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University requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

- Minimum of two consecutive semesters of registration as a full-time, resident graduate student.
- Successful passing of the Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination.
- Dissertation approved by at least two readers and certified by them to be a significant contribution to knowledge and worthy of publication.
- Certification by the Program Director that all requirements have been fulfilled.
- Submission of a dissertation to the library that adheres to the Doctor of Philosophy Board Dissertation Guidelines.
- The Program may determine the allowable time to complete degree requirements but in no case may that time exceed 8 years. Any approved leave of absence does not count toward the 8 year time limit.

Evaluation and Mentoring Requirements for BME PhD

- As a first year student in the Program, you are required to meet with your faculty advisor at least once per semester. The faculty advisor is separate from your mentor and is assigned by the Program to serve as your advocate, help with selection of courses, and help you adjust to life as a graduate student.
- Every three months you are required to update the Progress Report, an online record of your academic activities for the year. With this form you will report on the courses you have taken, laboratory rotations you have completed, thesis committee meetings, publications, fellowship applications, etc. This report is reviewed by the Program Director.
- By the end of your first year you are expected to have selected a research laboratory.
- During your 2nd year, and each year thereafter, you must have a formal meeting with your research mentor during which you discuss your individual development plan (IDP). An IDP is a discussion between you and your mentor regarding the status of your project, effectiveness of mentoring, organization of the lab environment, and your long-term career goals. An IDP form is provided at the end of this document.
- During your 2nd year, you should begin planning for taking the Doctoral Board Oral (DBO) examination. You must take this exam no later than 30 months from matriculation.
- Within 6 months after passing the DBO you should form a thesis committee. The first thesis committee meeting should be held approximately six months, and no later than 12 months, after completing the DBO. In the event that you do not pass the DBO in their first attempt, the first thesis meeting should be held no later than 6 months after passing the DBO.
• If you are eligible, you should plan to submit an individual fellowship application to the NSF in your first or second year, and a fellowship application to the NIH once you have formulated a thesis plan (best done in your 3rd year in the program).
• You are expected to meet annually with your thesis committees (post DBO students). Student, advisor and committee members must complete and sign the Thesis Committee Meeting form that contains written feedback on the student’s progress.
• After completion of Year 6 (72 months post-matriculation), thesis committee meetings should be held semi-annually.
• A terminal masters will be recommended if PhD is not complete by end of year 8. [NOTE: Official leaves of absence are not included].

Labs with delinquent students will be closed to rotation students unless the Program Director grants permission.

Registration and student status

To be classified as a graduate student in the School of Medicine, the student must be admitted to a graduate program, be registered on a full-time basis and be on campus. Status as a Special Student is awarded only to graduate-level students who are not candidates for a Johns Hopkins advanced degree; time as a Special Student may not exceed 1 year. Once students begin their graduate course of study toward a degree, they must complete a minimum of two consecutive semesters of registration as a full-time, resident graduate student. In order to be registered full-time, a student must engage in a full-time program of courses, seminars and/or research as approved by the graduate program. The School of Medicine does not define full-time in terms of credits, courses, or any other such unit. To qualify as a resident student, the student must be present on campus and working toward fulfilling the requirements for the degree.

The program certifies each student’s status at the beginning of every academic year. The program may determine the allowable time to complete degree requirements but in no case may that time exceed 12 years. Any approved leave of absence would not count toward the 12 years.

Registration

Students must register each semester from matriculation through graduation. A student's departure from the School of Medicine without an approved leave of absence will be deemed a permanent withdrawal from the student's program. If on leave, students are expected to provide the Registrar’s Office and their program with an updated current address, and are expected to respond to all communications and mailings within the deadlines specified. Students who withdraw from the program must be formally readmitted, at the discretion of the Program Director, before they may return to the School of Medicine. If readmitted, they need not pay a second application fee but must pay all outstanding fees. Failure to register by the published deadlines of the School of Medicine may be interpreted as a withdrawal from the program.

Change in Registration Status

Students may request a Leave of Absence. Students must obtain the signature of the Program Director, and the signature of the Director of International Student and Scholar Services if he or she is an international student before submitting their application for the change in status.

Leave of Absence (LOA)
A student may request a voluntary leave of absence for reasons including medical reasons (including mental health), family responsibilities, and internships. Leave may not exceed 2 years.

Student does not receive stipend during the leave. Student must retain health insurance during LoA through the Student Health Program, which is covered by the advisor.

The period of the leave is not included in the “time to degree.” The student cannot be enrolled at another degree granting program during LoA. An international student’s status is impacted by LoA. Those students should contact the Office of International Services 30 days before going on LoA.

A student requesting a leave of absence should contact his/her faculty advisor. A letter of intent should then be submitted by the student to the Program Director. At this time a meeting must be arranged with the Program Director. Following the meeting, the Director completes a Student Change of Status Form, obtained from the Registrar’s Office. This form is signed by the Program Director and the student. If a student does not return to the program within 2 years of leave, they are no longer enrolled in the program.

**Returning from Leave of Absence**
The student must send a letter to the Program Director noting the return to full time status. At this point the Program Director completes a Student Change of Status Form, signed by both the Director and the student.

**Rotations**
The aim of laboratory rotations is to allow students to learn new techniques and to find a suitable laboratory for their thesis research. Before matriculation, the students should be contacting the faculty to set up the first rotation. Ideally, the first rotation begins when the student matriculates. However, in the case that the student is taking Anatomy in the medical school curriculum, rotations can begin in the first available block of time after completion of the medical school course. Students are required to complete at least one rotation before the first of September of the second year, or 1 year from the date of entry into the program. Rotations should last a minimum of 8 weeks.

Students are required to find a thesis laboratory within 1 year after matriculation. However, on occasion despite reasonable efforts set forth by the student a match with a thesis mentor may not be found by the end of this period. In that case, the student will meet with the Program Director to carefully select the next rotation.

To start a rotation, the student must submit the Rotation Agreement form to the BME PHD office. This form is signed by the proposed mentor. Within one week of completing a rotation the student will prepare a one-page description of the work accomplished during the rotation and forward it to the Program Administrator. Each time the student starts a new rotation this form must be completed and submitted to the program office.
How to pick a mentor

Picking the lab in which you want to do a thesis is the most important decision you will make in graduate school. You will be selecting your home for the next 6 or so years. If the mentor that you select does not know how to train a scientist, it is unlikely that you will become a good scientist. Here are some general guidelines:

- Pick a mentor who is a good scientist, passionate about what they do. A good scientist is asking an interesting question, one that they describe well in the papers that they write. Their work demonstrates that they have been tackling this question over the course of many years by taking a consistent sequence of steps.
- Pick a mentor whose current students are advancing, or even overturning, the work of the previous students. If the question that is being asked is deep, then it is likely that the discoveries of one student are just the tip of the iceberg. The next student will discover more, and find something even more interesting. A consistent record of advancing and digging deeper is a good sign that the general question still has lots of room to explore, and the lab is equipped with the ingredients to do this productive exploration.
- Pick a mentor who has a record of good mentoring. Unless your advisor is a young faculty, they will have had previous students that they have mentored. How well did the earlier students do? Did they write an important paper? What are they doing now?

A good resource on the topic are the following articles:

Who can be the thesis mentor?

The School of Medicine has a policy that specifies that a graduate student must be overseen by (i.e., be the responsibility of) a faculty member who holds a position as Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor. Faculty who are instructors, or non-tenure track, cannot be designated as the primary advisor for a student. Non-tenure track faculty can be part of a thesis committee or a DBO exam, or act as a secondary advisor if their credentials are approved by the Program Director.

Course Requirements

Students will take at least 18 credit hours of course work in the life sciences. Courses in molecular, cellular and systems biology are required. The requirement may be met by taking a subset of the first year medical school basic sciences curriculum (described below). It may also be met by taking the alternative life sciences curricula, also as sketched below. In either case, courses in Quantitative Biology (listed below) may be used in part to meet this requirement.

