

# Academic Policies and Guidelines

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2019-2020

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This document is subject to change. For the current version of the Academic Policies and Guidelines, be sure to check the Graduate Division website: [www.einsteinmed.org/phd](http://www.einsteinmed.org/phd)

# Graduate Division Forms

The following forms are available through the Graduate Division website (<http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/graduate-forms.aspx>):

## **First Year Laboratory Rotations**

- [Rotation Registration Form](#)
- [One Time Rotation Registration Form](#) (for Directly Recruited PhD students)
- [Rotation Evaluation Form](#)
- [Health and Safety Assessment Form \(OSHA\)](#)

## **Thesis Laboratory**

- [Thesis Laboratory Declaration Form](#)
- [Change of Laboratory Form](#)

## **Student Advisory Committee (SAC)**

- [Student Advisory Committee Summary Report Form](#)

## **Qualifying Examination**

- [Form 1: Proposed Committee Members and Tentative Specific Aims](#)
- [Form 2: Confirmation of Committee Members](#)
- [Form 3: Date, Time, Location of Qualifying Exam](#)
- [Form 4: Chair's Summary Evaluation](#)
- [MS Diploma Form](#)

## **Thesis Defense and Graduation**

- [Thesis Defense Committee Form](#)
- [Thesis Defense Report Form](#)
- [Graduation Checklist](#)
- [PhD Diploma Form](#)
- [PhD Alumni Form](#)
- [Honorary "Thank You" Form](#)

## **Leave of Absence/Withdrawal**

- [Leave of Absence Form](#)
- [Return from Leave of Absence Form](#)
- [Program Withdrawal Form](#)

## **Transcript/Diploma/Certification**

- [Transcript/Certification Letter Request Form](#)
- [Request for Duplicate Diploma Form](#)

## **Additional Forms**

- [Course Withdrawal Form](#)
- [Request for Credit for Prior Master's Degree Form](#)
- [Transfer of Credit and/or Course Exemption Form](#)
- [Graduate Student/Alumni Publications and Awards](#)
- [Request for Approval of Co-Curricular Activity Form](#)
- [Update of Current Contact Information](#)

# Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences

## Albert Einstein College of Medicine

### Section I: Administration of the Programs

#### **1) Mission of the Graduate Division and Purpose of this Document**

The mission of the Graduate Division is to provide outstanding education and training to enable students to develop as independent biomedical scientists, capable of carrying out significant research aimed at understanding biological systems and the eventual cure of human diseases. The PhD degree administered by the Graduate Division of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine (hereafter referred to as the "Graduate Division") is an affirmation of the student's ability to conduct independent and original research. This degree is achieved by completing a defined but individualized curriculum including formal coursework and a period of research culminating in a doctoral Thesis, mentored by a member of the Graduate Faculty, and supervised by the Student Advisory, and Thesis Defense Committees.

The Academic Policies of the Graduate Division are described herein and are meant to facilitate the productive and efficient progression of a student from admission into the Division to completion of the Thesis. In addition to the guidelines presented within this document, each student is expected to meet any additional academic requirements imposed by the degree-granting department, and to uphold the standards of professional behavior expected of all members of the College of Medicine and the scientific community.

#### **2) Programs and Oversight**

The Einstein Graduate Division administers the Programs in the Biomedical Sciences, and is currently comprised of the PhD Program, the MD-PhD Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP), the Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP), the Postbaccalaureate Research Education Program (PREP), and the Summer High School Research Program.

The Graduate Division is headed by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, who is appointed by the Dean of the Medical School. The Associate Dean is responsible for implementing Division policies and changes in those policies, and for approving any change of student status including admission, dismissal, leave of absence, granting of degrees, etc., and may act upon the recommendation of Program, Department, and Graduate or Medical School Committees.

### 3) Composition of the Graduate Division

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

The Graduate Division confers the PhD degree in Biomedical Sciences, and the MS degree in Biomedical Sciences *en route* to the PhD degree. Each department, subject to the academic policies of the Graduate Division, may designate specific course requirements and recommendations. Students are responsible for acquainting themselves with the requirements of the specific department in which they will conduct their thesis research.

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

### 4) Who's Who in the Graduate Division

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

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

Students should feel free to contact the **Associate Dean** or the **Program Directors** with any questions, concerns, or suggestions relating to their graduate education. It is the responsibility of the Associate Dean and Program Directors to direct students to appropriate institutional contacts, for example chairs, faculty, administrators, or other offices of the Medical School.

**The Executive Director for the Graduate Division** oversees the administrative functions of the Graduate Division and functions as the **Registrar**. Specific responsibilities of the Executive Director include, but are not limited to, administrative management, administering legal documents associated with the Graduate Division, student affairs, registration, transcripts, and oversight of grant submissions.

**The Senior Academic Advisor** advises graduate students on academic matters, provide feedback to the Academic Affairs Committee regarding academic progress, work with students, mentors, and advisory committees on issues that may arise, and provide input to the Graduate Committee as a liaison between the faculty and the Graduate Division.

**Director of Graduate Education and Curriculum** collaborates with the Curriculum Committee on creating new courses, revising established courses, and improving the curriculum. The Director also works with faculty on the implementation of new teaching methods.

**Other Graduate Division Personnel** includes the Associate Registrar, Director of Graduate Admissions and Enrollment, Graduate Recruitment and Admissions Specialist, Events Coordinator and Special Programs Manager, Finance Manager and Grant Administrator, Analyst for Registrar Systems, Director of Systems and Reporting, Director of the Career and Professional Development Program, Senior Administration Assistant, and Program Coordinators.

### **5) Graduate Division Committees**

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

**The Graduate Executive Committee (GEC)** is the executive committee of the Graduate Division and is comprised of faculty representatives from each of the basic science departments and the PCI (appointed by the department chairs), the Executive Director of the Graduate Division, the MSTP and PhD Program Directors, the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, who serves as chair, and three student representatives selected by the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and MSTP Student Council (MSC).

Representatives of the GEC typically serve a term of two to three years. The GEC recommends to the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs additions or changes to policies of the Graduate Division, and may approve changes or additions to the graduate curriculum, and the Qualifying Examination and the Thesis guidelines and processes. Its members provide direct representation and feedback to and from the departments. All members are voting members and a majority “yea” vote is required for approving recommendations to the GEC. At least seven departments must be represented by voting members to establish a quorum. The Program Director(s) may represent his or her own department for the purpose of filling quorum, if the designated department representative is absent.

There are sub-committees of the Graduate Executive Committee, the detailed functions of which are described further in specific sections of this document. All sub-committees present an annual report to the Graduate Executive Committee.

#### **Sub-Committees**

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

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

**The Graduate Curriculum Committee** is responsible for the development, implementation and review of the graduate curriculum. The Graduate Curriculum Committee includes a faculty representative from each of the basic science departments and the PCI, the Director of Graduate Education and Curriculum, the Associate Dean, and three-to-four student (PhD and MD-PhD) representatives elected by the Graduate Student Council. Faculty representatives on the Graduate Curriculum Committee do not have to be course leaders. Individual faculty and student members may not serve concurrently on the Graduate Executive Committee and the Graduate Curriculum Committee. The Graduate Curriculum Committee is responsible for developing curriculum policy, reviewing course offerings, and recommending new graduate courses for approval by the Graduate Executive Committee.

**The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC)** includes a single representative from each of the basic science departments, the PCI, as well as the faculty member who is the Senior Academic Advisor for the Graduate Division,



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the MSTP Director and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. An additional faculty member serves as the chair, who is appointed by the Associate Dean. The AAC oversees the academic progress of all students as they progress towards obtaining the PhD degree. The AAC meets multiple times throughout the year, including during the summer semester. Any student who does not maintain good academic standing, fails a course, performs less than satisfactorily in the lab, fails the Qualifying Exam, receives an unsatisfactory Advisory Committee report, or is recommended for review by any faculty at any time, may be evaluated by this committee. The AAC also reviews the progress of all students who have been in the program for five years or longer and requests an Exit Strategy from these students. Additionally, issues of ethics and professional misconduct as they relate to students in the program may also be referred to the AAC.

**The Qualifying Examination Steering Committee** is comprised of faculty representatives from each of the basic science departments and the PCI as well as the faculty member who is the Senior Academic Advisor for the Graduate Division, the MSTP Director and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. This committee serves to organize the Qualifying Examination and make recommendations regarding the exam guidelines and format. Successful completion of the Qualifying Exam is required for the advancement to candidacy for the PhD degree.

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

Additional information regarding the GSC is available at:

<http://einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/graduate-student-council/>, or contact the current GSC Chair. (Contact information is available through the Graduate Division office.)

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

Additional information regarding the MSC is available at:

<http://mstp.einsteinmed.org/>, or contact the current MSC Chair. (Contact information is available through the Graduate Division office.)

## **6) Accreditation**

The Albert Einstein College of Medicine is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). The College has been granted an Absolute Charter from the State of New York to award the MD, PhD, and MS degrees. In addition, the College has been granted candidate status from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education; full accreditation is in process and pending.

By the New York State Education Department, the PhD in Biomedical Sciences is registered with program code 27706, HEGIS code 0499.00; the MS in Biomedical Sciences is registered with program code 33414, HEGIS code 0499.00.

## Section II: Admission and Matriculation

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

### 1) Application Requirements

All applications to the PhD program must be submitted online. Details of the application procedure are described on the *Prospective Students* page of the Graduate Division website, [www.einsteinmed.org/phd](http://www.einsteinmed.org/phd).

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

#### Letters of Recommendation

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

#### Transcript

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

#### **International Applicants**

##### Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

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

##### International Transcripts

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

### 2) Pathways to Enter the Program

There are four pathways by which students enter the Graduate Division.

First: the "rotational pathway." Students who apply for the rotational pathway are typically interviewed on-site at Einstein (or on rare occasions by at least two phone interviews) and the application considered in its entirety by the Graduate Admissions Committee. A majority vote is required for recommending acceptance. Students who are accepted into the rotational pathway participate in laboratory rotations during the first year of the program. By the end

## Admission and Matriculation

of the first year, students in the rotational pathway will declare a thesis mentor and a department. See section further below on Declaration of the Thesis Laboratory for more information.

**Second:** the "**direct pathway.**" A small number of students may be accepted directly into a thesis laboratory and a department. Students who enter the Graduate Division by this pathway should discuss the structure of their program fully with their prospective thesis mentor prior to matriculating in the program. Students who enter the program by this pathway have already determined a strong affinity with the prospective mentor. Therefore, it is fully expected that the student will complete their thesis work in the laboratory of the prospective thesis mentor. All applications considered for the direct pathway will include at least two phone interviews, and the application is then considered in its entirety, as above, by the Graduate Admissions Committee. These students will participate in at least one laboratory rotation during the first year in the program, agreed upon with their thesis mentor. A student can only be accepted into the program via the direct pathway if the prospective mentor can confirm a commitment of two years of stipend support commencing at matriculation. Because the admissions standards for the direct pathway are the same as the rotational pathway, an applicant *rejected for the rotational pathway is not eligible in the same year for admissions by the direct pathway.*

**Third:** the "**MSTP pathway.**" Students may enter the Graduate Division through the Medical Scientist Training Program (MD-PhD program). Admission to the MD-PhD program is entirely separate from the PhD admissions process, requiring an AMCAS application and a secondary application to the Albert Einstein Medical School. Application instructions are provided on the MSTP homepage: <http://mstp.einsteinmed.org/>. Admission to the MD-PhD program is approved by the MSTP Director, with advisory capacity from the MSTP Steering Committee. Students rejected for the MSTP may be considered for acceptance into the PhD program, if they have indicated this preference on the secondary application. Such applications are then considered in their entirety by the Graduate Admissions Committee, including personal interviews as requested by the Graduate Admissions Director or chair of the Graduate Admissions Committee.

**Fourth:** the "**alternate pathway**" to the MSTP. Students already enrolled in the Medical Degree (MD) program of the College of Medicine or the PhD program, may enter the MSTP through the alternate pathway by submitting an application to the MSTP Director.

### **3) Requirements for Matriculation**

Incoming students must fulfill the following requirements prior to starting the program:

- Health Clearance
- Human Resources Onboarding
- Academic/Education Verification

#### **Health Clearance**

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

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

#### **Human Resources Onboarding**

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

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

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

### **Academic/Education Verification for Matriculation into the PhD Program**

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

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

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

## **4) How to Apply**

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

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

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

Admission to the Graduate Programs is contingent on completion of the undergraduate degree. The final undergraduate transcript showing that the Bachelor's degree has been conferred is due before the date of matriculation. The official transcript(s) must be mailed to:

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

Alternatively, the official transcript may be sent electronically directly from the undergraduate registrar's office to [phd@einsteinmed.org](mailto:phd@einsteinmed.org).

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

For application to the MD-PhD program, visit the MSTP homepage at <http://mstp.einsteinmed.org/>. Applications to the PhD program via the MSTP **Alternate Pathway** are accepted in the Graduate Division office during the spring semester. (Information is available in the Graduate Division office.)

Inquiries regarding the application process for the PhD and MD-PhD programs can be sent to:

- PhD application and program queries: [phd@einsteinmed.org](mailto:phd@einsteinmed.org)
- MSTP application and program queries: [mstp@einsteinmed.org](mailto:mstp@einsteinmed.org)

## Section III: What to Expect: A Five Year Plan to the PhD

### 1) A General Guideline to the Einstein PhD (Years One Through Five)

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

#### Year One: Courses and Laboratory Rotations

##### **Graduate Courses:**

##### First Year PhD students:

- Are expected to complete at least six (6) course-credits per course block.
- A minimum of 21 course-credits overall is required for the PhD degree.
- Must successfully complete the first-year course on becoming a scientist.
- Must successfully complete the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course.

##### First year MD-PhD students:

- Are expected to complete at least four (4) to six (6) course-credits per block.
- A minimum of 18 graduate course-credits overall is required for the PhD degree.
- Are required to take several MSTP-specific graduate courses in the first year (see Appendix II: Medical Scientist Training Program (MD-PhD) Requirements).
- Must successfully complete the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course.

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

There are three course blocks during the academic year: Block I of the fall semester, and Blocks II and III of the spring semester. During the first year, the Associate Dean, and Senior Academic Advisor will advise students on which courses to take during which course block. MD-PhD students are advised by the MSTP Director.

It is expected that students will complete their course requirements in the first year. The graduate curriculum allows for each student to customize his/her own curriculum based on research interests. However, some courses are required and students should familiarize themselves with the course requirements and recommendations of the basic science department that they may be interested in joining (see Appendix I: Department/Concentration-Specific Course Requirements and Course Recommendations).

