, Neurosciences and Infectious Disease and Immunology. In the past years, the Program has grown in the numbers of both students and faculty mentors. Our researchers have also experienced a rapid rise in our funding for impactful research projects, as well as in our reputation for outstanding training of the next generation of Biomedical Scientists. We look forward to having you as an important part of our Graduate Student Community.

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# Program Coordinators Introduction & Welcome

Welcome to the Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program at the University of Central Florida (UCF)! As a doctoral student, you will face many new experiences that can be both rewarding and challenging. Your studies will involve foundational coursework and laboratory research. You will have the opportunity to work closely with faculty members from the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences (BSBS) as well as other schools and colleges within UCF and affiliated partners in the Orlando area. Within the BSBS, investigative work is being performed in the major fields of cardiovascular and metabolism science, neuroscience, infectious disease, and cancer. Collaborative research is an integral part of the Biomedical Ph.D. program. As a result, you will also have the opportunity to interact with scientists performing cutting edge research in related fields such as biomedical engineering, biology, chemistry, physics, and nanoscience.

The Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program will prepare you for a career in academic research, higher education, or biotechnology. Expectations are for you to go beyond the assigned classroom readings and use your curiosity to explore new research areas, building a knowledge base to support your career as an independent scientist. Oral presentations and writing assignments will teach you the skills needed to effectively communicate your discoveries to the scientific community.

The process of achieving a doctoral degree will demand dedication and effort that go far beyond your undergraduate experiences. The expectations are high but also are the achievements and rewards. With the support of your advisor and committee, you will be part of an intellectual collaboration that will highlight your graduate career at UCF and provide a firm underpinning for the rest of your scientific endeavors.

The program director, the associate director, the program coordinators, the faculty, and the staff are available to help you succeed in the program. You are encouraged to interact with your peers and to participate in the intellectual life of the university. You are committed to upholding the academic and ethical standards of UCF and the discipline of Biomedical Sciences. If you have any questions or problems, please ask for advice.

*We wish you the utmost success during your graduate experience at UCF!*



*Dr. Saleh Naser*

*We are here to help!*



*Dr. Jihe Zhao*

# Table of Contents

Program Welcome.....	1
Navigating Policy and Resources at the University of Central Florida.....	5
How to Use This Handbook.....	6
Introduction/Overview Section.....	7
Complete Name of Degree/Website.....	7
Program Overview Narrative.....	8
Policy Statement on Academic Integrity.....	9
Golden Rule.....	10
Plagiarism.....	11
HIPAA Training.....	12
Enforcement of Enforcement Programmatic Requirements.....	12
PhD Program Graduate Dicipinary Policy/Dismissal.....	13
PhD Program Appeals/Grievance Procedures.....	13
Research Divisions.....	14
Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies/Expectations.....	17
Student Responsibility to Keep Informed.....	18
Program Professional Conduct/Ethics Statement.....	18
Professional Development.....	19
PhD Program Leaders.....	21
Curriculum Section.....	22
Degree Requirements.....	22
Description of Core Courses.....	24
Suggested Timeline for Completion.....	26
Master’s Degree Enroute.....	27
Key Programic Deadlines.....	28
Advising/Mentoring.....	29
Finding & Selecting an Advisor.....	29
Lab Rotation.....	29
Lab Expectations and Evaluation.....	31
Changing Your Advisor.....	31
Dissertation Committee.....	33
Dissertation – Committee Details.....	33
Dissertation – Proposal/Prospectus.....	34
Dissertation - First Committee Meeting.....	34
Admission to Candidacy.....	34
Candidacy/Qualifying Exam.....	35
Oral Examination.....	37
Doctoral Candidate Dissertation Enrollment Policy.....	38
Annual Review.....	39
Annual Review Process.....	39
Unsatisfactory Lab Performance.....	40
Program Meeting Scheduling Policy.....	41
Graduate Research Policies.....	42
Statement of Graduate Research.....	42
IACUC - Animal Protocol.....	42
IRB.....	42
Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse.....	43
Dissertation and Defense Requirement.....	44
Program Dissertation Requirement.....	44
Pre-defense Requirement.....	45
Dissertation Defense.....	46
Dissertation Defense Examination.....	46
iThenticate Report.....	46

Dissertation Defense Announcement .....	47
Dissertation and Program Defense Approval Form.....	47
University Dissertation Requirements and Submission .....	49
Format Review/Release Option and EDT .....	50
Transfer Credit.....	51
Time Limits to Degree Completion .....	53
Registration and Records Hold.....	54
Professional Seminars/Program Symposia .....	54
Graduate Research Forum/Symposium .....	55
Graduate Absences/ Program Leave Policy.....	56
College of Graduate Studies Catalog and Handbook.....	57
Graduate Academic Progress/Doctoral Study .....	58
Graduate Studies GPA.....	58
Graduate Dismissal Policy/Discipline .....	58
Graduation Requirements .....	61
File Your Intent.....	61
Commencement/Tickets/ Regalia/ Diploma .....	61
International Students .....	64
How to Maintain F1 and J1 Status.....	64
Versant English Test for GTA .....	64
Institutional Policies.....	66
Accommodations .....	66
Communication.....	66
Disability Statement.....	67
Diversity Statement.....	67
Harassment.....	68
Privacy .....	68
Assistantship/ Tuition Waivers/ Additional Program Details .....	70
Graduate Assistantship Details.....	70
UCF Fee Policy.....	71
Financial Aid Funding .....	72
Full-time and Part-time Requirements .....	72
GTA Requirement.....	73
Lab and Safety Training.....	73
How to Get Involved.....	74
BSGSA and Graduate Student Associations.....	74
Program Faculty .....	76
Facilities .....	80
Health Sciences Campus Shuttle .....	81
Parking and Transportation .....	81
Forms/Useful Links/Resources .....	81
Program Contact .....	83
UCF Creed .....	84


***The Biomedical PhD program reserves the right to make any changes or amendments to the Program/Handbook information, rules, or policies within the students' period of study upon majority approval of the program faculty, director, and coordinators.***

# Navigating Policy and Resources at the University of Central Florida

This handbook is one of many sources to consult as you become familiar with the policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms of graduate education at the University of Central Florida.


## ACADEMIC CATALOGS

These online catalogs can help you quickly locate and save details about our undergraduate and graduate programs. Whether you are a prospective student or already enrolled, you can easily see what the University of Central Florida has to offer!



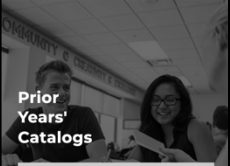
Current Undergraduate Offerings

VISIT CATALOG




Latest Graduate Programs

VISIT CATALOG



Prior Years' Catalogs

VISIT ARCHIVES



## THE GOLDEN RULE STUDENT HANDBOOK

## STUDENT LIFE

ORLANDO, FL | 73°F

### Student Handbook



### Knight Life at UCF

Don't just go to college — get the most out of it. At UCF, you'll have many ways to get involved inside and outside of the classroom. From application to graduation, you'll be inspired to do amazing things. So whether you prefer academics and research or campus activities and athletics, we'll provide you with the tools and support you need to find your place and foster your purpose.

Discover your next adventure at UCF.

[Student Handbook Intro](#)  
[Financial Matters](#)  
[Role of the College of...](#)

### GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

#### Understanding Your Graduate Experience



## Pathways to Success

Personal and Professional Development Opportunities

## UCF Regulations



HOME NOTICE ARCHIVES SUBSCRIBE TO NOTIFICATIONS UCF POLICIES

## Chapter 5: Students

## How to Use This Handbook

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your **PhD Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program Handbook** should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements, and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both handbooks are wonderful resources, you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College. The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

## Who to Contact for Questions

Many of your questions about how to meet expectations and thrive as a graduate student will be answered by the various sources of policies, procedures, requirements, resources, and norms listed in this document. Several key positions in this department listed in the handbook and on campus are ready to answer your remaining questions. The BSBS Graduate Program Associate Director and Program Coordinator Dr. Saleh Naser or the Program Coordinator Dr. Jihe Zhao will serve as your point of contact to answer specific program policy questions that may extend beyond the information posted in the handbook.

## Program Staff

Our Graduate Program Office will assist graduate students with general program questions and will likely be your first stop for questions and answers related to anything in this handbook. The Program Office will also assist graduate students with course registration, organizing seminars, symposiums, thesis defenses, and tracking student achievements throughout their time in the program(s). Moreover, the Program Office is also a critical link of communication between the students and the program directors and coordinators, keeping all parties up to date on the latest protocols and information for the department. Graduate students may email questions to [BSBSGradInformation@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradInformation@ucf.edu).

## Program Director

Each graduate program has designated faculty member(s) to direct its educational vision and structure.

Names and contact information of your Graduate Program Director and Program Coordinators can be found on your program's webpage at <https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/graduate-programs/>.

## Graduate School Services

For general graduate inquiries and graduate student services from the UCF Graduate School, please review the [College of Graduate Studies](#) website as an additional resource.

## Onboarding

### Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Program Orientation

All new graduate students are required to attend our New Graduate Student Orientation, that's held one week before Fall classes begin. Graduate students will meet with program leaders who will give an overview of the program choreography, guidelines, and expectations for the BSBS graduate program. New graduate students will also attend our Welcome Colloquium, financial/contract information session and complete all program orientation requirements including lab & safety and animal safety training.

## **Introduction/Overview Section**

### **Degree**

Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences

### **College**

College of Medicine

### **Department**

Biomedical Sciences

### **Program Type**

PhD Program

### **Program Website**

<https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/graduate-programs/>

### **Year of Program Inception**

**2001**



# Program Overview Narrative

## Introduction

### Mission Statement and Overview

**Mission:** The Biomedical Sciences doctoral training program at the University of Central Florida, College of Medicine, provides the highest quality education and research opportunities for training the next generation of biomedical scientists.

The Program is an interdisciplinary program enriched with graduate faculty with diverse investigative biomedical research interest and highly qualified students who are pursuing top education and cutting-edge discoveries.

The Graduate Faculty includes over 100 reputable scientists with established achievements in diverse aspects of biomedical sciences including metabolic disorders, cardiovascular sciences, infectious disease, neuroscience, cancer, nanoscience, biomedical engineering, drug discovery, and much more.

Visit: <https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/graduate-programs/graduate-faculty/>.

Our students are recruited from outstanding programs from all over the United States and over 18 other countries. They are supported by competitive scholarships and prestigious fellowships. Our students receive top tier education, rigorous training in basic and clinical research, outstanding mentoring, and lifelong professional development. They become well trained in research and regulations while conducting experiments involving the use of human subjects and animals. They learn, retain, and apply fundamental knowledge in biomedical sciences. They graduate from the program as scientists with excellent education, research training, and focused career goals. Many go on as postdoctoral fellows, academics, scientists, and researchers. Visit: <https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/graduate-programs/wherearetheynow/>

The curriculum of the Biomedical PhD program is continuously adapting to rapid changes in technology, science, ongoing research, public health, and evolving microbiome and genetic discoveries.

All students must successfully complete core courses with a focus on fundamental knowledge in molecular and cell biology, microbiology, biochemistry, immunology, neuroscience, bioinformatics, stem cell, metabolic, cancer, drug discovery and delivery, and more.

The program administrators, faculty and staff are all dedicated to educate, train, and mentor tomorrow's scientists and future colleagues and collaborators. Our Graduate Student Association plays the big brother/sister role to complement the role of our faculty to help our students feel at home and succeed.

## **College Awarding the PhD Degree in Biomedical Sciences**

**PhD students in the interdisciplinary PhD Biomedical Sciences Program will graduate with the Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences Degree, under the college of the faculty advisor.**

## **PhD Program Policy Statement on Academic Integrity**

Integrity is a critical foundation of science and scientific training. As such, any incident of cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic misconduct at any time by any student in the programs, may result in dismissal from the program. All graduate programs organized in the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences hold students to the highest standards of academic conduct and scientific conduct.

There are many forms of misconduct, both in academics and in science. In research, these primarily include the falsification or fabrication of data during one's research project, or the plagiarism of text, figures, or data from someone else's work (such as a published or online paper). These examples of misconduct, as well as other examples will be discussed in the Practice in Biomedical Science course or other courses.

In academics, the unauthorized use of electronic devices during exams, or any other means to gain an advantage during an examination will be considered academic misconduct. Copying work from another student who is currently taking the same course or previously took the same course will also be considered academic misconduct. Both the student who supplied such material and the student who attempts to use such material are both in violation of the standards.

Many other examples of misconduct exist, and common sense should dictate to the student what is and is not permissible. If you question whether an action could be considered misconduct (academic or scientific) – ask the program coordinator or program director. **Ignorance of what constitutes misconduct is not an excuse.**

**Required - All first-year graduate students are required to sign the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Academic Integrity Program form and FERPA waiver form before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Fall classes. This form addresses academic integrity and the consequences to students for academic misconduct.**

## **Required Training for Academic Honesty and Responsible Research Conduct**

### **Academic Integrity/CITI Training**

All students newly admitted to doctoral programs must complete training designed to inculcate an awareness and understanding of the fundamental issues of academic integrity and the

responsible conduct of research (RCR) in a manner that is consistent with federal regulations. This required training includes: **(1) the online Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) “Responsible Conduct of Research” training module** in the appropriate disciplinary area; and **(2) four face-to-face ethics/RCR workshops** coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies and the Office of Research and Commercialization.

**Required - Graduate students must take the CITI Responsible Conduct of Research Training and two CORE Ethics Academic Integrity workshops and at least two other CORE or ELECTIVE Ethics Academic Integrity workshops, for a total of four workshops prior to advancement to candidacy. (No exceptions)**

CORE and ELECTIVE workshops are offered every Fall and Spring semester. There will be a limited offering of sessions during the Summer semesters. The ethics/responsible conduct of research (RCR) workshops are provided at no cost and are open to all UCF graduate students and postdoctoral associates. Priority is given to doctoral students who are required to complete these workshops.

Students may attend Pathways to Success seminar series including Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research.

Visit <https://graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/> or [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org) to learn more.

## **Golden Rule**

The University of Central Florida is a community brought together by the tenets of the UCF Creed: Integrity, Scholarship, Community, Creativity, and Excellence. These are the values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions. To be successful at UCF, there is an expectation that we embrace and promote these core values in everything we do as a sign of our membership in the UCF community.

Whether you are a new or continuing undergraduate, graduate, or professional student at UCF, there are certain responsibilities that students must uphold as members of our community. The [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#) is a compilation of policies and procedures from different university areas intended to define the rights and responsibilities afforded to students and provide a better understanding of each student’s role as a member of the UCF community.

For more information visit <http://osrr.sdes.ucf.edu> for the most current version of The Golden Rule or email [osrr@ucf.edu](mailto:osrr@ucf.edu).

# Graduate Student Guide to Success

## Plagiarism

### Plagiarism Training Module

**The UCF Plagiarism Training Module is required for all new/incoming students. Students will be automatically enrolled in this Webcourse.**

All new graduate students will receive a request to complete the College of Graduate Studies webcourse: "Pressures to Plagiarize. Graduate students must complete the entire module and earn a score of 80% or higher on the quiz to avoid a registration hold. If not completed by the stated deadline, a hold that prevents future registration will be placed on the student's myUCF account.

**Plagiarism is the act of taking someone else's work and presenting it as your own.** Any ideas, data, text, media or materials taken from another source (either written or verbal) must be fully acknowledged. a) A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another person without acknowledgment. b) A student must give credit to the originality of others whenever:

1. Directly quoting another person's actual words, whether oral or written;
2. Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories;
3. Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written;
4. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; or
5. Offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.

When using the ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another, students must give credit to the original source at the location or place in the document where that source's material is found as well as provide bibliographic information at the end of the document. When students are verbally discussing the ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or pictures of another, they must give credit to the original source at the time they speak about that source. In this manner, students must make clear (so there is no doubt) within their written or verbal materials, which parts are gained from other sources, and which are their own original ideas, theories, formulas, graphics, and pictures.

The Office of Student Conduct has a set of criteria that determines if students are in violation of plagiarism. This set of criteria may be set to a higher standard in graduate programs. Therefore, a student may not be found in violation of plagiarism by the Office of Student Conduct, but a professor or program requiring higher standards of attribution and citation may find a student in violation of plagiarism and administer program level sanctions. The standard in doctoral programs should be the highest as students earning these degrees are expected to be experts in their fields and producing independent work that contributes knowledge to their discipline.

### **Example of Material that has been appropriately cited:**

#### **Paraphrased Material**

Source: Osborne, Richard, ed. *How to Grow Annuals*. 2nd ed. Menlo Park: Lane, 1974. Print. Page 24: As a recent authority has pointed out, for a dependable long-blooming swath of soft blue in your garden, ageratum is a fine choice. From early summer until frost, ageratum is continuously covered with clustered heads of fine, silky, fringed flowers in dusty shades of lavender-blue, lavender-pink or white. The popular dwarf varieties grow in mounds six to twelve inches high and twelve inches across; they make fine container plants. Larger types grow up to three feet tall. Ageratum makes an excellent edging.

#### **Use and Adaptation of the Material:**

You can depend on ageratum if you want some soft blue in your garden. It blooms through the summer and the flowers, soft, small, and fringed, come in various shades of lavender. The small varieties which grow in mounds are very popular, especially when planted in containers. There are also larger varieties. Ageratum is good as a border plant (Osborne 24).

#### **Explanation:**

The writer has done a good job of paraphrasing what could be considered common knowledge (available in a number of sources), but because the structure and progression of detail is someone else's, the writer has acknowledged the source. This the writer can do at the end of the paragraph since he or she has not used the author's words.

*The above example was provided by Northwestern University.*

*Northwestern University, Sept. 2016. "[Academic Integrity: A Basic Guide.](#)" Accessed 20 September 2017. Visit the [College of Graduate Studies website](#) to learn more.*

## **HIPAA Training Module**

### **Required every year**

Each year BSBS Graduate Students are required to complete the COM Annual HIPAA Training (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) in maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of protected health information. This training will take approximately 30 minutes to complete and at the end of the module, you will be prompted to complete a quiz. A score of 80% or higher is required in order to successfully pass and complete the training.

## **Policy Statement on Enforcement of Programmatic Requirements**

Students who fail to complete programmatic requirements (e.g., dissertation proposal defense, candidacy exam, annual dissertation committee review) by the specified deadlines\* may be placed on academic probation. If this occurs, the student will be given specific written notice of the terms of the probation and will have one semester to correct the deficiency. In most cases, the student's dissertation committee will be responsible for evaluating the student's progress. If a dissertation committee has not been formed, then the evaluation will be performed by the Program Coordinator in conjunction with the sponsoring PI. The evaluation body will meet with the student and spell out the terms of the probation, and then will meet with that student again within one semester to determine if the terms of the probation have been satisfactorily met. If the deficiency is corrected, then the probation will be lifted. If the student fails to correct the deficiencies within

the specified time period (1 semester), then the student will not be permitted to register for classes or receive financial support from the program and may be subjected to dismissal from the program. **All official communications regarding probation must include the Biomedical Sciences PhD Program Associate Director and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies.**

## **PhD Graduate Disciplinary Policy**

**The graduate program reserves the right to carry out full disciplinary action against student misconduct.** Any documented case of scientific or academic misconduct is the basis for immediate dismissal from the program. The incident(s) will be reported to the student's advisor, the graduate committee, and the UCF Office of Student Conduct. After reviewing the case, the Director of the Biomedical Sciences Graduate program will have the authority to recommend dismissal of the student from the graduate program.

