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I. INTRODUCTION

This handbook is a guide to the procedural aspects of obtaining a graduate degree at the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC). However, it is not to be considered a complete reference. In addition to this Handbook, the student should become familiar with the Bulletin of the University of Mississippi Medical Center, which contains information applicable to all UMMC students as well as John D. Bower School of Population Health-specific information. Policies, regulations, and guidelines related to the specific program in which he/she is enrolled can be found in the Bulletin and may be obtained from the Program Director of a given program. This information is typically available on-line or in printed form as a Policy Statement describing the specific requirements of that program. Collectively, these publications and policies outline the steps required to apply, gain admission, and successfully earn a degree at UMMC. All statements in this publication are announcements of present policies and are subject to change at any time. Changing any provision, offering, or requirement may occur within a student's period of study at the Medical Center.

A. Mission

The John D. Bower School of Population Health is committed to transforming the health of populations through the education of researchers, practitioners, and clinicians prepared to conduct and disseminate pioneering, multi-sector, population research to increase the effectiveness of health care systems, improve community health, and reduce health and health care disparities.

B. History

The John D. Bower School of Population Health at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson was established in 2016 by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.

C. Programs

The John D. Bower School of Population Health offers programs leading to Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees. A listing of graduate degree programs offered at the Medical Center follows.

Master of Science Degree Programs

Master of Science in Biostatistics and Data Science
Master of Science in Population Health

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs

Doctor of Philosophy in Biostatistics and Data Science

II. ADMINISTRATION

School of Population Health Deans and Administrative Staff

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III. ADMISSIONS

A. Admissions Procedures

Admission to the University of Mississippi Medical Center is administered under policies established by state law, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the Medical Center's faculty. Admission requirements are subject to change without notice at the direction of the Board of Trustees.

Selection of applicants is made on a competitive basis, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, or veteran status. A student with a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution may apply for study in areas in which competence has been demonstrated by scholastic performance.

1. General Requirements

Prospective students must submit an [online application for admission](#) to the Office of Student Records and Registrar, an official transcript of undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) grades, and an official statement of scores (verbal, quantitative and analytical) received on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). In addition, applicants must submit three letters of recommendation for PhD programs, and a personal statement. With the exception of those students applying for admission directly from a Master's Degree program, the GRE examination must be taken within five years of application. Information regarding the GRE may be obtained from the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, NJ 08540 (<http://www.ets.org>). **International applicants** must have transcripts evaluated in a course-by-course report from World Education Services (WES) (<http://www.wes.org/index.asp>) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) (<https://www.ece.org/>).

Certain programs require prerequisites, and these may be determined by contacting the specific program to which the applicant desires admission.

Initial evaluation of applicants for admission to graduate programs is made on the basis of undergraduate (and graduate, if applicable) scholastic performance, letters of recommendation and scores received on the GRE. Those applicants for whom the initial evaluation indicates the scholastic competence necessary to successfully pursue a graduate degree may be further evaluated by personal interview.

PhD applicants will be evaluated based on the following:

- Baccalaureate degree in a relevant scientific discipline
- GPA ≥ 3.0
- Three letters of recommendation
- Personal statement
 - Should include previous professional or research experience, current professional interests, long-term career goals, interest in the degree program. The personal statement should not exceed two pages.
- A GRE score ≥ 300 on the combined verbal and quantitative sections is preferred
 - Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores meet the above standards will be granted full admission to the School of Population Health. Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores are < 300 (new GRE) will be considered for conditional admission based on the recommendation of the program director. To obtain full admission the student must, within three academic semesters of admission, attain a GPA of ≥ 3.0 , or retake the GRE and score ≥ 300 . Conditional students who fail to meet the criteria listed above will be dismissed from the program

MS applicants will be evaluated based on the following:

- A GRE score ≥ 295 on the combined verbal and quantitative scores
 - MCAT and/or DAT scores may be required for some programs
- GPA ≥ 3.0
- Three letters of recommendation
- Personal statement
 - Should include previous professional or research experience, current professional interests, long-term career goals, interest in the degree program. The personal statement should not exceed two pages.
- Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores meet the above standards will be granted full admission to the School of Population Health. Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores are < 295 (new GRE) will be considered for conditional admission based on the recommendation of the program director. To obtain full admission the student must, within three academic semesters of admission, attain a GPA of ≥ 3.0 , or retake the GRE and score ≥ 295 . Conditional students who fail to meet the criteria listed above will be dismissed from the program.

Individual programs may set higher minimum standards than those required by the John D. Bower School of Population Health (SOPH). In view of that, students are encouraged to consult the director of their intended program of study and ascertain program-specific requirements.

As stated in the Grade Forgiveness Policy, applicants who have earned a grade of D or F in a course and who have successfully repeated the course at the same institution will have the higher grade used in calculating the overall GPA for admission.

English Language Proficiency

Applicants whose native language is not English and/or who have completed their tertiary education primarily outside of the USA must submit official scores from one of the following testing services Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or Pearson Test of English-Academic (PTE-A) and meet the minimum standards set below

- TOEFL-Internet Based Test (IBT): 79 or higher
- TOEFL-Paper Based Test (PBT): 550 or higher
- IELTS: 6.5 overall band score or higher
- PTE-A: 53 or higher

This requirement may be waived for students who are currently enrolled at a college or university in the United States and/or who demonstrate a proficiency in written and spoken English following a personal interview. Admission of a student to a graduate program must be approved by the dean of the SOPH. No individual may enroll in graduate level courses without proper approval and notification from the SOPH.

a) Conditional Acceptance

Acceptance to the SOPH is conditional; the admission committee may rescind an offer of acceptance at any time before matriculations if an applicant fails to maintain expectations upon which the acceptance was based. Examples include, but are not limited to, a significant decline in academic performance, failure to complete prerequisites or other course work and degrees in progress, patterns of unprofessional behavior and incidents discovered in a criminal background check.

b) Criminal Background Checks (CBCs)

Any preadmissions agreement executed by the health care program with a student shall be void if there is a disqualifying incident or pattern of unprofessional behavior in the CBC prior to enrollment.

c) Fingerprint-Based CBC

All accepted applicants should schedule an appointment with UMMC Human Resources prior to enrollment so that a set of digital fingerprints and photograph can be required.

2. Technical Standards

Technical Standards are non-academic requirements essential for meeting the academic requirements of the programs in the SOPH. Within any area of specialization, students must demonstrate competence in those intellectual and physical tasks that together represent the fundamentals of research in their chosen discipline.

The PhD degree programs and some MS degree programs at the UMMC SOPH require a dissertation or thesis based on independent research. Granting of those degrees implies the recipient has demonstrated a base of knowledge in their chosen field of study and possesses the ability to independently apply that knowledge to form hypotheses, design and conduct research projects, interpret results, and communicate these findings to the scientific community. Thus, a candidate for the PhD or MS degree in the health sciences must possess abilities and skills that allow for observation, intellectual and conceptual reasoning, motor coordination, and communication. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable.

The following technical skills are required of a successful student:

Observation: The candidate must be able to acquire knowledge by direct observation of demonstrations and experiences within the research and instructional setting.

Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities: The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, reason, integrate and synthesize information to solve problems.

Motor Skills: The candidate must possess motor skills necessary to perform procedures required for experimentation and experiences within the chosen discipline.