Students must also take a minimum of 18 credit hours of elective course work in mathematics/applied mathematics, engineering and/or quantitative biology. These electives must be at the 400 level or higher, with at least 2 electives at the 600/700 level. Of these 2 electives, at least 1 must have substantial theory content in engineering, mathematics or computer science. Electives of general value to all research areas
are listed below. Students may choose from these and other electives to fulfill the general BME Ph.D. Program requirements. It is important that when a student considers taking a course outside of this list they consult with the BME PHD office as to whether it fulfills requirements for graduation. Seminar courses generally do not count toward graduation requirements.

For a course to apply toward graduation, a grade of B- or higher is required. If a grade lower than B- is received, then that course must be repeated. If it is not possible to repeat the course, then an alternate course may be taken but must be approved by the Program Director.

Faculty advisors may strongly advise that students choose specific electives and/or specific numbers of electives of particular importance to each of the research and training areas. In such cases, this additional course work is not a requirement of the BME PhD Program.

All PhD candidates in the School of Medicine are required to take a course in the responsible conduct of research.

**Popular courses**

Below is a plot showing courses that are popular with the current BME PHD students. The y-axis is the number of current students who have taken this course. The course listed as NSS is part of the first year medical school course (Nervous system and special senses).
Training in responsible conduct of research

1st year students (required component)

- **Introduction to Research Ethics 1.** In October of your 1st year, you are required to attend the Introduction to Research Ethics 1 course in the School of Medicine. This is a one day course led by Prof. Mark Hughes. This course consists of a sequence of lectures covering scientific integrity (what it means to be a scientist), mentorship (what to look for in a mentor), scientific misconduct (the Francis Collins case), academic integrity (what it means to be a student), and managing data (good research practices). The class ends with small group discussions. Attendance is registered by ID card swipes upon entering the lectures, and the School of Medicine maintains a list of attendees at these lectures and provides that information to the Program Director.

- **Introduction to Research Ethics 2.** In May of their 1st year, you are required to attend the Introduction to Research Ethics 2 course in the School of Medicine. This is a one day course led by Prof. Saraswati Sukumar. This course consists of a sequence of lectures on human subjects, intellectual property, conflict of interest, and animal research. The class ends with small group discussion. Attendance is registered by ID card swipes upon entering the lectures, and the School of Medicine maintains a list of attendees at these lectures and provides that information to the Program Director.

1st year students (optional component)

- BME course on Ethics of Biomedical Engineering Innovation. Prof. Feilim Mac Gabhann (BME faculty) offers a three-credit course "EN.580.415, Ethics of Biomedical Engineering Innovation". This course goes beyond Introduction to Research Ethics to study contemporary and emerging issues in Biomedical Engineering. The course brings in multiple experts in Bioethics and Bioengineering Design. Topics covered in this course include: human subject research, ethics of augmentation of the human body, ownership of nature, synthetic biology, stem cells, ethics of animal research, genetic testing, and personalized medicine.

5th year students (required component)

Students who are in their 5th year must get a refresher on this topic by re-taking Introduction to Research Ethics 1 and 2. This once every 4 year training in responsible conduct of research is mandatory for all graduate students and is required by the NIH and NSF.

First Year Basic Sciences Curriculum of the School of Medicine

Assignment of credit hours to courses at School of Medicine and elsewhere at JHU

Federal law has established guidelines for how a course can be assigned credit hours. These guidelines are also used by Johns Hopkins. In 34 CFR 600.2, it is stated that: One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Because the courses in the School of Medicine often do not carry semester credit hours, these guidelines were used to assign credit below. If a student decides to take a course that is not listed below, the same guidelines will be used to assign credit hours.
The School of Medicine 1st year basic science curriculum consists of courses that meet every day, 8AM to 1PM or 3PM. The dates below are for the 2013-2014 school year.

**Fall: Scientific Foundations of Medicine (SFM)**

SFM 1: Anatomy, 35 days (12 credits). August 18 to October 06, 2014.
SFM 2: Macromolecules, cell physiology, metabolism, and genetics, 30 days (12 credits). October 9 to November 21, 2014.
SFM 4: Pharmacology (1 credit), November 24 to December 8, 2014.

**Winter: Genes to Society (GTS)**

GTS 1: Immunology, 13 days (5 credits), January 5 to January 22, 2015.
GTS 2: Micro/Infectious disease, 20 days (8 credits), January 23 to February 19, 2015.
GTS 3: Dermatology, 3 days, (1 credit), February 20 to February 24, 2015.
GTS 4: Hematology/Oncology, 17 days (7 credits), March 2 to March 24, 2015.
GTS 5: Nervous systems and special senses, 33 days (13 credits)
GTS 6: Brain/Mind/Behavior, 12 days (5 credits), April 13 to April 29, 2015.

Physiology - Organ systems (recommended for cardiovascular focus) (7 credits) offered by Departments of Physiology and BME

**Alternate Life Sciences Tracks**

**Alternate Track 1**

Two of the following (each 4 credits):

580.421 Systems Bioengineering I (cardiovascular)
580.422 Systems Bioengineering II (neuroscience)
580.423 Systems Bioengineering III (systems biology)
and 1-2 courses from Quantitative Biology Electives

**Alternate Track 2**

440.811 Neuroscience Cognition I (5 credits)
440.812 Neuroscience Cognition II (7 credits)
and 1-2 courses from Quantitative Biology Electives

**Alternate Track 3**

Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology Core:

100.709 Macromolecular Structure and Analysis (1 credits)
100.710 Biochemical and Biophysical Principles (1.5 credits)
260.708 Genetics (1.5 credits)
260.709 Molecular Biology and Genomics (1.5 credits)
330.709 Organic Mechanisms in Biology (3 credits)
360.728 Pathways and Regulation (1 credit)
110.728 Cell Structure and Dynamics (1 credit)
800.707 Bioinformatics (1 credit)
and 1-2 courses from Quantitative Biology Electives

**Quantitative Biology Electives**

540.409 Modeling Dynamics and Control for Chemical and Biological Systems
580.460 Physiological Fluid Mechanics
520.610 Computational Functional Genomics
580.625 Ion Channels
580.630 Theoretical Neuroscience
580.635 Bioelectromagnetic Phenomena
520.636 Feedback Control in Biological Signaling Pathways
580.639 Models of Neuron
580.682 Computational Models of the Cardiac Myocyte
580.687 Foundations of Computational Biology I
580.688 Foundations of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics II
580.690 Systems Biology of Cell Regulation
580.691 Learning Theory

**Mathematics/Applied Mathematics Electives**

110.405 Analysis
580.691 Learning Theory
110.607 Complex Variables
550.426 Introduction to Stochastic Processes
550.430 Introduction to Statistics
550.437 Statistics Information and Vision
550.471 Combinatorial Analysis
550.491 Applied Analysis for Engineers and Scientists
550.620 Probability Theory I
550.621 Probability Theory II
550.626 Stochastic Processes II
550.630 Statistical Theory
550.631 Statistical Inference
550.632 Multivariate Statistical Inference
550.672 Graph Theory
550.692 Matrix Analysis and Linear Algebra
550.723 Markov Chains

**Engineering Courses with Substantial Theory Content**

520.447 Introduction to Information Theory and Coding
580.691 Learning Theory
520.601 Introduction to Linear Dynamical Systems
520.621 Nonlinear System Theory
Fellowships

There are number of fellowships that are available to graduate students. In their first and second year in the BME PhD, most graduate students are eligible to apply for an NSF fellowship (deadline is November annually), and a DOE Computational Science Fellowship (deadline is January annually). After completion of the Thesis Proposal, most students are eligible to apply for an NRSA fellowship from the NIH (deadlines are in April, June, and December annually). Before the final year of the thesis research, all BME PhD students are eligible to apply for a Siebel fellowship. There are other fellowships that are also available (American Heart Association, etc.).

If students win external fellowships while they are in their thesis research period, per School of Medicine policy they receive an additional $3000 bonus. This bonus is paid by the thesis mentor in lieu of the monthly stipend charges that are usually paid by the mentor (and are now covered by the fellowship). The Siebel fellowship is a one-time prize of $35,000 that is paid directly to the student and does not include the additional $3000 bonus.

Siebel Scholars Program

In May of each year, request for nominations for the Siebel Scholars is sent to the faculty mentors of all BME PHD students. This is a program by the Siebel Foundation to recognize graduate students who have demonstrated the highest levels of academic achievement and leadership. Johns Hopkins is one of 5 universities in the nation that have been selected for this program. The Siebel Scholarship is based solely upon academic achievement and excellence, and is not need-based financial aid. It is a $35,000 prize paid directly to the student, and is independent of the usual stipend that they receive.