### **Dismissal of the student may occur for the following:**

- Any student who receives **two consecutive "U" grades**, will automatically be dismissed from the program.
- Any student found guilty of **research or academic misconduct** will be immediately dismissed from the program.
- If the student fails to maintain the standards of academic and professional integrity, meet or exceed the professional competencies of the discipline, or maintain the competence necessary for the welfare of faculty, fellow students, staff, patients, clients, or others encountered in internships, externships, or other classes required by the degree program.
- A student may be immediately terminated from a clinical assignment and/or graduate program when, in the professional judgment of a qualified clinician, faculty supervisor or instructor of record, client/patient welfare could be at risk.
- Student misconduct associated with research or misconduct in laboratory assignments may result in immediate termination from the assignment and/or the graduate program when the misconduct places clients, researchers, subjects or the university at risk.

## **PhD Graduate Appeals/Grievance Procedures**

If significant issues arise between a student and their mentor that cannot be resolved amicably, the student should first consult with the Program Coordinators and secondly with the Program Director to resolve the issues. If these first steps do not resolve the conflict, the student has the right to request a dissertation committee meeting to attempt to resolve such issues. This request for a meeting of the full committee cannot be overruled by the chair (mentor) and the meeting should be chaired by a dissertation committee member and not the mentor. If sought by the student, this meeting should also include at least one PhD coordinator. The PhD program director, associate director and all coordinators should also be informed of the meeting and have the right to attend to help resolve the issue(s).

Visit the [Academic Grievance](#) section in the UCF Graduate Catalog General Graduate Policies.

# Research Divisions

## **Division of Cancer Research**

Researchers in the Division of Cancer Research are on the vanguard of cancer biology, investigating:

- How patients' genes play a role in their cancer risk.
- What causes cancer and cancer metastasis.
- How cancer cells communicate with the neighboring normal cells.
- The epigenetic changes that play a role in developing drug resistance.
- Discovering new ways to harness the immune system to fight cancer.
- Identifying new targets for companion diagnostics with treatments that reduce side

effects.

<https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/burnett-school-of-biomedical-sciences-research/divisions/cancer-research/>

## **Division of Immunity and Pathogenesis**

The mission of the Immunity and Pathogenesis Division is elucidation of the cellular and molecular mechanisms at the interface of infection, inflammation, and immunity. Our group has broad interest and expertise in microbial pathogenesis, innate immunity, inflammatory signaling pathways and immunological memory. Discoveries are being translated into innovative diagnostics, vaccines, and therapeutic strategies to improve human health.

Projects are related to:

- Respiratory diseases (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, non-tuberculous mycobacteria, influenza, parainfluenza, respiratory syncytial virus, and asthma)
- Sexually transmitted diseases (*Chlamydia trachomatis*, human papilloma virus and Zika virus)
- Vector-borne diseases (Lyme disease and emerging vector borne viruses)
- Inflammatory diseases (Inflammatory bowel disease, peritonitis, autoimmune arthritis, and hypersensitivity)

<https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/burnett-school-of-biomedical-sciences-research/divisions/immunity-and-pathogenesis/>

## **Division of Molecular Microbiology**

The Division of Molecular Microbiology conducts basic and applied research related to bacterial, parasitic, and viral diseases that are of major public health concern. Research is focused in two broad areas:

- Understanding the fundamental principles of microbial pathogenesis.
- Development of next-generation antimicrobial drugs.

Topics of interest include HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, mechanisms of antimicrobial resistance, evolution of bacterial pathogens, genomic epidemiology, enteric diseases, toxins, and diagnostics. Student training and development are integral components of faculty research.

<https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/burnett-school-of-biomedical-sciences-research/divisions/molecular-microbiology/>

### **Division of Metabolic and Cardiovascular Sciences**

The Metabolic and Cardiovascular Research Division focuses on understanding the pathogenesis, molecular mechanisms and cell signaling of metabolic and heart diseases and to bring translational research into the clinical environment to serve our community.

#### **Major Areas of Research**

- Metabolic syndrome in diabetes and aging
- Interactions of lipids and lipoproteins in atherosclerosis
- Inflammation in cardiac diseases (Myocardial infarction, heart failure, atherosclerosis)
- Vascular and angiogenesis in cardiac diseases
- Biological energy metabolism
- Oxidative stress, free radical and reactive oxygen species
- Mitochondrial alterations pathophysiology of cardiac diseases
- Molecular and cellular cardiology
- Regenerative medicine (stem cells) in heart diseases
- Cardiac genetic and non-genetic disease modeling using 3D printing
- Tissue engineering and drug toxicity with 3D printed scaffolds
- Cardiovascular epidemiology and public health

<https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/burnett-school-of-biomedical-sciences-research/divisions/cardiovascular/>

### **Division of Neuroscience**

The mission of the Neuroscience Division is to discover cellular and molecular mechanisms that govern function of the nervous system. This knowledge is then applied to expand understanding of how neurological disorders arise and may be treated. The division's researchers are conducting cutting-edge research on:

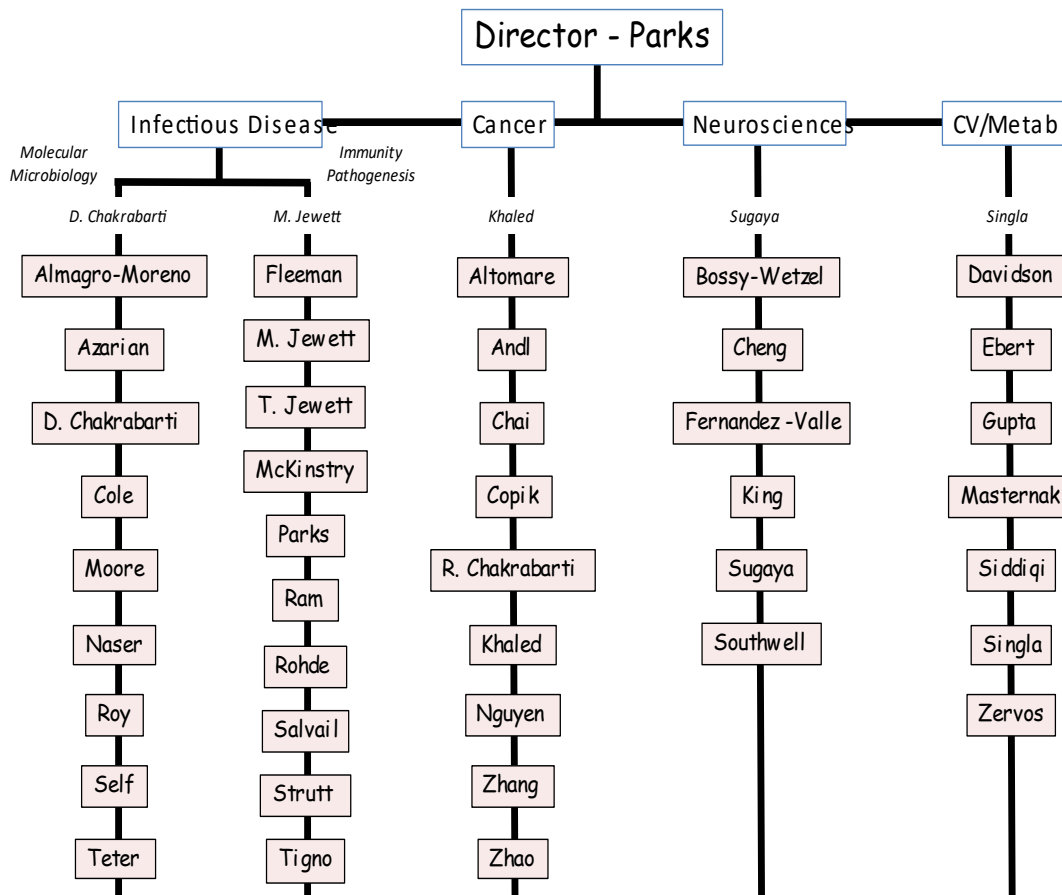
- Neurodegenerative diseases (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), Huntington's, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's Diseases)
- Cerebrovascular diseases (Stroke and cerebral ischemia)
- Traumatic brain injury and chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) caused by concussion
- Axonal transportation dysfunctions (Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease (CMT), Perry syndrome, distal spinal and bulbar muscular atrophy)
- Sleep apnea
- Diabetes and aging-induced cardiac neuropathy



- Brain cancer such as glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) and neuroblastoma
- Optic nerve damage
- Neurofibromatosis Type 2 and schwannomatosis
- Cancers of the head and neck including oral cancer
- Regenerative medicine and stem cell therapies & Induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells
- Brain machine interface

Faculty collaborate with local physicians and UCF researchers (Multidisciplinary Neuroscience Alliance (MDNA, <https://med.ucf.edu/mdna/>)). They are working with Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, the Prosthetic Interfaces faculty cluster, Nanoscience Technology Center, Material Sciences, College of Arts and Humanity, College of Optics and Photonics, and Psychology in UCF. Collaborators also include scientists and physicians from HCA Healthcare, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Nemours Children’s Hospital, and AdventHealth (Florida Hospital), Orlando Health and other local clinics, which enrich the clinical and translational research environment in the Neuroscience Division. <https://med.ucf.edu/biomed/burnett-school-of-biomedical-sciences-research/divisions/neuroscience/>

## Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences



# Student Learning Outcomes/Expectations

## Student Expectations

Before day one of first year, all the students must sign the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Academic Integrity Program form and FERPA waiver form, followed in the beginning of first semester by the required training that addresses academic integrity, research ethics, professional conduct and the consequences to students for academic misconduct.

- First year students must demonstrate satisfactory progress during a “hands-on” laboratory experience and attain a satisfactory evaluation from their rotation mentors on student attendance, technical proficiency, enthusiasm/interest in research work and work ethics. If a first-year student has already joined a research program and is not rotating through laboratories, then this student must achieve a “satisfactory” annual evaluation. First year students must develop problem-solving ability and critical thinking in a classroom setting. The students must perform at a “satisfactory” level in Experimental Design and Analysis for Biomedical Sciences (IDS6694) as determined by a rubric that involves three assessment parameters: (1) class attendance, (2) completion of weekly assignments and (3) participation in class discussions about the assignments. By the end of the first academic year, the students must have selected a mentor and assemble a dissertation advisory committee as evidence of a student’s commitment towards developing an independent research program.
- First year and second year students must master knowledge in specific topic areas of biomedical sciences and division-based fields by achieving at least a passing performance on the core course topics including biochemical principles, metabolism, nucleic acid structure and function, and gene regulation as well as division-specific course topics in cancer, metabolisms and cardiovascular diseases, infectious diseases or neurosciences.
- The students must demonstrate sustained overall progress in program academic excellence consistent with academic requirements to prevent probationary status. The students must demonstrate effective oral presentation skills in a classroom setting by performing at a “satisfactory” level in the seminar course IDS 7690 based on a peer evaluation of an oral presentation of current research publication, class attendance and classroom participation. The students must demonstrate good ability to communicate information to others by receiving “satisfactory” evaluations as graduate teaching assistants. The students must receive a “Pass” evaluation from their dissertation committees on writing and oral presentation of the dissertation proposal—a one-page document outlining the hypothesis and specific aims for their dissertation project. By the end of second year, the students must have successfully passed the Candidacy Examination that tests for the student’s strong knowledge base, communication skills both orally and in writing and ability to independently conceive of a NIH-style hypothesis-driven research program, as judged by dissertation advisory committee.
- Third year and beyond students must meet the program’s publication requirements. By the time of pre-defense meeting, the students must have at least one first-author original publication of the thesis research work in a peer-reviewed scientific journal with an Impact Factor of at least 2.0. Prior to the thesis defense, a second original manuscript of the

thesis research work must have been submitted and subjected to peer review. The students must present their research at the annual Graduate Research Symposium to demonstrate their successful progress in their thesis work. To graduate with a Ph.D. degree, the students must successfully defend their dissertation work by writing it and orally presenting it to the audience including both the general public and the dissertation advisory committee as judged by their performance on presenting their research work, fielding questions from the audience and displaying their thorough knowledge of the subject matter. The students will likely have received interview offers leading to a post-doctoral employment as evidenced by the Graduating Graduate Student survey after their intent to graduate forms are submitted as well as by a follow-up a year after graduation.

## **Student Learning Outcomes/Competencies**

- First and second year PhD students will acquire advanced knowledge in four topical areas of biomedical sciences and in division-based fields. Upon completion of laboratory rotations and coursework in experimental design they will demonstrate proficiency in the practical application of experimental methodology and the development of problem-solving skills. Students who maintain good academic standing in the program will demonstrate proficient oral and written skills and the capacity to develop an independent research program.
- Second year PhD students who advance to candidacy will demonstrate advanced knowledge of biomedical sciences appropriate to beginning an independent research program.
- Third year and beyond PhD students who maintain satisfactory progress in the program will demonstrate the ability to execute independent research skills and team collaboration within the field.
- Students who graduate from the program will have obtained an offer of professional employment at the time of their dissertation defense or shortly thereafter that is commensurate with a Biomedical Science PhD degree.

## **Student Responsibility to Keep Informed**

It is the student's responsibility to keep informed of all rules, regulations, and procedures required for graduate studies. Graduate program regulations will not be waived, or exceptions granted because students plead ignorance of the regulations or claim failure of the adviser to keep them informed.

## **Program Professional Conduct/Ethics Statement**

### **Expectations for Professional Conduct**

Students are expected to adhere to the rules and regulations as stipulated by the University of Central Florida and the PhD Program handbook. Professionalism encompasses behaviors and qualities that are expected of graduate both in the academic setting and laboratory setting. University of Central Florida PhD degrees begin at the time of program application; therefore, professional conduct is assessed from that point forward. Attendance, timeliness, and attire are all reflections of professionalism.

In the assessment of professionalism, instructors and program administrators will consider each student's conduct; the quality of interactions; tone of oral and written communication; language; meaningful engagement in all aspects of the program; and substantive contribution to class discussions. Students who are in violation of these behaviors will be counseled and reminded of

UCF expectations. In such events, the faculty or program administrators may conclude that the student is not able or willing to demonstrate an acceptable standard of professionalism.

Repeated disregard or violation of these behaviors will lead to dismissal from the program. Some of the criteria by which a student's professional demeanor is measured are below.

- **Civility:** Students are expected to behave in a respectful and courteous manner to instructors, fellow students, guest speakers, college and university administrators, and UCF Staff. Examples of respectful behavior include but are not limited to modulated tone of voice; professional language that avoids inappropriate, vulgar, or foul expressions; maintaining control of emotions and avoiding threatening or bullying behaviors; respect for others' personal space; respect for BSBS property and UCF property; refraining from distracting and disruptive behaviors while on UCF campus, laboratories, hallways and in classrooms; and a generally civil demeanor.
- **Attendance:** It is required for students to attend each lecture and comply with the instructor's attendance policy as stated in the course syllabus.
- **Timeliness:** Students are expected to regularly arrive in class on time and to comply with each instructor's tardiness policy as stated in the course syllabus.
- **Use of Technology:** The use of computers, cell phones, or electronic devices during class that are unrelated to course activities or not permitted by instructors (i.e., web searches, IMs, etc.) is considered unprofessional.
- **Use of Electronic Media:** As per Florida Law (§ 934.03) it is illegal to audio or video record any interaction with another individual without their explicit consent. This includes lectures, meetings with instructors, meetings with fellow students, or any situation involving UCF staff or other personnel.
- **Appropriate Attire:** If working in a laboratory, students are required to wear the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), included but not limited to laboratory coats, closed-toed shoes, gloves, safety glasses etc. Additionally, in accordance with UCF's Environmental Health & Safety Laboratory Safety Manual, PPE should be removed before leaving the work area. This includes removing safety glasses, gloves, lab coats, etc.
- **Guest Speakers / Presentations:** The Program often invites guest speakers to give presentations at seminars, and in the classroom. Students in the program must demonstrate professional conduct, respect, and appreciation for these professionals' donation of their time to enrich students' educational experiences. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and be attentive as a sign of appreciation for their time.

## Professional Development

### Teaching and Learning

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. They offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

### Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program

Every semester IDS 6513, a voluntary face-to-face course on teaching at the college level that is open to all UCF Graduate Students. This course can serve as a replacement to the GTA Training if completed the semester prior to your appointment. GTAs in the Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty (PTF) course meet weekly and engage in a learning community facilitated by Faculty Center staff. Texts will be provided, and the course is free to all graduate students who are registered in at least one credit hour of coursework at UCF. By the end of the semester you will have assembled a first draft of your teaching portfolio. Email: [fctl@ucf.edu](mailto:fctl@ucf.edu) for additional information.

## **Pathways to Success Workshops**

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the [Pathways to Success](#) program offers free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in academic integrity, graduate grantsmanship, graduate teaching, personal development, professional development, and research. Students are encouraged to use the Pathways to Success portal to register for workshops, cancel their attendance, or download a Training Summary. The Pathways to Success portal is located in [myUCF Student Center Graduate Students](#) then **Pathways to Success**. Visit the [Pathways to Success Workshop Registration Instructions](#) for additional details.

## **Graduate Research Forum/Student Scholar Symposium**

In 2021 the UCF [Student Scholar Symposium](#) was created to combine two signature events, the **Graduate Research Forum** and the Showcase of Undergraduate Research Excellence. The Symposium is held during [Student Research Week](#) and features poster sessions representing UCF's diverse colleges and disciplines. The Student Scholar Symposium is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best poster presentation in each category will be given and all participants will receive recognition. Student Scholar Symposium applicant criteria is available on the [Eligibility](#) page. For more information, contact [researchweek@ucf.edu](mailto:researchweek@ucf.edu).

## **Graduate Excellence Awards**

Each year, the College of Graduate Studies offers graduate students who strive for academic and professional excellence the opportunity to be recognized for their work.

### **Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant**

The Award for Graduate Teaching Assistant recognizes excellence by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) who are not instructors of record, but who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. Excellence in serving as a GTA may be demonstrated by evidence such as (but not limited to): lead teacher evaluations, student letters attesting to teaching excellence (limited to no more than five pages), a typical lab syllabus, a sample project/assignment for which the GTA was responsible for grading. For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see the College of Graduate Studies website [graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/).

### **Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching**

The Award for Graduate Student Teaching recognizes excellence in teaching by graduate teaching assistants who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities. Excellence in teaching may be demonstrated by evidence such as (but not limited to): awards or honors received in recognition of teaching excellence, outstanding evaluations of teaching, presentations or publications related to teaching, comments and/or evaluations from students or faculty regarding the outstanding nature of the student's teaching. For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see the College of Graduate Studies website [graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/).