Communication: The candidate must be able to communicate and discuss his or her experimental hypotheses and results to the scientific community.

Behavioral and Social Attributes: The candidate must possess the emotional and mental health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of responsibilities inherent in managing a scientific setting, the ability to function under the stress inherent in research, and the ability to understand and comply with ethical standards for the conduct of research.

3. Application Procedure

Applications are to be submitted on-line from the School of Population Health website (https://www.umc.edu/SoPH/SOPH_Home.html) . If problems are encountered, please contact the Office of the Student Records and Registrar.

All transcripts and documents submitted to the Office of Student Records and Registrar in support of an application become the property of The University of Mississippi Medical Center and will not be returned to an applicant or forwarded to another academic institution or individual. Contact information: Office of Student

Records and Registrar, University of Mississippi Medical Center, 2500 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi 39216, 601-984-1080, 601-984-1079 (Fax).

Deadlines for Applications: The SOPH accepts applications throughout the calendar year. However, the Office of Student Records and Registrar must receive applications for a specific academic term by the deadlines below:

MS and PhD programs in Biostatistics and Data Science

- June 1

MS in Population Health

- June 1

Students wishing to be considered for a graduate stipend should apply for admission prior to December 15. Stipends are assigned on a competitive basis. An applicant is considered for the enrollment period designated on the application. If the applicant is accepted and fails to enroll, or is not accepted, a new application must be submitted if consideration for a subsequent enrollment date is desired.

A range of circumstances and conditions determines the number of admissions to the graduate program. Therefore, students interested in a particular program of study are strongly urged to contact the program director of a given program prior to completing an application to determine whether openings exist for the current academic year and to ascertain specific program requirements.

Application Fee: A nonrefundable fee of \$25 must accompany the initial application.

Non-degree seeking students: UMMC employees who wish to take graduate courses but are not members of a University of Mississippi Medical Center graduate program may apply as non-degree seeking students. Applicants must first complete an approval to register form as a non-degree seeking student. The form and instructions for the non-degree seeking student are located on the SOPH website. Non-degree students may not earn more than 9 semester hours. Furthermore, successful completion of courses taken does not in itself qualify the individual for subsequent admission to a graduate program.

B. Orientation

General orientation applicable to students from all schools on the UMMC campus is held at the beginning of the fall semester. Furthermore, a specific orientation session for graduate students is also held. Students should plan to attend both general orientation and the School of Population Health orientation, as this will familiarize them with UMMC policies and services.

C. Enrollment

Once students are accepted into a program, they must be continuously enrolled in classes until the degree is completed or they have been granted a leave of absence. Leave of absence forms can be obtained from the SOPH website. Failure to remain continuously enrolled will result in Administrative Leave of Absence. For additional information see leave of absence policy.

D. Registration

Registration for classes is not permitted unless the applicant has received notification of acceptance to a specific graduate program from the SOPH. Registration for courses must be approved by the program director and academic advisor. No credit is given for any course for which a student is not officially registered. Student and academic advisor must complete required registration approval form.

E. Course Load and Fees

Current tuition and fees can be found on the institutional website. Tuition is subject to change pending information from the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). A full-time course load in the SOPH is outlined in the SOPH Course Load policy.

F. Required Laptops

Entering students are required to have a laptop computer that meets the minimum requirements for both PC (<http://support.examssoft.com/h/i/258193614-minimum-system-requirements-for-pc-devices>) and Mac (<http://support.examssoft.com/h/i/258195339-minimum-system-requirements-for-mac-device>) computers. Students should purchase a laptop meeting or exceeding these requirements from regular retail channels. Students will be personally responsible for maintenance/repair of their laptop. All students are required to maintain up to date virus and spyware detection software to allow access to the UMMC public wireless network. Students should acquire their laptop prior to orientation.

IV. GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

It is the responsibility of the student to ascertain the requirements for the degree program in which they are enrolled. Students can obtain this information from the program director, their advisor, or the Office of the Dean, SOPH.

A. Academic Expectations

Successful students will work a minimum of 40 hours per week at UMMC and take work (reading, manuscript preparation) home in the evenings.

It is the responsibility of each student and his/her advisor to be fully aware of all regulations governing each step of the progression through the MS and PhD programs as outlined below. Each PhD student's academic progress must be evaluated at least semi-annually by the program director, once at the end of the fall semester and again at the end of the spring semester. After successful completion of the qualifying exam, the students' progress is evaluated semi-annually by the students' advisory committee, once at the end of the fall semester and again at the end of the spring semester. Progression review permits appropriate academic planning for the following semester, and allows for timely responses to inquiries about students in jeopardy of losing federal and/or state financial aid. Additionally, each PhD student's GPA must be reviewed after their first semester of enrollment, in order to identify any academic problems early in the program.

1. Student Progression

Student Progression Policy: For full-time PhD students the progression toward the PhD degree follows this general path:

1. Graduate (G) Years 1 and 2: Complete course work and choose a mentor.
2. Successfully pass the qualifying examination and obtain PhD Candidacy (end of the G2 year/first term of the G3 year).
3. Defend the dissertation proposal (by the end of the G3 year)
4. Devote G4 and G5 years to dissertation and dissertation research.
5. G1 – G5 years: All students are expected to complete and review yearly an Individual Development Plan with their advisor and program director.

Ordinarily, students are eligible to take their qualifying examination during the summer of their second year/fall of their third year. After a student has passed the qualifying exam and been admitted to candidacy. Dissertation proposals are expected to take place within one year following advancement to candidacy. Each student's progress is monitored semi-annually by his/her advisory committee or advisor to facilitate timely completion of the degree. After the dissertation is written, a notice is sent to announce the public defense of the dissertation.

2. Good Academic Standing

The SOPH defines a student in good academic standing as one who is making acceptable progress toward a graduate degree and who is eligible to register for and pursue academic coursework at UMMC for the current semester. All graduate students are expected to remain in good academic standing throughout the entire course of their study.

The minimum requirements for good academic standing established by the SOPH are as follows:

1. A PhD student must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher based on a four point grade scale.
2. A MS student must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 2.8 or higher based on a four point grade.

Under such a scale a grade of A is assessed 4 points, a B 3 points, a C 2 points, and an F 0 points. A grade of C or below is not acceptable for graduate credit, but will be included in the calculation of the student's GPA. Per the grade forgiveness policy, SOPH graduate students who earn a grade of C or below in a course in the may retake the course once, and the grade earned in the repeated course will be used in calculating the student's overall UMMC GPA. Although the original grade will not be calculated into the student's GPA, it will remain on the transcript. Students may only remediate two courses in which they earn a C or below over the course of the degree program. Per the academic probation policy, students may be allowed 3 continuous semesters to raise their GPA to an acceptable level. Failure to do so will result in administrative withdrawal from the academic degree program.

Individual programs may have specific academic requirements in addition to those stated here. Academic requirements other than those imposed by the SOPH are determined by the approval of the Dean.

3. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Criteria for Federal Financial Aid and Institutional Scholarship Eligibility

All students must meet these academic standards for purposes of continued financial support, i.e. Dean's scholarship and federal and state loans. These standards are reviewed at the end of each spring term and any student failing to meet these requirements will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students on financial aid suspension are ineligible to receive state/federal student aid or institutional scholarships (i.e. Deans' Scholarship).

