

**Medical Scientist Training Program  
University of Alabama at Birmingham**

**Handbook of Policies and Procedures  
2013 -2014**





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## I. Rationale for the Program

The focus of the Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is to train outstanding young people from across the United States in the intellectual discipline of being a scientific investigator and a thoroughly trained physician. Although the ultimate career pathway for individual trainees may range from the conduct of basic biomedical research to clinical trials of novel therapeutic agents or procedures, the net effect of this cadre of investigators will be to increase the translation of basic biomedical understanding into clinical practice.

## II. Administrative Structure

### A. Program Leadership

The Program Director is appointed by the Dean of the UAB School of Medicine (SOM) and oversees all aspects of the Program. The Associate Directors are nominated by the Director and also appointed by the Dean of the School of Medicine. The Program Manager is a full-time staff member, who reports to the Program Director and manages all aspects of the program. The program Office Support manages all administrative and some financial aspects of the program. The UAB MSTP offices are located at 1825 University Boulevard in the Shelby Building, Suite 121. The official UAB MSTP website is <http://www.mstp.uab.edu>.

Name	Position	Phone	Office	Email
Robin Lorenz, MD, PhD	Director	934-0676	SHEL 602	rlorenz@uab.edu
Lou Justement, PhD	Associate Director	934-1429	SHEL 502	lbjust@uab.edu
Will Geisler, MD, MPH	Clinical Associate	934-4376	ZRB 216	wgeisler@uab.edu
Randy L. Seay, MA, MPA, MPH	Director Program Manager	934-4092	SHEL 121H	rseay@uab.edu
Jackie Bennett	Office Support	934-0440	SHEL 121J	jackiebennett@uab.edu

### B. Program Advisory Committee

The MSTP Advisory Committee (MSTPAC) consists of nine members from the SOM faculty, one member from the School of Engineering, and one member from the School of Public Health. The MSTP Director and MSTP Associate Director and MSTP Clinical Associate Director occupy three of these positions. There are no specified terms for the Director or Associate Directors. Each new committee member is nominated by the Director and appointed by the Dean of the SOM to a 4-year term. Two members rotate off the committee and two new members are appointed each year. In addition to serving as a policy advisory group and admissions committee for the program, each committee member mentors 3-5 students in the program. The MSTP mentor is expected to meet with each student at least once yearly and serves as either an *ex officio* or full member of the student's dissertation committee. The MSTP mentor is expected to submit yearly written evaluations of each student in his/her clinical years at the beginning of each new academic year (August/September). For students in their graduate years, the MSTP mentor is expected to submit a summary of the twice yearly thesis committee meetings within 2 weeks of each meeting. The MSTPAC has four formal meetings per year, in

which each of the following topics is covered: 1) recruitment issues; 2) evaluation of student progress, retention, and time in the research lab; 3) curriculum review; and 4) admission decisions for new students.

Name	Department	Phone	Office	Email
Robin Lorenz, MD/PhD	Pathology	934-0676	SHEL 602, zip 2182	rlorenz@uab.edu
Lou Justement, PhD	Microbiology	934-1429	SHEL 502, zip 2182	lbjust@uab.edu
Will Geisler, MD/MPH	Medicine-Infectious Diseases	934-4376	ZRB 216, zip 0007	wgeisler@uab.edu
Mary-Ann Bjornsti, PhD	Pharmacology/Toxi cology	934-4579	VH L107, zip 0019	bjornsti@uab.edu
Steven Carroll, MD/PhD	Pathology	934-9828	SC 930G, zip 0017	scarroll@uab.edu
Jeff Engler, PhD	Biochemistry	934-4734	HUC 504, zip 1150	engler@uab.edu
Erik Roberson, MD/PhD	Neurology	996-9486	SHEL 1171	eroberson@uab.edu
Victor Thannickal, MD	Medicine – Pulmonary/Allergy/ Critical Care	934-4328	THT 429A, zip 0006	vjthan@uab.edu
Timothy Wick, PhD	Biomedical Engineering	934-8420	SHEL 807, zip 2182	tmwick@uab.edu
Shih-Hsin (Eddy) Yang, MD/PhD	Radiation Oncology	934-5670	176F HSROC Suite 2232B	eyang@uab.edu

### C. Program Faculty

The MSTP Training Faculty must hold an appointment in the UAB Graduate School and a primary or secondary appointment in one of the participating graduate departments as well as in one of the Graduate Biomedical Sciences (GBS) interdisciplinary themes. In addition, faculty must be reviewed and accepted by the MSTPAC before accepting students for the PhD research phase of the program. For faculty in departments participating in the GBS themes, faculty will first undergo review by a GBS Faculty Review Committee. This review will be based on an application package that documents extramural research support, publication record, prior training record, involvement in training activities, and the support of the department chair for the faculty to take graduate students. Faculty that are approved as GBS Faculty will then undergo a secondary review by the MSTPAC for involvement in physician-scientist training and for commitment to the unique aspects that training of MD/PhD students entails. Allowances are made for newly recruited, young faculty members just starting an independent research program, who will be paired with a senior faculty member acting as an advisor. The foremost criterion for approval is the ability of potential mentors to provide an excellent training experience for MSTP students. Faculty will be reviewed by the GBS Committee and the MSTPAC every 3 years on a rotating basis to ensure continued academic excellence. Students select program faculty members from the list, which is updated continuously on the MSTP website.

## **D. Rotation Mentors**

MSTP students are required to complete three separate research laboratory rotations with three different mentors prior to selecting a mentor for their doctoral dissertation. The laboratories are chosen by the student and are based on the student's area of interest and information provided by each faculty on his or her research program. Information on faculty research programs can initially be found on the MSTP Faculty Profile and GBS Pages (<http://www.mstp.uab.edu/research.html>); however, students are expected to get further information in one-on-one meetings with potential rotation mentors.

Goals of the rotation experience are as follows:

- To help MSTP students make better informed decisions regarding research advisor selection
- To give students a first-hand experience in the research culture and mentoring styles of different laboratories
- To give students the short-term opportunity to closely consider research in multiple areas of biomedical sciences
- To expose students to different sizes of laboratories, both large and small;
- To expose the student to new techniques
- To help the student to begin to think like a scientist particularly in the areas of experimental design and data interpretation

Mentors are permitted considerable flexibility in assigning rotation activities and are expected to adhere to the following criteria:

- Design a project for the student (students should not function as technicians)
- Involve students in all seminars, journal club activities, and laboratory work-in-progress activities during the rotation period
- Meet weekly with the student
- Discuss goals for the rotation
- Discuss laboratory activities expected of the students
- Explain all laboratory guidelines and/or policies to be followed by the students
- Ensure that all necessary training is completed (i.e. biohazards, animal handling, human studies, etc.)
- Provide background reading for the project

## **E. Thesis Mentors**

The program has high expectations that the students and the Thesis Mentors will focus on both outstanding scientific productivity and completion of the PhD research within a 3 - 4 year time frame. Thesis Mentors are responsible for providing clear communication of the requirements and expectations to the student, guidance in the scientific focus and technical expertise for their project, and completion of their administrative responsibilities to the MSTP. Thesis Mentors must follow the given criteria:

- Clearly explain the formal requirements for completing the PhD degree in their particular department/theme, including the formal course requirements, the procedures for Advancement to Candidacy (both written and oral examinations), **the formation of a Dissertation Committee within 6 months of the student starting in the lab**, and rules concerning the writing of the Dissertation and formal completion of the PhD degree
- Discuss expectations for scientific productivity with the student. Issues including the scope and focus of the student's project, the number of first-author papers expected, and specific milestones of accomplishment over the next several years should be discussed and agreed upon between the mentor and student
- As stated, the Scientific Advisory/Dissertation Committee should be formed and the first meeting held no later than 6 months following the student's entry into the mentor's laboratory. The MSTP Mentor, a member of the MSTPAC assigned to each student, can serve either as an *ex officio* member or a full member of the Dissertation Committee.
- If the Thesis Mentor has not previously graduated a PhD student, the MSTP requires that a Senior Advisor also be identified for the MSTP student. This Senior Advisor should be appointed as a member of the thesis committee. (Appendix II)
- Effort Reports are an important part of any funded work. There are several types of funds that students may be paid from that require them to certify an Effort Report. This report indicates where the funding for the student's stipend came from over the past 3 months. If a student is paid from the mentor's funds, the effort report must be certified by the thesis mentor (in order for the student to continue to receive his/her stipend). To do so, login to UAB Admin Systems (<http://main.uab.edu/Sites/it/internal/faculty-staff/adminsystems/>). Click on Oracle HR & Finance. Login using your Blazer ID and password. At the next menu, click on UAB Effort Report User and then Effort Report Worklist, where the effort report that needs to be certified can be viewed.
- MSTP students are required to have two committee meetings per year throughout their tenure in the lab (i.e. once every 6 months);
- Submit a written progress report to the MSTP Program Manager within 2 weeks of each dissertation committee meeting. A form for this progress report can be found in Appendix II and on our website: <http://www.mstp.uab.edu>;
- If meetings are not held every 6 months and the written progress report is not received by the MSTP office within 2 weeks of the committee meeting, the thesis mentor will be put on a probationary status and will not be allowed to take new MSTP rotation or thesis students until corrective action is taken;
- Thesis Mentors should guide the student in writing manuscripts for publication, developing informative poster presentations, responsible conduct of research, and presenting scientific seminars;
- The Thesis Mentor should provide the student with knowledge concerning the mechanics for preparation and submission of grant applications. Additionally, the mentor should assist the student in the development of insight and skills associated with grantsmanship. All MSTP students are strongly encouraged to submit individual training grants to the NIH (F30/F31) during their first year of thesis research, and Thesis Mentors are expected to facilitate these grant submissions. (Appendix X and XI)
- Provide a written final evaluation of the student's thesis years upon the student's completion of the PhD dissertation;

- Provide financial support as described for the first 4 years the student is assigned to the lab and all of this support after the student has been in the lab four years.
- Each faculty member may only be the thesis mentor for 3 or fewer MD/PhD students at any one time.

Thesis Mentors are also responsible for closely monitoring the scientific progress of students and maintaining a productive research track.

For students entering research labs prior to 2007, the Thesis Mentor is responsible for providing financial support for 72.5% of the student's stipend for four years beginning immediately after the student selects a research laboratory. The MSTP will pay the remainder of the student's stipend (27.5%) and the student's tuition and fees for these four years.

For students entering research labs in 2007 and beyond, the MSTP will pay for 100% of the student's stipend, tuition, and fees for 1 year after the student selects a research lab (usually starting in September of the GS-I year). Thereafter, the Thesis Mentor is responsible for providing financial support for 100% of the student's stipend for 3 years. If the student is awarded an individual training grant award or appointed to an institutional training grant, the Thesis Mentor is responsible for any remaining stipend not covered by the training award. This remaining stipend **cannot** be paid from other federal funds. MSTP students are not allowed to have dual assignments. **They are appointed as either Graduate Assistants or Graduate Student Trainees, but cannot have a combination of appointments.** The MSTP will cover tuition and fees for the first 4 graduate years.

For students who are accepted into the MSTP after an Advanced Standing application, the financial responsibility for the student's stipend during their first year in the program will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Thereafter, the financial responsibility is as described in the paragraph above.

**For all students, after 4 years, the Thesis Mentor will be responsible for the student's entire stipend, tuition, and fees until their thesis is successfully defended and they return to clinical rotations.** These costs can be covered by a research grant, an individual NRSA award, or another NIH training grant subject to some limitations. It is required that the student be finished with his/her PhD prior to re-entry into the MD curriculum. In order to schedule the student's return to MD curriculum, the Transition from Research Phase to Clinical Phase Form must be completed (see Appendix II). This form indicates the date that the student will finish his/her PhD and must be signed by the student, the Thesis Mentor, and the MSTP Director and delivered to the Associate Dean for Medical Students at least three months prior to the planned transition. Details on this transition can be found in Appendix IV.

Should the Thesis Mentor leave UAB, the student has the option of going with the mentor in order to complete the research project. However, the same time line for completion of the research project is to be maintained. If there is a significant probability that a Faculty member plans to leave UAB within a year, no new MSTP students should be recruited into that faculty member's lab.

## **F. Program Departments, Interdisciplinary Themes, and PhD Programs**

All of the Joint Health Sciences Departments and Interdisciplinary Themes that sponsor PhD programs within the UAB Graduate School can serve as the sponsors for MSTP students in the graduate phase of the program. In addition, departments in the UAB School of Public Health and UAB School of Engineering may sponsor MSTP students and should provide financial support for the program on a pro-rated basis. (See Appendix III)

## **G. Student Representatives and Committees**

Students are expected to become involved in programmatic activities. UAB MSTP Opportunities are discussed as follows:

***Student Representatives:*** The student representatives are responsible for maintaining contact between students and the administration. Although they can always go directly to the administration, students should feel free to contact their representatives about any problems they may see with the program. The reps should also communicate viewpoints/ideas of students and be able to speak on behalf of various students. Reps are expected to attend monthly MSTP staff meetings and be involved with the inner workings of the program. Reps are the voice of the students in discussing program policies, both new and old. Therefore, they are often able to communicate new requirements and explain the reasoning behind them. These students also serve as our MSTP Representatives to the Graduate Student Association (GSA).

- Rising MS-II (1 year term)
- Rising GS-I (first year of 2 year term)
- Rising GS-II (second year of 2 year term)
- Rising GS-III/IV (1 year term)

***Event Committee:*** The Event Committee is responsible for the Annual MSTP Retreat and the Annual Spring MSTP Graduation Reception. In addition, this group is responsible for helping to organize all our student interactions during recruiting, such as student hosts, dinners, social hours, the second visit party, and so on.

***Communications Committee:*** The Communications Committee is responsible for writing and producing “The Vulcan Letter,” our quarterly newsletter that chronicles all things MSTP and showcases the energy and fun spirit of our band of merry pranksters while highlighting the national recognition our students and our program continues to accrue. It is also a great opportunity to keep in touch with our alumni, while learning about their experiences after graduation and gaining some insight into what our future may hold. This committee is also responsible for making our web site informative and up-to-date for students and faculty involved in the program.

***Griffin Society Representatives:*** This committee is responsible for interaction with our Physician-Scientist Advisory Group to help set up our Clinical Continuity Experiences. This includes identifying physicians in various specialty areas for shadowing opportunities and interacting with the Medicine Residency Program Directors, to identify residents willing to work with our students and assist them with maintaining their history and physical skills.

***Southeast Medical Scientist Symposium (SEMSS)/ American Physician Scientist Association (APSA) Representatives:*** The SEMSS is hosted by MSTP students from UAB, Emory, and Vanderbilt and seeks to (1) foster dialogue and networking among MD/PhD trainees at institutions in the Southeast United States; (2) provide opportunities to present research beyond a school-wide setting; and (3) educate undergraduate students possibly interested in MD/PhD programs.

The SEMSS is sponsored by the American Physician Scientist Association. The APSA is a national organization dedicated to addressing the needs of future physicians and their training and career development. They have an annual meeting each year in Chicago (usually in April) that is held in conjunction with the American Society for Clinical Investigation/Association of American Physicians. This committee helps to plan the SEMSS (which should be at UAB in 2013) and at least one member of this committee is sent by the MSTP to represent us at the National APSA meeting. One member of this committee will be named as the official UAB APSA Institutional Representative. The responsibilities of the institutional representative (as detailed from the APSA website) are as follows:

- Serve as a liaison between APSA and the physician-scientist student population at the represented institution. This includes, but is not limited to, gathering feedback with regard to APSA directives and providing a voice for their students within APSA, as well as announcements of APSA events and projects.
- Strongly encouraged to attend the Annual APSA Meeting in order to represent their institution during the APSA Business Meeting
- Strongly encouraged to be an active member of APSA by serving on one of APSA's four standing committees (Annual Meeting, Finance, Policy, and Public Relations). These standing committees not only rely on the APSA Institutional Representatives and other APSA Members to achieve their goals but also heavily rely upon them for continuous feedback and advice to guide the individual committee's path and future.
- Gain the opportunity to serve on the APSA Executive Council. Once an APSA Member has served in an Institutional Representative position, he/she becomes eligible to run for any of the positions on the Executive Council including President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer (Finance Committee Chair, Annual Meeting Committee Chair, Policy Committee Chair, Public Relations Committee Chair, Member-At-Large (to represent the MD-PhD voice), Member-At-Large (to represent the MD-only voice), and Member-At-Large (to represent the social sciences / humanities).
- Strive to exemplify the goals and missions of APSA on the local level at their home institution.

The SEMSS is fully organized by current MSTP students organized into 3 committees. Each committee is composed of representatives from each of the hosting institutions.

- **Executive Committee:** The primary responsibility of the UAB Executive Committee (EC) representative is to lead the UAB representatives in developing a successful conference. Toward this end, the UAB EC representative must work closely with the

UAB Programming and Personal Relations representatives, personally meeting with each representative on a consistent basis. Additionally, the EC representative must communicate frequently with the EC members from other participating institutions. With the EC representatives from partner institutions, the UAB EC representative will (1) draft a budget and ensure the necessary funds are available by composing and submitting grants / letters of request to intra- or extramural funding sources; (2) secure a location at which the conference will be held; (3) maintain contact with the APSA; (4) coordinate the conference in the weeks leading up to the event (i.e.: review abstracts, publish abstract book / program, secure poster presentation boards, print nametags, etc.); and (5) assist the UAB Programming and Personal Relations representatives with their duties in all possible manners.

- **Personal Relations (PR) Committee:** The UAB PR representative is responsible for establishing and maintaining contact with possible conference attendees. With the PR representatives from the companion institutions, the UAB PR representative will (1) maintain an online presence communicating conference details (APSA website, Facebook page); (2) send conference notifications to undergraduate, graduate, and medical institutions around the Southeast via e-mail on a consistent basis; (3) create fliers with conference details to distribute physically and electronically; (4) maintain contact with national organizations (APSA, studentdoctor.net, etc.) to advertise conference details; and (5) organize social events the evenings before and after the conference to facilitate student networking.
- **Programming Committee:** The UAB programming representative is responsible for the content of the meeting. With the programming representatives from the companion institutions, the UAB programming representative will (1) establish a conference schedule; (2) plan topics for keynote and breakout sessions which are distinct from those of previous conferences; (3) nominate keynote speakers and breakout session panels/leaders; (4) contact and secure all keynote speakers and breakout session panelists/leaders; and (5) organize MSTP recruitment booths for participating institutions and other groups desiring booths for representation at the conference.

## **H. Admission to the MD/PhD Program**

Admission to the MD/PhD program requires an application to the University of Alabama School of Medicine (UASOM) through the AMCAS system, including any supplementary material requested by the UASOM and/or the MSTP. Applicants to the UASOM who indicate a desire for a combined MSTP curriculum will be referred to the MSTP by the UASOM Admissions Office. Interviews with applicants who are deemed to have suitable credentials will be conducted by members of the MSTPAC and members of the Admissions Committee in the UASOM. To the extent possible, the interviews will be coordinated so that they can be accomplished during a single visit by the applicant. Acceptance into the program is initiated by the MSTP based on decisions by the MSTPAC and requires approval of the UASOM Admissions Committee. The Deans of both the UAB Graduate School and the UASOM may give final approval or disapproval on any applicant.

## **I. Admissions Procedures for Students with Advanced Standing**

**Admissions Procedures for Medical Students with Advanced Standing:** Applications are also encouraged from current students enrolled in the UASOM, usually after completion of the second year of Medical School. Such an application can be obtained from the MSTP or UASOM Admissions office and does not require the student to complete an AMCAS application. Successful admission depends on the student demonstrating a commitment to a research career and a satisfactory academic record in the UASOM. Guidelines for applicants from the UASOM and applicants from other medical schools are as follows:

Applicants applying to the MSTP for admission with advanced standing must meet the admission requirements for admission to the UASOM with advanced standing as well as those for the MSTP/Graduate School.

- Applicants from school other than the UASOM must demonstrate compelling circumstances as one of the reasons for their request for transfer.
- To initiate an application for Advanced Standing qualified applicants must request an application for Advanced Standing from the MSTP or the Medical School Admissions Office. **Applications are only accepted from October through March.**
- Completed applications will be reviewed by the UASOM Admissions Office and the MSTP Office. Completed applications must include an official transcript and an official letter of evaluation from the Dean/Associate Dean for Student Affairs or other appropriate official of the applicant's current school. This letter must state the eligibility (or expected eligibility) of the individual for promotion to the next academic year at the student's current school. The letter should address the academic and non-academic qualification of the individual for the eventual practice of medicine. Specific comment should be included on any infractions of the school's code of ethical and behavioral conduct.
- The UASOM Admissions Office and MSTP both must agree to offer the applicant interviews in order for the applicant to be given further consideration.
- Interviews will be coordinated with each office and conducted as determined by each office.
- Applicants not invited will be notified by letter signed by the UASOM Admissions Office and MSTP.
- In order for an applicant to be accepted the applicant must be acceptable to both the UASOM Admissions Office and the MSTP.
- Accepted applicants will be notified in writing by the UASOM Admissions Office as well as by the MSTP.
- Applicants not accepted will be notified by letter signed by the UASOM Admissions Office and MSTP.
- **Acceptance is contingent on the applicant having a passing score on the USMLE Step 1.** Applicants must complete this requirement prior receiving a formal letter of acceptance.
- Applications will not be considered from students who will have started their third year of medical school prior to transfer.

**Admissions Procedures for Graduate Students with Advanced Standing:** Applications are also accepted from students currently enrolled as a graduate student at UAB Graduate School. These students would usually be in their first or second year of graduate school. Applications are **not accepted** from students who have already passed their qualifying exam and advanced to candidacy.