### **Outstanding Dissertation**

The Award for the Outstanding Dissertation recognizes doctoral students for excellence in the dissertation. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's dissertation. The excellence of the dissertation may be demonstrated by evidence such as, but not limited to publications in refereed journals, awards and recognition from professional organizations, and

praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. **Note: Students can only win the university award once.** For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see the College of Graduate Studies website [graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/](https://graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/).

## **PhD Program Leaders**

**The PhD program director, the associate director, the program coordinators, the faculty and staff are all available to help you succeed in the program.**

- Dr. Griffith Parks Associate Dean, Research, Director of the Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program ([Griffith.Parks@ucf.edu](mailto:Griffith.Parks@ucf.edu))
- Dr. Saleh Naser Associate Director and Program Coordinator – Main Campus & ([Saleh.Naser@ucf.edu](mailto:Saleh.Naser@ucf.edu))
- Dr. Jihe Zhao PhD Program Coordinator – Lake Nona Campus & Associate Professor ([Jihe.Zhao@ucf.edu](mailto:Jihe.Zhao@ucf.edu))
- Program Office ([BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu))

# Curriculum

## Degree Requirements

### Program Curriculum

**Completion of the Biomedical Sciences PhD program requires a minimum of 72 credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. This includes a minimum total of 27 hours of formal course work exclusive of independent study.**

The program requires 24 credit hours of core courses, 9 credit hours of electives, and a up to 24 credit hours of dissertation research (minimum 15 credit hours of dissertation). The remaining 15 credit hours may consist of additional electives, doctoral research and/or dissertation research.

Students with an earned master's degree may request that up to 30 credit hours of previous course work be applied to the credit hour requirement.

New students will take a two-semester Core courses, participate in laboratory rotations to identify a research area of interest, and enroll in elective courses to prepare them to carry out their research. Students are also required to enroll in seminar courses and to participate in the program's seminar series.

**All students are required to attend and participate in the annual program symposia.** Students may register for doctoral research until they have been admitted to candidacy, after which they must register for dissertation research.

**All students in the program should be enrolled full time including summer.**

### Required Courses—24 Credit Hours

- [BSC6432](#) - Biomedical Sciences I (5)
- [BSC6431](#) - Practice of Biomedical Sciences (3)
- [IDS6694](#) - Experimental Design and Analysis in Biomedical Sciences (2)
- [GMS 6860](#) - Statistics for Biomedical Scientists (3 Credit Hours)
- **Must select one course (3 Credit Hours) from these 4 courses.**
  - [PCB5815](#) - Molecular Aspects of Obesity, Diabetes and Metabolism (3)
  - [PCB5837](#) - Cellular and Molecular Basis of Brain Functions (3)
  - [PCB5236](#) - Cancer Biology (3)
  - [MCB 6273](#) Advanced Topics in Infectious Processes: Host-Pathogen Interactions

### Earn at least 4 credits from the following types of courses:

- IDS 7690 - Frontiers in Biomedical Sciences 1 Credit Hours (four semesters, 1 credit hour each semester)

### Earn at least 4 credits from the following types of courses:

- IDS 7692L - Experiments in Biomedical Sciences (Lab Rotation: 4 credits)

## Elective Courses—9 Credit Hours

**At least 9 hours of electives must be taken from the following list.**

Any electives not on this list must be approved by the program before being counted toward degree credit requirements. Directed research, doctoral research, and dissertation research may be used to satisfy requirements beyond the first 9 hours, with approval from the program director.

Earn at least 9 credits from the following:

- [BSC5418](#) - Tissue Engineering (3)
- [BSC5436](#) - Biomedical Informatics: Structure Analysis (3)
- [BSC6407C](#) - Laboratory Methods in Molecular Biology (3)
- [CAP5510](#) - Bioinformatics (3)
- [CHM5305](#) - Bioconjugate Chemistry (3)
- [CHM5450](#) - Polymer Chemistry (3)
- [CHM5451C](#) - Techniques in Polymer Science (3)
- [CHS6251](#) - Applied Organic Synthesis (3)
- [CHS6535](#) - Forensic Molecular Biology (3)
- [CHS6535L](#) - Forensic Analysis of Biological Materials (3)
- [CHS6536](#) - Population Genetics and Genetic Data (3)
- [CHS6536](#) - Population Genetics and Genetic Data (3)
- [IDS5127](#) - Foundation of Bio-Imaging Science (3)
- [MCB5205](#) - Infectious Processes (3)
- [MCB5208](#) - Cellular Microbiology: Host-Pathogen Interactions (3)
- [MCB5209](#) - Microbial Stress Response (3)
- [MCB5225](#) - Molecular Biology of Disease (3)
- [MCB5505](#) - Molecular Virology (3)
- [MCB5722C](#) - Methods in Biotechnology (4)
- [MCB5932](#) - Current Topics in Molecular Biology (1 - 99)
- [MCB5415](#) - Cellular Metabolism (3)
- [MCB6226](#) - Molecular Diagnostics (3)
- [MCB6417C](#) - Microbial Metabolism (3)
- [PCB5025](#) - Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology (3)
- [PCB5235](#) - Molecular Immunology (3)
- [PCB5236](#) - Cancer Biology (3)
- [PCB5238](#) - Immunobiology (3)
- [PCB5265](#) - Stem Cell Biology (3)
- [PCB5275](#) - Signal Transduction Mechanics (3)
- [PCB5527](#) - Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (3)



- [PCB5596](#) - Biomedical Informatics: Sequence Analysis (3)
- [PCB5815](#) - Molecular Aspects of Obesity, Diabetes and Metabolism (3)
- [PCB5838](#) - Cellular and Molecular Basis of Brain Functions (3)
- [PCB6528](#) - Plant Molecular Biology (3)
- [PCB6595](#) - Regulation of Gene Expression (3)
- [PCB6677](#) - Molecular Evolution and Phylogenetics (3)
- [ZOO5748C](#) - Clinical Neuroanatomy (5)
- Others, must be approved by the dissertation advisor and program coordinator

At least 9 hours of electives must be taken from the above list. Any electives not on this list must be approved by the dissertation advisor and program coordinator before being counted toward degree credit requirements. Directed research, doctoral research, and dissertation research may be used to satisfy requirements beyond the first 9 hours, with approval from the program director.

### **Unrestricted Electives—15 Credit Hours Minimum**

Students should take a minimum of 15 credit hours of electives, directed research, doctoral research in consultation with their adviser.

### **Dissertation— Earn up to 24 credit hours of the following types of courses**

- IDS 7980 - Dissertation Research  
Up to 24 credit hours can be taken.

A minimum of 15 credit hours of dissertation research hours are required for students who have additional unrestricted electives due to transfer credits.

You may visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current program curriculum.

### **Description of Core Courses**

- **BSC 6432 Biomedical Sciences I (5 Credit Hours)**  
First semester of a multi-disciplinary course. Topics discussed include genome biology and gene expression, cell structure and function, and other key fundamental biological processes. This course is based on seminal works and the current scientific literature in the context of biomedical applications.
- **GMS 6860 Statistics for Biomedical Scientists (3 Credit Hours)**  
An introductory course tailored to the interests of biomedical scientists and the course will answer questions like how to calculate the odds of catching the flu? When does a Binomial model make sense? We will also learn how to correctly test scientific claims and make inferences. This knowledge is the foundation for sound scientific reasoning and data analysis.
- **BSC6431 - The Practice of Biomedical Sciences (3 Credit Hours)**  
Introduces both MS and PhD students to aspects of the practice of biomedical sciences that are relevant to careers in biomedical research such as manuscript writing, grant writing, peer review and ethics in research and publication.
- **PCB 5815 Molecular Aspects of Obesity, Diabetes and Metabolism (3 Credit Hours)**  
Biochemical, molecular and physiological aspects of obesity, diabetes and metabolic

diseases and how scientific findings can be translated towards prevention and treatment.

- **PCB 5837 Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience** (3 Credit Hours)  
Designed to provide graduate students the concepts required to understand the physiological basis of brain functions at the molecular, cellular and system levels.
- **PCB 5236 Cancer Biology** (3 Credit Hours)  
Current knowledge and research on molecular mechanism of tumor development, tumor progression, metastasis and therapy of cancer.  
**MCB 6273 Advanced Topics in Infectious Processes: Host-Pathogen Interactions** (3 Credit Hours) Examination of the molecular details of host-pathogen interactions. Key areas of cell biology will be considered in relation to microbial pathogenesis.
- **IDS 6694 Experimental Design and Analysis**  
Course focused on how to effectively design experiments and analyze data for hypothesis-driven research in biomedical sciences. (2 Credit Hours)
- **IDS 7690 Seminar**  
Biomolecular research seminar

## **Independent Study**

The dissertation serves as the independent learning experience.

# Sample Plan of Study/Course Sequence/Completion Timeline

## Suggested Timeline for Completion

### Year 1:

#### **Fall Semester:**

- Core Course: Biomedical Sciences I (BSC 6432/) 5 cr
- Seminar Course (IDS 7690) 1 cr
- Elective 3 cr (suggestion: BSC 6407C Lab Methods)
- Graduate Teaching Assignment

#### **Rotation/Selection of an Advisor**

#### **Spring Semester:**

- GMS 6860 – Statistics for Biomedical Scientists (3 Credit Hours)
- Seminar Course (IDS 7690) 1 cr
- Division required course: *Select one division course* (3 Credit Hours)
- Experimental Design & Analysis for Biomedical Science (IDS 6694) 2 cr

#### **Graduate Teaching Assignment**

#### **Summer Semester:**

- Laboratory Rotations (IDS 7692L) 3 cr
- Doctoral Research (IDS 7919) 3 cr or Elective 3 cr

#### **Committee Selection**

### Year 2:

#### **Fall Semester:**

- Practice of Biomedical Science (BSC 6431) 3 cr
- Elective 3 cr
- Seminar Core Course (IDS 7690 Frontiers in Biomedical Sciences) 1 cr
- Doctoral Research (IDS 7919) 2 cr

#### **First Dissertation Committee Meeting and Proposal Defense / IRB Form & Candidacy Topic Form**

#### **Spring Semester:**

- Elective 3 cr
- Seminar Core Course (IDS 7690 Frontiers in Biomedical Sciences) 1 cr
- Doctoral Research (IDS 7919) 5 cr  
*\*If MOW selected, then another 3 cr elective and only 2 cr Doctoral Research (IDS 7919)*

#### **Candidacy preparation**

#### **Summer Semester:**

- Doctoral Research, 6cr
- *\*If MOW selected, then 3 cr elective and 3 cr capstone*

#### **Candidacy Examination**

### Years 3-5:

- Dissertation research (IDS 7980, 3cr) until completion of all dissertation requirements

#### **Annual Review Meeting each year**

Note: The faculty mentor will provide guidance on graduate student course selections and timeline. Also, the faculty mentor should approve your selection of courses before registration.

## **Master's Degree Enroute PhD Program MS "Along the Way" Curriculum**

### **Requires a minimum of 33 credit hours of courses**

If selected, students should contact our program office ASAP to plan the choreography early.

Entering PhD students will have the option to receive a non-thesis Master of Science (MS) degree that will be awarded after achieving candidacy. Requirements for the MS degree must be completed in addition to the requirements of the PhD program.

All interested students must formulate a Program of Study as early as possible in order to choose electives that will provide a foundation for their doctoral studies and fulfill the MS degree requirements. The Program of Study for the MS "Along the Way" will be developed for each interested student using the following guidelines:

- a. Lab Methods in Molecular Biology (BSC 6407C) \*Taken Fall of year 1 or 2
- b. In both the Biomed focus (6 cr) and the Microbiology focus (6 cr), appropriate 5000-6000 level formal courses which the students have taken as a part of their Ph.D. may be included in the POS and must be approved by the program coordinator.
- c. No Independent Study or independent research or doctoral research courses will be allowed for this degree.

### **Required Courses—18 Credit Hours**

- [BSC6432](#) - Biomedical Sciences I (5)
- [BSC6431](#) - Practice of Biomedical Sciences (3)
- [BSC6407C](#) - Laboratory Methods in Molecular Biology (3)
- [IDS6694](#) - Experimental Design and Analysis in Biomedical Sciences (2)
- Seminar - IDS 7690 Seminar (1 credit hour, to be repeated by all students)

Division required course: Select one of the following: (3 credits)

- [PCB5815](#) - Molecular Aspects of Obesity, Diabetes and Metabolism (3)
- [PCB5838](#) - Cellular and Molecular Basis of Brain Functions (3)
- [PCB5236](#) - Cancer Biology (3)
- [MCB 6273](#) Advanced Topics in Infectious Processes: Host-Pathogen Interactions

### **Elective Courses—12 Credit Hours**

Students are required to take 12 credit hours of electives. These courses are in addition to the Lab Methods course.

- GMS 6860 – Statistics for Biomedical Scientists (3 Credit Hours) **plus 3 additional courses for a total of 12 credits.**

### **MCB 6026 Capstone Course (3 credit hours minimum)**

Registration of MCB 6026 is required during the semester of your candidacy exam, along with the passing of your candidacy exam to obtain the MS Degree.

**Note: No credit hours may be counted for more than two-degree programs. Credits from a previously earned master's degree may not be used to fulfill the requirements of a master's degree for a student in a doctoral degree program (a "master's along-the-way").**

## Key Programmatic Deadlines

### **Selection of a Mentor:**

By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 7-week rotation, Fall, 1<sup>st</sup> Year

### **Transfer Credits:**

By the beginning of the Spring Semester, 1<sup>st</sup> Year

### **Selection of Dissertation Advisory Committee:**

By the end of Summer 1<sup>st</sup> Year

### **Academic Integrity Workshops:**

By the end of Summer Semester 1<sup>st</sup> year

### **Program of Study Plan:**

By the end of the Fall Semester, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

### **1<sup>st</sup> Dissertation Committee Proposal Defense:**

By October 1<sup>st</sup> in Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> Year

### **IRB Program Form**

Before you hold your Candidacy Exam

### **Candidacy Topic Form:**

For students who chose to do the candidacy proposal on dissertation research-related area:  
By January 15, 2<sup>nd</sup> Year. Advanced PhD students by Jan 15<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Year.

### **Candidacy proposal to the Committee:** By May 15

Students must submit a written candidacy proposal to the committee

### **Defend Candidacy proposal:** By June 15

Students must present and defend their Candidacy proposal to the committee

### **Annual Thesis Meeting:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Dissertation Committee meeting (Proposal Defense):** October 1st in 2<sup>nd</sup> Year
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Year students** - If your candidacy topic was unrelated to thesis proposal: October 1<sup>st</sup>  
*Exception: Meeting is not required if the candidacy topic was on topic related to the dissertation proposal.*
- **4<sup>th</sup> Year students:** November 1<sup>st</sup>
- **5<sup>th</sup> Year students:** November 30<sup>th</sup>

### **Spring Symposium Presentation:**

In the Third or Fourth year

**Pre-defense Meeting:** Review page 45

**Dissertation Defense:** Review page 44 & 45

# Selecting Your Advisor

## Advising/Mentoring

Your graduate faculty advisor has two main roles: **1)** To assist you in acquiring the highest possible level of knowledge and competence in the field, and **2)** to chair the committee that will determine whether you have performed at an acceptable level in each of your degree milestones. Other roles of your advisor may include tracking your progress in completing your degree, assisting with course selection and planning your academic path, and helping you identify possible research mentors, committee members, and research opportunities.

**Both the student and advisor are responsible for making their expectations clear to each other. Be sure to discuss this with your advisor.**

## Finding and Selecting an Advisor

### Laboratory Rotation

During orientation, new incoming students will attend short presentations by faculty (accepting students) who will highlight their research program. Students should meet with faculty of their interest for further discussion about research to help them select their lab rotations.

**Prior to their laboratory rotation are required to complete laboratory safety, radiation safety, biosafety, and blood borne pathogen courses.**

All new incoming students are **REQUIRED** to rotate in at least 2 different laboratories before selecting a mentor. **Each rotation will be 7 weeks long.** Students are encouraged to identify their dissertation mentor as soon as possible after completing the two rotations, but they may opt to do a third rotation if needed. If no suitable lab can be found within 3 rotations, the student will be dismissed from the program. Program approval is required for any additional short rotations, if necessary.

**Specific dates may change each year but generally adhere to the following schedule:**

- **1st Rotation** – September 5 through October 20
- **2nd Rotation** – October 23 through December 8
- **If necessary, 3rd Rotation**, – January 8 through February 23

### Required Meeting with Program Director

Students are required to meet with the Program Director (Dr. Griffith Parks) as soon as they identify the labs for the first two rotation. Students will not be able to start rotations if they have not met with the Director. The Program Office will assist with the scheduling of these meetings.

### Possible discussion and questions to Ask of Prospective Advisors

You should first spend some time identifying what is most important to you in your graduate training and ask questions accordingly. Below are some questions to consider asking your prospective advisor in this discussion, though it is not a complete list.

- Ask about the mentor's philosophy of mentoring and the level of interaction you will have with the mentor. Inquire about the expectation of rotation students and projects you could possibly be working on.

- What are the expectations or requirements a student must spend each day/week in your group/lab?
- Find out the mentor's record of graduating students/time to graduate. You may inquire about the mentor and lab's publication record/quality of the publication journals.
- What projects would be available to me if I were to join your group?
- What is your philosophy regarding the amount of guidance the advisor should provide to a student during preparation of the thesis proposal, literature seminars, thesis writing, etc.? Also, how available will the advisor be to answer questions you might have?
- What regularly scheduled activities (e.g., group meetings, joint group meetings, research clubs) does your group participate in that provide an opportunity to get outside input on my research project and to hear about the work of other students and postdocs?
- Do you encourage your students to attend seminars and journal clubs, including those that may be outside of their narrow field of interest/research?
- Are students in your group/lab given the opportunity to attend professional meetings where they can interact with colleagues/researchers from other institutions?
- It is important that you ask about funding availability for the lab (Short-term & Long-term, 4-5 yrs.)
- Ask about the whereabouts of the mentor's past trainees including students and postdocs and the reasons why if any student failed to graduate from the lab.
- Ask about the mentor's policy regarding topics for the candidacy proposal.
- How long do you think it should take me to get my degree?
- What is your general philosophy of graduate training and what goals do you have for your graduate students?
- Does the mentor support your career goal(s)?

#### Lab Visit/Lab Rotation

- Ask for permission to visit the lab.
- Observe the culture of the lab while visiting or during rotation. Consider lab space, lab resources.
- Survey students, postdocs in the perspective lab and others who have rotated through the lab about their experiences. Ask if students in the lab are encouraged to attend and present at scientific meetings. Ask about the mentor's strengths and weaknesses and consider their feedback
- Ask yourself if this is the right environment for you; does your personality fit the environment
- It is ok to ask a lot of questions so you can make the right decision.
- Analyze the Pros and Cons of your selection.

Note: No faculty member is obligated to accept a student's request to serve as advisor, though invitations are often accepted unless the faculty member judges that a different advisor would serve your needs better.

#### **Lab Rotation registration**

All PhD Graduate Students are required to register for Experiments in Biomedical Sciences Course (IDS 7692L - Lab Rotation, 3cr + 1cr) for a total of 4 credits, as per our PhD Program requirement. Students will not meet in a classroom. Instead, students who already have a lab mentor and students who are rotating through labs will all be evaluated by the Lab mentor and a grade will be given on your performance in the lab for this course.