Note: The Academic Affairs Committee reviews the academic progress of all first-year students.

##### **Laboratory Rotations:**

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

At the end of the second rotation (or third rotation, if applicable), *students are expected to declare a thesis mentor/laboratory and department/concentration.* Any exception requires noted approval from the Associate Dean. Occasionally, students are permitted to complete a fourth rotation in the summer following the first year, and then declare a lab. All PhD students must declare a lab by the end of the summer semester following their first year in the program.

*Rotations are not permitted beyond the end of the summer semester of the first year.* Students are required to have declared and have been admitted into a thesis laboratory by the start of the fall semester in year two.

## What to Expect: A Five Year Plan to the PhD

Directly Recruited PhD students are required to complete a one-time laboratory rotation in the first year of the program during *one* of the three rotational periods as listed on the academic calendar. If this requirement is not met, registration for the second year may be blocked, and the student may receive a grade of Unsatisfactory for the laboratory rotation. (Directly-recruited PhD students declare their thesis laboratory and department upon matriculation into the PhD program.)

MD-PhD students are expected to perform their laboratory rotations during the first and second summers in the program. MD-PhD students typically declare their thesis mentor/laboratory and department/concentration at the end of the second year in the MSTP.

### **Rotation Evaluation:**

The faculty member with whom the student rotates must submit a Rotation Evaluation, including a final grade, at the end of the rotation.

The Academic Affairs Committee review all rotation grades for first year students.

## **Year Two: Initiate a Hypothesis and Generate Preliminary Data**

### **Graduate Courses:**

PhD students are required to complete the Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Research course in the fall semester of the second year. MD-PhD students are required to complete this course in the fall semester of their third year. If there are any other courses that still need to be completed in order to satisfy department/concentration-specific or program course requirements, it is expected that these will be completed by the end of the second year.

### **Thesis (Laboratory) Research:**

Once the student declares a thesis lab, registration for Thesis Research each summer, fall, and spring semester is required. During the second year in the program, the student begins to generate preliminary data and to develop a hypothesis. It is expected that this hypothesis will change significantly during the coming years, but it is essential to develop a general framework at this time. Pilot projects and feasibility assessments may be carried out at this time, and it is appropriate to attempt risky projects that might have a high impact on the particular field of inquiry.

### **Qualifying Examination** (for the advancement to candidacy for the PhD degree):

Students will take the Qualifying Examination in year two (year three for MD-PhD students). Any exception to this timeline must be approved by the Associate Dean (or MSTP Director for MD-PhD students).

### **Student Advisory Committee (SAC):**

By the end of year two, each student must have chosen a Student Advisory Committee and arranged an initial meeting to discuss the hypothesis and preliminary data. *Starting in year two, each student must meet with their SAC at least once per academic year and more frequently as the student progresses through the program (i.e. at least once every six months in year four and higher). Students who have not had an Advisory Committee meeting as required will be blocked from registration in the subsequent semester.*

## **Year Three: Develop the Thesis Aims**

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

## **Year Four: Write Manuscripts and Develop Exit Strategy**

This should be a time of strong research productivity. The strongest Aims that will constitute the thesis will solidify and completed manuscripts are expected to be submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. At the end of the

## What to Expect: A Five Year Plan to the PhD

fourth year, the student should develop an Exit Strategy to be approved by their Student Advisory Committee (SAC). Each student is required to meet with their SAC at least twice per year (or more) in the fourth year or higher.

### **Year Five: Work towards Publication(s) and Submission of the Dissertation**

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

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

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

In some cases, students will continue into the sixth year. Permission to continue thesis research beyond the fifth year may require submission of an exit strategy, developed by the student in conjunction with the mentor and the Student Advisory Committee. This exit strategy may be reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee that reviews the academic progress of students who've completed five or more years in the program.

## **2) General Information Regarding Co-Curricular Activities and Attendance at Scientific Conferences**

### **Request for Co-Curricular Activity**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## What to Expect: A Five Year Plan to the PhD

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

### **Request for Funds to Attend a Scientific Conference**

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

*Students must submit a completed Request for Funds to Attend a Scientific Conference Form to the Graduate Division office, prior to attending the conference/meeting.* The form is available in the Graduate Division office in Belfer 202.

*Student travel support is limited to one (1) trip per year, per student.*

## **3) Elective Externship**

A student may request approval to participate in an elective externship at a Pharmaceutical/Research company. In order to be eligible the student:

- must be in the second or third year of the PhD program (or PhD phase for an MSTP student)
- must have satisfied all course and course-credit requirements
- must have successfully completed the Qualifying Examination
- must be in good academic standing
- must have full written permission from their thesis mentor (see Elective Externship Form which is available in the Graduate Division office, Belfer 202)

*Externship qualifications:*

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

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

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

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



## Section IV: Biomedical Sciences Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

All PhD, MD-PhD and visiting students in the Biomedical Sciences program must fulfill all the requirements of the PhD as outlined below.

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

The residency requirement for the PhD degree consists of a minimum of three (3) years of full-time graduate studies and research. A minimum of two (2) of these three years must be spent in residence at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

All students are required to maintain full-time status. Full-time status is defined as maintaining a registration of nine (9) credits or more at all times throughout the academic year. There is no “part-time” or “half-time” status in the Graduate Division. A minimum of three years of full-time graduate studies, including course work and research, totaling a minimum of 90 credit hours is required.

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

**Credit Hour Definition for Courses:** One (1) credit hour is earned for fifteen (15) 1-hour (of 50 minutes each) sessions of lecture or classroom instruction, with the expectation of two (2) additional hours of outside study or reaching for each class session.

**Credit Hour Definition for Laboratory Rotation and Full-Time Thesis Research:** One (1) credit hour is earned for each forty-five (45) 1-hour session of academic activity. Forty-five hours of academic activity yields one (1) credit hour. Full-time supervised research, including instruction at the laboratory bench and conference with the research advisor, is the most important educational component in the training of a research scientist. A semester of full-time supervised research is considered to be the equivalent of twelve (12) credit hours.

### 2) Attendance Policy

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

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

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

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

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

### 3) Graduate Program Course Requirements

All PhD, MD-PhD, and visiting students must successfully complete:

- 1<sup>st</sup> year the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course. This is a critical course to complete as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandates, without exception, that all predoctoral fellows satisfy the requirement for formal training in the responsible conduct of research.
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher.

Any exceptions to this course requirement must be approved by the Associate Dean.

Course credits for successfully completing the RCR course and the RCR-Advanced course are **not counted** towards the total number of credits required for the doctoral degree.

#### PhD:

- Must successfully complete a minimum of 21 graduate course credits, preferably in the first year.
- Must successfully complete the first-year course on becoming a scientist, in addition to RCR, and Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher.
- Must successfully complete the Responsible Conduct of Research – Advanced course in the fifth year.
- May apply for *transfer credit, course exemption, Master's Credit*.
- With approval from the Associate Dean, can transfer into the Einstein graduate program from another graduate program and receive transfer of credit for graduate courses taken at the prior institute, noted as "transfer with advanced standing".

#### MD-PhD:

- Must successfully complete a minimum of 18 graduate course credits, preferably in the first year.
- Must successfully complete the following MSTP-specific graduate courses, in addition to RCR, and Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher:
  - Biochemistry
  - Histology and Cell Structure
  - Membrane Physiology and Transport
  - MSTP Cardiac Physiology
  - MSTP Mechanisms of Disease
  - Renal, Respiratory, and Acid-Base Physiology

*Note:* Credit hours for the Histology and Cell Structure, and MSTP Mechanisms of Disease courses **do not count** towards satisfying the 18 course-credit program requirements.
- May apply for *transfer credit, course exemption, Master's credit*

Final approval for transfer credit, Master's credit and course exemptions is granted by the Associate Dean. Once approved, these credits are reflected on the student's graduate transcript.

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

## 4) Transfer Credit and Course Exemption

### Transfer Credit:

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

Students may receive transfer credit for no more than two graduate courses. However, if a student transfers to the Einstein PhD program from another accredited doctoral program, additional courses may be approved for transfer credit. Transfer credit is not available to students who were previously granted Master’s credit. (See below, 6) Master’s Credit).

### Course Exemption:

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

The Associate Dean or Program Director must approve transfer credit or exemption.

## 5) Department/Concentration-Specific Course Requirements and Course Recommendations

See Appendix I: Department/Concentration-Specific Course Requirements and Course Recommendations.

## 6) Master’s Credit

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

If the request is approved,

- Students who matriculated in 2012 or prior:
  - Are granted credit for two graduate courses. PhD students then need to successfully complete at least five (5) graduate courses instead of the mandated seven (7); MD-PhD students then need to successfully complete three (3) graduate courses instead of the mandated five (5).
- Students who matriculated in 2013 or after:
  - Are granted three (3) course credits. PhD students then need to successfully complete 18 course credits instead of the mandated 21; MD-PhD students then need to successfully complete 15 course credits instead of the mandated 18.

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

## Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

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

Note: A student who has been granted Master's credit in the first year is still expected to register for a minimum of six (6) course credits per course block.

## **7) Biomedical Sciences Visiting Students**

Biomedical Sciences visiting students are international PhD or MD-PhD students who are sponsored by Yeshiva University. Visiting students must adhere to the policies, guidelines and procedures of the Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

## **8) Registration**

The academic calendar of the Graduate Division consists of three semesters: fall, spring and summer. The fall semester consists of one course block and one rotation period (Block I, Rotation Period I), typically spanning early-mid August to late November. The spring semester consists of two course blocks and two rotation periods (Block II, Rotation Period II: November-March, and Block III, Rotation Period III: March-June). Each year, a detailed academic calendar is posted on the Graduate Division website: <http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/calendar.aspx>. The Graduate Division academic calendar outlines the specific dates of each course block and rotation period, all registration dates/deadlines, course add/drop and withdrawal dates, and program holidays.

**Each PhD, MD-PhD and visiting student must register each semester** during the designated registration periods as indicated on the academic calendar. It is the student's responsibility to maintain their full-time status by registering accordingly. Failure to register may jeopardize the student status.

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

First Year Students: Registration for first year students is in accordance with advisory sessions with the Associate Dean, Senior Academic Advisor, Director of Graduate Education, and/or MSTP Director.

Students beyond the first year are expected to seek out advice on course selection from the Associate Dean, Program Directors, Student Advisory Committee, and/or mentor.

Visiting (International) students who are sponsored by Yeshiva University: a copy of the registration record will be provided to the registrar's office at Yeshiva University for the purposes of maintaining the student's academic record.

## **9) Auditing a Course**

After the student has completed their program and department-specific course requirements, a student may audit a course with the permission of the course leader. First year students may not audit a course without permission from

## Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

the Associate Dean or MSTP Director. Audited courses may not be used for credit; no course-credit is earned for auditing a course. A completed Audit Registration Form is required to audit a graduate course. This form is available in the Graduate Division office.

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

When auditing a course, please be advised of the following:

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

### **10) Course Add/Drop and Course Withdrawal**

During the add/drop period of each course block, as published on the academic calendar, a student may add or drop a course (online via Self-Service Banner) without penalty or notation on the transcript. First year students should seek input from the Associate Dean or Program Director prior to adding/dropping courses.

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

### **11) Registration in Courses Offered by Other Einstein Programs**

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

### **12) Registration and Transfer of Credit for Courses Taken at Another Institution While Currently Enrolled in the Graduate Division**

A graduate student who wishes to take a course which is not offered at Einstein should present their request to the Associate Dean, in writing, after discussion with the mentor and Program Director. The Program Director must present a written request to the Associate Dean and certify that the course is directly relevant to the student’s graduate training goals. This must be approved by the Associate Dean before the student may register for the course. If a student has been admitted to a thesis laboratory, the mentor must also certify that he or she is aware that the student will be enrolled in a course at another institution. A student may not take more than one course per semester outside the Einstein College of Medicine and each course taken must be relevant to the student’s thesis project. Requests

## Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

for financial support for tuition at outside institutions will be reviewed by the Program Director and Associate Dean. Approval of requests will be subject to the availability of funds specifically designated for this purpose.

Registration for courses outside the College of Medicine is the sole responsibility of the student in accordance with the procedures of the other institution. It is also the responsibility of the student to have an academic transcript sent from the other institution directly to the Graduate Division office. Transfer credit for the course will be granted only upon successful completion of the course and upon receipt of the official transcript from the institution where the course was completed. The course number, title, credit-hour equivalents, course grade and the name of the institution will be entered on the student's Graduate Division transcript as a transfer course.

The maximum number of graduate courses that can be taken outside the College of Medicine and funded by the Graduate Division is limited to two per student. No more than two outside courses may be used toward satisfying graduate course requirements.

### **13) Completion of Thesis Research at Another Institution**

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

In order to remain in good academic standing, a student who is completing thesis research at another institution must fulfill the following requirements:

- The student must have fulfilled the residency requirement described above;
- The student must submit the appropriate form with required signatures to the Associate Dean;
- The student must confer with their Advisory Committee at least twice every year (either on campus or by telephone/video conference) and submit the necessary Student Advisory Committee meeting report forms to the department and Graduate Division office.
- The student must register online during each registration period, observing all the registration deadlines published on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

### **14) Non-matriculated Students**

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

#### **Registration**

A completed Non-Matriculated Student Registration Form must be submitted to the Graduate Division office and requires approval from the course leader and the Graduate Division Registrar. The non-matriculated student is responsible for supplying documentation that all prerequisites for the course are met, if such documentation is requested by either the course leader or the Registrar. *Note:* Some courses may have size limitations that preclude registration by a non-matriculated student. A non-matriculated student who registers for a graduate course is considered to have equivalent status (within the course) as a graduate student and is responsible for fulfilling all

## Program Requirements, Registration and Courses

course requirements including examinations, papers, and presentations. A non-matriculated student who fails a course may retake the course once. (*Graduate courses may not be repeated more than once.*)

When taking a course as a non-matriculated student, please be advised of the following:

- Final date to register as a non-matriculated student is the last day of the add/drop period as indicated on the academic calendar. No admittance to the course can be made after this date.
- A non-matriculated student may register for credit or audit only one course per block.
- An Einstein or Montefiore email address and an Einstein or Montefiore ID card are required to register for credit or audit a graduate course.

### **Course Withdrawal**

A non-matriculated student must adhere to all official course deadlines including withdrawal dates as published in the academic calendar. A non-matriculated student who withdraws after the add/drop period and prior to mid-point of the course is given the grade of W (Withdrawn). Withdrawing from a course after mid-point will result in a grade of F (Fail) for the course. The results of a graduate course will be recorded on an official transcript by the Graduate Division, whether the course grade is Honors, Pass, Fail, Withdrawn, or Incomplete.