Applicants applying to the MSTP for admission with advanced standing must meet the admission requirements for admission to the School of Medicine as well as those for the MSTP. Requirements for Admission to UASOM can be found on their website: <http://medicine.uab.edu/education/prospective/46067/requirements/>.

Applicants must apply through the common AMCAS website and are subject to normal UASOM application deadlines. This is done electronically at the website <http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/start.htm>. On this site essays, grades, MCAT scores, etc., are selected as well as the schools to which the applicant wishes to apply (MD/PhD). AMCAS then sends the application to the UAB MSTP. The application site usually opens mid-summer and applications are accepted until November 1 for admission the following Fall semester.

Applicants are interviewed with and compete against the complete pool of regular applicants. If accepted, students must take a leave of absence from their graduate programs in order to complete the first 2 years of medical school. At that time, they will then return to their laboratory and graduate program to complete the requirements for the PhD degree.

### **III. Curriculum**

The curriculum for the MSTP is determined by the program director in consultation with the MSTPAC and is approved by the UASOM Medical Education Committee (MEC), the UAB Graduate Biomedical Sciences Steering and Oversight Committee (SOC) and the Deans of the School of Medicine and the Graduate School. The MSTP requires that students maintain an acceptable level of academic performance in both the medical and graduate school phases of the curriculum. An overview of the MSTP curriculum is shown in Appendix I.

#### **A. Medical Courses and Research Rotations**

During the first year of the Medical curriculum, MSTP students are enrolled in the GBS Basic Biomedical Science core courses (GBS 707: Basic Biochemistry and Metabolism and GBS 708: Basic Genetics and Molecular Biology), which are formally listed as Medical School courses for MSTP students and substitute for portions of Fundamentals I. All other courses and requirements of the first 2 years of the Medical curriculum are unchanged and are required for MSTP students. During the MS-II year, MSTP students will also enroll in four different modular graduate courses during the spring, for which credit will be given as Medical School Electives. For course descriptions, please see Appendix III-A or the Graduate Biomedical Sciences website ([www.gbs.uab.edu](http://www.gbs.uab.edu)).

Three rotations in different research labs are scheduled, primarily for the purpose of selecting the student's thesis mentor for their PhD dissertation work. The first required rotation is a full-time rotation beginning in June prior to the entry into the first year medical school curriculum. After a break for UASOM orientation and the Patient, Doctor, and Society course, it is an option to continue this rotation on a part-time basis during the early fall of the first year (during the timeframe of the Fundamentals I module) and consists of bench laboratory work or a similar experience in epidemiology or public health. The second two rotations are for 8-10 weeks of full time effort during the next two summers. The student, in selecting faculty mentors for these rotations, must expend considerable effort, because no further rotations are allowed. Students select Program Faculty for a rotation and must register for each rotation with the MSTP office prior to the start of the rotation. Forms can be found online ([www.mstp.uab.edu](http://www.mstp.uab.edu)). Specific registration forms for each rotation are located in Appendix II of this handbook. These forms must be completed and turned into the MSTP office by the indicated deadlines. It is a requirement that students meet with at least 3 faculty members to discuss potential rotation projects prior to making a commitment to a laboratory for their rotation. If students have an interest in working with a faculty member who is not currently an approved MSTP Faculty, they should notify the Program Manager and/or one of the Directors who can initiate the necessary procedures to evaluate and approve the individual as a MSTP Faculty. If at any time a student is having difficulty in identifying appropriate MSTP Faculty to serve as rotation advisors, he/she should immediately contact his/her MSTP Mentor or one of the Directors of the program for advice.

All students must take USMLE Step 1 before beginning their first clerkship or beginning a leave of absence for Ph.D. training if in the Medical Scientist Training Program, whichever comes first. MSTP students are required to take USMLE Step 1 prior to the start of Block 6b. If a MSTP student does not meet this deadline then they must either be registered for the Basic Science Elective in Block 6b (06-402D; Course Director Steve Smith) or go on a Leave of Absence (without stipend). These alternatives must be approved by the MSTP Director, the Associate Dean for Students (Dr. Laura Kezar), and the Basic Science Elective Course Director. In addition, students who have completed their MS-II year must complete 8 weeks of full time effort in the laboratory during the time between the end of second year Medical School classes and Labor Day.

Students must select a thesis mentor and laboratory for their dissertation research by August 15th of the summer after the MS-II year. If a student is having difficulty finding a suitable thesis mentor it is essential that they contact one of the Directors of the MSTP to discuss this issue. Ideally, students should not wait to discuss this issue with the Director or Associate Director and should seek advice early. If after two rotations a student has yet to identify MSTP Faculty who would be suitable as a thesis mentor, they should discuss this with one of the Directors. This will allow the student to obtain additional advice in order to make an informed decision regarding their third and final rotation. Ideally, students are expected to complete three rotations, each with a different MSTP Faculty. However, students may request permission from the Director to opt out of the third rotation if circumstances warrant this option. **Students may not do two rotations with the same MSTP Faculty member.**

During rotations, the program provides financial support for the student's stipend, fees and tuition.

**All students doing summer rotations (Pre-summer, MS1 to MS2 transition, MS2 to GS1 transition) are required to present a scientific poster (or oral presentation) based on the research done during rotation. All MSTP students must participate in "Medical Student Research Day" held each Fall, in which all Medical Students who participate in research present a poster of their work.** The MSTP will cover the cost of these posters. The only MSTP students who will not be expected to participate are those in MS-III or MS-IV clinical rotations.

As noted, it is critical that careful consideration be given to selecting MSTP Faculty for the three different scheduled rotations. In general, the student should discuss potential rotations with multiple faculty members and his/her MSTP mentor well before the registration date of the rotation. After the three rotations, students must formally join a lab to remain in the program. If a student joins a lab and subsequently comes to irreconcilable differences with his/her thesis mentor, a change of labs can be arranged. Once a student chooses a thesis laboratory, both the student and the mentor must make a serious commitment to successful completion of a PhD dissertation project. If after three rotations a suitable mentor cannot be identified, a fourth rotation may be allowed after a written request to and discussion with the Program Director. Requests received after the deadline for the selection of the thesis laboratory or with no evidence of appropriate diligence on the student's part to complete the requirement on time are not in keeping with the high expectations for professionalism of the program.

## **B. Dissertation Research**

Once a Thesis Mentor has been selected, the student officially takes a Leave of Absence (LOA) from the UASOM and transfers to the UAB Graduate School and remains in the PhD program until the PhD dissertation is complete. The expectation of the MSTP is that students will complete their research and dissertation defense within 3 – 4 years. In general, the policies and requirements of the MSTP may exceed the requirements of particular Graduate Program and/or Theme, but will not set a lower minimum set of requirements than the Graduate Program/Theme. In many cases, the first year graduate courses and Medical School courses will satisfy the requirements for formal courses in the Department/Theme; however, each may also require advanced courses, in addition to a required Journal Club course each term. **MSTP students are not allowed to take any additional coursework that is not germane to their PhD program.**

The requirements for the PhD degree are established by each of the Graduate Departments/Themes and are the same for all PhD students, with two exceptions. First, each student's MSTP mentor serves as either an *ex officio* or full member of the Dissertation Committee. Second, each student must have a meeting of his/her dissertation committee **at least once every 6 months**, beginning from the date that the student enters a laboratory and starts full-time dissertation research in the research phase of the program. If some Graduate Programs/Themes require specific milestones, such as completion of a preliminary examination, admission to candidacy, or a formal written proposal for their project prior to a meeting of the

Dissertation Committee, then an MSTP specific meeting of the same group of Faculty must be held to maintain the schedule of a meeting every 6 months.

For students who enter their research laboratories in 2007 and after, the MSTP will pay 100% of the stipend, fees, and tuition for 1 year after entry into the thesis laboratory (usually ending in September). Thereafter, the thesis mentor is responsible for 100% of the MSTP student's stipend. The MSTP will pay for all fees and tuition for 4 full years. After 4 years, the mentor is responsible for stipend, tuition, and fees.

Students who fail to meet MSTP requirements and/or expectations will be subject to any and all of the following actions:

- A letter describing the deficiency will be put into the student's permanent record
- The thesis mentor will be placed on probation, during which time no additional MSTP students will be permitted to rotate or begin full time studies in his/her lab, and the mentor may also be required to assume additional financial support for the student's stipend, tuition, and fees
- The student will not be eligible to attend research conferences such as APSA or the Keystone MD/PhD Student Conference, which are supported by the program
- The program will freeze the student's enhancement fund account until he/she has met all requirements and expectations
- If requirements continue to be unmet, the student's enhancement fund can be permanently frozen and/or reduced.

Attendance is required at both the MSTP Translational Research Seminar course and the Annual MSTP Retreat. **Failure to obtain an excused absence (refer to Section III.D) for the MSTP Retreat will count as one of the three allowed absences for the MSTP Translational Research Seminar course. Attendance at the yearly SEMSS will count as one attendance for the MSTP Translational Research Seminar course.**

In the past, the UAB MSTP has strongly encouraged all students to obtain some periodic clinical exposure during their dissertation years. There was no formalized mechanism for this exposure, but some opportunities were to: (a) Shadow their mentor (if a clinician); (b) Choose a physician in the area they were interested in and ask to shadow them; or (c) Work in the UASOM Student staffed Equal Access Clinic. To sign up for this clinic, visit <http://www.uab.edu/eab/>. Those that have returned to the clinical years need to sign up through their MS-III/IV representatives. The clinic is open every Wednesday, but students should sign up quickly as slots are limited. While at the clinic, white coats and IDs are required to be worn at all times. Professional attire or scrubs are both appropriate. Other than a stethoscope, no additional equipment is needed.

In addition, there are opportunities for continued interactions with clinical medicine through serving as a Trainer for standardized patients in the Introduction to Clinical Medicine (ICM) class. This activity can provide a financial reward if funds are available and can be set up through the ICM office. (See Section III.J).

Starting with the entering class of 2009, all MSTP students will be required to complete a Clinical Continuity Experience during their dissertation years (MSTP 795). Clinical contacts for each major specialty either have been or are in the process of being determined and required patient interactions will be arranged through the Department of Medicine.

**TB Skin Test Requirement:** All students matriculating back into clinics are now required to have a yearly TB Skin Tests in the past 2 years. Students that do not meet this requirement have to take two TB skin tests (read at least 1 week apart) prior to their return to the clinics. Any student who does the clinical continuity experience will need to maintain his/her yearly TB Skin Tests. The UAB MSTP will facilitate this requirement by organizing 1 week each year when MSTP students can go into Student Health for their PPD placement and during this week only, the MSTP will cover the cost of this screening test. This testing period will usually occur sometime during the month of February. Details of this requirement are outlined by the UAB Student Health Service on their website (<http://www.uab.edu/studenthealth/>). The MS1 and MS2 students do not have to use this week, as the SOM requires you to get your TB skin test at the beginning of each academic year.

**Liability Coverage:** The policy of the UAB Professional Liability Trust Fund (PLTF) is as follows: “Coverage applies to any UAB student named in a claim or lawsuit involving a patient as long as the student was acting within the course and scope of the assigned curriculum at the time of the alleged incident.” Therefore, it is not necessary to notify the MSTP Office that you will be shadowing your mentor in the clinic.

**CPR/BLS Class: The UAB MSTP requires all students to maintain their CPR/BLS Certification.** Each certification lasts for 2 years; therefore, a typical MSTP would take BLS training during UASOM Orientation, then again immediately prior to entry to their GS-I year (during the transition to clinics week). **Note: This would be required for students who opted to do their 1-month Family Medicine rotation prior to entry into their research lab.** Students would then again be given the option to do BLS training during the transitions to clinic week (typically the last week of April) at the end of their GS-II year and finally at the end of their GS-IV year (with the expectation that they will return to clinics sometime between July and December of the GS-IV year).

As part of the new UASOM curriculum, there is now a formal 1-week course to prepare students for their transition to the clinics. This course, held in late April, is taken by all second year medical students prior to beginning their third year clerkships. If a MSTP student opts to do their Family Medicine clerkship immediately after their MS-II year (and before starting their PhD thesis work), they are required to take this course along with the other MS-II students. In addition, all MSTP students returning to clinics during the 12-month period after this course is offered are required to take this course prior to their return. This session is required by the Medical School and attendance 2 years in a row is acceptable, whereas entering the clerkships without previously attending this session is not acceptable. Students interested in a refresher series of exercises in anticipation of returning to the clinical phase of the program can arrange an individualized program with clinical mentors. This can be arranged through Dr. Craig Hoesley.

**In order to register for rotations in the MS-III curriculum, MSTP students must notify both the MSTP office and the Associate Dean for Students at least 3 months prior to defending the dissertation and complete both the MSTP "Transition to Clinical Phase" form and the Medical Student Services "Return from Leave of Absence" form.**

### C. Clinical Rotations

MSTP students are given credit for a significant portion of the normal requirements for the M.D. degree during the MS-III and MS-IV years due to the completion of Graduate School courses and their research leading to the Ph.D. degree. The specific items NOT required for MSTP students are as follows:

- the Special Topics during the MS-III/IV years;
- a third Acting Internship (AI);
- any additional electives (in addition to the one required);
- The Scholarly Activity.

The specific requirements for MSTP students are detailed in Appendix V of this handbook. **It should be noted that MSTP students are required to start their clinical rotations in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or MSTP students usually take the Family Medicine Elective (30-210 Senior Preceptorship).** MSTP students will be given preferential selection for the particular clinical rotations of their choice, in consultation with the Associate Dean for Students and the MSTP Director. Once the requirements for graduation and the additional program options described have been completed, the student will have completed the program leading to both the MD and PhD degrees. Stipend support and tuition remission will not be extended beyond completion of the program. (See Appendix V).

All MSTP MS-II students will be offered the option to take the 4-week Family Medicine Clerkship or Elective **prior** to starting their third research rotation. This option must be approved by the MSTP and Medical Student services **no later than January 1 of the MS-II year.**

To plan the schedule for MS-III/IV clinical clerkships several factors must be considered:

- MSTP students must take and pass the USMLE Step 2 written exam and must take the USMLE Clinical Skills Exam within 6 months of expected Graduation. MSTP students are not required to complete all the MS-III Clerkships prior to scheduling USMLE Step 2CK.
- Application deadlines for different medical specialties, the National Residency Match, and the start time for entering most residencies are fixed at one time each calendar year.
- Entry into the clinical phase of the program must start at the beginning of an 8-week rotation block, based on the School of Medicine calendar.
- **Because the Family Medicine rotation is required for medical licensure in several states, including California, MSTP students are required to take a 4 week Family Medicine rotation. This rotation may be a UASOM clerkship or elective or may be an elective at another institution. This requirement applies to all students.**

- Two additional Medical School Electives (4 weeks each) can be taken as a part of the MSTP curriculum, but they are not a formal requirement for graduation.
- MSTP Students are required to take two Acting Internships: Medicine AI **and either** the Surgery AI or Critical Care AI or Ambulatory AI or an Elective AI
- MSTP students may take 8 weeks off to complete interview trips for residency programs and/or to prepare for and take the required USMLE Step 2 and Clinical Skills Exam.
- Additional time off during a particular clerkship/elective may be granted by individual directors. Normally, all medical students are allowed 3 days off for the Step 2 Clinical Skills Exam, but this time cannot be taken during an Acting Internship rotation.
- Other than these specific times or for medical reasons, no other time off is allowed.
- Once the graduation requirements for both the MD and PhD are complete, the student is considered "graduated" from the program, although the diploma is formally conferred only at the regular commencement exercises in December or May. **Stipend support will end when the requirements for graduation or 3 semesters of clinical clerkships are completed, whichever comes first. For entry in Block 4 (January), the student stipend ends the last day of May the following year. For entry in Block 1 (July), the student stipend ends the last day of December the following year.**
- With MSTP Director approval, students may now return to SOM MS3 clerkships in Block 2b/3a and the MSTP will cover the charged ½ tuition for this shortened term. If a student opts for this start date, the MSTP will cover tuition and stipend support for 3 ½ semesters.
- An MSTP student may complete the requirements for graduation, but elect to remain enrolled in the Medical School and take additional electives beyond those required for graduation. In this circumstance, students will not be required to pay tuition for the remainder of the academic term in which they completed the requirements for graduation. However, if the student completes the program in the fall, registration for the spring term will require the student to pay his or her own tuition.
- Students may request an exemption from this policy from the MSTP Director. Students should discuss their rationale with the Director and then submit a written request detailing both the additional activities and rationale at least 6 months prior to the time when the requirements for graduation will be completed.
- The practical consequence of this set of requirements and options is that the minimum time to complete the clinical phase of the program is 14 months and the maximum time is 20 months (See Appendix V).

Students should give careful consideration to the timing for the completion of their PhD and how this decision will affect the schedule for residency applications and beginning a residency on July 1st. Finishing the PhD in October or December offers an optimal schedule for completion of the requirements for graduation in May of the subsequent year to be in synchrony with other Medical graduates. Students who finish their PhD and begin clinical rotations in June/July (MS-III block 1a) will need to plan for an appropriate Post-doctoral fellowship or other experiences to be performed after completion of the program and prior to the beginning of a residency. Students may investigate Residency programs that accept candidates at times other than July 1st, obtain a Post-doctoral fellowship, or engage in other activities after completion of the program. It is strongly advised that students discuss their options with the MSTP Director and make plans for such activities well in advance of completing the requirements for graduation. Currently, the

MSTP **does not** allow returning to clinics in Blocks other than 1a/1b, 2b/3a or 4a/4b, as other return times require the MSTP to pay double tuition for both the UASOM and the UAB Graduate School. The only exception to this rule is if the MSTP student has an individual fellowship that covers tuition for the entire time they are in clinical clerkships.

#### **D. Tuition and Billing**

Effective August 2011, new policies have been put in place regarding tuition payments:

- At least **50%** of a student's tuition bill will be due **10 days before the start of the term.**
- If at least 50% of the balance has not been paid by this deadline, the student's classes will be **automatically dropped.**
- The remainder of the bill will be due **30 days after the add/drop deadline.**

As a result of the new policies you will be required to register earlier than usual in order for the MSTP Office to have adequate time to process the payment of the tuition bill and prevent your classes from being dropped. This new policy will primarily affect students who are in need of advanced courses usually taken in the first and second year in the lab. The MSTP Office will send an email with an **internal deadline** by which to register based on the days needed to process payment for everyone.

Please note:

- If you do not register by this date you **MUST** call or email the MSTP Office before doing so
- If you register after this date and payment could not be made in time to prevent classes being dropped, you will have to re-register, risking a **late registration fee for which you will be responsible**

#### **Dropping classes after the drop/add deadline**

**Dropping classes after the drop/add deadline may result in not meeting the minimum hour requirement for each semester as well as money lost that has been spent by the program if classes are dropped after the withdrawal deadline for the semester . Dropping classes after the withdrawal deadline MUST be pre-approved by the MSTP Director or may result in loss of Student.**

#### **E. Additional Required Program Activities**

There are several other programs and events designed to enrich the MSTP training experience that are requirements of the program in addition to the requirements of the Graduate School and the Medical School.

- Students must complete the required laboratory rotations as described in the ‘Medical Courses and Research Rotations’ section above.
- All students entering in the fall of 2010 will be required to take a Biostatistics course and a course in the responsible conduct of research. These courses will usually be taken the fall of the GS1 year or shortly after the GS-I year.
- All MS-I students are required to take the Special Topics Course – Survival Skills for Physician Scientists. This course is taught during the summer between the MS-I and MS-II years.

A seminar course focused on Translational Research (MSTP 794) is required throughout the tenure in the Program. Students must register for this course in either the SOM or GBS, depending on the School they are registered in for that semester (research phase in GBS, other years in the SOM). This seminar-based course is held in the evening on the second Wednesday of each month (except summer and December) in the Shelby Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research Building. These meetings will include various announcements concerning MSTP activities, seminars on Translational Research delivered by invited Faculty members, and presentations of research by students in the program that are nearing completion of their PhD. **Attendance at this course is required for a least 70% of the classes scheduled each year. Should a student have a conflict due to clinical rotations or another scheduled course, they should contact the MSTP Director. In exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the student, an excused absence for the monthly Translational Research Seminar may be granted by the MSTP Director. Prior notification of an absence does not guarantee that absence will be excused.**

Students not meeting this attendance requirement will receive a warning after the seventh meeting of the year. If a student ends the year and does not meet this attendance requirement, then they must submit a 2 page description of the topic(s) and the research of the presenting faculty member that they missed. A report will be required for each meeting missed until a total of 70% (either attendance and/or reports) is met. This report is to be turned in to the MSTP Director by the last day of November for students graduating in December and the last day of May for students graduating in June. All other students must submit their reports by the last day of May.

The Annual MSTP Retreat is held in the summer of each year during which time selected students in the research phase of the program will give presentations of their research. **Attendance at the MSTP Retreat is a requirement of the program.** Students in the clinical phase of the program should request time off to attend the retreat, which can be facilitated by the Program Director, if needed. In exceptional circumstances beyond the control of the student, an excused absence from the MSTP Retreat may be granted by the Program Director. However, permission must be obtained **prior** to the retreat. **Failure to obtain an excused absence for the MSTP Retreat will count as one of the three allowed absences for the MSTP Translational Research Seminar course. Prior notification of an absence does not guarantee that absence will be excused.**

MSTP students who have completed their second- or third-research rotation, or who are engaged in PhD research are required to prepare and submit an abstract for Medical Student Research Day (MSRD). Students are expected to prepare a poster and/or talk (if selected) for MSRD and to present their poster/talk at the event. **The MSRD poster and oral sessions will be held each year in October (abstract submission in Learning Portfolio will close the first week of September).** The cost for preparation of a poster will be covered by the MSTP only if this poster is printed by the Biomedical Poster Printing Service located in Room 121 of the Shelby Building. It is the responsibility of the student to get their poster printed in a timely manner. This obligation should be fulfilled each year as long as the student is actively engaged in rotations/PhD research.