### **Overall Lab Expectations**

Expectations from students in each lab may vary from one mentor to another. However, all labs/mentors in the program expect students to be at a high level of professionalism. This includes attending classes, fulfilling GTA assignments, working hard on research projects, attending seminars and meetings, presenting data in meetings, and demonstrating collegiality.

### **Dress Code - Appropriate Attire:**

If working in a laboratory, students are required to wear the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE), included but not limited to laboratory coats, closed-toed shoes, gloves, safety glasses etc. Additionally, in accordance with UCF's Environmental Health & Safety Laboratory Safety Manual, PPE should be removed before leaving the work area. This includes removing safety glasses, gloves, lab coats, etc.

### **Exemptions from laboratory rotations (Direct admit to the lab)**

Exemptions from laboratory rotations may be granted by the program if the student had already worked for a minimum of one year in the laboratory of one of the program faculty prior to the start of the graduate study, or in cases where a student is coming to UCF to join a specific research lab. (Course registration is still required.) If approved, the mentor will immediately assume full financial responsibility for the student unless the student has not fulfilled the GTA requirement. GTA support for one year will then be provided by the program.

**Direct admit students must meet with the mentor and the program at the beginning of the Fall semester (1<sup>st</sup> year) to determine if the accelerated program plan is an option.**

### **Written lab rotation evaluations**

During rotations faculty will be evaluating your attendance, level of commitment, your laboratory skills, intellectual curiosity, communication skills, achievements, and areas in which you can improve. Written rotation evaluations (signed form or official e-mail notification from PI) must be submitted to the program coordinator by the PI for each student. The evaluations will be graded S/U.

If the student receives a "U" for a rotation, the PI should briefly indicate the reasons in writing. This information should be made available to the student and should also be accessible to any other PhD program faculty with whom that student is considering rotating. Students that receive 2 "U" marks during their rotations will be automatically dismissed from the program.

The program will pursue, to the fullest of our policy, any complaint of unacceptable behavior or misconduct. This may end in placing students on probation, termination of GTA/GRA financial support, or dismissal from the program.

### **Changing Your Advisor**

As the advisor-student relationship is one of mutual agreement, it may be terminated by either party. Occasionally significant issues may arise between a student and their mentor that cannot be resolved amicably. Graduate students must first request a thesis committee meeting to attempt to resolve the issues, then secondly the Program Coordinator and/or the Program Director if needed to resolve the issue.

There are situations where it may be necessary for the student to choose a different advisor. The student must first have approval from the Program Coordinator and Director before reaching out to a prospective advisor to seek the change. If approved to look for a new mentor, the student is given three weeks since leaving current mentor and lab to find a new mentor. Failing to identify a new mentor within the timeline may lead to dismissal from the program.



## **UCF EHS Lab Coat Dispensing Program**

The Environmental Health and Safety Department (EHS) has teamed up with CINTAS to bring the lab coat dispensing program to the University of Central Florida. Students, Staff and Faculty working on labs will be able to check out a lab coat from a lab coat dispenser using their UCFID card and return them at a drop off machine at 4 locations on main campus and Lake Nona. Individuals will have to be designated to a research lab and be up-to-date with all their [EHS safety training \(EHS201, EHS202, EHS203 if needed\)](#). Lab coats can only be checked out 1 at time but may be checked out after an hour once returned and they should not be checked out for longer than 2 weeks. There are 7 lab coat sizes available (XS, S, M, L, XL, 2XL).

### **Locations:**

#### **Physical Sciences Building**

This building has a dispensing unit on the hallway to the right of the main lobby area between the two bathrooms. It also has a drop off machine in front of the dispensing unit, behind the way and across from the men's bathroom. [Physical Sciences Location Map](#)

#### **Research 1 Building**

This building only has a drop off machine. Coming from the entrance facing garage C, make a right at the first hallway and the machine will be next to the bathrooms and across from the mailboxes. [Research 1 Location Map](#)

#### **Engineering 2**

This building has a dispensing unit and drop off machine on the Northeast hallway coming from the corner door of the loading dock. The hallway intersects with another hallway where rooms 115 and 180 are located. [Engineering 2 Location Map](#)

#### **Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences at Lake Nona**

This building has a dispensing unit on the third floor by the elevator in the middle of the building. The unit is located in the hallway between the elevator and room 341. It also has a drop off machine across from the dispensing unit on the corner of the hallway next to room 339. [BSBS Location Map](#)

Tutorial - <https://ehs.ucf.edu/lab-coat-dispensing-program>

# Committee, Proposal, Candidacy Exam Section

## Examinations

### Dissertation – Committee Details

#### Committee Selection

**The Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. Program requires the students to select their dissertation advisory committee by the end of the first year. The student will work with the faculty mentor to select the members of the committee.**

The dissertation advisory committee is required to meet at least once per year to review each student's progress. The meeting format will be an oral report.

All committee members must be approved by the UCF College of Graduate Studies to serve as program faculty member. The program can help in nominating eligible faculty for appointment as a graduate faculty.

The PhD committee shall consist of a minimum of four faculty members including the PI (dissertation advisor) and one external member. **The external member should be selected from outside the Biomedical Sciences program faculty list.**

Any UCF faculty with a graduate faculty status (other than the Biomedical Sciences program faculty) including those with Graduate Faculty Scholar status are eligible to serve as external member. The student and dissertation advisor have the option of selecting an external member from outside UCF.

The chair of the dissertation committee is the student's primary dissertation advisor (mentor) if approved by the College of Graduate Studies to serve as a chair. **Program faculty (mentor) who have not previously supervised a thesis or dissertation to completion must ask a senior UCF faculty member on the committee (*who is approved by Graduate Studies to serve as chair*), to serve as the as Vice-Chair on the committee.**

This policy is only to ensure compliance with UCF graduate policies, and it should not interfere with the faculty mentoring or expectations from the students. In cases where the primary advisor is a non-UCF investigator (i.e., Courtesy faculty appointments from faculty at institutions other than UCF), then one of the UCF faculty members on the student's dissertation committee will serve as co-chair of the committee together with the student's primary advisor. **At least two UCF faculty members must serve on the student's dissertation committee, and at least one of these must be at the rank of Associate or Full Professor.**

#### A.1: College of Graduate Studies Faculty Roles in Graduate Education

- Chair of a thesis or dissertation committee: In the vast majority of cases, the chair is the adviser of the scholarly activities of the student. A chair of a thesis or dissertation committee also oversees all of the administrative functions of the committee. A Graduate Faculty Scholar is not eligible to serve as a chair of a thesis or dissertation committee.
- Vice-chair of a thesis or dissertation committee: A vice-chair serves as a voice of experience in thesis and dissertation committees. A vice-chair must be appointed to committees in which the chair has no prior experience serving on thesis or dissertation

committees. To be appointed as a vice-chair, the committee member must have prior experience serving on at least one thesis or dissertation committee that has successfully graduated a student.

- Co-chair of a thesis or dissertation committee: A co-chair is a member of a thesis or dissertation committee who shares with the chair in the scholarly advisory activities of the student. In cases in which a Graduate Faculty Scholar oversees the day-to-day scholarly activities of the student, the Graduate Faculty Scholar may be appointed as a co-chair of the thesis or dissertation committee.

## **Committee Selection Process**

### **Step 1**

Graduate students are required to complete the PhD Program "Internal" Committee Selection form and submit it electronically to the Program Office.

### **Step 2**

The Program Office will then notify students that their selection is approved/denied.

### **Step 3**

Approved students will then be instructed to log into the College of Graduate Studies "Dynamic Forms" system to process their committee request. **See *instructions below*:**

### **College of Graduate Studies Online Form Instructions for approved students:**

1. Please initiate the process by logging into the College of Graduate Studies "[Doctoral and Thesis Advisory Committee Form](#) Dynamic Forms" system with your NID and password to create your committee.
2. Complete the form with the names of your committee members. You are required to fill out the information with the names and email addresses of the committee members and sign the document electronically and submit. Please make sure the information (spelling and addresses) you enter is correct.
3. The form will automatically route via e-mail to each committee member before it is routed to the program director for review and approval
4. The College of Graduate Students will email the student, program office and faculty Chair once your committee is approved.

Note: The process is the same for Committee revisions.

If you have any issues processing your online Dynamic Form, please contact the College of Graduate Studies at [gradrcrd@ucf.edu](mailto:gradrcrd@ucf.edu) for assistance.

## **Dissertation – Proposal/Prospectus & First Committee Meeting**

### **First Dissertation Committee Meeting and Proposal Defense**

**The student will convene their first dissertation committee meeting during the fall semester of their first full-time year (Deadline: October 1st) in the PhD program. The meeting format will be an oral report.**

The purpose of the meeting is for the student to present the dissertation research proposal and to receive feedback from the committee. The proposal outlines should consist of a brief rationale, hypothesis, aims, approach and some preliminary data and expected to yield at least two publishable bodies of work.

**The written proposal:** While a full written proposal is not required at this time, it is recommended that student provides the committee members a minimum of **two-page write-up summary** of the central hypothesis/specific aims/rationale/sound methodology approach that support the dissertation research project at least two weeks prior to the date of the oral presentation.

**The proposal defense:** For the meeting, the student is expected to give an oral presentation of the dissertation research project, including relevant background and preliminary data, although less emphasis will be placed on preliminary data. During the oral presentation, the student will be evaluated by their understanding of the experimental plan. Importance will be placed on the ability of the student to explain the rationale and hypothesis that supports the research proposed. During the oral presentation, the student can receive suggestions from the committee on how to improve the proposed work.

Students are required to submit the written proposal electronically to the program office along with the Proposal Exam form to [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu).

## Admission to Candidacy

**A student must demonstrate their readiness for the PhD program by successfully completing the candidacy examination before admission to full doctoral status and enrollment into dissertation hours. Only after admission to candidacy may a student register for doctoral dissertation hours (IDS 7980).**

The Candidacy Examination is administered by the members of the student's dissertation advisory committee. Admission to candidacy will be approved by the program director and forwarded to the UCF College of Graduate Studies by the date listed in the academic calendar for status change.

**The following are required to be admitted to candidacy and enroll in dissertation hours:**

- Successful completion of all required program course work. Program review of your degree audit and approval is required.
- Submittal of an approved program of study must be on file before you can enroll in dissertation hours.
- Successful defense of the written dissertation proposal.
- Successful completion of written and oral candidacy exam.
- Successful completion of CITI Training and RCR academic integrity workshops.

## Candidacy/Qualifying Exam

Candidacy to the degree will consist of writing and orally defending a written proposal on a research idea. The written proposal will be prepared independently, following NIH-style grant proposal format, and must be approved by the dissertation committee as outlined below.

After passing the candidacy examination and meeting other requirements as specified, the student can register for dissertation hours.

### **The Process:**

Students are encouraged to start working on candidacy exam as soon as the dissertation committee approves the candidacy topic.

Candidacy proposal topic can be on a dissertation-related research topic or outside the dissertation area – this is decided in consultation with the faculty advisor before work begins on candidacy process. If a dissertation related idea is selected for the candidacy proposal, then a written approval from the mentor is required. Either option will also require approval from the dissertation committee as outlined below.

Students who chose to do the proposal on research outside the dissertation research area must submit to the dissertation committee 3 titles including a short one-paragraph summary for each title to seek approval for one.

Students who chose to do the candidacy proposal on dissertation research-related area must submit to the dissertation committee the title of the candidacy proposal for approval.

- The dissertation committee includes the mentor and three additional program faculty, including an external member.
- **The mentor cannot be the chair of the candidacy exam and should not interfere during the process.**
- The dissertation Committee must approve the Candidacy Topic no later than **January 15**. The student must submit the Candidacy Topic form to the program office for approval.
- Students must submit a written Candidacy Proposal to the committee by **May 15**.
- Students must present and defend their Candidacy Proposal by **June 15**.
- **A copy of the written report must be submitted to the Program Office.** Send forms to [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu)
- If a student fails to pass the exam, a second and final attempt will be granted. This should be completed by **July 15**.

**This is an Exam. No faculty input is allowed on any aspect of the written and oral portions of the candidacy proposal.**

**Note:** Please be aware that you must have a current Plan of Study on file and approved by the College of Graduate Studies before you can enroll in dissertation hours.

### **The Proposal**

The proposal should be written in the approximate style of an NIH R21 or F31 grant application.

This includes one page for specific aims and up to six pages for the Research Plan. There is no page limitation for references. The specific aims page should identify the problem under study, clearly state a central hypothesis, and include two or more specific aims to test your hypothesis. A brief rationale should be provided for each aim.

### **Research Plan**

**For the research plan**, please be sure to address the following: (i) Background, (ii) Significance, (iii) Research Approach (Design & Methods), (iv) Rationale for your experimental approach, (v) Expected results, and (vi) Potential pitfalls and alternative strategies.

The research plan should be feasibly achievable within 2-3 years, and each of the aims should ideally lead to tangible first-author manuscript publications for the student. Preliminary data are not necessary for the candidacy exam but can be included to strengthen the proposal.

The written format will be single-spaced using 11pt Arial font and 0.5" margins.

**Required - The student's mentor will be responsible for checking the proposal for plagiarism using [iThenticate](#) and will provide a report to the dissertation committee at the time of the candidacy meeting.**

### **Oral Exam**

**During the oral examination**, the student should be able to answer any questions concerning how the proposed experiments will be executed. There should be a full understanding of the background literature that supports the hypothesis and the rationale behind the research proposed. The student must be able to clearly explain the experimental procedures to be used and any alternative approaches planned.

**For the candidacy exam, the student's dissertation committee will pick one of its senior members (but not the student's mentor) to chair the examination meeting.**

The mentor is NOT permitted to ask or answer questions for the student during the exam unless specifically asked to do so by one of the committee members for the purpose of clarification only.

All dissertation committee members must be present for the oral component of candidacy exam. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule a defense date and time, which are amenable to all committee members.

### **Oral candidacy proposal defense**

- The defense will start by the presentation of the proposal by the candidate to the Ph.D. dissertation committee.
- The presentation will start with a 5-8-minute description of the background and significance of the proposed research.
- This is followed by stating the hypothesis.
- The next step is the presentation of the specific aims with clear rationale and connection to the hypothesis.
- Following this, a description of the experimental design should be presented. The expected results and how conclusions will be drawn from the results should be presented.
- Possible pitfalls of the experimental approach, potential complications and possible alternate approaches to the hypothesis should be presented.

The total presentation is expected to last no more than 40 minutes. The faculty may interrupt the presentation to ask questions. Following the presentation, a question-and-answer period will follow. During this time, the committee can ask the student questions unrelated to the exact candidacy topic that test knowledge acquired during the student's first two years in the program.

**The total exam time is expected to last 2 hours.**

The exam is evaluated by a decision of pass/fail. At least three out of the four regular dissertation committee members must vote positively for the student to pass.

If performance during the oral exam is deemed not satisfactory, a second chance will be given to the student, which should be concluded by no later than **July 15**. **The student is required to submit the signed Candidacy Exam form electronically to the Program Office ([BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu)) to be processed by College of Graduate Studies deadline.**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

If a PhD student fails to successfully complete the candidacy prior to the completion of the summer semester in their 2nd year, then their stipend will automatically be reduced to \$17,000 per year until satisfactory completion of the candidacy exam occurs.

**Re-examination**

The process may include a rewritten proposal and another oral defense of the revised proposal, depending on the strengths and weaknesses of the first attempt.

**The student will have a maximum of 30 days from the time of the exam and no later than July 15 to pass the exam.** The revised proposal must be submitted to all committee members at least one week prior to any oral re-examination (if an oral re-examination is stipulated by the committee and coordinator). This will be determined by the committee at the first defense.

**A student who fails the candidacy exam after the second try will be dismissed from the program.**

**Doctoral Candidate**

**Graduate Students who successfully enter Candidacy will register for 3 credit hours of Dissertation (IDS 7980) which is full-time, until graduation.**

**Doctoral Candidate Enrollment Policy**

Doctoral candidates must be enrolled continuously in at least three hours of dissertation coursework (IDS 7980) each semester (including summer) until the dissertation is completed. Doctoral students admitted to candidacy are expected to devote full-time effort to conducting their dissertation research and writing the required dissertation document. Doctoral Candidates may not enroll in more than nine credits in any given semester. Candidates that have met the 15 required dissertation hours but not yet defended must remain continuously enrolled. Graduate policy states students have seven years from beginning the program to complete the degree.

## Annual Review

All doctoral students are required to conduct an annual review of their progress in the program.

*In the academic year immediately after passing candidacy, the annual meeting is not required if the candidacy topic was on topic related to the dissertation proposal.*

To ensure that all doctoral students receive an annual review of their progress in the program, each Fall term the College of Graduate Studies will notify doctoral students of their requirement to initiate the annual review process via an electronic form. Graduate students will receive this communication via their Knights e-mail address.

### **Specified Deadline for Third Year and beyond PhD Students:**

**Annual dissertation committee review deadline in year 3 and beyond:**

- **3<sup>rd</sup> Year students** - If your candidacy topic was unrelated to thesis proposal: October 1<sup>st</sup>  
*Exception: Meeting is not required if the candidacy topic was on topic related to the dissertation proposal.*
- **4<sup>th</sup> Year students:** November 1<sup>st</sup>
- **5<sup>th</sup> Year students:** November 30<sup>th</sup>

PhD students are required to have **annual evaluations** with the dissertation committee to evaluate progress achieved towards completion of their dissertation research.

### **Students will be evaluated on the following:**

- Quality Research work in Progress or Completed
- Quality of Journal and/or Conference Papers
- Potential to pursue Doctoral work
- Self-Motivation
- Overall knowledge needed for field of study
- Course work performance
- Dependability
- Overall assessment of performance (required)
- Academic Performance
- Research Potential
- Current Publications (submitted or published)
- Presentations / Other professional achievements of note

### **Here's how the process works:**

1. The mentor and committee members will complete the student's Annual Evaluation Form after the student's presentation of research and the student will submit the form to the



program office.

2. You must “initiate” the online **College of Graduate Studies Online Dynamic Form** and complete the self-evaluation of your milestones, research, courses, teaching, and goal setting for the next 12 months, etc. *Note: The online Dynamic Form works best on Google Chrome, Safari Pages, and Firefox browsers. To access the form, [click here](#).*
3. You will be asked to enter your faculty advisor’s name and UCF email. To avoid errors or delays in processing, please ensure that you enter this information accurately.
4. You will be asked to electronically sign your form. If you would like to opt out of the electronic signature, please click “Opt out and print” on the form’s signature page. Please note that you will be responsible for collecting your faculty advisor and program director’s signatures and feedback and send it to [cgsdynamicforms@ucf.edu](mailto:cgsdynamicforms@ucf.edu) to avoid the hold.
5. After the advisor portion of the review is submitted, it will be routed to your Program Director for final review and comments. The program will upload your annual review form into the Dynamic System.
6. Once the program director reviews your online Dynamic form, it will be routed back to you for you to acknowledge the feedback that you received. **You must log back into the form, view the feedback and sign the form to complete the annual review process.**
7. Once finalized, the student and the program will have access to an electronic copy of the annual review.