Once a student is placed on financial aid suspension, a review of academic progress will be assessed after each graded term. If a student is deemed to be in academic good standing, the student will be removed from financial aid suspension and will once again be eligible to receive aid, loans, and institutional scholarships. Any student that does not meet the requirements for good academic standing within one academic year, will no longer be eligible for institutional scholarship, aids, or loans.

In addition, requirements of satisfactory academic progress set forth by the Office of Student Financial Aid must also be met to receive federal financial aid. For more information on these requirements, please visit the Office of Student Financial Aid website.

B. Graduate Programs and Degree Requirements

The following is a synopsis of the basic requirements for the degrees of Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Specific questions pertaining to these requirements can be answered by the program director in which the student is enrolled and the Office of the Dean of the SOPH.

1. Master of Science (MS) Degree

The SOPH offers Master of Science degrees in Biostatistics and Data Science and Population Health. Information about the program can be obtained from the program director or from the relevant section of the Bulletin.

A minimum of 30 credit hours is required for a MS degree. The minimum GPA for a MS degree is 2.8 (on a 4 point scale). These requirements, notwithstanding, individual MS programs can establish more stringent criteria for graduation as approved by the dean.

Master of Science Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

A student who completes a MS should:

- demonstrate mastery of a body of knowledge in the discipline; the level of the material and/or the extent of mastery must be above that for the baccalaureate degree,
- use and/or understand the basic methodologies of the discipline
- retrieve, evaluate, and utilize information relevant to the discipline
- communicate, both orally and in writing, in a manner and level of proficiency that is standard for the discipline
- (for thesis MS) conduct research or produce creative work
- (for non-thesis MS) function as a professional in the discipline

Residence Requirements: A minimum of one academic year must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student at The University of Mississippi Medical Center to qualify for a MS degree.

Course Work: A minimum of 30 credit hours is required for the MS degree.

Time Limit: The time limit for completing all requirements for a MS degree is six years from the date of first registration.

Thesis: Some programs may require a thesis as a requirement for graduation. The thesis should show evidence of original investigation and must be approved by the advisory committee and the SOPH Dean.

Thesis Advisory Committee: An oral examination and thesis defense are mandatory in programs requiring a thesis. The candidate's advisory committee will conduct the examination. MS advisory committee members must be members of the graduate faculty or approved by the dean of the SOPH. This advisory committee consists of the chair and a minimum of two additional members. The student's advisor serves as chair of the committee. The other members of the committee are nominated by the chair with the approval of the program director and the dean of the SOPH. The chair and one other member of the committee must be from the student's program. One member can be from outside the student's major program. The [nomination of advisory committee form](#) should be submitted to the office of the dean for the dean's written approval. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare and deliver the completed forms to the appropriate office or individual.

Graduation Requirements: To earn the MS degree a student must

- Successfully earn a minimum of 30 credit hours and maintain a GPA of ≥ 2.8 (on a 4 point scale). These requirements, notwithstanding, individual MS programs can establish more stringent criteria for graduation as approved by the dean.

Application for Diploma: The application for diploma and the cap and gown order form must be completed through the student MyU portal at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.

Exit Survey: The student must submit an online exit survey, which may be obtained from the Office of the Dean after the binding, publishing and copyright fees have been paid. The responses are submitted to the Office of Institutional Research and the anonymity of the student and faculty members is maintained. The collated results are used to assess program effectiveness.

2. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

The degree of PhD is offered by The University of Mississippi Medical Center SOPH. Information about the program can be obtained from the program director or from the relevant section of the Bulletin.

The PhD degree is a research degree and is not conferred solely as a result of formal course work, no matter how superior and extensive. The program leading to the PhD degree represents more than the sum of time in residence, and the study plans are only a minimum. To receive the doctoral degree, the candidate must demonstrate evidence of proficiency and distinctive attainment in a special field, and a recognized ability for independent investigation as presented in a dissertation, based upon original research. The following requirements for the PhD degree are the minimal requirements and apply to all students seeking the doctoral degree. Because individual programs may have additional specific requirements, the student is urged to clearly

identify them before beginning a course of study. A description of program-specific policies is available from the relevant program director.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 60 credit hours beyond a baccalaureate degree (or 30 credit hours beyond a MS degree in the same UMMC SOPH degree program). Credits representing research and preparation for the dissertation are to be earned as directed by the student's advisory committee. Credit hour requirements may differ between programs, therefore students should consult their program director for these requirements.

Academic performance and progress toward completion of all degree requirements will be monitored and documented by the program directors, mentor, advisor, and Office of the Dean of the SOPH. Progression in the program requires a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale). Students who do not meet the established criteria will be notified. A student may be allowed to repeat a course with the recommendation of their advisor. The repeat grade will be used for GPA calculation; however the original grade will remain on the transcript. If at any time during the academic year the progress of a student is considered unsatisfactory, the student may be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the program.

Ordinarily, students are eligible to take their qualifying examination during their third year. After a student has passed the qualifying exam and been admitted to candidacy, dissertation proposals are expected to take place within one year following advancement to candidacy. Each student's progress is monitored semi-annually by his/her advisory committee or program director to facilitate timely completion of the degree. Upon completion of the written dissertation, a notice is sent to announce the public defense of the dissertation.

Graduate School Student Learning Outcomes for PhD students

A student who completes a doctoral degree should:

- demonstrate broad and advanced knowledge within the discipline
- successfully use a range of methodologies of the discipline
- independently perform original research
- communicate effectively
- function as a professional in the discipline

Residence Requirements: A minimum of one academic year must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student at The University of Mississippi Medical Center to qualify for a PhD degree.

Time Limits: Completion of a PhD degree generally requires five to six years, but must take no more than five years following admission to candidacy. University standards mandate that PhD students complete all course requirements and examinations within a period of five years after passing the qualifying exam.

Full-time Student: A full-time course load in the SOPH is 9 credit hours per semester except for the summer term when 1 credit hour is sufficient. A student who is admitted to candidacy and is working on a thesis or dissertation may be classified as a full-time student while registering for one credit hour, following request by student's advisor and program director. Student and advisor must complete the required registration approval form which may be found on this website. A part-time student is one who is enrolled for less than full-time research and study. Since some programs within the SOPH allow for both full-time and part-time study, students should consult their program director to determine the criteria for maintaining full-time status within their program.

Course Work: A major objective of a productive graduate education program is providing the most appropriate program of study for the individual student. The student's research area is of major consideration in designing and developing all aspects of the program, including course work. Specific course requirements vary considerably among programs. Although a well-defined program of course work is required in each program, satisfactory completion of such studies is secondary to a demonstrated ability to complete an original research project and an acceptable dissertation. All doctorate degrees require a minimum of 60 credit hours beyond a baccalaureate degree (or 30 credit hours beyond a master's degree in the same UMMC SOPH degree program). Credits representing research and preparation of the dissertation are to be earned as directed by the student's

advisory committee. Credit hour requirements may differ between programs; therefore, the student should consult their program director for these requirements.

Qualifying Examination and Admission to Candidacy: An examination to qualify students for admission to candidacy for the PhD degree is administered by each program within the SOPH. The qualifying examination is given to graduate students in good academic standing upon completion of coursework. The composition of the examination (oral, written, comprehensive, or research based) varies from program to program. Information on the specific format used within a program may be obtained from the relevant program director or from the program's policy manual. Following completion of the qualifying exam with a passing score, the qualifying exam form must be submitted to the dean of the SOPH. Two weeks after satisfactory completion of the qualifying examination and any additional prerequisites, the student must submit an application for admission to candidacy form to the dean of the SOPH.