Each year several upper-level students and at least one MS-I/ II student will be selected to attend the Annual MD/PhD Student Conference. MS-Is wishing to be considered for selection to attend the national MD/PhD Student Conference in Keystone, CO, the summer following their first year, are required to participate in MSRD. All travel and hotel expenses are covered by the UAB MSTP. In addition, if the student is presenting a poster, the cost of printing the poster will be covered, as long as the poster is printed by the Biomedical Poster Printing Service.

## **F. Griffin Society**

The Griffin Society is named for Frank Monroe Griffin, Jr., MD, who founded the UAB MD/PhD training program in 1985 and directed the MSTP for 13 years. Dr. Griffin attended the Medical University of South Carolina and received his MD in 1966. He extended his training as an intern and resident in the Department of Medicine, and a Fellow in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of Alabama. He spent 2 years at the US Naval Hospital in Illinois and 2 years as a Research Fellow at Rockefeller University prior to returning to UAB as a faculty member.

The Griffin Society at UAB serves to advance understanding of biomedical research by clinical residents, fellows and MSTP students. The society's activities involve residents and fellows in clinical training programs at UAB-affiliated hospitals who have MD/PhDs, MSTP students in all phases of the program, and UAB faculty with MD/PhD degrees. One focus of the Griffin Society is a series of informal dinner meetings/social hours featuring one of two formats, either a pair of brief research presentations by a clinical trainee and an MSTP student, or a presentation by a prominent outside speaker who is a leader in his or her research field with an interest in education of future biomedical researchers. The goal of the Griffin Society is to promote interactions between MSTP students, residents and fellows with interests in biomedical research, as well as MD/PhD faculty who have experienced the rewards and challenges of the career opportunities offered to those with a combined degree, allowing these groups to enrich each other with their different experiences and viewpoints.

The society is the administrative center for our Clinical Continuity experiences, which help MSTP students to maintain their clinical skills and allows them to explore multiple clinical specialties in order to help solidify their future residency/fellowship choices. In addition, the

Griffin Society is the sponsor of the Translational Medicine Journal Club. The purpose of this journal club is to examine articles as a traditional journal club, but also to question the relevance of the articles to the treatment of human disease. This will also help foster interactions between the ABIM Research Pathway and the MSTP.

## G. Academic Standards

MSTP students will be evaluated in the same manner as other students participating in the same courses, clerkships, or other experiences. Students who fail to maintain an acceptable level of performance in either Medical or Graduate courses will be subject to review by the MSTPAC. The MSTPAC may recommend academic disciplinary measures, which can include (a) dismissal from the Program (see further provisions regarding dismissal below); (b) continuation on academic probation, if extenuating circumstances so warrant; (c) performance of additional or remedial work, if extenuating and other circumstances so warrant. Students may also be put on academic probation or dismissed from either the UASOM or their specific graduate programs, if an acceptable level of performance and conduct is not maintained.

It is a requirement of the Graduate School that in order for a student to maintain good academic standing, a GPA of at least 3.0 (B average) and overall satisfactory performance of pass/not pass courses are required. Every MSTP student must take at least one advanced class or journal club for a letter grade in order to calculate a GPA from his/her graduate school transcript. The policy of the MSTP is that “Students that receive a grade of ‘C’ in a required graduate school course must retake that course as soon as reasonably possible.”

Adverse actions taken against MSTP students by the MSTPAC will be subject to appeal to the Deans of the two Schools, whose decision will be final. All students must take USMLE Step 1 before beginning their first clerkship or beginning a leave of absence for Ph.D. training if in the Medical Scientist Training Program, whichever comes first. MSTP students are required to take USMLE Step 1 prior to the start of Block 6b. If a MSTP student does not meet this deadline then they must either be registered for the Basic Science Elective in Block 6b (06-402D; Course Director Steve Smith) or go on a Leave of Absence (without stipend). These alternatives must be approved by the MSTP Director, the Associate Dean for Students (Dr. Laura Kezar), and the Basic Science Elective Course Director. Students must also take the USMLE Step 2 written exam and the Clinical Skills Exam to complete their MD degree. **Note that some residency programs require the score be reported prior to beginning their residencies and some are now requiring these scores prior to doing their residency applicant ranking. Please check with individual residency programs regarding their specific requirements.** Policies and practices pertaining to regular MD program students will apply in this regard.

Dismissal for academic or other reasons from either the Graduate or Medical component of the Program will constitute dismissal from the entire Program. Voluntary resignation from either component of the Program will constitute resignation from the entire Program. There are several consequences students who are dismissed from the Program or who voluntarily resign from the Program:

- If the student wishes to pursue either the MD or the PhD degree only, then the student must re-apply to the appropriate admissions office. There is no guarantee of acceptance.
- All financial benefits of the MD/PhD Program end at the time of dismissal or voluntary resignation. The student becomes responsible for all tuition and fees if he/she is accepted into the graduate or medical programs at UAB. If the student was not an Alabama resident at the original time of admission, then the tuition charged will be at the non-resident rate.
- All programmatic benefits end. After dismissal or voluntary resignation, the student will no longer receive priority scheduling of UASOM clinical clerkships, the student is now required to complete all clinical requirements of the UASOM (including the additional Acting Internships and electives that are not a requirement of the MSTP), and the student is no longer guaranteed an assignment to the Birmingham campus.

If a MSTP student does not meet the requirements for the awarding of a PhD degree, then a master's degree may be awarded if the student has successfully completed all of the course work requirements of his/her program (first year coursework and required advanced coursework) and the qualifying examination administered by his/her program. This degree would be a master's degree in Basic Medical Science (MSBMS). The MSBMS is only awarded under unusual circumstances and only to students who have completed the requirements indicated earlier. These are minimal requirements for awarding the MSBMS; programs may elect to mandate additional requirements such as preparing and successfully defending a Master's thesis and/or having published a first author paper in a peer reviewed journal. The recommendation to award the MSBMS degree must come from the student's mentor, his/her thesis committee, and the Director of his/her program, graduate & MSTP, accordingly.

All units of academic activity in the SOM at UAB will be graded by a simple pass-fail grading system. This policy applies to all courses, clerkships, electives, acting internships and all other units of academic activity as well as all campuses of the School of Medicine. This simple pass-fail grading system will assign a grade as follows:

- All graded courses, clerkships and electives will continue to assign a raw score for the performance of each student enrolled. The raw score shall range from 0 to 100 with a score of 70 and higher established as a passing score.
- The raw scores earned will be recorded and maintained by the SOM for internal use and individual student use only. All academic grades earned prior to the implementation of this policy will remain as earned. Students who have had their academic progress interrupted and will return after July 1, 2006 will be graded according to this new grading policy.
- Students in the MSTP will be assigned to the medical school class with which they entered for the first 2 years. For purposes of calculating medical school GPA for students who entered prior to the implementation of this policy, the graduate courses and other first-year graduate courses will be given a weight equal to the courses they replace. Upon completion of the research and dissertation portion of the Program, and upon return to the clinical phase of the program, the MSTP student will be assigned to the medical school class then in the third year for purposes of comparative calculations (eligibility for AOA, honors, awards, etc.).

The MSTP Directors do not automatically write letters of recommendation for MSTP students who are applying to residency programs. However, MSTP students are welcome to ask the Directors and/or MSTPAC members to write letters if they wish. Such requests will gladly be accommodated.

MSTP students may request UASOM transcripts for the purpose of applying for fellowships, etc. The best procedure to order a transcript is to use the UASOM Records Request Form, which is available on the web at <http://www.uab.edu/uasom/mss/currentrequest.pdf> or on the table in the Records Office lobby.

## H. Financial Assistance

Funded students who matriculate in the MSTP will receive three financial benefits, as long as they remain in good standing in the Program. The first is a monthly stipend, the amount of which is to be determined and announced annually (currently \$26,000). The stipend amount will be the same for the two components of the Program. The stipend for the student's final year in the Program will be computed on a monthly basis, and will be paid through the month in which all requirements for both degrees are satisfied, or 18 months maximum in the clinical clerkships. The second benefit is the payment of all tuition and student fees (including student health insurance). The third benefit is the availability of an educational enhancement fund. This fund can be used for items necessary for a student's education at UAB. These items may include books, palm pilots, medical equipment, computers and/or computer programs. Please note that computers purchased from NIH funds (training grant/ fellowship) are actually the property of UAB and you may be required to return the computer when you graduate. Basic supplies such as notebooks, pens, pencils, file folders, highlighters, and so on will be provided by the MSTP Office. Special requests for certain supplies can be submitted to the MSTP Office for review and processing. Use of funds for items not listed or for to scientific meetings or training courses requires a written request to the MSTP Director for pre-approval. Travel will not be approved for the presentation of work not done while at UAB. All purchases are subject to approval by the MSTP Office Staff and/or the MSTP Director. The funds available are:

- MS-I & II - \$2500
- GS-I through IV - \$750
- MS-III & IV - \$750

**This totals \$4000 for the entire MSTP training period; however, funds do not roll over between phases of the program.** In order to expedite receipt of these funds, all MSTP students are required to have direct deposit from their student account to their bank account. Please note that if a student leaves the program in the middle of one of these time spans, the amount available for use will be prorated. If a student drops out and has spent more than the pro-rated amount, they must pay the overage amount back to the UAB MSTP. Students must submit itemized store receipts and credit card receipts to the MSTP office in order to get reimbursed. Students will not be reimbursed for amounts that total less than \$25.00. See Appendix IX for more detailed information. The total amount reimbursed per student is tracked by the MSTP Office. These educational enhancement funds can be held if a MSTP student does not meet

MSTP expectations (i.e. replying to emails in a timely manner, return of required forms by the deadline, etc.).

If a student submits an individual extramural fellowship application, the UAB Graduate School will pay a bonus of \$250 directly to the student's account. For information on how to apply for this bonus and how to make sure it is appropriately credited, see Appendix X. If the fellowship application is funded, the MSTP will supplement the student's stipend by \$200 per month above the normal level. To be eligible for this bonus, the individual grant must cover at least 50% of the student's annual stipend. This supplement is not awarded for students who are appointed to another institutional training grant.

For those students who enter graduate departments not formally a part of the School of Medicine (i.e. School of Public Health, School of Engineering, etc.), the payment of tuition will be made by the Dean of the School in which the student is enrolled. In each case, the transactions will be processed by the MSTP Office using funding accounts from individual investigators, the UAB Graduate School, or the SOM as appropriate.

**Other items such as parking citations, if added to the student's account, must be paid directly by the student.** Items billed as "Due from Student" will be subject to the deadlines for payment imposed upon students in the regular MD or PhD programs. The MSTP does not pay any late fees charged due to missed payments or late registration.

## I. Additional Financial Aid

**Need Based Financial Aid:** All MSTP students in their graduate years are eligible for need-based financial aid. Students in medical school years are, in general, not eligible for need-based financial aid. MSTPs in their graduate years that have dependents may be eligible for financial aid in addition to the MSTP stipend. Depending on a student's source of funding and specific position, the stipend may or may not apply as an available financial resource, which could affect the calculation of economic resources and student eligibility for financial aid. **The MSTP Enrichment Fund counts toward the total scholarship/fellowship received.** If you receive reimbursements while also receiving Financial Aid and you have reached the "cap" on those funds, the reimbursement will be deducted from the loan amount. This means that instead of receiving the reimbursement in the form of a check it will be applied to the amount you borrowed reducing what you have to pay back. Please contact the MSTP Office when applying for loans to ensure you request the correct amount.

In general, if your stipend comes from the MSTP Dean's fund, the MSTP NIH T32 training grant, or an institutional T32 training grant, you cannot get government backed student loans (i.e. if you are a graduate student trainee). This exception to the policy is because this money counts as assistance and by the time you add your salary, tuition, and other things the program pays for, the total money you get exceeds the cost of attendance for UAB. You can only get government backed loans to cover the cost of attendance at your school. If you are a graduate student assistant, then you are considered an employee (and have taxes taken out of your check), and you

may be eligible for government backed student loans up to the cost of attendance. The first \$8,800 or so is non-interest bearing (unless you have other income) while you are in school and if you are eligible for more, the interest rate is fairly low. The contact at UAB is Laura Carnie.

If a student has a parent who is an employee of UAB, then that parent-employee may be eligible for employee dependent educational assistance. These monies pay in addition to the MSTP scholarship. These educational assistance monies will be placed into the student's account and can be used for expenses other than tuition and fees (which are covered by the MSTP). The UAB educational assistance policy defines an eligible dependent as an unmarried dependent less than 26 years old.

**Note:** If you do apply for and subsequently receive any additional financial aid, please notify the MSTP Office immediately. If we are not aware of this additional aid, it will greatly delay the receiving of your additional aid as well as the correct payments of tuition, fees, etc.

***Emergency Financial Aid:*** If you are currently a UASOM student, the medical school has an Emergency Student Loan Fund. This loan had an interest of approximately 6%, which will begin accruing about 3 months after the loan is obtained. If you need this type of assistance, please contact the MSTP Director. She will then send a memo to Ann Little in Student Financial Aid that documents the circumstances and the amount of the needed monies.

If you are currently a UAB graduate student, then there are also some funds that may be made available to MSTP student through the Graduate School Dean's office under unforeseen and/or extraordinary circumstances. Please contact the MSTP Director and/or Dr. Jeff Engler if you need to know more about this option.

***Travel Funds from the UASOM:*** The UASOM can often provide matching travel funds (up to \$1500) for MD or MD/PhD student travel, if your department also commits funds. Please see Steve Smith for details.

***Travel Funds from the UAB Graduate Student Association:*** Currently, each graduate student in good academic standing who will be enrolled at the time of travel **and** at the time of reimbursement is eligible for one Travel Award of up to \$400.00 each academic year if the student is presenting at a conference or is attending an off-site, non-UAB academic training session for which the student will receive UAB graduate course credit. See: <http://studentorgs.uab.edu/gsa/travelgrants/index.htm>

***Fellowship from the Medical Alumni Association:*** The Caduceus Club of The University of Alabama School of Medicine established the Student Travel Fellowship to provide unique study opportunities for selected medical student. Qualified medical students are encouraged to apply for these fellowships which provide transportation costs for pursuing the approved training program. The Caduceus Club, recognizing that training programs at other institutions in this country and abroad can contribute significantly to the development of health services in Alabama, wishes to aid and encourage University of Alabama School of Medicine students to seek such experiences. These experiences are expected to broaden the student's perspectives as

physicians:

<http://www.alabamamedicalalumni.org/index.php?submenu=travel&src=gendocs&link=Travel%20Fellowship%20Objective&category=About&PHPSESSID=0edc369986923da918e514966b649040>

## J. Health Insurance

Health Insurance coverage is continuous as long as you are active in the program, beginning in the middle of August. Graduate student trainees' health insurance is paid by the MSTP through the student's UAB account. The MSTP does not provide health insurance for any additional family members. If the student is eligible, they can apply for additional financial aid to cover this expense (see Section III.H).

## K. Parking Lot/Deck Assignments

Parking for MSTP students is determined by the SOM during your MS1, MS2, MS3, and MS4 years. **When in the MS-I, MS-II, and graduate years, you are assigned to Lot 15, which is general student parking.** However, you may pay an additional fee to park in a closer lot or deck. Please note Lot 5A is **not** included as an option. The graduate student parking assignment, as found on the Parking and Transportation Services Website (<http://www.uab.edu/parking/parking/students>), states:

“Graduate students can access the commuter student lots if they do not live on campus. In addition, graduate students can access the 9th Avenue deck (under construction), 10th Avenue deck, and 5th Avenue deck for a nominal additional fee. All of these facilities' permits are also honored in any commuter lot. Parking is assigned on a first-come, first-serve basis. If demand for deck parking exceeds availability, then a waiting list will be taken for the current academic year only.

After-hours parking is available for certain areas. After-hours is defined as 5 p.m. - 6 a.m. weekdays, and all day weekends. This access is free for any graduate student with a deck permit. For those in commuter or resident student facilities, a \$20 charge applies. Current after-hours locations are:

- University Boulevard Deck
- 5th Avenue Deck
- Lot 16A (Underneath Education Building)”

**Parking Lot 5A is reserved specifically for Medical/Dental/Optomety Students in their third year and above of training.** Parking assignments for 5A and any other medical school lot are handled by the Office of Medical Student Services. **Please do not contact the MSTP Office with a request for special parking privileges as we have no control over lot/deck assignments.**

## L. Recreation Center

The Recreation Center is accessible to all enrolled students and is charged to the student's account.

Medical Students are charged twice a year for the Recreation Center (Fall and Spring) at the same time Medical School tuition is charged. Fall charges are for access from July 1st through December 31st and spring charges are for access from January 1st through June 30th. **This also means that students transitioning from the medical to graduate years are covered during the summer prior to entering their Thesis Lab as it was paid at the same time as spring medical tuition.**

Graduate students are charged three times a year (Fall, Spring and Summer). **Students transitioning to clinic will not have any gap in their access. Regardless of the date of final defense, the Recreation Center fee charged on the student account during the last semester in graduate school will be valid until the end of that semester.**

### **M. Extracurricular Activities/Jobs**

Students in the UAB MSTP have made a full-time commitment to the program. Under normal circumstances, therefore, they are not permitted to have outside jobs.

Certain exceptions may be granted under the following circumstances:

- Tutoring
- ICM trainer for standardized patients
- Teaching assistant
- Teaching MCAT or GRE prep courses

**Students should notify the MSTP Director if they are involved or plan to become involved in any military/government activity that offers a stipend.**

**In all cases, students must fill out the UAB MSTP Extracurricular Activities/Jobs Form in Appendix II to get permission from the Director prior to engaging in any outside job activity.** Permission must be requested in writing for any activities not listed.

### **N. Student Program Responsibilities**

Students in the UAB MSTP are required to:

- Maintain an up-to-date student profile on the MSTP website
- Submit an updated C.V. and activities spreadsheet annually by July 15th
- Respond in a timely manner (**i.e. within 48 hours**) to all e-mail sent by the UAB MSTP staff and/or directors to your UAB account
- **Certify Effort Reports (or else students will not get paid)**
- Routinely monitor UAB and UASOM email accounts to ensure that your mailbox storage limit has not been exceeded

- Attend monthly MSTP Translational Medicine Research Seminars and the Annual MSTP Retreat or obtain excused absence prior to seminar/retreat date
- During graduate research years, schedule thesis update meetings every 6 months
- Submit a PDF copy of your PhD dissertation to the UAB MSTP Office once approved by the Graduate School for binding purposes
- Submit an electronic copy of the dissertation abstract to the UAB MSTP office within 2 weeks of a successful defense
- Maintain an acceptable level of academic performance in all Medical and Graduate courses
- Register for and complete the MSTP laboratory rotations within the required period;
- Participate in the annual Medical Student Research Day during the rotation and PhD dissertation phase of the program
- Maintain an appropriate level of professional behavior in all interactions with faculty, students, staff, and patients
- Adhere to all UAB and UASOM Policies on Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages, Chemical Substance Abuse and having a Drug-Free Campus. These policies are in effect at all UAB MSTP sponsored events, including, but not limited to, recruitment events and the annual retreat (See Appendices XV-XVII)

### **O. Recruitment Meal Guidelines**

We greatly encourage and need student participation in the recruitment process. We want the experience to be enjoyable for student and applicant alike. However, students participating in recruitment need to be familiar with the following guidelines; failure to adhere to these guidelines will likely result in only partial reimbursement of meal expenses.

For all restaurant meals – reimbursements will only cover the expense of the applicants and their student hosts. A list of attendees is always required for reimbursement.

#### **Tuesday/Thursday dinners**

##### When dining out:

- If dining out after applicants arrive in Birmingham it is preferred that when multiple applicants arrive near the same time as many hosts and applicants go to dinner together as possible.
- The price cap on entrees is \$15. A (non-alcoholic) beverage and dessert are allowed at an additional cost resulting in a final cost of no more than \$25/person.
- Appetizers are allowed with the following guidelines: One appetizer for every four-person party. If your party is less than four you are allowed one appetizer. If your party is more than four you are allowed one additional appetizer.

Think very carefully if you are considering taking someone to a restaurant not on the approved list and where more than a third of the menu items are over \$15. We do not want to tell an

applicant they “can’t” have something. Therefore, if you choose a pricier restaurant, be prepared to purchase for yourself a much less expensive meal if your applicant’s entrée is more than \$15 in order for the cost to average out. If you have any doubt, contact the MSTP office prior to taking an applicant to a restaurant.

When hosting a dinner at your home: The budget for dinners at a student home is \$10 to \$15 per/person with a limit of \$150 for food and non-alcoholic beverages. The number of attendees should be between 10 and 15. Alcohol is not included in this budget and will not be reimbursed for off-site meals.

## **P. Expectations for Professionalism**

In addition to the academic requirements discussed earlier, students are expected to maintain high standards of professionalism throughout their tenure in the MSTP and take an active role in program activities (e.g., recruiting, student committees). Among the criteria of professionalism is completing all of the requirements of the program detailed in this handbook (See Appendix VIII and information listed). If students demonstrate repeated episodes of unprofessional behavior, appropriate actions will be taken by the MSTP Director in consultation with the MSTP Advisory Committee. These may include (a) a letter to the student's permanent academic file indicating a lack of professionalism, (b) temporary suspension of the student's stipend, or (c) dismissal from the program. Similar to a letter from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs indicating a lack of professionalism on the part of a medical student, such a letter from the MSTP Director will be available to Residency programs and potential future employers.