For guidelines on withdrawing from a course see Part 10) Course Add/Drop and Course Withdrawal, of this section.

A non-matriculated student may also **audit** a course (for which no credit will be granted) and must follow the same instructions for course auditing.

When auditing a course, please be advised of the following:

- Final date to register for audit is the last day of the add/drop period as indicated on the Graduate Division's academic calendar. No admittance to the course can be made after the final add/drop date.
- Change of status from "registered for credit" to "audit" or vice versa, can only be made during the add/drop period.
- No credit or grade will be granted for auditing a graduate course.
- Only one course per block may be audited, or taken for credit.
- Audited courses cannot be used to fulfill departmental course requirements.
- A course may not be audited in which a grade of Fail was received in a prior semester/block.
- A failed graduate course may not be repeated more than once, whether as for audit or for credit.

## **15) Official Transcripts**

Course and grade records will be maintained for every student in the form of a permanent transcript. The College has formulated its student record policy to guarantee the rights of privacy and access as provided by the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974**. The policies of Einstein are consistent with FERPA and apply to all students. A student may review their academic record and unofficial transcript online (through Self Service Banner) at any time.

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

- Qualifying Exam Proposal Title
- Dissertation Title
- Mentor (and co-mentor) Name
- Department/Concentration
- Periods of Leave of Absence
- Official Withdrawal
- Academic Dismissal
- University Dismissal

Einstein students who wish to obtain an official copy of their transcript may do so by submitting a Transcript Request Form. Instructions on how to request a transcript is available online at <http://www.einsteinmed.org/phd>.

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Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University may request a transcript online at <https://www.yu.edu/transcript>.

### **Issuance of Transcripts**

The authority to issue as well as certify the authenticity of student transcripts resides solely with the Registrar's Office. The Associate Registrar will assume such authority in the absence of the Registrar.



## Section V: Choosing a Thesis Laboratory

### 1) Laboratory Rotations

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

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

**PhD Students** are required to complete at least two laboratory rotations during the first year in the program. Under unusual circumstances, this requirement may be waived with the approval of the Associate Dean.

**Directly Recruited PhD Students**, during their first year in the program, are required to participate in at least one laboratory rotation outside of their thesis laboratory. The rotation can be performed in any laboratory in any of the basic science departments or PCI, during any one of the three designated rotation periods. The student selects their one-time rotation laboratory in consultation with the thesis mentor.

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

#### Rotation Registration

Each student must formally register for each rotation via completion and submission of the Rotation Registration form. PhD student rotations must be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. MD-PhD student rotations must be approved by the MSTP Director.

#### Rotation Evaluation

At the end of each laboratory rotation, the rotation mentor completes a Rotation Evaluation and provides a summary grade of *Satisfactory (S)*, *Needs Improvement (NI)* or *Unsatisfactory (U)*. This summary grade will be recorded permanently on the student's graduate transcript. It is expected that student and rotation mentor will discuss this evaluation; signatures of both the student and rotation mentor are required on the Rotation Evaluation. This evaluation may be reviewed by the Academic Affairs Committee. A grade of *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory* in Laboratory Rotation is grounds for academic probation.

If a student takes a leave of absence in the middle of a rotation, the student may receive a grade of Withdrew (W) upon approval from the Associate Dean.

### 2) Mentor and Thesis Laboratory Declaration

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

## Choosing a Thesis Laboratory

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

Once a thesis laboratory is declared, the student must register each semester for Thesis Research with their mentor. At the end of each semester, the mentor submits a Thesis Research grade of *Satisfactory (S)*, *Needs Improvement (NI)*, or *Unsatisfactory (U)*. A grade of *Needs Improvement* or *Unsatisfactory* in Thesis Research is grounds for academic probation. Receiving multiple grades of NI or U in Thesis Research is grounds for dismissal from the program.

## Co-mentorship

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

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

## Associate (Contingent) Mentor

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

## **Section VI: The Qualifying Examination**

### **For the Advancement to Candidacy for the PhD Degree**

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

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

Note: Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University must adhere to all Qualifying Exam policies and guidelines as described below.

### **1) The Mission of the Qualifying Examination**

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

### **2) The Responsibilities of the Candidate**

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

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

During the exam, the student must:

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

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

### **3) The Responsibilities of the Mentor**

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

- will work with the student to help the student develop an understanding of the field and relevant literature,

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- will work with the student to articulate mutually agreeable (scientific) specific aims and provide guidance and recommendations on the development of the experimental approach,
- must read the student's written proposal, and
- may provide feedback on the written proposal, but should not write any part of the proposal.

Mentors must remember that the student is responsible for the crafting of a document that speaks in her or his voice. Mentors must understand that *it is not their ideas that are being examined*, but the student's understanding of these scientific ideas and the student's potential to conduct the proposed studies.

## 4) The Qualifying Examination Committee

### The Responsibilities of the Qualifying Examination Committee

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

- i) A student is expected to be conversant in their chosen area of scholarship including, but not limited to, their thesis project. The student may be examined on their understanding of topics covered in the graduate coursework, aspects of their specific field of study, as well as the principles and practice of techniques included in the Qualifying Examination proposal.
- ii) The examiners must judge the extent to which the written document is the student's work and weigh their evaluation of it accordingly.
- iii) The key responsibility of the examination committee is to judge whether the student's written Qualifying Examination proposal and the oral defense of it demonstrate critical thinking and creative approaches to the proposed studies.

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

### Composition of the Examination Committee

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

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

- Four faculty members from the above referenced departments, *at the level of Assistant Professor or above on the tenure track*.
- A department representative from the QESC who serves as the examination committee chairperson. Occasionally, due to conflicts of interest, faculty availability, etc., the chairperson may be a faculty member who is not currently sitting on the QESC. The chairperson will approve the proposed Qualifying Exam Committee(s) on which they have been selected to chair.
- Examining Committees typically include at least two members of the student's home department. Appropriate faculty from related programmatic areas may substitute for a departmental representative

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- Mentors, co-mentors and/or associate mentors may not serve on their student's examination committee nor are they present during the oral examination. If a student has formed a Student Advisory Committee (SAC) prior to the examination, a member of their SAC may not serve on the student's Qualifying Exam Committee.

## 5) Scheduling and Preparation for the Qualifying Examination

### Scheduling of the Examination

*Each student is responsible for scheduling the date, time and location for their Qualifying Examination. The examination will be scheduled within the designated 4 to 6-week period following the deadline for submission of the written proposal (see Timeline). Examinations may not be scheduled during official program holidays, as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar.*

The student must submit to the Graduate Division office the form stating the scheduled date/time/location of their oral exam. *The Graduate Division office must be notified (via email: [sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org)) of any subsequent changes to the date, time, and location of the oral exam.*

If a student has a meeting with their Student Advisory Committee (SAC) prior to the examination, this meeting must be held no less than one month prior to the scheduled date of the oral examination.

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

### Delaying the Exam

Special circumstances may justify delaying the date of the Qualifying Examination. A student may request a delay from the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs at the onset of the scheduling process. Alternatively, if a committee chairperson concludes that completion of a graduate course is essential to the student's preparation for the examination, the chairperson may request a delay from the Associate Dean, until the student completes the course.

### Preparation for the Qualifying Examination

Each student's preparation for the *Qualifying Examination* can be roughly divided into three parts.

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

Each student is responsible for the *first* part of his or her preparation. The Graduate Division has developed workshops, resources and guidelines to direct students through the *second* and *third* parts of their preparation. The workshops are summarized below.

### Workshops

- Introduction to the Qualifying Examination* – An overview of the Qualifying Examination process and requirements.
- Proper Reference Citation: How to Avoid Plagiarism and Other Questionable Writing Practices* – Proper citation is an essential part of the responsible conduct and reporting of research. *Attendance and registration*

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at this workshop is mandatory.

- iii) *Preparing the Qualifying Exam Proposal* – This is a mandatory “nuts and bolts” course that focuses on crafting a written proposal. Topics to be covered include: determining the scope of the proposal, presenting the necessary background and significance, drafting specific aims and presenting a compelling research plan. *All students are required to take the course* and are therefore pre-registered. Students must attend all sessions of the course. A complete schedule of the course and course guidelines will be distributed separately.
- iv) *Qualifying Examination Oral Format and Sample Questions* – This workshop focuses on the oral defense of the written proposal. Tips are provided on how to prepare for and answer the topic-specific and general questions asked by the examiners.

### “Mock” Qualifying Examinations

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

## 6) The Qualifying Examination Proposal

### Writing the Proposal

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

*The written proposal must be the work of the student*. Mentors are encouraged to provide feedback about the aims, concepts and experiments included in the proposal but are prohibited from writing text for the student. It is expected that the student will seek editorial assistance from others. *A student may not copy or adopt any unpublished writings by their mentor(s), particularly grant proposals*. Discussion with mentors should certainly occur before writing starts and is permitted throughout preparation of the written proposal. Mentors are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the guidelines outlined in the mission statement at the beginning of this document. Students are encouraged to seek input and advice from other sources including fellow students, post-doctoral researchers, faculty members not affiliated with their examination and scholars outside of the Einstein community.

### Qualifying Exam Proposal Format

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

- **Length, Paper Size and Title Page:** The proposal will be 18 pages *excluding* a title page and the Literature Cited, using standard 8.5” x 11” paper with 1-inch margins. The title page lists the proposal title and the student’s name, mentor and department.
- **Font and Line Spacing:** Use an *Arial, Helvetica, Palatino Linotype, Times New Roman* or *Georgia* typeface, a *black font color*, and a *font size of 11 or 12 points*. A Symbol font may be used to insert Greek letters or special characters. The proposal must be *double-spaced* except indented quotations, footnotes, tables, figures, legends and the literature cited are to be *single-spaced*. Quotations of more than three lines will be single-spaced, set off from the text in a separate paragraph and indented four spaces. Opening and closing

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quotation marks are omitted. Quotations of three lines or less are enclosed in quotation marks and are run into the text. Consult the library guide <http://libguides.einsteinmed.org/thesis>.

- **Tables and Figures** are to be embedded in the document with each group numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals. Figure and table legends should be placed immediately under the embedded graphic. *Be sure that tables and figures are sufficiently large to be easily read by the examiners.*
- **Citations:** *Carefully and correctly reference your proposal!* References should be numbered sequentially within the text. The *full reference* is cited in numerical order in the Literature Cited at the end of the proposal. Each reference will include the title, names of all authors, book or journal, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. *The reference list should be limited to the literature relevant to your proposal.* Consult the library guide <http://libguides.einsteinmed.org/thesis> or ask the reference librarians for help <http://library.einsteinmed.org/index.php> with questions about proper citation.

### **Scientific Content of the Proposal**

The proposal will describe your proposed thesis project in which specific hypotheses are tested through Specific Aims. *Spell and grammar check your proposal, as a poorly proofed document will make your examiners irritable!* Note that the *Qualifying Examination* does not include either a personal statement or an explicit preliminary results section. Administrative sections of the NRSA application are also excluded from the *Qualifying Examination*. Below are the sections of the proposal that are included within the 18-page limit.

- 6-page, double-spaced section on Scientific Background and Significance
- 2-page, double-spaced Specific Aims section
- 10-page, double-spaced section on Research Design and Methods (and Preliminary Data, if available)

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

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

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

**The “Independent” (Third) Specific Aim** is developed independently of the mentor or any PI. The mentor will likely comment on this aim, but it should not be something presented to the student directly by the mentor.

This aim should still test the hypothesis and will be critiqued for originality and creativity. It is expected that there will be variability in quality and feasibility of the aim, but the point is for the student to incorporate some ideas from outside the scope of his/her immediate laboratory.

This independent specific aim must be indicated by an asterisk (\*) in the proposal.

Only the specific departments listed below require the inclusion of the third, independent aim in the proposal:

- Anatomy & Structural Biology,

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- Cell Biology, and
  - Developmental & Molecular Biology.
- **Research Design & Methods:** “Describe the research design conceptual framework, procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. As part of this section, provide a tentative sequence or timetable for the project.” [Form PHS 416-1] This is the heart of the ‘Qual’; the examining faculty will expect students to be able to elaborate orally on what they have written. *Helpful hint: a student should have a paragraph of additional explanation in mind for each written sentence.* It is also important to remember that it is *concepts* not *protocols* that the examiners are hoping to hear about! (*If including unpublished results, students should remember that the examiners are interested in their ability to elaborate on the ideas expressed in the proposal, not in counting how many gels they have run!*)

### **Submitting the Proposal**

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

## **7) The Oral Examination**

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

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

*This is a closed exam. Only the student and the four members of the Qualifying Examination Committee are allowed in the exam room.*

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

*The oral examination itself focuses on determining whether the student has incorporated the fundamental knowledge needed to progress into full-time thesis research.* The written proposal describing a student’s “budding” thesis project is the scaffold for the oral examination. However, each student is expected to be able to demonstrate a broad understanding of the basic concepts in biology, chemistry, physics or mathematics that underlie the questions posed in the proposal. In addition to knowledge obtained from graduate coursework and the relevant scientific literature, students will also be tested for knowledge of the primary and alternative experimental strategies and the ability to think on their feet about the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches. *The primary focus of the oral examination will not be preliminary data.* Rather the oral examination will focus on the



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background, experimental approaches, aims, and how all this fits in the “big picture.” A list of representative “mock” questions is available that illustrate the types of questions and level of depth that might be expected.

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

## 8) Grading of the Examination

At the end of the oral questioning, the committee chairperson will ask the student to leave the room so that the examiners can discuss and grade the student’s performance. Each examiner may vote *Honors* (outstanding, i.e. in the top 10%), *Pass* (clear advancement to candidacy), *Postponed Decision* (revision of the written proposal ONLY within one month) or *Fail*. A preliminary anonymous vote is followed by discussion and then a final vote.

The chairperson will summarize the discussion on the Chair’s Summary Evaluation form. The chairperson will also ensure that each committee member signs their Examiner Scoring Sheet, as well as the Exam Grade Report. A copy of the Summary Evaluation form will be provided to the student and the mentor along with the comments from each examiner. The original reports will be provided to the *Graduate Division office* and a copy forwarded to the *Academic Affairs Committee*.