Dissertation Advisory Committee: PhD Advisory Committee members **must** be members of the graduate faculty or approved by the dean of the SOPH. The committee will consist of a minimum of three members. The members of the committee are nominated by the chair of the advisory committee with the approval of the program director and the dean of the SOPH. The nomination of advisory committee form should be submitted to the Office of the Dean. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare and deliver the completed forms to the appropriate office or individual.

Dissertation: The dissertation must show originality of thought and demonstrate the results of independent investigation. It should contribute to the advancement of knowledge, exhibit mastery of the subject literature, and be written with an acceptable degree of literary skill. The dissertation is prepared under the direction of the student's advisor and must be approved by the candidate's advisory committee and the dean of the SOPH. This approval must be obtained and all other requirements completed by the date given in the official academic calendar. Generally, all degree requirements must be completed 6 – 8 weeks before the end of the term in which the student wishes to graduate.

Dissertation Defense: The dissertation defense is conducted by the candidate's advisory committee and consists of a public presentation and defense of the dissertation. Two weeks prior to a student's public defense, an administrative staff member from that particular program sends announcement information to the office of the dean in the SOPH. The following information should be included in the announcement: student name, program, dissertation or thesis, title of dissertation/thesis, date of defense, time of defense, and place of defense. In private deliberation, the advisory committee will determine the acceptability of the defense and dissertation. Further questioning of the candidate may be included in the committee's deliberations. The dissertation must be submitted to the advisory committee at least 10 days before the examination. Five members of the advisory committee must be present at the final oral examination at which time they will sign the dissertation defense approval form. Likewise, the office of the dean in the SOPH must be informed of the proposed date of the oral defense at least 2 weeks in advance.

Graduation Requirements: To earn the PhD degree a student must

- Successfully earn a minimum of 60 credit hr (30 hr beyond a MS degree in the same UMMC SOPH degree program).
- Successfully write and defend a PhD dissertation describing a body of original scientific research.
- Be listed as the sole first author on at least one submitted publication in a national or international, peer-reviewed journal. Verification of the publication requirement requires submission of the publication requirement form.
- Must enroll in and pass ID709 (Responsible Conduct of Research/Research Ethics).

Application for Diploma: The application for diploma and the cap and gown order form must be completed through the student MyU portal at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to graduate.

Exit Survey: The student must submit an exit survey form, which may be obtained from the Office of the Dean in the SOPH after the binding, publishing and copyright fees have been paid. The responses are submitted to the Office of Institutional Research and the anonymity of the student and faculty member are maintained. The collated results are used to assess program effectiveness.

3. Clinical/ Graduate Degree Program

To prepare students for careers in academic medicine, the clinical/graduate degree program will provide students with a broad understanding of contemporary medical knowledge and the ability to productively investigate issues related to human disease. Additional information regarding the clinical/ graduate degree program can be found on the SOPH website.

C. Checklist: Items to be completed prior to awarding the PhD degree:

- Residence Requirement
 - One academic year in continuous residence as a fulltime student
- Time Limit
 - No more than 5 years following admission to candidacy
- Complete Coursework
 - 60 hours minimum or 30 hours beyond Masters
 - ID 709 - Research Ethics
- Qualifying Exam Form
- PhD Application for Candidacy
 - Complete and submit within 2 weeks of passing Qualifying Exam
- Nomination of Advisory Committee
 - Committee to consist of 3 members nominated by the chairman of the advisory committee with the approval of the program director and the dean of the SOPH
- Proposal Approval Form
 - Within 1 year of candidacy
- 1st Authored Publication
 - The student must be listed as the SOLE first author on at least one submitted publication in a national or international peer-reviewed journal
- Application for Diploma /Cap and Gown Forms
- PhD Dissertation Defense Form
 - Public
 - 2 weeks prior, send announcement to Office of the Dean
 - 10 days prior, written copy of thesis/dissertation to advisory committee members. 3 members of advisory committee participate in the defense.

Other Requirements at Completion of Dissertation

- Dissertation finalized final draft in either Manuscript Style or Traditional Style must be submitted to SOPH within 2 weeks after defense for formatting review.
- 2 copies of dissertation on CD
- Finalized title page, copyright page and signed abstract
- Receipt for binding
- Copyright form pages 4, 5 and 6
- Survey of Earned Doctorates Certificate completed online
- Student Exit Survey Completion Certificate completed online
- Employer permission form
- Student information sheet
- Alumni affairs form

D. Annual Academic Review of PhD Students

Each PhD student's academic progress will be evaluated each fall and spring for progression review and completion of the individual student progression form. Each PhD student's academic progress must be evaluated semi-annually by the program director, once at the end of the fall semester and again at the end of the spring semester. After successful completion of the qualifying exam, the students' progress is evaluated semi-annually by the students' advisory committee and program director, once at the end of the fall semester and again at the end of the spring semester. Progression review permits appropriate academic planning for the following semester, and allows for timely responses to inquiries about students in jeopardy of losing federal and/or state financial aid. Additionally, each PhD student's GPA must be reviewed after their first semester of enrollment, in order to identify any academic problems early in the program.

These elements must be included in the PhD student annual evaluation:

- Review of the student's academic record including
 - Evaluation of grade point average (GPA)
 - Addressing any incomplete and/or in progress courses
 - Monitoring overall progress toward coursework completion
- Planning for a timely qualifying examination and defense of the dissertation research proposal.
- Monitoring adequate progress in research, including timeliness of degree completion i.e. manuscripts, and preliminary or qualifying exams. At the end of an academic year, the SOPH Health will check GPAs of all enrolled students. If any PhD student is below 3.0, or a weighted numerical average (WNA) of 80%, a letter will be sent informing the student and program director of academic probation per the SOPH Academic Probation Policy.
- Documentation of compliance with the Individual Development Plan Policy

E. Annual Academic Review of MS Students

Each MS Student's academic program will be evaluated each fall and spring for progression review and completion of the individual student progression form. Additionally, each MS student's academic progress must be reviewed after their first semester of enrollment, in order to identify any academic problems early in the program. Program directors are required to communicate the annual academic evaluation to the student in writing. Annual reviews are submitted by June 1 to the Office of the Dean in the SOPH.

These elements must be included in MS student annual evaluation.

- Review of the student's academic record including:
 - Grade point average (GPA)
 - Incomplete and/or in progress courses
 - Overall progress toward completing the coursework phase of the program
 - Progress toward timely completion of all degree requirements (e.g., dissertation, thesis, practice transformation practicum, qualifying examinations)

At the end of an academic year, the SOPH will check GPAs of all enrolled students. If any MS student is below 2.8 GPA (on a 4 point scale), a letter will be sent informing the student and program director of academic probation per the SOPH academic probation policy.

V. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Grading Policy

Grades for academic credit will be awarded based on a 4 point grading scale. Grades are reported as a percentage, which are converted into a letter grade and reported on the transcript according to the following rubric: A, 90-100; B, 80-89; C, 70-79; F, 0-69. Under such a scale a grade of A is assessed 4 point, a B 3 points,

a C 2 points, and an F 0 points. A grade of C or below is not acceptable for graduate credit but is included in the calculation of the student's GPA unless the course is remediated.