The nominees must meet all of the following criteria at the time of selection: Nominee ranks within the top 10% of their Biomedical Engineering School class based on academic results. Nominee demonstrates excellence, in terms of leadership qualities, in the Bioengineering or Biomedical School community and in experience prior to graduate program. Nominee has a track record of distinguished research (published papers). Nominee is expected to complete the doctoral degree between November of the nomination year and October of the following year. Therefore, the application process starts 6-12 months before expected completion of thesis research.
Teaching

Students are required to serve as a teaching assistant (TA) in two BME courses, or teach a course of their own during the intersession in lieu of one of the TA requirements. One of the courses is generally a ‘core BME’ course, such as Systems Bioengineering (SBE). Simultaneously taking a course for credit and TA-ing that course is not allowed.

The students are encouraged to teach a course during the University Intersession or during the summer in lieu of one of the two TA course requirements. If the student elects to teach a course in lieu of TA-ing, the course syllabus must be submitted to the Program Director at least one month before the start of the Intersession. The student may be asked to present a sample lecture. The course must be approved by the Program Director if it is to be used in lieu of TA-ing. Depending on the enrollment of the intersession class, the teaching student is paid by the Whiting School of Engineering approximately $1000 for a 1 credit intersession course, and $1500 for a 2 credit intersession course. This is in addition to the usual stipend that the student receives.

Internships

The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine will facilitate internships for Ph.D. students in fields outside academic research, such as Research and Development in biotech companies; technology transfer; science administration; science policy; science education; and scientific writing. Students may express interest in internship opportunities by completing the “Preliminary Interest in Student Internship” Form (enclosed in this document). This form should be submitted to the JHU internship program manager (e.g. BME EDGE). If there is not a JHU program facilitating the particular internship, then this form should be submitted to the BME PHD Program Director. Students are encouraged to discuss their career goals with their thesis mentor and graduate program director, and ask them to complete the relevant sections of the form.

Students who express interest through the above form may submit an application for internship, either through a Johns Hopkins internship program, or directly to a host organization. Students who are invited for an internship will be asked to submit a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the mentor, the director of the BME PHD Program, and the Associate Dean of Graduate Biomedical Education, ensuring that all parties are in agreement. This document should specify which entity will be responsible for the student stipend and health insurance for the duration of the internship.

A student who signs up for a full-time internship (2-6 months) may be placed on Leave of Absence (LOA) for the duration of the internship or enroll in an Internship Practicum Course for credit. International students are not eligible for LOA and must instead enroll in the course.

Progress Report

The primary mechanism with which the Program Director can follow your progress in the program is via the online Progress Report form. As you enroll in courses, embark on laboratory rotations, take your Doctoral Board Exam, hold a thesis committee, write a manuscript, give a talk, etc., you are required to update this form. The form is an accurate record of all your academic activities during your PHD years. The data in this form is kept confidential, and is available to only you, the Program Director, and the Program Administrator. The data are used to monitor your progress in the program.
**Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination**

**Purpose**
The Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination for candidates for the Ph.D. degree has three major objectives:

1. To assess a candidate’s proficiency in the discipline.
2. To give a student the benefit of a critical examination of his or her work by scholars outside the department or program.
3. To provide a means for extra-departmental monitoring of the academic quality of departments and programs sponsoring candidates.

**Types of Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examinations**
There are two types of Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examinations: preliminary exams and final exams. Students in the BME PHD program will use the preliminary examination to fulfill their Doctor of Philosophy Board requirement. Preliminary exams are given to students at an early stage in the progress toward the Ph.D. (typically at the end of the 2nd year).

**Preliminary Examination**
The purpose of a preliminary examination for students in the BME PHD program is to test the depth and breadth of the student’s knowledge and reasoning abilities. The scope of such an examination cannot and should not be sharply defined. The Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination Committee can determine the limits of the exam by reviewing the candidate’s formal coursework along with the requirements of the candidate’s school, group, department, or program requirements (e.g., whether specific minor, as well as major, subjects are to be included). The preliminary exam generally covers course work that the student has completed, and is not an examination that covers proposed research.

**Final Examination**
Final Examinations are not administered to students in the BME PHD program. In other JHU PHD programs, a final examination concentrates on the student’s doctoral dissertation and its implications.

**When to take the examination**
It is expected that the BME PHD students take the exam near the end of their 2nd year, at a time when most course work has been completed. Students who come into the program after completing an MS degree typically complete the examination at end of their 1st year.

**Scheduling the Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination (DBO)**
The process begins by the graduate student proposing to the Program Director a list of Oral Examination Committee Members. In many cases, the proposed members list is modified. Therefore, it is important that before the members are contacted, the student first get the proposed committee approved by the Program Director. Upon approval of the list, the student contacts the members and schedules an examination date and time.

Once the date is scheduled, the date must be submitted to the Program Administrator at least one month prior to the scheduled exam date. This is a firm requirement set by the Graduate Board. If the date is not submitted one month in advance, the Graduate Board will not approve the exam.
Once the date has been submitted to the Program Administrator, the Program Administrator submits the form entitled *Oral Examination for the Ph.D. Degree for School of Medicine Programs* to the School of Medicine Registrar’s Office. Exams may be conducted at any time throughout the year.

**Oral Examination Committee Eligibility**
To be eligible to serve on a Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination Committee, a faculty member must hold:

- A faculty appointment as a Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor in a University department/program. Such appointments may be regular or visiting, full-time or part-time.

Exceptions. The Associate Dean for Graduate Students must approve anyone not meeting these criteria. To be considered for approval, the chair of the program petitioning for authorization of an examiner outside of the University must submit:
  - The full curriculum vita of the outside examiner, including recent peer-reviewed publications and evidence of scholarly work
  - A one-page summary of the research of the Ph.D. student
  - A one-page letter explaining how the expertise of the examiner meshes with the student's research and why the department must go outside of the University to have this expertise represented on the committee.

The above request and documentation should be submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Students for approval a minimum of four weeks before the scheduled Doctoral Board Oral Examination. Written approval from the Associate Dean for Graduate Students and all documentation should then be submitted to the Registrar’s Office, along with the exam committee form for final approval.

At the discretion of the program, faculty members who leave the University may continue to mentor their former students for a period of five years with the approval of the chair of the department/program and serve on the oral exam committee.

**Composition of the Oral Examination Committee**
The composition of the Oral Exam Committee should be a balance of faculty with expertise in the mathematical and biological sciences. This balance should be such that the student is examined in both mathematical and biological sciences.

Members of the DBO examination committee are approved by the Associate Dean/Registrar. The chair of the committee is selected by the Associate Dean/Registrar, based on rank and seniority at rank. Only JHU full-time tenure track faculty, holding the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, or Emeritus Professor, from outside the candidate’s department are eligible to serve as Chair of the DBO committee. However, in addition to tenure track faculty, faculty who hold the rank of Assistant Research Professor, or Associate Research Professor, can serve as regular members of the committee.

Although consultation between the student and his or her faculty advisor regarding possible exam committee members is appropriate, final selection of committee members is the responsibility of the Program Director.

**Inside and Outside Examiners**
A minimum of 2 committee members must be from inside the BME department, and a minimum of 2 committee members must be from outside the BME department. The fifth committee member may be inside or outside BME. The primary or secondary departmental appointment of a faculty member will
generally determine whether he or she is considered inside or outside the department, except that advisors are considered inside examiners even if their appointment is outside of the BME department. An alternate is selected for the inside member, and a second alternate is selected for the outside member. These alternates will be called upon in case one of the regular members of the committee is not able to serve at the day of the examination.

**Notification of Committee Members**

After the Associate Dean/Registrar approves the examination request, the original request form will be sent to the program administrator, who will forward the form and examination instructions to the Committee Chair. The Associate Dean/Registrar will maintain one copy. After this point, no substitution of examiners other than those named as alternates can be made without the approval of the Associate Dean/Registrar. The chair or program administrator of the program sponsoring the candidate is responsible for notifying the student and examiners of the time and place of the examination.