The committee decision will be as follows:

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

After reaching a decision the committee will ask the student to return and will inform the student of the committee’s decision. The grade *Postponed Decision* is to be used to obtain revision of the written proposal only. The revised proposal must be distributed to all the members of the examination committee *within one month of the oral exam date*. After submission of a revised proposal, the committee has seven calendar days to submit a final grade (*Pass* or *Fail*) to the Graduate Division office. *If the oral examination is unsatisfactory, even if the written document is acceptable, the grade will be Fail.*

### Outcome of the Qualifying Examination

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

**Note:** Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University (YU) will be awarded the Master of Science degree from YU upon successfully completing the Qualifying Examination. Student will advance to candidacy for the PhD degree.

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

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

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### **Appeal of Qualifying Committee's Decision**

Students may appeal a decision by the *Qualifying Examination Committee* to the parent *Steering Committee*, by making this request in writing to the *Associate Dean for Graduate Programs*. The Associate Dean will review the request and may deny it or may refer to the *Steering Committee* for review. The *Steering Committee* may deny the appeal, in which case the original grade will stand, or may recommend that the student be allowed to repeat the examination with a new Exam Committee.

## Section VII: Academic Standards and Student Academic Progress

Note: Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University must adhere to all academic standards as described below.

### 1) Academic Standards

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

#### Plagiarism

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

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

### 2) Grades

Students who matriculated into the program in 2013 or prior should adhere to the previously published policies regarding final grades.

For students who matriculated into the program in 2014 and onwards, below is the policy regarding final grades:

All final grades become part of the students' permanent academic record and will appear on the transcript. If a course is repeated, both grades for the course will appear on the transcript.

#### Graduate Courses Grades:

A student enrolled in graduate courses *for credit* will receive a grade of *Honors* (H), *Pass* (P), *Incomplete* (I) or *Fail* (F). Final course grades are submitted by the course leader. The grade of *Honors* in a graduate course recognizes exceptional performance when compared to all other students in that specific course.

A grade of *Incomplete* may be given to a student if, in the judgment of the course leader, the course requirements have not been met, but there is every expectation that the student can fulfill the course requirements in the allotted time. In this instance, the course leader will stipulate the requirements for course completion. The student must then satisfy all course requirements no later than **one (1)** month from the end date of the course, unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the Associate Dean. Such arrangements must be in writing, signed by the student and course leader, and submitted to the Graduate Division office. It is the responsibility of the student

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to make sure that all grades of *Incomplete* are resolved in a timely manner. In the event that these requirements are not met, the *Incomplete* will be converted to a grade of *Fail*.

*Note:* All final grades are permanently recorded on the students' transcript/academic record.

Additional grade options for graduate courses include: *Exempt* (E), *Transfer* (T), and *Withdrew* (W).

**Graduate Course Examinations:** Unless otherwise clearly stated in the instructions for the particular examination, it is fully expected that the student will work alone and without any assistance from other students or sources. Evidence of cheating or plagiarism can be used by the course leader as justification for giving a failing grade.

In the event of suspected cheating and plagiarism, the course leader must immediately provide the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs with a complete written report of the incident and evidence of cheating or plagiarism for review by the Academic Affairs Committee.

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

### **Failure of a Graduate Course:**

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

### **Appeal of a Course Grade:**

If a student wishes to appeal a final course grade, the student may do so in writing to the course leader within one month of the end of the course. The student must also submit a duplicate written appeal to the Graduate Division Registrar's office. The course leader has 15 days from receipt of the appeal to review and submit a final decision on the final grade: amend or leave as is. The course leader must notify the student in writing of their decision and copy the Graduate Division Registrar ([sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org)).

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

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

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

### **Thesis Research and Laboratory Rotation Grades:**

Grade options for Laboratory Rotation and Thesis Research are: *Satisfactory* (S), *Needs Improvement* (NI), or *Unsatisfactory* (U). Grades are based on the student's:

- Ability to budget time effectively
- Understand the project
- Read and use of literature in solving problems
- Execute experiments
- Evaluation experimental data
- Oral communication ability
- Lab notebook and experimental record-keeping

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- General laboratory conduct
- Attendance and participation in lab meetings, seminars, journal clubs, etc.

*Satisfactory*: student is performing satisfactorily in the areas listed above.

*Needs Improvement*: the student's performance requires improvement.

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

A student who changes thesis laboratories mid-semester will receive a grade of *Transfer* (T), indicating the change in laboratory. A student who *withdraws* from the program mid-semester, issue an auto-grade of W (withdrew) for Thesis Research/Laboratory Rotation.

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

The final grade for a laboratory rotation is tendered by the faculty (rotation mentor) under which a student is completing the laboratory rotation. This grade is provided on a Rotation Evaluation form which must be completed at the end of each lab rotation and signed by the rotation mentor and the student.

The final grade for Thesis Research is submitted by the student's thesis mentor at the end of each semester (fall, spring and summer).

Visiting (International) students who are sponsored by Yeshiva University: grades received for courses and lab research will be provided to the registrar's office at Yeshiva University for the purpose of maintaining the student's academic record.

## **3) The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and Required Meetings**

### **Purpose of the Student Advisory Committee**

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

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

### **Composition of the SAC**

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

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

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- An Associate or research track faculty member may serve on a Student Advisory Committee, but must not be from the same lab as the student on whose SAC they serve.
- A Postdoctoral Fellow or Instructor may not serve on the Advisory Committee of a graduate student.

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

The student, in consultation with the mentor, may change the composition of the SAC at any time. However, barring an unusual circumstance, the chair is to remain the same. The composition of the SAC is meant to be dynamic and may go through several changes during the time a student progresses to the Dissertation. The tenure

Each student is strongly encouraged to get to know their SAC members. If the members are truly familiar with the student and their work, they may also be able to provide useful letters of recommendation.

### Frequency of SAC Meetings

The student is required to meet with their SAC at least once during their second and third years and at least twice (every six months) during the fourth year and above. The student, the mentor, the SAC or the Academic Affairs Committee may require the student to meet with the SAC at more frequent intervals. The span of time between SAC meetings is referred to below as a "project period."

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

### Scheduling an Advisory Committee Meeting

The following recommendations may be helpful.

- **Setting a date**  
Scheduling a meeting involves finding a time that is a suitable fit with everyone's schedule. Start to schedule the meeting early – at least one month before the target date. Fourth-year or above students are required to have at least two meetings per year. To facilitate scheduling, students may elect to take advantage of websites that support online appointment scheduling.
- **Committee attendance**  
Occasionally, it may be difficult to schedule a time when every one of the SAC members can attend. The student should still go ahead with the meeting on schedule if a majority of the committee members are present. It is permissible to have a committee member participate via Skype or other electronic means.
- **Reserving a room and equipment**  
Remember to schedule a conference room for an appropriate length of time. Also remember to schedule the use of any audiovisual equipment that you will need for the meeting.
- **Reminding the participants**  
Remind the Committee members of the time and place of the meeting several days in advance.

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

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

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

a. **Current Goals and Rationales**

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

b. **Progress Toward the Current Goals**

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

c. **Additional Progress (optional)**

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

d. **Proposed New Goals and Rationales**

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

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

### **A Typical Advisory Committee Meeting**

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

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

- **Distribution of Forms**

The student should distribute copies of the Student Advisory Committee Member Report Form to all members of the SAC and a single copy of the Student Advisory Committee Summary Report Form to the chair of the SAC. Both forms are available under the "Student Advisory Committee Summary Report Form" link on the Graduate Division website:

<http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/graduate-forms.aspx>.

- **Review of the Student's Progress**

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

- **Scientific Background, Results and Plans**

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

- **Discussion of Scientific Results and Plans**

A discussion by the student and the SAC of the student's scientific results and plans in terms of the current goals and proposed new goals may occur during the PowerPoint presentation or after it has been completed.

- **Specification of New Goals and Rationales**

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

- **SAC Forms**

At the end of the meeting, *after the student and mentor leaves*, the SAC will discuss the items on the Summary Report Form (including the SAC Consensus Opinions section of the form). The chair will complete and sign the Summary Report Form. Each member of the SAC is also to complete the Member Report Form and hand these filled forms to the chair of the SAC.

The student is then responsible for immediately collecting the original SAC Meeting Report Forms (Summary Report and Member Report forms) from their SAC chair and submitting the forms to the Graduate Division office. The student is also to submit copies of these forms to all members of the SAC, the mentor and their departmental office.

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

### **Permission to Write the Thesis**

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

If permission is granted to write and defend and the thesis (and defense paperwork) is not submitted within six months, then another Student Advisory Committee meeting will be required.

## **4) The Academic Affairs Committee, Academic Probation and Appearance Before the Committee**

### **Composition of the Committee**

The Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) consists of a representative from each of the basic science departments and the PCI, the Senior Academic Advisor for the Graduate Division, the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, and the



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Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP). Each department representative typically serves two to three years, and is appointed by the relevant department chair. An additional faculty member serving as the chair of the AAC is appointed by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs. The Associate Dean, MSTP Director, and Executive Director of the Graduate Division are ex-officio, non-voting members of the AAC. Recommendations are decided by majority vote. At least seven voting members must be present to constitute a quorum. The chair of the AAC, with the approval of the Associate Dean, may invite other members of the faculty of the Graduate Division to participate as non-voting members of the AAC.

### **Charge of the Committee**

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

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

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

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

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

The Academic Affairs Committee may place a student on academic probation for various reasons relating to the student's academic progress. A student who is having academic problems may be temporarily blocked ("registrar's hold") from registration the following semester. The hold will be release after the student meets with the Associate Dean, Senior Academic Advisor, the departmental AAC representative or, if applicable, the MSTP Director. The AAC will continue to monitor the progress of any student on academic probation, until that status is relieved.

### **Appearance Before the AAC**

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

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

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

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

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

Following the meeting, the student and the mentor will receive a written letter with the AAC's recommendation. The student and the mentor may be asked to meet with the Associate Dean (and MSTP Director, if applicable) to review the AAC's recommendation. The AAC may outline a strict timeline with specific milestones and deadlines that the student will be required to meet. If any one of the deadlines is not met, the student may be dismissed from the program.

See policies below on 6) Suspension or Dismissal from the Program.

## Academic Probation

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

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

### **What Happens When a Student is placed on Academic Probation?**

If a student is placed on academic probation, the student will be notified of their probationary status via a letter from the chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The letter will be copied to the student's mentor(s), department chair, the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, and, if applicable, the MSTP Director.

The AAC may request a specific plan of action from the student, mentor, and department chair to rectify the probationary status. The student's progress will continuously be monitored by the AAC. The student on probation,

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along with the mentor or department chair (or designate), may be invited to participate in AAC meeting(s) at which the student's progress and plan of action will be discussed.

A student on academic probation may be blocked ("registrar's hold") from registration. In this event, the student is required to meet with the Associate Dean or Senior Academic Advisor, (or MSTP Director, if applicable).

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

### **Removal from Academic Probation:**

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

### **Standards of Ethical and Scholarly Conduct**

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

## **5) Change of Laboratory, or Dismissal from a Laboratory/Department**

If a student wishes to change his or her thesis laboratory, or a mentor seeks to dismiss a student from the laboratory, the student or mentor seeking a change in status should contact the department chair and the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs, or MSTP Director (if applicable). The department chair should confirm that both the student and mentor are aware of pending action.

When a student-mentor relationship is not working, there are several ways to resolve the problem. It is primarily the responsibility of the department chair to make an attempt at resolving the issue. It is recommended that the chair arrange (or designate) a Department Graduate Committee to meet with the student and mentor to help determine potential solutions to the conflict (for example, specific expectations on both sides that should be attained) and a timetable for any trial period (recommended one to three months) during which time the situation can be monitored by the Department Graduate Committee. If a trial period is agreed upon, then at the end, the student and mentor should meet with the department chair to report on the success or failure of the trial. The chair will provide a written recommendation to the Associate Dean or MSTP Director indicating if a change in laboratory or dismissal from the department is warranted.

In the case of a **change of laboratory**, the student must receive approval from the Associate Dean. Once approved, a Change of Laboratory Form must be completed with all the required signatures and submitted to the Graduate Division office. This form can be found on the Graduate Division website ([www.einsteinmed.org/phd](http://www.einsteinmed.org/phd)). The student will receive a grade of *Transfer* (T) for Thesis Research under the former mentor for the semester in which the change of laboratory occurred.

In the case of a **dismissal from the laboratory**, the student may appeal to the Academic Affairs Committee to be allowed a limited period of time (up to a maximum of three (3) months) to identify another mentor for transfer; the student must declare a new thesis laboratory within three months. The Associate Dean must approve any change of laboratory, but is under no obligation to do so. If an appropriate mentor cannot be identified within the three-month time period, the student may choose to withdraw or may be dismissed from the program. The Graduate Division makes no commitment to the student beyond the three-month period.

## 6) Suspension or Dismissal from the Program

### Suspension

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

### Dismissal

The Academic Affairs Committee, MSTP Director, or Department Chair may recommend to the Associate Dean a student for dismissal from the program. Only the Associate Dean may dismiss a student from the Graduate Division. In the case that an MSTP student is dismissed from the PhD phase of the program, the student file is referred to the Senior Associate Dean of Student Affairs of the Medical School for further consideration.

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

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

### ***Appeal of Dismissal:***

A student who has been dismissed from the Graduate Division may appeal, in writing, to the Dean of the College within 15 days of date of dismissal. If student appeals to the Dean, the Dean has 15 days to respond. The Dean will either uphold or reverse the dismissal. If the Dean upholds the dismissal, student will be notified via letter of the effective dismissal date. Effective on the date of dismissal from the Graduate Division:

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

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

Change in status of visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University will be reported to the YU registrar's office.

## 7) Withdrawal from the Program

A student who chooses to discontinue their enrollment in the PhD or MD-PhD program for any reason during the academic year may withdraw from the Graduate Division. At least two weeks prior to withdrawal, the student must

## Academic Standards

notify the Associate Dean and the Graduate Division Registrar (and MSTP Director, if applicable) of their intention to withdraw. At least one week prior to withdrawal, the student must submit a Withdrawal Form to the Graduate Division office, with all necessary signatures.

Change in status of visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University will be reported to the YU registrar's office.

### **Health Benefits following a Program Withdrawal**

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

Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University should contact the YU Benefits Office regarding their benefits.

### **Housing following a Program Withdrawal**

- a) A student who withdraws from the program vacate housing within thirty (30) days. Any other arrangements must be made directly with the Einstein Housing Office.
- b) An MD-PhD student who is withdrawing from the MSTP, but remaining either in the PhD or MD program, should make any necessary arrangements directly with the Housing Office.

### **Email Access following a Program Withdrawal**

Access to the student email address will terminate fourteen (14) days from the withdrawal date. It is important for the student to copy or download any material that he or she wishes to save as these materials will not be available when the email account terminates.