1. Good Academic Standing

The SOPH defines a student in good academic standing as one who is making acceptable progress toward a graduate degree and who is eligible to register for and pursue academic coursework at UMMC for the current semester. All graduate students are expected to remain in good academic standing throughout the entire course of their study.

The minimum requirements for good academic standing established by the SOPH are as follows:

- a. A PhD student must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher based on a four point grade scale.
- b. A MS student must maintain a grade point average (GPA) of 2.8 or higher based on a four point grade scale.

Under such a scale a grade of A is assessed 4 point, a B 3 points, a C 2 points, and an F 0 points. A grade of C or below is not acceptable for graduate credit but will be included in the calculation of the student's GPA. Per the Grade Forgiveness Policy, SOPH graduate students who earn a grade of C or below in a course may retake the course once, and the grade earned in the repeated course will be used in calculating the student's overall UMMC GPA. Although the original grade will not be calculated into the student's GPA, it will remain on the transcript. Students may only remediate two courses in which they earn a C or below over the course of the degree program. Per the Academic Probation Policy, students may be allowed 3 continuous semesters to raise their GPA to an acceptable level. Failure to do so will result in administrative withdrawal from the academic degree program.

Individual programs may have specific academic requirements in addition to those stated here. Academic requirements other than those imposed by the SOPH are determined by the approval of the Dean.

2. Pass/Fail Courses

In certain courses, a mark of P is given to indicate that a student has received graduate credit but has been assigned no point grade in the course. For example, official credit for satisfactory scholastic performance in seminars, journal clubs, research, and preparation of the dissertation or thesis will be recorded as P. However, in courses approved for the P mark, course directors may also assign the grade of F.

3. Incomplete Coursework

An incomplete (I) mark may be assigned with the approval of the dean when the student has not completed a course within the enrollment period. Graduate students receiving the mark of I must complete the course work within 12 months from the time the grade was assigned, unless the course director requires an earlier completion date.

4. Grade Forgiveness Policy (Repeating a course)

Repeating a course must be recommended by the student's program director or advisor and approved by the former and the course director. Students who have earned a grade of C or less in a course in the SOPH may retake the course once, and the grade earned in the repeated course will be used in calculating the student's overall UMMC GPA. Although the original grade will not be calculated into the student's GPA, it will remain on the transcript.

5. Change of Grade

A course instructor may change a reported grade only if the original grade was incorrectly assigned due to clerical or computational error, or if a student meets the requirements for the removal of an "I" mark.

B. Academic Probation

If at any time during an academic year the progress of a student is considered unsatisfactory, the student may be placed on academic probation and enrolled in the Academic Achievement Program or dismissed from

the program. Students who are placed on academic probation because their GPA has fallen below the benchmarks as indicated in good academic standing, have 3 semesters to raise their GPA to an acceptable level. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.

The SOPH will monitor student progression by checking their GPAs after the first academic year. Letters will be sent to those students who are no longer in Good Academic Standing, detailing the policy and consequences. The student will be instructed to meet with the program director and may be placed in the program's academic achievement program.

C. Adding or Dropping a Course

Classes may be added or dropped for a specific term until the day specified by the academic calendar. Registration for a course makes the student responsible for attending that class until the course is completed or until the program director and dean or designee of the SOPH authorizes withdrawal from that course. Approved withdrawal from a course, if completed on or before the day specified by the academic calendar, will not be recorded on the student's record. A withdrawal authorized after that date will be recorded as "W". A student can withdraw from a course and receive a "W" at any time until the submission of the final grade. Once the final grade has been submitted, withdrawal is not permitted. Students may challenge grades within 30 days of issuance of final grades by the Office of Student Records and Registrar; otherwise, grades will stand as recorded.

The request form to add or drop a class may be found on the SOPH website.

D. Transfer of Graduate Credit

With the approval of the program director and the dean of the SOPH, a limited amount of graduate credit earned at another recognized institution may be accepted toward degree requirements at UMMC. All transfer course work is evaluated and accepted work is recorded, without changes in grades, as part of the student's permanent academic record. Graduate credit will only be accepted for grades of "B" or higher. Final approval is granted by the program director and SOPH dean or designee.

No more than nine (9) credit hours required for graduation will be accepted for credit toward a UMMC degree. Coursework must have been earned at an institution whose academic integrity has been assured. For institutions in the United States, transfer credit will only be accepted from accredited universities. Furthermore, acceptance of this work does not reduce the residency requirement.

For institutions outside the United States, such assurance is provided by a course-by-course report from World Education Services (WES) or Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE).

Students in good academic standing may pursue training at another institution for periods up to a total of 12 months; however, credit from another institution is accepted only when it is clearly a relevant part of the student's current program and when its acceptance has been recommended by the dean of the SOPH. A student will not receive credit for courses taken at another college or university while simultaneously attending UMMC unless prior approval is obtained from the student's academic dean.

Acceptance of transfer credit does not reduce the residency requirement. There is no credit given for experiential learning. Grades received in transfer courses are not used to calculate the student's GPA, but are counted toward the hours required for a given graduate degree. Transfer courses are indicated on the student's transcript by the designation "T," to indicate credit has been awarded.

The transform of credit approval form can be found on the SOPH website.

E. Academic Accommodations

The Office of Academic Support manages academic accommodations at the UMMC. Students seeking accommodation for physical or other disabilities should review the Documentation Guidelines for Academic Accommodations and complete the Request for Academic Accommodations form. A complete outline on how to apply for academic accommodations can be found at the Office of Academic Support on the Academic Accommodations website.

F. Academic Counseling and Support

If a student is experiencing academic difficulties, the SOPH offers the student the opportunity to participate in the Academic Achievement Program provided by the Office of Academic Support. This program is designed to assist the student in developing good study habits and to provide, if needed, tutorial help.

During the first year of the program, a student who earns a grade of “C” or below on any exam, may be referred to their program director for inclusion in the Academic Achievement Program.

Once the student has met the criteria to be enrolled in the Academic Achievement Program, the student must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Within two weeks of receiving notification from the dean for Academic Affairs, the student must make an appointment with the Office of Academic Support to discuss the appropriate academic assistance that is available to students, both directly and on a referral basis.
2. In some cases, the student may be evaluated by Student/Employee Health.
3. After the initial meeting with an academic counselor, students will plan with their Program Director the conditions for continuation as indicated in their program’s Academic Achievement Program.

G. Graduation and Commencement

Degrees earned in a graduate program are awarded at the end of each semester. To be awarded a degree at the end of an academic term, a student must complete all degree requirements and complete the Application for Graduation through the MyU Portal by the dates designated in the Academic Calendar. Formal commencement ceremonies are held once a year at the end of the academic year (May). If able, all graduates are encouraged to participate in spring commencement exercises.

H. Dismissal

Graduate students may be dismissed from the graduate program for cause. This may include unsatisfactory academic performance, failure to pass qualifying examinations, poor research performance, breaches of scientific integrity, i.e., plagiarism, falsification of data, etc. or personnel issues, i.e., harassment.

Dismissal of a student from the SOPH is initiated by the program director of the student’s program and approved by a vote of the faculty of that program. A recommendation for dismissal is then submitted in writing to the dean of the SOPH. Following his/her approval, the Office of the Dean notifies the student of the decision to dismiss and all necessary details related to the implementation of that decision through the student’s official UMMC email account. Copies of the notification are sent to the program director of the student’s academic program. Written notification to the student includes a statement of the appeals process and the deadline for appeal. Appeal of the decision must be made by the student, in writing, to the dean of the SOPH within 14 days of receipt of the letter of notification.

Dismissal of a student can only occur after review by the dean of the SOPH and, if necessary, by a hearing before the SOPH Academic Council at which the student has the opportunity to explain any unsatisfactory performance. Students have the right to appeal any disciplinary action as outlined in the appeals process.

I. Honor Code

Because integrity is the foundation of scientific endeavors, a graduate student pledges to be honest and trustworthy both in class and while performing research, i.e., the student will not cheat on examinations, plagiarize the work of others, or falsify results. Furthermore, the student will report such behavior to the responsible authority, i.e., course director or program director.

J. Distance Education

In order to facilitate academic integrity within distance learning courses, the SOPH requires all coursework materials be accessed by students through a secure login via UMMC's learning management system, Canvas (umc.instructure.com).

All current policies that apply to traditional face-to-face delivery of academic coursework also apply to coursework delivered electronically.

K. Residence Requirement

UMMC applies the definitions and conditions of residency as stated in the Bulletin as required by state law in the classification of students as residents or nonresidents for the assessment of fees. Requests for a review of residency classification should be submitted to the Office of Student Records and Registrar. A minimum of one academic year must be spent in continuous residence as a full-time student at UMMC to qualify for a MS or PhD degree.

L. Leave of Absence

Leave of absence from graduate school for students currently booked may be granted by the dean or designee under the following conditions:

1. To students in good academic standing, a leave of absence will be granted for periods for up to 12 months to pursue training at another institution,
2. To students in good academic standing, a leave of absence for generally no more than one academic semester will be allowed for personal, financial, or medical reasons, and
3. To students not in good academic standing, i.e., those whose GPA is less than 3.0 or or an 80% weighted numerical average C or whose research efforts/results are not satisfactory, a leave of absence will be given at the discretion of the program director and dean of the SOPH. Such students will be permitted the option of withdrawal from the program.

Non-booked Students: Students who are enrolled in an academic program but who are not actively booked in any given semester/term may be placed on an administrative leave of absence by the dean. This will prevent financial aid, for which a student is not eligible and which may result in inappropriate financial aid refund to the student, from transferring to his/her account.

An administrative leave of absence for non-booked students will also alert the student accounting manager to review that student's eligibility for continuation into the student health insurance plan. Only students who are actively enrolled (booked) or who are on an approved leave of absence are eligible for continuation of coverage in the student health plan.

M. Withdrawal

Registration in an academic program makes the student responsible for completion of the course of study or until, with the permission of the dean or designee, the student withdraws from the curriculum. Official withdrawal is facilitated by the dean or designee submitting official notice of withdrawal to the Offices of the Registrar, Student Financial Aid, and Student Accounting. Failure to officially withdraw will result in the recording of a failing grade in the course(s) in which the student is registered. An approved withdrawal, if completed on or before the last day specified in the academic calendar, will not be recorded on the student's record. Withdrawals authorized after this date will be recorded "W" unless the student has completed the course, in which case the final grade in the course will be recorded.

N. Non-Degree Seeking Students

Before registering for classes, individuals who are not currently enrolled at UMMC, but who wish to take a course offered within the SOPH must be admitted as non-degree seeking.

Non-degree Seeking Students: UMMC employees who wish to take graduate courses, but are not members of the UMMC graduate program may apply as non-degree seeking students. Applicants must first complete an approval to register form. The form and instructions are located on this website under the heading

“Non-Degree Seeking Students”. Non-degree seeking students may not earn more than 9 semester hours. Furthermore, successful completing of courses taken does not in itself qualify the individual for subsequent admission to a graduate program.

Visiting Students: A student who wishes to enroll in graduate course work for transfer toward a degree at another institution may be admitted in a visiting status. A visiting student must have written approval from the school to which the credit will be transferred and a letter of good standing. In addition, applicants must first complete an approval to register form. The form and instructions are located on this website under the heading “Non-Degree Seeking Students”. Non-degree seeking students may not earn more than 9 semester hours. Credit earned as a visiting student may not be applied toward a degree at this institution.

O. Off-Campus Graduate Courses and Tuition Payment Policy

Although graduate courses necessary to meet the requirements to graduate are available in the SOPH curriculum, there may be circumstances where a program requires a graduate student to enroll in a course at another institution. If a student’s graduate advisory committee requires a graduate student to enroll in a course at another institution, then it is the responsibility of the mentor/graduate program to pay tuition and fees associated with that course. The graduate student must obtain approval from the program director and dean of the SOPH before including such a course in the degree plan. The UMMC accounts or other funding sources may be used to pay the required tuition and fees, provided such use complies with the policies of the sponsoring agency. When searching for an institution that offers the necessary course, the following types of institution should be considered in decreasing order of preference: University of Mississippi-Oxford, other Mississippi colleges and universities, and colleges and universities outside of Mississippi.

If a student enrolls at another institution in a course that is not required by his/her graduate advisory committee, then it is the responsibility of the student to pay tuition and fees associated with that course. This policy applies to students performing non-sponsored as well as sponsored activities whether those students are employees of the university or not.

P. Outside Employment

Stipends are provided to graduate students on a competitive basis to assist with living expenses and to ensure that they will not accumulate a large debt in pursuit of a PhD degree. Because the stipend allows the student to pursue his/her graduate work without the need to seek outside employment, graduate students supported by stipends from either the University of Mississippi Medical Center or research grants are expected to devote their full efforts to their academic classes and research projects. Specifically, this implies that a minimum of 40 hour/week is spent at UMMC, with additional time at home for study and writing. Although outside employment is generally discouraged, permission may be granted to senior graduate students for teaching a course related to their field of study as this may be considered appropriate training for an academic career. In view of this, and consistent with the University of Mississippi Medical Center policy, outside employment is permitted by the completion of the Outside Employment Request Form and with the written consent of the chairman of the advisory committee, the Program Director, and the Dean of the School of Population Health. An application for Permission to Engage in Outside Employment, available from the Office of Human Resources, must be completed and approved prior to seeking such employment. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, up to and including loss of stipend and dismissal from the graduate program. Additional information about outside employment may be found in the Stipend Policy.

Q. Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in good taste and to present themselves in a manner appropriate to their profession. UMMC policy requires that all employees and students wear their identification badges at all times while on campus and in any other facilities which are operated by UMMC, or in which the student is engaged in research experience. The badge should be worn with the name and photo clearly visible on the front, upper torso affixed to the collar, pocket, lapel, or displayed on a short break-away neck strap close to the face.

These recommendations for dress are expected to be adhered to any time the students are in educational/research or clinical settings or at any time they interact with others at UMMC.

R. Compliance Training

All students and student/employees (i.e. insert name of students on school stipend or stipend paid by grant) must receive institutional compliance training in accordance with the institutional compliance training policy and procedure. UMMC student compliance training is managed and monitored by the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. All students are required to complete student compliance training through the institution's learning management system within 14 calendar days of beginning their academic degree program and as outlined in the SOPH compliance training policy. In addition, individual degree programs may require additional compliance and responsible conduct in research training.

S. Human Research Subjects

Individuals working with human subjects must also undergo training to ensure confidentiality of human subjects and appropriate treatment of human subjects.

T. Mandatory Immunizations

As mandated by the Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, all entering students, including those online or distance education programs, regardless of physical presence on the UMMC campus, are required to be compliant with the Student Immunization Policy. Required immunizations are listed below.

Influenza: It is the policy that all employees and students, volunteers, observers and shadowers must be vaccinated annually against influenza in advance of the flu season unless they are eligible for and have an approved medical contraindication or an approved religious restriction. All persons covered under this policy must show proof of influenza vaccination or be granted an exemption as outlined below by the date of the Designated Vaccination Period established annually by the Student Employee and the Department of Infection Prevention. The vaccine will be offered free of charge to UMMC employees, students, and volunteers through the Student Employee Health Department during usual business hours or during Flu Blitzes. One may also receive the vaccine from an outside provider, but written documentation on letterhead of one's personal physician or pharmacy must be provided. Failure to comply with vaccination will result in disciplinary action up to dismissal from school. For more information on medical or religious exemptions, please see the institutional Mandatory Flu Vaccine Policy.

Varicella: Two-dose varicella vaccination series given at least 30 days apart OR proof of immunity through blood titer for students who have had a previous Varicella infections is required.

Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap): Proof of up-to-date Tdap vaccine. The last dose must have been given within 10 years. If only tetanus/diphtheria vaccine (Td) was administered, a single booster of Tdap is required. International students must provide documentation of three previous doses of Tetanus/diphtheria. One of which must include the Tdap vaccine.

Meningococcal vaccine: See Student Immunization Policy (optional)

Hepatitis B: Proof of completion of three dose series is required. If you have not completed the series before school entry, the 2nd and/or 3rd may be obtained at Student Employee health for a fee. This series MUST be completed by the end of the first semester.

TB Skin test: A two-step TB skin test is required for baseline TB screening of all students. Accepted students must submit documentation of a two-step TB skin test performed within 90 days (3 months) prior to school entry. The second dose of the two-step TB test must be placed within 28 days of the initial TB skin test. If the TB skin test is positive, a chest x-ray report must also be submitted. Students residing in the United States who have been undergoing annual TB skin test screening prior to enrollment may submit two consecutive annual reports of negative TB skin tests, one of which must have been done within the past three months, in lieu of the two-step TB skin test. International students with a previous positive TB skin test or students with a history of immunization with BCG should submit a report of a Quantiferon TB Gold/T-spot TB blood test obtained with three months prior to school entry. Additional details regarding annual TB testing can be found in the UMMC policy on Student TB Testing.

The University of Mississippi Medical Center reserves the right to revoke acceptance of students and to deny admission to any of its programs as it determines appropriate based on TB status, required vaccination status and the best interests of the Medical Center.

Record of vaccinations should be documented on the Mississippi Certificate of Immunization Compliance, Form 121 or the University of Mississippi Medical Center Immunization record form. This form must be completed by a licensed healthcare provider: a physician, a licensed nurse practitioner, a licensed nurse or public health official.

Questions regarding level of immunity and other interpretation of testing results are resolved by the Office of Student and Employee Health.

U. International Travel for Non-Citizen Alien Students

Non-citizen alien students receiving a graduate stipend will be given a maximum of 3 weeks leave time for international travel. Travel that extends beyond 3 weeks will require the student to take a leave of absence and financial support will be immediately suspended. Financial support will resume at the beginning of a new pay period once the student returns to school. Any exceptions to this policy will be handled on an individual basis. For additional information regarding this policy and SOPH stipends, please contact the Office of the Dean.

V. Financial Aid Good Academic Standing Policy

All students must remain in good academic standing for purposes of continued financial support, i.e. Dean's scholarship and federal and state loans. These standards are reviewed at the end of each spring term, and any student failing to meet these requirements will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students on financial aid suspension are ineligible to receive state/federal student aid or institutional scholarships (i.e. Deans' Scholarship).

Once a student is placed on financial aid suspension, a review of academic progress will be assessed after each graded term. If a student is deemed to be in good academic standing, the student will be removed from financial aid suspension and will once again be eligible to receive aid, loans, and institutional scholarships. Any student that does not meet the requirements for good academic standing within one academic year, will no longer be eligible for institutional scholarship, aids, or loans.

In addition, requirements of satisfactory academic progress set forth by the Office of Student Financial Aid must also be met to receive federal financial aid. For more information on these requirements, please visit the Office of Student Financial Aid website.

VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT- Stipends, Scholarships, and Tuition

Financial support in the form of scholarships and stipends may be available in some programs. Academic excellence, maturity, and research experience are the main qualifications considered in the appointment of trainees and assistants. Inquiries should be addressed to the director of the graduate program in which the applicant wishes to undertake study. In addition to the above, information concerning loans to cover tuition and personal expenses may be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Aid. All students must maintain good academic standing in order to be eligible for aid, loans, and institutional scholarships as stated in the Financial Aid Good Academic Standing Policy.

A. Graduate Stipends

Stipends are awarded to defray housing and living costs for full-time students on a competitive basis. Additional information may be found in the Stipend Policy.

B. Scholarships

In addition to the stipend, all students receiving a stipend from either the SOPH or an outside source will also receive a scholarship to cover tuition.

Dean's Scholarship: The Dean's Scholarship is a full-tuition recruitment scholarship, which is awarded to students for outstanding academic achievement. All students on stipends or extramural support are eligible for the Dean's Scholarship.

C. Loans

Students may also apply for additional funding through various loan mechanisms. Students should contact the Office of Student Accounting and Financial Aid to determine if they qualify for these loan programs.

VII. COMMUNICATION AMONG STUDENTS AND BETWEEN STUDENTS AND THE FACULTY/ADMINISTRATION

A. Social Media

UMMC recognizes that social networking websites are popular means of communication. Students who use these websites must be aware that posting certain information is illegal. Violations of existing statutes and administrative regulations may expose the offender to criminal and civil liability and the punishment for violations may include fines and imprisonment. Offenders also may be subject to adverse academic actions up to and including dismissal. Additional information may be found at Policy and Guidelines for Personal Use of Social Media. Below is a brief summary of the UMMC policy highlighting the critical issues:

Please be advised that the following actions are forbidden:

- You may not present the personal health information of other individuals. Removal of an individual's name does not alone constitute proper de-identification of protected health information. Inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date of evaluation, or type of treatment or the use of a highly specific medical photograph (such as a before/after photograph of a patient having surgery or a photograph of a patient from one of the medical outreach trips) may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual.
- You may not report private (protected) academic information of another student or trainee.
- You may not present yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for the institution. Make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of UMMC – you may consider adding a disclaimer such as “The views express on this (blog, website, etc.) are my own and do not reflect the views of UMMC.”
- You may not represent yourself as another person, real or fictitious, or otherwise attempt to obscure your identity as a means to circumvent the prohibitions listed above and below.

In addition to the absolute prohibitions listed above, the actions listed below are strongly discouraged. Violations of these suggested guidelines are considered unprofessional behavior and may be the basis for disciplinary action:

- Display of vulgar language
- Display of language or photographs that imply disrespect for any individual or group because of age, race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.
- Presentation of personal photographs or photographs of others that may reasonably be interpreted as condoning irresponsible use of alcohol, substance abuse, or sexual promiscuity.
- Posting of potentially inflammatory or unflattering material on another individual's website.

Individuals should make every effort to present themselves in a mature, responsible, and professional manner. Discourse should always be civil and respectful. Please be aware that no privatization measure is

perfect and that undesignated persons may still gain access to your networking site. Future employers (residency or fellowship Program Directors, department chairs, or private practice partners) often review these network sites when considering potential candidates for employment. Finally, although once-posted information can be removed from the original social networking site, exported information cannot be recovered. Any digital exposure can "live on" beyond its removal from the original website and continue to circulate in other venues. Therefore, think carefully before you post any information on a website or application. Always be modest, respectful, and professional in your actions. This policy shall not be construed to impair any constitutionally protected activity, including speech, protest or assembly.

B. Canvas

Depending upon the course, class-related information will be posted on the UMMC Canvas system. For many courses, course assignments and in-class PowerPoint presentations are posted on Canvas.

C. Method of Dissemination of School Information

Information regarding SOPH policies will be disseminated by the directors of the individual graduate programs or the dean's office via e-mail. Communication directly from the dean will be either by campus mail or via e-mail. As a result, students should check their UMMC e-mail accounts.

D. Proper Use of the UMMC Internet/E-mail Service

UMMC Policy regarding acceptable internet and e-mail use can be found at:

Email Policy: Electronic mail (email) services are provided to the UMMC community in support of the missions and administrative functions of the university. Users of the email system are expected to comply with the Email Policy, Information Policy, and all other UMMC policies. The email system may not be used for illegal or unlawful activities. Email users are expected to use the services in a professional and respectful manner.

VIII. FACILITIES AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO UMMC STUDENTS

A detailed list of facilities and services available to all UMMC students is presented on the SOPH website/Facilities and service available to students include cafeterias and on-campus eating establishments (Subway, McDonalds, Cups), Student–Employee Health, the Student Union including food services, gym, and bookstore, Roland Library, etc.

IX. GRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT AND ACTIVITIES

A. Associated Student Body (ASB)

The ASB council serves as the students' voice to the administration and also hosts social and outreach activities for the UMMC student body. Monthly meetings are held at which the Vice Chancellor and representatives from each school meet to discuss issues of importance to UMMC students.

B. Student Activities/ Social Events

Social events include a number of annual parties hosted by the ASB council. There are also intramural leagues including flag football, basketball, soccer, and volleyball. In addition, students are encouraged to take part in philanthropic events and community outreach activities.

X. COMMENCEMENT

Students receiving terminal degrees are encouraged to attend commencement. However, the SOPH realizes that because students finish their course of study and leave for post-doctoral and other positions at various times throughout the year, attendance at commencement is not always possible.

XI. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Dismissal Appeal Process

Dismissal of a student from graduate school for academic or non-academic reasons such as unprofessional behavior, scientific misconduct or cause is initiated by the director of graduate studies in the student's program. A recommendation form is then submitted in writing to the dean of the SOPH. Following approval of a recommendation for dismissal by the dean of the SOPH and after written notification, the student has the right to appeal. Course grades cannot be appealed.

- a. The Office of the Dean notifies the student through formal notification by the student's UMMC email account of the decision to dismiss and all necessary details related to the implementation of that decision. Copies of the notification are sent to the program director of the student's academic program.
- b. Written notification to the student includes a statement of the Appeals Process and the deadline for appeal.
- c. Appeal of the decision must be made by the student, in writing, to the dean of the SOPH within 14 days of receipt of the letter of notification.
- d. The Academic Council shall act as the appeal body for all matters concerning dismissal. Upon receipt of a valid request for appeal, the Dean of the SOPH shall call a meeting of the Academic Council to hear information from both the student and the program. During an appeal before the Academic Council, the student shall have the right to counsel and may present witnesses and other documentation as may seem pertinent. Academic Council members who had direct input into the recommendation for dismissal shall be excused from this deliberation process. The decision of the members of the Academic Council who have heard the appeal will be determined by written ballot.
- e. The dean of the SOPH shall inform the student and the director of the student's program in writing of the decision. This decision by the dean of SOPH shall be final. The student shall have the right to file a procedural appeal in Writing to the Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs within five (5) working days. In the case that a procedural violation is found to have occurred, the case will be returned to the point of procedural issue and readdressed.

B. Student Complaint Policy

Students have the right to complain, whether verbally or in writing, regarding any area of academic or student life without fear of coercion, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal from the institution or its employees. Students also have the right to expect a timely response to any complaint related to student life. However, defamatory or baseless charges may cause a student to be held responsible for violations of institutional policies or for action through the courts.

If a student has a complaint, grievance, or concern based on academic, personnel, research, ethical, policy or non-academic issues in instances where an existing institutional policy does not apply, the student should **first** discuss the issue at hand with his/her mentor or faculty advisor and/or director of the graduate program in which the students is enrolled. If satisfaction is not received, the student should contact the SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs according to the procedure outlined below.

1. The student should submit the complaint to the SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs. The complaint should contain (at a minimum) the date and time of the alleged conflict or action and a summary of the complaint.

2. The SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs will submit by email to the student any resolution of the complaint within ten (10) business days of the complaint being filed. In order to achieve this, the SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs may attempt to arrange a conference with the student, encourage discussion between the student(s) and a faculty member/administrator, or take other appropriate action.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, the SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs may choose to review the complaint and resolution to the dean of the SOPH. The decision of the dean will be final.
4. A record of all complaints and their resolution will be documented and the records will be kept in the SOPH Associate Dean of Student Affairs office.
5. As an alternative, students may choose to submit a complaint directly through the UMMC Office of Student Affairs "complaints, comments, suggestions or requests" link <https://www.umc.edu/Office%20of%20Academic%20Affairs/For-Students/Student%20Affairs/Student%20Comments%20and%20Complaints.html> Through this site, complaints may be made anonymously if desired. Complaints that are related to overall institutional policy or procedures will be resolved by the UMMC Office of Student Affairs.

C. Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#) gives matriculated students the right to view their academic records, mandates student consent for authorized persons to gain access to these records, and authorizes hearings to enable students to modify or supplement their records.

D. Professional Conduct Policy for Students and Their Mentors

The following guidelines for students and their mentors are provided by the AAMC Group on Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) and can be accessed in full at www.aamc.org/gradcompact. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of students and mentors alike.

XII. Appendix

A. Websites of Importance

1. School of Population Health Forms

<https://www.umc.edu/SoPH/Overview.html>

2. Academic Support

http://www.umc.edu/academic_support/

3. Student Accounting

<https://www.umc.edu/Office%20of%20Academic%20Affairs/For-Students/Student%20Affairs/Student%20Accounting%20and%20Insurance/Student%20Accounting%20and%20Insurance.html>

4. Financial Aid

<https://www.umc.edu/Office%20of%20Academic%20Affairs/For-Students/Student%20Financial%20Aid/Student-Financial-Aid.html>

5. Student Records and Registrar

<https://www.umc.edu/Office%20of%20Academic%20Affairs/For-Students/Student%20Records%20and%20Registrar/Student%20Records%20and%20Registrar.html>

B. Acknowledgement of Receipt and Reading of Handbook

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

STUDENT HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the student handbook and accept responsibility for reviewing, understanding and complying with the policies and procedures of the John D. Bower School of Population Health at the University of Mississippi Medical Center.

I also recognize that the policies and procedures may change from time to time and accept responsibility for maintaining current and accurate information. The student handbook will be posted on the John D. Bower School of Population Health website.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PROGRAM

DATE