**Failure to complete annual evaluations will impede the student’s graduation. A meeting with the dissertation committee must also be held the semester prior to graduation.**

If you have questions about the Dynamic Form process, please contact the College of Graduate Studies at [cgsdynamicforms@ucf.edu](mailto:cgsdynamicforms@ucf.edu).

### **Unsatisfactory Laboratory Performance Review**

If the student received unsatisfactory grade in lab courses including thesis or unsatisfactory evaluation by the committee in the annual thesis review committee meeting, the program coordinator will give the student a written statement advising the student of a probation period during which specific improvements are expected. The time limit for improvement can’t excel one semester. However, If the committee finds lack of satisfactory improvement following the probation, the student may be expelled from the PhD Graduate Program.

# Program Meeting Scheduling Policy

## First Dissertation Proposal Defense/ Candidacy Exam/ Annual Review/ Pre-Defense/ Defense

- The student is responsible for scheduling the committee meeting date and time that will be amenable to all committee members.
- Once the committee meeting date is confirmed, the student is required to send the program an email on where and how the exam will be held (**in person, virtual zoom, or hybrid**) for approval [BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu).
- **Once the approval is given**, the student is responsible for contacting the program office to reserve the conference room for the “in person” meeting, no later than 3 weeks before the meeting. The program Office will assist with room reservations for the event.
  - **Approved exam rooms for PhD Defense:** BBS 103 (Lake Nona) or HS II 345 (Main Campus), Research Annex Conference Room
  - **Approved exam rooms for Committee Meetings and Annual Review:** BBS conference or meeting rooms (Lake Nona)/ HS II 345 (Main Campus)/ BMS 136 (Main Campus)/ Research Annex Conf Room (Main Campus). *Please email Program Office for permission to use other facilities especially if the meeting is held totally or partially through virtual connection.*

For conference room reservations you may email:

BBS 103 (Lake Nona) – [BBSReservations@ucf.edu](mailto:BBSReservations@ucf.edu)

HSII 345 (main campus) – [HSIIReservations@ucf.edu](mailto:HSIIReservations@ucf.edu)

BMS 136A (main campus) – [BMSReservations@ucf.edu](mailto:BMSReservations@ucf.edu)

- If the meeting is to be held via zoom, it is the mentor responsibility to create a zoom link using the UCF account. Please note that the faculty will also be responsible for letting participants into the Zoom meeting. Link to [UCF Zoom Guide here](#).
- **Dissertation Defense Meeting – If IT support is needed (In person, Zoom or Hybrid)**  
A ticket requesting IT assistance for your **dissertation defense** will be submitted to the UCF Health IT support Center. Faculty mentors and students will be notified once the IT appointment is confirmed and should reach out to the IT Support Center before the defense if there are any questions.

**All program forms must be signed and submitted to the Program Office electronically to [BSBSGradforms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradforms@ucf.edu) no later than 1 week after your meeting.**

## Graduate Research Policies

Research is such a vital part of the PhD Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program. The development of research skills and the practice of good research ethics begins when you accept the offer to join the program. Our Graduate Faculty serves a crucial role and are the primary source for teaching research skills and modeling research ethics.

### Statement of Graduate Research

The Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences faculty are engaged in investigating research in cancer, cardiovascular, metabolic, molecular microbiology, neurodegenerative, and immunity & pathogenesis diseases. Our faculty research mentors are also committed to enhancing our graduate students' knowledge and graduate student experience.

Graduate students are expected to perform at a high level of professionalism, demonstrate collegiality while attending classes, fulfill GTA assignments, attend seminars and meetings, present data in meetings, be scientifically inquisitive, and contribute to the research to produce 2 (first authored) manuscripts required to complete the program.

### Research with animal subjects (IACUC)

The Animal Study Protocol or the **IACUC Protocol** is a detailed description of the proposed use of animals prepared by the researcher for review and approval. Any activity that involves animal research, can only begin after an IACUC review. At UCF the IACUC is responsible for oversight and evaluation of the university animal care and use program, its procedures and facilities to ensure that they are consistent with the recommendations of the Guide, AWR, PHS Policy and IACUC Policies. Go to <https://www.research.ucf.edu/IACUC/2021/Regulations.html>

### IRB - Institutional Review Board

The IRB is a committee established to protect the rights and welfare of human participants involved in research. All **Human Research** conducted by UCF faculty, staff, and students must be reviewed by the IRB and approved for compliance with regulatory and ethical requirements before it may be undertaken (unless the IRB determines that the activity is exempt from IRB review).

To ensure that thesis and dissertation research involving human subjects has been evaluated by the UCF Institutional Review Board (IRB) before data is collected, an IRB Checklist was placed on the GPS degree audit of all master's thesis and doctoral students for academic progress and degree certification purposes.

Graduate students are required to review the **UCF College of Graduate Studies IRB Requirements** in the Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse and review the IRB Office's "Human Research Determination" checklist on the IRB Policies and Procedures.

- <https://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb/investigators/index.html>
- <https://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html>

If you check yes for use of human subjects in your research on the IRB form, then you are required to submit your request through the Huron IRB system so you can obtain a formal determination letter to be included in your dissertation. You must obtain and submit the program form to

[BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu). Contact the IRB Office at [irb@ucf.edu](mailto:irb@ucf.edu) with any questions about whether your activity meets the definition of Human Research subject to IRB oversight, or to obtain a memorandum letter.

- Huron IRB – [Proposal Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**Required - Program IRB Policy - Graduate students are required to meet with the faculty mentor and submit the PhD Program Graduate Research IRB Notification form to [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu) before the Candidacy Exam.**

### **Research Ethics**

The Office of Research offers a variety of teams and tools to assure research conducted at UCF adheres with regulatory guidelines and meets the highest standards of responsible conduct. To learn more go to <https://www.research.ucf.edu/compliance.html>

### **UCF's Patent and Invention Policy**

University policy and federal law requires that intellectual property resulting from federally funded research must be disclosed to the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT). To learn more, go to <https://tt.research.ucf.edu/our-policies/>

## **Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse**

### **Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse - Required**

All PhD dissertation students are required to access the [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#) before the Fall semester (second year).

This free, non-credit webcourse contains:

- UCF's required formatting instructions
- Procedures for declaring your advisory committee
- Resources on IRB, copyright, publishing, and dissemination
- Review for Original Work (iThenticate) instructions
- Information on the final defense process
- Instructions for the final submission process

Thesis and dissertation students should also access the [Thesis and Dissertation Services Site](#) for the thesis and dissertation approval form, as well as the format review, format help, and final submission areas.

### **Using the Thesis and Dissertation Services Site**

To log in to your Thesis and Dissertation Services account for the first time:

- Go to the TD Services log in page at [https://apps.graduate.ucf.edu/ETD\\_Student\\_Services/Links\\_to\\_an\\_external\\_site.](https://apps.graduate.ucf.edu/ETD_Student_Services/Links_to_an_external_site.)
- Enter your Knights email address
- Select New User
- Enter your UCF Identification Card number (see the red box in the ID card image on this page)
- The site will prompt you to select your anticipated thesis/dissertation completion term and choose a password

Once you create your account, you'll select "Existing User" on the site's log in page then use your Knights email address and the password you chose.

If you forget your password, select the "Forgot Password" link on the site's log in page. You'll need to enter your UCF ID card number again to reset your password.

#### Verify Your Information

If you are enrolled in more than one graduate program (for example, those getting a "master's along the way") please ensure that the correct program displays at the top of the home page of the Thesis and Dissertation Services site. You should be able to choose the correct program from a drop-down menu at the top of the home page. Do not submit anything for review unless the correct program is displaying. If the correct program is not displaying or you have trouble logging in, please contact [editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu)

#### Check Your Messages

Please note that any time College of Graduate Studies (CGS) staff sends a communication to you within the Thesis and Dissertation Services site (whether for format review, format help, or final submission) you will receive an automatically generated email to your Knights Email stating that you have a message in the Thesis and Dissertation Services Site. This email to your Knights Email is just an automated message and will NOT contain any specific information (such as format review comments or instructions) so it is your responsibility to check the Thesis and Dissertation Services site for the actual communication made by CGS staff.

## Dissertation and Defense

### Dissertation and Publication Requirement

**The dissertation should be of significant scope and depth such that the work has made significant advances in the area of biomedical science.**

**The PhD dissertation research must generate sufficient quantity and quality of data to support a minimum of two original manuscripts (first-authored by the PhD candidate) in a mainstream peer-reviewed journal with an impact factor of at least 2.0.**

**Rather than satisfying the minimum requirement, the goal of a PhD candidate ought to be publishing as many high impact papers as possible.**

**•First co-authorship is allowed if equal contribution of the 2 first authors is documented by joint first authorship.**

## **Dissertation Pre-Defense**

Prior to the meeting, there should be at least one first-author original research article published/accepted in a journal with an Impact factor of at least 2.0.

After consultation with the mentor/dissertation committee chair and approval from the program, students can proceed to hold a pre-defense committee meeting.

- A meeting with the full dissertation committee must occur at least **one semester prior** to the actual defense date.
- The student must request a copy of the Pre-defense meeting form from the Program Office at [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu). **Pre-defense form (part 1)** should be completed by student and mentor and emailed to the program office for approval **before** scheduling the pre-defense meeting. Note: List your publications in full citation format including authors, title, journal and year (as listed in any article).

The student is expected to present to the committee a comprehensive new body of work in a form of a pre-defense seminar. The committee will critically evaluate the progress including data for a second manuscript (first author) to be submitted for publication before defense day. The committee will then decide if the student has fulfilled all program requirements and is ready to proceed to defense.

Recommendations from the committee should be very specific, and indicate in writing which issues, if any, the student must complete or resolve prior to scheduling of the final defense date. The candidate will answer questions and defend conclusions about the subject matter.

## **Dissertation Defense**

- **Pre-defense-requirements has been met**
- **Plus, an additional first-author original research manuscript submitted to a journal in the field with an impact factor of at least 2.0 (unless the candidate has satisfied the latter requirement prior to the pre-defense meeting).**

The dissertation committee may consider waiving the additional first-author manuscript and must vote unanimously in the following circumstances:

- If the accepted (or published) first-author manuscript is in a premier journal with an IF of 10 or more. In this case, first-co-authorship does not suffice the program publication requirement.
- If the candidate co-authored a minimum of 2 additional original research manuscripts with significant contribution to data generation in mainstream journal with an impact factor of at least 2.0, and the data contribute to a significant weight of the candidate's dissertation.

*The program expects from the dissertation committee a thorough review and evaluation of the dissertation body of work, and quantity and impact of data included in co-authored manuscripts.*

## Dissertation Defense Examination

**Students must seek approval from the program to hold their dissertation defense meeting.**

The program in consultation with mentor/dissertation chair will confirm that the students have met all the recommendations provided from the pre-defense dissertation meeting and has completed all required milestones.

**Writing of the dissertation should be subjected to the General Guidelines for Alternative Organization in the [Thesis and Dissertation Manual](#) of the UCF College of Graduate Studies Thesis and Dissertation office.**

The dissertation must be submitted to the committee and the program at least two weeks prior to the defense date.

**The PhD dissertation defense will consist of a seminar of the dissertation outcome to the biomedical science program and the local scientific community, followed by questions from the audience.**

- **The seminar will be followed by a closed meeting with the dissertation committee.**
- **Student's response to questions raised by present faculty, students and guests should be considered by the committee before voting.**
- **Three out of the four regular Ph.D. committee members must vote positively for the student to pass.**

## iThenticate Report Required

### Review for Original Work

The university requires all students submitting a thesis or dissertation as part of their graduate degree requirements to first submit their electronic documents through iThenticate for advisement purposes and for review of originality.

- **The dissertation chair is responsible for scheduling the submission of the dissertation to iThenticate and reviewing the results from iThenticate with the student's advisory committee (self-citation) should be excluded from the similarity score)**
- The dissertation chair is required to include a copy of the dissertation iThenticate report when sending the written copy of the dissertation to the committee members and the program office, **no later than 2 weeks prior to the final defense**. Members of the dissertation committee may ask for a paper copy of the dissertation or an electronic copy (PDF) file.
- Before the student may be approved for final submission to the university, the dissertation chair must indicate completion of the Review for Original Work through iThenticate by signing the [Dissertation Approval Form](#).

For further information about or assistance with iThenticate, please refer to the Office of Research & Commercialization's [Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

## Defense Announcement

The College of Graduate Studies requires all thesis/dissertation defense announcements to be distributed **two weeks before** your scheduled defense date. Your announcement will be distributed to the biomedical science program students, faculty, staff and the local scientific community.

Graduate students are required to complete, submit and email the defense abstract/announcement to the Program Office at least 3 weeks prior to the defense for committee and program approval to the distribute and post the announcement.

Include the following with your abstract:

- Dissertation title,
- Name of your Committee members
- Event Location - (in person, virtual zoom, or hybrid)
- Abstract
- Publication Information - List your publications in full citation format including authors, title, journal and year (as listed in any article).

Please email [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu) to request your template.

## Day of Your Defense and Approval Form

Please arrive early to prepare for your presentation and bring a copy of your **PhD Defense Program Approval Form**, and your **UCF College of Graduate Studies Dissertation Defense Approval Form** for signatures.

**Note: The review for original work must be completed prior to the committee signing the Thesis Approval Form.**

(1) PhD Graduate Students are required to obtain the new **PhD Program Dissertation Defense Approval Form** from the Program Office to bring to the defense.

Email [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu) to obtain your copy.

(2) Graduate Students are also required to bring the **College of Graduate Studies Dissertation Approval Form** to the defense.

### **Please review process below:**

Bring your approval forms with you to your defense or email your pdf form to each committee member before the meeting. Note: It may take a few days for you to obtain your signatures if your meeting will be held by Zoom or Hybrid. If so, you are responsible for following up with your committee on the status of the signatures.

After your defense, you will have 1 week to submit your approval forms electronically to the Program Office ([BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu)) who will then obtain the signatures from College of Medicine Dean, Program Director, and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The student is required to notify the Program Office if there is a delay in collecting signatures.

**Once approved by your Committee, Graduate Students are required to upload your final approved thesis to the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site and confirm your submission.**



**Your graduate program degree GPS (audit) will be updated once the approval process is completed and all requirements have been met.**

### Accessing Your Approval Form

At least two weeks before your defense, PhD Program students are required to access your Approval Form in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services Links to an external site](#), site Approval Form page.

- **A preview of your approval form will appear on the Approval Form page**
- **Ensure your committee is listed correctly in the preview**  
Graduate students are required to review your thesis or dissertation committee in the university records system to make sure all members are correct. Please contact Program Office immediately if the committee information is not listed correctly.
- Your name, title, and defense date may be updated **in the preview if necessary** (save by hitting "Enter" after making changes).
- **Ensure your release option is displayed correctly**  
You are required to submit your thesis/dissertation release option e-form. This form must be submitted at least one week prior to your defense to allow time for processing. The release information will appear on your Defense Approval Form in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site one business day AFTER the TD Release Option form is processed.
- **Release Option Missing Information**  
Do not use the Approval Form if the **release option information is missing** or if your **committee information is incorrect**. If your Approval Form does not contain the release option information you have either not submitted your Release Option form, or the form has not finished processing. Please note that updating of committee information can take several days, so check this form well before your defense.
- **The Defense Approval Form will not be accepted by the College of Graduate Studies if the release option is not present.** Upon completion of the TD Release Option form, the title, defense date, and release option will be processed by the Graduate Office and updated in the Approval Form.
- Once you've confirmed that all information is correct in the preview, select the green Download and Print Approval Form button to obtain in PDF format
- The Defense Approval Form will not be accepted by the College of Graduate Studies if the release option is not present. Graduate Students must contact the College of Graduate Studies Thesis Editor ([editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu)) if assistance is needed with this process.

**Please Note: Processing can take a day or two, so please complete the TD Release Option form well before you defend.**

### **College of Graduate Studies ETD**

The College of Graduate Studies coordinates the format review and final submission process for ETDs ([Electronic Theses and Dissertations](#)). **Answers to common ETD questions can be found on this site's [FAQ section](#) or [\(EDT\)](#).**

### **Format Review**

All thesis and dissertations must pass format review by the College of Graduate Studies ETD office in order to receive permission to upload their final document by the final deadline. Students should submit a properly formatted file for initial format review of their work as early as possible and at least by the format review deadline of the semester the student plans to graduate.

Students will need to continue to submit their document for review until they receive format approval by the College of Graduate Studies Editor. Students will not be able to complete all ETD requirements without format approval.

**Thesis and Dissertation Format help is available at the College of Graduate Studies Graduate Student Center. You may email [ETDHelp@ucf.edu](mailto:ETDHelp@ucf.edu) to schedule an appointment.**

**For additional information see the general guidelines in the [Thesis and Dissertation Manual](#) of the College of Graduate Studies Thesis and Dissertation office.**

## University Dissertation Requirements

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services Site](#). All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Consult with graduate director or advisor for potential earlier deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures. The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at [editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu). Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site.

The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site. The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures. The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at [editor@ucf.edu](mailto:editor@ucf.edu).

**Note: Dissertation Deadlines are posted in the [UCF Academic Calendar](#) every Semester**

### Viewing Dissertation Status and Release Options

Go to: myUCF Student Center > Graduate Students section > Thesis and Dissertation Status page / Thesis and Dissertation Services website > Homepage

While UCF respects the wishes of students who would like to publish their work and/or apply for patents, it is essential for scholarly research conducted at a university to be available for dissemination. While several options are available for the release of an ETD, it is the goal of the university that all dissertations be available through the UCF Libraries catalog. Students with potential patent concerns are required to discuss the following options with their dissertation adviser and indicate the availability choice on the **Thesis and Dissertation Release Option** electronic form, which the student submits in the myUCF Student Center.

**For those with no patent or copyright concerns:**

- Immediate worldwide dissemination with no restrictions.

**For those who have patent issues, dissemination options must be discussed and agreed to with your adviser. Choices are:** Pending dissemination of the entire work for six months for patent or other proprietary issues, with an additional six-month extension available. Once the patent and proprietary issues are resolved, then immediate worldwide dissemination with no restrictions. Pending dissemination of the entire work for six months for patent or other proprietary issues, with an additional six-month extension available. Once the patent and proprietary issues are resolved, choosing this option allows the student to make the dissertation available to the university community for the period chosen below, and then for it to be distributed via the Web beyond that time.

- one year / three years\* / five years\*

**For those who have copyright concerns,** dissemination options are a student decision within the guidelines of individual departments that may have requirements for dissemination. If a department has no guidelines for dissemination, then students are free to choose one of the options below. In general, those in the sciences and engineering will choose one year while students in the arts and humanities may choose longer. Choosing this option allows the student to make the dissertation available to the university community for the period chosen below, and then for it to be distributed via the Web beyond that time. \*Does not require dissertation adviser signature and approval.

- **one year / three years\* / five years\***

UCF Graduate Thesis and Dissertation (EDT): <https://graduate.ucf.edu/thesis-and-dissertation/>

### **Knights E-mail Requirement for Dissertation**

All official university student communication must be made through Knights E-mail. This requirement includes all thesis and dissertation communications, as well as documents submitted for format review. Documents not submitted from a Knights E-mail account will be returned to the student without being reviewed.