### **Return to the Graduate Division after a Withdrawal**

Should a student desire to return to the Graduate Division following a withdrawal, the student may apply for re-admission in the same manner as all other applicants (see Section II: Admission and Matriculation). As all prior academic progress will be reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Committee, readmission to the PhD program is by no means guaranteed. If the student is readmitted, advanced standing may be granted following review by the Associate Dean.

## Section VIII: Thesis and Defense

Note: Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University must adhere to all thesis and defense policies and guidelines as described below.

### 1) The Dissertation

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

#### **Manuscript Requirement to Defend and to Graduate:**

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

*First-author manuscript must be submitted no less than three weeks prior to the date of defense. For “Submitted” manuscripts, confirmation from the journal to which the manuscript was submitted must be forwarded to the Graduate Division office, and student must also provide a copy of the confirmation to the Thesis Defense Committee upon submission of the Thesis prior to the defense. (See timeline for Submission of the Thesis Prior to the Defense section below.)*

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

### 2) The Thesis Defense Committee

#### **Composition of the Thesis Defense Committee**

Every candidate for the PhD degree must submit a Dissertation and pass an oral examination of their Thesis (the Thesis Defense) by a Thesis Defense Committee.

The Thesis Defense Committee is selected by the student and the mentor(s) and must:

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

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

- For students in the PCI department:
  - At least one faculty member must have a primary or secondary appointment in a basic science department (other than PCI),
  - At least one of the members on the defense committee must have had prior experience serving on a Thesis Defense Committee.
- Each student is strongly encouraged to designate a sixth faculty member as an alternate in the event that an examiner cannot attend the Thesis Defense. There must be five members present at the Thesis Defense.
- The Thesis Defense Committee must consist of faculty members who are eligible to train graduate students (i.e. tenure-track faculty ranked assistant professor or higher). An Instructor, Associate, or faculty on the research track may not serve on the Thesis Defense Committee.
- The name of any Thesis Defense Committee member who was a collaborator with the student must be indicated by the check box on the submitted Thesis Defense Committee Form. A collaborator may not serve as Chair of the Thesis Defense Committee.
- The student's mentor and/or co-mentor may not serve on the Thesis Defense Committee although the mentor and/or co-mentor are present at the Thesis Defense.
- If the student has an associate (contingent) mentor, this mentor cannot serve on the Thesis Defense Committee. An associate mentor is a basic science faculty member designated by the student and primary mentor to oversee the student's laboratory research while the primary mentor is physically no longer at Einstein or away on sabbatical.

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

### Approval of the Thesis Defense Committee

The Associate Dean for Graduate Programs must approve all Thesis Defense Committees. **At least two months prior to the scheduled defense date, the student must submit to the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202)**

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

The Thesis Defense Committee Form is available on the forms page of the Graduate Division website, and requires signatures from the student's Thesis Defense Committee Chair, Mentor, Department Chair and Department Administrator. International students on a student visa must have their Thesis Defense Committee Form approved by the Einstein Office of International Services (OIS).

Once the Thesis Defense Committee has been approved by the Associate Dean, the student, mentor(s) and Defense Committee Chair will be sent an email confirmation from the Graduate Division office.

All subsequent changes to the Thesis Defense Committee must be approved by the Associate Dean. In the event that changes in the Committee must be made, and the Associate Dean is not available for consultation, the approval of the appropriate Department Chair should accompany the final report of the Committee.

Note:

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

### Scheduling of the Thesis Defense

The Thesis Defense and Seminar are scheduled by the student, who is responsible for finding the rooms and confirming that all members of the Thesis Defense Committee can attend. The Thesis Seminar is usually scheduled

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

immediately before the actual defense. The student's Department Administrator can assist with room reservations and drafting the Thesis Seminar Announcement. A copy of the Thesis Seminar Announcement must be submitted to the Graduate Division office with the Thesis Defense Committee Form.

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

*Note: No Thesis Seminar or Defense is to be scheduled on official program holidays* as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar (<http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/calendar.aspx>).

### 3) Submission of the Thesis Prior to the Defense

#### ***Four weeks prior to the defense:***

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

The student is to retain copies of the signed acknowledgement form for each member of their Thesis Defense Committee. (The **Mentor Acknowledgement of the Thesis Document** form is available further below in these Guidelines.)

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

#### ***Three weeks prior to the defense:***

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

#### ***Two weeks prior to the defense:***

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

### 4) Conduct of the Thesis Defense

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

The Thesis Seminar, whenever possible, should immediately precede the oral Defense.



### **Presentation of a Public Seminar**

The presentation of a public seminar at the College of Medicine is required for successful completion of the PhD degree. This seminar also fulfills a New York State requirement that a PhD candidate demonstrate his or her ability to present scientific material in public. This seminar is usually presented immediately preceding the defense. A copy of the announcement of the seminar must be forwarded to the Graduate Division office for inclusion in the student's file. An announcement of the time, place and subject of the public seminar should be widely disseminated at the College of Medicine, and a draft copy of this announcement should be included with the Thesis Defense Committee form submitted to the Graduate Division office.

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

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

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

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

The Chair should ensure that the Defense is conducted in a professional manner, and that each examiner has the opportunity to ask questions. The Chair should also ensure that the length of the exam is appropriate. A typical exam period is one (1) to two (2) hours.

After the Chair has determined that the Defense is at an end, the mentor and the student are asked to leave the room. The Thesis Defense Committee vote is confidential and the mentor should leave the room together with the student during the voting procedure. The Defense is discussed, and a decision is made. The decision is determined by majority vote. If the vote is for "minor revision" then the grade is *Pass* and the mentor is usually given the responsibility of checking the final revised document. If the vote is for "major revision", a member of the Defense Committee, or subcommittee, is usually assigned to review and accept the corrections on behalf of the Committee. A decision for "major revision" results in the grade of *Conditional Pass* (see below, 5) Evaluation of the Dissertation and the Thesis Defense).

## **5) Evaluation of the Dissertation and the Thesis Defense**

A Thesis Defense Report Form is available on the Graduate Division website ([www.einsteinmed.org/phd](http://www.einsteinmed.org/phd)). When the examination is complete, the members of the Thesis Defense Committee will assign a grade and sign the report form. By majority vote of the Committee, student can receive a grade of *Pass*, *Conditional Pass* or *Fail* for the examination. The Chair of the Committee, or the defending student, must return the completed original Thesis Defense Report Form to the Graduate Division office (Belfer 202) immediately following the oral defense.

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

### **Pass**

The student has a **maximum of three months** from the date of defense to satisfy all additional requirements for PhD program completion. See below, 6) Completion of All Requirements after Successful Thesis Defense.

*Note:* the three months following a successful Thesis Defense is for the purpose of making final revisions to the Thesis.

### **Conditional Pass**

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

In the event of a grade of *Conditional Pass*, the student has a maximum of five (5) weeks to revise the Thesis and submit it to the Thesis Defense Committee. The Committee then has three (3) weeks to review the revised Thesis and submit a final grade of Pass or Fail to the Graduate Division office. *All Thesis deficiencies must be corrected and a final thesis defense grade provided within a maximum of two months from the date of defense.*

If the student receives a final grade of *Pass* for the revised Thesis, the student must now submit the necessary paperwork for program completion as outlined below in the 6) Completion of All Requirements after Successful Thesis Defense section of these guidelines. Note: The student has a maximum of three (3) months from the date of defense to satisfy all requirements for program completion following a grade of Conditional Pass.

### **Fail**

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

## **6) Completion of All Requirements after Successful Thesis Defense**

### **Absolutely Required for the PhD Degree**

The following must be submitted to the Graduate Division office:

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

### **Submission of the Final Thesis and Abstract to ProQuest**

The final version of the thesis must be submitted online to ProQuest at <https://secure.etdadmin.com/einstein>. The thesis must be submitted as a PDF document, with an originally signed Thesis Title page included as

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

the first page. The title page must be signed (in black or blue ink) by the candidate and the thesis mentor (and co-mentor, if applicable). ProQuest will register the thesis for US Copyright, and also provide bound copies of the thesis. The Graduate Division will cover the fee for copyright registration and for four bound copies of the thesis (a student copy, a mentor copy, a department copy, and a Library copy) and a microfilm copy of the thesis for the Library. The student may order additional bound copies of the thesis at their own expense through ProQuest.

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

For further copyright guidelines, go to <http://www.proquest.com/en-US/products/dissertations/copyright/>

Note: Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University: once a visiting student has submitted the thesis through ProQuest, the Graduate Division will forward a copy of the thesis to the YU registrar's office for their records.

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

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

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

- the final copy of the thesis to ProQuest (as indicated above)
- a printed copy of the thesis submission email confirmation from ProQuest
- a copy of the signed thesis title page

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

### **Change in Status after the Thesis Defense (for PhD, MD-PhD and Visiting Students)**

#### MD-PhD Students:

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

#### PhD Students:

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

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

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

#### *Note:*

- The student must inform the Graduate Division Registrar's Office ([sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org)) of  
1) any changes in address or contact information,

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

2) plans to leave Einstein prior to submission of all required paperwork, or

3) plans to change status to Postdoc.

*Failure to inform the Graduate Office may jeopardize the student's degree completion status.*

- No student should leave the institution without notifying the Graduate Division Registrar's Office in advance.

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

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

*Note:*

- A student on an unpaid Thesis Leave of Absence is no longer in active, full-time status and therefore no longer eligible for loan deferment.
- Medical benefits for a student on an unpaid Thesis Leave of Absence will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student is terminated from payroll.
- The Thesis Leave of Absence is allotted for a maximum of three (3) months from the date of defense.
- As a condition of maintaining student status, all international students must pursue a "full course of study." The Thesis Leave of Absence is therefore not available to international students.

**Benefits:** If a student is enrolled in the Einstein Student Health Plan, the plan will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student terminates from payroll. For more information, contact the Einstein Benefits Office. Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University (YU) should contact the YU Benefits Office for more information.

**Housing:** A student who resides in Einstein Housing must vacate housing within 30 days from the date all paperwork is submitted for program completion. Any other arrangements must be made directly with the Housing Manager.

**Email and AD Credentials:** Fourteen (14) days from the date of program completion, the student email will be changed to an '@alumni.einsteinmed.org' email address which the graduate is entitled to use in perpetuity. The student email address will no longer be accessible after fourteen (14) days from the date of program completion. The Active Directory (AD) username will be disabled. If the graduate is to remain at Einstein as a postdoc, the proper email and AD credentials will be assigned through the HR onboarding process. Graduate will be sent appropriate communication from Montefiore IT regarding termination of the student email and information on how to access the alumni email.

### **Change in Status for International Students**

An international student on a student visa, who intends to remain in the United States for further training after completing the PhD, must apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) at least three (3) months prior to the date of the Thesis Defense. Students are strongly advised to consult the Office of International Services (OIS) at Einstein well in advance of any anticipated change in status. Visa restrictions and requirements change frequently.

### **Granting of the PhD Degree**

There are three (3) official PhD degree conferral dates: the end of September, the end of January, and end of May (or early June). The specific degree dates are published annually on the Graduate Division academic calendar.

All academic requirements must be fulfilled on or before the deadline date for each of the official degree-granting dates as also published on the academic calendar. This includes completion of all coursework and other departmental

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

requirements, successful defense of the Thesis (*Conditional Pass* is not sufficient), completion of all revisions, submission of the final Thesis, and completion of all required paperwork.

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

### **Participation in the Annual Commencement Ceremony**

#### *September and January Graduates:*

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

#### *May Graduates:*

All academic requirements must be fulfilled **on or before the April deadline date** as indicated on the Graduate Division academic calendar in order to receive the May PhD degree-granting date and **also** participate in the Commencement Ceremony. There will be no exception to this April deadline for a May PhD degree. (See Absolutely Required for the PhD Degree above for program completion requirements.)

Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University will be awarded the PhD degree from YU, but will participate in the Einstein commencement ceremony, and must adhere to the same deadlines noted above.

## **7) Instructions for Preparing the Dissertation**

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

### **General Instructions**

In general, successful theses range from 125 – 225 pages without references.

- ii) *Manual of Style:* On points of style (including capitalization and punctuation) not covered by the above, follow the recommendations of your Department. The style selected should be adhered to strictly and consistently. If no style is preferred by the Department, the *Manual for Writers of Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian, University of Chicago Press, should be used.
- iii) *Line Spacing:* The text of the Dissertation is to be double-spaced except for indented quotations, footnotes, figures, legends and bibliography, which are to be single-spaced.
- iv) *Required font for text:*
  - Arial 11 pt.
  - Helvetica 11 pt.
  - Times New Roman 12 pt.
- iv.) *Paper:* The final copies of the Dissertation are to be printed on 8 ½" x 11" high quality paper (24 lb.) that is not punched or perforated in any way.

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

(a.) Copies submitted to the Thesis Defense Committee may be:

- 1) duplicated on standard photocopy paper,
- 2) printed double sided and,
- 3) secured using either a three-hole binder or a spring binder.

- v.) *Pagination:* Every paper in a Thesis is assigned a number typed on it. There are two series of page numbers. The first, in small Roman numerals, begins with the title page and ends with the last page preceding Chapter I. The second series, in Arabic numerals, begins with the first page of Chapter I and continues throughout the Dissertation, including graphs, illustrations, tables, bibliography and appendices.
- vi.) *Margins:* The margins at the top, bottom and right are to be 1.0 inch; the left-hand margin is to be 1.5 inches. All tables, charts and illustrations are to have left-hand margins of no less than 1.5 inches because of binding requirements. Any over-sized material may be folded in from the right, top and bottom in such a way as to leave a 1.5-inch margin on the left side.
- vii.) *Spelling:* The spelling given in any standard dictionary may be used. However, whatever forms are adopted should be adhered to consistently throughout the text of the Dissertation.
- viii.) *Quotations:* Quotations of more than three lines should be single-spaced, set off from the text in a separate paragraph and indented four spaces, with double-spacing between paragraphs. Opening and closing quotation marks are omitted. Quotations of three lines or less are enclosed in quotation marks and are run into the text.
- ix.) *Tables, Figures, Reproductions:* The recommendations of the style manual are to be followed in preparing tables, figures and other graphic materials. Tables and Figures and all legends should be embedded into the document.

Tables are numbered consecutively throughout the Thesis. The word TABLE, followed by the appropriate Arabic numeral, is placed above the caption.

