Academic Policies and Guidelines

2021-2022
About these Policies and Guidelines:

This online Academic Policies and Guidelines supersedes all previous academic policies and guidelines and is binding on all students. It was prepared on the basis of the best information available at the time of publication. The Graduate Programs in Biomedical Sciences ("Graduate Division") reserves the right to change course offerings, regulations, reimbursement policies, and admission and graduation requirements at any time without prior notice. The student is responsible for periodically reviewing these Academic Policies and Guidelines to ensure compliance.
SECTION I: Graduate Division Administration

1.1) Mission of the Graduate Division and Purpose of this Document

The mission of the Einstein Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences is to provide outstanding education and training to enable students to develop as independent biomedical scientists, capable of carrying out significant research aimed at understanding biological systems and curing human disease.

The PhD degree administered by the Graduate Programs in Biomedical Sciences (hereafter referred to as the “Graduate Division”) of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (herein “Einstein” or “College”) is an affirmation of the student’s ability to conduct independent and original research. This degree is achieved by completing a defined but individualized curriculum including formal coursework and a period of research culminating in a doctoral dissertation, mentored by a member of the graduate faculty, and supervised by the Student Advisory Committee and the Thesis Defense Committee.

The academic policies and guidelines of the Graduate Division are described herein and are meant to facilitate the productive and efficient progression of a student from program admission through to completion of the doctoral dissertation and graduation.

The Graduate Division confers the PhD degree in Biomedical Sciences and the MS degree in Biomedical Sciences en route to the PhD degree.

In addition to the guidelines presented within this document, each student is expected to meet any additional academic requirements of their declared concentration(s), and to uphold the standards of professional behavior expected of all members of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and the scientific community.

1.2) Accreditation

The Albert Einstein College of Medicine is fully accredited by The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, (267)284-5000. MSCHE is one of six regional accrediting agencies in the United States, each of which accredits institutions of higher education within a specific geographic region. Middle States is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, enabling eligibility to participate in federal student financial aid programs (e.g., federal loans, grants, and work-study) administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

The PhD in Biomedical Sciences is registered with the New York State Education Department under program code 27706, HEGIS code 0499.00; the MS in Biomedical Sciences is registered with program code 33414, HEGIS code 0499.00. Einstein holds Absolute Carter from the State of New York to award the MD, PhD, and MS degrees.

1.3) Programs and Oversight

The Graduate Division administers the programs in biomedical sciences, and currently includes the PhD program, the MD-PhD Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP), the Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP), the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), and the Summer High School Research Program (SHSP).

The Graduate Division is headed by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs (herein referred to as “associate dean”), who is appointed by the Dean of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.
Composition of the Graduate Division

The Graduate Division is comprised primarily of the basic science departments and the PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI) track. Faculty holding primary or secondary appointments in one of these departments may serve as a mentor for a PhD candidate. In order to sponsor a PhD, MD-PhD, PREP, High School, or SURP student, a faculty member must hold a primary or secondary appointment in one of the basic science departments (concentrations), or be designated as a faculty for the PCI—this track includes faculty mentors who are designated or may have appointments in the clinical departments.

Basic Science Concentrations:
- Biochemistry
- Cell Biology
- Developmental and Molecular Biology
- Genetics
- Microbiology and Immunology
- Molecular Pharmacology
- Neuroscience
- Pathology
- PhD in Clinical Investigation
- Systems and Computational Biology

Each department, subject to the academic policies of the Graduate Division, may designate specific course requirements and recommendations. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with the requirements of the specific department or concentration in which they will conduct their thesis research.

In general, the policies and guidelines described herein apply to all PhD candidates, including MD-PhD students during the PhD phase of their training.

Graduate Division Committees

There are several Graduate Division committees primarily comprised of faculty representatives from the basic science departments and the PCI. The committees serve to make recommendations, policies and guidelines for improving the programs of the Graduate Division.

The Graduate Executive Committee (GEC) is the executive committee of the Graduate Division. This committee is comprised of faculty representatives from each of the basic science departments and the PCI (appointed by the department chairs), the MSTP and PhD program directors, the associate dean, who serves as chair, and three student representatives selected by the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and MSTP Student Council (MSC).

Representatives of the GEC typically serve a term of two to three years. The GEC recommends to the associate dean additions or changes to policies of the Graduate Division and may approve changes or additions to the graduate curriculum, and the Qualifying Examination and the Thesis guidelines and processes. Its members provide direct representation and feedback to and from the departments. All members are voting members and a majority “yea” vote is required for approving recommendations from the GEC. The GEC may also establish sub-committees for various projects, including selecting candidates for student awards and fellowships. The program director(s) may represent their own department for the purpose of filling quorum, if the designated department representative is absent.

1 A listing of the current members of the committees is available in the Graduate Office.
There are additional faculty committees involved in the operations of the Graduate Division, the detailed functions of which are described further in specific sections of this document. All sub-committees present an annual report to the Graduate Executive Committee.

The Graduate Admissions Committee evaluates the acceptability of applicants for matriculation into the Graduate Division. This committee is comprised of faculty representatives from each basic science department, the PCI, as well as a diversity representative. Members serve terms of two to three years. The associate dean appoints the chair of this committee.

The MSTP Steering Committee is assembled by the MSTP director and includes faculty, students, as well as a diversity representative who advise on admissions and other matters specific to the Medical Scientist Training Program.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) is responsible for the development, implementation and oversight of the graduate curriculum, including developing curriculum policy, reviewing course offerings, and reviewing course evaluations and course leader summaries. The GCC includes a faculty representative from each of the basic science departments and the PCI, the associate dean, and three-to-four student (PhD and MD-PhD) representatives elected by the Graduate Student Council and MSTP Student Council. Faculty representatives on the GCC do not have to be course leaders. Individual faculty and student members may not serve concurrently on the Graduate Executive Committee and the Graduate Curriculum Committee.

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) oversees the academic progress of all students as they progress towards obtaining the PhD degree. This committee includes a single representative from each basic science department, the PCI, as well as the faculty member who is the senior academic advisor for the Graduate Division, the MSTP director and the associate dean for graduate programs. An additional faculty member serves as the chair, who is appointed by the associate dean. The committee evaluates any student who does not maintain good academic standing, fails a course, performs less than satisfactorily in the lab, fails the Qualifying Exam, receives an unsatisfactory advisory committee report, or is recommended for review by any faculty at any time. The AAC also reviews the progress of all students who have been in the program for five years or longer. Additionally, issues of ethics and professional misconduct as they relate to students in the program may also be referred to the AAC.

The Qualifying Examination Steering Committee serves to organize the Qualifying Examination and makes recommendations and requirements regarding the exam guidelines and format. The QESC is comprised of faculty representatives from each basic science department and the PCI as well as the faculty member who is the senior academic advisor for the Graduate Division, the MSTP director and the associate dean.

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) is chartered as the representative organization of the graduate students to the faculty and administration. The GSC gives students a formal voice in the operations of the graduate program. This group also plans social events and community service activities, maintains an active student listserv, and manages the Big Brother/Big Sister program in which each entering student is paired with an older student who serves as a guide and confidante during the first year.

The MSTP Student Council (MSC) represents the interests of MD-PhD students enrolled in the Medical Scientist Training Program. This group was formed to facilitate communication among MD-PhD students, faculty, and Einstein administration, participate in organizing recruitment events for MSTP applicants, provide academic, professional, and social support to MD-PhD students, and organize social and academic events relating to the Medical Scientist Training Program.

1.4) Who’s Who in the Graduate Division

The Associate Dean for Graduate Programs oversees all aspects of the Graduate Division and is responsible for implementing policies that promote excellence in graduate education. The associate dean should be consulted for
questions concerning programs, academic policies, student issues, conflicts in the classroom or laboratory, and any questions regarding professional or ethical behavior. The role of the associate dean also includes, but is not limited to, developing new programs, revising and implementing curriculum changes, overseeing the training grant and other initiatives, and responding to all institutional and college guidelines. The associate dean also appoints directors of certain programs of the Graduate Division (such as the SURP) and chairs of Graduate Division sub-committees of the Graduate Executive Committee.

The PhD and MD-PhD Program Directors are Einstein faculty appointed by the dean of the College or the associate dean. They are responsible for assuring the quality of the academic program, implementing and guiding the development of the academic policies uniformly, and for fair treatment for the students and faculty of the Graduate Division. The director of the MD-PhD program appoints the Associate Director of the MD-PhD Program, and chooses the members of the MSTP Steering Committee.

Students may contact the associate dean or the program directors with any questions, concerns, or suggestions relating to their graduate education. It is the responsibility of the associate dean and program directors to direct students to appropriate institutional contacts, for example chairs, faculty, administrators, or other offices of the College.

The Senior Academic Advisor advises graduate students on academic matters, provide feedback to the Academic Affairs Committee regarding academic progress, work with students, mentors, and advisory committees on issues that may arise, and provide input to the Graduate Executive Committee as a liaison between the faculty and the Graduate Division. The senior academic advisor also organizes and administers the Qualifying Exam proposal preparation course.

Faculty Advisor to First Year Students advises graduate students in the first year on courses, laboratory rotations, and other academic matters particularly relevant to the first-year graduate students. This advisor provides feedback to the Graduate Executive Committee, organizes the first-year boot camp course (Learning to be a Scientist), and leads the first-year Phocus meetings.

Administrative Personnel of the Graduate Division:
- Director, Career and Professional Development
- Director, Financial Operations
- Director, Graduate Admissions and Enrollment
- Director, Systems and Reporting
- Graduate Registrar
- Graduate Admissions Specialist
- Manager, Special Programs and Events
- Program Coordinators (PhD and MD-PhD)
- Systems Analyst

The administrative offices of the Graduate Division are located in the Belfer building, 1st and 2nd floors.
SECTION II: Graduate Admissions and Matriculation

The Albert Einstein College of Medicine is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and encourages applications from qualified students regardless of race, religion, color, creed, age, national origin or ancestry, citizenship status, gender, marital status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity within the meaning of applicable law.

2.1) Application Requirements

All applications to the PhD program must be submitted online. Details of the application procedure are described on the Prospective Students page of the Graduate Division website, www.einsteinmed.edu/phd.

The Graduate Division admits applicants with diverse undergraduate training. It is generally expected that applicants will have successfully completed undergraduate courses in biology, general chemistry, organic chemistry, mathematics (including calculus), and physics, with advanced courses and laboratory work in biology, chemistry and physics or have successfully completed an undergraduate engineering curriculum. A course in biochemistry is strongly recommended. Successful candidates for admission will generally have had significant bench research experience.

Letters of Recommendation

Three letters of recommendation are required, preferably from individuals with direct knowledge of the applicant's qualifications for graduate study.

Transcript

A transcript or academic record is required from each college or university attended. Applicants who have attended international institutions that provide transcripts in a language other than English must also provide the certified English translation of the transcript.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

The TOEFL is required for applicants who are not native English speakers and for applicants whose degree(s) was earned at a non-English speaking institution. Inquiries about these examinations should be addressed directly to the Educational Testing Service https://www.ets.org/contact.

International Transcripts

All transcripts from international institutions will be subjected to independent verification from an outside agency prior to matriculation into the PhD program. The cost of this evaluation will be borne by the Graduate Division.

2.2) Graduate Admissions Process

All applications are reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Committee, which will determine candidates for interview. Applicants will be interviewed on-site at Einstein or virtually (via Zoom) and the application then considered in its entirety by the Graduate Admissions Committee. A majority vote is required for recommending acceptance. Accepted applicants will receive a formal letter of acceptance into the Graduate Division of Biomedical Sciences. Students are admitted into the Graduate Division of Biomedical Sciences, not to an individual department, and therefore must fulfill all programmatic requirements for admissions into the Graduate Division and all programmatic requirements for the doctoral degree.

Occasionally, a student may apply to be admitted directly into a thesis laboratory. An application for a directly recruited student is reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Committee in the usual way. Students who are accepted into the program by this pathway have already determined a strong affinity with the prospective mentor. Therefore,
it is fully expected that the student will complete their thesis work in the laboratory of the prospective thesis mentor. If admitted, a direct recruited student will participate in at least one laboratory rotation during the first year in the program, agreed upon with their thesis mentor. A student can only be accepted into the program via the direct pathway if the prospective mentor can confirm a commitment of two years of stipend support commencing at matriculation. Because the admissions standards for the direct pathway are the same as the rotational pathway, an applicant whose application is rejected by the Graduate Admissions Committee is not eligible in the same year for considerations for this direct pathway.

Students who are interested in the Medical Scientist Training Program (MD-PhD program): visit www.einsteinmed.edu/mstp for information on applying to the MSTP

Students already enrolled in the Medical Degree (MD) program of the College of Medicine who are interested in the PhD program, must apply as noted above.

2.3) How to Apply

All applicants apply directly to the Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences, not to individual departments. Applications for admission to the PhD program are available online from the Graduate Division website (www.einsteinmed.edu/phd) after September 1st, for entrance the following August.

In addition to the online application, applicants must submit three letters of recommendation (online only), official transcripts (uploaded to online application) and TOEFL scores (for international applicants).

It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the Graduate Division office receives all required materials by the deadline date.

Admission to the Graduate Programs is contingent on completion of the undergraduate degree. The final undergraduate transcript showing that the Bachelor’s degree has been conferred is due before the date of matriculation. Official transcript(s) can be submitted electronically or mailed to:

Graduate Admissions
Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences
Albert Einstein College of Medicine
1300 Morris Park Avenue, Belfer 203
Bronx, NY 10461

Alternatively, the official transcript may be sent electronically directly from the undergraduate registrar’s office to phd@einsteinmed.edu.

Students wishing to transfer from another graduate program must follow the same application procedures and deadlines. There is only one date of matriculation (fall semester) and students may not enter the program mid-year.

For application to the MD-PhD program, visit the MSTP homepage at http://einsteinmed.edu/mstp.

Inquiries regarding the application process for the PhD and MD-PhD programs can be sent to:
- PhD application and program queries: phd@einsteinmed.edu
- MSTP application and program queries: mstp@einsteinmed.edu

2.4) Matriculation Requirements

Incoming students must fulfill the following requirements prior to starting the program:
- Health Clearance
- Human Resources Onboarding
• Academic/Education Verification

**Health Clearance**
Incoming students must be medically cleared prior to enrolling in the Graduate Division. The clearance requirements are set by the Einstein Occupational Health Services Office. Without medical clearance, a PhD or an MD-PhD student is unable to enroll in the program. Health clearance forms are sent to incoming students prior to the start of the program. The completed forms must be returned directly to the Einstein Occupational Health Office no later than the stated deadline date.

Questions regarding the health clearance forms should be directed to the Occupational Health Office.

**Human Resources Onboarding**
All incoming students are required to complete the onboarding process through Human Resources, which will include:

- Completion of student onboarding application
- Background screening, including criminal and SS Trace
- Urine drug screening
- Proof of identity and eligibility to work in the United States (I-9 purposes)
- Completion of online Preventing Workplace Harassment Training course

Questions regarding the onboarding requirements should be directed to the Einstein Human Resources Office.

**Academic/Education Verification for Matriculation into the PhD Program**
In order to enroll into the PhD program a student, at the time of matriculation, must hold at least a Bachelor’s degree from a college or university of recognized standing, or present evidence of an equivalent education. To fulfill this requirement, the incoming PhD student will need to provide official academic transcripts which includes the final degree award status and date to the Graduate Division office.

*Incoming PhD students who were educated in the United States must arrange for the final official transcripts to be mailed or submitted electronically to the Graduate Division office by date of matriculation into the PhD program.*

*Incoming PhD students who were educated outside the United States are required to provide a course by course credential evaluation with degree equivalency. The deadline to fulfill this requirement is communicated to the incoming student in advance of their matriculation date. The preferred company is World Education Services (WES). The cost for the WES course by course evaluation for incoming first-year PhD students will be covered by Einstein. Visit the WES website [http://www.wes.org/required/](http://www.wes.org/required/) for information regarding the required documents for credential evaluations. Questions regarding the academic transcripts should be directed to the Einstein Graduate Admissions Office.*

**Student Information**
Note: A student who is found to have misrepresented him or herself in the admissions process or thereafter is subject to Committee action; and this may be grounds for dismissal. This is to include not only the provision of false or misleading information, but applies as well to information that may have been omitted or concealed.
SECTION III: What to Expect: A Plan to the PhD

3.1) A General Timeline to the PhD in Biomedical Sciences

While every student will have a unique experience, it is expected that on average it will take five years to complete the PhD degree. The successfully defended doctoral thesis will provide new information based on original experimental data and it is not possible to predict the twists and turns required to arrive at the eventual dissertation. Below is a general guideline that should be considered an average path to the PhD degree. Again, this is not to be taken as a literal plan, but rather as a general guide of expectation.

![Figure 1: 5-year plan to the PhD in Biomedical Science](image)

There are three course blocks during the academic year: Block I of the fall semester, and Blocks II and III of the spring semester. During the first year, the associate dean, faculty advisor to first-year students, and/or additional designated faculty will advise students on which courses to take during which course block. MD-PhD students are advised by the MSTP director. First-year MD-PhD students also take graduate courses in the first summer of the program.

The graduate curriculum allows for each student to customize their own curriculum based on research interest. However, some courses are required, and students must familiarize themselves with the course requirements of the program and of the basic science concentrations.

Students participate in laboratory rotations to determine the lab in which they will conduct their doctoral thesis research. The laboratory rotation is considered a formal course, and as such, students must register for each laboratory rotation. The student’s performance during each rotation will be evaluated by the rotation mentor, who will also provide a final grade of Satisfactory, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory for the rotation.

The Academic Affairs Committee reviews the academic progress of all first-year students, including coursework and laboratory performance.
3.2) Years One Through Five

**Year One:**

**Graduate Courses for PhD Students:**
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
- A course on becoming a scientist
- Course-credit requirement per course block: at least 6
- Overall course credit requirement for the PhD: a minimum of 21 course-credits, typically completed within the first year.

*Credit hours for RCR and the course on becoming a scientist are not counted towards the minimum required course-credits of 21 for the program.*

**Graduate Courses for MD-PhD Students:**
- MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy
- Physiology: Membranes and Transport
- MSTP Pharmacology-Physiology-Pathology
- Biochemistry
- Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)
- Course-credit requirement per course block: 4-6
- Overall course credit requirement for the PhD: a minimum of 18 course-credits, typically completed within the first year.

*Credit hours for RCR, MSTP Pharmacology-Physiology-Pathology, and MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy are not counted towards the minimum required course-credits of 18 for the program.*

**Laboratory Rotations:**

PhD students are required to complete a minimum of two laboratory rotations in the first year, during the designated rotation periods as listed on the academic calendar.

At the end of the second rotation (or third rotation, if applicable), students are expected to declare a thesis mentor/laboratory and basic science concentration. Any exception requires noted approval from the associate dean. Occasionally, a student is permitted to complete a fourth rotation in the summer following the first year, and then declare a lab. All PhD students must declare a lab by the end of the summer semester following their first year in the program. Students are required to have declared and have been admitted into a thesis laboratory by the start of the fall semester in year two.

A PhD student who is directly recruited to a laboratory and declares upon matriculated into the program is required to complete a one-time laboratory rotation in the first year of the program during any one of the three rotational periods as listed on the academic calendar.

MD-PhD students perform their laboratory rotations during the first and second summers in the program. MD-PhD students typically declare their thesis mentor/laboratory and basic science concentration at the end of the second year in the MSTP. Any exception to this timeline must be approved by the MSTP director.

**Year Two:**

**Graduate courses:**
Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher course is required in the fall semester of the second year of the PhD program (third year for MD-PhD students). If there are any other courses that still need to be completed to satisfy their concentration-specific requirements and/or program course requirements, it is expected that these will be completed by the end of the second year (third year for MD-PhD students).
Thesis (Laboratory) Research:
Once the student declares a thesis lab, registration for Thesis Research each summer, fall, and spring semester is required to maintain full-time status. During the second year in the program, the student begins to generate preliminary data and to develop a hypothesis. It is expected that this hypothesis will change significantly during the coming years, but it is essential to develop a general framework at this time. Pilot projects and feasibility assessments may be carried out at this time, and it is appropriate to attempt risky projects that might have a high impact on the particular field of inquiry.

Qualifying Examination (for the advancement to candidacy for the PhD degree):
Students will take the Qualifying Examination in year two (year three for MD-PhD students). The associate dean (or MSTP director for MD-PhD students) must approve any exception to this timeline.

Student Advisory Committee (SAC):
By the end of year two (year three for an MD-PhD student) after the Qualifying Exam, each student must have assembled a Student Advisory Committee and arranged an initial meeting to discuss the hypothesis and preliminary data. Starting in year two, each student meets with their SAC at least once per academic year and more frequently as the student progresses through the program (i.e. at least once every six months in year four and higher). Students who have not had an Advisory Committee meeting as required may have a registration hold for the subsequent semester.

Year Three:
It is expected that during year three the data obtained will tighten and focus the overall hypothesis. Experiments will continue to further develop the Aims, and weaker or unreliable approaches may be discarded by the end of this year, to focus effort on the strongest Aims. A Student Advisory Committee meeting should be scheduled to evaluate progress thus far. It is expected that manuscript drafts should begin to develop.

Year Four:
This should be a time of strong research productivity. The strongest Aims that will constitute the thesis will solidify and completed manuscripts are expected to be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. At the end of the fourth year, the student should develop an Exit Strategy to be approved by their Student Advisory Committee (SAC). Each student is required to meet with their SAC at least twice per year (or more) in the fourth year or higher.

Year Five+:
In the fall semester of the fifth year, PhD students are required to complete the Responsible Conduct of Research – Advanced course.

During the fifth year, the student should be finishing experiments that will facilitate publication of the doctoral research in the primary literature. By this time, the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) should be in agreement regarding what is required for completion of the thesis. The SAC must grant the student permission to “write and defend” the thesis. Prior to defending, students who wish to write and defend must attend a mandatory Thesis Workshop on plagiarism, held in the fall. Students must begin planning for the thesis defense at least six to nine months prior to the anticipated date of the defense.