**Length of the Exam**

The examination should be long enough for the committee to learn as much as it needs to judge the student’s qualifications as a Ph.D. candidate. Ordinarily, examinations should be under two hours, but committees are free to set their own time limits.

**Oral Examination Procedures**

The chair of the examination committee will begin the meeting by introducing the committee members. At this time the candidate will be asked to leave the examination room. The faculty advisor will make a brief introduction of the candidate. The committee members may review the candidate’s formal course record at this time. At this time the candidate re-enters the examination room and the exam commences. The candidate is not expected to provide a presentation of their research. Typically each committee member will conduct a 15 minute question session.

At the conclusion of the examination, after a vote has been taken, the chair of the examination committee should record the results of the examination and have each committee member sign the form. The chair should also sign the form and fill in the date. The completed form must be given to the candidate’s program administrator directly following the examination. In no case should the form be given directly to the student. The program administrator is responsible for sending the original form to the Registrar’s Office within one week of the exam date.

- **If the candidate receives an unconditional pass** (e.g., a majority of favorable votes), the examination committee is discharged.
- **If the candidate receives a conditional pass**, the exact terms of the condition are to be reported on the examination form – i.e., what course(s), if any, need be taken; in what time frame the conditions(s) should be met; and any other pertinent information that will point out clearly to both the student and faculty how to satisfy the condition(s). As soon as all conditions have been met, the chair of the examination committee must write a letter to the Associate Dean of the Registrar of the School of Medicine informing them that the condition has been removed. A copy of this letter must also be sent to the Program Director and the Program Administrator. The committee is then discharged.
- **If the candidate fails**, the examination committee, through the chair, should recommend a course of further action:
  - No further examination.
o Re-examine the candidate by the same committee at a later date. The candidate must receive a Pass or Conditional Pass on the second attempt. A second failure will lead to dismissal.

o Re-examine the candidate by a different committee at a later date. Reasons should be given for the change in the committee membership. The newly formed committee must have representation from the previous committee. The candidate must receive a Pass or Conditional Pass on the second attempt. A second failure will lead to dismissal.

The committee may recommend whatever action in its judgment seems desirable, taking into consideration the background of the student, previous performance, potential, and reaction to oral questioning. The Doctor of Philosophy Board will be guided by these recommendations, but will assume responsibility for whatever action is taken.

Duties of the Chair of the Doctor of Philosophy Board Oral Examination Committee

The duties of the chair of the examination committee are to:

- Preside at the examination.
- Instruct the committee as to the scope, character, and conduct of the examination before questioning begins.
- Allot time to inside and outside examiners.
- Report the results of the examination to the program administrator immediately after the examination, using the original examination form. The program administrator must send the signed original to the Registrar’s office within one week of the exam date.
- In the case of a conditional pass or failure, to monitor the further action recommended.

Reports and Records of Oral Examinations

Immediately after the examination, the chair of the examination committee should tell the candidate in person whether he or she passed or failed the examination, or received a conditional pass. It is crucial that the chair of the examination committee (and not the student) send the results of the examination (the signed form) to the program administrator immediately after the examination. The program administrator will then send the results to the Registrar’s office.

The advisor/departmental representative serving on the examination committee should report the results of the student’s examination to the department/program chair.

Should a student fail or receive a conditional pass, the Associate Dean/Registrar will formally notify the program director in writing.

The Registrar’s Office enters results of each examination into the student’s official record.

Thesis Advisory Committee

The Thesis Advisory Committee is intended to assist the student and provide critical review of progress, methods, etc. The Committee meets periodically to assess the student's progress, evaluate the research plan for the coming period, and provide constructive criticism for the student and his or her supervisor. These meetings also provide an opportunity for the committee to advise students on their career development, and to assess progress of the student by faculty who are independent of the thesis supervisor.
The Committee consists of the thesis supervisor and at least two other faculty members chosen jointly by the student and supervisor. At least one member must have a primary appointment in the BME Department. The members should be selected for their expertise and willingness to advise the student and their thesis supervisor throughout the duration of the thesis research. The most senior member of the committee (other than the mentor) serves as the “chair”, and should fill out the required information on the thesis committee report form after discussion with the committee. If one or more members of the committee are not able to physically attend a meeting, they may participate in the meeting using teleconferencing.

The Thesis Advisory Committee’s first milestone is to meet and approve the student’s thesis proposal. After this step has been completed, the committee then meets annually unless there is some indication that more frequent meetings would be useful. Thesis committee meetings should be scheduled for Friday afternoons (if possible), and should begin with a student presentation of scientific progress. This portion of the meeting is open to the Hopkins community. The presentation is then followed by closed-door deliberations. The Program Administrator must be informed of the date and time of the Thesis Advisory Committee meeting, along with a title of the presentation, so that the information can be shared with the Hopkins community. For post-DBO students, advisory meetings must be completed at least once per year (this clock starts from time of passing of DBO) to remain in good standing.

At least one week before each meeting of the Thesis Advisory Committee the student must provide each member with a written statement, 2-3 pages in length, of his or her progress during the preceding year and plans for the following year. The thesis proposal must be provided to each committee member at least 2 weeks in advance of that meeting. Each member of the committee should also receive a copy of the previous committee report. Without timely delivery of these documents, the meeting cannot proceed in a productive manner. At the beginning of the closed-door segment of the meeting, the committee may wish to ask the student to step out of the room so it can consider its response to the thesis proposal or student report and the most appropriate way to proceed in its discussion with the student.

After each meeting of the Thesis Advisory Committee, including the thesis proposal meeting, the chair of the Thesis Advisory Committee submits a report to Program Administrator (this form is enclosed at the end of this document). The report should summarize the student’s progress and the results of the committee meeting. Copies of that letter are distributed to the members of the Advisory Committee and to the student. This report is placed in the student’s file.

**Meeting #1:** Evaluate plan for development of thesis proposal. A list of the faculty who have agreed to be on the Thesis Advisory Committee, together with the scheduled date and time of the first meeting must be submitted to the Program Administrator within 6 months of passing the DBO exam. The goal of this first meeting is to discuss the scope of the thesis in an outline form, review background literature, review preliminary experimental results, and lay plans for formulating the thesis proposal.

**Meeting #2:** Evaluate and approve the thesis proposal. This meeting should take place within 12 months of passing the DBO exam.

**Meeting #3:** Evaluate progress during previous year. This meeting should take place within 12 months of meeting #2.

**Year 6+:** After completion of 6 years, the Thesis Advisory Committee should meet twice per year to more closely be involved in the progress of the students and help address issues that may be affecting the student’s ability to complete their thesis.
Note that the Thesis Proposal (next section) can be held at the 1st or 2nd Thesis Committee Meeting; the thesis proposal meeting should be held within 12 months post DBO, and must be completed by the end of the Student’s fourth year, though many students benefit from an earlier thesis proposal, for two reasons: (1) feedback for submission of NRSA and other fellowship applications; (2) earlier focusing of research.

Committee Membership

The thesis committee may be as small as 3 faculty members, including the thesis advisor. At least one member must have a primary appointment in the BME Department. A minimum of 3 faculty members are required to approve the thesis proposal, sign the thesis committee meeting reports, and be present during the thesis committee meetings (either physically or via tele-conferencing). A minimum of 3 faculty members are required to approve the dissertation.

Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal format is the same as an NIH Pre-doctoral Fellowship (NRSA) application. This proposal should be well-formulated and presented in sufficient detail that it can be evaluated for both its research training potential and scientific merit. It is important that it be developed in collaboration with the thesis advisor, but it is to be written by the applicant.

Include sufficient information to permit an effective review without reviewers having to refer to the literature or any previous application. Brevity and clarity in the presentation will be considered indicative of an applicant’s approach and ability to conduct a superior project. Subsections (3) and (4) of this item are not to exceed 6 single-spaced pages in total, including all tables and figures. The document has minimum margins of 0.5 inches and a minimum font size of 11. Follow the format below:

1. Title Page (one page). Title, Author, Names of Committee Members, plus: two-sentence summary of Public Health Significance; and two-sentence summary of Proposed Research.
2. Specific Aims (one page). State the specific purposes of the research proposal and the hypotheses to be tested.
3. Background and Significance. Sketch briefly the background to the proposal. State concisely the importance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to broad, long-term objectives. Use this section to provide an account of any preliminary studies that might demonstrate the utility of the proposed project as a training experience.
4. Research Design and Methods. Provide an outline of: Research design and the procedures to be used to accomplish the specific aims; Tentative sequence for the investigation; Statistical procedures by which the data will be analyzed. Potential experimental difficulties should be discussed together with alternative approaches that could achieve the desired aims.
5. Literature cited.
6. NIH-style biosketch.
7. Path to graduation (one page). Estimate of time remaining to graduation, annotated with work to be done including: milestones; classes, training or travel to be undertaken; anticipated manuscript and grant/fellowship submission. This one-page overview should be updated and distributed at subsequent thesis committee meetings.