Figures are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals, with the word "Figure" (only the first letter is capitalized) and the appropriate numeral appearing before the caption. If possible, figures should be oriented in the "portrait" configuration. Submitted figures should be of sufficiently high resolution to be interpreted by the reader. Figures may be embedded into the text, with text wrapped around, or embedded as separate pages. In either case, make sure that the Figure Legends are adjacent to the figures and easy to find and read.

- x.) Digital media or jpeg for high resolution images may be submitted on an accompanying CD-ROM.
- xi.) *References and Footnotes:* References to published articles should be cited by author and year (i.e. Student and Mentor, 1995, or Student et al., 1995). Every reference listed must appear in the bibliography (see below for "Bibliography").

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

**The generally accepted Thesis formats (Formats A and B) are described below.** The format chosen must be maintained throughout the Dissertation. Students must discuss with their mentor the Dissertation format acceptable to their Department.

### FORMAT A

- i.) *Introduction:* The comprehensive Dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter I). This section should include a historical review of the student's area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the

## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

current status of the field. The student should then present working hypotheses and give an introduction to the system and the thesis research. The student should consult with his or her mentor in order to agree upon how extensive a historical review is appropriate to the Dissertation.

- ii.) *Methods and Materials:* The protocols and procedures used in the Dissertation studies should be presented in sufficient detail to allow reproduction of the experiments (Chapter II). A Dissertation provides an appropriate vehicle for experimental details that might be omitted from journal articles due to space limitations.
- iii.) *Results and Discussion:* Chapters III ...n of the Dissertation should present the results of the conducted studies followed by a discussion of their significance. The format for these chapters should follow that in the suggested manual of style or of a highly respected scientific journal, mutually agreed upon by the student and the mentor.
- iv.) *Conclusions:* A Dissertation should end with a general discussion of the studies that have been conducted including an assessment of the significance of the research, arguments of interpretation, evaluation of material included in appendices, and a plan for the experimental resolution of unanswered questions.

### **FORMAT B**

- i.) *Introduction:* The comprehensive Dissertation begins with a scholarly introduction (Chapter I). This section should include a historical review of the student's area of research followed by a critical evaluation of the current status of the field. The student should then present working hypotheses and give an introduction to the system and the thesis research. The student should consult with his or her mentor in order to agree upon how extensive a historical review is appropriate to the Dissertation.
- ii.) *Manuscripts:* The body of the Thesis should be in the form of manuscripts that have been or are ready to be submitted for publication in a scholarly journal. Note that the format and style requirements described above must be adhered to for each and every chapter of the Dissertation. Each manuscript will constitute a chapter and will include a brief Introduction, Methods and Materials, Results, and Discussion. The candidate must be the first author of these manuscripts and must be responsible for their preparation. A footnote to the introduction must give bibliographic information for manuscript constituting the chapter. This information should include the full names of the authors, institutional affiliations, the journal and the status of the manuscript (i.e., submitted, published or in press)
- iii.) *Separate Chapter for Unpublished Data:* If the student is not first author: One of several options may be appropriate in cases in which the student is not first author of a manuscript that is to be presented in the Dissertation as a chapter: 1) The student may extract his or her own work from the manuscript for presentation in the Dissertation; 2) The manuscript may be included as an appendix to the Dissertation; 3) The manuscript may be included as a chapter if the student was responsible for the preparation of a significant portion of the manuscript. For all multi-authored manuscripts, the exact contribution of the student should be stated in an introductory statement or footnote preceding each chapter or in the appendix. If figures from a multi-author manuscript are used, it is imperative to indicate which figures are the student's works and which represent the work of other authors. In all cases in which figures are used, appropriate acknowledgement must be given. In addition, any contributions of co-authors must also be specified in the acknowledgment section.

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

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

### **The following sections of the Dissertation are common to both formats:**

- i.) *Title Page:* The title page is to list at the top the title of the Dissertation, student's full name and signature, the full name and title of the Thesis mentor (and Co-mentor, if applicable). At the bottom of the title page, the following statement should be included:
- a) Einstein PhD and MD-PhD students:  
"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, (month and year)."
- b) Visiting students (i.e. international students sponsored by Yeshiva University):  
"Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Division of Medical Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University, New York, (month and year)."
- The month and year given on the title page is to reflect the month and year of the thesis defense. A sample title page is shown at the end of this Section.
- ii.) *Abstract:* The abstract of the Dissertation is to include: a hypothesis, the procedures followed, the significant results and the general conclusions. The abstract is to be presented on a separate page headed with the word ABSTRACT in capital letters centered on the page. On the next line is the title of the Dissertation. The following line is the full name of the student. The length of the abstract must not exceed 750 words.
- iii.) *Acknowledgments:* This feature is not required, but offers a convenient opportunity to express the writer's appreciation to persons who have been especially helpful or to the publishers of materials from which data have been drawn and to whomever else acknowledgment should be given. The appropriate training or research grants should also be acknowledged in the Dissertation.
- iv.) *Table of Contents:* The table of contents should list the chapters or other division headings of the Dissertation, using the same words that appear in the body of the report. The numbers of the pages on which these items appear should also be given. The table of contents is to be followed by separate page listings for tables and for figures and illustrations.
- v.) *Bibliography:* The format for the references included in the bibliography should follow that in the suggested manual of style or a highly respected scientific journal. At a minimum, each reference must include the names of all authors, the title of the article, the name of the journal, the volume number and the pages of the article. Titles of articles must be included. The bibliographies of the Dissertation may be compiled for each chapter separately or together at the end of the Dissertation, at the discretion of the mentor and the student.
- vi.) *Supplementary Materials and Methods:* It may be appropriate for a more extensive presentation of Materials and Methods to be given in an appendix where it may be helpful to other investigators who wish to utilize procedures developed by the candidate. The candidate may also wish to include as appendix material more detailed presentations of data than appropriate for a scholarly journal or thesis.
- vii.) *List of Abbreviations:* A full and complete list of all abbreviations used in the text must be included.
- vii.) *Appendix:* The appendix may include but is not limited to:
- Published papers – reprints, and/or submitted manuscripts. Published articles and/or submitted manuscripts must be included in the Thesis Appendix; printed PDFs are sufficient. The Appendix pages may be separately numbered, if desired. The page numbering in the Appendix does not continue from the Thesis page numbering.
  - Drafts of manuscripts expected to be submitted shortly
  - Surveys of patient or other data



## Thesis, Defense and Program Completion Requirements

- High resolution figures
- Computer programs

### **8) Including Published Work in the Thesis**

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

a) Einstein PhD and MD-PhD students:

"Data in this paper are from a thesis to be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Biomedical Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine"

b) Visiting students (i.e. international students sponsored by Yeshiva University):

"Data in this paper are from a thesis to be submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate Division of Medical Sciences, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, Yeshiva University"

All publications for which the student is first author should be appended to the submitted Thesis. Published articles and/or submitted manuscripts must be included in the Thesis Appendix. Co-first author publications are allowed. If there are no first-author publication at the time of Thesis submission, a submitted first-author manuscript must be appended, even if this draft ultimately requires additional experimental results. The manuscript should be written in the style of a specific (indicated) journal.

#### **Copyright Permissions**

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

#### **Plagiarism**

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

## Mentor Acknowledgement of the Thesis Document

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Thesis document of  
*(mentor name)*

\_\_\_\_\_ and approve the submission of this Thesis document  
*(student name)*

to the Thesis Defense Committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Mentor Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

## Sample Thesis Title Page

**An Investigation of the Arginine Methylome in *Toxoplasma gondii* with Additional  
Observations on MAG1, a Cyt Wall Protein**

by  
Rama Brodie Yakubu

Candidate:

<hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Signature</p> <hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Rama Yakubu</p> <p>Name</p>	<hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Signature</p> <hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Louis M. Weiss, M.D., M.P.H</p> <p>Name</p> <hr style="border: none; border-top: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Professor of Pathology and Medicine</p> <p>Title</p>
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the [insert program name]  
[insert institution Name]  
New York  
[Month yyyy of Thesis Defense]

Einstein student template

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

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

New York  
September 2017

Visiting (international) student template

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Graduate Division of Medical Sciences

Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Yeshiva University

New York  
September 2017

## Sample Thesis Title Page (Co-Mentorship)

**Iron Homeostasis-Regulatory Pathways Mediate Hematopoietic Stem Cell Fate**

by

Yun-Ruel Christine Kao

Candidate:

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Yun-Ruel Christine Kao

Thesis Advisors:

<hr style="width: 80%; margin: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">Britta Will, Ph.D. Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine (Oncology) Assistant Professor, Department of Cell Biology</p>	<hr style="width: 80%; margin: auto;"/> <p style="text-align: center;">Ulrich G. Steldl, M.D. Ph.D. Professor, Department of Cell Biology Professor, Department of Medicine (Oncology)</p>
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the [insert program name]  
[insert institution name]  
New York  
[Month yyyy of Thesis Defense]

Einstein student template

Visiting (international) student template

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

Albert Einstein College of Medicine

New York  
September 2017

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Graduate Division of Medical Sciences

Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
Yeshiva University

New York  
September 2017

## Section IX: Vacation and Leaves of Absence

### 1) Vacation and Holidays

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

Students who have completed at least twelve (12) months in the program may receive stipends during the normal period of vacation and holidays observed by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. (Visit the Human Resources website for a list of Einstein holidays: [www.einsteinmed.org/hr/working-at-einstein/](http://www.einsteinmed.org/hr/working-at-einstein/)). It is anticipated that students will take two (2) weeks' vacation time each year, exclusive of the winter and spring holidays as posted on the Graduate Division Academic Calendar (<http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/calendar.aspx>). *All time off should be scheduled in consultation with the mentor.*

### 2) Leaves of Absence

The Graduate Division follows the NIH Training Grant Guidelines (NOT-OD-16-105) with respect to leaves.

Students *must* submit a Leave of Absence Form to the Graduate Division office prior to going on leave, and *must* submit a Return from Leave of Absence Form at the end of the leave. These forms are available on the Graduate Division Forms web page: <http://www.einsteinmed.org/education/phd/current-students/graduate-forms.aspx>.

Leaves of absence must be approved in advance by the Associate Dean for Graduate Programs.

A student who is absent from courses or the laboratory without notice may be subject to disciplinary actions, including dismissal from the program.

Note: A student who fails to re-matriculate following the expiration of a leave of absence will be officially withdrawn from the Graduate Division.

#### **Parental Leave**

A student may receive stipends for up to a maximum of sixty (60) calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to eight (8) work weeks) of parental leave per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave. Parental leave must be scheduled in consultation with the mentor. A student must provide advanced notification of the leave by completing and submitting a Leave of Absence Form to the Graduate Division office prior to going on leave.

#### **Health Insurance and Housing while on Parental Leave**

Health insurance benefits will continue during the time of parental leave. The student may remain in housing and is required to continue paying rent.

#### **Extension of Parental Leave (*Unpaid*)**

A student requiring an extension of parental leave longer than sixty (60) calendar days must seek approval from the mentor and Associate Dean (and MSTP Director, if applicable) for an *unpaid* leave of absence prior to the original anticipated date of return. The student must submit an amended Leave of Absence Form with a doctor's note. (The extended leave is an *unpaid* medical leave of absence.)

## Vacation and LOAs

**International Students:** Due to visa requirements, an international student is eligible for parental leave only upon approval of the Office of International Services and with written doctor's recommendation.

Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University: leave of absence status will be reported to the Yeshiva University Registrar's Office for international students who are sponsored by Yeshiva University.

## Sick Leave

A student may receive stipends for a maximum of fifteen (15) calendar days (inclusive of Saturday and Sunday; equivalent to two (2) work weeks) of sick leave per year. A Leave of Absence Form need not be submitted to the Graduate Division office prior to going on sick leave. The student must communicate with the mentor when on sick leave.

### **Health Insurance and Housing while on Sick Leave**

Health insurance benefits will continue during the time of sick leave. The student may remain in housing and is required to continue paying rent.

### **Extension of Sick Leave**

A student requiring an extension of sick leave longer than fifteen (15) calendar days must seek approval from the mentor and Associate Dean (and MSTP Director, if applicable) for an *unpaid* medical leave of absence. The student must submit a Leave of Absence Form with a doctor's note to the Graduate Division office.

## Medical Leave of Absence (Unpaid)

The Associate Dean (and MSTP Director, if applicable) may allow a student to be placed on a temporary *unpaid* medical leave of absence in case of prolonged illness or other medical emergency. This leave may also be appropriate in the case of chronic physical or mental illness. (Pregnancy and childbirth are covered by parental leave as stated above.) At the beginning of a medical leave of absence, the student must submit a Leave of Absence Form accompanied by a doctor's note. The maximum amount of time allowed for an *unpaid* medical leave of absence is six (6) months.

### **Health Insurance and Housing while on a Medical Leave of Absence**

Health insurance benefits will continue for up to six (6) months, although it is important for the student to contact the Benefits Office prior to or immediately after taking the leave. A student on a medical leave of absence may remain in student housing for up to six (6) months and must continue to pay rent during that time.

**International Students:** Due to visa requirements, an international student is eligible for medical leave upon approval of the Office of International Services and written doctor's recommendation.

Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University: leave of absence status will be reported to the Yeshiva University Registrar's Office for international students who are sponsored by Yeshiva University.

## Bereavement Leave

If a member of the immediate family dies, a student may receive a paid leave of absence for up to five (5) days. These days are to be taken consecutively within a reasonable time of the date of the death or funeral, and may not be split or postponed. Health insurance benefits and housing will continue while a student is on bereavement leave. A Leave of Absence Form does not have to be submitted for this type of leave. However, if the student needs more time for funeral or other arrangements, the student may request vacation time or a personal (*unpaid*) leave of absence in which case a Leave of Absence Form must be submitted to the Graduate Division office.

## Vacation and LOAs

### **Academic or Personal Leave of Absence** (*Unpaid*)

The Associate Dean (and MSTP Director, if applicable) may grant an *unpaid* academic or personal leave of absence for a period up to a maximum of six (6) months. This may be considered appropriate if the student is experiencing academic problems in courses or laboratory research based on personal issues, conflicts, or the need for counseling beyond normal tutoring. This is an unpaid leave. The Graduate Division assumes no financial commitment during the academic or personal leave of absence. At the beginning of an academic or personal leave of absence, the student must submit a Leave of Absence Form to the Graduate Division office.

#### **Health Insurance and Housing while on an Academic or Personal Leave of Absence:**

Prior to starting an academic or personal leave of absence, the student must consult with the Benefits Office regarding continuation of health insurance.

A student on academic or personal leave may remain in housing for up to six (6) months and rent payments must be maintained during the leave of absence.