To march in the May graduation commencement ceremony, all defense requirements and appropriate paperwork (including the doctoral thesis, and additional forms) must be submitted by the April deadline date as noted on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

In some cases, students will continue into the sixth year. Permission to continue thesis research beyond the fifth year may require submission of an exit strategy, developed by the student in conjunction with the mentor and the Student Advisory Committee. The Academic Affairs Committee reviews the academic progress of students who have completed five or more years in the program and may review this exit strategy.
An MD-PhD student must have successfully defended their PhD thesis before the student will be certified to go onto the clinical part of their training. Under extremely rare circumstances, exceptions to this rule may be obtained from the program director with the approval of the associate dean for graduate programs.
SECTION IV: Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

4.1) Formal Residency Requirements, Full-time Status, and Credit Hours

The residency requirement for the PhD degree consists of a minimum of three years of full-time graduate studies and research. A minimum of two of these three years must be spent in residence at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

All students are required to maintain full-time status. Full-time status is defined as maintaining a registration of nine credits or more at all times throughout the academic year. There is no “part-time” or “half-time” status in the Graduate Division. A minimum of three years of full-time graduate studies, including coursework and research, totaling a minimum of 90 credit hours is required.

Matriculated students of the Graduate Division are formally defined as students accepted for PhD training who are engaged in formal courses and/or research training.

Credit Hour Definition for Courses: One credit hour is earned for fifteen 1-hour (of 50 minutes each) sessions of lecture or classroom instruction, with the expectation of two additional hours of outside study or reaching for each class session.

Credit Hour Definition for Laboratory Rotation and Full-Time Thesis Research: One credit hour is earned for each forty-five 1-hour session of academic activity. Forty-five hours of academic activity yields one credit hour. Full-time supervised research, including instruction at the laboratory bench and conference with the research advisor, is the most important educational component in the training of a research scientist. A semester of full-time supervised research is considered to be the equivalent of twelve credit hours.

4.2) Attendance

Regular class attendance is a required condition of receiving credit for courses. Any student who is not in regular attendance for a course may be prohibited from taking the exam and/or receiving a passing grade for that course. If the course leader denies a student permission to take the exam because of failure to attend classes regularly, the student shall receive a grade of “F” (Fail) or “I” (Incomplete) at the discretion of the course leader. Each course leader may supplement this general attendance requirement by announcing a more specific attendance requirement for a particular course. It is expected that a course leader who imposes a more specific attendance policy will do so in writing, setting out the policy and sanctions for its violation, but this is not an absolute requirement.

Students in “active” status must maintain regular attendance in the lab while completing a laboratory rotation or thesis research. A student who is not in regular laboratory attendance may receive a grade of “NI” (Needs Improvement) or “U” (Unsatisfactory) for Thesis Research or Laboratory Rotation.

Regular attendance is essential to maintaining full-time enrollment status. A student who falls out of status may be impacted negatively in terms of federal aid eligibility and/or loan deferment.

Prolonged absence from the lab, greater than time agreed upon by the mentor(s), and/or limited participation in the lab with little or no communication with mentor, advisors, the associate dean or Registrar’s Office, may lead to review by the academic Affairs Committee and subsequent academic probation or dismissal from the program.

Grades of Fail, Incomplete, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory will lead to a review of the student’s academic record by the Academic Affairs Committee. Receipt of any one of these grades is grounds for academic probation. Multiple grades of Fail, Incomplete, Needs Improvement and/or Unsatisfactory may lead to dismissal from the program.
4.3) Graduate Division Course Requirements

Listed below are the course requirements for students enrolled in the PhD or MD-PhD program. Any exceptions to these requirements must be approved by the associate dean in writing.

**PhD:**
- Must successfully complete a minimum of 21 graduate course credits, ideally in the first year.
- Must successfully complete the following courses:
  - first-year course on becoming a scientist
  - first-year Responsible Conduct of Research course
  - Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II courses
  - Responsible Conduct of Research – Advanced course (in the fifth year if not defended by this time)

  *Note:* credit hour(s) for the on becoming a scientist course, RCR and RCR-Adv do not count towards satisfying the 21 course-credit program requirements.

- May apply for transfer credit, course exemption, Master’s Credit.
- With approval from the associate dean, can transfer into the Einstein graduate program from another graduate program and receive transfer of credit for graduate courses taken at the prior institute, noted as “transfer with advanced standing”.

**MD-PhD:**
- Must successfully complete a minimum of 18 graduate course credits, ideally in the first year.
- Must successfully complete the following graduate courses:
  - MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy
  - Physiology: Membranes and Transport
  - Biochemistry
  - MSTP Pharmacology-Physiology-Pathology
  - first-year Responsible Conduct of Research course
  - Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II courses

  *Note:* Credit hours for the MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy, RCR, and MSTP 3-Ps courses do not count towards satisfying the 18 course-credit program requirements.

A student on the Neuroscience track may be waived from the Biochemistry requirement with written approval from the MSTP director.

A student joining the MSTP by way of the alternate pathway from the MD or MD-CRTP track may be waived from the above courses with written permission from the MSTP director.

- May apply for transfer credit, course exemption, Master’s credit

Final approval for transfer credit, Master’s credit and course exemptions must be granted by the associate dean for graduate programs. Once approved, these are reflected on the student’s graduate transcript.

In addition to having fulfilled the conditions and requirements of the Graduate Division, as set forth in these guidelines, candidates for the PhD degree must also satisfy their department/concentration-specific course requirements outlined further in Appendix II.

Students who declare in PCI (PhD in Clinical Investigation) may be waived from taking the Quantitative Skills courses.

A listing of graduate courses is available online at: [www.einsteinmed.edu/phd](http://www.einsteinmed.edu/phd)

4.4) Graduate Division Academic Calendar

The academic calendar of the Graduate Division consists of three semesters: summer, fall, and spring. The fall semester consists of course Block I, Rotation Period I and fall Thesis Research. The spring semester consists of two
course blocks (Blocks II and III), two rotation periods (Rotation Periods II and III), and spring Thesis Research. The Graduate Division academic calendar outlines the specific dates of each course block, rotation period, and thesis research period, registration dates and deadlines, course add/drop and withdrawal dates, and program holidays. Each year, a detailed academic calendar is posted on the Graduate Division website.

4.5) Registration

Each graduate student must register each semester during the designated registration periods as indicated on the academic calendar. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain their full-time status by registering accordingly. Failure to register may jeopardize the student status.

- If a student is doing solely thesis research, the student must register for full-time Thesis Research (12 credits in fall and spring; 6 credits in summer).
- If a student has successfully completed the thesis defense, but has not yet submitted all the final required forms for the doctoral degree prior to the start of the subsequent semester, the student must still register for Thesis Research during the next registration period.

First Year Students: Registration for first year students is in accordance with advisory sessions with the associate dean, senior academic advisor, faculty advisor to first-year PhD students, and/or MSTP director. Students beyond the first year are expected to seek out advice on course selection from the associate dean, program directors, Student Advisory Committee, and/or mentor(s).

Registration instructions are posted on the Graduate Division website.

4.6) Course Add/Drop and Course Withdrawal

During the add/drop period of each course block, as published on the academic calendar, a student may add or drop a course without penalty or notation on the transcript. First year students should seek input from the associate dean or program director prior to adding/dropping a course.

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course after the add/drop period, the request for withdrawal from a course must be made prior to mid-point of the course. Course withdrawals after the add/drop period requires the completion, with appropriate signatures, of a Course Withdrawal Form. Students who withdraw prior to mid-point of the course are given the grade of W (Withdrawn). Withdrawal from a course following mid-point of the course may result in a grade of F (Fail) for the course.

4.7) Auditing a Course

After the student has completed their program and concentration-specific course requirements, a student may audit a graduate course with the permission of the course leader. First-year students may not audit a course without permission from the associate dean or MSTP director. Audited courses may not be used for credit; no course-credit is earned for auditing a course. A completed Audit Registration Form is required to audit a graduate course. This form is available in the Graduate Division office.

Non-matriculated individuals may also audit a course; no credit will be awarded.

When auditing a course, be advised of the following:

- Final date to register for “audit” is the last day of the add/drop period as indicated on the Graduate Division’s academic calendar. No admittance to the course can be made after this date.
- Change of status from “audit” to “registered for credit” can be made only during the add/drop period.
• First year students may not audit a course without permission from the associate dean for graduate programs or the MSTP director.
• No credit or grade will be granted for auditing a graduate course.
• Audited courses cannot be used to fulfill departmental course requirements.
• Only one course per block may be audited.
• A failed graduate course may not be retaken as an audit.

4.8) Master’s Credit

If a student enters the program with a Master of Science or Master of Arts degree from a relevant discipline, (or a PhD student enters the program with an MD degree) the student may apply for Master’s credit.

If the request is approved, three credits is granted towards satisfying the program course requirements. PhD students then need to successfully complete 18 course credits instead of the mandated 21; MD-PhD students then need to successfully complete 15 course credits instead of the mandated 18.

Students should apply for Master’s credit within their first year of matriculation into the program by submitting the Request for Credit for Prior Master’s Degree Form with appropriate documentation (i.e. official Master’s transcript with degree and date conferred or a copy of the Master’s diploma). The associate dean must approve Master’s credit.

No transfer of credit for courses will be granted if a student is afforded Master’s credit. However, if a student transfers to the Graduate Division from another accredited doctoral program, additional courses may be approved for transfer credit.

Note: A student who has been granted Master’s credit in the first year is still expected to register for a minimum of six course credits per course block.

4.9) Transfer Credit and Course Exemption

Transfer Credit:
A student may be granted credit for courses if the student has successfully completed similar graduate courses in their previous training. The determination of equivalency of graduate level courses taken at other institutions (including courses taken at foreign institutions) will be decided by the associate dean or program director, who acts upon the recommendation of the faculty member who is the current leader of the course for which equivalency and/or transfer credit is being sought. The student must present the syllabus and related course information, as well as evidence of successful completion of exams and course requirements (official grade) in order for the course leader to determine equivalency. The course leader may then recommend “transfer credit,” in which case, the credit is applied toward the PhD degree and this is indicated on the student’s transcript.

Students may receive transfer credit for no more than two graduate courses. However, if a student transfers to the Einstein PhD program from another accredited doctoral program, additional courses may be approved for transfer credit. Transfer credit is not available to students who were previously granted Master’s credit.

Course Exemption:
Alternatively, the course leader may recommend “exemption” in which case the credits of the exempted course do not count toward the total number of required course credits (21 for PhD; 18 for MD-PhD); no credit is earned for course exemption and another course should be taken in its place. However, an exempted course may fulfill a concentration-specific course requirement. Course exemption may be granted if the student successfully completed a similar graduate course at a previously attended institution.
The associate dean or program director must approve transfer credit or exemption.

In unique circumstances, students may be waived from required courses with approval from the associate dean, MSTP director, or department/concentration chair.

4.10) Registration in Courses Offered by Other Einstein Programs

A student interested in taking a course in another Einstein degree program may do so with permission (in writing) from the mentor, and associate dean or program director, as a non-matriculated, non-degree-seeking student of that program. A graduate student is not eligible to matriculate in any other Einstein degree or certificate program while enrolled (in active-student status) as a PhD or MD-PhD student in the Graduate Division.

4.11) Registration and Transfer of Credit for Courses Taken at Another Institution While Enrolled in the Graduate Division

A graduate student may request approval to take a course that is not offered at Einstein by submitting a written request to the associate dean, after a discussion with their mentor and program director. The external course must be directly relevant to the student’s graduate studies or thesis project. Approval from the mentor, program director and associate dean for an external course must be obtained prior to registering for the course.

Registration for courses outside Einstein is the sole responsibility of the student in accordance with the procedures of the other institution. Only one course per semester may be taken outside Einstein; and no more than a total of two courses may be taken at an external institution.

The program director and associate dean will review requests for financial support for tuition at outside institutions. Approval of requests for financial support will be subject to the availability of funds specifically designated for this purpose. Funding support for student to take external course is limited to a maximum of two courses per student.

For transfer credit, the student must successfully complete the course and arrange to have an academic transcript sent from the other institution directly to the Graduate Division office. Transfer credit for the course will be granted only upon successful completion of the course and upon receipt of the official transcript from the institution where the course was completed. The transferred course details (course number, title, credit-hour equivalents, course grade and the name of the institution) will be applied to the student’s Graduate Division transcript. No more than two outside courses may be used toward satisfying graduate course requirements.

4.12) Completion of Thesis Research at Another Institution

Under unusual circumstances, it may be necessary for a student to complete the thesis research at another institution. This may occur, for example, if an Einstein faculty member relocates. Only students who have passed the Qualifying Examination may request permission from the associate dean or MSTP director to complete their thesis research at another institution and still obtain the PhD degree from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The two-year residency requirement must be met in any case, and a request form with appropriate signatures must be submitted. (The form is available in the Graduate Division office.) The request to complete thesis research at another institution must be approved in advance by the associate dean. The Graduate Division assumes no financial obligation for the student completing thesis research at another institution.

Student must maintain good academic standing while completing thesis research at another institution by:
• Observing all the registration deadlines published on the Graduate Division academic calendar, and registering accordingly.
• Meeting with their Student Advisory Committee at least twice every year (either on campus or by virtually) and submit the necessary SAC forms.

4.13) Registration for Non-matriculated Students

A non-matriculated student is an individual (affiliated with Einstein) who registers for a graduate course, but is not enrolled in the Graduate Division. A non-matriculated student may register for-credit (or to audit) a graduate course. Medical students, post-doctoral fellows, physicians in post-doctoral or residency training in Einstein affiliated hospitals, or colleges with which the Graduate Division or medical school has established a formal relationship, as well as qualified employees of the College of Medicine may be non-matriculated students.

Requirements to register for credit or to audit a graduate course:
To register for a graduate course for-credit or to audit, a non-matriculated student must complete and submit to the Graduate Division office a Non-Matriculated Student Registration Form available in the Graduate Division office. The non-matriculated student must obtain on the form an approval signature from the course leader of the course for which they wish to register, as well as an approval signature from their PI/supervisor/program registrar, if applicable. The non-matriculated student is responsible for supplying documentation that any prerequisite for the course is met, if such documentation is requested by the course leader. Additionally, please note:
• An Einstein or Montefiore email address and an Einstein or Montefiore ID card are required to register for credit or audit a graduate course.
• Only one course per block may be audited, or taken for credit.
• Final date to register as a non-matriculated student is the last day of the add/drop period as indicated on the academic calendar. No admittance to the course can be made after this date.
• Change of status from “registered for credit” to “audit” or vice versa, can only made during the add/drop period.
• Audited courses cannot be used to fulfill departmental course requirements.
• A course may not be audited in which a grade of Fail was received in a prior semester/block.
• A failed graduate course may not be repeated more than once, whether as for audit or for credit.

A non-matriculated student who registers for a graduate course for-credit is considered to have equivalent status within the course as a graduate student and is responsible for fulfilling all course requirements including examinations, papers, presentations, etc. A non-matriculated student who fails a course may retake the course once. (Graduate courses may not be repeated more than once.)

When auditing a course, please be advised of the following:
• No credit or grade will be granted for auditing a graduate course.
• Audited courses cannot be used to fulfill departmental course requirements.
• A failed graduate course may not be retaken as an audit.

Note: Some courses may have size limitations that preclude registration by a non-matriculated student.

Course withdrawal:
A non-matriculated student must adhere to all official course deadlines including withdrawal dates as published in the academic calendar. If a non-matriculated student wishes to withdraw from a course after the add/drop period, the request for withdrawal must be made prior to mid-point of the course by completing and submitting the Course Withdrawal form to the Graduate Division office. Withdrawing from a course after the add/drop period and prior to mid-point of the course will result in a grade of W (Withdrawn). Withdrawing from a course after mid-point will result in a grade of F (Fail) for the course. The Graduate Division records graduate course grades for non-matriculated students on an official transcript, whether the course grade is Honors, Pass, Fail, Withdrawn, Incomplete, or Audit.
4.14) Records and Transcripts

Change of Address
Students who change their home or local residences must update their Einstein (EA) address through the Luminis Portal. For payroll purposes, the W2 address must also be updated. A student is responsible for all mail sent to the old address if the Graduate Division and HR have not been notified.

Name Change
Students who wish to change either a first or last name on school records must submit a Name Change Request form with appropriate documentation of legal name change to the Office of the Registrar. The request form is available in the Graduate Division office.

Change of Visa Status
Students who change visa status must notify the Graduate Division office, in addition to other relevant offices.

Diploma
The MS in Biomedical Sciences diploma is issued at the annual Qualification Jubilation. The PhD in Biomedical Sciences diploma is issued at the annual commencement exercises. Duplicate or revised diplomas can be secured under certain circumstances. For a duplicate diploma, a Duplicate Diploma Request form is required and is available from the Graduate Division office.

Transcripts (official and unofficial)
In accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (Section 438 of the General Educational Provisions Act, 20 USC 1232g), also known as FERPA, the Graduate Division has adopted these policies to protect the privacy rights of its “Students” with respect to their “Education Records.” FERPA affords students certain rights of access to their education records and limits disclosure to third parties unless the student provides written consent. In certain circumstances, disclosure is permitted without the student’s permission.

The FERPA Policy is available in the Document Library on the Einstein Intranet: https://einsteinmed.edu/intranet/

Course and grade records are maintained for every student in the form of a permanent transcript. The College of Medicine has formulated its student record policy to guarantee the rights of privacy and access as provided by the FERPA. The policies of the College of Medicine are consistent with FERPA and apply to all students. A student may review their academic record and unofficial transcript online (through Self Service Banner) at any time.

In addition to all courses, grades, and relevant degree information, the following are also recorded on the graduate transcript:

- Qualifying Exam Proposal Title
- Doctoral Dissertation Title
- Mentor (and co-mentor) Name
- Periods of Leave of Absence
- Program Withdrawal
- Academic Dismissal
- University Dismissal

Students who wish to obtain an official copy of their transcript may do so by submitting a Transcript Request Form.

Issuance of Transcripts
The authority to issue as well as certify the authenticity of student transcripts resides solely with the Office of the Registrar Office. The assistant or associate registrar will assume such authority in the absence of the registrar.
SECTION V: Academic Standards

It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with and to comply with all policies, guidelines, and standards, to pay all institutional and housing fees and charges, and to meet the specific requirements of any course for which s/he is enrolled, including prerequisites and corequisites wherever required.

5.1) Academic Standards

Each student is expected to familiarize him/herself and to comply with the rules of conduct, academic regulations and established practices of the Graduate Division and the College of Medicine. The admission of a student, his/her continuation in good standing, the receipt of academic credits, graduation, and the conferring of any degree are entirely subject to the disciplinary powers of the Graduate Division and the College and to the student’s maintenance of high standards of ethical, professional, and scholarly conduct. The associate dean, on the recommendation of the program director, a department chair, or the Academic Affairs Committee, may dismiss any student who is considered to be unfit for matriculation in the Graduate Division or for infringement of these policies and standards.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. All documents prepared as part of a student’s academic or research activities must be free of plagiarism. This includes but is not limited to written examinations in class or take-home, Qualifying Exam proposals, thesis proposals, fellowship applications, manuscripts, reports to the Student Advisory Committee and Academic Affairs Committee, and the doctoral thesis.

For in-class or take-home examinations in graduate courses, unless otherwise clearly stated in the instructions for the particular examination, it is fully expected that the student will work alone and without any assistance from other students or sources.

5.2) Grades

All final grades become part of the students’ permanent academic record and will appear on the transcript. If a course is repeated, both grades for the course will appear on the transcript. A course may not be retaken or repeated more than once.

Graduate Courses Grades:

A student enrolled in graduate courses for credit will receive a grade of Honors (H), Pass (P), Incomplete (I) or Fail (F). Final course grades are submitted by the course leader. The grade of Honors in a graduate course recognizes exceptional performance when compared to all other students in that specific course. Note: All final grades are permanently recorded on the student’s graduate transcript/academic record.

A grade of Incomplete may be given to a student if, in the judgment of the course leader, the course requirements have not been met, but there is every expectation that the student can fulfill the course requirements in the allotted time. In this instance, the course leader will stipulate the requirements for course completion. The student must then satisfy all course requirements no later than one month from the end date of the course, unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the associate dean. Such arrangements must be in writing, signed by the student and course leader, and submitted to the Graduate Division office. It is the responsibility of the student to make sure that all grades of Incomplete are resolved in a timely manner. In the event that these requirements are not met, the Incomplete will be converted to a grade of Fail.

Additional grade options for graduate courses include: Exempt (E), Transfer (T), and Withdrew (W).
**Graduate Course Examinations:**
Unless otherwise clearly stated in the instructions for the particular examination, it is fully expected that the student will work alone and without any assistance from other students or sources. Evidence of cheating or plagiarism can be used by the course leader as justification for giving a failing grade.

In the event of suspected cheating and plagiarism, the course leader must immediately provide the associate dean for graduate programs with a complete written report of the incident and evidence of cheating or plagiarism for review by the Academic Affairs Committee.

Exams should be graded by course leader(s) and/or by faculty participating in the teaching of the course and not by a graduate student(s) or Postdoc(s) serving as Teaching Assistant.

**Failure of a Graduate Course:**
- A student who fails a course will be placed on academic probation by the Academic Affairs Committee.
- No credit is granted for courses with a grade of **Fail (F)**.
- Failed courses may **not** be used to fulfill department-specific course requirement or Graduate Division course credit requirements.
- After a course failure, a student may repeat the course a single time. **Graduate courses may not be repeated more than once.**
- Grades of Fail are permanently recorded on the transcript/academic record.