## **IV. Appendices**

### Appendix I: UAB MSTP MS-I/MS-II Curriculum and Special Topics

#### Year 1 (2013-2014)

Week	Date	UASOM Course	GBS Course	ICM	Laboratory Rotation	
July 2013	29	PDS/Orientation		ICM	Continuation of Summer	
August	5	PDS/Orientation			Research Rotation	
	12	PDS/Orientation	GBS 707		ICM	on a part-time basis (optional)
	19	Fundamentals I				
	26	Fundamentals I				
September	02					
	09					
	16		GBS708			
	23		GBS 708			
	30	Fall Break				
October	07					
	14					
	21	Fundamentals II				
November	28	Fundamentals II				
	04					
	11					
	18					
	25					
December	02	Winter Break				
	09					
	16					
	23	Cardiovascular				
January 2014	30					
	06					
	13					
	20	Pulmonary				
February	27					
	03					
	10	Spring Break				
	17					
	24	Gastrointestinal				
	31					
April	07					
	14					
	21	Renal				
	28					
May	05					
	12	Summer Break				
	19					
	26					
June	02					
	09	Special Topics				
	16					

Year 2 (2013-20134)					
Week	Date	UASOM Course	GBS Course	ICM	Laboratory Rotation
July 2013	30	Special Topics		ICM	Summer Rotation I
August	6				
	13				
	20	MS/Skin			
	27				
September	03				
	10				
	17				
	24				
October	01	Neuroscience			
	08				
	15				
	22	Fall Break			
	29				
November	05				
	12				
	19				
	26				
	03				
December	10				
	17	Winter Break/Spec Topics			
	24	Winter Break			
	31	Winter Break			
January 2014	07	Heme/Onc	Spring Module 2		
	14				
	21				
	28				
February	04	Endocrine	Spring Module 3		
	11				
	18				
	25				
March	04	Reproductive	Spring Module 4		
	11				
	18				
	25	Integ/Test Prep/USMLE Step I			
April	01		Spring Module 5		
	08				
	15				
	22				
	29		Spring Break		
May	06	Block 6a	Spring Module 6 (Optional)		
	13				
	20				
	27				
June	03		Summer Break	Summer II (if no FM)	
	10				
	17				
	24				

**Years 3-8:**

<b>PhD Research (usually 3.5 years)</b>
Dissertation Research
Selected Advanced Graduate Courses
Journal Clubs and Seminars
MSTP Translational Research Seminar

<b>Clinical Rotations</b>	
<b>MS-III</b>	<b>MS-IV</b>
Family Medicine	Medicine AI
Internal Medicine	Additional AI
Pediatrics	Electives
Surgery	
Psychiatry	
Neurology	
OB/GYN	

For a detailed look at the 2013-2014 UASOM Curriculum Overview, please see:

<https://www.uab.edu/medicine/home/images/forms-documents/2013-2014-SOMAcademicCalendar.pdf>

## Appendix II: Forms for MSTP activities and transitions between phases of the Program

MSTP students must register for several special activities because these activities are not otherwise part of the Medical School or Graduate School requirements. For each rotation registration form, the names of at least three different Program Faculty members with whom the student has thoroughly discussed the possibility of a rotation must be listed. These registration forms are not complete until all of the required approvals are obtained. Students must anticipate the often significant time it may take to review these decisions with different Faculty members and ensure that this process is begun with sufficient time to complete the required registration by the stated deadline. Each of these steps is a core requirement of the program and failure to complete this registration by the specified deadline may result in disciplinary consequences as described in Section III of the handbook. Forms available in this section are listed below:

- Summer Rotation Selection Form for:
  - Pre-Summer rotation during MS-I year
  - Summer rotation after MS-I year
  - Summer rotation after MS-II year
- Thesis Lab Selection Form
- Senior Advisor Form
- Theme/PhD Program Selection Form
- Transition from Research Phase to Clinical Phase UAB MD/PhD Program (Please note this form is due **3 months** prior to return)
- Clinical Planning Worksheet
- Student Evaluation of Lab Rotations
- Evaluation Form for Lab Rotation Mentors
- Student Evaluation of Thesis Lab
- Evaluation Form for Thesis Research Mentor
- Evaluation Form for Thesis Research Committee Meetings
- Extracurricular Activities/Jobs Form
- Parental Leave of Absence Form

Additional information concerning the return to the clinical phase is detailed in Appendix IV of this handbook. Copies of each of these forms for the coming academic year are provided on the succeeding pages. Because the specific due dates change with every calendar year, the specific forms to be used are available under the Resources section of the MSTP Website.

# Medical Scientist Training Program Summer Rotation Selection Form

**Student Name** (print): \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select to which rotation this form applies below:**

- Pre-MS-I Summer Rotation: Form Due **6/3/2013**
- Summer Rotation Selection (between MS-I & MS-II): Form Due **5/1/2013**
- Summer Rotation Selection (between MS-II & GS-I): Form Due **5/1/2013**

**I have discussed rotation projects with the following UAB Faculty members** (at least 3):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After discussion with the MSTP Director and/or my MSTP Mentor and these Faculty members, **I have chosen** \_\_\_\_\_ to be my supervisor for my MSTP Lab Rotation. I expect to devote full time effort to this rotation for:

- Pre-MS-I: 6 weeks between June 17, 2013 and July 28, 2013\*
- Between MS-I & MS-II: 8 weeks between June 10, 2013 and August 19, 2013
- Between MS-II & GS-I: 8-10 weeks between July 1, 2013 and August 31, 2013 Family
- Between MS-II & GS-I: 8-10 weeks between June 3, 2013 and August 11, 2013 Non-Family

I understand that I must develop a poster for the UAB Medical Student Research Day based on my work in this rotation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

**Research Mentor:**

I accept responsibility for guiding this student for this 6-10 week period. I will submit a brief confidential evaluation of the student's effort at the end of the rotation. The MSTP pays the student's stipend and tuition during the rotation. I am responsible to pay for lab supplies needed during the rotation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Summer Research Mentor** (please sign and print your name)      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
**APPROVED BY: MSTP Mentor** (please sign and print your name)      Date\*\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
**APPROVED BY: MSTP Director or Associate Director**

- For Pre-MS-I Summer Rotations if your class load permits, you can continue with this research during Fundamentals I.
- \*\* Not applicable for Pre-MS-I Summer Rotation Selections

## Medical Scientist Training Program Thesis Lab Selection Form

*Due two weeks before the completion of the final rotation*

**Student Name** (print your name): \_\_\_\_\_

After discussion with both my MSTP mentor and my proposed Research mentor, I have chosen \_\_\_\_\_ to be my Research mentor until the completion of my PhD degree.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

### Research Mentor:

I have reviewed the requirements and expectations of the UAB Medical Scientist Training Program (**listed below**) and accept the responsibility for mentoring this student in completion of the requirements for their PhD. I agree to:

- 1) Chair the student's dissertation committee and ensure that one committee meeting will be held every 6 months. The first meeting should occur before March 1, 2014.
- 2) Help complete a written report on the student's progress after each committee meeting.
- 3) Provide financial support for 100% of the student's annual stipend after their first full year in the laboratory, starting 9/1/14. I understand that the MSTP will pay 100% of the student's annual stipend during their first research year (9/1/13-8/31/14) and all of the student tuition and fees for 4 years. I will continue to pay 100% of their stipend until the student returns to UAB clinical rotations. If the student has not completed the PhD by August 31, 2017 (four years), I agree to provide 100% of the student's stipend, tuition, and fees until the dissertation is complete. I understand that the student's MSTP mentor will be a full member of the student's dissertation committee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Research Mentor** (please sign and print your name) Date

I support the acceptance of this student into the \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Graduate Program Director** (please sign and print your name) Date

Our department will financially support the student if the mentor cannot.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Primary Department Chair** (please sign and print your name) Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Division Director (if applicable, (please sign and print your name) Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED BY: **MSTP Mentor** (please sign and print your name) Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED BY: **MSTP Director** (please sign and print your name) Date

**Guidelines for MSTP Students entering laboratories with MSTP Junior Faculty Members**

*MSTP Junior Faculty Members are young faculty with strong research track records, but who have not yet trained a PhD student.*

At the time of choosing the lab for their PhD Thesis, the MSTP student (after discussion with the MSTP Junior Faculty Member) will identify an experienced MSTP Faculty Member who is willing, in principle, to serve as a senior advisor. These senior advisors will be expected to actively interact with the MSTP student and be available when necessary. This senior advisor must be on the student’s thesis committee and should assist (as needed) in overseeing both the student’s program of study and their research activities. The senior advisor should also help the MSTP Junior Faculty Member when questions arise about graduate curriculum, thesis requirements, and graduate student oversight. The senior advisor will have no financial responsibility for the MSTP student, but should be willing to be listed as a co-mentor on any individual fellowship applications and to help critique these applications.

-----  
I have read the responsibilities listed above and I agree to be the senior advisor for

\_\_\_\_\_.

(Student’s name).

I understand that he/she will be entering the laboratory of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Faculty member’s name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Senior Advisor Printed Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Senior Advisor Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(MSTP Student Signature & Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(MSTP Junior Faculty Signature & Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(MSTP Director Signature & Date)

**Medical Scientist Training Program**  
**Graduate Theme/PhD Program Selection Form**  
Due: First Week of August

**Student Name** (print): \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please select the theme or PhD program in which you will complete your thesis work:**

- Biochemistry & Structural Biology
- Cancer Biology
- Cell, Molecular, and Developmental Biology (CMDB)
- Genetics and Genomic Sciences
- Immunology
- Microbiology
- Neuroscience
- Pathobiology & Molecular Medicine
- Biomedical Engineering
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I must complete all coursework, qualifying exam  
, and thesis dissertation requirements as required by the selected theme for MD/PhD students.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

**Theme Director:**

I acknowledge that I have discussed the theme specific requirements with this MSTP student. I also acknowledge that I have received the "Guidelines for MSTP students as they join the GBS Themes". This student will be added to all theme specific communications (including mailing, Email, and course websites) and will be encouraged to participate in all theme activities, including recruitment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Theme Director** (please sign and print your name) Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED BY: **MSTP Mentor** (please sign and print your name) Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
APPROVED BY: **MSTP Director or Associate Director** Date

## Transition from Research Phase to Clinical Phase UAB MD/PhD Program

This form is to be filed with the MD/PhD program office at least three months prior to the expected completion of the PhD Dissertation and is required in order to make final plans with the UAB School of Medicine Office of Medical Student Services to begin clinical rotations.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Graduate Theme/Department:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Dissertation (Private Defense) is expected to be complete:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Clinical Rotations will begin:** \_\_\_\_\_

- I have discussed the specific clinical clerkship preferences with both the Director of the Medical Scientist Training program and the Associate Dean for Students and have made definitive plans to complete my PhD dissertation with my Research mentor and Dissertation committee.
- I plan to complete my Dissertation and will have fulfilled all the requirements for the PhD by the date specified above. The graduate office in my Department is aware of these plans and is in full agreement with my expected date of completion. I understand that I am responsible for obtaining official notification of defense from my graduate program and providing this certification to the office of the MSTP at least 1 month prior to my defense.
- I plan to formally return from my "Leave of Absence" from the Medical School and begin clinical rotations on the date specified above. If for any reason, the plans for completion of my PhD by the date indicated above change, I will immediately contact both the MD/PhD program office and the School of Medicine Registrar to reschedule the clinical Clerkships. I understand that I must complete all requirements for the PhD prior to beginning any clinical Clerkship.

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Thesis Mentor**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**UAB MSTP Director**

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**UAB Associate Dean for Medical Students**

## Clinical Planning Worksheet (2013-2015)

## FIRST CHOICE

Block	Date	Testing Requirements / Residency Interviews	1 <sup>st</sup> month	2 <sup>nd</sup> month
<b>2013-2014</b>				
<b>I (2012)</b>	7/13-7/28 7/29-8/25			
<b>II</b>	8/26-9/22 9/23-10/20			
<b>Scholars</b>	10/21-10/27			
<b>III</b>	10/28-11/24 11/25-12/22			
<b>Scholars</b>	12/23-1/5			
<b>Break</b>	1/6-2/2 2/3-3/2			
<b>IV (2013)</b>	3/3-3/30 3/31-4/27			
<b>V</b>	4/28-5/4			
<b>Scholars/ Transition</b>	5/5-6/1 6/2-6/29			
<b>VI</b>	7/13-7/28 7/29-8/25			
<b>2014-2015</b>				
<b>I (2013)</b>				
<b>II</b>				
<b>Scholars</b>				
<b>III</b>				
<b>Break</b>				
<b>IV (2014)</b>				
<b>V</b>				
<b>Scholars/ Transition</b>				
<b>VI</b>				

## Testing Requirements:

**\*USMLE Step 2:** An attempt to pass the USMLE Step 2 written examination must be no less than three months before the anticipated diploma date. Failure to meet this deadline will subject the M.D. candidate to a possible delay in their diploma date. The USMLE Step 2 written examination must be passed within six months after the first diploma date at which the student would be eligible for graduation. Failure to record a passing score on the USMLE Step 2 by this deadline will be grounds for academic dismissal from the School of Medicine.

**USMLE Step 2CK:** It is UASOM Policy that straight MD student's must complete all required MS-III Clerkships prior to attempting UAMLE Step 2CK. This policy is waived for MSTP students, although there is a strong recommendation to attempt to complete the majority of your required Clerkships prior to taking this exam.

**USMLE Clinical Skills Examination:** All students must take, but not pass the USMLE CSE as a graduation requirement. It is strongly recommended that all students schedule the USMLE CSE at least 3 months prior to the anticipated graduation date. The USMLE CSE must be taken within six months after the first diploma date at which the student would be eligible for graduation. Failure to take the USMLE CSE by this deadline will be grounds for academic dismissal from the School of Medicine.

**Note:** The policy at UAB and many other hospitals is, loosely speaking, that you must take the Step 2 CS before starting residency, but you do not need to have your score reported before you start. **However**, we have heard from several graduates who have recently gone through the residency application process that several of the more competitive programs are requiring the results of Step 2 **before** they will rank applicants to their residency programs.

## UAB GBS/MSTP Student Evaluation of Lab Rotations

Page 1 of this evaluation **will** be shared with mentors

**Due: 10 days after the end of each rotation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Term (check one):  Pre- Summer Rotation  1<sup>st</sup> Summer Rotation  2<sup>nd</sup> Summer Rotation

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_

This evaluation form is provided for two reasons

- 1) To assist your fellow students in choosing labs for rotations, and
- 2) To provide feedback to the faculty so they can provide the best possible environment for rotation students.

**Please evaluate your rotation experience in each category as follows:**

**Excellent (1), Good (2), Average (3), Poor (4).**

1. Explanation of the scientific basis of the rotation project. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Opportunity to discuss broader scientific areas related to your project. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Opportunity to discuss technical aspects of the project during the rotation. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Overall quality of learning experience during this rotation. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Other Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Rotation Student**

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

*Please note that the amount of time each faculty member can spend with a student varies. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback as to the overall quality of the learning experience you received. Also note that the completed evaluation form will not be returned to your rotation advisor until after your final grade has been assigned.*

## UAB GBS/MSTP Student Evaluation of Lab Rotations

Page 2 of this evaluation **will not** be shared with mentors

**Due: 10 days after the end of each rotation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Term (check one):  Pre- Summer Rotation  1<sup>st</sup> Summer Rotation  2<sup>nd</sup> Summer Rotation

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following question as honestly as possible.**

Would you recommend a rotation in this laboratory to others? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Rotation Student**

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

## UAB GBS/MSTP Evaluation Form for Lab Rotation Mentors

Page 1 of this evaluation **will** be shared with the student

**Due 10 Days following the end of the rotation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_ Start date in your lab: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor, please note:** *It is critical for the student's development as a scientist that you be as honest and objective as possible in this evaluation.* Evaluate the student in each category as follows: Excellent (1), Good (2), Average (3), Poor (4), Not Observed (X).

- |                                                                        |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Spends adequate time in the laboratory to accomplish research goals | _____ |
| 2. Understands laboratory problems, procedures, and equipment          | _____ |
| 3. Performs laboratory skills with a reasonable level of proficiency   | _____ |
| 4. Designs experiments with adequate controls                          | _____ |
| 5. Plans a series of experiments logically                             | _____ |
| 6. Keeps adequate laboratory records                                   | _____ |
| 7. Ability to evaluate experimental results                            | _____ |
| 8. Receptiveness to suggestions and critical comments                  | _____ |
| 9. Capacity for self-expression and communication                      | _____ |
| 10. Ability to get along with co-workers                               | _____ |

11. If adequate space and funding are available, would you be willing to accept this student into your laboratory? (Y/N)\_\_\_\_\_

12. Significant problems or areas of concern. Are there any significant problems that may adversely affect the student's progress in the program, either currently or on the horizon? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Include personal problems, lack of focus or diligence on student's part, and/or scientific difficulties (e.g. project not proceeding as well as you planned, project too hard/risky for this student, student pursuing too many different issues without adequate prioritization).*

13. Provide a brief overview (3-4 sentences) of your student's project and progress to date.

14. Additional comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Lab Rotation Mentor** (please sign and print your name)

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

## UAB GBS/MSTP Evaluation Form for Lab Rotation Mentors

Page 2 of this Evaluation is Confidential and **will not** to be shared with the student

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_ Start date in your lab: \_\_\_\_\_

Significant problems or areas of concern that were not outlined on page 1 of this evaluation. Are there any significant problems that may adversely affect the student's progress in the program, either currently or on the horizon? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

*(Include personal problems, lack of focus or diligence on student's part, and/or scientific difficulties (e.g. project not proceeding as well as you planned, project too hard/risky for this student, student pursuing too many different issues without adequate prioritization).*

If yes, please advise the actions being taken to overcome these problems.

Additional comments

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Lab Rotation Mentor** (please sign and print your name)

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

## UAB GBS/MSTP Student Evaluation of Thesis Lab

Page 1 of this evaluation **will** be shared with mentors

**Due: 10 days after the private defense date**

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

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PhD Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates Evaluation Covers:** \_\_\_\_\_

This evaluation form is provided for two reasons:

1. To assist your fellow students in choosing labs for rotations and thesis work, and
2. To provide feedback to the faculty so they can provide the best possible environment for MSTP students.

**Please evaluate your experience in each category as follows:**

**Excellent (1), Good (2), Average (3), Poor (4).**

1. Explanation of the scientific basis of the thesis project. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Opportunity to discuss broader scientific areas related to your project. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Opportunity to discuss technical aspects of the project. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Overall quality of learning experience. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Other Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of MSTP Student**

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

*Please note that the amount of time each faculty member can spend with a student varies. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide feedback as to the overall quality of the learning experience you received. Also note that the completed evaluation form will not be returned to your advisor until after you finish in the lab.*

## UAB GBS/MSTP Student Evaluation of Thesis Lab

Page 2 of this evaluation **will not** be shared with mentors

**Due: 10 days after the private defense date**

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

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PhD Program:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates Evaluation Covers:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following question as honestly as possible.**

Would you recommend a thesis project in this laboratory to others? (Y/N) \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of MSTP Student**

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

# UAB GBS/MSTP Evaluation Form for Thesis Research Mentors

Page 1 of this evaluation **will be** shared with the student

**Due: 10 days after the Public Defense**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_ Start date in your lab: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor, please note:** *It is critical for the student's development as a scientist that you be as honest and objective as possible in this evaluation.* Evaluate the student in each category as follows: Excellent (1), Good (2), Average (3), Poor (4), Not Observed/Not Applicable (NA).

- 1) Spent adequate time in the laboratory to accomplish research goals \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Understood laboratory problems, procedures, and equipment \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Performed laboratory skills with a reasonable level of proficiency \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) Designed experiments with adequate controls \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Can plan a series of experiments logically \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Kept adequate laboratory records \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) Ability to evaluate experimental results \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Receptiveness to suggestions and critical comments \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Capacity for self-expression and communication \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Ability to get along with co-workers \_\_\_\_\_

Date of final Defense: \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief overview (3-4 sentences) of your student's project (or attach the dissertation abstract):

Expectations for upcoming accomplishments – papers still to be published, meetings to attend, etc.:

Additional comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Research Mentor** (please sign and print your name)

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

## Annual UAB MSTP Evaluation Form for Thesis Research Mentors

Page 2 of this Evaluation is Confidential and **will not** to be shared with the student

**Due: 30 days after Public Defense**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mentor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Evaluation Covers: \_\_\_\_\_ Start date in your lab: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any significant problems that may adversely affect the student's progress in the program, either currently or on the horizon? (Include personal problems, lack of focus or diligence on student's part, and/or scientific difficulties, e.g. project not proceeding as well as you planned, project too hard/risky for this student, student pursuing too many different issues without adequate prioritization). (Y/N)\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe and advise the actions being taken to overcome these problems:

Additional comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Research Mentor** (please sign and print your name)

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

## UAB GBS/MSTP Evaluation Form for Thesis Research Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings are to be held every **6 months**. This form is to be completed and turned into the MSTP Office within **one week** of the committee meeting.

It is the **responsibility of the UAB MSTP student** to ensure the student and thesis mentor sections are completed and signed prior to delivery to the MSTP Mentor for completion of the final page. MSTP Mentors, please ensure the signed and completed form (all sections) is returned to the MSTP office.