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

### **Thesis Leave of Absence**

If a student, who has successfully defended the thesis, separates from Einstein prior to completing all program requirements for the PhD degree, the student must apply for an *unpaid* Thesis Leave of Absence. Student must submit a completed Leave of Absence form to the Graduate Office (Belfer 202) prior to leaving the institution.

The maximum amount of time allotted for a thesis leave of absence is three months from the date of defense.

A student on a thesis leave of absence is no longer in active, full-time status and therefore no longer eligible for loan deferment.

#### **Health Insurance and Housing while on a Thesis Leave of Absence**

Medical benefits for a student on an unpaid thesis leave of absence will terminate on the last day of the month in which the student is terminated from payroll.

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

## **3) Return from Leave of Absence**

A student who wishes **to return from a leave of absence** must:

- At least two weeks prior to the anticipated date, confirm the anticipated return date with the mentor and the Graduate Division Registrar ([sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org))
- On the date of return, notify the Graduate Division Registrar by email ([sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org)) so that student status can be updated, and
- Within three days of return from leave, submit a completed Return from Leave of Absence form, with all necessary signatures, to the Graduate Office (Belfer 202).

#### **Return from Parental, Academic or Personal Leave of Absence**

Student must notify the mentor and the Graduate Division Registrar and submit the Return from Leave form as noted above.

## Vacation and LOAs

### **Return from Medical Leave of Absence**

Student must notify the mentor and the Graduate Division Registrar and submit the Return from Leave form as noted above. In addition, a student who wishes to return from a medical leave of absence must submit a doctor's note accompanying the Return from Leave of Absence form certifying that the student is well enough to return to their responsibilities as a full-time graduate student.

### **4) Failure to Return from a Leave of Absence**

Once the period of leave time is expired, and the student does not wish to return to the program (i.e. active student status), the student will have the option to withdraw from the program by notifying the Graduate Division Registrar ([sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sgregistrar@einsteinmed.org)) within 14 calendar days prior to the leave expiration date. The "official withdrawal" will be recorded on the student's permanent graduate transcript.

If the student does not contact or notify the Graduate Division Registrar within 14 calendar days of leave expiration date, the student will be withdrawn, and the "official withdrawal" will be recorded on the student's permanent graduate transcript.

Visiting (International) students sponsored by Yeshiva University: the withdrawn status will be reported to the Yeshiva University registrar's office.



## Section X: Graduate Division Policies on Conduct

Note: Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University must adhere to all policies and conduct as described below.

### 1) Policy on Research Misconduct

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

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

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

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

#### **Responsible Conduct of Research**

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

### 2) Policy on Professional Misconduct

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

## Policies on Conduct

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

Instances of professional misconduct by students (that do not fall within the guidelines of research misconduct) will be considered in accord with the Policy on Professional Conduct. The Associate Dean will have primary responsibility for determining the appropriate venue for investigation of alleged misconduct, and seeing that the allegations are thoroughly and fairly investigated.

A student who is unsure of whether their actions, or those of others, constitute professional misconduct should consult with their mentor, department chair, Associate Dean, Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program or the Director of the Graduate Division. Ignorance of the standards of professional conduct will not exonerate a student from responsibility for their actions.

### **Plagiarism**

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

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

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

## **3) Suspension Due to Research or Professional Misconduct**

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

## **4) Academic Affairs Committee Review on Research or Professional Misconduct**

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

1. Allegations of research or professional misconduct are to be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean and must be sufficiently specific to provide a factual basis for investigation. Anonymous allegations are not acceptable.
2. A preliminary evaluation of an allegation will be made by the Associate Dean in consultation with the Director and Associate Director of the Graduate Division, and/or the Director of the MSTP (if applicable), and the Academic Affairs Committee chair to determine whether the allegation falls within the purview of this policy and is sufficiently substantive to warrant investigation.

## Policies on Conduct

3. If it is determined that a review by the Academic Affairs Committee will proceed, the student will be promptly notified in writing by the chair of the AAC of the nature and details of the allegation. The student will be advised of the procedures set forth herein and of the right to the advice of an advocate from the College of Medicine.
4. The review of the allegations of research or professional misconduct will be promptly conducted. The Associate Dean may appoint an *ad hoc* subcommittee, which will report to the Academic Affairs Committee. Members of the Academic Affairs Committee for whom there exists, or is perceived to exist, a conflict of interest will be excused from the review. The *ad hoc* subcommittee shall not include any member of the faculty where any conflict of interest exists or is perceived to exist. In addition to, or alternatively, the Associate Dean may request a review of the case from the Medical School Committee on Promotions and Professional Standards, which may make recommendations. These recommendations are not binding and may or may not be followed by the Associate Dean and/or the Academic Affairs Committee in determining the final disposition of the allegation.
5. The Academic Affairs Committee (or the *ad hoc* subcommittee) will attempt to obtain written and oral evidence from all sources the Committee determines to be appropriate and that it requires to evaluate the alleged misconduct. The review is not bound by the formal rules of evidence. The accused student may examine all the evidence against him/her and respond to the evidence. The student may present the facts of his/her case, provide witnesses to testify on his or her behalf, may be advised by a person from the College of Medicine, but may not have an attorney present at the review.
6. After reviewing the evidence the Academic Affairs Committee will provide a recommendation to the Associate Dean, who will decide the matter and prepare a written decision. A copy of the decision will be given to the student.
7. An appeal of the decision of the Associate Dean may be made to the Dean of the Medical School in writing within fifteen (15) calendar days.

## MD-PhD Students

All MD-PhD students are subject to the above described Graduate Division policies on misconduct. In the case of professional misconduct, the MD-PhD student may also be referred to the Medical School's Committee on Student Promotions and Professional Standards and the Associate Deans of Student Affairs for review.

## **5) Policy on Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment**

Einstein is committed to the principles of non-discrimination. Einstein prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, age, national origin or ancestry, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical or mental disability, veteran or disabled veteran status, military status, pregnancy status, genetic predisposition/carrier status, citizenship status, familial status, Domestic Violence victim status, or any other personal characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law.

Unlawful Discrimination or Harassment: The Einstein College of Medicine has adopted a policy of zero tolerance with respect to discriminatory practices and harassment of any kind as being antithetical both to the academic values of the College and the need for a work environment that is free from even the appearance of unlawful discrimination or harassment, or coercion. Unlawful discrimination or harassment in any form is a violation of College policy.

## Policies on Conduct

Sexual Harassment is offensive and includes harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and the status of being transgender. Sexual Harassment in any form is prohibited and constitutes a violation of the College's policy, regardless of whether it rises to the level of being unlawful.

Sexual harassment refers to any unwelcome or unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, physical, demonstrative, or electronic conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- 1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or educational experience; or
- 2) Submission or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for a decision regarding an employment, academic, or other University-related activity affecting such individual; or
- 3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or participation in a University program, department or extra-curricular activity; or
- 4) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, learning, studying, or school environment.

Please refer to Appendix VI: Additional Policies below for links to detailed description of the College's policies including the Non-Discrimination and Gender-Based Misconduct Policy and Complaint Procedures for Students - Title IX, which includes contact information and procedures.

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

## Appendix I: Department/Concentration-Specific Course Requirements and Course Recommendations

### **General Graduate Division Course Requirements:**

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

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

Visiting (international) students sponsored by Yeshiva University must adhere to the course requirements as described for students in the Biomedical Sciences programs.

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

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

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

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

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

### **Departments/Concentrations**

- I. Anatomy & Structural Biology
- II. Biochemistry
- III. Cell Biology
- IV. Developmental & Molecular Biology
- V. Genetics
- VI. Microbiology & Immunology
- VII. Molecular Pharmacology
- VIII. Neuroscience
- IX. Pathology
- X. PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI)
- XI. Physiology & Biophysics
- XII. Systems & Computational Biology

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

Listed below are specific departmental/concentration course requirements and recommendations.

## Concentration-Specific Course Requirements

### **I. Anatomy and Structural Biology (ASB)**

ASB *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Cell Biology, and
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I.

*Recommended* courses:

- Histology and Cell Structure
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher II, III.

### **II. Biochemistry (BC)**

BC *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and
- Human Metabolism: Regulation and Disease.

### **III. Cell Biology (CB)**

CB strongly *recommends* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix,
- Molecular Cell Biology,
- Stem Cells, Development and Disease, and/or
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II.

### **IV. Developmental and Molecular Biology (DMB)**

DMB *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and
- Molecular Cell Biology.

### **V. Genetics (GENE)**

GENE strongly *recommends* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and/or
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I.

### **VI. Microbiology & Immunology (MCIM)**

MCIM *requires* successful completion of at least two of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Molecular Genetics,
- Gene Expression: Beyond the Double Helix, and/or
- Molecular Cell Biology;

And *requires* the successful completion of at least one of the following graduate courses:

- Immunology, and/or

## Concentration-Specific Course Requirements

- Viruses.

### **VII. Molecular Pharmacology (MP)**

MP *requires* successful completion of the following graduate course:

- Molecular Approaches to Drug Action and Design.

### **VIII. Neuroscience (NS)**

NS *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Principles of Neuroscience I, and
- Principles of Neuroscience II.

### **IX. Pathology (PATH)**

PATH *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry, and
- Mechanisms of Disease (also required for MD-PhD students in PATH)

### **X. PhD in Clinical Investigation (PCI)**

PCI *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

All in year two:

- Clinical Research Intensive,
- Multivariable Regression, and
- Epidemiologic Research Methods.

The following courses are strongly *recommended*:

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

### **XI. Physiology and Biophysics (PB)**

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

P&B Biophysics track *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II, and
- Molecular Biophysics for the Life Sciences.

P&B Physiology track *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

- Biochemistry,
- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher I and II,
- Membrane Physiology and Transport,
- MSTP Cardiac Physiology, and
- Renal, Respiratory, and Acid-Base Physiology.

### **XII. Systems and Computational Biology (SCB)**

SCB *requires* successful completion of the following graduate courses:

## Concentration-Specific Course Requirements

- Introduction to Systems Biology: Theory and Case Studies, and
- Systems Biology Seminar.

Strongly *recommended* graduate courses:

- Quantitative Skills for the Biomedical Researcher.



## Appendix II: Medical Scientist Training Program (MD-PhD) Requirements

### Graduate Division Program Course Requirements

MD-PhD students must successfully complete a minimum of 18 graduate course credits to be granted a PhD degree upon successful defense of their thesis. It is expected that during the first year MD-PhD students complete at least four (4) to six (6) course credits per Block and a minimum of 18 course credits. Each student will usually take two graduate courses in Blocks I and II including Biochemistry and Responsible Conduct of Research and elective course of their choice, and one or two graduate courses in Block III.

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

- Biochemistry
- Histology and Cell Structure
- Responsible Conduct of Research
- Membrane Physiology & Transport
- MSTP Cardiac Physiology
- MSTP Mechanisms of Disease
- Renal, Respiratory and Acid-Base Physiology

Note: Course credits for *Histology and Cell Structure*, *MSTP Mechanisms of Disease*, and *Responsible Conduct of Research* do not count towards the 18 graduate course credit requirement for MD-PhD students.

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

### **Master's Credit**

If an MD-PhD student enters the program with a Master of Science or Master of Arts degree from a relevant scientific discipline, the student may apply for "Master's credit." If the request is approved, the student will be granted three (3) credits towards the program course credit requirement; the student must successfully complete 15 course credits to satisfy the program course requirements. A student may apply for Master's credit by completing and submitting to the Graduate Division office the Request for Credit for Prior Master's Degree Form which is available on the Graduate Division's forms webpage. Appropriate documentation of conferral of the Master's degree is required with submission of the form.

### **Course Exemptions and Transfer of Credit**

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

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

An MD-PhD student wishing to receive credit for graduate courses taken at another institution while enrolled as an Einstein student must receive the written approval of the Program Director and the Associate Dean. Note: the maximum number of graduate courses that can be taken outside the College of Medicine and funded by the Graduate

## MSTP Requirements

Division is limited to two per student. Credit hours for no more than two outside courses may be used toward satisfying the course credit requirements.

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

### Concentration-specific Course Requirements

In addition to the Graduate Division program course requirements, MD-PhD students must complete their department-specific course requirements. (See Appendix I: Department/Concentration-Specific Course Requirements and Course Recommendations.) A waiver from a department-specific course may be granted by the department chair.

### MD Course Requirements

During the first year of the MSTP, students will take the following medical school classes: *Unit 2 of Molecular and Cellular Foundations of Medicine (MCFM-2, Immunology)*, *Pharmacology*, and the second half of the *Renal Systems* course (*Pathophysiology/Pathology*). In addition, first year MD-PhD students are expected to take *MSTP Anatomy* and required Physical Examination sessions in *Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM)*. The following first year medical school courses are optional for MD-PhD students: *Histology*, *MCFM* (except *Unit 2 – Immunology*), *ICM-A*, *ICM-B* (except required physical exam sessions), *Biomedical Ethics 1*, *Epidemiology*, *Population Health and Evidence-based Medicine 1 (EPHEM 1)*, *Cardiovascular Physiology*, *Disease Mechanisms*, and the first half of *Renal Systems (Renal Physiology)*.

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

### MD 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Year Clerkships and Sub-internships

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

### Laboratory Rotations

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

## MSTP Requirements

### **Thesis Laboratory and Department Declaration**

*MD-PhD students must obtain permission from the MSTP Director prior to declaring a thesis laboratory.* An MD-PhD student must satisfy all the requirements of their declared department, including course requirements, and other departmental activities as stipulated by the department.

### **Qualifying Examination**

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

### **Thesis Defense**

An MD-PhD student must have successfully defended their PhD Thesis before the student will be certified to go onto the clinical part of their training.

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

See Section VIII: Thesis and Defense.

## **MSTP – Program Requirements and Expectations**

### **Predocutorial Fellowship Application**

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

### **MSTP Retreat**

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

### **Required MSTP Conference Attendance**

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

### **Bylaws and Policies Applicable to MSTP Students**

All applicable rules, requirements, standards of professionalism, academic integrity, and performance expectations of both the medical school and Graduate Division apply to MSTP students throughout their time in the MSTP. Throughout their time in the MSTP, students are subject to both the Graduate Division Academic Policies and Guidelines and to the medical school Bylaws on Student Promotions and Professional Standards (<https://www.einsteinmed.org/docs/education/student-affairs/CSPPS-bylaws.pdf>).