The proposal must be distributed to members of the Thesis Advisory Committee at least two weeks before the Thesis Proposal meeting. The members of the Thesis Advisory Committee will provide written feedback to the student before the Thesis Proposal. The student then presents the proposal orally to the committee. Three of the Thesis Advisory Committee members must be in attendance (or via tele-
conferencing). The oral presentation by the student is 25 minutes, followed by a brief period of questions from the public, followed by closed-door committee questions and discussion. The committee discusses the proposal with the student and can accept or reject it.

**Dissertation Requirements and Graduation**

Thesis research must be a significant contribution to knowledge and be worthy of publication in its present form. Acceptance the thesis research is in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

There are a series of requirements for graduation that must be performed in a particular sequence as described below. The university confers degrees twice per year, once in May and once in December. However, the Commencement ceremony is only held in May. In order to graduate in May of a given year, there are certain deadlines and intervals for these steps. It should be understood that if the graduation deadline is not met for a given calendar year that this does not obligate the student to remain in the program. Once the requirements for graduation have been met, the Registrar's office can issue a letter attesting to this fact which will then be sufficient to allow students to begin postdoctoral fellowships, employment, residencies, etc. MD/PhD students returning to the clinic must schedule a research defense at least 3 months prior to returning to the clinic, and must complete all degree requirements including submission of the approved dissertation to the Graduate Board and the Thesis Seminar prior to returning to the clinic.

**The Research Defense**

The purpose of this meeting is twofold. First, the Thesis Advisory Committee will seek to determine whether the student has conducted research that is appropriate to provide the basis for a dissertation. Second, the Thesis Advisory Committee will test the student on their knowledge of the literature and broader issues related to their thesis topic. In addition to presenting their data, students should be prepared to discuss the background and history of the problem addressed in their thesis work, details of the techniques used, implications and limitations of their findings and future research directions. If all members of the Committee are satisfied on all of these points, then permission will be given to begin writing the Dissertation. This fact is indicated in the Record of Annual Thesis Committee Meeting form. If they are not, then specific instructions will be given on the problems to be addressed in a subsequent Research Defense meeting. These may involve additional experiments, reanalysis of data, and study of the literature.

The timing of this meeting is critical. For all students, the Research Defense meeting must be scheduled a minimum of one month before submission of the written Dissertation. For graduation in May of the same calendar year this will be January 31. There will be no exceptions made to this deadline.

**The Dissertation Defense**

The Dissertation should be prepared in consultation with the thesis advisor. It should begin with a general Introduction, which summarizes the history of the general area and the problem. A General Methods section should be used to describe those methods that are common to the various experiments. Following the chapters which present and discuss the various experimental results, there should be a general Discussion which addressed the implications and limitations of these findings, sets them within the context of related work in the literature and points to some future directions.
The Dissertation must be submitted to the Thesis Advisory Committee in complete form with all figures. It should represent what the student believes to be a complete and final document. The dissertation must be submitted at least two weeks before The Dissertation Defense and three weeks before the Submission of the Approved Dissertation and Related Forms (see below). For graduation in May of the same calendar year this will be March 22nd. There will be no exceptions made to this deadline.

The purpose of the Dissertation Defense is two folds: 1) The Thesis Advisory Committee will determine whether the written dissertation is appropriate for submission to the Graduate Board. This meeting will focus upon the content, style, clarity and completeness of the written document. If the Dissertation is not approved at this meeting, specific instructions will be given on the point that must be addressed to render it acceptable. The Dissertation must be approved by all members of the Thesis Advisory Committee. While all members of the committee must sign a document approving the dissertation, two (the Thesis Advisor and one other of the student's choice) are designated as Readers to provide particularly detailed feedback. 2) The student will present the research results to the Hopkins community, friends, and family. The Defense is open to the public, and is a celebration of completion of the PHD years.

The Dissertation Defense meeting must be scheduled at least one week before the Submission of the Approved Dissertation and Related Forms. For graduation in May of the same calendar year the latest date for the submission of Approved Dissertation and Related Forms is March 22nd.

In addition, there is a maximum period of 6 months between the successful Research Defense and the approval of the thesis by a successful Dissertation Defense. If the Dissertation has not been approved by the Thesis Committee within this time frame then the student will be placed on leave of absence without pay. A waiver to this deadline requires the approval of both the student’s thesis advisor and the chair of the Thesis Committee.

Submission of the Approved Dissertation and Related Forms

The following documents must be delivered to Program Administrator by March 22nd for graduation in May of the same calendar year.

- One complete copy of your thesis with your CV appended.
- Letters from both of your readers approving the Dissertation in its present form (can be one letter from your advisor including the signature of your second reader)
- The Graduate Student Clearance Form
- Completion of the degree requirements worksheet (enclosed)

Summary of important dates for graduation in May:

- February 22 - Research Defense meeting. (Must occur at least 1 month prior to the date that you submit your approved thesis to the Graduate Board).
- March 1 - Submission of written dissertation to your advisory committee (this must occur at least 2 weeks prior to your dissertation defense and at least 3 weeks prior to the date that you submit your approved thesis to the Graduate Board).
- March 22 - Submission of approved Dissertation and related forms to the Graduate Board.
Graduate Student Hours/Time Off/Vacation/Sick Leave Policy

Hours of work: Students are expected to be in the lab, doing thesis research at a minimum, 40 hours per week, during normal business hours. The standard workday is 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. In order to meet the needs of both the thesis supervisor and student, arrangement of an alternative work schedule is left to the discretion of the thesis supervisor (i.e. experiments during non-business hours, studying for GBO, preparing for meeting).

Vacations and holidays. In accordance with the School of Medicine Policy, Graduate students receive 2 weeks of vacation during the first year beyond the official University holidays and breaks. In the 2nd and subsequent years, students receive 3 weeks of vacation. Additional time off may be granted by the thesis advisor and program director. Vacation is not accrued and may not be carried over to the next year and will not be paid to students that graduate or leave the program.

Sick leave and other leave. Graduate students may take up to 15 calendar days of sick leave per year which can be applied to pregnancy/childbirth. Under exceptional circumstances, this period may be extended by the training program director and the advisor. Sick leave is not accrued. For medical leave of absence, health insurance will be paid for by the advisor for up to one year if requested by the student. For an extended sick leave the student must submit a written request from his/her doctor to the thesis advisor and program director detailing the illness, and expected date of recovery. Sick leave may be used for medical conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Parental leave. Graduate students may receive paid parental leave for up to 30 calendar days per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave. The use of parental leave requires approval by the thesis advisor and the program director.

Terminal leave. A period of terminal leave is not permitted, and payment may not be made from grant funds for leave not taken.

Unpaid leave. Graduate students requiring extended periods of time away from their research training, that is, more than 15 calendar days of sick leave or more than 30 calendar days of parental leave, must seek approval for an unpaid leave of absence. Approval for a leave of absence must be requested in advance from the Thesis Advisor and Program Director. If the unpaid leave is not medical related, health insurance will still remain in effect, but will be paid by the student.

Outside counseling. If you are having personnel troubles or are having vocational concerns we encourage you to seek help through the Johns Hopkins counseling center www.jhu.edu/counselingcenter.

