



2018-2019
STUDENT HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	4
A.	Mission.....	4
B.	History.....	4
C.	Programs	4
	Master of Science Degree Programs	4
	Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs	4
II.	ADMINISTRATION.....	4
	School of Population Health Dean’s Office	4
III.	ADMISSIONS.....	5
A.	Admissions Policy and Procedure	5
B.	Orientation.....	5
C.	Enrollment.....	5
D.	Registration	5
E.	Course Load and Fees.....	5
F.	Required Laptops.....	5
IV.	GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS	5
A.	Academic Expectations	5
	1. Good Academic Standing.....	6
	2. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Criteria for Federal Financial Aid and Institutional Scholarship Eligibility	6
B.	Graduate Programs and Degree Requirements	6
	1. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree.....	7
V.	ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	8
A.	Grading Policy.....	8
B.	Grade Forgiveness Policy (Repeating a course).....	8
C.	Academic Probation.....	8
D.	Adding or Dropping a Course.....	8
E.	Transfer of Graduate Credit.....	8
F.	Academic Accommodations	9
G.	Graduation and Commencement.....	9
H.	Dismissal	9
I.	Honor Code	9
J.	Distance Education	9
K.	Leave of Absence	9
L.	Withdrawal.....	9
M.	Non-Degree Seeking Students	9
N.	Dress Code.....	10
O.	Compliance Training	10
P.	Human Research Subjects	10
Q.	Mandatory Immunizations	10
R.	International Travel for Non-Citizen Alien Students	10

VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT.....10

- A. Graduate Stipends10**
- B. Institutional Scholarships10**
- C. Loans.....10**

VII. INFORMATION POLICIES10

- A. Information Policy10**
- B. Social Media11**
- C. Canvas.....11**
- D. E-mail11**

VIII. STUDENT GOVERNMENT AND ACTIVITIES11

- A. Associated Student Body (ASB).....11**
- B. Student Activities/ Social Events11**

IX. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES11

- A. Dismissal Appeal Process11**
- B. Student Complaint Policy11**
- C. Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)12**
- D. Professional Conduct Policy for Students and Their Mentors.....12**

Acknowledgement of Receipt and Reading of Handbook.....12

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 (SOPH) 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.

Executive Master of Science Degree Programs

Executive Master of Science in Population Health Management

Master of Science Degree Programs

Master of Science in Biostatistics and Data Science

Master of Science in Population Health Science

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs

Doctor of Philosophy in Biostatistics and Data Science

Doctor of Philosophy in Population Health Science

II. ADMINISTRATION

School of Population Health Dean’s Office

Bettina Beech DrPH, Dean	601-815-1020
Natalie Gaughf PhD, Associate Dean of Student Affairs	601-815-5064
Sydney Murphy, PhD, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs	601-984-1206

III. ADMISSIONS

A. Admissions Policy and Procedure

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, sex, age, disability, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, genetic information or veteran's 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. More information regarding SOPH admissions policies and procedures may be found in the [SOPH Admission Policy](#).

B. Orientation

SOPH students must complete UMMC general orientation and the SOPH specific orientation prior to first semester course registration.

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 as outlined in the [SOPH Enrollment 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 UMMC [Tuition Table](#). 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 and Mac 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 as outlined in the [SOPH Student Progression Annual Review Policy](#).

1. Good Academic Standing

The [SOPH Good Academic Standing](#) Policy 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.

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

All students must remain in good academic standing for purposes of continued financial support, i.e. Dean's scholarship and federal and state loans per the [SOPH Financial Aid Good Academic Standing Policy](#).

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, Population Health Science, and an Executive Master of Science degree in Population Health Management. Information about each program can be obtained from the program director.

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

Course Work: A minimum of 30 credit hours and a minimum GPA of ≥ 2.8 (on a 4 point scale) are required.

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. 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.

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: All students must complete an anonymous online exit survey prior to graduation. The collated results are used to assess program effectiveness.

2. **Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree**

The SOPH offers PhD degrees in Biostatistics and Data Science and Population Health Science. Information about the programs can be obtained from the program directors.

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.

Course Work: 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).

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.

Dissertation Advisory Committee: A written dissertation and oral defense are mandatory in all PhD programs. 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. The [nomination of advisory committee form](#) should be submitted to the Office of the Dean for approval. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare and deliver the completed forms to the appropriate office or individual.

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 Office of the Dean. 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 Office of the Dean.