### **TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MSTP STUDENT**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Committee Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Theme/Department Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee Members Present for this Meeting:

Committee Members Absent from this Meeting:

This meeting is a (check one):

- Initial Meeting
- Qualifying exam/admission to candidacy
- Progress report
- Private defense

1. Have you completed any coursework since the last committee meeting? If yes what were the course(s)?
  
2. Please list any courses you still need to complete for your PhD requirements:
  
3. List the goals outlined you from the previous committee meeting:
  
4. What was your progress in reaching these goals? Clearly indicate which goals were met and those that were not (if not, why).

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE THESIS MENTOR**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Thesis Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Theme/Department Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Was a date for expected PhD completion discussed?  Y  N

If yes, what was anticipated date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did the Committee feel that the degree of progress made since the last meeting was acceptable (if not, please elaborate)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Was additional course work suggested for the student? If yes what is/are the course(s)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Did the student publish any manuscripts since the last committee meeting? If so, please list. If no, when is the next publications anticipated.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. List the specific goals and recommendations outlined by the committee for the student to address by their next committee meeting.

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**MSTP Student Signature**

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

Please return completed form via email (mstp@uab.edu) or intercampus mail to SHEL121H, zip 2181, 205.934.4092.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE MSTP MENTOR (Confidential)**

**NOTE: this part of the form does not need to be completed by the Thesis Mentor unless some confidential information needs to be reported to the MSTP.**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MSTP Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Theme/Department Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Overall, is the student's progress consistent with the committee's and programmatic expectations for a PhD project (if not, please elaborate)?

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

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

MSTP Mentors, please return completed form via email (mstp@uab.edu) or intercampus mail to SHEL121H, zip 2181, 205.934.4092.

## UAB MSTP Extracurricular Activities/Jobs Form

This form must be submitted for approval to the MSTP Director **prior** to engaging in any outside activities not listed below (See Section III.J)

- Tutoring
- ICM trainer for standardized patients
- Teaching assistant
- Teaching MCAT or GRE prep courses

I, \_\_\_\_\_, would like to engage in the following outside job activity.  
(Student's name)

Please describe:

---

---

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date Submitted to Director**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Approved by MSTP Director**

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

## UAB MSTP Parental Leave of Absence Request

**Date:**

To Whom It May Concern:

This form is to request a parental leave of absence for a qualified event under the Parental Medical Leave policy found in the MSTP Handbook.

I expect that my leave will begin on \_\_\_\_\_ and continue through \_\_\_\_\_.

I understand that parental leave of absence is approved for 30 consecutive days per calendar year with pay upon the birth or adoption of a child. If I exceed the allotted time given, I will be moved to unpaid status until my return to UAB and MSTP.

Additionally, I understand that the Graduate School and the SOM have different policies surrounding parental LOA and that MSTP will impose the most relevant policy depending on my current student status upon the birth or adoption of a child.

Sincerely,

---

**Student's Name** (please sign and print your name) Date

---

**Theme or Department Affiliation**

---

APPROVED BY: **Mentor** (please sign and print your name) Date

---

APPROVED BY: **MSTP Director** (please sign and print your name) Date

## **Appendix III-A: Requirements for the PhD degree awarded by different participating Graduate Themes**

All incoming MSTP students will take the common course, GBS 700-Basic Biomedical Science (syllabi can be found at [www.mstp.uab.edu](http://www.mstp.uab.edu) or [www.gbs.uab.edu](http://www.gbs.uab.edu)).

GBS 707: Basic Biochemistry and Metabolism

GBS 708: Basic Genetics and Molecular Biology

MSTP Students are not required to take any GBS coursework Nov-Dec and Spring of the MS-I year or the Fall of the MS-II year.

### **General requirements for first year students (MSTP MS-I/II):**

1. Students making a C in a first-year GBS course must retake the course.
2. Receiving a C in the same course twice (or failing to complete the same course twice) will result in dismissal from the GBS program.
3. 3 Cs in any combination of first year courses will result in dismissal from GBS program.
4. Students must achieve B or better in all required first year courses of his/her selected theme before advancing to the qualifying exam in that theme.
5. A working knowledge of the content of the 3 core topics is expected of all GBS students. If a student does not pass any of the 3 core 1 (Fall semester) courses, he/she will be required to re-take that course. If a passing grade is not obtained in the second attempt, the student will be dismissed from the GBS program.
6. Appeals for student continuation when the guidelines described above recommend dismissal will be made at the theme director's discretion. All appeals must be forwarded to the Theme Directors Liaison Committee for a final judgment to ensure consistency among themes.
7. The Biostatistics course will be offered over a 9-week period in the summer. The Bioethics course will run concurrently for 4 weeks.

### **General requirements for 2nd year and beyond (MSTP GS-I):**

1. 9 credit hours of advanced courses (e.g., 3 courses) will be required for students in all GBS themes.
2. The mentor and the student's thesis committee will decide the appropriateness of all advanced courses taken by each student.
3. Students will be allowed to take additional first-year theme-specific courses offered as advanced courses in the spring semester to help satisfy the advanced course requirement. Additional requirements for advanced course status will be determined by the relevant coursemaster.
4. The Graduate School requires that 48 credit hours should be completed prior to admission to candidacy. GBS students taking the standard course load (9 credit hours during both the fall and spring semesters and 9 credit hours during the summer) will fulfill this requirement before the end of the second year.
5. Participation in a journal club will be required for all GBS students in both the Fall and Spring semesters until graduation.

Note that individual themes may have additional requirements for their participating students.

### Guidelines for MSTP students as they join the GBS Themes:

1. **MS2 MSTP** students will choose a **theme-specific curriculum track** in the late Fall of their 2nd year in the MSTP (i.e., their 2nd year in medical school). The theme-specific curriculum track choice deadline is typically November 1st. They commence with their theme-specific coursework in spring of their MS2 year. An e-mail will be sent in November to the theme managers notifying them of those MSTP students who have chosen their theme-based curriculum track.

#### MSTP Office:

- Will obtain these choices from the MSTP students and transmit these choices to the Theme and to GBS Data Support.
- At the time of theme selection, the MSTP will submit to the appropriate themes a student fact sheet.
- The MSTP will inform the student that they need to meet with theme manager and/or director to review required and/or recommended courses and sequence prior to registration for Spring term (i.e., typically by early Nov, in advance of registration for Spring courses. The MSTP will communicate this date to MSTP students). After this meeting, the student will promptly communicate the agreed upon courses to MSTP, confirmed with the theme.
- All MSTP emails to MSTP students who have a theme affiliation, **which discuss theme information or requirements** will be copied to the appropriate theme(s).
- Obtain course descriptions of GBS courses taken by MSTP students and transmit those GBS course descriptions to the UASOM for inclusion in the Medical School course catalog.
- The MSTP office will facilitate obtaining signatures on the UASOM grade sheets from the course-masters and transmitting them to the UASOM.

#### Theme Directors/Administrators:

- After this notification, the theme manager should immediately initiate welcome contact with MSTP student, cc'd to mstp@uab.edu.
  - GBS Bioethics – MSTP students are required to take this, but due to medical school conflicts, they cannot take it the summer of their MS2 year. In general, they will take this course during or shortly after their GS1 year (their 3rd year in the MSTP)
  - GBS Biostatistics – MSTP students are required to take this course as a minimum. Again they would take this course during or shortly after their GS1 year. Some MSTP students may opt to take a more intensive biostatistics course and that will be approved by the MSTP office and that approval transmitted to the specific theme involved
  - Neuroscience Theme: GBS 732 (Graduate Neuroscience) - MSTP Students are only required to take the discussion section of this course (GBS 791). For GBS737 (Student Summer Seminar) - MSTP students will be required to take this course as per theme requirements, but will be excused for the month of June following the MS2 year, if the student is enrolled in a Family Medicine clerkship. The MSTP will notify the Neuroscience Administrator of the names of the students for which this exception needs to apply.
  - All Themes: MS2 MSTP students cannot take any required coursework during the month of May due to the UASOM requirement for USMLE Step I.

- All required theme GS1 coursework (Spring and Fall) must be taught in the 8-10am timeslot to accommodate the concurrent medical school coursework that the MSTP students are also required to take.
2. Once MSTP students start their GS1 year, they are required to follow all theme requirements for advanced coursework and qualifying exams. The MSTP students have several additional requirements:
- MSTP students typically perform 3 research rotations, 1) summer before MS1 yr; 2) summer following MS1; and 3) summer following MS2 (some MSTP MS2s will choose to do a Family Medicine rotation, which will delay this third research rotation by one month. MSTP students can directly enter a thesis lab after two rotations with MSTP Director permission.
  - MSTP students register for either MSTP 798 (non-dissertation research) or MSTP 799 (dissertation research), in accord with MSTP NIH T32 program guidance.
  - The deadline for MSTP students to select their thesis mentor and final theme affiliation is 2 weeks before the end of their third rotation (summer after their second year of medical school). This is usually in mid-August. Mentor choices will be communicated promptly to the theme and to GBS Data Support.
  - MSTP students are required to set up a meeting with the Theme Director within one month of choosing a theme/laboratory.
  - MSTP students must form their dissertation committees within 6-months of joining their laboratories and they must have dissertation committee meetings every 6-months.
  - The MSTP office will help the student create and process the Graduate Committee Selection Form, Change in Graduate Committee Form, the Admission to Candidacy form, and the Application for Degree Forms. The Graduate School has agreed to copy the mentor, theme, and MSTP, once the forms are approved by the Graduate School Dean's Office.
  - The MSTP office tracks committee meetings and reminds students/mentors.
  - MSTP students have to fill out a report following each dissertation committee meeting. The MSTP office tracks these reports and reminds students/mentors if they are not received. The MSTP office will provide copies of these reports to the respective student's theme administrators for their files.
3. The MSTP students have several additional requirements:
- MSTP students are required to have their assigned MSTP mentor on their Thesis Committee.
  - The MSTP Mentor can either be an ex officio member or a full member of the Dissertation Committee.
  - Other MSTP-specific requirements, including required MSTP events and MSTP-specific courses are listed below:
    - MSTP 794: Translational Research Seminar (required every semester-Fall, Spring, Summer) (2nd Wednesday of each month, 5:30-7pm)

- MSTP 795: Continuing Clinical Education (will be taken periodically in upper GS years) (offered Fall/Spring semester)(requires clinical experiences that will be scheduled around the attending and student's schedules, as well as a translational JC which occurs on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 12-1)
- MSTP Retreat (on a summer weekend in June or July)

### General Qualifying Exam/Thesis Committee Guidelines:

1. All GBS student are required to pass a qualifying exam prior to being considered for admission to candidacy (**deviation from these guidelines are on a theme-by-theme basis**).
2. Students must successfully complete all first year course requirements of their chosen theme before scheduling the qualifying exam.
3. After selecting a lab, a thesis committee should be formed to administer the qualifying exam and guide the student in selecting an appropriate program of advanced courses, seminars, and independent study. This program will be designed to meet the student's specific needs and satisfy GBS Program and Graduate School requirements.
4. The qualifying exam will entail both a written research proposal and an oral defense of this proposal.
5. Ph.D. students should form their thesis committee during the second year of study in the GBS program; MSTP students should form their committee during the third year of study in the GBS program. Ph.D. students should schedule their qualifying exam as early as possible in their 3rd year, while MSTP students should schedule their qualifying exam as early as possible in their 4th year.
6. Determining Graduate Committee Composition:
  - a. The student and advisor should jointly agree on the graduate committee membership.
  - b. The advisor should submit those recommendations for committee membership to their GBS Theme Director for approval.
  - c. The Theme Director will then submit those recommendations to the Graduate School Dean for final approval. The Graduate School Dean, who is an *ex officio* member of all graduate student committees, is ultimately responsible for all graduate committee appointments.
7. The Qualifying Exam/Thesis Committee will include five faculty members (including the mentor). At least one committee member should have a primary theme affiliation that differs from the student's chosen theme. All committee members should bring some relevant insight and expertise to guide the student.
8. The student is required to meet with his/her thesis committee at least once per year during years 2-4 in the GBS program and every 6 months after that.
9. A Master's Degree in Basic Medical Science (MSBMS) can be awarded under unusual circumstances to students **leaving the GBS program** who have successfully completed all of the course work requirements (first year and advanced courses) and the qualifying examination. Please refer to specific guidelines set by the UAB Graduate School for awarding the MSBMS. Specific requirements (defending a Master's thesis and/or first author publication) for completing the MSBMS will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the student's mentor, student's thesis committee if one has been formed, and the Theme director.

### Qualifying Exam Guidelines:

1. Students should have at least one thesis committee meeting before the qualifying exam to approve the planned topic of their thesis research.
2. Completion of a grant-writing course before the qualifying exam will be encouraged but not required.

3. A committee member other than the mentor will coordinate and chair the qualifying exam. The chair should be selected by agreement of the student and mentor.
4. Each examination committee will decide the extent to which the mentor participates in the qualifying exam. If the mentor does participate in the oral examination, it is recommended that he/she only be allowed to ask questions and not otherwise contribute to the discussion.
5. The qualifying exam will be written on the topic of the student's proposed thesis research. The written proposal should follow the new NIH R01 format (one page for Specific Aims; 12 pages for Research Strategy; and a Literature Cited section).
6. The mentor and other committee members are encouraged to provide only general guidance and advice to the student as he/she writes the proposal.
7. A draft of the proposal should be provided to each committee member for his/her review at least two weeks prior to the scheduled committee meeting (i.e., 2 weeks before the scheduled oral defense of the proposal).
8. It is the responsibility of the committee members to notify the student and mentor if the written proposal is unacceptable prior to the oral defense meeting. If so, the student will be allowed one attempt to revise the written proposal. If the revision is also unacceptable, the student will fail the qualifying exam.
9. Upon approval of the written proposal by each committee member, the student may proceed with the oral defense of the proposal before the committee.
10. During the oral phase of the qualifying exam the committee members may ask questions that extend beyond the scope of the proposal to gauge the student's general comprehension and critical thinking skills.
11. Following the oral defense, the committee may recommend corrections to the written proposal. The student should complete the corrections and re-submit the revised proposal to the committee within a month of the defense.
12. If the student fails the oral defense, he/she will be allowed one more attempt to pass the oral component of the qualifying exam within 2 months of the initial defense.
13. Students that fail either the written or oral components of the qualifying exam twice will be dismissed from the GBS program.
14. Upon successful completion of both the written proposal and oral defense, the student may apply for candidacy.
15. Each examination committee has the option of preparing written critiques of the proposal, as would an NIH study section. This could entail providing the student with brief written critiques in bullet-style format with criterion scores on the 1-9 scale currently used by NIH study sections. The committee will decide whether to prepare written critiques before the student begins writing the proposal.
16. It is understood that the aims of the qualifying exam proposal do not constitute a binding contract for the successful completion of the thesis project.

**Please check with the theme manager of your chosen track to ascertain which courses are required as opposed to recommended.**

### ***Biochemistry & Structural Biology (BSB)***

- **Contact Information**
  - Tim Townes, PhD, Theme Director, [townes@uab.edu](mailto:townes@uab.edu)
  - Dianne Vickers, Program Manager, [dvickers@uab.edu](mailto:dvickers@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 781: Molecular Enzymology (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 783: RNA Biology (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 782: Molecular Genetics (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 784: Stem Cell Bio (2 hrs)
  - Year 3 and beyond
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775: Biometry (3 hrs)
    - Choose Thesis Committee
    - Thesis Research, plus 4 advanced courses
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense

### ***Cancer Biology***

- **Contact Information**
  - Rosa Serra, PhD, Theme Director, [rserra@uab.edu](mailto:rserra@uab.edu)
  - Theresa Strong, PhD, Co-Director, [tvstrong@uab.edu](mailto:tvstrong@uab.edu)
  - Patricia Matthews, Program Manager, [pml@uab.edu](mailto:pml@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS 707, 708 Core Courses (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 720: Genomic Structure/Function (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 774: Cancer Immunology (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 770: Pathogenesis/biology (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 753 Pharmacology & Molecular Medicine (2 hrs)
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775 Biometry (3hrs)
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense
    - Thesis Research, plus 3 advanced courses
    - Seminar and Journal Club required each semester from the 3rd year until completion of the program

## ***Cell, Molecular and Developmental Biology (CMDB)***

- **Contact Information**
  - Brad Yoder, PhD, Theme Director, [byoder@uab.edu](mailto:byoder@uab.edu)
  - Alecia Gross, PhD, Co-Director, [agross@uab.edu](mailto:agross@uab.edu)
  - Nan Travis, Program Manager, [ntravis@uab.edu](mailto:ntravis@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - After completion of the GBS core course work, students will begin selecting modules from among the themes within the GBS. Students may choose from any of the GBS upper-level course electives. One sequence could be: GBS 720: Genomic Struc/Func; 2) GBS 712: Cell/Mole Asp Dev Bio; 3) GBS 714: Dev Neuroscience; 4) GBS 784: Stem Cell Bio; or 5) GBS 750: Nerves, Muscles, and Bones.
    - Spring-flexible choice of 4 GBS theme-sponsored modules
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775 Biometry (3hrs)
    - Thesis Research, plus 3 advanced courses
    - Course in scientific writing and grantsmanship
    - Each semester students choose a seminar and journal club of their choice
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense (By beginning of Year 3)

## ***Genetics and Genomic Sciences (GGS)***

- **Contact Information**
  - Daniel Bullard, PhD, Theme Director, [dcbullard@uab.edu](mailto:dcbullard@uab.edu)
  - Nan Travis, Program Manager, [ntravis@uab.edu](mailto:ntravis@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 720: Genomic Struc/Func (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 722: Bioinformatics (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 721: Genetic Epidemiology (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 723: Model Sys for Gen/Epigen Analys (2hrs)
    - 3 lab rotations and select dissertation advisor
    - Summer-Lab rotation or Nondissertation Research
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3<sup>rd</sup> Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775 Biometry (3hrs)
    - Thesis Research, plus 3 advanced courses
    - Grant Writing course
    - Each semester students choose a seminar and journal club of their choice
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense

## ***Immunology***

- **Contact Information**
  - Pete Burrows, PhD, Theme Director, [peterb@uab.edu](mailto:peterb@uab.edu)
  - Scott Barnum, PhD, Co-Director, [sbarnum@uab.edu](mailto:sbarnum@uab.edu)
  - Kym Proctor, Program Manager, [kproctor@uab.edu](mailto:kproctor@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (6 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 745: Neuroimmunology (2-3 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 741: Lymphocyte Bio(2-3 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 744: Mucosal Imm (2-3 hrs)
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775 Biometry (3hrs)
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense
    - GRD 701 Presentation and Discussion Skills (3rd year – offered fall and spring)
    - MIC 710 Development of Communication Skills for Biological Research (4th year)
    - Grant Writing course
    - Each semester students choose a seminar and journal club based on their specific interests
    - Complete 3 advanced courses in areas relevant to the student's area of interest

## ***Microbiology***

- **Contact Information**
  - Janet Yother, PhD, Theme Director, [jyother@uab.edu](mailto:jyother@uab.edu)
  - Kym Proctor, Program Manager, [kproctor@uab.edu](mailto:kproctor@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (6 hrs) and GBS 768: Communicating Science(2 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 760: Prokar Gene & Mole Bio (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 762: Virology (2-3 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 763: Microbial Pathogen (2-3 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 764: Structural Bio (2-3 hrs)
  - Year 3 onward
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775: Biometry (3hrs)
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense (during fall of 3rd year)
    - Each semester students choose a seminar and journal club based on their specific interests
    - Complete 3 advanced courses in areas relevant to the student's area of interest

## **Neuroscience**

- **Contact Information**
  - Scott Wilson, PhD, Theme Director, [livvy01@uab.edu](mailto:livvy01@uab.edu)
  - Lori McMahon, PhD, Co-Director, [mcmahon@uab.edu](mailto:mcmahon@uab.edu)
  - Patricia Matthews, Program Manager, [pml@uab.edu](mailto:pml@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS 707, 708 Core (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring GBS 791: Grad Neuro Discussion (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 714: Developmental Neuroscience (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 733: Disease of the Nervous System (2 hrs)
    - Summer-GBS 737: Student Seminar Series, Lab rotation or Nondissertation Research
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775: Biometry (3hrs)
    - Summer-July and August: Written and Oral Assessment Exam
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense (during fall of 3rd year)
    - Choose Thesis Committee
    - Each semester students take a seminar and journal club (Summer-GBS 737: Student Seminar Series)
    - Complete 2 advanced courses in areas relevant to the student's area of interest with approval by mentor

## **Pathobiology & Molecular Medicine (PBMM)**

- **Contact Information**
  - Michelle Fanucchi, PhD, Theme Director, [fanucchi@uab.edu](mailto:fanucchi@uab.edu)
  - Rakesh Patel, PhD, Co-Director, [rakeshp@uab.edu](mailto:rakeshp@uab.edu)
  - Jason Noah, MEd, Program Manager, [jnoah@uab.edu](mailto:jnoah@uab.edu)
- **Course Requirements**
  - Year 1 (Fall MS1)
    - Fall-GBS Core (4 hrs)
  - Year 2 (Spring MS2)
    - Spring-GBS 750: Nerves, Muscles, Bones (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 751: Heart, Lung, Kidney (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 752: GI, Endo, Imm Sys (2 hrs)
    - Spring-GBS 753: Pharm & Mol Med (2 hrs)
  - Year 3 and Beyond
    - Fall of 3rd Year-GRD 717: Principles of Scientific Integrity (3 hrs)
    - Spring-BY 775: Biometry (3hrs)
    - Fall-PAT 704: Data Analysis and Presentation to be taken each Fall semester
    - Qualifying Exam on thesis project-Written proposal in form of NIH grant application and defense(during fall of 4th year)
    - PBMM students are required to attend a total of four journal clubs prior to their graduation
    - First year students are required to attend the Molecular and Cellular Pathology Seminar. After the first year, students are required to go to at least one seminar per week, chosen from seminars that are open to the UAB community
    - Complete 3 advanced courses in areas relevant to the student's area of interest

## **Appendix III-B: Requirements for the PhD degree awarded by different participating Graduate Programs**

### ***Biomedical Engineering***

**Program Chair:** Timothy Wick, PhD, SHEL 807, [tmwick@uab.edu](mailto:tmwick@uab.edu), 934-4820

**Hours:** 32 hours (9-fall, 9-spring, 9-summer)

**Additional information:** <http://www.uab.edu/engineering/departments-research/bme>

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### ***Epidemiology, School of Public Health***

**Program Director:** Donna Arnett, PhD

**Hours:** 9 Fall, 9 Spring, 6 Summer

**Additional information:** <http://www.soph.uab.edu/epi>

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### ***Vision Sciences***

**Program Director:** Kent Keyser, PhD, WORB 626, [ktkeyser@uab.edu](mailto:ktkeyser@uab.edu), 975-7225

**Course requirements:** Six core class modules in Vision Science the first year and 5 courses/electives in their second year. The Dissertation committee requires at least 5 members including the research mentor. Two faculty members should have primary appointments within the Department of Vision Sciences and two should have their primary appointment outside the department. The Graduate Program Director and Dean of the Graduate School must approve the committee. (Please note: one member must be the MSTP mentor). Admission to candidacy-students who achieve an “A” grade in at least 4 of the 6 core class modules are exempt from any oral or written qualifying exams. Students must successfully defend their research proposal in an oral and written presentation. Admission to candidacy is granted once the written and oral presentations are passed successfully. Students may propose after the summer of their first year.