Electronic Dissertations

Publication of a dissertation is a requirement for the Ph.D. degree. Traditionally, publication has been accomplished by depositing a copy of the dissertation in the university library, and then sending a copy for microfilming by ProQuest, an independent publisher. This is the model still used at many universities across the country. The digital revolution is changing traditional models of scholarly communication. Internet technology allows easy and widespread distribution of information. It permits immediate dissemination of a scholar's work, but it also increases the risk of unwanted and unauthorized disclosure. This document outlines a set of principles to underlie the electronic publication of Ph.D. dissertations at Johns Hopkins. The principles balance the intellectual property rights of students against the mission of the University – to produce knowledge for the world. They fit the decentralized culture of Johns Hopkins.
Starting September 1, 2013, students will be required to deposit an electronic copy of their dissertation in the University repository. Instead of bringing paper copies of the thesis or dissertation to the library, you will submit a PDF via a special JHU electronic thesis or dissertation (ETD) web portal. You will login to the portal using your JHED ID, enter some contact information about yourself, enter some information about the dissertation (title, keywords, abstract, etc.), and upload the PDF. The library will do some brief format checking and then approve the submission or email you about necessary changes. The ETD will not be visible to the public at this point.

To submit your dissertation, go to here and sign in with your JHED credentials. You will be asked for some basic information about yourself and the department (email, phone, address, defense date, your committee members), as well as about your dissertation (title, abstract, and keywords). There is a size limit to the dissertation: no individual files can be larger than 512 MB and the total size of all files cannot be larger than 4 GB.

At the end of each semester, the library will make the ETD available to researchers around the world via a digital repository. Your research can make an immediate impact in your field. In rare cases, you may need to delay public access to your dissertation because of patent concerns or a pending publication derived from your dissertation. In such circumstances, you will be allowed to embargo your dissertation for a period of up to four years. In most cases the embargo will be short, if at all. Extensions beyond four years may only be granted by your school’s graduate academic board.

In addition to distributing the ETD through the JHU repository, you have the option to make your ETD available through the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database. The web site library.jhu.edu had guides available on ETD.

- Copyright. It is the considered legal opinion of the General Counsel’s Office that faculty and students must obey copyright law, and in particular, that dissertations should respect copyright. This implies that students must seek permission to include in their dissertations intellectual property that belongs to others. The dissertation is a scholarly work, so scholarly standards of attribution and credit should apply. The dissertation is a stand-alone document that represents the culmination of a student’s Ph.D. studies. Every effort must be made to secure permissions for copyrighted material. If that is not possible, an exception may be claimed under the “fair use doctrine.” The Library and the General Counsel will develop a guide to help students and advisors understand what constitutes fair use, and what does not. An electronic copy of a student’s dissertation will be made available to Library patrons and to the Johns Hopkins community for scholarly purposes. This will be the definitive version of the dissertation. A second copy will be made freely available over the internet through the Library’s electronic repository. The Library will arrange for a click-box to indicate that the dissertation is to be used for scholarly purposes only. In general, the two versions of the dissertation will be identical. In the rare case that copyright permissions cannot be secured, or that the use of copyrighted material is so extensive that fair use cannot be claimed, the public version may appear without the copyrighted material, or with the material appropriately altered. When that occurs, the public version must indicate where the changes were made. Students are encouraged to copyright their dissertation for their own protection.

- Dissemination. With rare exceptions, the electronic dissertations must be available without restriction through the University repository. However, there are occasionally legitimate reasons to withhold dissemination for a finite period of time. These include patent and other intellectual property concerns, as well as issues pertaining to later publication of a book derived from the dissertation. For these reasons, a student should be allowed to embargo his or her dissertation for
a fixed period of time: either zero, one, two, three or four years. The default is to have no embargo. The Board expects that in most cases the embargo period will be short, if indeed there is an embargo. At the end of four years, the student could petition his or her school’s appropriate graduate academic board to extend the embargo. The Ph.D. Board believes that a high bar should be set for such extensions. The Board requests that each school prepare a report describing the extensions it has granted at the conclusion of each academic year. An embargo should never be available to a student whose dissertation contains plagiarized material.

- ProQuest. ProQuest offers the student an opportunity to publish his or her dissertation via its services. ProQuest then pays the student royalties for the work. ProQuest also maintains a database of all dissertations produced nationwide. The database is a valuable tool for scholars in certain disciplines. The ProQuest publication agreement must be read carefully. For example, ProQuest reserves rights to repackaging and resell dissertations under their control, which some students find objectionable. Moreover, in the library community, there is increasing resistance to a business model in which universities give intellectual property to organizations like ProQuest, and then have to buy it back each year through subscriptions. For all these reasons, going forward, ProQuest participation will be optional for JHU students. For some students, ProQuest adds value, so those students should be free to participate. But for other students, ProQuest represents an obstacle that should be removed. The ProQuest database, though, offers value to the academic community because it contains a record of all U.S. dissertations. Therefore the Ph.D. Board requests that the Library continue to send all dissertation metadata (author, title, abstract) to ProQuest for inclusion in their database.

**Terminal Masters Degree**

Because of changes of intention, of external circumstances, or failure to meet departmental requirements for progress toward dissertation, a student who had commenced study with the intention of pursuing a PhD in Biomedical Engineering may wish to leave the program. If the student has satisfactorily completed the course requirements of the program, and can write a thesis that has scientific novelty and significance (as certified by the student’s mentor), then the BME PhD program can recommend that the student be awarded a terminal MA degree.

The following are the requirements for a Terminal Masters degree from Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine:

- Student must meet the two consecutive semester residence requirement required for full-time status.
- Student must successfully complete the required courses of the BME PhD program, receiving a passing grade (B- or better).
- Student must pass the Doctoral Board Oral Exam, or provide a written thesis. This document can take the form of a published paper, manuscript or topical review. This document must be reviewed by the student’s mentor and a second reader (a faculty member in the Program) and submitted to the MA/PhD Committee with a letter of nomination from the advisor, co-signed by the second reader.

Once the decision to obtain a Terminal Master’s degree is made, students will have three months to complete the requirements and submit the thesis to the MA/PhD Committee, at which time they will cease enrollment and depart the university. If it is not possible to complete the requirements in three months, the student may elect to take a leave of absence.
Dismissal Procedures from the BME PHD program

Students who are in the pre-DBO phase
The DBO examination is expected to be taken by the end of the second year of matriculation, and in no case later than 30 months after matriculation. During the pre-DBO period the graduate student is expected to make significant progress toward completion of the course requirements and selection of a thesis laboratory. Significant progress in completion of courses is defined as completion of at least 70% of the total course credit requirements for graduation with a mark of B- or higher by the end of the second year. If the graduate student does not meet this requirement, he/she will be placed on probation. The BME PHD Program Director will state the reason for this probation in a letter to the student, indicating the courses requirements that the student must meet in the probationary period. The Program Director will evaluate the progress of the student at the end of the probationary period and will do one of three things: (a) remove the student from probation, (b) extend the probationary period, or (c) dismiss the student from the academic program. The student may appeal this decision in writing within five business days to the Department Director. The Department will continue funding the student during the appeal process, provided that the student continues with his/her duties.

Dismissal without Probation
A student may be dismissed without a formal probation period under two circumstances: (1) if he/she fails a DBO examination and the DBO committee determines that the student will not be allowed to re-take the exam; (2) if he/she fails a DBO examination, the DBO committee determines that the student will be allowed to re-take the exam but upon re-examination fails again; or (3) if he/she is expelled pursuant to allegations of misconduct.

Students who are in the post-DBO phase
The Thesis Committee and the student should hold meetings at a frequency of at least once a year. During this time the student presents his/her research results, and plans for conclusion of PhD. If the Thesis Committee determines that the graduate student has failed to meet minimum academic or research requirements, or that the research progress is inadequate, he/she may be placed on probation. This requires a formal letter to the student and the BME PHD Program Director providing an outline of the student’s academic or research shortcomings, indicate the corrective measures necessary to remain in the program, and state the length of the student’s probationary period.

Length of the Probation
If the probation is related to research progress and cannot be resolved with coursework, the probation period must span at least 8 work weeks before a final decision can be made. The Thesis Committee is at liberty to provide a longer probationary period.

Decision Process
The Thesis Committee must meet with the student at the end of the probationary period and inform the student and the BME PHD Program Director whether the student has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter. The recommendations of the Thesis Committee to the Program Director are as follows: (a) remove the student from probation, (b) extend the probationary period, or (c) dismiss the student from the academic program.

Dismissal Appeal Procedures
A student may appeal the dismissal within five business days to the Program Director with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. The program must render a decision on the appeal within five business days. The student may then appeal that decision within five business days to the BME
Department Director with a letter stating why he/she feels this decision is unmerited. The Department will continue funding the graduate assistant during the appeal process, provided that the student continues with his/her duties.

**Rights and responsibilities of PHD students**

The following statements are university policy regarding Ph.D. students.

Ph.D. education is fundamental to the University’s teaching and research mission. For an intellectual community of scholars to flourish, it is important to acknowledge the principles that underlie the compact between Ph.D. students, the faculty, and other members of the University community. It is in this spirit that the Doctor of Philosophy Board, in collaboration with faculty and students from across the University, has articulated a statement of rights and responsibilities for doctoral students at Johns Hopkins. The principles described in this document are to be realized in policies established by the various Schools of the University; the Schools will also develop mechanisms to monitor and enforce such policies.

**RIGHTS**

1. Ph.D. students have the right to education, supervision and training. This includes access to the classroom, laboratory and teaching opportunities necessary for completion of degree requirements, appropriate and regular faculty supervision consistent with the norms of the discipline, as well as appropriate research and/or clinical experiences.
2. Ph.D. students have the right to full and regular access to information about the requirements for the degree. This includes information regarding program requirements, assignment/selection/change of advisor, expected time to completion, graduation rates, and conditions of financial support.
3. Ph.D. students have the right to conditions of learning, teaching and research that are appropriate and reasonable for their discipline. This includes the right to information and ongoing consultation regarding their expected effort and specific duties, as well as clearly stated criteria for participation in collaborative work and/or research.
4. Ph.D. students have the right to be treated in a respectful and professional manner by all members of the University community. This includes freedom from discrimination and harassment as well as assurance of reasonable confidentiality in their communications, as governed by university policy.
5. Ph.D. students have the right to receive, on a regular basis, written evaluation of their progress and to be informed of the criteria upon which the evaluation is based. Students should also be provided with opportunities to discuss such evaluations with their advisor. Each program should make available their policies concerning academic probation, funding withdrawal, and dismissal; reasonable warning should be provided in advance of dismissal based on failure to make satisfactory academic progress.
6. Ph.D. students have the right to appropriate recognition for their contributions to research and scholarship. This will require discussion between the student, advisor and other relevant parties regarding expectations for student contributions and the nature of the recognition.
7. Ph.D. students have the right to academic freedom. This includes the right to express, without reprisal, independent opinions about scholarly issues (such as opinions regarding theoretical and methodological debates in their disciplines), opinions regarding matters of institutional policy, concerns about suspected research misconduct and personal opinions on public matters.
8. Ph.D. students have the right to have their views represented in the development of policies that govern the Ph.D. Student ideas and perspectives should be solicited and considered if substantive changes in the structure of a Ph.D. program are anticipated.

9. Ph.D. students have the right to clearly defined policies regarding benefits and nonacademic issues pertinent to their student status. These policies should cover (but not be limited to) such things as the provision of health care, recognition of family responsibilities, leave, vacation and other absences. These policies should acknowledge that students can, without reprisal, form clubs, associations or organizations around common interests, as long as these are consistent with general non-discrimination policies of the University.

10. Ph.D. students have the right to accessible procedures for redress of their grievances. Each School within the University must provide mechanisms to ensure that grievance procedures are fair and without reprisal. These procedures should include Ph.D. student representation, as appropriate.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to inform themselves of the requirements of their programs.

2. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to dedicate appropriate effort and time to meeting the requirements of their programs.

3. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to uphold the ethical responsibilities of their profession and discipline. This includes honesty in academic coursework and scholarship, integrity in the use of grant and fellowship funds, and the upholding of ethical norms in the conduct and reporting of research methods and results.

4. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to treat all members of the University community in a respectful and professional manner.

5. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to contribute to the intellectual life of the University and to the advancement of education and scholarship.

6. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to understand and fulfill their role in developing and maintaining a professional relationship with their faculty advisor(s). This includes the responsibility for communicating regularly with advisors, maintaining a mutually agreed upon schedule of meetings, and informing advisors of such things as: the current status of their degree work; any expected deviations from the agreed upon program of studies; and any unanticipated absences.

7. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to recognize the contributions to their research and scholarly publications made by their advisors and other colleagues. This will require communication and consultation with these individuals about the nature of the recognition.

8. Ph.D. students have the responsibility to fulfill their teaching, research and/or clinical commitments and duties in a responsible manner. This includes the responsibility to inform themselves of the requirements of these positions, to maintain the established ethical standards of interaction with students, faculty, patients and/or research participants, and to respect the privacy of information shared with them.

9. Ph.D. students have the responsibility for the appropriate use of university resources and equipment.

10. Ph.D. Students have the responsibility to abide by the established rules and policies of their program, school and the University.
Laboratory Rotation Agreement

We require that our PhD students identify a mentor by the end of their first year in the Program, with the understanding that the mentor will support the student fully beyond the first year until the student has successfully defended his/her dissertation. The student’s rotation is an exploratory time to determine whether or not there is an intellectual fit between the student and the mentor. If there is mutual agreement between the student and the mentor that there is a good fit, we will need a confirmation from the mentor that there is adequate funding in the lab to meet what is typically five years of support for the student. For your information, the stipend is approximately $30K per year, and the health and dental insurance premiums total around $4K. In addition each mentor provides annual support for the overhead of the Program. Overhead costs include salaries and benefits for 1.5 staff members, stipends for students doing rotations in their first year, recruitment costs to bring students to Baltimore for interviews and activity costs for the Program during the year. This year that cost is $2.1K. The overhead cost is charged for students in their 2nd year and beyond, and must be paid by non-federal funds. In subsequent years we expect a modest increase in all categories of student and Program support. If a mentor loses funding unexpectedly we expect the home department of the mentor to provide the funding.

Our program encourages and helps students to apply for and acquire external fellowship. When a student is successful, their fellowship relieves a substantial financial responsibility from the lab. Since 2006, the School of Medicine policy states that once a student receives an external fellowship, the lab mentor will provide the student who has won such a fellowship a one-time bonus of $3000. This is mainly to encourage the students to compete for the fellowships.

Rotation Start date: _______________ End date (estimate): _______________________

Mentor name: _______________ Student Name: _______________________

Mentor signature: ___________________

The student should upload the signed agreement to their web-based reporting page, and email it to Hong Lan at hlan1@jhmi.edu before the rotation start.

Reza Shadmehr
Director, Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. Program
shadmehr@jhu.edu
BME PHD Mentor Agreement

At the time that a BME PHD student identifies a mentor (no later than end of 1st year in the Program), and the mentor agrees to have the student in their laboratory for the duration of their dissertation, this form should be signed and returned to the BME PHD Program office. The intent of this form is to outline the financial responsibilities of the mentor.

**Costs per year**
Stipend/Medical/Dental: $33.5K (approximate figure, as of FY 2015)
Ph.D. Program overhead: $2.1K

If the mentor loses funding, the home department of the mentor is expected to provide support.

Student Name: ______________________________

Budget number for stipend and insurance: _______________

Budget number for PHD Program overhead: _______________

Mentor Name: ___________________________

Mentor Signature: __________________________

By signing this form, you are confirming your understanding of the financial obligations of a BME PHD mentor. Please sign and return the form to Hong Lan at hlan1@jhmi.edu prior to the student joining the laboratory.

Reza Shadmehr
Director, Biomedical Engineering Ph.D. Program
shadmehr@jhu.edu
NOTE: Thesis committee meetings have the option of beginning without the student present for the mentor to review the student’s progress with committee members. At the end of the meeting, the student may opt for the mentor to leave the room and talk alone with committee members. The student must scan and upload the completed form to their web based reporting page.

Name of student: _____________________________________       Matriculation year: __________

Name of advisor: ____________________________________         Date of meeting: ____________

Number of previous thesis committee meetings: ___________

The most senior member of the committee (other than the mentor) usually serves as the “chair”, and should fill out the required information after discussion with the committee.