**Appeal of a Course Grade:**
If a student wishes to appeal a final course grade, the student may do so in writing to the course leader within one month of the end of the course. The student must also submit a duplicate written appeal to the Office of the Registrar of the Graduate Division. The course leader has fifteen days from receipt of the appeal to review and submit a final decision on the final grade: amend or leave as is. The course leader must notify the student in writing of their decision and copy the Graduate Division Registrar (gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu).

If the student wishes to further pursue a grade appeal, the associate dean will bring the matter before the Academic Affairs Committee. The AAC will discuss the student’s appeal and make a final decision. No further appeal on that course grade will be accepted.

The student should recognize that, following the appeals process, their grade may be amended in a direction that is not desired.

In all cases of grade changes following the appeals process, the student’s record and official school transcript will be amended to reflect any necessary grade change.

**Thesis Research and Laboratory Rotation Grades:**
Grade options for Laboratory Rotation and Thesis Research are: **Satisfactory (S)**, **Needs Improvement (NI)**, or **Unsatisfactory (U)**. Grades are based on the student’s:
- Ability to budget time effectively
- Understand the project
- Read and use of literature in solving problems
- Execute experiments
- Evaluation experimental data
- Oral communication ability
- Lab notebook and experimental record-keeping
- General laboratory conduct
- Attendance and participation in lab meetings, seminars, journal clubs, etc.

**Satisfactory:** student is performing satisfactorily in the areas listed above.
**Needs Improvement**: the student’s performance requires improvement.

**Unsatisfactory**: the student is not performing up to the standards of a graduate student; significant improvement is required.

The final grade for a Laboratory Rotation is tendered by the faculty (rotation mentor) under which a student is completing the laboratory rotation. This grade is provided on a Rotation Evaluation form which must be completed at the end of each lab rotation and signed by the rotation mentor and the student. The final grade for Thesis Research is submitted by the student’s thesis mentor at the end of each semester (fall, spring and summer).

A grade of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory in a Laboratory Rotation or Thesis Research constitutes grounds for academic probation. Receiving multiple grades of NI/U in Thesis Research is grounds for dismissal from the program.

A student who changes thesis laboratories mid-semester will receive a grade of Transfer (T), indicating the change in laboratory.

**5.3) Dismissal from a Laboratory or Department**

When there is conflict within the mentor-student relationship, there are several ways to resolve the problem. The department chair may recommend (or designate) a department graduate committee to meet with the student and mentor to help determine potential solutions to the conflict (for example, specific expectations on both sides that should be attained) and a timetable for any trial period (recommended one to three months) during which time the situation can be monitored by the department graduate committee.

Alternatively, the mentor and/or the student may meet with the associate dean and develop a course of action involving a trial period with repeated checkpoints in the lab. If a trial period is agreed upon, then at the end, the student and mentor should meet with the department chair or the associate dean to report on the success or failure of the trial. The mentor may decide to have the student continue in the lab or the student and mentor may decide that a change in lab is warranted.

In the case of a dismissal from the laboratory, the associate dean for graduate programs or program director must be notified if a student is being dismissed from the laboratory. The student may appeal the dismissal to the Academic Affairs Committee to be allowed a limited period of time (up to a maximum of three months) to identify another mentor for transfer; the student must declare a new thesis laboratory within three months. The associate dean must approve any change of laboratory, but is under no obligation to do so. If an appropriate mentor cannot be identified within the three-month time period, the student may choose to withdraw or may be dismissed from the program. The Graduate Division makes no commitment to the student beyond the three-month period.

**5.4) Suspension or Dismissal from the PhD or MD-PhD Program**

**Suspension**

In the case of a serious breach of ethical or professional conduct, or in the case of serious concern for the health or safety of a student or any other person or Einstein facility, the associate dean may, upon consultation with those program directors, mentors, and Einstein officials deemed appropriate and informed, suspend a student immediately, pending further consideration by the appropriate and informed administrative personnel, wherein a recommendation can be made for subsequent return to active student status, return to leave, or dismissal from the program.

**Dismissal**

The Academic Affairs Committee, MSTP director, or department chair may recommend to the associate dean a student for dismissal from the program. Only the associate dean may dismiss a student from the Graduate Division.
In the case that an MSTP student is dismissed from the PhD phase of the program, the student file is referred to the senior associate dean of student affairs of the medical school for further consideration.

Grounds for considering dismissal from the Graduate Division include, but are not limited to:

1) Failure of one or more graduate courses,
2) Failure of a repeated graduate course,
3) Failure of a required department course, subject to the recommendation of the appropriate Department Chair,
4) Failure of the Qualifying Examination (either on the first or second taking of the Exam),
5) Failure to declare a thesis laboratory after four rotations in the first year,
6) An Unsatisfactory grade in Thesis Research or Laboratory Rotation,
7) Repeated Needs Improvement grades in Thesis Research or Laboratory Rotation,
8) Failure of a Thesis Defense Examination,
9) Failure to progress in the thesis research
10) Failure to re-matriculate following expiration of a Leave of Absence, or
11) Participation in actions that are not commensurate with high standards of ethical or professional scholarly conduct.

Appeal of Dismissal:
A student who has been dismissed from the Graduate Division may appeal, in writing, to the Dean of the College within fifteen days of date of dismissal. If student appeals to the Dean, the Dean has fifteen days to respond. The Dean will either uphold or reverse the dismissal. If the Dean upholds the dismissal, student will be notified via letter of the effective dismissal date. Effective on the date of dismissal from the Graduate Division:

- Student will be terminated from Payroll.
- The dismissal will be noted on the graduate transcript.
- An MD-PhD student may be required to appear before the Committee on Student Promotions and Professional Standards for review of their status in the medical program.
- Access to the Einstein student email address will terminate immediately.

If the dismissal from the Dean is reversed, the student will continue on academic probation and be monitored by the Academic Affairs Committee.

5.5) Withdrawal from the PhD or MD-PhD Program
A student who chooses to discontinue their enrollment in the PhD or MD-PhD program for any reason during the academic year may withdraw from the Graduate Division. At least two weeks prior to withdrawal, the student must notify the associate dean and the graduate registrar (and MSTP director, if applicable) of their intention to withdraw. At least one week prior to withdrawal, the student must submit a Withdrawal Form to the Graduate Division office, with all necessary signatures.

Health Benefits following a Program Withdrawal
Health insurance benefits will terminate on the last day of the month in which the withdrawal occurs. The student should confer with the Benefits Office prior to the date of withdrawal regarding benefits.

Housing following a Program Withdrawal
a) A student who withdraws from the program vacate housing within thirty days. Any other arrangements must be made directly with the Einstein Housing Office.

b) An MD-PhD student who is withdrawing from the MSTP, but remaining either in the PhD or MD program, should make any necessary arrangements directly with the Housing Office.
Email Access following a Program Withdrawal
Access to the student email address will terminate fourteen days from the withdrawal date. It is important for the student to copy or download any material that he or she wishes to save as these materials will not be available when the email account terminates.

Return to the Graduate Division After a Withdrawal
Should a student desire to return to the Graduate Division following a withdrawal, the student may apply for readmission in the same manner as all other applicants (see Section II: Graduate Admissions and Matriculation). As all prior academic progress will be reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Committee, readmission to the PhD program is by no means guaranteed. If the student is readmitted, advanced standing may be granted following review by the associate dean.
SECTION VI: Laboratory Rotations and Thesis Laboratory Declaration

6.1) Laboratory Rotation

The first-year laboratory rotations are intended to provide the student with exposure to the breadth of research in the biomedical sciences, the opportunity to acquire technical expertise, and the experience necessary to make an informed choice of the laboratory in which they wish to conduct their thesis research. Each student is expected to fully participate in the research activities of the laboratories in which they rotate and to seriously apply themselves to the laboratory work. A student may not conduct two rotations in the same laboratory. The start and end dates of each Rotation Period are published annually on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

Research laboratories generally sponsor only one PhD or MD-PhD student for any given rotation period. Rotation mentors must have an appointment in a basic science department or be a designated member of the PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI).

PhD students are required to complete at least two laboratory rotations during the first year in the program. Under unusual circumstances, this requirement may be waived with the approval of the associate dean. Directly recruited PhD Students, during their first year in the program, are required to participate in at least one laboratory rotation outside of their thesis laboratory. The rotation can be performed in any laboratory in any of the basic science departments or PCI, during any one of the three designated rotation periods. The student selects their one-time rotation laboratory in consultation with the thesis mentor.

MD-PhD students typically choose two to three rotations which are performed during the summer months of the first and second years.

Rotation Registration
Each student must formally register for each rotation via completion and submission of the Rotation Registration form. PhD student rotations must be approved by the associate dean for graduate programs. MD-PhD student rotations must be approved by the MSTP director.

Rotation Evaluation
At the end of each laboratory rotation, the rotation mentor completes a Rotation Evaluation and provides a summary grade of Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (NI) or Unsatisfactory (U). This summary grade will be recorded permanently on the student’s graduate transcript. It is expected that student and rotation mentor will discuss this evaluation. The Academic Affairs Committee may review the evaluation. A grade of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory in Laboratory Rotation is grounds for academic probation. If a student takes a leave of absence in the middle of a rotation, the student may receive a grade of Withdrew (W) upon approval from the associate dean.

6.2) Mentor and Thesis Laboratory Declaration

Students are expected to declare a thesis laboratory at the end of the spring semester of their first year in the program (end of second year for MD-PhD students). Each student must submit a Thesis Laboratory Declaration form to the Graduate Division office with all the necessary approval signatures. Under exceptional circumstances, and only with the prior permission of the associate dean or MSTP director, a student may rotate in an additional laboratory (a fourth rotation) during the summer prior to entering the second year of the program (third year for an MD-PhD student). The student is then expected to declare a thesis laboratory immediately following the fourth/summer rotation. Failure to declare a thesis laboratory may result in dismissal from the program.

Primary Mentor
The declared primary thesis mentor must hold an appointment, at the level of assistant professor or above on the tenure track, in one of the basic science departments, or be a designated mentor in the PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI). If the mentor has both primary and secondary appointments in basic science departments, the student is
expected by default to enter the department of the primary appointment, but may choose to enter the department of secondary appointment due to the nature of the thesis topic upon recommendation of the mentor, and approval of the associate dean or MSTP director.

Once a thesis laboratory is declared, the student must register each summer, fall and spring semester for Thesis Research with their mentor. At the end of each semester, the mentor submits a Thesis Research evaluation and a summary grade of Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (NI), or Unsatisfactory (U). The summary grade is recorded on the graduate transcript. A grade of Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory in Thesis Research is grounds for academic probation. Receiving grades of NI or U in Thesis Research is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Co-Mentor
In some cases, it may be appropriate for a student to declare “co-mentors” at the time of laboratory declaration, as for example, collaborative projects which are equally shared between two laboratories. The following guidelines apply to co-mentorship:

- The student must designate one mentor as the “primary” mentor and the other mentor as the “co-mentor.” The co-mentor must also have an appointment as an assistant professor or higher in a basic science department or the PCI.
- Neither mentor may participate as a member of the student’s Qualifying Exam Committee or Thesis Defense Committee.
- Neither mentor may serve as the chair of the student’s Advisory Committee.
- The student’s Advisory Committee must include other faculty (typically two to four) in addition to the co-mentors.
- Project development responsibility will be assumed by both mentors.
- Regular meetings between the student and co-mentors are strongly recommended.
- Both mentors must sign the student’s thesis dissertation upon time of defense and graduation.

Associate (Contingent) Mentor
There may be instances where a student’s primary mentor goes on sabbatical or is physically no longer located at Einstein. In such instances, the student and the primary mentor should designate another basic science faculty member to serve as an associate mentor to the student while the primary mentor is away. The associate mentor is expected to give the student hands-on advice in matters relating to the student’s laboratory research. The primary mentor is expected to periodically check in with the associate mentor to discuss the student’s progress in the lab. The student’s Thesis Research grade will be submitted by the primary mentor.

6.3) Change of Laboratory
In the case of a change of laboratory, the student must receive approval from the associate dean or MSTP director. Once approved, a Change of Laboratory form must be completed with all the required signatures and submitted to the Graduate Division office. This form can be found on the Graduate Division website. The student will receive a grade of Transfer (T) for Thesis Research under the former mentor for the semester in which the change of laboratory occurred. Only one change of laboratory is permitted.

Change of Concentration
If a student’s change in concentration is necessitated by the mentor’s change in departmental appointment, the student may be required to satisfy the course requirements of the new concentration. If this change occurs after the student has completed the course requirements for the previous concentration as well as the Qualifying Exam, the student may be waived from the course requirements of the new concentration. If the change occurs prior to the student satisfying the course requirements of the previous concentration and/or has not completed the Qualifying Exam, the student will be required to satisfy the course requirements of the new concentration.
SECTION VII: The Academic Affairs Committee

7.1) Composition of the Committee

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) consists of a representative from each of the basic science departments and the PCI, the senior academic advisor for the graduate division, the associate dean for graduate programs, and the director of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). Each department representative typically serves two to three years and is appointed by the relevant department chair. An additional faculty member serving as the chair of the AAC is appointed by the associate dean for graduate programs. The associate dean, and MSTP director are ex-officio, non-voting members of the AAC. Recommendations are decided by majority vote. At least seven voting members must be present to constitute a quorum. The chair of the AAC, with the approval of the associate dean, may invite other members of the faculty of the Graduate Division to participate as non-voting members of the AAC.

7.2) Charge of the Committee

The Academic Affairs Committee monitors the academic progress of all graduate students enrolled in the Graduate Division. The AAC reviews student academic records including course grades, Thesis Research/Laboratory Rotation evaluations and grades, Student Advisory Committee (SAC) evaluations, Qualifying Exam and Thesis Defense grades and any relevant faculty comments. The AAC informs the student, the student’s mentor, and the department chair of any academic problems and is available to work with the Student Advisory and Department Committees (and the MSTP Steering Committee for MD-PhD students) to ensure that each student progresses in a timely manner towards the PhD degree.

A student who fails to progress in Thesis Research or is, in the opinion of mentor/co-mentor and/or SAC, performing poorly, may be recommended by the mentor or SAC, for review by the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC). This may involve appearance of both the student and mentor at an AAC meeting to discuss lack of progress and the development of an academic plan (including milestones and a timeline). Failure to progress in Thesis Research constitutes a ground for academic probation. The AAC may recommend a leave of absence and/or dismissal from the Graduate Division.

A student who is consistently performing poorly in graduate courses, exams, failing to progress in thesis research, etc. may be required to appear before the AAC.

The Academic Affairs Committee also reviews the research progress of students in the program five years or longer. The AAC may request that the student and the mentor provide a written Exit Strategy detailing the steps the student will take to ensure timely completion of the PhD degree. The exit strategy will be reviewed by the departmental representative to the AAC; this representative may ask other members of the AAC to also participate in the review and/or may request a full review of the Exit Strategy by the full AAC.

The Academic Affairs Committee will ensure that the academic policies of the Graduate Division are applied in evaluating students’ progress. The AAC reviews matters regarding unethical or unprofessional behavior upon request by the associate dean or MSTP director. Matters related to unethical or unprofessional behavior of any kind should be brought to the attention of the associate dean, who will make a determination of whether the Academic Affairs Committee or other administrative leaders (department chair, Office of the Dean, Security, etc.) should be consulted. The associate dean may call ad hoc meeting of the AAC to review a charge of unethical or unprofessional behavior.

The Academic Affairs Committee may place a student on academic probation for various reasons relating to the student’s academic progress. A student who is having academic problems may be temporarily blocked (“registrar’s hold”) from registration the following semester. The hold will be release after the student meets with the associate dean, senior academic advisor, the departmental AAC representative or, if applicable, the MSTP director. The AAC will continue to monitor the progress of any student on academic probation, until that status is relieved.
7.3) Appearance Before the AAC

The AAC may request that a student and mentor appear at an AAC meeting. A student may be requested to appear before the Academic Affairs Committee for various reasons, including failure to progress in the courses and/or rotations, lack of progress in thesis research, and/or unethical or unprofessional behavior.

If a student has been requested to appear before the AAC due to lack of progress in thesis research, or upon recommendation from the Student Advisory Committee (SAC), in preparation for the appearance, the student should:

- Prepare a brief presentation describing the research project and the current status of the goals that the student and mentor decided together will constitute the student’s thesis research. Include a copy of all SAC meeting reports.
- Prepare a discussion of any experimental limitations that the student has encountered or is anticipated to encounter as well as the alternative approaches that the student is considering.
- Prepare a realistic timeline of the milestones to the completion of the research project and defense of the thesis, or alternatively, if the student is withdrawing from the program, prepare a realistic timeline of detailed actions that the student will take for transferring of the data and reagents generated during this time to the mentor. Student will be asked for specific dates for each event so that the AAC can evaluate the feasibility of the student’s plan.

The student’s mentor will also be invited to the meeting to give their account of the situation and to review the student’s plan with the AAC.

At a meeting to which the student is invited, the AAC will typically review the student’s background and progress to date. The mentor will then be invited to come into the room and give their summary. The AAC will ask the mentor questions at this time. The mentor is then asked to leave, and the student will be brought in for their progress summary. At this time, the student will be given the opportunity to discuss with the AAC any issues the student may want to share with the committee regarding their mentor and/or Student Advisory Committee. After the student leaves, the AAC will have a discussion on what they’ve heard from the mentor and student, evaluate the student’s ability to successfully defend and complete the program, and decide on what action should be taken.

Following the meeting, the student and the mentor will receive a written letter with the AAC’s recommendation. The student and the mentor may be asked to meet with the associate dean (and MSTP director, if applicable) to review the AAC’s recommendation. The AAC may outline a strict timeline with specific milestones and deadlines that the student will be required to meet. If any one of the deadlines is not met, the student may be dismissed from the program. See policies above (Section V) on Suspension or Dismissal from the Program.

7.4) Academic Probation

A student may be placed on academic probation by the Academic Affairs Committee for any of, but not limited to, the following reasons:

- Upon receiving a grade of Fail in a graduate course,
- Upon receiving an Incomplete in one or more graduate courses in an academic year,
- Upon receiving Incomplete twice in the Responsible Conduct of Research course,
- Upon receiving a Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory grade in Laboratory Rotation or Thesis Research,
- Failure of the Qualifying Exam,
- Failure to have regular Advisory Committee meetings as stipulated by the Advisory Committee Guidelines and/or as recommended by the Academic Affairs Committee,
- Failure of the Thesis Defense,
- Plagiarism,
- Failure to comply with registration or other programmatic requirements,
- Failure to progress in the thesis research
- Following an appearance before the Academic Affairs Committee
• For participation in actions that are not commensurate with high standards of ethical and professional scholarly conduct (see below, Standards of Ethical and Scholarly Conduct).

**What happens when a student is placed on academic probation?**

If a student is placed on academic probation, the student will be notified of their probationary status via a letter from the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The letter will be copied to the student’s mentor(s), department chair, the associate dean for graduate programs, and, if applicable, the MSTP director.

The AAC may request a specific plan of action from the student, mentor, and department chair to rectify the probationary status. The student’s progress will continuously be monitored by the AAC. The student on probation, along with the mentor or department chair (or designate), may be invited to participate in AAC meeting(s) at which the student’s progress and plan of action will be discussed.

A student on academic probation may be blocked (“registrar’s hold”) from registration. In this event, the student is required to meet with the associate dean or senior academic advisor, (or MSTP director, if applicable).

A student on academic probation whose performance is not improving may be granted an academic leave of absence, may elect to withdraw completely from the program, or may be dismissed from the Graduate Division.

**Removal from Academic Probation:**

When the student on academic probation has satisfied the written requirements of the Academic Affairs Committee, the student will be considered to have regained “good” academic standing, as documented by a written letter from the chair of the AAC following a review of the student’s progress.

### 7.5) Standards of Ethical and Scholarly Conduct

The associate dean may seek a recommendation from the Academic Affairs Committee to place a student on academic probation for participating in actions that are not commensurate with the high standards of ethical and scholarly conduct. According to the By Laws, the AAC reserves the right to consult the Einstein Committee on Promotions and Professional Standards in cases it perceives would benefit from objective review. If asked by the associate dean or the AAC, the Einstein Committee on Promotions and Professional Standards will review the case and present recommendations to the AAC, which may then act with or against those recommendations.

### 7.6) AAC Review on Research or Professional Misconduct

Either the student(s) or faculty involved in the incident or allegation may request a review by the Academic Affairs Committee in accordance with the procedure described below. Allegations that have no clear relation to academic performance or behavior may be handled directly through the associate dean, who will consult with appropriate and informed individuals and staff.

1. Allegations of research or professional misconduct are to be submitted in writing to the associate dean and must be sufficiently specific to provide a factual basis for investigation. Anonymous allegations are not acceptable.

2. A preliminary evaluation of an allegation will be made by the associate dean in consultation with the program director, and the Academic Affairs Committee chair to determine whether the allegation falls within the purview of this policy and is sufficiently substantive to warrant investigation.

3. If it is determined that a review by the Academic Affairs Committee will proceed, the student will be promptly notified in writing by the chair of the AAC of the nature and details of the allegation. The student will be advised of the procedures set forth herein and of the right to the advice of an advocate from the College of Medicine.
4. The review of the allegations of research or professional misconduct will be promptly conducted. The associate dean may appoint an *ad hoc* subcommittee, which will report to the Academic Affairs Committee. Members of the Academic Affairs Committee for whom there exists, or is perceived to exist, a conflict of interest will be excused from the review. The *ad hoc* subcommittee shall not include any member of the faculty where any conflict of interest exists or is perceived to exist. In addition to, or alternatively, the associate dean may request a review of the case from the Medical School Committee on Promotions and Professional Standards, which may make recommendations. These recommendations are not binding and may or may not be followed by the associate dean and/or the Academic Affairs Committee in determining the final disposition of the allegation.