**Additional information:** Ramona Hart at 934-6743, [rhart@uab.edu](mailto:rhart@uab.edu) or <http://main.uab.edu/Sites/optometry/about/programs/vsgp/>.

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### ***Health Care Organization and Policy***

**Program Director:** Nir Menachemi, PhD, MPH, Ryals 320E, [nmenachemi@uab.edu](mailto:nmenachemi@uab.edu), 934-7192

**Program Information:** The DrPH degree is the highest professional degree in public health. The DrPH Program in HCOP develops leaders and research faculty who have proficiency in data analysis, management, critical thinking, teaching, and translating research into policy and practice. Students will be exposed to complex practical problems facing public health practitioners and policy-makers. This program, housed within the Department of Health Care Organization and Policy has three concentrations (1) Public Health Management, (2) Maternal and Child Health Policy and (3) Outcomes Research

**Additional Information:** [www.soph.uab.edu/hcop](http://www.soph.uab.edu/hcop)

## **Appendix IV: Procedures for Transitioning from the Research to Clinical Phase of the Program**

Students must be completely finished of all PhD degree requirements prior to beginning any clinical clerkship. In general, this means the PhD dissertation must be completed and successfully defended, however, the specific requirements for the award of the PhD degree rests with the Dissertation committee and the particular Graduate Program.

Given the desire for students to begin the clinical phase in a timely fashion after completing the Dissertation and the logistical issues involved in scheduling specific clerkships with the Medical School Registrar, specific plans concerning the start date in clinical rotations need to be made prior to the actual completion of the PhD. Because this transition involves key changes in the financial responsibility for the student stipend and tuition payments, Medical or Graduate School, it is imperative that the MSTP office has documentation of the effective date of this transition.

As the student's dissertation research nears completion, the student should present their work to the Dissertation committee and a date for the completion of the dissertation and the final dissertation defense should be established. This approval should occur at least 6 weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation defense. The Dissertation committee should communicate these plans to the Graduate Program Director, who must send written confirmation of the anticipated completion date to the MSTP office. The student and the research mentor are responsible for seeing that this communication takes place in a timely fashion. It is strongly recommended that the student schedule a meeting with their MSTP Mentor and the Director of the MSTP to review the student's plans for completing the PhD, discuss alternative residency programs in relation to the student's future research focus, and discuss the optimal order of clinical clerkships to complete the MD degree. These meetings should take place at least 3 months prior to the anticipated PhD completion date. At this meeting with the MSTP Director, the "Return from leave of Absence" form is completed. Students may not schedule the specific order and timing of the clinical rotations, nor schedule a meeting with the Associate Dean for this purpose until this documentation is complete. Finally, the MSTP office requires written confirmation from the Graduate Program Director of the anticipated dissertation defense date and a statement that indicates that all PhD requirements have been met by the student. The MSTP office will communicate these plans in written form to the Associate Dean for Students and the Medical School Registrar's office. The scheduling of specific rotations must be done at least 8 weeks prior to the anticipated start date. If, for whatever reason, the dissertation is not completed on the anticipated schedule and the final dissertation defense is rescheduled or delayed, it is imperative that the Graduate Program immediately notify the MSTP office of this change in plans.

Please note that if you do not defend your thesis by the "Last Day For Final Defense" in the table below, then you have to register for dissertation research the following semester (even though you have returned to clinic). This then means that the MSTP has to pay both graduate school and medical school tuition for this semester. Due to this increased cost, students will need to obtain permission from the MSTP Director if they will not be able to defend by the "Last Day for Final Defense" listed.

Check this schedule each semester for any changes to the posted dates. Also check with your department. Some programs have earlier deadline dates for the application for degree.

SEMESTER	DIPLOMA DATE	DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION FOR DEGREE	LAST DAY FOR FINAL DEFENSE	DEADLINE FOR DOCUMENT SUBMISSION*
Summer 2013	August 10, 2013	<b>June 7, 2013**</b>	July 12, 2013	No later than 10 business days following public defense
Fall 2013	December 4, 2013	<b>September 13, 2013**</b>	November 1, 2013	No later than 10 business days following public defense
Spring 2014	April 26, 2014	<b>January 24, 2014**</b>	March 21, 2014	No later than 10 business days following public defense
Summer 2014	August TBD 2014	<b>June TBD 2014**</b>	July TBD 2014	No later than 10 business days following public defense

**Request for Approval Forms must be submitted online no later than 2 weeks before your public defense date.**

**\*It is your responsibility to submit your completed thesis or dissertation for review no later than 2 weeks (10 business days) after your public defense. You will be notified when your manuscript has been reviewed (usually within 5 – 7 days). Under certain circumstances, submission extensions may be granted for students who defend well before the final semester deadline for final defense. Extensions will not be granted past the submission date for the final defense deadline.**

**It is the student's responsibility to see that the above deadlines are met.** Students cannot be cleared for graduation until all paperwork has been processed, all grades have been finalized, and all applicable fees have been paid.

**Note:**

Failure to meet these deadlines will require the filing of a "NEW" Application for Degree Form (reorder) and registration for course hours for the following semester. The new application for degree form (approved at the departmental level and submitted to the Graduate School) must be submitted by the deadline posted above.

**\*\*The above dates are subject to change. Check with the Graduate School, 511 Hill University Center, or call 934-8227 if you have any questions concerning these dates.**

When a student sets up his/her defense dates, he/she should go to the graduate school web site and fill out a request for approval forms. Thereafter, Jan Baird ([jbaird@uab.edu](mailto:jbaird@uab.edu), 975-6511) will contact you to get everything processed correctly.

Two-weeks prior to defending, a copy of the dissertation must be sent to each committee member and the MSTP Program manager for review. After the defense and submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School, the MSTP requires each student to send to the MSTP office an electronic copy of a CV and the Graduate School approved dissertation for processing.

The MSTP will /pay the following expenses:

- Graduation fee (1st time only)
- Diploma
- Dissertation binding: 3 copies will be printed and sent off for binding by the MSTP Office (one for you, one for your mentor, one for the MSTP office)
- Copyright

**There is no cap and gown reimbursement for Graduate School.**

### **Returning to Clinics**

Think about how you want to arrange your 15-18 months of clinical rotations. Please use the included worksheet (Appendix II) to help in your planning process. Please remember that you are required to begin with a rotation in Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or Family Medicine. Complete the 'Transition from Research Phase to Clinical Phase' Form. Turn the completed form into the MSTP office and the Associate Dean for Student's office at least 3 months prior to the anticipated transition date.

In order to complete this form, you must first meet with the MSTP Director to discuss your transition plans. Then, you must meet with the Associate Dean for Students, Dr. Laura Kezar ([kezar@uab.edu](mailto:kezar@uab.edu), 934-0566) to discuss the transition plans.

After these meetings, you will need to schedule a meeting with the Academic Scheduler (Marla Ferguson, [mmfergus@uab.edu](mailto:mmfergus@uab.edu), 934-7976 or [scheduler@uab.edu](mailto:scheduler@uab.edu)) to do the actual scheduling of your clinical rotations.

Have your graduate program director create a letter to the MSTP, saying that 1) you have met all the requirements of your PhD program and 2) you are anticipating defending by 'x' date (specify a specific date when your dissertation will be complete (private defense date). Submit this letter to the MSTP office as soon as possible (at least 6 weeks prior to your transition).

**You are required to do an orientation to the clerkships before you begin the clerkships.** Since the orientation program is only run once a year (usually the last week of April), you should plan on attending if you think you will go back to clinics anytime in the 12 months after April. In general, this is just all day on Monday, with just a few hours on other days of that week.

After you attend this program, you will still need to take care of several items before you return to your clinical education. These are best completed closer to the time you actually return. You can schedule them with the appropriate offices a month or so before your clinical begin date. For

questions about these items, please contact Dr. Steve Smith, [ssmith@uasom.uab.edu](mailto:ssmith@uasom.uab.edu) , 975-9845. These include:

Please see Denise Coston for a checklist for returning to clinics. Additional useful contacts are provided below:

Heath Compliance	<a href="http://www.uab.edu/studenthealth/medical-clearance/school-of-medicine">http://www.uab.edu/studenthealth/medical-clearance/school-of-medicine</a>
Card Key ID, Students need additional access to all perimeter doors of the hospital complex	Physical Security (get MS3 building access). If you have your SOM ID, just go to Physical Security on 20th Street. If not, have the registrar fill out a sheet to take with you.
Mailbox and Locker assignments	Learning Resource Center, VH 225, Tammi Taylor( <a href="mailto:tammi@uab.edu">tammi@uab.edu</a> )(934-5296)
Extended hours access to Lister Hill Library	Tracy Powell ( <a href="mailto:trapow@uab.edu">trapow@uab.edu</a> )
Parking, Approved access to lot 5A	Joy Smith ( <a href="mailto:smithjoy@uab.edu">smithjoy@uab.edu</a> ); Michele Carter ( <a href="mailto:michele@uab.edu">michele@uab.edu</a> )
Student Accounting, Billing	Gwen Stewart ( <a href="mailto:gstewart@uab.edu">gstewart@uab.edu</a> )
Student Health, Records and coverage	Candace Ragsdale ( <a href="mailto:crag@uab.edu">crag@uab.edu</a> )
IMPACT, training and access	UAB PIN Office; Mitzi Jenkins- Lapsley ( <a href="mailto:mitzid@uab.edu">mitzid@uab.edu</a> )
VA Fingerprinting and Picture ID	933-8101, Ext 5958 (Linda Walfield)
VA HIPAA training	On-line <a href="mailto:susan.laing@va.gov">susan.laing@va.gov</a>
OSHA training and fitting	William E. Davis, Jr. ( <a href="mailto:wdavis@uab.edu">wdavis@uab.edu</a> )
BLS certification, Returning students and off-cycle students should contact and set up training. It is the students' responsibility to send the UASOM an updated BLS card.	Kornelius Gardner ( <a href="mailto:mrk@uab.edu">mrk@uab.edu</a> )
Pager distribution	First try Jason Noah in VH109. He also has the yellow medical school books (written by students); alternatively go to UAB Paging,

	Kimberly Lee ( <a href="mailto:kimlee@uab.edu">kimlee@uab.edu</a> )
16th floor Lounge access	Graduate Medical Education, Jacasta Wright ( <a href="mailto:deltagir@uab.edu">deltagir@uab.edu</a> )
Scrub distribution	Support Services, Lisa Shelton ( <a href="mailto:sheltonl@uab.edu">sheltonl@uab.edu</a> ), <b>the charge for these will just be added to your tuition.</b>

#### 4th Year Scheduling

Your final 4th year schedule has to be approved by Dr. Kezar. You also need to select a career advisor from the approved career advisor list and have that advisor approve your list of courses. The only way to do that step is to go through the lottery. You will not actually schedule through the lottery, but you will choose an advisor and have that advisor approve your list and then stop; you will not rank any courses. All of the students go through the lottery but the regular MD students do an extra step in that after their advisor has approved their course list they then will rank courses for when they want to take them throughout the year, the MD/PhD students do not do that step.

So the steps are:

1. Enter the FYSH, select a career advisor, have them approve your list of courses
2. Then have Dr. Kezar approve the courses
3. Then go to the scheduler (Marla Ferguson)

## Checklist for Completing Thesis and Returning to Clinics

### Before the defense:

- Attend MS-III summer orientation (fingerprinting, BLS certification, general info, etc.)
- Obtain graduate school “Guide to completing a thesis or dissertation” packet
- Submit “Application for Degree Form” within 3 weeks of beginning of semester
- Contact department office concerning planning for defense (room reservations, etc.)
- Contact Graduate School for “Dissertation Approval Form” 3 weeks before private defense
- E-mail dissertation to committee and MSTP office 2 weeks (or requested time) before private defense
- Contact journals and obtain reprint permission (required to submit dissertation to Graduate School)

### After the defense:

- Complete all forms in “Guide to completing a thesis or dissertation” packet, including Survey of Earned Doctorates, UAB Publication Agreement, and copyright form (if copyright is desired), and turn in with “Dissertation Approval Form”
- Pay applicable fees (including microform, and possibly copyright) and turn in receipt to Graduate School
- Submit electronic copy of dissertation to Graduate School for format review
- Submit Graduate School approved dissertation to the MSTP Office for copying and binding

### Transition to clinics:

- Advisor or Graduate Program Director informs MSTP of graduation date (by letter)
- Meet with MSTP Program Director (at least 3 months prior to finishing PhD)
- Obtain forms from MSTP office (“Return from Leave of Absence” and “Transition from Research to Clinical Phase”)
- Meet with Dean of Students (Dr. Laura Kezar) and Lacy Lazenby for scheduling of rotations
- Obtain forms and checklist for return to clinics from Registrar

**Appendix V: Requirements and Electives available for the MSTP Clinical Phase and award of the MD degree**

The specific policies concerning the requirements for graduation from the MSTP and completion of the MD degree are detailed in Section III.C of this handbook. The key points will be reiterated here along with several graphical illustrations of the requirements and alternative schedules available.

**MSTP Clinical Curriculum - Requirements**

3rd year rotations		4th year rotations	
Required Clerkships	Weeks	Required Clerkships	Weeks
Internal Medicine	8	Internal Medicine (Acting Internship)	4
Surgery	8	Surgery or Critical Care or Ambulatory or Elective (Acting Internship)	4
Pediatrics	8	Elective	4
Psychiatry	4	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>
Neurology	4		
Family Medicine*	4		
Obstetrics-Gynecology	8		
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>		

<sup>a</sup> Extra MSTP Electives Permitted	as time permits
---------------------------------------------	-----------------

Time Constraints

Residency Applications - Late Fall

Match Day - mid - March

<sup>b</sup>Completion of USMLE Step 2 & CSE  
July 1 Start Date for most Residencies

Minimal Time = 15 months; maximal Time = 18 months

a. Additional 4 week electives can be taken by MSTP students if they choose, but are not required. The MST Program includes 56 weeks of required courses, an optimal additional 8 weeks of electives and 8 weeks for interview trips and/or study for Step 2 of the USMLE. The MSTP stipend and tuition remission cannot be extended to activities outside the program.

b. See SOM web site for further details  
<http://main.uab.edu/uasom/2/show.asp?durki=21318>

The clinical phase of the program includes most of the clerkships normally taken by third-year medical students, and two acting internships (4 weeks each), and one additional four-week elective normally part of the fourth year. MD/PhD students are required to take a family medicine rotation (\* this can be either the third year clerkship or a 4th year elective), but are not

required to take Special Topics during the MS-II/IV year. The clinical phase comprises 56 weeks of required classes and with an extra eight weeks of electives allowed to allow appropriate scheduling. Additional time is allowed off for residency interviews and time for study and preparation for the part 2 of the National Boards (USMLE). **All MSTP students are assigned to the Birmingham campus for their clinical training.** However, elective rotations at other Institutions (potential sites for residency and fellowship training) are available. The MSTP covers tuition for up to 3 semesters of clinical training.

The bulk of the clinical phase consists of the clinical clerkships normally taken during the third year of Medical School. These include 8-week blocks in Internal Medicine, Surgery, Pediatrics, and Obstetrics-Gynecology, and a four-week block in Neurology, Psychiatry, and Family Medicine. The normal requirements for the fourth year of medical school or substantially abbreviated for MSTP students, since the elective requirements and the scholarly activity requirement can be satisfied by the Ph.D. research. Only 3 elective rotations (4 week blocks) are required, two of which must be acting internships. Depending on which block during the calendar year, the student returns to the clinical clerkships - several additional four week electives may be taken as time permits.

Dr. Kezar or Sorrentino will sign off on all rotations taken during the MDIII year, even if these are “senior” rotations. In the spring before the MS-IV year, you choose a career advisor in your specialty area, and they will have to sign off on your picks for the 4th year lottery. If you still have some clerkships to finish up during 4th year, you will want to preschedule those before the lottery for 3rd and 4th year. **If you still have required 3rd year clerkships to take during the final clinical year, do not schedule them during months where you will have to be away a significant amount of time for residency interviews. During interview months, either schedule time off or schedule an elective.**

The practical effect of the requirements and available options is that the minimal time to complete the clinical phase of the program is 14 months, while the maximal time is 20 months. Entry in the clinical phase of the program during the School of Medicine calendar blocks beginning in January or February will allow all the requirements to be completed for graduation at the end of May with only the normal 1 month gap between the end of the MSTP stipend and the start of most residency training programs in July. Below is a chart showing the scheduling consequences of beginning the clinical phase at the beginning of each block and the resulting blocks in which the program ends using the minimal and maximal optional activities. Note that the completion of the program occurs at the end of the designated block, while entry must be at the beginning of the designated block. **Entry into the clinical phase of the program is prohibited during the months of April through November. Exception is made for entry into Block I (July/August) or if the MSTP student has 4 semesters of medical school tuition covered by a fellowship.** This is due to the fact that the MSTP is required to pay double tuition (UASOM and UAB Graduate School) in these circumstances.

It is strongly encouraged, but not required, that you arrange your required MS-III clerkships so that all are completed prior to taking USMLE Step 2CK.

Special Topics Weeks during the MS-II/IV years are not required for MSTP students; however a MSTP student can participate if they wish.

Entry during Block I will require the student to find additional funding/employment opportunities for the 6 months between the end of their MSTP requirements and the normal July start date of residency programs. The UAB MSTP does not pay tuition or stipend after 3 semesters of clinical clerkships. The only exception to this rule is if a student has an individual fellowship award that covers the majority of their tuition and stipend. If a student chooses this route, they have two choices with regards to graduation. They can (1) choose to graduate in December or (2) take a leave of absence once medical school requirements are met and graduate with the rest of the class in May. If you opt for the leave of absence you will not be required to pay tuition and the MSTP will pay the minor amount of school-related fees (~\$1000). Also, if you take the leave of absence, you CANNOT have finished all the graduation requirements before December. This usually means that you need to delay taking at least one of the exams until after the December graduation date OR just make sure you are enrolled in a SOM clerkship or elective in Block 3b. As far as we know, **there is no difference between these two options** – as far as residency program preferences. Therefore, this decision is up to the student.

	Minimal Schedule - 14 months	
	Maximal Schedule - 20 months	
Block	Start Month	End Month
4a	January	May
4b	February	May
5a	N/A	
5b	N/A	
6a	N/A	
6b	N/A	
1a	July	December
1b	August	December
2a	N/A	
2b	October	May
3a	November	May
3b	N/A	

As in other areas of the program, an exception to some aspects of these requirements is possible, but such an exception requires a written request to the MSTP Director. If a student would like to pursue a possible extension of the length of the program after the requirements for graduation have been fulfilled, such a written request for an extension must be submitted at least six months prior to the completion of the requirements for graduation. Whether the request is granted will depend on specific individual circumstances and the reasons for the failure to complete the dissertation at the optimal time.