Dissertation Defense: The dissertation defense is conducted by the candidate's advisory committee and consists of a public presentation and defense of the dissertation in accordance with the [SOPH Notice of Public Defense Policy](#). 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](#).

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: All students must complete an anonymous online exit survey prior to graduation. The collated results are used to assess program effectiveness.

V. ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Grading Policy

Grades for academic credit will be awarded based on a 4 point grading scale per the [SOPH Grading Policy](#).

B. Grade Forgiveness Policy (Repeating a course)

Students who have earned a grade of C or below in a course in the SOPH may retake the course once, according to the [SOPH Grade Forgiveness Policy](#).

C. Academic Probation

The SOPH will monitor student progression and any student who has fallen below the benchmarks as indicated in good academic standing policy, can be placed on academic probation per the [SOPH Academic Probation Policy](#).

D. Adding or Dropping a Course

Classes may be added or dropped for a specific term until the day specified by the academic calendar and in accordance with the [SOPH Add/Drop Course Policy](#). The [Add/Drop request form](#) may be found on the SOPH website.

E. 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 per the [SOPH Transfer of Credit Policy](#). The [transfer of credit approval form](#) can be found on the SOPH website.

F. Academic Accommodations

The [Office of Academic Support](#) manages academic accommodations at UMMC. UMMC is committed to ensuring equal access to a quality education for qualified students through the provision of reasonable academic accommodations which support UMMC standards and academic integrity. UMMC policy provides for reasonable academic accommodations to be made for students with verified disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis as specified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). A complete outline on how to apply for academic accommodations can be found at the Office of Academic Support on the [Academic Accommodations website](#).

G. Graduation and Commencement

Degrees earned in a graduate program are awarded at the end of each semester. 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 per the [SOPH Dismissal Policy](#).

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 according to the [SOPH Honor Code Policy](#).

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). Information about and resources for the delivery of distance education courses can be found on the [SOPH Distance Education Policy](#).

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

K. Leave of Absence

Leave of absence from graduate school for students currently booked may be granted by the Dean or designee per the [SOPH Leave of Absence Policy](#).

L. 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.

1. [Administrative Withdrawal](#)
2. [Program Withdrawal Policy](#)

M. 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 per the [SOPH Non-Degree Seeking Student Policy](#). Additional instructions and information can be found on the SOPH website.

N. Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in good taste and to present themselves in a manner appropriate to their profession. All students are expected to adhere to the [SOPH Dress Code Policy](#).

O. 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. The [SOPH Student Compliance Training Policy](#) is available for more information.

P. Human Research Subjects

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

Q. 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 [UMMC Student Immunization Policy](#).

R. 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 per the [SOPH International Travel for Non-Citizen Alien Students Policy](#). For additional information regarding this policy and SOPH stipends, please contact the Office of the Dean.

VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT**A. Graduate Stipends**

Financial support in the form of graduate stipends may be available in some programs and are awarded on a competitive basis. More information regarding student stipends may be found in the [SOPH Stipend Policy](#) and provided by the student's program director.

B. Institutional Scholarships

All students receiving a stipend from either the SOPH or an outside source will also receive a tuition scholarship.

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 Financial Aid](#) to determine their eligibility.

VII. INFORMATION POLICIES**A. Information Policy**

The purpose of the [UMMC Information Policy](#) is to establish management direction and requirements to ensure the accomplishment of the UMMC mission through the appropriate

protection of all UMMC information from accidental or intentional misuse or unauthorized access, modification, destruction, or disclosure.

B. Social Media

All students in UMMC schools and programs will comply with the [UMMC Policy and Guidelines for Personal Use of Social Media](#).

C. Canvas

Each school's course syllabi and schedules are available to students electronically on the internet via Canvas, UMMC's e-learning management system. For courses that are taught face-to-face, UMMC faculty may use Canvas to post lecture notes and slide presentations for student review and study outside of class.

D. E-mail

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.

Students will receive information from the SOPH via mail and their UMMC e-mail account. Therefore, students are expected to check their UMMC e-mail accounts regularly.

VIII. 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.

IX. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Dismissal Appeal Process

Following recommendation for dismissal by the Dean of the SOPH and after formal notification, the student has the right to appeal. Information regarding this process can be found in the [SOPH Appeal of Dismissal Policy](#).

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. More information is available in the [SOPH Grievance/Complaint Policy](#).

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND READING OF THE SOPH STUDENT HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the John D. Bower School of Population Health (SOPH) 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.

STUDENT NAME

STUDENT SIGNATURE

PROGRAM

DATE