5. The Academic Affairs Committee (or the *ad hoc* subcommittee) will attempt to obtain written and oral evidence from all sources the AAC determines to be appropriate and that it requires to evaluate the alleged misconduct. The review is not bound by the formal rules of evidence. The accused student may examine all the evidence against him/her and respond to the evidence. The student may present the facts of his/her case, provide witnesses to testify on his or her behalf, may be advised by a person from the College of Medicine, but may not have an attorney present at the review.

6. After reviewing the evidence the Academic Affairs Committee will provide a recommendation to the associate dean, who will decide the matter and prepare a written decision. A copy of the decision will be given to the student.

7. An appeal of the decision of the associate dean may be made to the dean of the medical school in writing within fifteen calendar days.

**MD-PhD Students**

All MD-PhD students are subject to the above described Graduate Division policies on misconduct. In the case of professional misconduct, the MD-PhD student may also be referred to the medical school’s Student Promotions and Professional Standards Committee and the associate deans of student affairs for review.
SECTION VIII: The Qualifying Examination

For the Advancement to Candidacy for the PhD Degree

Candidates for the PhD degree must satisfactorily complete a Qualifying Examination, the purpose of which is to ensure that students have a general understanding of the biomedical sciences and sufficient knowledge of their chosen area of thesis research to proceed towards the PhD degree in a timely manner. The Graduate Division administers the Qualifying Examination in the fall/spring of each year. The examination is usually taken in the second year of the PhD program (or in the third year of the MD-PhD program). Under extenuating circumstances, a student may defer the examination with permission of the associate dean for graduate programs, based on gaps in his/her academic training, illness, a change in laboratory, or other extenuating circumstances.

It is expected that students will have completed most of their program-specific and concentration-specific course requirements prior to taking the Qualifying Examination. Successful completion of the examination marks a student's transition to the independent research phase of his/her graduate training.

8.1) The Mission of the Qualifying Examination

Advancement to candidacy by passage of the Qualifying Examination reflects the judgment of the Graduate Division faculty that a student is adequately prepared to embark upon focused thesis research. That is, the student has demonstrated the fundamental knowledge in a chosen discipline and the creativity, discipline, and dedication to complete the PhD degree in a timely manner. Conversely, failure of the examination indicates faculty concern regarding the student's likelihood of success at conducting PhD-level independent research.

8.2) The Responsibilities of the Candidate

A student who seeks to advance to candidacy for the PhD degree must take full responsibility for preparation for the examination. Each student should use the planned thesis research as the starting point for Qualifying Examination preparation. For the Qualifying Exam, the student is expected to:

- be scientifically conversant in their chosen discipline,
- demonstrate creative and critical thinking about their proposed studies,
- adhere to the highest standards of intellectual and professional integrity.

During the exam, the student must:

- demonstrate an understanding of the underlying principles and context of the proposed work,
- demonstrate scientific depth and breadth of understanding of the field.

Successful completion of the exam indicates that the student is ready to embark on his/her academic journey toward the doctoral degree.

8.3) The Responsibilities of the Mentor

The mentor is very important in a graduate student’s training. In preparation for the Qualifying Exam, the mentor must:

- work with the student to help the student develop an understanding of the field and relevant literature,
- work with the student to articulate mutually agreeable (scientific) specific aims and provide guidance and recommendations on the development of the experimental approach,
- read the student’s written proposal,
- provide feedback during the development of the written proposal,
- not write any part of the proposal,
- not comment on or provide feedback on the independent aim if one is required by the department.
Mentors must remember that the student is responsible for the crafting of a document that speaks in her or his voice. Mentors must understand that it is not their ideas that are being examined, but the student’s understanding of these scientific ideas and the student’s potential to conduct the proposed studies. Students and mentors should discuss reasonable time away from the bench to write the proposal and prepare for the exam. If there is a difference in agreement about “reasonable time” student and/or mentor should contact the senior academic advisor, or the associate dean for graduate programs. Preliminary data are not required for either the written proposal or the oral exam.

The mentor is required to sign the Mentor Acknowledgement form, signifying recognition of these guidelines. The form is available on the last page of guidelines.

8.4) The Qualifying Examination Committee

A Qualifying Examination Steering Committee (QESC) organizes each year’s Qualifying Examinations. The QESC is composed of faculty representatives from the basic science departments and the Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR) and is chaired by a committee member appointed by the associate dean for graduate programs. The number of department representatives to the QESC varies to avoid student/mentor conflict of interest and depends on the number of students taking the examination in a given year.

The Responsibilities of the Qualifying Examination Committee

It is the responsibility of each specific Qualifying Examination Committee to decide whether it is in the best interests of the student, the laboratory, and the PhD program for the student to embark upon a course of thesis study. The successful completion of a PhD dissertation requires substantial commitment, time and resources on the part of the student as well as the mentor, faculty and institution. The examining faculty must balance the following criteria in rendering judgment on whether the examinee will be admitted to candidacy:

i) A student is expected to be conversant in their chosen area of scholarship including, but not limited to, their thesis project. The student may be examined on their understanding of topics covered in the graduate coursework, aspects of their specific field of study, as well as the principles and practice of techniques included in the Qualifying Examination proposal.

ii) The examiners must judge the extent to which the written document is the student’s work and weigh their evaluation of it accordingly.

iii) The key responsibility of the examination committee is to judge whether the student’s written Qualifying Examination proposal and the oral defense of it demonstrate critical thinking and creative approaches to the proposed studies.

In summary, the examination committee must decide whether to welcome the student through the gateway to the PhD, hold the student for reconsideration by failing them on the first examination or close the door and direct them to another professional endeavor by failing them on the second examination.

Choosing the Qualifying Examination Committee

At an announced date (see Timeline), each eligible student, in consultation with the mentor(s), submits a list of four to eight faculty members whose expertise and interests the student feels would be appropriate to their area of study. The Steering Committee will use the student’s list as much as possible to assemble the Examination Committee. The student’s Qualifying Examination Committee includes:

- Four faculty at the level of Assistant Professor or above.
- Faculty who serve on the Examining Committee must be eligible to train a graduate student in their lab.
- A department representative from the QESC who serves as the examination committee chairperson. Occasionally, due to conflicts of interest, faculty availability, etc., the chairperson may be a faculty member who is not currently sitting on the QESC. The chairperson will approve the proposed Qualifying Exam Committee(s) on which they have been selected to chair.
• Examining Committees typically include at least two members of the student’s home department. Appropriate faculty from related programmatic areas may substitute for a departmental representative.
• Mentors, co-mentors and/or associate mentors may not serve on their student’s examination committee nor are they present during the oral examination.
• Not more than one member of the Student’s Advisory Committee (if one already exists). If a student has a meeting with their Student Advisory Committee (SAC) prior to the examination, the SAC meeting must be more than one month prior to the scheduled due date for the written proposal.

Students may not propose faculty members who have existing collaborations with the student’s thesis project.

8.5) Scheduling and Preparation for the Qualifying Examination

Scheduling of the Examination
_Students are responsible for scheduling the date, time and location for their Qualifying Examination._ The examination will be scheduled within the designated four-to-six week period following the deadline for submission of the written proposal (see Timeline). Examinations may not be scheduled during official program holidays, as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

The student must submit to the Graduate Division office the form stating the scheduled date/time/location of their oral exam. _The Graduate Division office must be notified (via email: qualexam@einsteinmed.edu) of any subsequent changes to the date, time, and location of the oral exam._

_Four examiners must be present at the oral examination._ If a member is absent, the committee chairperson is responsible for identifying and contacting an alternate. If more than one examiner is absent, the examination must be rescheduled for the earliest possible date.

Delaying the Exam
Special circumstances may justify delaying the date of the Qualifying Examination. A student may request a delay from the associate dean for graduate programs at the onset of the scheduling process. Alternatively, if a committee chairperson concludes that completion of a graduate course is essential to the student’s preparation for the examination, the chairperson may request a delay from the associate dean, until the student completes the course.

Preparation for the Qualifying Examination
Each student’s preparation for the _Qualifying Examination_ can be roughly divided into three parts.

• _First_ is achieving an understanding of the chosen area of thesis study through review of their completed course work, reading contemporary literature and discussion with faculty and peers. During the examination, the student may be asked to provide a five-minute critical summary of the last paper the student has read in their field or the most recent paper from their laboratory.
• _Second_ is preparing a clear and compelling written proposal that will provide the examination committee with a springboard for their exploration of the student’s understanding of the chosen area of thesis research.
• _Third_ is becoming adept at “thinking on one’s feet” in preparation for the questioning of the oral examination. As discussed in more detail below, _examiners are more interested in a student’s understanding of the concepts, assumptions and limitations of their proposal than in the granular detail of routine experimental techniques._

Each student is responsible for the _first_ part of his or her preparation. The Graduate Division has developed workshops, resources and guidelines to direct students through the _second_ and _third_ parts of their preparation.

Workshops
  1. Intro _duction to the Qualifying Examination_ – An overview of the Qualifying Examination process and requirements.
ii) Proper Reference Citation: How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Questionable Writing Practices – Proper citation is an essential part of the responsible conduct and reporting of research. Attendance and registration at this workshop is mandatory.

iii) Preparing the Qualifying Exam Proposal – This is a mandatory “nuts and bolts” course that focuses on crafting a written proposal. Topics to be covered include determining the scope of the proposal, presenting the necessary background and significance, drafting specific aims and presenting a compelling research plan. All students are required to take the course and are therefore pre-registered. Students must attend all sessions of the course. A complete schedule of the course and course guidelines will be distributed separately.

iv) Qualifying Examination Oral Format and Sample Questions – This workshop focuses on the oral defense of the written proposal. Tips are provided on how to prepare for and answer the topic-specific and general questions asked by the examiners.

“Mock” Qualifying Examinations
Students are very strongly advised to participate in mock examinations, particularly with senior graduate students and post-doctoral researchers with expertise within and outside their area of thesis study. Mentors, co-mentors and examiners may not participate in mock examinations. Mock examinations are self-organized by students.

8.6) The Qualifying Examination Proposal

Writing the Proposal
A clear and compelling written proposal has a very positive impact on the oral examination; students are reminded that they will be evaluated primarily on their defense of the proposal, not on the proposal itself. Students submit a written proposal based on their developing dissertation project. The proposal format is based on the format of an NIH NRSA fellowship application (Form PHS 416-1; OMB # 0925-0001). The format of the Qualifying Examination is presented in detail below. Basing the examination on the NRSA format is intended to give students a head start in preparing an application for extramural support.

The written proposal must be the work of the student. Mentors are encouraged to provide feedback about the aims, concepts and experiments included in the proposal but are prohibited from writing text for the student. It is expected that the student will seek editorial assistance from others. A student may not copy or adopt any unpublished writings by their mentor(s), particularly grant proposals. Mentors are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the guidelines outlined above (see The Responsibilities of the Mentor). Students are encouraged to seek input and comments on drafts of the proposal from other sources including fellow students, post-doctoral researchers, faculty members not affiliated with their examination and scholars outside of the Einstein community.

Qualifying Exam Proposal Format
Please read the following section carefully before crafting your proposal, as the format for the examination proposal is based on, but not identical to, the NIH NRSA fellowship application. Proposals that do not adhere to the specifications listed below will be returned without review.

• Length, Paper Size and Title Page: The proposal will be 18 pages excluding a title page and the Literature Cited, using standard 8.5” x 11” paper with 1-inch margins. The title page lists the proposal title and the student’s name, mentor and department/concentration. Note: The Neuroscience department requires a different format for the proposal. Reference the Neuroscience department guidelines for the Qual proposal (https://einsteinmed.edu/departments/neuroscience/graduate-program/exam.aspx).

• Font and Line Spacing: Use an Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, Times New Roman or Georgia typeface, a black font color, and a font size of 11 or 12 points. A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters. The proposal must be double-spaced except indented quotations, footnotes, tables, figures, legends and the literature cited are to be single-spaced. Quotations of more than three lines will be single-spaced, set off from the text in a separate paragraph and indented four spaces. Opening and closing
quotation marks are omitted. Quotations of three lines or less are enclosed in quotation marks and are run into the text. Consult the library guide https://libguides.einsteinmed.edu/thesis.

- **Tables and Figures** are to be embedded in the document with each group numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals. Figure and table legends should be placed immediately under the embedded graphic. Be sure that tables and figures are sufficiently large to be easily read by the examiners.

- **Citations:** Carefully and correctly reference your proposal! References should be numbered sequentially within the text. The full reference is cited in the title, names of all authors, book or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. The reference list should be limited to the literature relevant to your proposal. Consult the library guide https://libguides.einsteinmed.edu/thesis or ask the reference librarians for help with questions about proper citation.

**Scientific Content of the Proposal**

The proposal will describe your proposed thesis project in which specific hypotheses are tested through Specific Aims. Spell and grammar check your proposal, as a poorly proofed document will make your examiners irritable!

Note regarding preliminary results: Preliminary data from the student’s work should not be included in the Background section and are not required for the Qualifying Exam Proposal. However, if necessary, a concise summary of unpublished results from the laboratory relevant to establishing the significance of the proposed work may be included here.

1. **Background & Significance:** “Briefly sketch the background leading to the present proposal, critically evaluate existing knowledge, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and relevance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to broad, long-term objectives.” [Form PHS 416-1] This section should be a review of the field and demonstrate the student’s knowledge of the field and relevant literature.

   **Note regarding preliminary results:** Preliminary data from the student’s work should not be included in the Background section and are not required for the Qualifying Exam Proposal. However, if necessary, a concise summary of unpublished results from the laboratory relevant to establishing the significance of the proposed work may be included here.

2. **Specific Aims:** “List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology.” [Form PHS 416-1] The Qualifying Examination will typically have two and not more than three specific aims. Students should discuss with their mentor the nature of their proposed aims, the overarching hypotheses and the likely directions and outcomes of the proposed thesis research. While specific aims can be interrelated, it is critically important that one aim not be entirely dependent upon another. The specific aims should be no longer than two pages, double-spaced.

   The “Independent” (Third) Specific Aim is developed independently of the mentor or any PI. The mentor cannot comment on this aim. This aim should still test the hypothesis and will be critiqued for originality and creativity. It is expected that there will be variability in quality and feasibility of the aim, but the point is for the student to incorporate some ideas from outside the scope of his/her immediate laboratory. This independent specific aim must be indicated by an asterisk (*) in the proposal.
Only the specific departments listed below require the inclusion of the third, independent aim in the proposal:
  o Cell Biology, and
  o Developmental & Molecular Biology.

3. **Research Design & Methods:** “Describe the research design conceptual framework, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project.” [Form PHS 416-1]

This is the heart of the ‘Qual’; the examining faculty will expect students to be able to elaborate orally on what they have written. *Helpful hint: a student should have a paragraph of additional explanation in mind for each written sentence.* It is also important to remember that it is concepts, not protocols, that the examiners are hoping to hear about! *(If including unpublished results, students should remember that the examiners are interested in their ability to elaborate on the ideas expressed in the proposal, not in counting how many gels they have run!)*

**Submitting the Proposal**

Each student is responsible for submitting their proposal on time to each examiner on their Qualifying Exam Committee. Students may submit their proposal via email (PDF) or hand delivery of a hard copy. Check with your examiners to see which they prefer. *Please be sure that your proposal is legible regardless of its delivery method!* A PDF of the proposal (with title page) also must be emailed to the Graduate Division office on or before the designated due date for submission (see Timeline). The examining committee is prohibited from accepting a revised proposal after the submission due date. Each student will have the opportunity to present late-breaking thoughts or results during their 15-minute presentation at the beginning of the oral examination (see below).

For the specific proposal due date, reference the Qualifying Exam Timeline on the Graduate Division website: [http://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/qualifying-exam.aspx](http://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/qualifying-exam.aspx).

**8.7) The Oral Examination**

*Audio and/or video recording of the oral examination is expressly prohibited whether in person or via Zoom.* Any recording will be viewed as a breach of responsible conduct of research and the matter referred to the Academic Affairs Committee.

*Students may not approach their own Qualifying Examination Committee members for advice prior to the oral examination.*

**In person format:**

The student will determine the time and date for the exam based on the availability of the exam committee members and reserve the room for the exam. *This is a closed exam. Only the student and the four members of the Qualifying Examination Committee are allowed in the exam room.*

Prior to actually beginning of the oral exam, the committee chairperson will ask the student to leave the room so that the examiners can briefly discuss the written proposal and the student’s academic performance to date. The student will then be invited to return to the room. *At the beginning of the exam, the student has 15 uninterrupted minutes to summarize the proposal.* The committee chairperson should alert the student when the 15-minute presentation time is over and will allow one additional minute for the student to conclude if needed. A PowerPoint presentation is appropriate (but not required) for this presentation and can be used to remind the examiners of essential concepts, important questions, graphics or preliminary results. If they wish, the
committee chairperson may ask the student to ‘close the laptop’ and conduct the remainder of the examination as a ‘chalk talk’.

**Zoom format:**
The student will determine the time and date for the exam based on the availability of the exam committee members. The committee chairperson will set up the Zoom link in order that the chairperson can control the breakout room options. This is a closed exam. Only the student and the four members of the Qualifying Examination Committee can participate in the Zoom call. All participants’ videos are expected to be on during the entire time of the examination. Physically, only the student should be in the room while on a Zoom call for the exam.

Prior to the beginning of the oral exam, the committee chairperson will place the student in a breakout room so that the examiners can briefly discuss the written proposal and the student’s academic performance to date. At the beginning of the exam, the student has 15 uninterrupted minutes to summarize the proposal. The committee chair should alert the student when the 15-minute presentation time is over and will allow one additional minute for the student to conclude if needed. A PowerPoint presentation is appropriate (but not required) for this presentation and can be used to remind the examiners of essential concepts, important questions, graphics or preliminary results. If they wish, the committee chairperson may conduct the remainder of the examination as a ‘chalk talk’. Students should be prepared to draw diagrams, etc. on a white board, PowerPoint slide or other media that can be shared through Zoom.

**Overall goals of the oral examination (both formats):**
The oral examination itself focuses on determining whether the student has incorporated the fundamental knowledge needed to progress into full-time thesis research. The written proposal describing a student’s “budding” thesis project is the scaffold for the oral examination. However, each student is expected to be able to demonstrate a broad understanding of the basic concepts in biology, chemistry, physics or mathematics that underlie the questions posed in the proposal. In addition to knowledge obtained from graduate coursework and the relevant scientific literature, students will also be tested for knowledge of the primary and alternative experimental strategies and the ability to think on their feet about the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches. The primary focus of the oral examination will not be preliminary data. Rather the oral examination will focus on the background, experimental approaches, aims, and how all this fits in the “big picture.” A list of representative “mock” questions is available that illustrate the types of questions and level of depth that might be expected.

The examination itself is free-flowing in form at the discretion of the committee. Typically, the examiners go around the room for a first round of questions. Students should strive to clearly and concisely answer the questions that are posed. It is equally important to be able to say ‘I don’t know’. Examinations typically run continuously from one to two hours. However, the committee chairperson can call for a short break if appropriate.

### 8.8) Grading of the Examination

At the end of the oral questioning, the committee chair will ask the student to leave the room so that the examiners can discuss and grade the student’s performance. Each examiner may vote Honors (outstanding, i.e. in the top 10%), Pass (clear advancement to candidacy), Postponed Decision (revision of the written proposal ONLY, within one month) or Fail. A preliminary anonymous vote is followed by discussion and then a final vote. Students showing the ability to discuss experiments well beyond what is in the written proposal and showing broad mastery of background knowledge will be considered for Honors.

Each committee member will submit a member evaluation form, including a recommended grade of Fail, Postponed Decision, Pass, or Honors. The exam will be evaluated based on the following components:

1. Oral Presentation and Discussion
   - Is the oral presentation clear and organized logically providing a hypothesis to be tested?
### Did the student succeed in describing the “big picture”?
- Can the student justify the choice of the methods?
- Does the student understand the science behind the methods proposed?
- Honors: Did the discussion go beyond basic concepts in multiple areas?

### General Knowledge and Scientific Perspective
- Can the student assess critically the background and significance of the project?
- Does the student understand the underlying principles?
- How well is the student able to talk about the field?
- Can the student integrate knowledge from multiple courses?
- Did the student demonstrate an ability to think logically and critically?
- Honors: Did the student demonstrate mastery of fields related to the proposal?

### Written Proposal
- Is the written proposal clear and organized logically?
- Are the aims logical and defensible?
- Are the experiments directly testing the hypothesis?
- Are the controls proposed appropriate?
- Is the hypothesis original?
- Is the experimental design or the methods innovative?
- When applicable, is the independent aim (*) appropriate for the project?

The committee chair will submit the chair evaluation form, which will include a summary of the committee’s discussion and the final grade for the exam. (A sample of the Chair Form is available at the end of these guidelines). The chair will also ensure that each committee member submits a member evaluation.) The decision for the exam will be as follows:

- A majority vote of 3-1 is required for Honors, Pass, Postponed Decision or Fail;
- A 2-2 vote with two examiners voting Honors and two voting Pass is a grade of Pass;
- A 2-2 vote with two examiners voting Fail and two voting Honors, Pass or Postponed Decision is a grade of Fail;
- A 2-2 vote with two examiners voting Postponed Decision is a Postponed Decision

*If the oral examination is unsatisfactory, even if the written document is acceptable, the grade will be Fail.*

After reaching a decision, the committee will ask the student to return and will inform the student of the committee’s decision.

The student and mentor(s) will have access to Qualifying Exam Committee evaluations via One45.

### Outcome of the Qualifying Examination

**Honors/Pass**: A student who passes or receives honors on the Qualifying Examination will be awarded the degree of Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and will advance to candidacy for the PhD degree.

**Postponed Decision**: The grade Postponed Decision is to be used to obtain revision of the written proposal only. The revised proposal must be distributed to all the members of the examination committee within one month of the oral exam date. After submission of a revised proposal, the committee has seven calendar days to submit a final grade (Pass or Fail) through the online evaluation system.