MSTP Requirements  
 Approved by the UAB MEC in 2013

<b>Component</b>	<b>Regular MD (includes MD/MPH)</b>	<b>MSTP</b>
Fundamentals I (PLC1110)	Full Course	MSTP students are exempt from specific coursework and exam questions that are already covered in GBS 707 and 708
GBS 707 & 708	Not applicable	MSTP students take these two Graduate Biomedical Science Courses (GBS 707 – Basic Biochemistry; GBS 708 – Basic Genetics), which are then recorded on the SOM transcript.
Translational Research Seminar (01-794A/B)	Not applicable	Required for all MSTP students.
Attendance Requirements during MS1/MS2 coursework	Per specific course syllabus	Any attendance requirements are waived for MSTP students when they are dual enrolled in graduate and medical school coursework
Scholarly Activity	8 weeks of activity during the MS3/MS4 years	Requirement fulfilled by completing all PhD Degree requirements.
Special Topics	4 weeks	2 weeks (Requirement fulfilled by STP2043 – Survival Skills for Physician Scientists)
Beginning Clinical Rotations	Not applicable	Required to start on one of these three clinical services - Family Medicine/Internal Medicine/Pediatrics unless prior approval is given to waive this requirement
Electives	20 weeks	4 weeks (cannot be fulfilled by the Family Medicine Elective)
Rural/Selective	4 weeks	Not required
MS3 Clerkships	Must be completed before the start of Block III in the MS4 year	Can be taken anytime
Family Medicine	Clerkship during the MS3 year	May be taken anytime and can be either a Clerkship or Elective (but if taken as an Elective, it does not count towards the MSTP Elective requirements)
Acting Internships		
Medicine	4 weeks	4 weeks
Surgery or Critical Care	4 weeks	4 weeks (choose one of these three or an Elective AI)
Ambulatory	4 weeks	
Timing of USMLE Step II	All MS3 Required Clerkships must be completed prior to the USMLE Step II CK	USMLE Step 2 CK can be taken prior to the completion of the MS3 Required Clerkships
Minimum number of months in clinical curriculum	22 months	14 months
MSTP Retreat (One day or one weekend in June/July)	Not Applicable	MSTP students to be given preference for days off during this weekend so that they can attend the MSTP Retreat
Allowed time off from clinical rotations for interviews/Step II study	Not applicable	8 weeks

## UAB-SOM Clinical Calendar for Academic Year 2013 – 2014

\*\*\* All Dates Subject to Change by UAB-SOM \*\*\*

Academic Calendar Last Revised 07.10.09

### Block I Jul 1, 2013 – Aug 25, 2013

a	Week 1	01-Jul-13	to	07-Jul-13
	Week 2	08-Jul-13	to	14-Jul-13
	Week 3	15-Jul-13	to	21-Jul-13
	Week 4	22-Jul-13	to	28-Jul-13
b	Week 5	29-Jul-13	to	04-Aug-13
	Week 6	05-Aug-13	to	11-Aug-13
	Week 7	12-Aug-13	to	18-Aug-13
	Week 8	19-Aug-13	to	25-Aug-13

### Block II Aug 26, 2013 – Oct 20, 2013

a	Week 9	26-Aug-13	to	01-Sep-13
	Week 10	02-Sep-13	to	08-Sep-13
	Week 11	09-Sep-13	to	15-Sep-13
	Week 12	16-Sep-13	to	22-Sep-13
b	Week 13	23-Sep-13	to	29-Sep-13
	Week 14	30-Sep-13	to	06-Oct-13
	Week 15	07-Oct-13	to	13-Oct-13
	Week 16	14-Oct-13	to	20-Oct-13
s-	Week 17	21-Oct-13	to	27-Oct-13

### Block III Oct 28, 2013 – Dec 22, 2013

a	Week 18	28-Oct-13	to	03-Nov-13
	Week 19	04-Nov-13	to	10-Nov-13
	Week 20	11-Nov-13	to	17-Nov-13
	Week 21	18-Nov-13	to	24-Nov-13
b	Week 22	25-Nov-13	to	01-Dec-13
	Week 23	02-Dec-13	to	08-Dec-13
	Week 24	09-Dec-13	to	15-Dec-13
	Week 25	16-Dec-13	to	22-Dec-13
x-	Week 26	23-Dec-13	to	29-Dec-13
x-	Week 27	30-Dec-13	to	05-Jan-14

### Block IV Jan 06, 2014 – Mar 2, 2014

a	Week 28	06-Jan-14	to	12-Jan-14
	Week 29	13-Jan-14	to	19-Jan-14
	Week 30	20-Jan-14	to	26-Jan-14
	Week 31	27-Jan-14	to	02-Feb-14
b	Week 32	03-Feb-14	to	09-Feb-14
	Week 33	10-Feb-14	to	16-Feb-14
	Week 34	17-Feb-14	to	23-Feb-14
	Week 35	24-Feb-14	to	02-Mar-14

### Block V Mar 3, 2014 – Apr 27, 2014

a	Week 36	03-Mar-14	to	09-Mar-14
	Week 37	10-Mar-14	to	16-Mar-14
	Week 38	17-Mar-14	to	23-Mar-14
	Week 39	24-Mar-14	to	30-Mar-14
b	Week 40	31-Mar-14	to	06-Apr-14
	Week 41	07-Apr-14	to	13-Apr-14
	Week 42	14-Apr-14	to	20-Apr-14
	Week 43	21-Apr-14	to	27-Apr-14
s-	Week 44	28-Apr-14	to	04-May-14

### Block VI May 5, 2014 – Jun 29, 2014

a	Week 45	05-May-14	to	11-May-14
	Week 46	12-May-14	to	18-May-14
	Week 47	19-May-14	to	25-May-14
	Week 48	26-May-14	to	01-Jun-14
b	Week 49	02-Jun-14	to	08-Jun-14
	Week 50	09-Jun-14	to	15-Jun-14
	Week 51	16-Jun-14	to	22-Jun-14
	Week 52	23-Jun-14	to	29-Jun-14

**Key**

s **Special Topics** (Weeks 17 and 44)

! MS4 spring graduates finish coursework  
x OFF for Winter Break, no classes

**Any absence from a rotation is dependent on departmental work schedules.**

**Contact the specific department if you have questions regarding attendance.**

**Block VI**

Block VI clinical schedules will always overlap for two separate classes of graduates. Beginning MS3s may start rotations in Block VI while finishing MS3s will also be taking clerkships in Block VI.

This clinical course calendar for academic year 2013-2014 pertains to the following medical student classes:

Class of 2014 (Blocks I – VI)  
Class of 2015 (Blocks I – VI)  
Class of 2016 (Block VI only)

## **Appendix VI: MSTP Thesis Mentor's Guide**

### ***Communication of Requirements and Expectations***

Clearly point out to the MSTP student at the beginning of his/her tenure in your lab all theme or program requirements for getting an advanced degree. Please consult with the Graduate Theme/Program Director and encourage your student to consult with this individual, to ensure that the specifics of each of these requirements are clear to both you and the student within the first 2 months of the student's tenure in the Lab.

Specific Requirements include:

- All courses that will be required for completion of the PhD (advanced courses, journal clubs, seminars, etc.).
- Advancement to Candidacy, including format and timing of both written and oral examination components.
- Formation of a Scientific Advisory/Dissertation Committee. This must be completed within 6 months of the date that the student joins the lab, regardless of the requirements of the specific graduate theme/program.
- Rules concerning writing the dissertation and formal completion of the PhD degree.

Scientific Expectations for productivity should also be discussed in some detail. Issues including the scope and focus of the student's project, the number of first-author papers expected, and specific milestones of accomplishment over the next several years should be discussed and agreed upon between the mentor and student.

### ***Identification and Guidance in developing a dissertation research project***

The NIH expects that students supported by the MSTP mechanism should complete the program within 7 years. The research mentor will:

- Help the student formulate a scientific project that is both important enough to qualify for the award of the PhD and feasible to complete within approximately 3.5 years.
- Guide the student in writing manuscripts for publication, in developing informative poster presentations, and presenting scientific seminars. It is critical that the student learn to present excellent scientific talks.
- Provide the student an opportunity to learn how to write a grant proposal, understand how grants are reviewed, and develop insight into common problems in "Grantsmanship". All MSTP students entering their PhD research in 2013 or after are required to submit individual training grants to the NIH (F30/F31) during their first or second year of thesis research. Research Mentors are expected to facilitate these grant submissions.
- Follow closely the scientific progress of the MSTP student and keep him/her on a productive research track. Communication between the Research mentor and the MSTP Committee is important to resolve issues that might be slowing progress. Problems should first be discussed with the student's MSTP mentor, but contact with the Program Director or Associate Director is welcome at any time.

### ***Research Mentor's Responsibilities to the MST Program***

Research Mentors should provide a rigorous and nurturing environment for scientific achievement, including communicating clear expectations of productivity and the specific requirements for completing the PhD degree in the relevant graduate program as outlined above.

If the Thesis Mentor has not previously graduated a PhD student, then the MSTP requires that a Senior Advisor also be identified for the MSTP student. This Senior Advisor should be appointed as a member of the thesis committee. Please see Appendix II for the form that will need to be completed and signed to formally appoint a faculty member as a Senior Advisor.

### **Thesis Mentors will only be allowed to have three or fewer MSTP students in their lab completing a PhD thesis at any time.**

Research Mentors are also required to certify their student's effort report in a timely manner. This reporting is required by UAB and failure to comply will result in the student not receiving their stipend.

The Scientific Advisory/Dissertation Committee should be formed and the first meeting held within six months of the date that the student entered into your laboratory. The MSTP mentor, a member of the MSTPAC assigned to each student, will serve as either an ex officio or full member of the Dissertation Committee. MSTP students are required to have committee meetings every 6 months throughout their tenure in the lab.

The Research Mentor is expected to submit a written progress report to the MSTP Director after each dissertation committee meeting. A form for this report can be found on the MSTP website and is included in this handbook (Appendix II).

In order to schedule the student's re-entry into the MD curriculum, a written notice indicating the date that the student will finish the PhD must be delivered to the MSTP Director at least 3 months prior to the planned transition. The "Transition from Research Phase to Clinical Phase" Form should be used for this notice (see Appendix II). The Dissertation must be formally submitted to the Graduate School prior to re-entry into the MD curriculum.

For students entering research labs prior to 2007, the Research Mentor is responsible for providing financial support for 72.5% of the student's stipend for four years beginning immediately after the student selects a research laboratory. The MSTP will pay the student's tuition and fees for these four years.

For students entering research labs in 2007 and beyond, the MSTP will pay for 100% of the student's stipend, tuition, and fees for 1 year after the student selects a research lab (usually ending in September). Thereafter, the Research Mentor is responsible for providing financial support for 100% of the student's stipend for three years (currently \$26,000). The MSTP will still cover tuition and fees for these three years.

The Research Mentor is responsible for a portion of the MSTP students stipend, even if that student is placed on a UAB Institutional Training Grant (T32) or if the student received an

individual fellowship (F30/F31/or equivalent). If the student entered the research laboratory prior to 2007, the advisor will be responsible for providing 72.5% of that portion of the student's stipend that exceeds the amount being provided by the individual fellowship (up to the UAB base stipend). If the student entered the research laboratory in 2007 and beyond, the advisor will be responsible for 100% of that portion of the student's stipend that exceeds the amount being provided by the individual fellowship (up to the UAB base stipend). **If the source of the individual fellowship is from NIH, the supplementary funds must be derived from a non-NIH source.** MSTP students are not allowed to have dual assignments. They are appointed as either Graduate Assistants OR Graduate Student Trainees, and cannot have a combination of appointments. If the advisor does not have access to funds from a source other than NIH, he/she should consult with their department chair.

For all students, after 4 years the Research Mentor will be responsible for the student's entire stipend, tuition, and fees until their thesis is successfully defended and they return to clinical rotations. These costs can be covered by a Research grant, an individual NRSA award, or another NIH training grant subject to some limitations (contact the MSTP office for the specifics). It is required that the student be finished with their PhD prior to re-entry into the MD curriculum.

Should the Research Mentor leave UAB the student may have the option of going with the mentor in order to complete the research project. However, the same time line for completion of the research project should be maintained. No new MSTP students should be recruited into a Faculty member's lab if there is a significant probability that the Faculty member plans to leave UAB within a year.

### ***IRB and IACUC approvals required for admission to candidacy and application for degree***

There are two times in a graduate student's career when the Graduate School checks to see if their research requires IRB and/or IACUC approval and whether the student has the necessary approvals: admission to candidacy and application for degree. Basically, the Graduate School cannot allow a student to be advanced to candidacy if they are doing human or animal research unless they have the appropriate approvals in place (not pending). In the case of the IRB approval, the IRB office would prefer that approval be granted to the student directly and that the title of the approval be close to the title of their eventual dissertation. Similarly, if they tell us at the advancement to candidacy stage that they are doing human or animal research, then when they apply for their degree, the Graduate School will require that their approvals have remained current and that a copy of these approvals are submitted with their thesis or dissertation. The student cannot graduate in the absence of these approvals, if human or animal research is involved in the thesis.

### ***IRB Notes***

**Advancement to candidacy:** If a student checks "human subjects" on the advancement to candidacy form, they will be expected to have an approved (not pending) IRB review. The IRB approval document either (1) will be in their name or have a title which is substantially similar to the title of their proposed thesis or (2) will provide documentation that an amendment has been made to the PI's IRB protocol approval, listing the student as an investigator participant and

showing the thesis title. If such documentation is not provided or is pending, the student will be referred back to IRB. If the student's name and thesis title are not correct on the IRB approval form, they will be referred back to IRB.

**Application for degree:** when a student applies to graduate (generally at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to graduate), the graduate office will check their advancement to candidacy form. If human subjects were involved in the research, then a check will be made to see what kind of IRB approval the student has. If the human research was "exempt", then a copy of the IRB approved exemption form should be submitted with the thesis. If an expedited or full review of the IRB application was made at the time of advancement to candidacy, then the student will be asked to provide the most recent approval from the IRB for the use of human subjects. This check will happen early in the semester, so that the student has time to obtain the appropriate documents from IRB. If the student's name is not on the IRB approval form or if the title of the dissertation is not close to that of the project for which IRB approval was obtained, the student will be referred back to the IRB, even if that delays fulfilling their graduation requirements. For questions regarding this policy, please contact Dr. Jeff Engler.

### ***IACUC Notes***

**Advancement to candidacy:** If a student checks "animal subjects" on the advancement to candidacy form, they are expected to be listed on one of the mentors IACUC approved projects. The student name does not have to appear on the IACUC approval form, but the student must be listed as an animal used on the Animal Use Form.

**Application for degree:** when a student applies to graduate (generally at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to graduate), the graduate office will check their advancement to candidacy form. If animal subjects were involved in the research, then a check will be made to see if the student is listed on one of the mentors IACUC approved projects.

## Appendix VII: Tip Sheet for Students Involved in Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects

	IRB	IACUC	OH&S
Who can serve as Principal Investigator (PI)?	PI may be the student, however, the faculty mentor must be listed as Co-PI and is equally responsible for the conduct of the study.	PI must have faculty status. List faculty mentor as PI on animal protocol and list student's name in parentheses after title.	PI may be the student, however, the faculty mentor must be listed as Co-PI and is equally responsible for the conduct of the study.
How are students added to a protocol?	(1) Submit amendment/revision form noting addition of personnel to existing protocol, (2) submit new protocol including student's name as PI (3) add student's name to request for changes in Investigator's Progress Report (renewal form) if involvement coincides with renewal due date.	(1) Submit modification request form noting addition of personnel to existing protocol, (2) submit new protocol including student's name in personnel section, or (3) add student's name to renewal form if involvement coincides with renewal due date.	(1) Send email to Glenda P. Moon ( <a href="mailto:Glenda@uab.edu">Glenda@uab.edu</a> ) or Donna S. Williamson ( <a href="mailto:dsw@uab.edu">dsw@uab.edu</a> ) and indicate protocol name and funding agency (provide OH&S project #) and list students to be added. (2) Amend Project Registration form to include additional student names. Make a note that the addition of students is the only amendment.
When is it a procedural vs. personnel modification?	n/a	If the student proposes to conduct animal procedures that are not already part of an approved protocol under their mentor then the mentor must either submit an amendment or a new protocol.	n/a
Timeline for review and approval.	Amendment/Revisions are normally reviewed within a week – you may add RUSH to top of form with an explanation as to the nature of the RUSH request – some request may be returned in 2 – 3 working days.	Personnel modifications are reviewed within 1 -2 business days of receipt and can be approved when all required training documentation is on file. Procedural modifications and new protocols received by the 21 <sup>st</sup> of the month (or next regular business day if 21 <sup>st</sup> is holiday or weekend) are entered into the subsequent month for review. Voting for protocols called for Full Committee Review occurs on the last Wednesday of the assigned review month.	Personnel modifications are reviewed within 1 -2 business days of receipt. PI and added personnel will be notified if additional information is needed.
Required training.	Initial and continuing Human Subjects Training which as applicable. Available training options and instructions are available at <a href="http://main.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=56078">http://main.uab.edu/show.asp?durki=56078</a> . If students have completed training at another institution it may be submitted for review by the OIRB and may be accepted to meet UAB's training requirements. On-line training may be started before student arrives on campus.	Students must complete the following training items, accessible through BlazerNet: (1) Basic training in rules, regulations, ethics and (2) species-specific training. Items 1 and 2 are on-line training modules (ca. 3 hrs).	Depends on the nature of the research. In addition to IACUC and IRB requirements, the use of material of human origin requires annual blood-borne pathogen training.
Occupational Health Requirements		The requirements for the UAB Occupational Health Program must be met before final approval to work with animals is granted. All non UAB employees must receive clearance from their personal physician indicating that the physician has reviewed the proposed	The requirements for the UAB Occupational Health Program must be met before final approval to work with animals and certain other work (i.e., work with material requiring immunizations) is granted. All non UAB employees must receive clearance from their

		work and the medical history of the individual, that the individual is current for all required immunizations, and has been cleared to conduct the work proposed on the UAB Employee Occupational Health Enrollment Form. The letter and the form must be submitted before the requirements are met and the student cleared. <b>Please note: this may take extra time.</b>	personal physician indicating that the physician has reviewed the proposed work and the medical history of the individual, that the individual is current for all required immunizations, and has been cleared to conduct the work proposed on the UAB Employee Occupational Health Enrollment Form. The letter and the form must be submitted before the requirements are met and the student cleared. <b>Please note: this may take extra time.</b>
Student defined.	An individual enrolled in a UAB undergraduate or graduate program.	An individual enrolled in a UAB undergraduate or graduate program.	An individual enrolled in a UAB undergraduate or graduate program.
Non-UAB students.	An individual enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program at another institution. Non-UAB students must complete training; however, training from their “home” institution may be accepted. Please call OIRB for clarification. Non-UAB students may need a “blazer ID” to access on-line training. Faculty mentors may contact Human Resources for more information about obtaining a blazer ID and appointment of the student.	An individual enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program at another institution. Non-UAB students may complete training items 1 and 2 but are not eligible for enrollment in the UAB Occupational Health Program. They must submit documentation of an equivalent evaluation provided through their own personal physician. They may use the UAB form, which must be submitted with a physician clearance, as the basis for that evaluation.	An individual enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program at another institution. Non-UAB students may complete UAB on-line training (call to register) but are not eligible for enrollment in the UAB Occupational Health Program. They must submit documentation of an equivalent evaluation provided through their own personal physician. They may use the UAB form, which must be submitted with a physician clearance, as the basis for that evaluation.
Sponsored Projects	If the student is the Prime Awardee of their own sponsored research project they must submit a new protocol specifically detailing the protocol which must be concordant with the funding application.	If the student is the Prime Awardee of their own sponsored research project (i.e., funds budgeted for direct support of animal purchases, per diems, supplies, etc.) they must submit a new protocol specifically detailing the animal procedures proposed in the corresponding grant, fellowship, contract, etc. If the student is the Prime Awardee of a grant, fellowship, contract, etc. with funds solely for salary support they must submit the IACUC form to register the project as a salary support project. Note: faculty mentor should be listed as PI on the IACUC form.	If the student is the Prime Awardee of their own sponsored research project, and that project either involves material that is potentially hazardous or requires some sort of approval from OH&S, they must submit a new protocol specifically detailing the protocol which must be concordant with the funding application.
Forms and staff directory.	<a href="http://www.uab.edu/irb">www.uab.edu/irb</a>	<a href="http://www.uab.edu/iacuc">www.uab.edu/iacuc</a>	<a href="http://www.healthsafe.uab.edu">www.healthsafe.uab.edu</a>

## **Appendix VIII: Summary of Program Requirements for Students and Faculty**

### **Summary of Program Requirements for Students**

- Maintain an up-to-date student profile on the MSTP website;
- Submit an updated CV and activities spreadsheet annually (by date requested);
- Respond in a timely manner (i.e. within 48 hours) to all e-mail sent by the UAB MSTP staff and/or directors to your UAB account;
- Complete the UAB Effort Report in a timely fashion.
- Attend monthly MSTP Translational Medicine Research Seminars and the Annual MSTP Retreat or obtain excused absence prior to seminar/retreat date;
- During graduate research years, schedule thesis update meetings every 6 months;
- Submit an electronic copy of the dissertation abstract to the UAB MSTP office within 2 weeks of a successful defense;
- Maintain an acceptable level of academic performance in all Medical and Graduate courses;
- Register for and complete the MSTP laboratory rotations within the required period;
- Participate in the annual Medical Student Research Day during the rotation and PhD dissertation phase of the program;
- Maintain an appropriate level of professional behavior in all interactions with faculty, students, staff, and patients.

### **Summary of Program Requirements for Faculty**

- Clearly explain the formal requirements for completing the PhD degree in their particular department, including the formal course requirements, the procedures for Advancement to Candidacy (both written and oral examinations), the formation of a Dissertation Committee within six months of the student starting in the lab, and rules concerning the writing of the Dissertation and formal completion of the PhD degree.
- Discuss expectations for scientific productivity with the student. Issues including the scope and focus of the student's project, the number of first-author papers expected, and specific milestones of accomplishment over the next several years should be discussed and agreed upon between the mentor and student.
- As stated, the Scientific Advisory/Dissertation Committee should be formed and the first meeting held no later than six months following the student's entry into the mentor's laboratory. The MSTP Mentor, a member of the MSTPAC assigned to each student, can serve either as an ex officio member or a full member of the Dissertation Committee.
- MSTP students are required to have two committee meetings per year throughout their tenure in the lab (i.e. once every 6 months).
- Submit a written progress report to the MSTP Manager within 2 weeks of each dissertation committee meeting. A form for this progress report can be found in Appendix II and on our website: <http://www.mstp.uab.edu>.
- If meetings are not held every six months and the written progress report is not received by the MSTP office within 2 weeks of the committee meeting, the thesis mentor will be

put on a probationary status and will not be allowed to take new MSTP rotation or thesis students until corrective action is taken.