### **Doctoral Students: Complete the NORC Survey**

Doctoral students must complete the [NORC Survey of Earned Doctorates \(Links to an external site.\)](#). The College of Graduate Studies will receive an email confirmation upon your completion of the NORC SED survey. The NORC Survey of Earned Doctorates is an annual census conducted by six federal agencies of all individuals receiving a research doctorate from accredited U.S. institutions. Survey data is used to track the number of graduates in various fields; the educational paths of scientists, engineers, and humanists; movement of graduates into the labor market; and similar information. To learn more go to the [Survey of Earned Doctorates \(Links to an external site.\)](#) web site.

# Grades, Transfer Credits and Other Requirements

## Grades

**Grades of every student will be evaluated after each semester. A Grade point average of 3.0 is required.**

### See Policy Below:

- Any PhD student who receives a grade below “B” in BSC 6432 will be considered failing to pass the cumulative exam and will be dismissed from the program immediately.
- The program will allow a maximum of two “C” grades in courses other than BSC 6432.
- If a student’s GPA falls below a 3.0 but remains above a 2.0, the student will automatically be placed on academic probation by the College of Graduate Studies. Students will receive a notice of probation at the beginning of the probation period, and the notice of probation will be imprinted on the student’s academic transcript.
- Thesis and Dissertation hours are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Students can receive a grade of “U” for unsatisfactory laboratory work/performance, and no credit. Under such circumstances the program may elect to place the student on academic probation or dismiss the student if the unsatisfactory progress continues.
- Any student who receives two consecutive “U” grades, will automatically be dismissed from the program.
- Any student who receives a GPA below 2.0, will automatically be dismissed from the program by the College of Graduate Studies.
- Any student found guilty of research or academic misconduct will be immediately dismissed from the program.
- International students placed on probationary status will be sent to the UCF Global for advisement regarding the immigration status implications of this action.

## Transfer Credit

### Transfer Credit Policy

To request transfer credit, the student should submit a Plan of Study (POS) during their first semester of enrollment (i.e., their admit term). Requests must be received by the end of the semester following their admit term. Transfer credit requests are made to the Graduate Program Director, who will review the student’s transcript and the associated syllabi to decide if the transfer course(s) are equivalent to the course(s) required by the graduate program. Some syllabi may require an additional review by faculty with relevant expertise to determine equivalency. The POS must then be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies for review and approval. The following limits apply to transfer requests for degree programs (refer to the Graduate Certificate Policies for transfer of credit to graduate certificates):

1. The total number of transfer credits cannot exceed 50% of the UCF degree requirements, and at least 15 credit hours of graded (A-F) courses must be taken at UCF once admitted. The only exceptions to this rule are listed in #5 below.
2. **Only graduate-level courses with a grade of 'B' or higher can be transferred.** No Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory or Pass/Fail courses can transfer. Internal transfer courses (i.e., courses taken at UCF) will appear as a graded course on the transcript.
3. Transfer of international credits may be permitted with the required Josef Silny and Associates, Inc. or World Education Services (WES) transcript evaluations (see Admissions Equivalency Information). For a graduate-level course to be considered for transfer, the course should have an equivalent course in the program at UCF. To help the graduate program director decide whether a course is equivalent to the course offered at UCF, the student should provide an official transcript listing the course name and number, and a syllabus for the course to be considered for transfer. If the official transcript or syllabus are not provided by the international institution in English, the student should provide a translation performed by a certified translator at the issuing institution, government agency, or by a translator certified by the American Translators Association (<https://atanet.org/>).
4. Courses older than 7 years cannot be transferred unless they have been reviewed and approved by a formal committee comprised of graduate faculty in the program. Program-level approvals must be accompanied by statements demonstrating the currency of the course content in the context of the student's experience. The course must then be approved by the dean or dean's designee of the relevant college. Approval documentation must be attached with the transfer request to the College of Graduate Studies. All other transfer policies apply. Approved courses are valid if the student maintains continuous enrollment in the graduate program. If the student is readmitted after discontinuation or dismissal, the student must initiate a new transfer request for courses older than 7 years.
5. There are 4 exceptions to this policy as written:
  1. Unless part of an approved dual degree program, a maximum of 9 hours may be used to fulfill the requirements of 2 master's degrees. In no case can hours be used to fulfill the requirements of more than 2 degrees.
  2. Unless part of an approved accelerated program, a maximum of 9 hours may be used by a student taking graduate courses while in undergraduate status at UCF.
  3. When doctoral programs require a master's degree for admission, credits from the required, earned master's degree may not be used as transfer credits.
  4. To minimize disruption to the student's research and progress to degree, graduate students recruited to transfer to UCF when their faculty supervisor is being hired by UCF from another institution may transfer up to 66.7% of the total degree requirements if all other transfer requirements are met. In this case, the student's transfer must be requested by the faculty supervisor being hired by UCF (rather than initiated by the student). This exception still requires the student to complete the following at UCF: a minimum of 9 hours of graded coursework, the requirements for Doctoral Candidacy, and a minimum of 15 hours of dissertation.

**All transfer credits to be used toward the master's degree should be finalized before the end of the Fall semester, 1<sup>st</sup> year.**

### **UCF MS Biotechnology or MS Biomedical Sciences Transfer Credits**

Students in UCF MS Biotechnology or UCF MS Biomedical Sciences programs are required to complete their master's degree requirements before joining the PhD Biomedical Sciences Program. See *Transfer of Credit Policy in the Graduate Catalog*.

## Satisfactory Progress

Graduate students are required to meet with their committee members annually and the student is required to present to the committee achievements and plans for the next academic year. The committee must evaluate and grade the student progress and provide feedback to go forward.

## Time Limits to Degree Completion

It is expected that graduate students complete all coursework and enter candidacy during summer semester of the second academic year. Graduate students are then required to meet and update their dissertation committee annually with data and plans to complete the required research training to **generate a minimum of two original first-authored manuscripts.**

Students who fail to meet the expected academic and/or research requirements (e.g., dissertation proposal defense, candidacy exam, annual dissertation committee review) by the specified program deadlines may be placed on academic probation or dismissed. Please review Policy Statement on Programmatic Requirements in this handbook. Per UCF policy, graduate students who have not yet completed their degrees after 5 years of the graduate study must submit a 7 Year Completion Plan to the College of Graduate Studies. The student will be terminated from the program if the student fails to complete the degree (without an approved College of Graduate Studies Petition on file) by the seventh year.

## Program Plan

A Program of Study is a listing of course work agreed to by the student and the degree program specifying course degree requirements. A specific Program of Study, which may vary from student to student, must be formulated jointly by the student and the appropriate committee or adviser in the program area and approved by the college. **All students must review their program plan of study with their faculty mentor and submit the PhD Program Plan Form to the Program Office by the beginning of the Spring semester, 1st Year.**

The Program of Study must comply with the student's relevant catalog. This form should be prepared and signed by the adviser and student, then submitted electronically to the graduate program office for review and filing in the student's permanent file. The Program Office will submit this form to the College of Graduate Studies for you. Email [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu) to obtain your form and email [BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu) if you need to schedule an appointment for advising.

### Graduate Studies GPS Plan

The Graduate Studies GPS is an advisement tool you can use to plan your academic career, check your progress and assist you in registering in upcoming semesters. To access your report, navigate to the student portal at [my.ucf.edu](http://my.ucf.edu) enter your PID, then go down to Main Menu>Self Service>Student Center. At the drop-down box, select "Graduate Plan of Study," then hit the right-facing arrow to process your report.

## Graduate Program Registration

Graduate students will work with the Program Graduate Service Office to register for courses each semester. The Program Office will send out the approved list of courses available at the beginning of each semester along with the registration request (agreement) form. Graduate Students should review the program curriculum guide provided in this handbook before sending the registration request.

- Department consent is required for many of our graduate program courses. Graduate students must send their signed Registration request form to the Program Office for assistance. Email [BSBSGradRegistration@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradRegistration@ucf.edu)
- **Graduate students must meet with their faculty mentor first before submitting the signed registration request form electronically to the Program Office.**
- All holds must be removed before we can assist you with registration. Please send us your registration request form after your hold has been removed.
- IDS 7919 Doctoral Research or IDS 7980 Dissertation Research – The Registration of these courses must include the mentors “Description of Assignments and Expectation” and signature before submission.
- If you need to schedule an appointment to review your registration plan, please email [BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu).

## Record Holds

A hold (negative service indicator) may be placed on a student's records, transcripts, grades, diplomas, or registration due to financial or other obligations to the University. Satisfaction and clearance of the hold is required before a release can be given. **Students may check for holds on the myUCF system at [my.ucf.edu](http://my.ucf.edu).** To obtain an immediate release for Student Accounts financial holds, you may make your credit card or e-check payment online from your student account. After making a successful payment, contact Student Account Services with the remit ID to confirm your payment and have your hold released.

## Professional Seminars, Program Colloquium and Symposia

Students are strongly encouraged to attend departmental seminars including the weekly Friday seminar, the research divisions meetings, and guest seminars. Presenting and attending at the annual colloquium and symposia is required.

**PhD students will give a program-wide seminar presentation of their own research during either their third or fourth year. This will typically be completed during the Graduate Research Symposium held in the Spring Semester each year.**

Critical feedback will be given on overall quality of presentation.

- This includes how well abstract conveys objective, results and conclusion of the research;
- How properly data are organized (formats- figures, tables, movies, etc. and number of slides);

- How clearly a story is told (background, significance, hypothesis, aims, concepts, approach and conclusion); as well as how appropriately and confidently questions are answered.

**Presentations at other settings including research divisions cannot substitute for this requirement.** Students should take opportunities to present a poster or a topic of research at a conference.

To obtain financial support to present at a conference (other than through your program) or to engage in comparable creative activity at a professional meeting, visit the Graduate Travel Fellowship section at [graduate.ucf.edu/](http://graduate.ucf.edu/). For information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, see their website: [csgs.org/](http://csgs.org/) > Awards.

## **Graduate Research Forum/Symposium**

The College of Graduate Studies hosts an annual Research Forum to provide a conference setting for our own students to showcase their work either with poster presentations or a face-to-face presentation. Graduate students are encouraged to participate in the [Graduate Research Forum](#).

### **3MT**

**Int the Fall and Spring Semesters, the College of Graduate Studies hosts a Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition for graduate students.** Doctoral students communicate their research in just three short minutes and with only one PowerPoint slide to non-expert judges while competing to win scholarship awards. Graduate students are encouraged to participate in this event. For questions about this event, please email [gradworkshops@ucf.edu](mailto:gradworkshops@ucf.edu).

### **Posters and PowerPoint**

The UCF College of Medicine's Educational Technology department offers **free printing of posters** and **PowerPoint** templates for COM faculty, staff and students that promote UCF and the college. Contact: [comedtech@ucf.edu](mailto:comedtech@ucf.edu)

#### Posters

The college has created several templates to be used for all poster presentations in accordance with new university-wide brand standards that reflect a modern, cohesive look for all materials that reflect the university. The purpose of these templates is to create professional posters that reflect the UCF brand and provide a consistent look. Additionally, the template should facilitate your efforts in creating posters.

- The templates provide a choice of either a black or yellow banner for your poster (links below) as well as the university-approved font – Gotham.
- Since there is a fee associated with installing this font on your computer, please use another font and Ed Tech will change the font for you prior to printing.
- We don't want to restrict creativity, so feel free to design the body of your poster any way you feel appropriate, but we will enforce the following standards for the banner
- Must be either black or yellow background
- Must include the approved COM logo
- Title of poster must be either yellow or black

#### PowerPoint

These PowerPoint templates contain multiple slide designs and photo options you may use for your own presentations. We've included a 4:3 presentation format and a 16:9 format.



- These templates are set up with the font Helvetica.
- Arial may be used as a substitute font. If you have the font [Gotham](#) installed on your computer, please feel free to convert all text to that font.
- (Note: If you are sharing your final PowerPoint with other users who do not have Gotham, the document fonts will not display correctly.)
- For more information please click [here](#).

## **Absences**

Students who anticipate that they may not be able to enroll continuously due to external circumstances should apply for [Special Leave of Absence](#). Specifically, students who are taking courses should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in more than two consecutive semesters. Students who are in thesis/dissertation hours should apply for a Special Leave of Absence when they cannot enroll in every semester (including summer).

To qualify for a Special Leave of Absence, the student must demonstrate good cause (e.g., illness, family issues, financial difficulties, personal circumstances, recent maternity/paternity, employment issues). The specific reason for the Leave of Absence request must be indicated by the student on the [Leave of Absence Form](#).

Due to current U.S. government regulations, international students must be enrolled every fall and spring semester.

## **PhD Graduate Program Leave Policy**

**Graduate students who are supported by GTA or GRA are considered UCF employees.**

It is mandatory that all graduate students in the program who are supported by GTA or GRA must receive prior program approval for any leave of absence. Only UCF official holidays, as published in the UCF academic calendar each year, are recognized as paid holidays. Student must discuss the leave with their mentor and/or GTA supervisor, then complete the graduate leave of absence form, and receive program approval before going on leave. Failure to comply with the program leave of absence policy may lead to termination of employment/tuition waiver and/or dismissal from the program. **The Program Leave form must be approved two weeks in advance of requested date(s).**

### **Attendance Requirement**

Students are expected to attend all classes, lectures, seminars and complete all research and laboratory assignments by the deadlines specified. **Supervisors must be notified if you are going to be absent from the research lab or the teaching lab.**

### **Changing Your E-mail, Address or Phone Number**

It is important to remember that all official university communication will be sent to your e-mail address or physical address on file. Students are responsible for updating their e-mail, physical address, and phone number. This can be done online through myUCF or by submitting a written request to the Student Services office.

# UCF College of Graduate Studies Catalog and Handbook

The UCF Graduate Catalog contains a description of the various policies, graduate programs, degree requirements, course offerings, and related matters intended to be in effect at the University of Central Florida during each academic year.

The Graduate Handbook is intended to familiarize graduate students with the procedures, policies, and expectations of the University of Central Florida Graduate program.

It is the student's responsibility to review and become familiar with all graduate policies. See links to the UCF Graduate Catalog and the UCF College of Graduate Studies Graduate Student Handbook below.

- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Student Handbook](#)

## **Academic Progress**

Academic progress involves processes and actions taken by the College of Graduate Studies with regard to graduate student performance. It is expected that graduate students perform at a level substantially higher than expected of undergraduates. Therefore, the academic performance of graduate students is closely monitored through the use of the Graduate Status GPA.

The Graduate Status GPA is defined as all UCF graduate-level coursework taken since admission into the graduate program. The Graduate Status GPA does not include transfer courses from another institution, from another UCF graduate program, or any undergraduate or non-degree coursework.

**The College of Graduate Studies will review all Graduate Status GPA's and take appropriate actions on student records including:**

### **Placing on probation**

Grad Status GPA below 3.0: Student has up to 18 credit hours of graded coursework to raise their Grad Status GPA to a 3.0 or the remaining graded courses of their degree program (if fewer than 18).

### **Continuing probation**

Student has up to 18 credit hours of graded coursework to raise their Grad Status GPA to a 3.0 or the remaining graded courses of their degree program (if fewer than 18).

### **Removing from probation**

Student is removed from probation once they earn a Grad Status GPA of 3.0 or higher

### **Dismissing from program**

Student did not meet the terms of probation by raising their Grad Status GPA to 3.0 or better upon completing 18 graduate credits of graded A-F coursework or the remaining graded courses of their degree program (if fewer than 18). Visit <https://graduate.ucf.edu/students/>

## **Review of Academic Performance**

The primary responsibility for monitoring academic performance standards rests with the degree or certificate program. However, the academic college and the UCF College of Graduate Studies will monitor a student's progress and may dismiss any student if performance standards or academic progress as specified by the program, college, or university are not maintained. Satisfactory academic performance in a program includes maintaining at least a 3.0 graduate status GPA in all graduate work taken since admission into the program. Satisfactory performance also involves maintaining the standards of academic progress and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program.

## **Graduate Status – GPA**

A graduate status GPA will be calculated based on the graduate courses taken at UCF since admission into each degree or certificate program. The graduate status GPA is used to monitor the student's progress in the program. The university requires that students must maintain a graduate status GPA of at least 3.0 or higher in order to maintain regular graduate student status, receive financial assistance, and qualify for graduation. This GPA requirement cannot be waived.

The Graduate Status GPA is comprised of all UCF graduate-level coursework completed as of the first term of admission into a graduate program.

- Does not include **transfer courses** from other institutions, **coursework completed for other UCF graduate programs, undergraduate or non-degree** coursework

## **When Graduate Status GPA falls below a 3.0, the following occurs:**

- Students will have a maximum of 18 graduate credit hours of graded A-F course work from their Graduate Plan of Study to increase their Graduate Status GPA to 3.0 or higher.
- Students who have fewer than 18 credit hours of course work left in their Graduate Plan of Study will only have the number of remaining credit hours toward degree completion to attain the 3.0 Graduate Status GPA.
- Students who cannot mathematically attain a 3.0 Graduate Status GPA, either through the 18 credit hours of course work or through the remaining credit hours to degree completion, will be formally dismissed without the probationary period. Exceptions can be made for students who start their final semester of coursework with a 3.0 (or higher) Graduate Status GPA but fall below a 3.0 when grades post at the end of the final semester of coursework. In this case, the student will be put on probation and may enroll in up to 6 credit hours of electives from their graduate program's approved list of electives. If the student cannot remedy the GPA in the 6 hours, the student will be dismissed.
- At the end of each semester, the College of Graduate Studies will continue to monitor each student on probation. If further audits reveal that it is mathematically impossible to attain the 3.0, students on probation will be dismissed from the program.
- Students placed on probation are required to meet with their graduate program director to create a **Probation Plan**. Failure to meet any of the conditions of the Probation Plan may result in dismissal without any further appeal.

## **GPA Dismissal**

- Any student who receives a **GPA below 2.0**, will automatically be dismissed from the program by the College of Graduate Studies.
- Students will have a maximum of 18 graduate credit hours of graded A-F course work from their Graduate Plan of Study to increase their Graduate Status GPA to 3.0 or higher. Students who cannot mathematically attain a 3.0 Graduate Status GPA, either through the

18 credit hours of course work or through the remaining credit hours to degree completion, will be formally dismissed without the probationary period.

- Students placed on probation are required to meet with their graduate program director to create a **Probation Plan**. Students who fail to meet any of the conditions of the Probation Plan may result in dismissal without any further appeal.
- The dismissal will be recorded on the transcript.
- The College of Graduate Studies communicates the dismissal action to the students via email and a copy of this communication is scanned into the student's permanent file.

**Visit the UCF Graduate Catalog and the UCF Code of Conduct Handbook to review additional dismissal policies. Graduate students may review the Appeals of Graduate Program Actions or Decisions - UCF-5.017 policy in the [UCF Golden Rule](#).**

**Review the full academic policies found in the [Academic Progress and Performance](#) section in the UCF Graduate Catalog.**

#### Maximum Hours of Unsatisfactory Grades

- The grades D, D+, D-, F and U grades are all considered unsatisfactory grades.
- A total of 6 semester credit hours of "C" grades (C, C+, C-), in courses other than BSC 6432 is allowed to satisfy degree program requirements.
- Exceeding six semester credit hours of unsatisfactory grades is grounds for dismissal for all degree-seeking and nondegree students. A course in which a student has received an unsatisfactory grade may be repeated, however, both grades will be used in computing the GPA. There is no forgiveness policy for any course taken while in graduate status.

*Individual graduate programs may have more stringent grade requirements than described above. Students must abide by the academic performance standards of their graduate program.*

#### Incomplete Grades

- A grade of "I" (incomplete) is assigned by the instructor when a student is unable to complete a course due to extenuating circumstances, and when all requirements can clearly be completed in a short period of time following the close of regular classes.
- In all circumstances where the "I" grade is received, **the student and faculty member must complete an agreement form that specifies how and when the incomplete grade will be made up**. This agreement form is submitted with the instructor grade rolls at the end of the semester, and a copy of this agreement is given to the Graduate College for further follow-up.
- For those students on financial assistance such as loans, the incomplete "I" must be made up by the agreement date. Failure to complete course requirements by that date may, at the discretion of the instructor, result in the assignment of an "F" grade, or a "U" grade for thesis, dissertation, or research report hours. It is the student's responsibility to arrange with the instructor for the changing of the "I" grade.
- Grades of "I" must be resolved within one calendar year or prior to graduation, whichever comes first. Incompletes in regular course work left unresolved will be changed to "F" if not changed in the allowed time period, and this time period may be sooner for those receiving financial assistance.

**UCF fellowship students cannot receive fellowship funds while holding incomplete grades and have thirty days from the issuance of the Incomplete to remedy it in order to continue to receive fellowship funds.**

## Course Requirements

The primary objective of doctoral study is to educate students to a point of excellence in conducting, disseminating, and applying scholarly research, with the explicit goal of making original, substantive contributions to their degree discipline. The advanced nature of doctoral education requires student participation, debate, evaluation, and discussion of diverse ideas and approaches. Careful analysis, independent research, and greater understanding and application of ideas are also expected.

The doctoral degree program requirements will consist of core and elective courses, seminars, directed and doctoral research, independent study, and dissertation research.

- Each doctoral program of study will include a minimum of 72 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the baccalaureate degree or a minimum of 42 semester hours of graduate credit beyond the master's degree; these graduate credits must be taken as part of an approved graduate program of study. Some programs require considerably more than the minimum of 72 hours because of the nature of the discipline and the standards of the associated profession.
- All graduate credits in a doctoral program must be at 5000 level or higher. At least one-half of the credit hours used to meet program requirements must be in 6000-level or 7000-level courses, including the allowed number of research and dissertation hours.
- At least 50% of the credits offered for the degree are expected to be derived from a single field of concentration (that is, from one department). However, programs that are interdisciplinary in nature may be exempt from this policy upon approval from the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee.
- Only graduate-level credit with a grade of "C- "or higher may be used to satisfy degree requirements.
- A university-wide minimum of at least 27 hours of formal coursework exclusive of Independent Study (XXX 6908), dissertation and research is required for all doctoral programs; some programs require a greater number of formal coursework hours.
- A university-wide minimum of at least 15 hours of dissertation credits is required for all doctoral programs, although some programs require a greater number of dissertation hours. The dissertation hour requirements may only be satisfied by enrollment in dissertation hours.

### 6000- and 7000-Level Courses

A minimum of 36 credit hours (including courses taken in a master's program) must be in 6000-level and 7000-level courses, which are designed, respectively, for graduate students and doctoral students only.

**Important Note: New graduate students from UCF that completed Molecular Biotechnology and Biotech Lab methods & other program courses as undergraduates (4000 level) cannot register for these courses again at 5000 level. Graduate students are required to meet with the program office to review alternative course selection(s).**

# Graduation Requirements

## **File Your Intent to Graduate**

**You must first be approved to graduate by your Dissertation Committee and the PhD Program Coordinator before filing an intent to graduate for the semester you are approved.**

**Graduate students who plan to graduate are required to meet with the Program Office one semester prior to graduation to review their degree audit and program specific requirements.** Email [BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu) to schedule your appointment.

Once you are approved, graduate students will be instructed to log into their myUCF account (<https://my.ucf.edu/>) to apply for graduation. Go to: Student Self Service> Student Center> other academics (drop down menu) > Intent to Graduate> Apply.

Once you submit your Intent to Graduate, your initial status will be updated as “Applied” then moved to “Pending” after the Program and College of Graduate Studies review. Your status will change to “Awarded” and you will be certified to graduate by the Program Office and the College of Graduate Studies once all program and University requirements are met.

## **Commencement /Tickets/ Cap and Gown:**

**Graduate students must visit the [UCF Commencement Website](#) to learn about the following:**

### **Commencement Location:**

The University of Central Florida Commencement Ceremony will take place in the [Addition Financial Arena](#).

### **Tickets:**

Each guest entering the arena, which includes children and infants, is required to have a Commencement ticket for the ceremony. Family and friends who are unable to attend commencement can view the live-streamed ceremony online. The [UCF FAIRWINDS Alumni Center](#) will also be simulcasting the ceremonies. Additional guests can watch the ceremony at this location, and no ticket is required.

### **Regalia:**

Candidates participating in the commencement ceremonies are required to wear official UCF regalia available exclusively through the UCF Bookstore. Order online on the [Herff Jones website](#). All rented items are due back by 5pm on Graduation Day.

### **Diploma:**

You will receive your diploma at Commencement, or it will be mailed approximately 6 to 10 weeks after the commencement ceremony to the address indicated on your Intent to Graduate form. Students who have changed their address should contact the College of Graduate Studies at [graddegr@ucf.edu](mailto:graddegr@ucf.edu). Questions can be directed to the College of Graduate Studies at 407-823-2766. Diplomas cannot be released if you have a nonacademic hold. It is your responsibility to resolve holds as quickly as possible.

## **PhD Diploma**

**PhD students in the interdisciplinary PhD Biomedical Sciences Program will graduate with the Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences Degree, under the College of your faculty advisor.**

You will receive your diploma at Commencement, or it will be mailed approximately 6 to 10 weeks after the commencement ceremony to the address indicated on your Intent to Graduate form. Students who have changed their address should contact the College of Graduate Studies at [graddegr@ucf.edu](mailto:graddegr@ucf.edu). Questions can be directed to the College of Graduate Studies at 407-823-2766.

Diplomas cannot be released if you have a nonacademic hold. It is your responsibility to resolve holds as quickly as possible.

## **Transcripts:**

Your transcripts, showing the degree has been awarded, may not be available for up to six weeks after commencement. The [Registrar's Office](#) has an online site where you can order your final, official transcripts and you can request to have it held for delivery until it shows the degree has been earned.

In advance of your final transcripts being available, if you need an official letter showing that you have met all of the degree requirements, you can request this from the UCF Graduate College. Please [e-mail](#) or call (407/823-2766 ext. 0) for additional information.

[Student Account Services](#) and the [Registrar's Office](#) will notify students of any outstanding financial obligations prior to the Commencement ceremony. All financial obligations must be met in order to receive a diploma and official transcripts. Transcripts that reflect the degree earned will be available approximately 4-6 weeks after the ceremony and requests may be made through the Registrar's Office.

## **Career Pathways**

### **PhD Biomedical Sciences Graduates**

The Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program will prepare you for a career in academic research, higher education, or biotechnology.

Our graduate students that have completed the programs are prepared to enter a career in fields related to biomedical sciences or continue their graduate/professional education at universities all over the country.

### **Positions: Postdoctoral Fellows, Scientists, Academics (have Rachael update list from recent surveys)**

- Southern Arkansas University
- US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID/NIH)
- Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson – Pharmaceutical Dossier Integrator
- Washington University School of Law
- Baylor School of Medicine
- Mayo Clinic Jacksonville

- University of Washington – Pilot Award Manager for Translational Health Sciences (ITHS)
- Duke University
- University of Central Florida – Preeminent Postdoctoral Program (P3)
- Private Practice Veterinarian
- Center for Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases, University of Washington
- Jackson Laboratories
- University of Pennsylvania, College of Veterinary Medicine
- Wayne State University Medical Center
- Van Andel Institute, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- University of Texas at El Paso
- University of Rochester
- H3Me Life Sciences, India
- UT Southwestern, Dallas County, Texas
- McMaster University, Toronto
- Cornell University
- Seattle Biomedical Research Institute/Center for Infectious Disease Research
- University of Rochester Medical Center
- Salk Institute for Biological Studies
- Institute of Translational Health Sciences, University of Washington
- Indian Institute of Technology
- University of California, Los Angeles
- Hesperos, Inc
- Rootwork InfoTech, LLC
- Aalto University, Finland
- Sanofi



# International Student Information

## UCF Global

### International Advising

UCF Global at the University of Central Florida functions as the primary international hub for students, faculty, and staff. Through strong partnerships UCF Global is committed to increasing international mobility and enhancing the university's global competency.

### Considerations for International Students

All international students on F or J visas must maintain full-time, degree-seeking status regardless of financial support received from the university. F and J visa holders should contact UCF Global to ensure that their enrollment conforms to the full-time definition of their visa status. International students should not change their course schedule or drop classes without advisement from the UCF Global.

### Reduce Course Load

While international students must maintain full-time enrollment for the duration of their program, immigration regulations allow exceptions to the full-time enrollment requirement. Prior to dropping below the full-time enrollment requirement students must receive approval from UCF Global by submitting a Reduced Course Load (RCL) form that explains the nature of the reduced hours.

- Visit <https://global.ucf.edu/maintaining-status/> to obtain a copy of the (RCL) form.
- To learn more please review [How to Maintain F1 and J1 status](#).

Students receiving fellowships or assistantships should consult with the Graduate College's Financial Assistance Office before considering dropping a course if they will become part-time as a consequence.

Students should contact the following: [gradfellowship@ucf.edu](mailto:gradfellowship@ucf.edu) or [gradassistantship@ucf.edu](mailto:gradassistantship@ucf.edu)

### Versant English Test Requirement for GTA

The Versant English Test is used to measure the communicative competence of non-native English-speaking graduate students under consideration for teaching assistant positions at the University.

The English language Institute will be offering the Versant English Test in place of the SPEAK Test. Students who are non-native speakers of English and do not have a degree from a U.S. institution must pass the English Speaking test before they will be permitted to teach as Graduate Teaching Associates (position code 9183) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (position code 9184). The SPEAK test is not required for students who will be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Grader (position code 9187). The English-Speaking test is administered by the English language Institute and takes about 20 minutes.

### Test Dates and Registration - <https://global.ucf.edu/english-test/>

Students must register in advance for the Versant Test. Registration is an online process through the [myINTLportal](#). Log in using your NID and NID password to submit your registration.

**Please refer to the [IEP Student Handbook](#) on detailed information about the Intensive English Program and helpful information and tips about student life at the University of**

Central Florida. It will include detailed information on F-1/J-1 immigration regulations, attendance policies, academic progress, UCF Services, Housing, etc.

For additional information please contact UCF Global.

Website - <http://global.ucf.edu/>

Address: 4356 Scorpius St,  
Building GB 139  
Orlando, FL 32816-0130

Phone: (407)823-2337 | Fax: (407)823-2526

UCF Global provides expert advising services in the areas of a student's academic and immigration matters.

#### IMMIGRATION ADVISING

- Questions regarding your I-20 and Immigration status
- I-20 Travel Signature and Visa Renewal
- Request Annual Vacation (IEP)
- I-20 Extension
- Transfer out Procedure

To schedule an appointment with an **Immigration Advisor** please visit [UCF Meet with an Immigration Advisor](#).

#### ACADEMIC ADVISING - UCF GLOBAL PROGRAMS

- Questions regarding your classes and your academic performance/progression
- Course of Study Plan
- Graduation Advising
- Academic Exploration
- Cultural adjustment support

To schedule an appointment to see an **Academic Advisor**, please visit the **Front Desk on the 1st Floor of UCF Global**.

#### ENROLLMENT SERVICES - UCF GLOBAL PROGRAMS

##### Pathway Program Information/Application

- Program overview and requirements
- Pathway Program Agreement
- Transcripts and Documents

Schedule an appointment with our **Enrollment Services Team** on the **1st Floor of UCF Global**.

# Institutional Policies

## Accommodations

### **Student Accessibility Services**

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) views disabilities as an integral part of the rich diversity at the University of Central Florida. To that end, we work collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff to create an inclusive educational environment for students. Graduate students with disabilities must contact the professor at the beginning/or prior to the semester to discuss the needed accommodations.

Students who need accommodations must be registered with the Student Accessibility Services office. For more information, please visit Student Accessibility Services website at <https://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/accommodations/>. Contact: [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu) or (407) 823-2371

## Communication

Each year the Program Director and Coordinators hold an annual meeting in an open forum with all graduate students. The College of Medicine Dean also attends the meeting to share the strategic plans for the college and the department and to speak with graduate students. Other guest speakers are also invited to speak to students about other topics important to students.

Program updates, successes, challenges, and assessments are shared during the meeting and a question and answer session is held to give students an opportunity to share their suggestions, concerns, and any feedback they may have. This meeting provides an open line of communication between the students and Program Leadership. New ideas and suggestions are welcomed to help improve graduate student overall experience.

### **Student Responsibility for University Communication**

UCF uses email as the official means of notifying students of important university business and academic information concerning registration, deadlines, financial assistance, scholarships, student accounts (including tuition and fees), academic progress and problems, and many other critical items for satisfactory completion of a UCF degree program.

The university sends all business-related and academic messages to a students Knights Email address to ensure that there is one repository for that information. Every student must register for and maintain a Knights Email account at <https://extranet.cst.ucf.edu/kmailselfsvc> and check it regularly to avoid missing important and critical information from the university. Any difficulty with establishing an account or with accessing an established account must be resolved through the [UCF Computer Services Service Desk](#) so that a student receives all important messages.

**Additionally, each student must have an up-to-date emergency e-mail address and cell phone number by which to be reached in case of a crisis on campus.** This emergency contact information will be used only for emergency purposes. Also, both permanent and local mailing addresses must be on the record, so that any physical documents that must be mailed can be delivered.

It is critical that students maintain and regularly check their Knights Email account for official announcements and notifications. Communications sent to the Knights Email address on record will be deemed adequate notice for all university communication, include issues related to academics, finances, registration, parking, and all other matters. The University does not accept responsibility if official communication fails to reach a student who has not registered for, or maintained and checked on a regular basis, their Knights Email account. Please ensure that this information is current and that any changes in contact information are made online through the myUCF portal at <https://my.ucf.edu/>.

## Disability Statement

### ACCESS matters

**Purpose:** We envision UCF to be a fully accessible campus and inclusive environment for people with disabilities. We do this by:

- Acknowledging disability as an aspect of human diversity;
- Cultivating awareness of the environment's disabling barriers;
- Collaborating on and proactively facilitating accessible environments and experiences;
- Educating faculty and staff to create and maintain access in their spheres of influence;
- Shifting to an inclusive-minded attitude;
- Supplementing with reasonable accommodations as a last resort measure to ensure access.

## Diversity Statement

The program invites guest speakers during the orientation events of new students to discuss topics related to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The speakers discuss with the new students UCF policies on this topic and provide them with necessary information and available recourses.

The University of Central Florida considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. UCF expects every member of the university community to contribute to an inclusive and respectful culture for all in its classrooms, work environments, and at campus events. Dimensions of diversity can include sex, race, age, national origin, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, intellectual and physical ability, sexual orientation, income, faith and non-faith perspectives, socio-economic class, political ideology, education, primary language, family status, military experience, cognitive style, and communication style. The individual intersection of these experiences and characteristics must be valued in our community.

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at <https://letsbeclear.ucf.edu> and <http://cares.sdes.ucf.edu/>. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify the instructor as soon as possible and/or contact [Student Accessibility Services](#).

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE <http://oie.ucf.edu/> & [askanadvocate@ucf.edu](mailto:askanadvocate@ucf.edu)

- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – <http://sas.sdes.ucf.edu/> & [sas@ucf.edu](mailto:sas@ucf.edu)
- Diversity and Inclusion Training and Events – [www.diversity.ucf.edu](http://www.diversity.ucf.edu)
- Student Bias Grievances – Just Knights response team – <http://jkrt.sdes.ucf.edu/>
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – <http://compliance.ucf.edu/> & [complianceandethics@ucf.edu](mailto:complianceandethics@ucf.edu)
- Ombuds Office – <http://www.ombuds.ucf.edu>

## Harassment

The University of Central Florida values diversity in the campus community. Accordingly, discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability, marital status, parental status, veterans status, sexual orientation, or genetic information is prohibited.

Sexual harassment, a form of sex discrimination, is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature including any of these three situations.

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or enrollment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or enrollment decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or enrollment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. Occurrences will be dealt with in accordance with the guidelines above and university rules. Employees, students, or applicants for employment or admission may obtain further information on this policy, including grievance procedures, from the OIE Coordinator. The Director of the Office of Institutional Equity Programs is the campus Equity Coordinator responsible for concerns in all areas of discrimination. The office is located on the main campus, in Barbara Ying CMMS Building 81, Suite 101. The phone number is (407) 823-1336. Policies and guidelines are available online at <http://www.eeo.ucf.edu>.

## Privacy – Data and Security

All members of the university community have a responsibility to protect the data generated, accessed, modified, transmitted, stored, or used by the university. Stay alert and treat university information responsibly. Please review reminders below:

### Computers and electronic devices:

- Password protect or use another authorized form of authentication for your computer and electronic devices. Do not share your password and do not write it on a note that you leave on or around your desk area. IT Support can help reset your password if it is forgotten. No one needs to know your password. Do not let anyone watch you type in your password.
- Encrypt and password protect confidential or sensitive information provided via email or stored on a disk or an external drive. When providing a password for an attachment to an email, do not send the password and the encrypted message in the same message.
- Stay alert and avoid falling for phishing schemes. Do not trust unsolicited emails or click on suspicious links

- Secure laptops and other electronic devices when not in use. Do not leave them in view and unattended. It is easy to smash a car window and grab a computer or cell phone left on a car seat. Put your laptop, mobile phone, and other electronic devices in the trunk of your car if you aren't taking them with you. Use similar precautions in airports, hotels, and at home.
- If your university-owned computer or electronic device is lost or stolen, report the loss as soon as you are able to do so. It may be possible to disable the device or limit access to the information it contains or even trace the location of the equipment. Depending on the circumstances, and more specifically what was stored on the device, UCF may be under a legal obligation to quickly report the loss to a government agency or persons whose sensitive information has gone missing.
- Limit use of public WIFI and do not use it to send sensitive information.

**Workspace security:**

- Do not leave confidential or sensitive materials in view when visitors are present or when you leave your workspace. Turn document hard copies upside down or place them in a drawer or cabinet, particularly when leaving for an extended period. If locks have been supplied for your desk drawer, file cabinets or office, use them when you leave work for the day.
- Position your computer screen away from others. Share your work with people having a reason to see it, not with friends, uninvolved co-workers, or strangers dropping by your workspace.
- When visitors are permitted in the workplace, do not allow them to roam or wander through unattended. Report suspicious activity appropriately and rapidly.
- Limit copying of confidential and sensitive materials and avoid leaving printed copies on copy machines.