**Fail**: A student who fails the Qualifying Examination will be placed on academic probation by the Academic Affairs Committee. The Academic Affairs Committee will review the Qualifying Examination Committee reports. Eligibility to retake the exam is based upon review of the student’s entire academic record, including course grades and laboratory productivity. The AAC will either recommend a “retake” of the examination in the next Qualifying Exam.
period or in some circumstances, recommend dismissal from the program. The examination “retake” is not a “rebuttal” of the failed examination but rather is a fresh independent opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and insight required for advancement to candidacy.

A student is allowed only one retake of the Qualifying Exam. A student who fails the retake will be dismissed from the program.

Appeal of Qualifying Committee’s Decision
Students may appeal a decision by the Qualifying Examination Committee to the parent Steering Committee, by making this request in writing to the associate dean for graduate programs. The associate dean will review the request and may deny it or may defer to the Steering Committee for review. The Steering Committee may deny the appeal, in which case the original grade will stand, or may recommend that the student be allowed to repeat the examination with a new Exam Committee.

8.9) After the Exam
The following are required and are due after successful completion of the Qualifying Exam (see Timeline for due dates):

- MS Diploma Form (indicating your full (legal) name as it should be printed on the MS diploma)
- PhD Learning Environment Survey (a link to the survey will be emailed to the student from the Office of Institutional Research)

Student Advisory Committee Meeting:
Following the exam, each student must identify their Student Advisory Committee and schedule a meeting prior to the next fall registration period. Further information on the requirements for the SAC are available on the Graduate Division website. If a student had a SAC meeting prior to taking the exam, the next meeting should be held within one year of the first meeting.

Qualification Jubilation:
The annual Qualification Jubilation is held in recognition of the students who have successfully completed the Qualifying Exam. At this event, the Master of Science diploma is distributed to the degree recipients.
Mentor Acknowledgement for the Qualifying Examination

Student Name: ________________________________

Mentor Name: ________________________________

Co-Mentor Name: ________________________________ (If applicable)

The Responsibilities of the Mentor

The mentor is very important in a graduate student’s training. In preparation for the Qualifying Exam, the mentor must:

- work with the student to help the student develop an understanding of the field and relevant literature,
- work with the student to articulate mutually agreeable (scientific) specific aims and provide guidance and recommendations on the development of the experimental approach,
- read the student’s written proposal,
- provide feedback during the development of the written proposal,
- not write any part of the proposal,
- not comment on or provide feedback on the independent aim if one is required by the department.

Mentors must remember that the student is responsible for the crafting of a document that speaks in her or his voice. Mentors must understand that it is not their ideas that are being examined, but the student’s understanding of these scientific ideas and the student’s potential to conduct the proposed studies. Students and mentors should discuss reasonable time away from the bench to write the proposal and prepare for the exam. If there is a difference in agreement about “reasonable time,” student and/or mentor should contact the Sr. Academic Advisor, Dr. Joan Berman, or the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. Preliminary data are not required for either the written proposal or the oral exam.

I agree to abide by these guidelines as a mentor of a student taking the Qualifying Exam this year.

I acknowledge the proposed committee members and tentative Specific Aims as listed on my student’s Qualifying Exam Form 1.

________________________________________  Date
Mentor Signature

________________________________________  Date
Co-Mentor Signature

Please submit completed form to the Graduate Office (Belfer 202 or by email to qualexam@einsteinmed.edu).
SECTION IX: The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and Required Meetings

9.1) Purpose of the Student Advisory Committee

The purpose of the Student Advisory Committee (SAC) is to provide critical feedback on the research plan, to assess experimental progress, and to advise the student when to write/defend the Thesis. The SAC is charged with aiding the student in moving efficiently towards the PhD degree, while at the same time maximizing the significance and impact of the thesis research.

The progress of modern science is measured by the quality and quantity of peer-reviewed scientific publications. These publications are frequently used to distinguish between the holders of “minimal” and “competitive” PhD degrees in the postgraduate job market. Because of this, the SAC meeting should focus on the factors that are limiting the student’s progress toward publishing high quality peer-reviewed scientific results.

9.2) Composition of the SAC

The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) is chosen by the student and the mentor and consists of:

- Several faculty members—typically three to four—in addition to the mentor (and/or co-mentor).
  - At least three members must be an Assistant Professor or higher on the tenure-track.
  - The committee members may be from any department and, if relevant, may include one member from an outside institution
- At least one member of the SAC must be a senior faculty member (Associate Professor or Professor), who has successfully mentored one or more graduate students to successful completion of the Thesis.
- One member must be designated as the chair of the SAC, who will serve in this capacity throughout the student’s graduate training. The mentor or co-mentor must not be the chair of their own student’s SAC.
- An Associate or research track faculty member may serve on a Student Advisory Committee, but must not be from the same lab as the student on whose SAC they serve.
- A Postdoctoral Fellow or Instructor may not serve on the Advisory Committee of a graduate student.

The student should choose members whom he or she can trust to provide honest advice and critiques. Ideally, the SAC should consist of scientists who are able to comment on the student’s goals and can suggest if a goal does not sound feasible or if an approach seems too risky or unlikely to yield significant results. Each member should be capable of providing cogent, timely, and relevant feedback about the student’s project. It is not essential that all members be expert in the field, but it helps to find at least one.

The student, in consultation with the mentor, may change the composition of the SAC at any time. However, barring an unusual circumstance, the chair is to remain the same. The composition of the SAC is meant to be dynamic and may go through several changes during the time a student progresses to the Dissertation. Each student is strongly encouraged to get to know their SAC members. If the members are truly familiar with the student and their work, they may also be able to provide useful letters of recommendation. If a SAC member is from another institution, the student should request additional information from the Office of Biotechnology and Business Development at biotech@einsteinmed.edu.

9.3) Frequency of SAC Meetings

At minimum, frequency of SAC meetings is determined by the student’s year in the program.

- 2nd and 3rd year students: must meet with the SAC at least once every 12 months
- 4th year and above students: must meet with their SAC at least once every 6 months
Failure to schedule and meet with your Student Advisory Committee may result in a registration hold (affecting your student status) or academic probation. Repeated delays and failures to meet with the SAC will result in a mandated appearance before the Academic Affairs Committee.

The student, the mentor, the SAC, or the Academic Affairs Committee may require the student to meet with the SAC at more frequent intervals. The span of time between SAC meetings is referred to below as a “project period.”

The student should schedule a SAC meeting when it is due and should not postpone a meeting on the basis of anticipated scientific results. Students who do not meet their SAC meeting requirement(s) will be blocked from online registration in the succeeding semester. Release of this registrar’s hold and continuation in the program requires approval of the associate dean for graduate programs.

9.4) Scheduling an Advisory Committee Meeting

The following recommendations may be helpful.

- **Setting a date**
  Scheduling a meeting involves finding a time that is a suitable fit with everyone’s schedule. Start to schedule the meeting early – at least one month before the target date. Fourth-year or above students are required to have at least two meetings per year. To facilitate scheduling, students may elect to take advantage of websites that support online appointment scheduling.

- **Committee attendance**
  Occasionally, it may be difficult to schedule a time when every one of the SAC members can attend. The student should still go ahead with the meeting on schedule if a majority of the committee members are present. It is permissible to have a committee member participate via Skype or other electronic means.

- **Reserving a room and equipment**
  If meeting in-person, remember to schedule a conference room for an appropriate length of time. Also, remember to schedule the use of any audiovisual equipment that you will need for the meeting.

- **Reminding the participants**
  Remind the committee members of the time and place of the meeting several days in advance.

9.5) The Student Advisory Committee Progress Report (Progress Report)

It is required that a student submit a goal-based Progress Report to all members of the Student Advisory Committee at least one week before the meeting. The length of this report should be one to three (1-3) pages, single-spaced, and may include figures. The Progress Report should allow the SAC to assess the student’s progress toward a set of previously stated goals, to identify barriers to the submission of the student’s next scientific manuscript and to help the student to develop a set of new goals for the next project period.

In the absence of any directives to the contrary issued by the SAC, the Progress Report should be written in four sections as described below. It may also include figures to document the student’s scientific progress.

a. **Current Goals and Rationales**
   The goals and their scientific rationales for the current project period are listed exactly as they were specified at the previous SAC meeting.

b. **Progress Toward the Current Goals**
   For each goal, the student should provide a description of the progress made toward that goal. For goals that have not been met completely, a discussion of the difficulties that arose should be provided. Members of the SAC will understand that many factors may affect the student’s progress toward a goal, including its technical feasibility, the time required to meet alternate goals and the effect of any changes made to the direction of the student’s project.

c. **Additional Progress (optional)**
The student may provide a description of any additional scientific progress made during the current project period. The progress described in this section would ordinarily not be directly associated with a Current Goal but could form the basis of a New Goal.

d. **Proposed New Goals and Rationales**
The student should create a list of several Proposed New Goals to be achieved during the next project period. These Proposed New Goals should address the question of what barriers must be overcome next for the student to submit a peer-reviewed manuscript for publication. These proposed goals will be refined through discussion of the Progress Report by the student and the SAC (see below). For each Proposed New Goal a short Rationale (one or two sentences) should be provided to indicate why this Proposed New Goal is scientifically necessary.

The student should retain copies of all Progress Reports. The SAC may ask the student to provide a copy of the Progress Report from the previous project period. In addition, the description of research progress provided in these reports may help the student to write the initial draft of a scientific manuscript or a chapter of the thesis dissertation.

### 9.6) A Typical Advisory Committee Meeting

The emphasis of the Student Advisory Committee meeting should be placed on the student’s progress toward a set of previously specified goals, the identification of current difficulties, potential solutions to these difficulties and the specification of a set of new goals for the next project period. Progress toward these goals should bring the student closer to submitting a peer-reviewed manuscript and to completion of the requirements for the PhD degree. The SAC should also be available to support any efforts made by the student to acquire external financial support.

The length of time and the agenda of a Student Advisory Committee meeting will vary, depending on the needs of the student and the members of the SAC. However, a typical SAC meeting is described below.

- **Distribution of Forms (prior to the meeting)**
  Forms for the SAC meeting are to be completed electronically through One45, the evaluation software. Prior to the meeting, the student must complete the student form, and distribute the Student Advisory Committee Member Report Form to the members of the SAC and the Student Advisory Committee Chair Summary Report Form to the chair of the SAC through One45. Instructions on how to complete and distribute the forms are available on the Graduate Division website.

- **Review of the Student’s Progress**
  The student is asked to leave the room for the SAC’s initial discussion of the student’s overall progress toward the PhD degree, the quality of the student’s Progress Report and any issues that the mentor wishes to raise. The SAC will then direct the mentor to leave the room to allow the student to discuss progress or issues with members of the SAC.

- **Scientific Background, Results and Plans**
  The student then provides a description of any necessary scientific background, experimental results and future plans as part of a PowerPoint presentation. The SAC may decide, particularly after several meetings, that a scientific background review is not necessary or may decide to limit the time devoted to this review. This presentation should include specific references to the current goals and should conclude with the student’s proposed new goals for the next project period.

- **Discussion of Scientific Results and Plans**
  A discussion by the student and the SAC of the student’s scientific results and plans in terms of the current goals and proposed new goals may occur during the PowerPoint presentation or after it has been completed.

- **Specification of New Goals and Rationales**
  Toward the end of the SAC meeting, the student and members of the SAC should produce several new goals and rationales for the next project period. These new goals should direct focus toward the barriers that
stand in the way of the student’s submission of a peer-reviewed scientific publication. The scope of these new goals should be appropriate for the time span of the next project period, if all goes well. The new goals will usually specify experimental work but may also refer to the submission of written work, including a scientific manuscript, the Thesis or an application for extramural funding. The student should provide members of the SAC with a copy of these new goals and rationales soon after the conclusion of the SAC meeting. These new goals will become the current goals of the next project period’s Progress Report.

- **SAC Report Forms (after the meeting)**
  Following the meeting, the members of the SAC and the chair must complete a report form through One45. The chair form, however, requires consensus from the committee on certain questions. At the end of the meeting, the chair will discuss these items with the other members of the SAC. Each member submits a report form. The chair will then be able to access the member comments. The chair then completes the Chair Summary Form. Once the chair submits the summary report, the student will then be able to view and print the forms, if needed, for submission to their mentor(s), and departmental office. The student is responsible for following up with their SAC to ensure that all members including the chair have completed and submitted their evaluation form through One45. Member report forms are due within 5 days after the meeting. The Chair Summary Report form is due within seven days after the meeting.

  **Note:** A student who fails to progress in Thesis Research or are, in the opinion of mentor and/or SAC, performing poorly, may be recommended by the mentor or SAC, for review by the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC). This may involve appearance of both the student and mentor at an AAC meeting to discuss lack of progress and the development of an academic plan. Failure to progress in Thesis Research is grounds for academic probation or dismissal from the Graduate Division.

**Recording the SAC meeting**
A SAC meeting may be recorded to enable an absent committee member to later hear the meeting/discussion, and then provide feedback to the student. However, the student must obtain written permission from the other committee members and their mentor(s) prior to the meeting. If one participant declines recording the meeting, then the meeting cannot be recorded.

**9.7) Permission to Write the Thesis**

The student will ordinarily have discussed with the mentor whether it may soon be appropriate to begin writing the Thesis. However, before doing so, the student must obtain permission from their Student Advisory Committee. Permission to write and defend must be documented on the SAC Summary Report. Although the student may have met the minimum requirements for course work, the Qualifying Exam, and the requirement for the submission of a suitable scientific publication, the SAC need not issue permission to begin writing the Thesis if it believes that the student’s overall progress or scientific maturity are insufficient for the defense of the Thesis.

If permission is granted to write and defend and the thesis (and defense paperwork) is not submitted within six months, then another Student Advisory Committee meeting will be required.
SECTION X: The Doctoral Dissertation, Defense, and Program Completion Requirements

Students must begin planning for the thesis defense at least six to nine months prior to the anticipated date of defense.

10.1) The Doctoral Dissertation

The doctoral thesis, or dissertation, is the all-encompassing document describing original research carried out by the graduate student in the laboratory in pursuit of the Doctor of Philosophy degree. In general, the research has been structured to answer a question or group of questions, or to explore particular hypotheses, and has resulted in a body of novel data. The historical background, the scientific context of the experiments, and the data are presented and discussed extensively in the dissertation.

Manuscript Requirement to Defend and to Graduate

Students are required to publish at least one first-author paper from their original thesis research, or if not, to document and append to the Thesis, the final draft of a submitted first-author manuscript. The manuscript should be indicated as "In press" or "Submitted" (and to which journal), or "In revision" (for which journal).

First-author manuscript must be submitted no less than three weeks prior to the date of defense. For "Submitted" manuscripts, confirmation from the journal to which the manuscript was submitted must be forwarded to the Graduate Division office, and student must also provide a copy of the confirmation to the Thesis Defense Committee upon submission of the thesis prior to the defense. (See timeline for Submission of the Thesis Prior to the Defense section below.) A submission to bioRxiv, or other electronic repository, is not acceptable to meet this requirement.

It is not unusual for the thesis research to generate two to three publications in which the student is the leading author. However, a specific number of published manuscripts is not required, and it is expected that some of the thesis research may be published following the thesis defense. A co-first authorship paper meets the requirement. All collaborative work that contributes to the Dissertation must be clearly indicated in the text. Each Chapter should indicate which publications (if any) are represented by the described work. All collaborative work that contributes to the Dissertation must be clearly indicated in the text.

Instructions for Preparing the Dissertation

Two dissertation formats are generally accepted by the departments within the Graduate Division. Students must consult with the appropriate faculty in their department to ensure that their dissertation format is acceptable by their department. ‘Format A’ is the traditional organization of a dissertation. ‘Format B’ is organized with each chapter corresponding to a published (or in preparation) journal article. However, it is emphasized that a collection of published papers cannot be submitted in place of a dissertation. An improperly prepared dissertation may be returned to the student by the Thesis Defense Committee without review.

General Instructions

In general, a successful thesis ranges from 125 – 225 pages without references.

i) Manual of Style: On points of style (including capitalization and punctuation) not covered by the above, follow the recommendations of your concentration. The style selected should be adhered to strictly and consistently. If no style is preferred by the Department, the Manual for Writers of Dissertations by Kate L. Turabian, University of Chicago Press, should be used.

ii) Line Spacing: The text of the dissertation is to be double-spaced except for indented quotations, footnotes, figures, legends, and bibliography which are to be single-spaced.

Paper: Printed copies submitted to the Thesis Defense Committee may be duplicated on standard photocopy paper, printed double-sided, and secured using either a three-hole binder or a spring binder.

Pagination: Every page in the dissertation must be numbered. There are two series of page numbers. The first, in small Roman numerals, begins with the title page and ends with the last page preceding Chapter I. The second series, in Arabic numerals, begins with the first page of Chapter I and continues throughout the Dissertation, including graphs, illustrations, tables, bibliography and appendices.

Margins: The top, bottom and right margins are to be 1.0 inches; the left margin, 1.5 inches. All tables, charts and illustrations are to have left-hand margins of no less than 1.5 inches because of binding requirements. Any over-sized material may be folded in from the right, top and bottom in such a way as to leave a 1.5-inch margin on the left side.

Spelling: The spelling given in any standard dictionary may be used. However, whatever forms are adopted should be adhered to consistently throughout the text of the dissertation.

Quotations: Quotations of more than three lines should be single-spaced, set off from the text in a separate paragraph and indented four spaces, with double-spacing between paragraphs. Opening and closing quotation marks are omitted. Quotations of three lines or less are enclosed in quotation marks and are run into the text.

Tables, Figures, Reproductions: The recommendations of the style manual are to be followed in preparing tables, figures and other graphic materials. Tables and Figures and all legends should be embedded into the document.

Digital Media or jpeg for high resolution images may be submitted on an accompanying CD-ROM.

References and Footnotes: References to published articles should be cited by author and year (i.e. Student and Mentor, 1995, or Student et al., 1995). Every reference listed must appear in the bibliography (see below for “Bibliography”).

Footnotes are to be placed at the foot of the page and numbered consecutively for each chapter.

The generally accepted thesis formats (Formats A and B) are described below. The format chosen must be maintained throughout the dissertation. Students must discuss with their mentor the dissertation format acceptable to their department/concentration.

FORMAT A

Introduction: The comprehensive Dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter I). This section should include a historical review of the student's area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the current status of the field. The student should then present working hypotheses and give an introduction to the system and the thesis research. The student should consult with his or her mentor in order to agree upon how extensive a historical review is appropriate to the Dissertation.
ii) **Methods and Materials:** The protocols and procedures used in the dissertation studies should be presented in sufficient detail to allow reproduction of the experiments (Chapter II). A dissertation provides an appropriate vehicle for experimental details that might be omitted from journal articles due to space limitations.

iii) **Results and Discussion:** Chapters III ...n of the Dissertation should present the results of the conducted studies followed by a discussion of their significance. The format for these chapters should follow that in the suggested manual of style or of a highly respected scientific journal, mutually agreed upon by the student and the mentor.

iv) Conclusions: A dissertation should end with a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted including an assessment of the significance of the research, arguments of interpretation, evaluation of material included in appendices, and a plan for the experimental resolution of unanswered questions.

**FORMAT B**

i) **Introduction:** The comprehensive dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter I). This section should include a historical review of the student’s area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the current status of the field. The student should then present working hypotheses and give an introduction to the system and the thesis research. The student should consult with his or her mentor in order to agree upon how extensive a historical review is appropriate to the dissertation.

ii) **Manuscripts:** The body of the thesis should be in the form of manuscripts that have been or are ready to be submitted for publication in a scholarly journal. Note that the format and style requirements described above must be adhered to for each and every chapter of the dissertation. Each manuscript will constitute a chapter and will include a brief Introduction, Methods and Materials, Results, and Discussion. The candidate must be the first author of these manuscripts and must be responsible for their preparation. A footnote to the introduction must give bibliographic information for manuscript constituting the chapter. This information should include the full names of the authors, institutional affiliations, the journal and the status of the manuscript (i.e., submitted, published or in press).

iii) **Separate Chapter for Unpublished Data:** If the student is not first author: One of several options may be appropriate in cases in which the student is not first author of a manuscript that is to be presented in the dissertation as a chapter: 1) The student may extract his or her own work from the manuscript for presentation in the Dissertation; 2) The manuscript may be included as an appendix to the Dissertation; 3) The manuscript may be included as a chapter if the student was responsible for the preparation of a significant portion of the manuscript. For all multi-authored manuscripts, the exact contribution of the student should be stated in an introductory statement or footnote preceding each chapter or in the appendix. If figures from a multi-author manuscript are used, it is imperative to indicate which figures are the student’s works and which represent the work of other authors. In all cases in which figures are used, appropriate acknowledgement must be given. In addition, any contributions of co-authors must also be specified in the acknowledgment section.

Wherever pertinent, coworkers and helpers and other contributors should be acknowledged in the body of the text.

iv) **Conclusions:** A dissertation should end with a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted including an assessment of the significance of the research, arguments of interpretation, evaluation of material included in appendices, and a plan for the experimental resolution of unanswered questions.

The following sections of the dissertation are common to both formats:

i) **Title Page:** The title page is to list at the top the title of the Dissertation, student’s full name and signature, the full name and title of the Thesis mentor (and Co-mentor, if applicable). At the bottom of the title page, the following statement must be included:
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences,
Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, (month and year)

The month and year given on the title page is to reflect the month and year of the thesis defense. A sample title page is shown at the end of this Section.

ii) **Abstract**: The abstract of the dissertation is to include: a hypothesis, the procedures followed, the significant results and the general conclusions. The abstract is to be presented on a separate page headed with the word ABSTRACT in capital letters centered on the page. On the next line is the title of the dissertation. The following line is the full name of the student. The length of the abstract must not exceed 750 words.

iii) **Acknowledgments**: This feature is not required, but offers a convenient opportunity to express the writer's appreciation to persons who have been especially helpful or to the publishers of materials from which data have been drawn and to whomever else acknowledgment should be given. The appropriate training or research grants should also be acknowledged in the Dissertation.

iv) **Table of Contents**: The table of contents should list the chapters or other division headings of the dissertation, using the same words that appear in the body of the report. The numbers of the pages on which these items appear should also be given. The table of contents is to be followed by separate page listings for tables and for figures and illustrations.

v) **Bibliography**: The format for the references included in the bibliography should follow that in the suggested manual of style or a highly respected scientific journal. At a minimum, each reference must include the names of all authors, the title of the article, the name of the journal, the volume number and the pages of the article. Titles of articles must be included. The bibliographies of the dissertation may be compiled for each chapter separately or together at the end of the dissertation, at the discretion of the mentor and the student.

vi) **Supplementary Materials and Methods**: It may be appropriate for a more extensive presentation of Materials and Methods to be given in an appendix where it may be helpful to other investigators who wish to utilize procedures developed by the candidate. The candidate may also wish to include as appendix material more detailed presentations of data than appropriate for a scholarly journal or thesis.

vii) **List of Abbreviations**: A full and complete list of all abbreviations used in the text must be included.

viii) **Appendix**: The appendix may include but is not limited to:

   - Published papers – reprints, and/or submitted manuscripts. Published articles and/or submitted manuscripts must be included in the thesis appendix; printed PDFs are sufficient. The appendix pages may be separately numbered, if desired. The page numbering in the Appendix does not continue from the Thesis page numbering.
   - Drafts of manuscripts expected to be submitted shortly
   - Surveys of patient or other data
   - High resolution figures
   - Computer programs

**Including Published Work in the Dissertation**

Students are strongly encouraged to submit their Dissertation studies for publication in peer-reviewed journals during the course of their studies. In order to fulfill copyright obligations, papers published by graduate students before the Thesis Defense, that are intended to be included in the Dissertation, should carry the footnote:

"Data in this paper are from a thesis to be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine"
All publications for which the student is first author should be appended to the submitted thesis. Published articles and/or submitted manuscripts must be included in the thesis appendix. Co-first author publications are allowed. If there are no first-author publication at the time of thesis submission, a submitted first-author manuscript must be appended, even if this draft ultimately requires additional experimental results. The manuscript should be written in the style of a specific (indicated) journal.

**Copyright Permissions**

Students must obtain permission to use previously copyrighted materials. For further copyright guidelines, go to http://www.einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/thesis.aspx or contact the Einstein Reference Librarians.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. All documents prepared as part of a student’s academic or research activities should be free of plagiarism. This includes, but is not limited to, written examinations in classes, Qualifying Exam proposals, thesis proposals, fellowship applications, manuscripts, and the PhD thesis.

### 10.2) The Thesis Defense Committee

**Composition of the Thesis Defense Committee**

The Thesis Defense Committee serves as examiners of the doctoral dissertation and oral defense. Every candidate for the PhD degree must submit a dissertation and pass an oral defense (or exam) of the thesis.

The Thesis Defense Committee is selected by the student and the mentor:

- The defense committee must consist of a minimum of five members, on the tenure-track ranked assistant professor or higher
  - At least four of the five members must be from the departments that comprise the Graduate Division.
  - One member must be designated as the committee chair who must be a senior member of the faculty (professor or associate professor), and has had experience serving of a defense committee. The chair does not have to be a member of the student’s home department.
  - At least two members must hold a primary or secondary appointment in the student’s home department/concentration.
  - Inclusion of an examiner from outside the institution with expertise in the area of the student's research is desirable, although the fifth member of the Committee may be an additional member of the basic science (or PCI) faculty. The external examiner must hold a current faculty position.
    - A former Einstein faculty member may serve on the defense committee if they are in emeritus or distinguished status, or hold a current faculty position elsewhere.
  - For students in the PCI department:
    - At least one faculty member must have a primary or secondary appointment in a basic science department (other than PCI),
    - At least one of the members on the defense committee must have had prior experience serving on a Thesis Defense Committee.

- Each student is strongly encouraged to designate a sixth faculty member as an alternate in the event that an examiner cannot attend the thesis defense. *There must be five members present at the thesis defense.*
- The Thesis Defense Committee must consist of faculty members who are eligible to train graduate students (i.e. tenure-track faculty ranked assistant professor or higher). An instructor, associate, or faculty on the research track may not serve on the Thesis Defense Committee.
• The name of any Thesis Defense Committee member who was a collaborator with the student must be indicated by the check box on the submitted Thesis Defense Committee Form. A collaborator may not serve as chair of the Thesis Defense Committee.

• The student’s mentor and/or co-mentor may not serve on the Thesis Defense Committee although the mentor and/or co-mentor are present at the thesis defense.

• If the student has an associate (contingent) mentor, this mentor cannot serve on the Thesis Defense Committee. An associate mentor is a basic science faculty member designated by the student and primary mentor to oversee the student’s laboratory research while the primary mentor is physically no longer at Einstein or away on sabbatical.

If necessary, the Graduate Executive Committee will review, on an individual basis, any Thesis Defense Committee whose make up is not in line with these guidelines.

Approval of the Thesis Defense Committee

The associate dean for graduate programs must approve all Thesis Defense Committees. At least two months prior to the scheduled defense date, the student must submit to the Graduate Division office:

• a completed and signed Thesis Defense Committee Form,
• a full Curriculum Vitae (CV), and
• a copy of the Thesis Seminar Announcement.

The Thesis Defense Committee Form is available on the forms page of the Graduate Division website, and requires signatures from the student’s Thesis Defense Committee chair, mentor(s), department chair and department administrator. International students on a student visa must have their Thesis Defense Committee Form approved by the Einstein Office of International Services (OIS).

Once the associate dean has approved the Thesis Defense Committee, the student, mentor(s) and defense committee Chair will be sent an email confirmation from the Graduate Division office.

All subsequent changes to the Thesis Defense Committee must be approved by the associate dean. In the event that changes in the committee must be made, and the associate dean is not available for consultation, the approval of the appropriate department chair should accompany the final report of the committee.

Note:

• Students must successfully complete all required coursework and the Qualifying Examination prior to submission of the Thesis Defense Committee Form.
• All defending students must attend the thesis defense workshop on plagiarism and proper reference citation offered in the fall each year.

Scheduling of the Thesis Defense

The Thesis Defense and Seminar are scheduled by the student, who is responsible for finding the rooms and confirming that all members of the Thesis Defense Committee can attend. The Thesis Seminar is scheduled immediately before the oral defense. The student’s department administrator may assist with room reservations and drafting the Thesis Seminar Announcement. A copy of the Thesis Seminar Announcement must be submitted to the Graduate Division office with the Thesis Defense Committee Form.

All expenses related to the thesis and defense are the responsibility of the student’s department. An honorarium is not appropriate and will not be provided by the Graduate Division.

Note: No thesis seminar or defense is to be scheduled on official program holidays as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar (https://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/calendar.aspx).
10.3) Submission of the Thesis Prior to the Defense

_Myth:_ At least four weeks prior to the scheduled date of defense, the student must submit the signed Mentor Acknowledgement form to the Graduate Division office. By signing this form, the mentor is acknowledging that he/she has read the thesis document and that the Thesis document is ready for submission to the Thesis Defense Committee. The student is responsible for submitting the Thesis to the mentor in a timely manner so that there is time to make any additional revisions prior to this four-week deadline.

_Reality:_ The student is required to retain copies of the signed acknowledgement form for each member of their Thesis Defense Committee. (The _Mentor Acknowledgement of the Thesis Document_ form is available further below in these Guidelines.)

For students in the department of Neuroscience, a copy of the completed thesis must be submitted to the chairman of the department of Neuroscience at least four weeks prior to the scheduled date of defense.

Three weeks prior to the defense:
At least three weeks prior to the scheduled date of defense, a copy of the Thesis, along with a copy of the Mentor Acknowledgement form, must be submitted to each member of the Thesis Defense Committee. At the point of submission of the thesis to the defense committee, the student must have submitted at least one first-author manuscript. Submitted first-author manuscript must be included in the thesis appendix. See _Manuscript Requirement to Defend and to Graduate_ section above.

Two weeks prior to the defense:
A member of the Thesis Defense Committee may require a postponement of the Thesis Defense if this submission requirement is not met. Once the Thesis is received, within one week (i.e. two weeks prior to the defense) any Thesis Defense Committee member may request a pre-defense meeting of the Committee if, in the opinion of the Committee member, the Dissertation is not defensible. If the defense is indefensible, the Thesis may be returned to the student for substantial re-writing and/or new experiments and rewrite. If the Thesis is returned to the student, a new defense date must be set. The Thesis Defense Committee chair must notify the associate dean and graduate division registrar of any postponement.

10.4) Conduct of the Thesis Defense

The purpose of the thesis defense is to demonstrate in an oral form the knowledge and skills acquired to carry out research that provides new information on a significant problem. The thesis defense is an exam, and as such, the student should be well prepared for the exam. The following are recommended guidelines for conducting the thesis defense.

Presentation of a Public Seminar
The presentation of a public seminar at the College of Medicine is required for successful completion of the PhD degree. This seminar also fulfills a New York State requirement that a PhD candidate demonstrate his or her ability to present scientific material in public.

- The thesis seminar, whenever possible, should immediately precede the oral defense.
- A copy of the announcement of the seminar must be forwarded to the Graduate Division office.
- The announcement of the time, place and subject of the public seminar should be widely disseminated at the College of Medicine.
- A draft copy of this announcement is required with the submission of the Thesis Defense Committee form to the Graduate Division office.
The Oral Defense

The chair of the defense committee is selected by the student and mentor, and must be a senior member of the faculty (see Composition of the Thesis Defense Committee). The chair will have received the Thesis Defense Committee Report Form from the Graduate Division office and will bring this form to the defense. (The Defense Report Form is also available on the Graduate Division Forms webpage.) The chair will identify to the group any members of the defense committee who have acted as a collaborator during the course of the student’s research, and will confirm that the manuscript submission requirement has been met.

At the commencement of the defense, the student should be excused and the chair (and/or mentor) will then provide a profile of the student’s background, course work, and publication record. The chair, in consultation with the examiners, will then determine how the thesis defense will be conducted. If any of the examiners expresses a serious concern with the content of the thesis, a strategy should be developed whereby the questioning can address these concerns in a constructive manner. The student will then be asked to return and the exam can commence. If a thesis seminar was not given immediately prior to the defense, the student should give a short (~10 minutes) synopsis of the major findings of his or her research.

It is strongly recommended that an external examiner be invited to the thesis defense. If an external examiner has been invited to participate in the thesis defense, it is recommended that this examiner be invited to commence the questioning period. Examiners will be allowed a ~10 min question period in turn, with the opportunity to have a second round of questioning. Alternatively, questions will be permitted to follow logically from the initial set of questions, with examiners sharing the examination period.

The mentor or co-mentors may be present during the defense, but cannot ask questions, and are not expected to answer any questions for the student unless clarification is asked for from the examiners.

The chair should ensure that the defense is conducted in a professional manner, and that each examiner has the opportunity to ask questions. The chair should also ensure that the length of the exam is appropriate. A typical exam period is one to two hours.

After the chair has determined that the defense is at an end, the mentor and the student are asked to leave the room. The Thesis Defense Committee vote is confidential and the mentor should leave the room together with the student during the voting procedure. The defense is discussed, and a decision is made. The decision is determined by majority vote. If the vote is for “minor revision” then the grade is Pass and the mentor is usually given the responsibility of checking the final revised document. If the vote is for “major revision”, a member of the defense committee, or subcommittee, is usually assigned to review and accept the corrections on behalf of the committee. A decision for “major revision” results in the grade of Conditional Pass (see below).


A Thesis Defense Report Form is available on the Graduate Division website. When the examination is complete, the members of the Thesis Defense Committee will assign a grade and sign the report form. By majority vote of the committee, student may receive a grade of Pass, Conditional Pass or Fail for the examination. The committee chair, or the defending student, must return the signed original Thesis Defense Report Form to the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202) immediately following the oral defense.

Pass: The student has a maximum of three months from the date of defense to satisfy all additional requirements for PhD program completion. See below, Absolutely Required for the PhD Degree. Note: the three months following a successful thesis defense is for the purpose of making final revisions to the thesis.

Conditional Pass: A grade of Conditional Pass will require the student to complete extensive revisions of the thesis as set forth by the Thesis Defense Committee. In addition to the Thesis Defense Report Form, the chair must also
submit a written summary outlining what revisions are necessary to the thesis and recommendations for rectifying deficiencies in the thesis.

In the event of a grade of Conditional Pass, the student has a maximum of five weeks to revise the thesis and submit it to the Thesis Defense Committee. The committee then has three weeks to review the revised thesis and submit a final grade of Pass or Fail to the Graduate Division office. All thesis deficiencies must be corrected and a final thesis defense grade provided within a maximum of two months from the date of defense.

If the student receives a final grade of Pass for the revised Thesis, the student must now submit the necessary paperwork for program completion as outlined below. Note: The student has a maximum of three months from the date of defense to satisfy all requirements for program completion following a grade of Conditional Pass.

Fail: The grade of Fail for the defense will lead to complete review of the student’s academic record and thesis defense by the Academic Affairs Committee. Re-defense is at the discretion of the Academic Affairs Committee who may call both student and mentor to appear at an AAC meeting. Should the student be allowed to re-defend, the student and mentor, working together with the Student Advisory Committee, must submit to the AAC and the associate dean for graduate programs a written plan for re-defense and completion of all requirements for the PhD degree. In some cases, the AAC may recommend dismissal from the PhD program. No PhD degree will be awarded in the event of dismissal.

10.6) Completion of All Requirements after Successful Thesis Defense

Absolutely Required for the PhD Degree

The following must be submitted to the Graduate Division office:

- Graduation Checklist (signed by the student),
- A printed copy of the email confirmation from ProQuest (see below: Submission of the Final Thesis and Abstract to ProQuest)
- A copy of the signed Thesis Title page (signed by the student and mentor(s)),
- A printed copy of the Survey of Earned Doctorate Certificate of Completion. The survey is to be completed online at https://sed-nces.org,
- PhD Diploma Form (indicating full (legal) name as it should be printed on the diploma,
- PhD Alumni Survey Form (providing a forwarding address and new contact information),
- PhD Learning Environment Survey (the link to which is provided by the Office of Institutional Research)
- Honorary “Thank You” Certificate Form (optional)

Submission of the Final Thesis and Abstract to ProQuest

The final version of the thesis must be submitted online to ProQuest at https://secure.etdadmin.com/einstein. The thesis must be submitted as a PDF document, with an originally signed Thesis Title page included as the first page. The title page must be signed (in black or blue ink) by the candidate and the thesis mentor (and co-mentor, if applicable). ProQuest will register the thesis for US Copyright, and also provide bound copies of the thesis. The Graduate Division will cover the fee for copyright registration and for four bound copies of the thesis (a student copy, a mentor copy, a department copy, and a Library copy) and a microfilm copy of the thesis for the Library. The student may order additional bound copies of the thesis at their own expense through ProQuest.

Additional materials such as media files, and written permission from other copyright holders of the thesis are also to be submitted through ProQuest.


The following must be submitted online to the Office of Student Affairs:

- Commencement Form (to be completed online closer to the date of the commencement ceremony. Graduates will be notified via email when it is time to complete this required online form.)
• **Yearbook Page** (optional) link will be sent to graduates and prospective graduates.

An MD-PhD student who is moving on to the clinical wards after the defense must submit the following within three months of the date of defense:

- the final copy of the thesis to ProQuest (as indicated above)
- a printed copy of the thesis submission email confirmation from ProQuest
- a copy of the signed thesis title page
- complete the Learning Environment Survey (to be provided by the Office of Institutional Research)

The remaining Graduate Division paperwork and the Graduation Application for the Office of Student Activities are due closer to the MD-PhD student's time of graduation. The student will be sent email notices as necessary regarding their specific due dates.

**Change in Status After the Thesis Defense (for PhD and MD-PhD Students)**

**MD-PhD Students:** If an MD-PhD student has successfully defended the PhD thesis, but has not completed the clinical phase of their training, the student will be granted the PhD degree (for the next upcoming degree-granting date) upon submission of the final paperwork that is absolutely required for the PhD degree.

**PhD Students:** A student who has successfully defended the Thesis may remain enrolled in the Graduate Programs as an “active student” for up to a maximum period of three months from the date of defense (to make final revisions to the Thesis) if funding is available and the student and mentor agree to this arrangement, and if the student remains in the lab.

A student has a maximum of three months from the date of defense to submit all required paperwork for program completion.

A student who has successfully defended the Thesis and has submitted all required paperwork for program completion and the PhD degree will no longer be an “active student” effective on the date all final paperwork is submitted. If the student is to remain at the institution, the student’s status must be changed to that of “Postdoctoral Fellow.”

**Note:**
- The student must inform the Graduate Division Registrar’s Office (gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu) of 1) any changes in address or contact information,
  2) plans to leave Einstein prior to submission of all required paperwork, or
  3) plans to change status to Postdoc.

  *Failure to inform the Graduate Office may jeopardize the student's degree completion status.*
- No student should leave the institution without notifying the Graduate Division Registrar’s Office in advance.

If the student is starting a new position prior to their three-month deadline and requires certification of the PhD degree for the new position, all final paperwork listed above must be submitted in order to receive certification that the PhD degree is earned.

In the event that a student leaves the institution (i.e. no longer on Einstein payroll) prior to completing all program requirements for the PhD degree, the student must apply for an unpaid Post-defense Leave of Absence by submitting the Leave of Absence Form to the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202) prior to leaving the institution.

**Note:**
- A student on an unpaid Post-defense Leave of Absence is no longer in active, full-time status and therefore no longer eligible for loan deferment.
• Medical benefits for a student on an unpaid Post-defense Leave of Absence will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student is terminated from payroll.
• The Post-defense Leave of Absence is allotted for a maximum of three months from the date of defense.
• As a condition of maintaining student status, all international students must pursue a “full course of study.” The Post-defense Leave of Absence is therefore not available to international students.

**Benefits:** If a student is enrolled in the Einstein Student Health Plan, the plan will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student terminates from payroll. For more information, contact the Einstein Benefits Office.

**Housing:** A student who resides in Einstein Housing must vacate housing within thirty days from the date all paperwork is submitted for program completion. Any other arrangements must be made directly with the Housing Manager.

**Stipend:** If a graduating student is leaving Einstein, the last scheduled paycheck will be a physical check mailed to the W2-Payroll address in Self-Service Banner. Update your address through the Luminis Portal before moving. If any subsequent address changes is needed, email payroll@einsteinmed.edu.

**Email and AD Credentials:** Fourteen days from the date of program completion, the student email will be changed to an ‘@alumni.einsteinmed.edu’ email address which the graduate is entitled to use in perpetuity. The student email address will no longer be accessible after fourteen days from the date of program completion. The Active Directory (AD) username will be disabled. If the graduate is to remain at Einstein as a postdoc, the proper email and AD credentials will be assigned through the HR onboarding process. Graduate will be sent appropriate communication from Montefiore IT regarding termination of the student email and information on how to access the alumni email.

**Change in Status for International Students**
An international student on a student visa, who intends to remain in the United States for further training after completing the PhD, must apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) at least three months prior to the date of the thesis defense. Students are strongly advised to consult the Office of International Services (OIS) at Einstein well in advance of any anticipated change in status. Visa restrictions and requirements change frequently.

**Granting of the PhD Degree**
There are three official PhD degree-granting dates: the end of September, the end of January, and May. These dates are published annually on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

All academic requirements must be fulfilled on or before the deadline date for each of the official degree-granting dates as indicated on the academic calendar. This includes completion of all coursework and other departmental requirements, successful defense of the Thesis (Conditional Pass is not sufficient), completion of all revisions, deposit of five copies of the Thesis in the department office, and completion of all required paperwork.

Upon satisfaction of all requirements for the PhD degree, certification of receipt of the PhD degree may be made by the Registrar at any time during the year. Formal award of the PhD diploma will be made at the subsequent Albert Einstein College of Medicine Commencement Exercises. **All financial obligations to the College of Medicine must be met prior to the release of the diploma.** Students must clear their accounts with the Housing Office, the Library, and the Office of Student Finance in order to receive the PhD diploma.

**Participation in the Annual Commencement Ceremony**

*September and January Graduates:*
September and January PhD degree-recipients will be contacted through email by the Graduate Division registrar’s office and/or the Office of Student Activities regarding participation in the formal Commencement Ceremony held...
in May. These graduates will have a deadline (typically in January) to complete the required online Commencement form.

**May Graduates:**
All academic requirements must be fulfilled **on or before the April deadline date** as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar in order to receive the May PhD degree-granting date and also participate in the Commencement Ceremony. **There will be no exception to this April deadline for a May PhD degree.** (See Absolutely Required for the PhD Degree above for program completion requirements.) The commencement form is due in March.
Mentor Acknowledgement of the Thesis Document

I, ________________________________ have read the Thesis document of
______________________________ (mentor name)

______________________________ and approve the submission of this Thesis document
______________________________ (student name)

to the Thesis Defense Committee.

Mentor Signature

Date
Sample Thesis Title Page

An Investigation of the Arginine Methylation in Toxoplasma gondii with Additional Observations on MAG1, a Cyst Wall Protein

by

Rama Brodie Yakubu

Candidate:

________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature                                           Signature

Rama Yakubu                                      Louis M. Weiss, M.D., M.P.H
Name                                               Name

Professor of Pathology and Medicine
Title

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

New York
[Month yyyy of Thesis Defense]
Sample Thesis Title Page (Co-Mentorship)

Iron Homeostasis-Regulatory Pathways Mediate Hematopoietic Stem Cell Fate

by

Yun-Ruei Christine Kao

Candidate:

Yun-Ruei Christine Kao

Thesis Advisors:

Britta Will, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine (Oncology)
Assistant Professor, Department of Cell Biology

Ulrich G. Steidl, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Cell Biology
Professor, Department of Medicine (Oncology)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences

Albert Einstein College of Medicine
New York
[Month yyyy of Thesis Defense]
SECTION XI: Co-Curricular Activities and Attendance at Scientific Conferences

11.1) Co-Curricular Activities

Co-Curricular Activity is defined as an activity that has some education value and relevant to the student’s graduate training. Some examples of co-curricular activity include serving as a teaching assistant or tutor for a course, serving as a mentor in the summer undergraduate research programs, participating in writing internships with the office of public affairs, etc.

To participate in a co-curricular activity, the student must:

a) Be in good academic standing, i.e. not be on academic probation
b) Be making acceptable progress towards completing their thesis research, as documented by their Student Advisory Committee reports
c) Have the consent of the mentor to participate in the co-curricular activity
d) Receive approval from the associate dean (or MSTP director if an MD-PhD student)
e) International students must receive additional approval from the Office of International Services for participation in co-curricular activities.

Co-curricular activities must be approved by the associate dean, or MSTP director if applicable. Students must submit a completed Request for Approval of Co-Curricular Activity Form to the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202) prior to starting any co-curricular positions.

Co-curricular activities are expected to not significantly detract from progress in a student’s thesis research and should be limited to a short duration, except in unusual circumstances. Mentor(s) reserve the right to prohibit the graduate student(s) in their lab from participating in teaching activities.

A student may be financially compensated for teaching efforts, in addition to the student stipend.

A student on an F-1 Visa must contact the Office of International Services for permission to participate in co-curricular activities.

11.2) Attendance at a Scientific Conference

Based on the availability of funds, the Graduate Division may provide shared support for student attendance at regional or national scientific meetings, if the student is making an oral or poster presentation. Customarily, support is divided among the student’s laboratory and the Graduate Division, (and often the department) and may be used for any combination of registration fees and travel expenses. The total amount of support provided by the Graduate Division is based on the availability of funds at the time the request is received. Student travel support is limited to one trip per year, per student.

Students must submit a completed Request for Funds to Attend a Scientific Conference Form to the Graduate Division office, prior to attending the conference/meeting.

11.3) Elective Externship

A student may request approval to participate in an elective externship at a Pharmaceutical/Research company. Eligibility for participation:

- must be in the second or third year of the PhD program (or PhD phase for an MSTP student)
- must have satisfied all course and course-credit requirements
must have successfully completed the Qualifying Examination
must be in good academic standing
must have full written permission from their thesis mentor

Externship qualifications:
- The elective externship must be scientifically related to the student’s thesis lab/project or otherwise justified as pertaining to the student’s development.
- Only one elective externship is permitted per student during their doctoral training.
- Externship must not exceed 4 months.

If the student meets the criteria noted above, the student must submit the Request for Approval of Elective Externship form to the Graduate Division office at least 3 months prior to the start of the externship. Student may not begin externship without the expressed written approval of the associate dean for graduate programs.

If externship is approved, the student will be registered for the “Elective Externship” course which will result in full-time status. This course will appear on the graduate record/transcript. At the end of the elective externship, an evaluation form must be completed and signed by the externship supervisor. A final grade of Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (NI) or Unsatisfactory (U) as provided by the externship supervisor will be recorded permanently on the student’s graduate record/transcript.

If the externship is paid, the student’s Einstein stipend will be suspended for the period of the externship. However, if the student is on the Einstein Student Health Plan, their health coverage will continue. The Graduate Division bears no financial responsibility for an elective externship.
SECTION XII: Vacation and Leaves of Absence

Links:
Graduate Division academic calendar:
https://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/calendar.aspx
Graduate Division forms:
https://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/graduate-forms.aspx
Einstein holiday schedule:
https://einsteinmed.edu/administration/human-resources/work-holiday-schedule-information.html

12.1) Vacation and Holidays

First-year students may take vacation only during the winter and spring holidays as posted on the Graduate Division academic calendar—consult the academic calendar posted on the Graduate Division website. Students may not schedule time off during class or exam periods—consult the course syllabus and/or course leader.

Students who have completed at least twelve months in the program may receive stipends during the normal period of vacation and holidays observed by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. (Visit the Human Resources website for a list of Einstein holidays). It is anticipated that students will take two weeks’ vacation time each year, exclusive of the winter and spring holidays as posted on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

All time off should be scheduled in consultation with the mentor.

Prolonged absence from the lab, greater than time agreed upon by the mentor(s), and/or limited participation in the lab with little or no communication with mentor, advisors, the associate dean or registrar’s office, may lead to review by the Academic Affairs Committee and subsequent academic probation or dismissal from the program.

12.2) Leaves of Absence


General Guidelines:
A student may request a voluntary leave of absence due to medical, personal or academic reasons. The associate dean for graduate programs, or the MSTP director may place a student on an emergency medical leave, if necessary.

The associate dean for graduate programs must approve all leaves of absence. Leaves of absence are recorded on the transcript, although the specific type of leave is not.

A Leave of Absence form (available on the Graduate Division Forms webpage) must be submitted to the Graduate Division office.

Medical leave of absence requires submission of a note from a health care provider in addition to the Leave of Absence form.

A student may take a leave of absence for up to six months at a time. If more time is needed, a request must be submitted in writing to the associate dean. The maximum duration for any type of leave or any combination of leaves of absence whether continuous or discontinuous is a total of twelve months. Leaves of absence with a combined total more than twelve months may lead to review by the Academic Affairs Committee and/or dismissal or withdrawal from the program.
A student who fails to re-matriculate following the expiration of a leave of absence will be administratively withdrawn from the Graduate Division. The student must then apply for re-admission if they wish to re-enroll.

A student who is absent from courses or the laboratory without notice may be subject to disciplinary actions, including referral to the Academic Affairs Committee and subsequent dismissal from the program.

**Student Stipend:**
A student on a parental leave or medical leave may receive stipend for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight work-weeks).

The academic and post-defense leaves of absence are unpaid.

Reference the specific leave types below for further information.

**Health Insurance and Housing While on Leave:**
Health insurance benefits may continue while the student is on leave for up to six months. However, prior to or immediately after the start date of a leave of absence, the student must consult with the Benefits Office regarding continuation of health insurance. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm their health insurance benefit status while on leave.

A student may remain in student housing while on a leave and must continue to pay rent during that time. A student who does not pay rent for any reason may be subject to removal from student housing.

**International Students:**
As a condition of maintaining student status for visa requirements, all international students must pursue a “full course of study.” An international student is eligible for a parental leave or medical leave only upon approval of the Office of International Services and with written healthcare provider’s recommendation. An international student is not eligible for other types of leave.

**Types of Leaves:**

**Parental Leave**
A student may request a paid parental leave of absence for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight work-weeks) per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave.

A student requiring an extension of parental leave longer than sixty calendar days must seek approval from the mentor and associate dean (and MSTP director, if applicable) for an unpaid leave extension prior to the original anticipated date of return. The student must submit an amended Leave of Absence form with a written note from a healthcare provider. The student may continue the leave as an unpaid medical leave for an additional four months. The maximum amount of time allowed for a parental leave of absence is six months.

**Medical Leave of Absence**
A student may request to take a medical leave of absence in the case of prolonged illness or other medical emergency. This leave may also be appropriate in the case of chronic physical or mental illness. (Pregnancy and childbirth are covered by parental leave as stated above.) At the beginning of a medical leave of absence, the student must submit a doctor’s note along with the Leave of Absence form.

The associate dean or program director may immediately place a student on medical leave status if the student experiences an episode or series of episodes of psychiatric illness and/or symptoms that reasonably appears, in the judgment of the associate dean or program director (after appropriate psychiatric consultation), to render the student unable to safely continue to participate in the academic program.
A student may continue to receive a stipend for up to a maximum of sixty calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight work-weeks) for medical leave. After this period of time, the student may continue an unpaid medical leave for an additional four months. The maximum amount of time allowed for a medical leave of absence is six months. In extreme circumstances medical leave may be extended an additional six months with appropriate documentation from a medical professional. If the student does not return to active student status after twelve months of medical leave, the student may be administratively withdrawn from the program.

Return from a medical leave of absence requires submission of a healthcare provider’s note certifying that the student is well enough to return to their responsibilities as a full-time graduate student. This healthcare provider note must accompany the Return from Leave of Absence form.

**Sick Leave or Bereavement Leave**
A student may take a sick leave for a maximum of fifteen calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to two work-weeks) per year.

If a member of the immediate family dies, a student may take a bereavement leave of absence for up to five days. These days are to be taken consecutively within a reasonable time of the date of the death or funeral, and may not be split or postponed. If the student needs more time for funeral or other arrangements, the student may request vacation time or an academic (unpaid) leave of absence in which case a Leave of Absence form must be submitted to the Graduate Division office.

A Leave of Absence form need not be submitted to the Graduate Division office prior to going on sick or bereavement leave. However, the student must communicate with the mentor regarding sick or bereavement leave.

**Unpaid Leaves:**

**Academic Leave of Absence**
The associate dean (and MSTP director, if applicable) may grant an academic leave of absence for a period up to a maximum of six months. This may be considered appropriate if the student is experiencing problems in courses or laboratory research, academic difficulties based on personal issues, conflicts, or the need for counseling beyond normal tutoring. The academic leave of absence is an unpaid leave.

**Post-Defense Leave of Absence**
If a student successfully defends the thesis and then must leave Einstein prior to satisfying all final requirements for the PhD degree (as may occur if the student starts a job), the student will be placed on an unpaid post-defense leave of absence. The maximum amount of time allotted for a post-defense leave of absence is three months from the date of thesis defense. No extension permissible.

A student on a post-defense leave of absence is no longer in active, full-time status and therefore no longer eligible for loan deferment, stipend or health insurance.

**Health Insurance While on a Post-Defense Leave of Absence**
Health benefits for a student on an unpaid post-defense leave of absence will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student is terminated from Einstein payroll.

*International Students*: As a condition of maintaining student status, all international students must pursue a “full course of study.” The post-defense leave of absence is not available to international students.

**12.3) Return from Leave of Absence**
A student who wishes to return from a leave of absence must:
12.4) Failure to Return from a Leave of Absence

Once the period of leave time is expired, and the student does not wish to return to the program (i.e. active student status), the student will have the option to withdraw from the program by notifying the Graduate Division Registrar (gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu) within fourteen calendar days prior to the leave expiration date. The “official withdrawal” will be recorded on the student’s permanent graduate transcript.

If the student does not contact or notify the Graduate Division Registrar within fourteen calendar days prior to the leave expiration date, the student will be administratively withdrawn from the program.
SECTION XIII: Policies on Conduct

13.1) Policy on Research Misconduct

The Einstein College of Medicine expects that all members of the academic community will display the highest personal integrity and conduct themselves according to accepted ethical standards in every aspect of their professional lives. Dishonesty in the academic arena can neither be accepted nor ignored by students and faculty of the College and it is their joint responsibility to see that the highest standards of conduct are upheld.

The following definition of "research misconduct" from the College's Research Misconduct Policy will be used to evaluate whether a student's research activities constitute scientific misconduct.

“Research misconduct” includes fabrication, falsification or plagiarism in proposing, performing or reviewing research or reporting research results. Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them. Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record. Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.

Instances of suspected research misconduct involving laboratory research by students will be considered in accord with the College’s policy on Research Misconduct of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Suspected research misconduct may also be referred by the associate dean to the Academic Affairs Committee who can request written and/or oral explanations on the matter and make recommendations to the associate dean regarding the research misconduct.

Responsible Conduct of Research

Every student enrolled in the Graduate Division is required to complete the NIH mandated training in the responsible conduct of research (RCR). The Graduate Division provides such training via RCR courses offered each year. The course is mandatory for all students in the 1st year and again in the 5th year of the program. Each student must attend every class session and every small group session in order to be certified as having completed training in the RCR. If a student misses a class or small group session, the student is required to complete make-up assignments. If these assignments are not completed, the student will receive a grade of Incomplete (I) and will be required to register for the course and attend the missed class and/or small group session the following Block in which the course is next offered. If a student receives consecutive grades of Incomplete in RCR, the student will be placed on academic probation by the Academic Affairs Committee.

13.2) Policy on Professional Misconduct

The Graduate Division requires at all times the highest standards of professional conduct. Professional misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism or cheating in academic courses offered by the Graduate Division and by the Medical School, fabrication or falsification of academic work or data, intentionally damaging or interfering in the academic activities of other members of the College of Medicine, or assisting others in any of these acts and the failure to meet generally accepted standards of personal integrity and professional conduct. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward colleagues, faculty, or other College staff may constitute professional misconduct.

Expected professional conduct also includes respectful behavior towards others, timely responses to emails and requests for information, and other communication.

Instances of professional misconduct by students (that do not fall within the guidelines of research misconduct) will be considered in accord with the Policy on Professional Conduct. The associate dean will have primary responsibility for determining the appropriate venue for investigation of alleged misconduct, and seeing that the allegations are thoroughly and fairly investigated.
A student who is unsure of whether their actions, or those of others, constitute professional misconduct should consult with their mentor, department chair, associate dean, director of the Medical Scientist Training Program or the director of the Graduate Division. Ignorance of the standards of professional conduct will not exonerate a student from responsibility for their actions.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person’s ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit. All documents prepared as part of a student’s academic or research activities should be free of plagiarism. This includes but is not limited to written examinations in classes, Qualifying Exam proposals, thesis proposals, fellowship applications, manuscripts, and the PhD thesis. Plagiarism or cheating will may result in dismissal from the Graduate Division.

For in-class or take-home examinations in graduate courses, unless otherwise clearly stated in the instructions for the particular examination, it is fully expected that the student will work alone and without any assistance from other students or sources.

Plagiarism or cheating may result in dismissal from the Graduate Division.

**13.3) Suspension Due to Research or Professional Misconduct**

In the case of serious research misconduct, professional misconduct or serious concern for the health or safety of a student or any other person or College facility, the associate dean may (upon consultation with those directors, mentors, and College officials deemed appropriate and informed) suspend a student immediately, pending further consideration by the appropriate and informed administrative staff, wherein a recommendation can be made for subsequent return to status, return to leave, or dismissal from the program.

**13.4) Policy on Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment**

Einstein prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, age, national origin or ancestry, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, pregnancy-related condition, veteran or disabled veteran status, military status, pregnancy status, genetic predisposition/carrier status, citizenship status, familial status, domestic violence victim status, prior arrest or conviction record, or any other personal characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law.

Reference Einstein’s policy on Title IX Gender-Based Misconduct, Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Complaint Procedures for Students for more information.

The University’s Title IX Coordinator should be contacted if a member of the University community or an applicant believes an act of unlawful discrimination or harassment is occurring. See Appendix VI: Student Safety and Security for contact information.
APPENDIX I: Graduate Division Forms

The following forms are available through the Graduate Division website:  
(https://einsteinmed.edu/education/phd/current-students/graduate-forms.aspx)

First Year Laboratory Rotations
- Rotation Registration Form
- One Time Rotation Registration Form (for Directly Recruited PhD students)
- Health and Safety Assessment Form (OSHA)

Thesis Laboratory
- Thesis Laboratory Declaration Form
- Change of Laboratory Form

Qualifying Examination
- Form 1: Proposed Committee Members and Tentative Specific Aims
- Form 2: Confirmation of Committee Members
- Form 3: Date, Time, Location of Qualifying Exam
- MS Diploma Form

Thesis Defense and Graduation
- Thesis Defense Committee Form
- Thesis Defense Report Form
- Graduation Checklist
- PhD Diploma Form
- PhD Alumni Form
- Honorary “Thank You” Form

Leave of Absence/Withdrawal
- Leave of Absence Form
- Return from Leave of Absence Form
- Program Withdrawal Form

Transcript/Diploma/Certification
- Transcript/Certification Letter Request Form
- Request for Duplicate Diploma Form

Additional Forms
- Course Withdrawal Form
- Request for Credit for Prior Master’s Degree Form
- Transfer of Credit and/or Course Exemption Form
- Graduate Student/Alumni Publications and Awards
- Request for Approval of Co-Curricular Activity Form
- Update of Current Contact Information

All other forms mentioned in these policies are available in the Graduate Office, Belfer 202, and by email request to gradregistrar@einsteinmed.edu.
APPENDIX II: Concentration Course Requirements and Recommendations

General Graduate Division Course Requirements:
PhD students who entered the program in 2013 onward must successfully complete a minimum of 21 graduate course credits to be granted the PhD degree upon the successful defense of their thesis.

MD-PhD students who entered the program in 2013 onward must successfully complete a minimum of 18 graduate course credits to be granted the PhD degree upon the successful defense of their thesis.

All students must successfully complete the Qualifying Examination for advancement to candidacy for the PhD degree.

All students must successfully complete the NIH mandated training in the responsible conduct of research. Note: the RCR course does not count towards the required number of course credits for the program.

All students must successfully complete:

- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher II

All PhD students must successfully complete the first-year course on becoming a scientist.

Each department within the Graduate Division has its own set of required or recommended graduate courses. Course credits earned by successfully completing the department-specific (or concentration-specific) courses do count towards satisfying the program course credit requirements. In addition to the concentration-specific courses, students are encouraged to take additional courses more relevant to their research interests.

Upon approval from their department chair, and associate dean, a student may be granted a course waiver from a concentration-specific required course. However, the program course/course-credit requirements must be met before a waiver may be granted. A course waiver form is required and is available in the Graduate Division office.

Basic Science Concentrations:
I. Biochemistry
II. Cell Biology
III. Developmental & Molecular Biology
IV. Genetics
V. Microbiology & Immunology
VI. Molecular Pharmacology
VII. Neuroscience
VIII. Pathology
IX. PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI)
X. Systems & Computational Biology

Please note that departments may require participation in other departmental activities, such as journal clubs, WIP (work-in-progress) seminars and retreats. Additional departmental specific information may be obtained by contacting the relevant Graduate Executive Committee representative or the Departmental Graduate Committee.

Listed below are specific concentration course requirements and recommendations.
I) Biochemistry (BC)  
Requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and
- Human Metabolism: Regulation and Disease.

II) Cell Biology (CB)  
Strongly recommends successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix,
- Molecular Cell Biology,
- Stem Cells, Development and Disease, and/or
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II.

III) Developmental and Molecular Biology (DMB)  
Requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
PhD students:
- Biochemistry, and
- Molecular Genetics,
  And at least one of the following:
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, or
- Molecular Cell Biology.
MSTP students:
- Biochemistry,
  And at least two of the following:
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and/or
- Molecular Cell Biology.

IV) Genetics (GENE)  
Strongly recommends successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry, 
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and/or
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I.

V) Microbiology and Immunology (MCIM)  
Requires successful completion of at least two of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and/or
- Molecular Cell Biology;
And requires the successful completion of at least one of the following graduate courses:
- Immunology, and/or
- Viruses.

VI) Molecular Pharmacology (MP)  
Requires successful completion of the following graduate course:
- Molecular Approaches to Drug Action and Design.
VII) Neuroscience (NS)

Requires successful completion of the following graduate course:
- Principles of Neuroscience I
- Principles of Neuroscience II

VIII) Pathology (PATH)

Requires successful completion of the following graduate course:
- Biochemistry, and
- Mechanisms of Disease.

IX) PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI)

Requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
All in year two:
- Clinical Research Intensive,
- Multivariable Regression, and
- Epidemiologic Research Methods.

Strongly recommended:
- Year 1: Design and Conduct of Clinical Research (strongly recommended for those without clinical research experience)
- Year 2 and beyond: Further methodologically or analytically-oriented course work specific to each trainee, to be determined by program directors and mentors

X) Systems and Computational Biology (SCB)

Requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Introduction to Systems Biology: Theory and Case Studies, and
- Systems Biology Seminar.

Former Concentrations:

Anatomy and Structural Biology (ASB)

Requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Cell Biology, and
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I.

Recommended:
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher II, III.

Physiology and Biophysics (PB)

There are two tracks of study for students in the Physiology and Biophysics department.

PB Biophysics track requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry, and
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II

PB Physiology track requires successful completion of the following graduate courses:
- Biochemistry,
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II, and
- Physiology: Membranes and Transport.
APPENDIX III: Medical Scientist Training Program (MD-PhD) Requirements

Graduate Division (PhD) Requirements

Courses
For the PhD degree, MD-PhD students must successfully complete a minimum of 18 credits of graduate courses, ideally in the first year. It is expected that during the first year, MD-PhD students complete at least four to six course credits per Block. There are three course Blocks that span the fall and spring semesters (Fall Block I, and Spring Blocks II and III).

MD-PhD students are required to successfully complete the following graduate courses:

- MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy
- Physiology: Membranes and Transport (2.0 credits)
- MSTP Pharmacology-Physiology-Pathology
- Biochemistry (5.0 credits)
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II (1.0 credit each, usually taken year three)

Note: Course credits for MSTP Clinical and Developmental Anatomy, MSTP Pharmacology-Physiology-Pathology, and Responsible Conduct of Research do not count towards the requirement of 18 graduate course credits.

Responsible Conduct of Research: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandates that all predoctoral fellows in NIH supported training programs satisfy the requirement for formal training in the responsible conduct of research. All MD-PhD students must complete the Responsible Conduct of Research. Additional training to comply with the NIH requirement for periodic refresher training occurs at the MSTP retreat.

Master’s Credit
If an MD-PhD student enters the program with a Master of Science or Master of Arts degree from a relevant scientific discipline, the student may apply for “Master’s credit.” If the request is approved, the student will be granted three credits towards the program course credit requirement; the student must successfully complete 15 course credits to satisfy the program course requirements. A student may apply for Master’s credit by completing and submitting to the Graduate Division office the Request for Credit for Prior Master’s Degree Form. Appropriate documentation of conferral of the Master’s degree is required with submission of the form.

Course Exemptions and Transfer of Credit
An MD-PhD student may be granted exemption for graduate course(s) if they have successfully completed similar graduate course(s) in their previous training. The determination of whether to grant an exemption for graduate level courses taken at other institutions (including courses taken at foreign institutions) will be decided by the associate dean or program director, who acts upon the recommendation of the course leader for which exemption is being sought. An exempted course is not counted towards the minimum required course credit of 18 and therefore, another graduate course must be taken in its place.

Transfer credit may be granted for graduate course(s) taken at a prior institution if that course is deemed equivalent to a current Einstein graduate course as recommended by the current graduate course leader. No more than two graduate courses can be approved for “transfer credit” and no additional credit will be applied if the student is afforded the “Master’s credit.” (In this case, only exemptions apply.)

An MD-PhD student wishing to receive credit for graduate courses taken at another institution while enrolled as an Einstein student must receive the written approval of the program director and the associate dean. Note: the maximum number of graduate courses that can be taken outside the College of Medicine and funded by the
Graduate Division is limited to two per student. Credit hours for no more than two outside courses may be used toward satisfying the course credit requirements.

To apply for a course exemption or transfer credit, the student must present the syllabus and related course information, for the course leader to determine equivalency. The student must present evidence of successful completion of the course requirements (i.e., an official grade on their transcript) to receive an exemption or transfer credit.

Concentration-specific Course Requirements
In addition to the Graduate Division program course requirements, MD-PhD students must complete their department or concentration-specific course requirements. (See Appendix II.) A waiver from a concentration-specific course may be obtained from the department chair.

Laboratory Rotations
The goal of laboratory rotations is to identify a mentor(s) in whose research group the student will perform their thesis research project. An MD-PhD student will generally perform one laboratory rotation during the summer prior to their first year in the MSTP. An additional rotation (or two) will be performed during the summer between the first and second year in the program. With permission from the Program Director, an MD-PhD student may perform the rotation(s) between the first and second year in the same lab as their first rotation if the student plans to perform their thesis research with that mentor. All MD-PhD students must perform at least one laboratory rotation. In rare cases, with permission of the Program Director, an MD-PhD student may perform an additional rotation following completion of the second year and the USMLE Step 1 exam. MD-PhD students must obtain permission from the Program Director for their laboratory rotation choices.

Thesis Laboratory and Concentration Declaration
MD-PhD students must obtain permission from the MSTP director prior to declaring a thesis laboratory. An MD-PhD student must satisfy all the requirements of their declared department/concentration, including course requirements, and other departmental activities as stipulated by the department. To declare a thesis lab, submission of the MSTP Laboratory Declaration and OSHA forms are required.

Qualifying Examination
MD-PhD students are expected to take the Qualifying Exam during the third year on the program with the same deadlines and requirements as all students in the Graduate Division. See Section VIII: The Qualifying Examination.

Doctoral Thesis Defense
An MD-PhD student must have successfully defended their PhD Thesis before the student will be certified to go onto the clinical part of their training. See Section X: The Doctoral Dissertation, Defense, and Program Completion Requirements. Under extremely rare circumstances, exceptions to this rule may be obtained from the program director with the approval of the associate dean for graduate programs.

The PhD degree is officially awarded on the same date as the MD degree.

MD Course Requirements
During the fall semester of the first year, MSTP students will take the following medical school classes:

- Unit 2 of Molecular and Cellular Foundations of Medicine (MCFM-2, Immunology),
- Unit 3 of Molecular and Cellular Foundations of Medicine (MCFM-3, Pharmacology),
- Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM),
- Biomedical Ethics 1,
- Epidemiology, Population Health and Evidence-Based Medicine 1 (EPHEM 1), and
- Health System & Health Equity.
MSTP students will be exempted from Anatomy and the other MCFM modules not listed above. This is subject to change as the MD curriculum evolves.

During the spring semester of the first year, and the second year of the MSTP, students take the entire medical school curriculum with the medical school class of students. MD-PhD students are expected to take the USMLE Step 1 exam by June 15, prior to beginning their thesis research. Students may take the USMLE Step 1 exam after June 15 only with permission of the Program Director and the Office of Student Affairs. MD-PhD students are expected to perform one clinical clerkship before starting their PhD thesis research.

**MD 3rd and 4th Year Clerkships and Sub-internships**

MD-PhD students must complete clinical clerkships in Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Surgery, Family Medicine must be completed if a student plans to train or practice in California at any stage in their career. MD-PhD students must also complete two months of sub-internships. MD-PhD students may do clinical electives prior to completing the required clerkships. MD-PhD students are exempted from the Patients, Doctors, and Communities (PDC) third year course. Clerkships in Geriatrics, Radiology, Neurology, and Ambulatory Care are optional for MD-PhD students. The PhD thesis replaces the medical school required Scholarly Paper.

**MSTP – Program Requirements and Expectations**

**Predoctoral Fellowship Application**

All students in the MSTP are expected to apply for a predoctoral fellowship before they complete their 48th month in the program. In general, this should be an application for an NIH F30 or F31 fellowship, but it could also be a foundation fellowship. In extenuating circumstances, exemptions from this requirement can be made by the Program Director.

**MSTP Retreat**

MD-PhD students must attend the MSTP retreat unless granted an exemption by the Program Director. The medical school Office of Student Affairs will arrange for MD-PhD students to be excused from medical school classes and clinical activities to attend the retreat.

**Required MSTP Conference Attendance**

- Incoming first year MSTP students must attend the MSTP Summer Series Seminars
- First year MD-PhD students are expected to attend Friday lunches with the Program Director
- All MD-PhD students are welcome to attend the monthly Clinical Pathological Conferences and Career Dinners. All fourth year MD-PhD students must attend the Clinical Pathological Conferences. All fifth-year students must attend the Career Dinners
- If unable to attend a required session, students must contact the supervising program faculty member.

**Bylaws and Policies Applicable to MSTP Students**

All applicable rules, requirements, standards of professionalism, academic integrity, and performance expectations of both the medical school and Graduate Division apply to MD-PhD students throughout their time in the MSTP. Throughout their time in the MSTP, students are subject to both the Graduate Division Academic Policies and Guidelines and to the medical school Bylaws on Student Promotions and Professional Standards (https://einsteinmed.edu/education/student-affairs/policies-bylaws-promotion/).
APPENDIX IV: AAMC’s Compact Between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Advisors

AAMC: Association of American Medical Colleges

These guiding principles, known as the *Compact Between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Research Advisors*, are intended to support the development of a positive mentoring relationship between the pre-doctoral student and their research advisor. A successful student-mentor relationship requires commitment from the student, mentor, graduate program, and institution. This document offers a set of broad guidelines which are meant to initiate discussions at the local and national levels about the student-mentor relationship.

The Compact was prepared by the AAMC Group on Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) and is modeled on the AAMC Compact Between Postdoctoral Appointees and Their Mentors, available at [www.aamc.org/postdoccompact](http://www.aamc.org/postdoccompact). Input on this document was received from the GREAT Group Representatives and the members of the AAMC governance. The document was endorsed by the AAMC Executive Council on September 25, 2008. In 2016, a team consisting of representatives from the GREAT Group and the AAMC Council of Faculty and Academic Societies (CFAS) reviewed and updated the document.

The Compact is available on the AAMC Website at: [https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/research/gradcompact/](https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/research/gradcompact/)

**Compact Between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Research Advisors**

Predoctoral training entails both formal education in a specific discipline and research experience in which the graduate student trains under the supervision of one or more investigators who will mentor the student through graduate school. A positive mentoring relationship between the predoctoral student and the research advisor is a vital component of the student’s preparation for future careers and mentoring roles.

Individuals who pursue a biomedical graduate degree are embarking on a path of lifelong learning and are therefore expected to take responsibility for their scientific and professional learning and development from the onset. Graduate students must be in charge and take ownership of their progress through the graduate program. This means seeking guidance on and knowledge about course requirements and program requirements, policies, and procedures. Students must also commit to working on an individual development plan. Faculty members who advise students—with the backing of the graduate program and institution—are expected to fulfill the role of mentor, which includes providing scientific training, guidance, instruction in the responsible conduct of research and research ethics, and financial support. The faculty advisor also serves as a scientific and professional role model for the graduate student. In addition, the advisor offers encouragement as the graduate student prepares an individual development plan and facilitates the experiences and professional skills development essential for a broad set of career paths.

**Core Tenets of Pre-Doctoral Training**

**Institutional Commitment**

Institutions that train biomedical graduate students must be committed to establishing and maintaining rigorous graduate programs with the highest scientific and ethical standards. Institutions should work to ensure that students who complete their programs possess the foundational knowledge, skills, and values that will allow them to mature into scientific professionals of integrity. They should have oversight of the graduate curricula, length of study, stipend levels, benefits, career guidance, grievance procedures, and other matters relevant to the education of biomedical graduate students (e.g., consideration of, preparation for, and exposure to various career paths). Institutions should recognize and reward their graduate-training faculty. With changing and diversified biomedical workforce needs, institutions should recognize the necessity of faculty development around multiple career paths.
for trainees and provide opportunities for faculty to acquire such skills and experiences. Additionally, institutions should also foster an environment that is diverse and inclusive.

Program Commitment
Graduate programs should establish training that prepares students with broad and deep scientific knowledge and the technical, professional, and leadership skills necessary for a successful career in the biomedical sciences. Programs should closely monitor the progress of graduate students during their course of study by establishing milestones and clear parameters for outcomes assessment, as well as maintain and make available career outcomes data.

Quality Mentoring
Effective mentoring is crucial for graduate school trainees as they begin their scientific careers. Faculty mentors must commit to dedicating substantial time to the scientific, professional, and personal development of the graduate student. Whether a faculty member acts as the primary research advisor or sits on a student’s advisory committee, a relationship of mutual trust and respect between mentor and graduate student is essential for healthy interactions and to encourage individual growth. Effective mentoring should include teaching the scientific method, providing regular feedback in the form of both positive support and constructive criticism to foster individual growth, teaching the “ways” of the scientific enterprise, and promoting careers by providing or directing students to appropriate opportunities. The best mentors are careful listeners who actively promote and appreciate diversity. They possess and consistently maintain high ethical standards, acknowledge and recognize the contributions of students—in publications and intellectual property, for example—and have a record of research accomplishments and financial support. Finally, it should be recognized that mentoring does not end with a student’s completion of the graduate program but continues throughout the student’s professional life.

Skill Sets and Counseling for a Broad Range of Career Choices
The institution, training programs, and mentor should provide training relevant to a broad variety of careers that will allow graduate students to appreciate, navigate, discuss, and develop career choices. Effective and regular career guidance activities should be offered.

Commitments of Graduate Students

• I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree. I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom, the research laboratory, and all other related academic and professional activities. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, initiative, engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards, including complying with institutional and research group standards for contributing to an inclusive research environment.

• I will meet regularly with my research advisor to provide updates on the progress and results of my course work, research, and professional and career development activities.

• I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project. This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to keep engaged with the work, discuss experimental findings and any pitfalls, and meet the established goals and deadlines.

• I will work with my research advisor to select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will commit to meeting with this committee at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will discuss my progress to date and be responsive to the advice and constructive criticism from my committee.

• I will be a good lab citizen. I agree to take part in shared laboratory responsibilities and will use laboratory resources carefully and frugally. I will maintain a safe and clean laboratory space. I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all laboratory personnel. I will be an active contributing member to all team efforts.
and collaborations and will respect individual contributions. I will also contribute to an environment that is safe, equitable, and free of harassment.

- I will maintain detailed, organized, and accurate research records. With respect to data ownership, I acknowledge that original notebooks, digital files, and tangible research materials belong to the institution and will remain in the lab when I finish my thesis/dissertation so that other individuals can reproduce and carry on related research, in accordance with institutional policy. Only with the explicit approval from my research mentor and in accordance with institutional policy may I make copies of my notebooks and digital files and have access to tangible research materials that I helped to generate during my graduate training.

- I will discuss policies on work hours, medical leave, and vacation with my graduate program and research advisor. I will consult with my advisor in advance of any planned absences and apprise my advisor of any unexpected absences due to illness or other issues.

- I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor. I will work with my advisor to disseminate all relevant research results in a timely manner before completion of all degree requirements.

- I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my graduate program, graduate school, and institution. I will commit to meeting these requirements in the appropriate time frame and will abide by all institutional policies and procedures.

- I will attend and actively participate in laboratory meetings, seminars, and journal clubs that are part of my educational program. To enhance research, leadership, and additional professional skills, I will seek out other enrichment opportunities, such as participation in professional organizations and meetings, student representation on institutional committees, and coordination of departmental events.

- I will be knowledgeable of all institutional research policies. I will comply with all institutional laboratory safety practices and animal-use and human-research policies. I will participate in my institution's Responsible Conduct of Research Training Program and practice the guidelines presented therein while conducting my research. I will also seek input on and comply with institutional policies regarding my research design and data analysis.

- I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the development of my own career. I recognize that I need to explore career opportunities and paths that match and develop my individual skills, values, and interests to achieve my desired career goals. I understand that there are tools such as the individual development plan that I should use to help me define my career goals and develop my training plan. I will seek guidance throughout my graduate education from my research advisor, career counseling services, thesis/dissertation committee, other mentors, and any other resources that can offer advice on career planning and the wide range of opportunities available in the biomedical workforce.

**Commitments of Research Advisors**

- Throughout the graduate student’s time in my laboratory, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful. I will foster the graduate student’s professional confidence and encourage intellectual development, critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity. I will continue my interest and involvement as the student moves forward into a career.

- I will be committed to meeting one-on-one with the student on a regular basis. I will regularly review the student’s progress and provide timely feedback and goal-setting advice.
• I will be committed to the graduate student’s research project. I will work with the student to help plan and guide the research project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project.

• I will help the graduate student select a thesis/dissertation committee. I will assure that this committee meets at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines) to review and discuss the graduate student’s progress and future directions. I understand that the function of this committee is to help the student complete the doctoral research, and I will respect the ideas and suggestions of my colleagues on the committee.

• I will provide an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, equitable, and free of harassment.

• I will demonstrate respect for all graduate students as individuals without regard to gender, race, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation, and I will cultivate a culture of tolerance among the entire laboratory.

• I will be committed to providing financial resources, as appropriate and according to my institution’s guidelines, for the graduate student to conduct thesis/dissertation research. I will not require the graduate student to perform tasks that are unrelated to the training program and professional development.

• I will expect the graduate student to share common laboratory responsibilities and use resources carefully and frugally. I will also regularly meet with the graduate student to review data management, storage, and record keeping. I will discuss with the student intellectual policy issues regarding disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries.

• I will discuss with the graduate student authorship policies regarding papers. I will acknowledge the graduate student’s scientific contributions to the work in my laboratory, and I will provide assistance in getting the student’s work published in a timely manner.

• I will be knowledgeable of and guide the graduate student through the requirements and deadlines of the graduate program and the institution, as well as teaching requirements, if any, and human resources guidelines.

• I will encourage the graduate student to attend and present their research at scientific/professional meetings and make an effort to secure and facilitate funding for such activities. In addition, I will provide opportunities for the student to discuss science and their research findings with colleagues and fellow scientists within the institution and broader scientific community—for example, at lab meetings, research days, and seminars.

• I will promote the training of the graduate student in professional skills needed for a successful career. These skills include but are not limited to oral and written communication, grant writing, management and leadership, collaborative research, responsible conduct of research, teaching, and mentoring. I will encourage the student to seek opportunities to develop skills in other areas, even if not specifically required by the student’s program. I will also encourage the graduate student to seek input from multiple mentors.

• I will create an environment in which the student can discuss and explore career opportunities and paths that match their skills, values, and interests and be supportive of their career path choices. I will be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals. I will work with the student on an individual development plan to help define career goals and identify training milestones. I will provide letters of recommendation for the student’s next phase of professional development.
APPENDIX V: Resources and Support

Student Health

**Academic Support and Counseling**
The Office of Academic Support and Counseling (OASC) provides students with a variety of support services including academic support and personal counseling. The Einstein support team incorporates both a professional component run through the OASC and a student-run peer mentoring system for both the medical and graduate programs. This allows for all students to access the guidance and help they need while here at Einstein.

For more information, please visit the OASC website:
http://www.einstein.yu.edu/education/student-affairs/academic-support-counseling/

Mental health emergency information is available at:

**Special Accommodations:** A student who requires special accommodations for exams or other required work must present appropriate documentation to the Office of Academic Support and Counseling (OASC). The documents will be reviewed and, if approved, notification will be sent to the associate dean. The student and course leader(s) (for courses in which the student is registered) will then be notified by the associate dean. See Appendix VII for links to the Student Disability Accommodation Policy and Request Form.

**Personal Counseling**
The Office of Academic Support and Counseling (OASC) offers a private and safe environment to discuss academic and emotional issues that may affect a student’s well-being and progress through graduate school. The OASC also offers students a place to relax if feeling “just stressed out.” The personal counseling services provided by the OASC cover a vast spectrum. The OASC encourages students to make an appointment to discuss their particular issues and access needed resources. Students can discuss the source of stress, express concerns, vent frustrations, and obtain a referral if desired.

**Einstein Student Health Service**
The Einstein Student Health Service is available to all students for sick call visits and post-exposure consultations. Walk-in hours for the Student Health Service sick call visit are from 12:00pm to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday in the Block Building, 2nd Floor, Room 220.
https://www.einstein.yu.edu/administration/occupational-health-service/student-health-service.asp

**WellMed Student Wellness Program**
WellMed’s goal is to provide opportunities for students to adopt habits and attitudes that will contribute to their balance and well-being. For more information visit: https://www.einstein.yu.edu/education/student-affairs/student-wellness-wellmed/.

**Einstein Student Mental Health Center**
Students and post-docs can contact the center for appointments at (718) 839-7400 or email Dr. Joseph Battaglia at joseph.battaglia@einsteinmed.edu.

Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm; open until 7:00pm on Wednesday.
Walk-in hours are also available from 8am to 12pm, and 2:30pm to 4:00pm on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The center is located in the psychiatry suite on the 4th floor of the Van Etten Building.

**Tutoring**

The Graduate Division provides tutoring to graduate students as needed. Tutoring is arranged through the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202).

**Library**

https://library.einsteinmed.edu/

**Instruction Sessions and Workshops**
The library regularly schedules workshops for students. These workshops are announced and posted on the Library's events calendar.

**LibGuides**
For information on use and citation of scientific references and other helpful resources relevant to scientific writing, please visit the Library's LibGuides website: http://libguides.einsteinmed.edu/thesis

**Career & Professional Development Program**

https://einsteinmed.edu/education/career-development/

The Einstein Career & Professional Development Program (CPD) offers a variety of services to help graduate students and postdoctoral researchers make the most of their tenure at Einstein. Whether a student is just starting out in PhD studies or as postdoctoral researcher or moving on to the next phase in their professional career, the CPD office can help.

The mission of the Career and Professional Development program is two-fold:

i. to provide programs and services to assist graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in discovering and clarifying career choices, and to aid them in learning how to manage their careers effectively, and

ii. to help graduate students and postdoctoral researchers at Einstein build a professional skill set which enables them to become world leaders in academic and non-academic careers.
APPENDIX VI: Student Safety and Security

Security
https://einsteinmed.edu/administration/auxiliary-services/security/

The Office of Security and Transportation strives to maintain the Einstein campus as a secure place for work and study.

The security desk in the Forchheimer lobby operates 24 hours, 7 days a week, and can be reached at (718) 430-2019. The main Security Office is located in the Forchheimer building, Room G9 and can be reached during normal business hours at (718) 430-2180. In case of emergencies, call 911.

To contact the local police precinct (49th Precinct) dial (718) 918-2000.

Helpful links regarding safety and security are available online (see link above).

Missing Student Policy
A student who resides in on-campus housing who has been absent from Einstein for more than 24 hours without any reason, is considered missing. All reports of missing students should be directed to Einstein’s Security Office, the dean or program director of the academic program in which the student is enrolled, or the Housing Office. Any reports made to the program dean or director or the Housing Office will be referred immediately to the Einstein Security Office.

See Appendix VII for the link to the Missing Student Policy.

Department of Human Resources
https://einsteinmed.edu/administration/human-resources/

Mission: Delivering innovative HR solutions in support of the College’s mission and that attract, develop, retain and engage a high performing diverse workforce that advances research, education and the health of the communities we serve.

See Appendix VII for the link to the Non-Discrimination and Gender-Based Misconduct Policy and Complaint Procedures for Students – Title IX. The policy also includes information relating to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Abuse/Assault, Stalking, Domestic Violence and Dating Violence.

Any questions regarding the Non-Discrimination policies may be directed to Einstein’s Title IX Coordinator/Vice President for Human Resources.

Title IX Coordinator
Yvonne M. Ramirez, Vice President of Human Resources and Diversity Officer
1300 Morris Park Avenue, Belfer Bldg., Room 1209
Bronx, New York 10461
Office Phone: (718) 430-2541; yvonne.ramirez@einsteinmed.edu

Graduate Division Office
The Graduate Division provides diverse resources towards serving our students. The associate dean, faculty advisors, and program directors are available by appointment. Contact information is as follows:
Dr. Victoria H. Freedman, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs
Office Phone: (718) 430-2872
victoria.freedman@einsteinmed.edu

Dr. Myles Akbas, Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program
Office Phone: (718) 430-3360
myles.akbas@einsteinmed.edu

Dr. Joan W. Berman, Senior Academic Advisor to the Graduate Division
Office Phone: (718) 430-2587
joan.berman@einsteinmed.edu

Dr. Teresa V. Bowman, Faculty Advisor to First-Year PhD Students
Office Phone: (718) 430-4001
teresa.bowman@einsteinmed.edu

Ms. Kamala S. Lusk, Graduate Registrar
Office Phone: (718) 430-8682
kamala.lusk@einsteinmed.edu
## APPENDIX VII: Additional Policies

Einstein policies (including those listed below) are available on the Einstein Intranet in the Document Library: [https://einsteinmed.edu/intranet/document-library/](https://einsteinmed.edu/intranet/document-library/).

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