## **Appendix III: AAMC's Compact between Biomedical Graduate Students and Their Advisors**

AAMC: Association of American Medical Colleges

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

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

The Compact is available on the AAMC Web site at: <https://www.aamc.org/initiatives/research/gradcompact/>

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

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

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

### **Core Tenets of Pre-Doctoral Training**

#### **Institutional Commitment**

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

provide opportunities for faculty to acquire such skills and experiences. Additionally, institutions should also foster an environment that is diverse and inclusive.

### **Program Commitment**

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

### **Quality Mentoring**

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

### **Skill Sets and Counseling for a Broad Range of Career Choices**

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

### **Commitments of Graduate Students**

- **I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the successful completion of my degree.** I will be committed to my graduate education and will demonstrate this by my efforts in the classroom, the research laboratory, and all other related academic and professional activities. I will maintain a high level of professionalism, self-motivation, initiative, engagement, scientific curiosity, and ethical standards, including complying with institutional and research group standards for contributing to an inclusive research environment.
- **I will meet regularly with my research advisor to provide updates on the progress and results of my course work, research, and professional and career development activities.**
- **I will work with my research advisor to develop a thesis/dissertation project.** This will include establishing a timeline for each phase of my work. I will strive to keep engaged with the work, discuss experimental findings and any pitfalls, and meet the established goals and deadlines.
- **I will work with my research advisor to select a thesis/dissertation committee.** I will commit to meeting with this committee at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines). I will discuss my progress to date and be responsive to the advice and constructive criticism from my committee.

## AAMC's Compact

- **I will be a good lab citizen.** I agree to take part in shared laboratory responsibilities and will use laboratory resources carefully and frugally. I will maintain a safe and clean laboratory space. I will be respectful of, tolerant of, and work collegially with all laboratory personnel. I will be an active contributing member to all team efforts and collaborations and will respect individual contributions. I will also contribute to an environment that is safe, equitable, and free of harassment.
- **I will maintain detailed, organized, and accurate research records. With respect to data ownership, I acknowledge that original notebooks, digital files, and tangible research materials belong to the institution and will remain in the lab when I finish my thesis/dissertation so that other individuals can reproduce and carry on related research, in accordance with institutional policy.** Only with the explicit approval from my research mentor and in accordance with institutional policy may I make copies of my notebooks and digital files and have access to tangible research materials that I helped to generate during my graduate training.
- **I will discuss policies on work hours, medical leave, and vacation with my graduate program and research advisor.** I will consult with my advisor in advance of any planned absences and apprise my advisor of any unexpected absences due to illness or other issues.
- **I will discuss policies on authorship and attendance at professional meetings with my research advisor.** I will work with my advisor to disseminate all relevant research results in a timely manner before completion of all degree requirements.
- **I will be knowledgeable of the policies and requirements of my graduate program, graduate school, and institution.** I will commit to meeting these requirements in the appropriate time frame and will abide by all institutional policies and procedures.
- **I will attend and actively participate in laboratory meetings, seminars, and journal clubs that are part of my educational program.** To enhance research, leadership, and additional professional skills, I will seek out other enrichment opportunities, such as participation in professional organizations and meetings, student representation on institutional committees, and coordination of departmental events.
- **I will be knowledgeable of all institutional research policies.** I will comply with all institutional laboratory safety practices and animal-use and human-research policies. I will participate in my institution's Responsible Conduct of Research Training Program and practice the guidelines presented therein while conducting my research. I will also seek input on and comply with institutional policies regarding my research design and data analysis.
- **I acknowledge that I have the primary responsibility for the development of my own career.** I recognize that I need to explore career opportunities and paths that match and develop my individual skills, values, and interests to achieve my desired career goals. I understand that there are tools such as the individual development plan that I should use to help me define my career goals and develop my training plan. I will seek guidance throughout my graduate education from my research advisor, career counseling services, thesis/dissertation committee, other mentors, and any other resources that can offer advice on career planning and the wide range of opportunities available in the biomedical workforce.

## Commitments of Research Advisors

- **Throughout the graduate student's time in my laboratory, I will be supportive, equitable, accessible, encouraging, and respectful.** I will foster the graduate student's professional confidence and encourage intellectual development, critical thinking, curiosity, and creativity. I will continue my interest and involvement as the student moves forward into a career.
- **I will be committed to meeting one-on-one with the student on a regular basis. I will regularly review the student's progress and provide timely feedback and goal-setting advice.**

## AAMC's Compact

- **I will be committed to the graduate student's research project.** I will work with the student to help plan and guide the research project, set reasonable and attainable goals, and establish a timeline for completion of the project.
- **I will help the graduate student select a thesis/dissertation committee.** I will assure that this committee meets at least annually (or more frequently, according to program guidelines) to review and discuss the graduate student's progress and future directions. I understand that the function of this committee is to help the student complete the doctoral research, and I will respect the ideas and suggestions of my colleagues on the committee.
- **I will provide an environment that is intellectually stimulating, emotionally supportive, safe, equitable, and free of harassment.**
- **I will demonstrate respect for all graduate students as individuals without regard to gender, race, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation, and I will cultivate a culture of tolerance among the entire laboratory.**
- **I will be committed to providing financial resources, as appropriate and according to my institution's guidelines, for the graduate student to conduct thesis/dissertation research.** I will not require the graduate student to perform tasks that are unrelated to the training program and professional development.
- **I will expect the graduate student to share common laboratory responsibilities and use resources carefully and frugally.** I will also regularly meet with the graduate student to review data management, storage, and record keeping. I will discuss with the student intellectual policy issues regarding disclosure, patent rights, and publishing research discoveries.
- **I will discuss with the graduate student authorship policies regarding papers.** I will acknowledge the graduate student's scientific contributions to the work in my laboratory, and I will provide assistance in getting the student's work published in a timely manner.
- **I will be knowledgeable of and guide the graduate student through the requirements and deadlines of the graduate program and the institution, as well as teaching requirements, if any, and human resources guidelines.**
- **I will encourage the graduate student to attend and present their research at scientific/professional meetings and make an effort to secure and facilitate funding for such activities. In addition, I will provide opportunities for the student to discuss science and their research findings with colleagues and fellow scientists within the institution and broader scientific community—for example, at lab meetings, research days, and seminars.**
- **I will promote the training of the graduate student in professional skills needed for a successful career. These skills include but are not limited to oral and written communication, grant writing, management and leadership, collaborative research, responsible conduct of research, teaching, and mentoring.** I will encourage the student to seek opportunities to develop skills in other areas, even if not specifically required by the student's program. I will also encourage the graduate student to seek input from multiple mentors.
- **I will create an environment in which the student can discuss and explore career opportunities and paths that match their skills, values, and interests and be supportive of their career path choices.** I will be accessible to give advice and feedback on career goals. I will work with the student on an individual development plan to help define career goals and identify training milestones. I will provide letters of recommendation for the student's next phase of professional development.

## [Appendix IV: Resources and Support](#)

### Student Health

#### **Academic Support and Counseling**

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

For more information, please visit the OASC website:

<https://www.einsteinmed.org/education/student-affairs/academic-support-counseling/>.

Mental health emergency information is available at:

<https://www.einsteinmed.org/education/student-affairs/academic-support-counseling/mental-health-emergencies.aspx>.

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

#### **Personal Counseling**

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

#### **Einstein Student Health Service**

The Einstein Student Health Service is available to all students for sick call visits and post-exposure consultations. Walk-in hours for the Student Health Service sick call visit are from 12:00pm to 4:00pm, Monday through Friday in the Block Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220.

<https://www.einsteinmed.org/administration/occupational-health-service/student-health-service.asp>

#### **WellMed Student Wellness Program**

WellMed's goal is to provide opportunities for students to adopt habits and attitudes that will contribute to their balance and well-being. For more information visit: <https://www.einsteinmed.org/education/student-affairs/student-wellness-wellmed/>.

#### **Einstein Student Mental Health Center**

Students and post-docs can contact the center for appointments at (718) 839-7400 or email Dr. Joseph Battaglia at [joseph.battaglia@einsteinmed.org](mailto:joseph.battaglia@einsteinmed.org).

Operating Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm; open until 7:00pm on Wednesday.

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



## Tutoring

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

## Library

<http://library.einsteinmed.org/>

### **Instruction Sessions and Workshops**

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

### **LibGuides**

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

## Career & Professional Development Program

<http://einsteinmed.org/education/career-development/>

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

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

- i. to provide programs and services to assist graduate students and postdoctoral researchers in discovering and clarifying career choices, and to aid them in learning how to manage their careers effectively, and
- ii. to help graduate students and postdoctoral researchers at Einstein build a professional skill set which enables them to become world leaders in academic and non-academic careers.

Contact Information for the CPD:

Dr. Diane A. Safer, *Director of Career and Professional Development*  
Office Phone: (718) 430-8696  
[diane.safer@einsteinmed.org](mailto:diane.safer@einsteinmed.org)

## [Appendix V: Student Safety and Security](#)

### Security

<https://www.einsteinmed.org/administration/auxiliary-services/security/>

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

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

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

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

#### Missing Student Policy

A student who resides in on-campus housing who has been absent from Einstein for more than 24 hours without any reason, is considered missing.

All reports of missing students should be directed to Einstein's Security Office, the dean or program director of the academic program in which the student is enrolled, or the Housing Office. Any reports made to the program dean or director or the Housing Office will be referred immediately to the Einstein Security Office.

See Appendix VI: Additional Policies, for the link to the Missing Student Policy.

### Department of Human Resources

<http://einsteinmed.org/administration/human-resources/>

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

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

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

#### **Title IX Coordinator**

Yvonne M. Ramirez, *Vice President of Human Resources and Diversity Officer*

1300 Morris Park Avenue, Belfer Bldg., Room 1209

Bronx, New York 10461

Office Phone: (718) 430-2541

[yvonne.ramirez@einsteinmed.org](mailto:yvonne.ramirez@einsteinmed.org)

## Graduate Division Office

The Graduate Division provides diverse resources geared towards serving our students. The Associate Dean and Program Directors are available by appointment. Contact information is as follows:

Dr. Victoria Freedman, *Associate Dean for Graduate Programs*

Office Phone: (718) 430-2872

[victoria.freedman@einsteinmed.org](mailto:victoria.freedman@einsteinmed.org)

Dr. Myles Akabas, *Director of the Medical Scientist Training Program*

Office Phone: (718) 430-3360

[myles.akabas@einsteinmed.org](mailto:myles.akabas@einsteinmed.org)

Ms. Sheila Cleeton, *Executive Director and Registrar, Graduate Programs in the Biomedical Sciences*

Office Phone: (718) 430-4133

[sheila.cleeton@einsteinmed.org](mailto:sheila.cleeton@einsteinmed.org)

## [Appendix VI: Additional Policies](#)

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

Policy	Link
Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=J4eCr9xeKRHjihNvh935awwfgDp_oTiS0j37qTd8M8JY">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=J4eCr9xeKRHjihNvh935awwfgDp_oTiS0j37qTd8M8JY</a>
Missing Student Policy	<a href="https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=PR%2fXCS9WgH%2fxEr6vXvCIIYo5mpEIkBXCvXI6Os63C60">https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=PR%2fXCS9WgH%2fxEr6vXvCIIYo5mpEIkBXCvXI6Os63C60</a>
Non-Discrimination and Gender-Based Misconduct Policy and Complaint Procedures for Students - Title IX	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=YR6vxCufBLkAm4kCpNshPBcUC9r1zTaSrStG6m5rcvs">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=YR6vxCufBLkAm4kCpNshPBcUC9r1zTaSrStG6m5rcvs</a>
Record Retention Policy	<a href="https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=U5Yk0LFtr7Vu%2bXlk2Akm1HfNqleCtF Eih3MIUYHp0GA">https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=U5Yk0LFtr7Vu%2bXlk2Akm1HfNqleCtF Eih3MIUYHp0GA</a>
Request for Service or Assistance Animal Form for Students	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=PfXAMQu6I3DCz%2bxn7pDngvQl5Dh1eaylwLeM9L9nklo">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=PfXAMQu6I3DCz%2bxn7pDngvQl5Dh1eaylwLeM9L9nklo</a>
Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=Decl94PCg8Dap8X6742ZHxkNZFNk1%2f%2f8VOnEgJd6oZg">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=Decl94PCg8Dap8X6742ZHxkNZFNk1%2f%2f8VOnEgJd6oZg</a>
Request to Review Educational Record	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=X2afToKwnhCBLBFzDV2%2fT9P%2fzBqtppw%2fsUQbn0Z8M4E">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=X2afToKwnhCBLBFzDV2%2fT9P%2fzBqtppw%2fsUQbn0Z8M4E</a>
Research Misconduct Policy	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=51k%2fNUBR3gvt6qvW%2fia6330PgYg2brUZ2oe6OcDnHik">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=51k%2fNUBR3gvt6qvW%2fia6330PgYg2brUZ2oe6OcDnHik</a>
Service and Assistance Animals Rules and Responsibilities Agreement	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=K476UFwNrBON4EnSnvQK6%2bl99qDjkF0fIk5cOOMdg%2fg">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=K476UFwNrBON4EnSnvQK6%2bl99qDjkF0fIk5cOOMdg%2fg</a>
Service and Assistance Animals Policy	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=%2bhhWLW7mGlzm45%2fukOKBrvHV%2bPunEMAKUInhJxTAmZY">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=%2bhhWLW7mGlzm45%2fukOKBrvHV%2bPunEMAKUInhJxTAmZY</a>
Student Disability Accommodation Policy	<a href="http://einsteinmed.org/docs/administration/policies/Student-Disability-Accommodation-Policy-rev-final-(signed)-122217.pdf">http://einsteinmed.org/docs/administration/policies/Student-Disability-Accommodation-Policy-rev-final-(signed)-122217.pdf</a>
Student Disability Accommodation Request Form	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=UT%2fmkeeeSufqjQJX3NGXpvJnX6NgxXE4ySH9DQEA3U">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=UT%2fmkeeeSufqjQJX3NGXpvJnX6NgxXE4ySH9DQEA3U</a>
Use of Copyrighted Material Policy	<a href="https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=K4SMUJ1mNcDS9PNrpVsPqNc83Rgbd88xCYNxxE9UZEE">https://einsteinmed.org/download/?token=K4SMUJ1mNcDS9PNrpVsPqNc83Rgbd88xCYNxxE9UZEE</a>
Workplace Romance and Fraternization Policy	<a href="https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=uisUzac%2bPDFH4y3NersuEgCqMjJsJeki8ltTO5CHCAg">https://www.einsteinmed.org/download/?token=uisUzac%2bPDFH4y3NersuEgCqMjJsJeki8ltTO5CHCAg</a>