- Thesis Mentors should guide the student in writing manuscripts for publication, developing informative poster presentations, and presenting scientific seminars.
- The Thesis Mentor should provide the student with knowledge concerning the mechanics for preparation and submission of grant applications. Additionally, the mentor should assist the student in the development of insight and skills associated with “Grantsmanship”. All MSTP students entering their PhD years in 2013 or after are required to submit individual training grants to the NIH (F30/F31) during their first or second year of thesis research, and Thesis Mentors are expected to facilitate these grant submissions. Please see Appendix items X and XI for additional information.
- Provide a written final report of the Student's thesis years upon the student's completion of the PhD dissertation.
- Provide financial support as described for the first four years the student is assigned to the lab and all of this support after the student has been in the lab four years.
- **Complete the UAB Effort Report in a timely fashion.**

## Appendix IX: Tips for Reimbursement

Reimbursements must be in the computer system within **30 days from the time of the transaction. Reimbursements must equal \$25.00 or more before a payment request will be processed.** Turn in all receipts as soon as possible upon your return or when the purchase was placed. The documentation required, includes the following:

- Conference Itinerary if reimbursement is part of a conference/symposium
- Flight itinerary and proof of purchase if ticket is purchased on own
  - a. **Flight itineraries should be processed through the MSTP Office if travel is for a UAB student-attended conference or symposium. Flight information should be sent via e-mail no later than 6 weeks before the flight is to take place.**
- **Paid by cash:** Original register receipt indicating form of payment.
- **Paid by check:** Copy of an online banking record showing that specific payment circled.
- **Paid by credit card:** The original credit card receipt (showing at least the **last four digits** of the card used) and a transaction statement.

**Note:** If you are being reimbursed as an employee (see conditions below) you will be asked to return to the MSTP Office to sign a form generated by the computer once the process has begun.

### How will you receive your reimbursement?

Students being reimbursed as employees will receive payment directly to their home address or can request to pick it up at the MSTP Office.

Students will be reimbursed as employees under the following circumstances:

- If the student is on the departmental NIH Grant.
- If the student is being reimbursed from their Individual Grant.
- If the student is being reimbursed for travel (must be turned in within 60 days of travel date).
- **Hosting recruits** (the restaurant receipt must be itemized and have the total payment).
- Once the reimbursement is approved the student should receive a notification email from the MSTP Office. The check for the reimbursement(s) should arrive within a few days.

All other reimbursements will be sent to the student's tuition account. Every student is **required** to have **direct deposit** from their student account (see directions below). Enhancement funds will be **withheld** until this requirement is met. This is to insure you receive your payment 1) as soon as possible/the next working day; 2) that the payment does not get applied to tuition charges (provided there are no charges at time of reimbursement). The MSTP Administrative Associate will do everything possible to time the reimbursement when there are no tuition charges on the

account. If there are other fees, such as **traffic citations**, the reimbursement will be processed as normal.

**To set up direct deposit from your student account:**

1. Go to Blazernet – <https://blazernet.uab.edu>
2. Click on Student Resource tab
3. Click on Manage my Direct Deposit located in the Student Accounting Box

You will be notified by e-mail any time a change to your account information is made.

## **Appendix X: Graduate School Incentive Program to Promote Individual Fellowship Applications**

### **MSTP Specific Instructions are listed in bold text**

**Rationale and Goal:** Relative to similar institutions which have vigorous research programs and generous external funding, UAB has a very small number of graduate students who have applied for and secured an individual fellowship to support their pre-doctoral education. We believe that many of our graduate students would be competitive for individual awards. Accordingly, the Graduate School is establishing an incentive plan designed to encourage more students to apply for individual fellowships. The Graduate School anticipates that implementing this incentive plan will be effective in garnering a significant number of individual fellowships in various programs at UAB. **Please note that although currently these applications for individual fellowships are not a requirement for MSTP students, they are strongly encouraged.**

### **Plan Description:**

The Graduate School will provide a monetary incentive for students to APPLY FOR individual fellowships funded by extramural agencies or foundations. Graduate students who apply for an individual fellowship (e.g. NSF Individual, NIH NRSA, or other) will be awarded \$250 from the Graduate School through the UAB Financial Aid office as a reward for submitting the application. To qualify for this award, the application must be reviewed prior to submission by the **MSTP program director and the student's mentor**. The student's mentor must provide a written verification to the Graduate School that the application is considered to be competitive. After submission of the grant application, the student will provide a PDF of the application to the Graduate School **and the MSTP Office**. The incentive reward will be authorized when the student provides evidence that the application has been received by the granting agency.

If a student's application is funded, the student will receive an additional financial reward:

For an NIH NRSA or other grant that provides less than the base stipend currently being offered to all students in that student's program, the student will receive supplementation of the fellowship stipend to an amount equal to \$1000 per year over the UAB base stipend for that student's level for the term that the grant is funded. **This additional \$1000 will be paid from Graduate School funds. If the student entered the research laboratory prior to 2007, the advisor will be responsible for providing 72.5% of that portion of the student's stipend that exceeds the amount being provided by the individual fellowship (up to the UAB base stipend). If the student entered the research laboratory in 2007 and beyond, the advisor will be responsible for 100% of that portion of the student's stipend that exceeds the amount being provided by the individual fellowship (up to the UAB base stipend).** If the source of the individual fellowship is from NIH, the supplementary funds must be derived from a non-NIH source. If the advisor does not have access to funds from a source other than NIH, he/she should consult with their department chair.

If the stipend amount of the external award is equal to or greater than the equivalent of \$2,400 more than the current base stipend in the student's program, the student is entitled to receive the full amount of the stipend.

**Eligibility:** This plan is available to students in any graduate program discipline in which extramural individual fellowship funding is available. To be eligible for both the reward for submitting the application and the supplement to a student's stipend, the award must provide more than half the current base stipend in the student's program. Applications for and receipt of travel and other small grants will not be eligible for an incentive award under this program.

To receive the application incentive (\$250) the following materials are required:

- A letter from the student's advisor verifying that the advisor reviewed the application and believes that it is competitive.
- Documentation that the amount of the fellowship provides greater than half of the student's current base stipend.
- An electronic or hard copy PDF of the application.
- Verification of receipt of the application by the funding agency.
- Incentives apply to applications submitted January 2, 2007 or later.

These materials must be submitted to **both** the MSTP Office and Scott Austin, 120G SHEL, 934-2845, [ScottA@uab.edu](mailto:ScottA@uab.edu), in the Graduate Biomedical Sciences Office.

If the application is successfully funded, the student should provide a copy of the award notice to both the MSTP office and Scott Austin in the GBS Officer to receive the additional financial reward as described in the Plan Description.

The MSTP office will make every effort to make sure tuition and related fees are paid in order to keep your balance at zero, but to insure you receive your full award check your student account before providing a copy of the award notice.

## Appendix XI: Potential Funding Sources for MD/PhD Students

Please visit the websites for deadlines, qualifications, and funding applications.

Two categories of possible funding sources for MD/PhD students are listed below: private, non-federal sources and federal sources.

You can also login to the UAB Integrated Research Administration Portal (<https://irap.uab.edu/main.asp>) and click on Find Funding (at the top) to search for additional funding opportunities.

**LIST A** (private, non-federal funds).

**LIST B** (federal sources)

### LIST A

#### **American Association of University Women**

<http://www.aauw.org/> or [http://www.aauw.org/learn/fellows\\_directory/index.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/learn/fellows_directory/index.cfm)

#### **American Chemical Society, Division of Analytical Chemistry Graduate Fellowships**

[http://www.southwestern.edu/departments/chemistry/acsgraduatefellowship/ACS\\_DAC\\_site/American\\_Chemical\\_Society\\_Division\\_of\\_Analytical\\_Chemistry\\_Graduate\\_Fellowship\\_Home\\_Page.html](http://www.southwestern.edu/departments/chemistry/acsgraduatefellowship/ACS_DAC_site/American_Chemical_Society_Division_of_Analytical_Chemistry_Graduate_Fellowship_Home_Page.html)

#### **American Heart Association Regional Affiliates Pre-doctoral Fellowship**

<http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/> or  
[http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/Funding-Opportunities\\_UCM\\_316909\\_SubHomePage.jsp](http://my.americanheart.org/professional/Research/FundingOpportunities/Funding-Opportunities_UCM_316909_SubHomePage.jsp)

#### **American Society for Microbiology Robert Watkins Graduate Fellowship for Minorities**

<http://www.asm.org>

#### **Community of Science Funding Opportunities Database**

<http://fundingopps2.cos.com/>

#### **National Science Foundation**

[http://www.nsf.gov/funding/education.jsp?fund\\_type=2](http://www.nsf.gov/funding/education.jsp?fund_type=2)

#### **UNCF-Merck Graduate Science Research Dissertation Fellowships**

<http://umsi.uncf.org/>

#### **Department of Defense**

<http://cdmrp.army.mil/>

## LIST B

**Note:** These applications are now all submitted electronically through Grants.gov.

**Due Dates:** April 8, August 8, December 8

### **Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral MD/PhD and Other Dual Doctoral Degree Fellows (Parent F30) (PA-11-110)**

National Cancer Institute ([NCI](#))

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute ([NHLBI](#))

National Human Genome Research Institute ([NHGRI](#))

National Institute on Aging ([NIA](#))

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([NIAAA](#))

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases ([NIAID](#))

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases ([NIAMS](#))

*Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development ([NICHD](#))

National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders ([NIDCD](#))

National Institute on Dental and Craniofacial Research ([NIDCR](#))

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases ([NIDDK](#))

National Institute on Drug Abuse ([NIDA](#))

National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences ([NIEHS](#))

National Institute of Mental Health ([NIMH](#))

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-110.html>

### **NINDS Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral Fellows in MD-PhD programs (F31) (PAR-13-127)**

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-13-127.html>

**Note:** This is a new funding category for 2010. The deadlines are the same as the F30. However, the new F31 from NINDS is different in the following ways:

1. It is meant to support students earlier in their career - The hope is that students will apply as early as during the second year of medical school (after they have identified a research laboratory). The focus is supposed to be on creative ideas and the best training/mentoring environments. It is supposed to reduce the need for preliminary data.
2. It could allow a student to work in a laboratory that might otherwise not have funding for a student (since you can apply for the funding before you actually go into the lab)
3. This mechanism **will not** support students during their medical school years - but will fund for the entire graduate years (up to 5).
4. The actual application appears to be slightly different - with the Research Strategy section not exceeding 6 pages.

### **Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Pre-doctoral Fellowships (F31) to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research**

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-11-112.html>

National Cancer Institute ([NCI](#))  
National Eye Institute ([NEI](#))  
National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute ([NHLBI](#))  
National Human Genome Research Institute ([NHGRI](#))  
National Institute on Aging ([NIA](#))  
National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism ([NIAAA](#))  
National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases ([NIAID](#))  
National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases ([NIAMS](#))  
National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering ([NIBIB](#))  
*Eunice Kennedy Shriver* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development ([NICHD](#))  
National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders ([NIDCD](#))  
National Institute on Dental and Craniofacial Research ([NIDCR](#))  
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases ([NIDDK](#))  
National Institute on Drug Abuse ([NIDA](#))  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences ([NIEHS](#))  
National Institute of General Medical Sciences ([NIGMS](#))  
National Institute of Mental Health ([NIMH](#))  
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke ([NINDS](#))  
National Institute of Nursing Research ([NINR](#))  
National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine ([NCCAM](#))

### **Current Budget Policies for NIH Individual Training Grants**

**Tuition and Fees:** The amount awarded for tuition will be based on the following formulas: 60 percent of each requested pre-doctoral trainee's tuition and fees up to a cap of \$22,032 for dual-degree students. Grantees are reminded that these formulas are for award calculation purposes only. Grantees should continue to request full needs in all competing applications; the formula will be applied at the time of award.

**Institutional Allowance:** Health insurance is part of the institutional allowance, which currently is awarded at \$4,200 for pre-doctoral fellowships.

NOTE: Before you can submit an NRSA Grant to the NIH you will need to "add a role to my existing eRA Commons ID" The role you will add is New Principal Investigator. You can find the form to do this at:

[http://www.uab.edu/uabra/ogca/ogcapdf/NIH/PI Account for the eRA Commons.pdf](http://www.uab.edu/uabra/ogca/ogcapdf/NIH/PI_Account_for_the_eRA_Commons.pdf)

## **Appendix XII: Vacation and/or Leave of Absence from UAB MSTP**

In general, MSTP students are expected to be available in the periods between academic terms. MSTP students are entitled to the following short-term leaves:

- A maximum of 15 calendar days (one-half month) paid leave of absence (vacation) per calendar year,
- Three calendar days paid sick leave of absence per calendar year, and
- Parental leave of absence (with pay) of 30 consecutive days per calendar year upon the birth or adoption of a child. Either or both parents are eligible for parental leave.

These leaves (vacation, sick, parental) do not accrue. All vacation and sick leaves require notification of and approval by the mentor. All parental leaves or vacation leaves over one week require notification of and approval by the mentor and the MSTP director. With the agreement of the mentor, the graduate program director, and the MSTP director, extended, unpaid, nonemergency absences from campus for periods up to a month may be approved (see Appendix XII). Extended absences (without pay) for non-academic purposes should be limited. In emergencies, MSTP students should inform their mentors and the MSTP Director as soon as possible about the need for a leave of absence.

### **Voluntary LOA (if taking UASOM coursework), under primary direction of the Associate Dean of Students and the MSTP**

- The student must fill out and sign a Leave of Absence form for both the medical school and the graduate school. Leave of Absence forms for the graduate school can be found on the graduate school's web site at: (<http://www.uab.edu/graduate/apply/acrobat/leaveofabsence.pdf>). Leave of Absence forms for the medical school must be picked up directly from the medical school.
- All graduate school leave forms must be approved by the student's graduate program director, MSTP Director and the Graduate School Dean. Requests for leave from the UASOM must be approved by the Associate Dean for Students.
- Once the requests have been approved by the appropriate individuals, the student's employment will then be terminated by the MD/PhD program via his or her ACT document using whatever date the leave is to be effective.
- During a Leave of Absence each student is required to retain his or her health-related fees through the medical school. These fees should automatically process on the student's account after he or she goes on leave however, the student should monitor their account to ensure that this actually happens. If the student's health-related fees do not automatically process on the student's account after the student has gone on leave, then Gwen Stewart in Student Accounting should be contacted immediately at 934-9893 to ensure that these fees get added and the student is not without insurance coverage.
- In order for the student to return from an approved Leave of Absence, the director must submit a request to the Graduate School as well as the Associate Dean for Students, to allow the student to be able to re-enroll in courses. Once this is done, the student should be rehired by the MD/PhD program via his or her ACT document using whatever effective date the student is to return.

## **Voluntary LOA (if doing graduate/thesis work) under primary direction of the Graduate School and the MSTP**

Students in good academic standing may request a leave of absence for a period not generally to exceed two years. The request for a leave of absence must be made in writing to the graduate program director and must include the anticipated duration of the leave. A copy of the approved request shall be forwarded to the Graduate School. Students on leave shall not undertake any requirements for the degree.

- Leave of Absence forms for the graduate school can be found on the graduate school's web site at: (<http://www.uab.edu/graduate/apply/acrobat/leaveofabsence.pdf>). Leave of Absence forms are not necessary for the medical school, as MSTP student in their graduate years are already on temporary LOA from the UASOM.
- All graduate school leave forms must be approved by the student's graduate program director, MSTP Director and the Graduate School Dean.
- Once the requests have been approved by the appropriate individuals, the student's employment will then be terminated by the MD/PhD program via his or her ACT document using whatever date the leave is to be effective.
- During a Leave of Absence each student is required to retain his or her health-related fees through the medical school. These fees should automatically process on the student's account after he or she goes on leave however, the student should monitor their account to ensure that this actually happens. If the student's health-related fees do not automatically process on the student's account after the student has gone on leave, then Gwen Stewart in Student Accounting should be contacted immediately at 4-9893 to ensure that these fees get added and the student is not without insurance coverage.
- In order for the student to return from an approved Leave of Absence, the director must submit a request to the Graduate School to allow the student to be able to re-enroll in courses. Once this is done, the student should be rehired by the MD/PhD program via his or her ACT document using whatever effective date the student is to return.

## **Involuntary LOA**

The procedures are the same for involuntary LOA during either the medical or graduate years with the exception that the procedure is initiated by the UASOM or the UAB MSTP.

## **Parental LOA**

Parental leave of absence (with pay) of 30 consecutive days per calendar year upon the birth or adoption of a child is permitted. Either or both parents are eligible for parental leave. The Graduate School and the SOM have different policies surrounding parental LOA. MSTP will enforce the most relevant policy depending on your current student status upon the birth or adoption of a child. It is important that notification be given to the MSTP Program Director at the second trimester of the pregnancy or the initial stages of the adoption process. This notification enables both parties to meet and create an adequate LOA so not to interrupt both academic and parental obligations.

These leaves (vacation, sick, parental) do not accrue. All leaves require notification of and approval by the MSTP Program Director, Mentor, and Graduate Theme Director and may be extended without pay, if necessary, with the permission of the MSTP Program Director. Program policies regarding leaves of absence must apply equitably to all full time students in good standing in the program. With the agreement of the MSTP Program Director, Mentor, and Graduate Theme Director, extended, unpaid, nonemergency absences from campus for periods up to a month may be approved. Extended absences (without pay) for non-academic purposes should be limited. In emergencies, graduate assistants should inform the MSTP Program Director, Mentor, and Graduate Theme Director as soon as possible about the need for a leave of absence. See <http://main.uab.edu/Sites/gradschool/students/current/policies/> for more information.

### **Parental LOA if on an Individual Training Award from the NIH**

Current NRSA policy indicates that trainees and fellows may receive stipends for up to 60 calendar days of parental leave per year for the adoption or the birth of a child when those in comparable training positions at the grantee organization have access to this level of paid leave for this purpose. Note that as the current UAB Policy states only 30 consecutive days per calendar year are permitted, this also is the policy for all MSTP students until further notice.

## Appendix XIII: Tax Information for MSTP Students

### U.S. CITIZEN AND PERMANENT RESIDENT TAXABILITY OF UAB PAYMENTS

**Graduate Student Traineeships** - Awards with monthly stipend payments, usually the funding source is some sort of training grant.

**Stipend awards:** Any portion of a fellowship in excess of tuition, fees, and required books and equipment is subject to federal income tax (i.e. your stipend). UAB does not withhold taxes from fellowships or issue W-2 forms. You must self-report the taxable amount. Useful tax information can be found in IRS Publication 970:

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p970/index.html> (Tax Benefits for Education - especially look at Scholarships and Fellowships – towards the bottom of this part it tells you what line to put your stipend amount on and how to code it, depending on the tax form you are using).

**Tax Withholding Form:** You generally have to make estimated tax payments if you expect to owe tax of \$1,000 or more when you file your return. Use Form 1040-ES, Estimated Tax for Individuals, to figure and pay your estimated tax (and Alabama State Form 40-ES). For additional information, refer to Publication 505, Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax (<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p505/index.html>). These forms contain Estimated Tax Worksheets. Payments are due by April 15 (for January - March income), June 15 (for April - June income), September 15 (for July - September income), and January 15 (for October - December income). Forms are available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and [www.ador.state.al.us/incometax/ITindex2.html](http://www.ador.state.al.us/incometax/ITindex2.html).

**CAUTION – AVOID TAX PENALTIES:** Federal 1040 instructions state that you may be assessed a tax penalty when filing your return if you “owe at least \$1,000 and it is more than 10% of the tax shown on your return or you did not pay enough estimated taxes by any of the due dates.”

### BRIEF OVERVIEW OF Traineeships or Fellowships

For the stipend part of the payments:

- Student files federal/state quarterly taxes (1040ES/540ES) or student increases withholding on other salaried income
- Student receives no Wage and Tax Statement (W-2) from UAB
- Fellowships are exempt from FICA (social security tax)
- Student positively reports taxable amount as "SCH" on 1040EZ/1040A/1040 (Refer to the "Fellowship and Scholarship Grants" instructions for Line 1, Wages (1040EZ) or Line 7, Wages (1040A) or Line 7, (1040)).

**Graduate Student Assistantship** - Awards with monthly salary payments, usually the funding source is some sort of research grant.

**Stipend/Salary Awards:** This will be taxable and you will get a Wage and Tax Statement (W-2) from UAB. The fee/tuition payments provided by the assistantship are not taxable and not reported by the University as income on a W-2 or 1099 Form.

**Tax Withholding Form:** At UAB, you will complete a "W-4" form to instruct Payroll how much in Federal and State Income Tax should be withheld from each paycheck. (Note: Only the top copy of the W-4 needs to be submitted to Payroll; the attached worksheets are designed to assist you in determining the number of exemptions to claim). Taxes are withheld based on marital status and the number of exemptions claimed on the W-4. Single students generally file as single, claiming 1 allowance (because they will file their Federal/State income tax forms as "single" with "1" allowance/exemption). The lower the number of allowances or exemptions claimed (0, 1, 2, etc.), the more taxes withheld. Claiming "0" allowance has more withheld than "1", claiming "1" allowance has more withheld than "2", etc. You can submit to your employing department a revised W-4 form to change the amount of withholding at any time.

### **BRIEF OVERVIEW OF UAB Assistantship**

For your salary part of your payments:

- