

Petition to Candidacy for the Master of Science Degree

Instructions to Students

When to file

- End of your 1st year **OR** when the minimum of 6 SCH of Research in Biomedical Sciences has been satisfied;

This petition should be submitted after you have:

- identified, in conjunction with your Advisory Committee, a research problem suitable for a Master's level thesis;
- identified all course work to be included in the M.S. degree program;
- met formally* with your Advisory Committee and obtained their approval of your program of work and thesis topic.

*Note: This form can be submitted following your first Advisory Committee meeting or following satisfaction and approval of the committee's recommendations for your thesis project.

This petition must be submitted to the GSBS Office of Academic Affairs, within two years of admission to the M.S. or Ph.D. program. You will not receive credit for any thesis work until you have been admitted to candidacy.

Instructions

- Complete the section of the petition concerning your program of work, prepare the summary describing your thesis research, and sign the Student Code of Conduct Acknowledgement and Pledge.
- Return a copy of the entire petition, signed by the Advisory Committee Chair, to the GSBS Front Desk or email to Bunny Perez (lourdes.v.perez@uth.tmc.edu).

Outcome

The Associate Dean of Graduate Education will certify the petition and forward it to the members of the Academic Standards Committee for consideration at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee. If your petition is approved you will be notified shortly after the meeting that you have been admitted to candidacy.

**Petition to Candidacy for the Master of Science Degree
Program of Work**

I hereby petition for admission to candidacy for the degree of Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences

Name of student

Signature

Date

Please indicate the GSBS program to which you were admitted and give the date of your first enrollment in that program:

M.S.

M.S. (Medical Physics)

Ph.D.

M.S. (Genetic Counseling)

Date of first enrollment

Program of Work:

Please log in to myUTH to print out your current and completed coursework

- 1 – Login to myUTH (<https://my.uth.tmc.edu/>)
- 2 – Click on the TRANSCRIPTS tile on the Home Page
- 3 – Click on View Unofficial Transcript on the left menu
- 4 – Click Submit
- 5 – Print

Complete the table below, showing the GSBS courses you intend to take to complete your M.S. degree program. At least thirty-six (36) semester hours of course work including at least one semester of *Thesis for Master of Science* are required for the M.S.

Course number and title	Credit hours	Graded or P/F

Proposed Thesis Research Title:

Attach a one-page summary of your proposed thesis research containing a brief background, a clearly stated hypothesis, specific aims and the methods by which the aims will be carried out.

TEMPLATE FOR SPECIFIC AIMS PAGE FOR PETITION FOR CANDIDACY

Specific Aims

Title of project

Your name

Advisor's name

A specific aims page is a summary of the logic for an entire project or research proposal. Writing them well is a skill that you'll need to master. You must convince the reader that your project addresses an important need, and then logically describe your hypothesis and approach -- all in one page.

First 1/3 – Establish need for the project: State key **background/significance** information, identify the problem that needs to be addressed and define the gap in our current knowledge. In this section of the Aims, you should cite important references, and perhaps findings from your own laboratory, to indicate what is known about your particular field of study, what is not known, and what you plan to uncover as part of your research.

Second 1/3 – Justify and describe your **hypothesis**: State the long-term goal that motivates the project. You may have a hypothesis for each aim or one overarching hypothesis. If the latter, include it at the end of the background and significance. Suitable language may be, "We hypothesize that the xyz protein acts as a negative regulator of apoptosis in pancreatic cancer cells". The hypothesis need not be longer than 1-2 sentences.

Last 1/3 - Specific aims: Clearly stated **specific aims**, set apart by numbering, and perhaps bolding or underlining. Aims are usually one sentence in length, should always be based on the hypothesis, and are written in the format of a standard grant, e.g. "To determine...", "To quantify...", "To assess...", etc. Usually there are only two or three aims. Each should be a self-contained group of logical experiments and/or studies that will address the central hypothesis or goal. Start each aim by stating its goal succinctly. For example: "Determine if X is required for Y during mouse embryogenesis". Then briefly describe your approach and any vital elements of the experimental design. You don't have much room so each aim is only a few sentences in length.

Finish the page with 1-2 sentences indicating the impact of the whole project once the aims are completed.

Tips:

- 11 point Arial, 1" margins
- Page Limit: Minimum ¾ page; Maximum: 1 page
- References are not necessary
- Proof read and spell check your document
- Be sure to include a clearly stated central hypothesis and make sure each aim is directed at addressing that hypothesis
- In the aims, provide a clear indication of important experimental approaches you plan to use (RNA-seq, immunoblotting, histology, etc.)
- Avoid needless detail (concentrations, experimental conditions)
- Avoid aims that depend on the outcome of another aim before they can be attempted
- If you originally submitted abstracts without specific aims to your committee, then you should rewrite the selected abstract in the form of a specific aims page before submitting it to GSBS

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Approvals

Name of student: _____

Advisory Committee Chair:

The Committee members indicated below met on _____(date) to consider the M.S. candidacy petition submitted by the student named above. The Committee has considered the student's program of work and research proposal and has found them appropriate for the M.S. degree. The Committee recommends the student be admitted to candidacy for the M.S. degree.

Advisory Committee (names to be listed by student or Chair)

Approved, Advisory Committee Chair

Date

Steering Committee Chair/Program Director:

The Steering Committee Chair (Medical Physics) or Program Director (other Programs) has approved the program of work and the thesis proposal for the student named above and recommends admission to candidacy for the Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Sciences.

Approved, Steering Committee Chair/Program Director

Date

Associate Dean of Graduate Education

I certify that the records contained in the program of work are correct and the proposed program of work satisfies all requirements for the Master of Science degree program.

Approved, Associate Dean of Graduate Education

Date

Academic Standards Committee Chair: (will sign after ASC meeting)

The Academic Standards Committee has approved the program of work and the thesis proposal for the student named above and recommends admission to candidacy for the Master of Science Degree in Biomedical Sciences.

Approved, Academic Standards Committee Chair

Date

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Code of Conduct for Students of the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School

PRINCIPLES

Scientific research is the search for truths about our physical and natural world. This search can succeed only if it is carried out with the highest levels of integrity and honesty. Simply put, the search for truth must itself be truthful.

These same principles apply to students preparing for careers in scientific research. Their studies and their research must be conducted with absolute honesty and integrity. This Code of Conduct describes the behaviors that characterize academic honesty and integrity and, conversely, those behaviors that violate the standards of both The University of Texas System and the Faculty of the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School. Further information is provided on the consequences of unacceptable behavior and what responsibilities students have for encouraging appropriate behavior on the part of others.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM RULES ON STUDENT CONDUCT

The University of Texas System Board of Regents has promulgated, in its Rules and Regulations (Rule 50101), a set of guidelines concerning student conduct and discipline. These guidelines include the following:

- "The component institutions shall adopt rules and regulations concerning student conduct and discipline...Each student is responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents' Rules and Regulations and the rules of the component institution."
- "Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

MD ANDERSON UTHEALTH GRADUATE SCHOOL

In compliance with the Regents' Rules, MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School has set forth the following definitions and regulations concerning scholastic dishonesty:

- Confirmed cases of cheating, plagiarism, or dishonesty in research are grounds for dismissal from the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School.
- Unless a professor specifically states it is acceptable, it is considered academic dishonesty to either receive or give help on class papers and assignments.
- Plagiarism means: 1) knowingly submitting work as one's own when it contains direct or paraphrased quotes from another source; 2) knowingly using someone else's ideas and presenting them as one's own.
- Dishonesty in research includes deliberately fabricating, falsifying or distorting data and/or research protocols.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIORS

Once an allegation has been made that a student has committed an act of scholastic dishonesty, the Rules of the Regents are followed. These Rules specify the manner in which the investigation is conducted, the rights of the student concerning due process, the appeals that the student may make, and the disciplinary actions that may be taken. Penalties may range from disciplinary probation to a failing grade in a course to expulsion from the school.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE CONDUCT OF OTHERS

In addition to ensuring that their own work is above reproach, researchers and scholars have a collective responsibility for the integrity of the scientific enterprise. One aspect of this responsibility entails an intolerance for academic dishonesty on the part of their colleagues. Students, as future research scientists have the same responsibility. Accordingly, MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School students should not hesitate to report what they believe are instances of scholastic dishonesty to the appropriate instructor or Dean. However, under this Code of Conduct, a MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School student has no formal or binding obligation to report such incidents.

**The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center UTHealth
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND PLEDGE

MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School students are expected to read this Code of Conduct and sign the pledge below before starting classes in the Graduate School and at the time of petitioning for advancement to candidacy:

- I acknowledge that I have read the Code of Conduct for MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School students and understand its objectives and principles.
- I understand that I am responsible for knowing and obeying the rules and regulations of The University of Texas Board of Regents and the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School.
- I understand that if I am found guilty of an act of scholastic dishonesty, the penalties can be severe, including expulsion from the MD Anderson UTHealth Graduate School.
- Accordingly, I pledge that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized help on any examination, paper, or assignment that requires individual responsibility and that I will be scrupulously honest in the conduct of my research and the presentation of my research results.

Name of student

Signature

Date