If you have questions about your data privacy and security obligations, please contact [privacy@ucf.edu](mailto:privacy@ucf.edu) for assistance. To learn more about the importance of protecting restricted and related data at UCF visit: [University Compliance, Ethics, and Risk](#).

# Assistantship / Tuition Waivers & Additional Program Details

## Graduate Assistantship Details

Students who have graduate teaching assignments are required to complete UCF GTA training before beginning their assistantships. International students who have graduate teaching associate or assistant positions will need to pass the Versant English Test administered by the UCF English Language Institute before beginning their assistantships. Graduate research assistants also have training requirements (for example, lab safety). **Please see important information below and links to the [Graduate Teaching](#) and [Graduate Assistant Guide](#).**

## PhD Program Graduate Assistantship & Tuition Waivers

Students admitted into the PhD Program will receive a competitive annual stipend, individual student health insurance and tuition assistance. This award is contingent upon full-time enrollment in required course work taken as part of your degree program, satisfactory performance of assigned duties, and continued excellent academic progress towards your degree.

Students accepted in the program are eligible to receive financial support in the form of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) or a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA), and the accompanying of available tuition waiver.

The total annual stipends are currently \$27,000 per year and capped at \$34,000. Any increase above the standard stipend amount must be approved and provided by the mentor.

These stipends support PhD students for the full 12 months per year, and so students are expected to continue working in the laboratories when classes are not in session\*. Absence for more than 2 weeks per year, exclusive of UCF-approved work holidays, will result in the loss of stipend for the period of absence. After the student has identified an advisor for dissertation mentorship and that advisor assumes sponsorship of the student, then leave of absence from work must be approved by the advisor.

For research assistantship recipients, absence in the sponsoring laboratory for a period of more than three weeks may result in temporary or permanent withholding of the assistantship.

**A student's eligibility to receive financial support will be reviewed at the end of each Fall and Spring semester.**

### **Students receiving assistantships are expected to:**

- Complete the Environmental Health & Safety workshops.
- Meet graduate school regulation regarding the Versant test, etc.
- Demonstrate dedication to research and teaching responsibilities.
- Maintain satisfactory academic performance - Minimum 3.0 GPA.
- Complete Program Academic Integrity Requirements
- Meet Program required deadlines

New graduate students will receive information on scholarships, fellowship and stipend payments during the Graduate Assistantship & Financial Award meeting scheduled during Orientation Week.

**Exceptionally qualified students may be eligible for university enhancement awards. Note: Competitive prestigious fellowships are available (based on academic merit to highly qualified students).**

- Tuition covered
- Total Annual Standard Stipend: \$27,000 and capped at \$34,000. Any increase above the standard stipend amount must be approved and provided by the mentor.
- Health Insurance covered

New graduate students will receive information about their scholarships, fellowship and stipend payments during the Graduate Assistantship & Financial Award meeting scheduled during Orientation Week.

Please visit the **UCF College of Graduate Studies Website** to learn more [UCF Graduate Assistantships](#).

### **Tuition and Fee Payment**

**Tuition support pays matriculation and nonresident fees (charges for course hours) and does not include local fees such as health fees, athletic fees, etc.**

All funded students must complete their hiring paperwork to receive their biweekly paycheck.

- Stipend payments will occur every other Friday in the form of direct deposit.
- Students receiving scholarship/fellowships will receive a separate payment that will be deposited directly into your account.
- Graduate students should expect to pay about \$100 per credit hour in fees.

**Note: Tuition Payments will be finalized after ADD/DROP of each semester you are in the program. Visit: <http://www.studentaccounts.ucf.edu/TuitionFees.cfm>.**

### **Tuition Coverage**

Full - The tuition coverage portion of this offer will pay for 100% of the tuition charges during the terms of your assistantship. This will cover full-time enrollment in required course work taken as part of your degree program. **Tuition covers the “Tuition” and “Out-of-State Fee” items in the Fee Schedule and not the local fees.** Visit [Student Account Services](#) to view current graduate tuition rates. Note: *Tuition waivers are subject to availability of funding.* To learn more about UCF Funding, visit <https://graduate.ucf.edu/funding/>.

### **UCF Fee Policy - Financial Matters**

**All fees must be paid by the Fee Payment Deadline.** Graduate assistantship and fellowship students must be enrolled full time by the end of Add/Drop. The College of Graduate Studies reviews all assistantship and fellowship students for full-time enrollment requirements after Add/Drop closes and before the Payment Deadline and sends notices via e-mail to students who are not in compliance with university full-time enrollment requirements.

In addition, the College of Graduate Studies continues to review assistantship and fellowship students throughout the semester to ensure they remain in compliance with university requirements to receive their financial support.



Students are responsible for completing any required assistantship hiring documents and fellowship award documents in order to assist the university in processing payments. They are also responsible for reviewing their university records (e.g., fee invoice, enrollment record, financial aid record) and reporting any discrepancies to their academic program office or the appropriate student services office.

If tuition remission (e.g., department or project payment, tuition waiver) is not recorded on a student's Fee Invoice by the Payment Deadline, the student must pay all tuition and fees. If partial tuition remission is provided, the student must pay the remainder of the tuition owed by the Payment Deadline. Assistantship students who have questions about their tuition remission may e-mail [gradassistantship@ucf.edu](mailto:gradassistantship@ucf.edu) and inquire about the status of their tuition remission. University fellowship students should contact [gradfellowship@ucf.edu](mailto:gradfellowship@ucf.edu).

Be sure to check the official UCF Academic Calendar and the Tuition and Fees Schedule for the current academic year fees and deadlines.

### **Financial Aid Funding**

The mission of the **Office of Student Financial Assistance** is to provide UCF students and the University Community comprehensive quality service by offering options for financial assistance and efficient delivery of aid. Financial aid counseling is available by appointment. Due to confidentiality, counseling by phone and email is limited. To learn about UCF financial assistance opportunities, visit [Funding](#). For student loans and other funding sources, you should also visit the Office of Student Financial Assistance site at [finaid.ucf.edu](http://finaid.ucf.edu).

Visit the [College of Graduate Studies Funding Website](#) for information about specific funding, awards, and fellowships opportunities.

### **Student Account Services**

The mission of the Student Account Services office is to serve the students who attend our university by billing fees, campus housing, and other university charges accurately and efficiently, and collecting and crediting tuition revenue. We are here to provide students with quality service and information by maintaining accurate financial records and communicating policies and information to students concerning their accounts. For more information, please visit: <https://studentaccounts.ucf.edu/>

### **Full-time Enrollment**

All PhD full-time degree-seeking graduate students must take at least **9 credit hours in the Fall and Spring semesters**. During the summer term, full-time is 6 credit hours.

- **For doctoral students who have passed the candidacy exam and are enrolled only for doctoral dissertation (IDS 7980) hours, full-time is 3 hours per semester until graduation.** Such students must continue to enroll in at least three dissertation hours each semester (including summers, without skipping a semester) until they successfully complete the dissertation and graduate. Note: UCF requires that thesis and dissertation students remain enrolled continuously in thesis or dissertation hours each term until they complete their thesis or dissertation.

Students who anticipate that they may not be able to enroll continuously due to external circumstances should apply for a [Special Leave of Absence](#). Please see [General Graduate Policies and Continuous Enrollment](#) in the Graduate Catalog.

## Graduate Teaching Requirement (GTA)

Graduate students must serve as teaching assistants (GTAs) for a minimum of two semesters during the first two years of the program and before the candidacy exam. The graduate committee may exempt from GTA anybody who has done relevant teaching, for at least two semesters, in a graduate program.

GTAs may be assigned as instructors of record for undergraduate courses, as assistants to the faculty in their teaching responsibilities or in other roles directly related to credit earning formal course instruction, or as tutors for students on specific course-related material or general skills. GTAs assisting members of the faculty may have responsibilities that include assisting in laboratory courses, grading, and preparation of course materials, or performing clerical tasks associated with course instruction.

### GTA Expectations:

- Professionalism with time, attire and interaction with students and staff.
- GTAs are evaluated after each semester (GTA is a privilege); poor performance will result in loss of future assistantship.
- GTAs can be terminated during or at the end of the semester if warranted.
- Communication is very important.
- Teaching labs rely on your assistance.
- Where appropriate, proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) must be worn in labs.
- Proper training on equipment is necessary before use.

## Lab and Safety Training

All Graduate Students are required to complete the following Lab and Safety Training Courses below during Orientation week. [ehs.ucf.edu/](https://ehs.ucf.edu/)

Basic chemical safety, biological safety, and radiation safety awareness training is required for you to participate in laboratory research.

**The UCF Environmental Health and Safety Department offer these required safety training courses online and they are available at any time.**

- EHS102 Biological Safety
- EHS140 Blood borne Pathogens
- EHS201 Laboratory Safety
- EHS301 Radiation Safety
- EHS116 Practical Session
- **Graduate Students will have the opportunity to complete these training courses during the Program required Orientation Week of events, held a week before Fall classes begin. Please note: The student is responsible to complete these safety**

**training courses by the official end of the first Fall semester in the program.** No exceptions. Please contact the Office of Environmental Health & Safety at 407-823-6300 if you have any questions.

## How to Get Involved

**As a graduate student at UCF, you have a multitude of opportunities to become involved on campus and in your academic discipline. This involvement often enhances your academic, professional, and personal growth through developing advanced leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. It also provides opportunity for professional networking.**

### **In Our Discipline**

In our discipline graduate students have the opportunity to attend seminars, present at program and university symposiums, colloquiums, and other events, and can take an active role in our Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Graduate Student Association.

## **Graduate Student Associations**

### **Biomedical Sciences Graduate Student Association**

BSGSA is a registered student organization at the University of Central Florida that serves as the official advocate and representative for graduate students in the Biomedical Sciences program. We provide a relaxing environment where graduate students can have fun while discussing relevant issues that directly affect our program.

BSGSA also helps welcome incoming students and organizes meetings aimed to help students overcome the major milestones of the Master's and PhD programs.

**Parent Organization:** Office of Student Involvement

#### **The goals of BSGSA include**

1. To provide a forum for discussion of issues relevant to graduate students within the Burnett School of Biomedical Science and others in the university community
2. To organize, promote and conduct activities beneficial to Biomedical Sciences graduate students and enhance their graduate education at the University of Central Florida.

#### **Check us out on our Facebook page!**

- Like our Facebook Page: [https://www.facebook.com/bsgsaucf/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/bsgsaucf/?ref=br_rs)
- Join our Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/bsgsaucf/>
- Follow us on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/bsbsgsa/>
- Contact us at: [bsbsgsa@gmail.com](mailto:bsbsgsa@gmail.com)

### **UCF Graduate Student Association (GSA)**

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational, and professional experience. The Purpose of GSA is to support a culture that continually seeks out and identifies needs common throughout the

graduate community, increase visibility of graduate student excellence, expertise, and professionalism through collaboration with other university partners, and demonstrate initiative, vision, and leadership in the development and execution of programming and professional development opportunities. To learn more or get involved, please visit [facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/) or contact Information: [gsa@ucf.edu](mailto:gsa@ucf.edu)

**For the complete list of Registered Student Organizations (RSO) at UCF please visit the knights connect website at: <https://knightconnect.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations>.**  
For information about student organizations please visit: <http://osi.ucf.edu/student-orgs> .

### **The Office of Student Involvement (OSI)**

The Office of Student Involvement supports student success and enhances the campus environment by focusing on our core principles – **Connect, Involve, Impact** -through quality programs, services, student leadership opportunities, and intentional environments. Visit the [Student Involvement](#) website to view the list of over 670+ Registered Student Organizations across all UCF Campuses.

### **Graduate Student Center**

The UCF [Graduate Student Center](#) provides a space for graduate students to gather for professional development, workshops, rehearsal of presentations, defenses of their thesis or dissertation research, guest lectures and colloquia series, study, and collaborate. Located on the second floor in suite 213 of Trevor Colbourn Hall Building, the Graduate Student Center is just minutes from the Student Union, Bookstore, Library, and Millican Hall services. The Graduate Student Center contains four main areas: multipurpose study and collaboration area, presentation room, conference room, and study and data analysis rooms. To check availability call or email [gradcenter@ucf.edu](mailto:gradcenter@ucf.edu).

## Graduate Program Faculty

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\*Eligible to serve on thesis/dissertation committees as external member

\*\*Denotes BSBS program teaching faculty

Qualified individuals who are not UCF faculty may wish to be considered for courtesy faculty\* appointment in one of the relevant units in UCF.

No more than two courtesy faculty members may serve on a given student's Ph.D. dissertation committee. Courtesy faculty may not serve as chairs but may serve as co-chairs together with a UCF \*Rules governing Courtesy Faculty participation in the Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. Program:

An external faculty (non-UCF) may participate in the UCF Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. Program through a courtesy faculty appointment if they meet the following criteria: (1) Meet all standards required of UCF Ph.D. Program Faculty, (2) Supply a CV to be reviewed by BMS Ph.D. Program faculty, (3) Give a seminar on their work to UCF BMS Ph.D. faculty, and (4) Must receive a majority of votes from current UCF BMS Ph.D. faculty in favor of offering a courtesy faculty appointment in the BMS Ph.D. Program. All faculty receiving courtesy appointments in our Ph.D. Program will be expected to fully participate in the program, including teaching, committee service, supplying cumulative exam questions, etc.

If a non-UCF courtesy faculty member agrees to serve as the Dissertation Advisor for a Ph.D. student and the student agrees, then the courtesy faculty mentor or the institution will become financially responsible for that student for the duration of their Ph.D. studies. This includes both stipend and tuition waivers for the student. Stipends must be equivalent to but not exceed current UCF stipends for our program (presently = \$27,000 per year).

### **PHD PROGRAM COMMITTEES**

#### **Graduate Committee**

*Mission: Oversight of the Ph.D. Program.*  
*Meets: As needed*

#### **Admissions and Recruitment Committee**

*Purpose: Reviews student applications and makes recommendations for admission to the Ph.D. Program. Committee is also responsible for recruitment of new students, which may include (but not limited to) making sure that the most current and pertinent information is available and accessible via our website, and production of pamphlets, posters, and/or newsletters.*  
*Meets: Twice per year – Once in early Fall (Recruitment) and once in early Spring (Admissions). Can meet more often as needed.*

#### **Curriculum Committee**

*Purpose: The committee is responsible for reviewing core graduate course and other required and elective courses for the Ph.D. Program. The committee is also responsible for updating those sections of the Ph.D. Program Handbook pertaining to the curriculum (coursework) and ensuring that these changes are consistent with information on our website and in the Graduate Catalog.*  
*Meets: Twice per year – Once in Fall and again at the end of Spring Semester. Can meet more often as needed.*

#### **Graduate Exam Committee**

*Purpose: The committee will meet to prepare and grade cumulative exam questions and coordinate exam schedules.*



**Meets:** *Twice per year – Once in early Fall (Aug) for exam preparation and again in Spring to grade exams. Committee can meet more often as needed.*

**Student Affairs Committee**

**Purpose:** *The committee will meet to discuss issues pertaining to Ph.D. students and will serve as a liaison committee between the Ph.D. Faculty and BMS Graduate Student Organization. This committee will also serve as the planning committee for Orientation of incoming Graduate Students.*

**Meets:** *At least once per year.*

**Graduate Symposium Committee**

**Purpose:** *The committee will organize the Graduate Research Symposium in the Spring Semester. Meets: At least once per year.*

## Facilities

Faculty and staff in the School are located in five areas: The Biomedical Science Building, the Health Sciences II Building on Main Campus, the Biomedical Research Annex in Research Park, the Burnett Biomedical Sciences Facility adjacent to the College of Medicine, and the Lake Nona Cancer Center at the Lake Nona Medical City Campus.



**Biomedical Sciences Building, Main Campus**



**Burnett Biomedical Sciences Building, Health Sciences Campus**



**Health Sciences II Building, Main Campus**



**Biomedical Research Annex, Research Park**



**UCF Lake Nona  
Cancer Center, Health  
Sciences Campus**

### **Health Sciences Campus Shuttle**

UCF Shuttles travel between UCF's main campus and the Health Sciences Campus at Lake Nona Monday through Friday. For the latest schedule updates please visit the Parking Services website at <http://parking.ucf.edu/shuttles/health-sciences-schedule/>

### **Parking and Transportation**

All students must register their vehicle online. The registered owner of the permit is responsible for all infractions and penalties attributed to the permit, even if expired. All vehicles on campus must park nose-in and plate out. No back-in or pull-through parking is allowed. Failure to park nose-in may result in a citation.

There are 15 regular off-campus, fixed shuttle routes between the UCF campus and the following 22 off-campus apartment complexes and Central Florida Research Park. Parking & Transportation Services also provides an on-campus shuttle system called Pegasus. The UCF Shuttles operate every class day excluding weekends. Please visit <https://parking.ucf.edu/shuttles/> to learn more.

- [Purchase a permit](#)
- [Parking FAQs](#)

## **Forms/Useful Links/Resources**

### **Program Forms**

- PhD Committee Form
- PhD 1<sup>st</sup> Committee Meeting Form
- PhD Program Plan Form
- PhD Candidacy Topic Form

- PhD Candidacy Exam Form
- PhD Masters on the Way Form
- PhD Annual Meeting Form
- PhD Program Pre-Defense Form
- PhD Program Dissertation Defense Form

## Useful Links/Resources

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [BSBS Program Website](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Parking Services](#)
- [Library](#)
- [UCF Library Services for Grad Students](#)
- [Inter Library Loan](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Recreation Center](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Writing Center](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
- [Student Union Food and Vendors](#)
- [Dining Services](#)
- [Knights Pantry](#)

## Program Contact Info

### **Burnett School of Biomedical Sciences Graduate Office**

The Biomedical Sciences Graduate Services Office is an integral part of ensuring our graduate students' success. We assist with admissions, orientation, course registration, and are heavily involved in making sure our graduate students complete their required milestones throughout their graduate student career.

We are here and ready to answer all your questions!

We are available to assist you by phone, email or by Zoom appointment.

### **Program Email Contact**

- [BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradInfo@ucf.edu) – Send general inquiries to this account.
- [BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradAppts@ucf.edu) – Send your request to schedule an appointment to this account.
- [BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradForms@ucf.edu) – Submit all forms electronically to this account.
- [BSBSGradRegistration@ucf.edu](mailto:BSBSGradRegistration@ucf.edu) – Submit all registration request's forms electronically to this account.

## **THE UCF CREED**

*Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions. These values comprise the guiding principles that direct the actions of the university, and its students.*

### ***Integrity***

*I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.*

### ***Scholarship***

*I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.*

### ***Community***

*I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.*

### ***Creativity***

*I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.*

### ***Excellence***

*I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.*



***The Biomedical PhD program reserves the right to make any changes or amendments to the Program/Handbook information, rules, or policies within the students' period of study upon majority approval of the program faculty, director, and coordinators.***