Committee evaluation of progress (check one):

☐ The student is on trajectory for completion of PhD in __ 1 year, __ 2 years, or __ > 2 years

☐ Concern regarding trajectory or thesis project (student/advisor must meet with program director)

The above named student is in the final phase (final 6 months of training) and will be allowed to write a dissertation and graduate when the items listed on the second page are complete:

☐ Yes  ☐ No

____________________________     __________
Mentor’s signature                      Date                      Student’s signature

Names and signatures of other Committee Members present:

1) _____________________________ _____________________________
    Name (Chair)                          Signature

2) _____________________________ _____________________________
    Name                                Signature

3) _____________________________ _____________________________
    Name                                Signature
Summary of committee recommendations (for students not in final phase):

The committee agrees that the student is in the final phase and that completion of the following allows the student to write their dissertation and graduate:

Students in the final phase are expected to complete requirements within six months of the final thesis meeting. If the student is unable to do so, another meeting will be scheduled [by the Academic Program Manager] after six months.
Name of student: ____________________________ Date of Meeting: __________

Arrival date in the lab: ________ Year of Study: __________ Prepared by: __________

Please read and answer the following questions in a few sentences before coming to our annual meeting. Please be honest and forthright as this information will be treated as confidential. We will review the progress made in the last year and develop an action plan for the future.

A. Your Project

What is the long-term goal of your project? How does it fit into the overall plan of the lab? Does this project excite you? (multiple projects may be entertained)

Describe experimental and professional accomplishments from past year.

What are your experimental goals for the next twelve months? How will you accomplish these goals? Are there new techniques you would need to learn to accomplish these goals?
B. Mentoring

If relevant (post DBO students), who are the active members of your thesis committee? Does this committee need adjustment?

Would more regular formal feedback from your primary mentor (i.e., monthly or weekly ~1 hour meetings) be helpful for you? If so, how frequently should we meet?

Name two things that I, as your mentor, could do better that would help you.

If relevant, name two things that your thesis committee could do to mentor you better.

Name two things that you as a trainee could do better.

C. The Lab Environment

How do you perceive the larger focus of the lab? Where does your project fit in? Describe your view of the lab’s future direction.

Do you have concerns about the lab? Do you have any suggestions for how the lab could run better or more smoothly?
D. Long-Term Career Goals

What is your perception of how far along are you within your Ph.D. journey (approximate)? If you are closer to graduation, when do you hope to graduate? What do you hope to (or need to) accomplish by graduation?

Have your used the website myIDP (http://myidp.sciencecareers.org/) or other similar site? Have you found that helpful? Is there anything that you have learned from that exercise that you wish to discuss?

What are your long-term career goals?

How can/does your current project posture you for your long-term career goals?

Beyond carrying out your project, are there other professional activities that could be carried out in the next twelve months? For example, are you planning on attending a scientific meeting, hosting outside speakers, taking a professional development course or internships (see opportunities at http://www.jhu.edu/~pdo/)?
Preliminary Interest in Student Internship

Ph.D. Degree Candidate Name ____________________________

Thesis Mentor Name ____________________________

Graduate Program ____________________________

Year of Study ____________________________

US Citizen ☐ Yes ☐ No  If No, Visa status: _______________

Ph.D. Degree Candidate

1. I have successfully completed the Oral Exam: ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. I would be interested in internship opportunities in the following fields:
   ☐ Consulting
   ☐ Intellectual Property
   ☐ Industry – R&D
   ☐ Industry – Other ____________________________
   ☐ Regulatory Affairs
   ☐ Science Administration
   ☐ Science Education
   ☐ Science Policy
   ☐ Other: ______________________________

3. I am specifically interested in the following companies / organizations:

4. I would be interested in a ☐ Part-time internship.
   Please provide range of hours per week __________ and duration __________
   ☐ Full-time internship for a duration of ☐ 2-6 months
   ☐ Other __________

5. In preparation for this career path, I have explored the following resources and completed the following coursework:

6. Have you completed an Individual Development Plan? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Have you discussed your career goals with your mentor? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Have you discussed the possibility of an internship with your mentor?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No  IF YES, PLEASE ASK YOUR MENTOR TO COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW

9. Have you discussed the possibility of an internship with the director of BME PHD Program?
   ☐ Yes ☐ No
   IF YES, PLEASE ASK YOUR PROGRAM DIRECTOR TO COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW

______________________________ _______________
Signature of Ph.D. Candidate Date
Thesis Mentor

I believe that Ph.D. Degree Candidate ____________________ would be an excellent candidate for an internship in the above fields and/or companies.
☐ Yes  ☐ No
Comments:

I would be willing to grant permission to this Ph.D. Degree Candidate to participate in an internship for the above described duration, under mutually agreed conditions.
☐ Yes  ☐ No
Comments:

I understand that I will not be expected to provide any financial support for the duration of a full time internship.

________________________________________  ________________
Signature of Thesis Mentor  Date

Director of Graduate Program

I believe that Ph.D. Degree Candidate ____________________ would be an excellent candidate for an internship in the above fields and/or companies.
☐ Yes  ☐ No
Comments:

I would be willing to grant permission to this Ph.D. Degree Candidate to participate in an internship for the above described duration, under mutually agreed conditions.
☐ Yes  ☐ No
Comments:

________________________________________  ________________
Signature of Director of Graduate Program  Date
Memorandum of Understanding for Student Internship

This Memorandum of Understanding describes the general terms and conditions under which the Thesis Mentor, the Director of the Graduate Program, and the Associate Dean of Graduate Biomedical Education grant permission for the Ph.D. Degree Candidate to participate in an internship program.

Ph.D. Degree Candidate  
Thesis Mentor  
Graduate Program Director  

The above parties agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. The Ph.D. Degree Candidate may participate in an extramural internship with
   Organization  
   Department (if applicable)  
   Address  
   Supervisor Name  
   Supervisor Contact Info  

   under the following conditions (please explain or write “none”):
   ☐ completion of Oral Exam  
   ☐ submission of manuscript:  
   ☐ other:  

2. The internship will begin on ____________ and 
   Date  
   end on ____________ OR last for a period of up to _______ months.  
   Date  

3. The Thesis Mentor is not expected to provide financial support for the duration of the internship. The stipend and health insurance for the Ph.D. Degree Candidate will be covered by
   ☐ Host organization  
   ☐ Other (BCI, EDGE, etc.):  

4. The Ph.D. Degree Candidate will complete and return an evaluation of the internship experience to the Internship Program Manager or the Graduate Program Manager.
Ph.D. Degree Candidate
I agree with the above description of the internship.

- I will observe my commitment to the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine Honor Code as it relates to professional interactions.
- I will adhere to the School of Medicine’s policies on academic and professional conduct and those related to conflict of interest and intellectual property.

_____________________
Name

_____________________
Signature

_____________________
Date

Thesis Mentor
I agree with the above description of the internship and I certify that:

- The proposed internship will not pose a conflict of commitment with the student’s primary responsibility to complete his/her graduate education, and
- The student has been counseled regarding the School of Medicine’s conflict of interest and intellectual property policies.

_____________________
Name

_____________________
Signature

_____________________
Date

Director of Graduate Program
I agree with the above description of the internship and I certify that

- The proposed internship is not prohibited by the source of funding listed above (Section 3) or by any visa restrictions, and
- The proposed internship has educational value to the student.

_____________________
Name

_____________________
Signature

_____________________
Date

Associate Dean for Graduate Biomedical Education
I agree with the above description of the internship and I certify that

- The student’s mentor and the director of the student’s graduate program approve of the proposed internship, and
- The proposed internship has educational value to the student.

_____________________
Name

_____________________
Signature

_____________________
Date
Completion of Degree Requirements Worksheet

This form should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office with other degree completion paperwork.

GRADUATE PROGRAM: Biomedical Engineering

NAME (last, first):

MATRICULATION DATE:

DEGREE COMPLETION DATE:

TIME TO DEGREE (months):

DATES OF GRADUATE BOARD ORAL EXAMINATIONS AND OUTCOMES:

THESIS TITLE:

THESIS ADVISOR:

DATE OF THESIS DEFENSE:

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<th>STUDENT PUBLICATIONS/PATENTS (FROM THESIS WORK ONLY)</th>
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<td>AWARDS (FROM THESIS WORK)</td>
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Comments (i.e. explanation for any C’s or lower on transcripts)

_________________________________________________   ______________________
Signature of Student Date

_________________________________________________   ______________________
Signature of Program Director Date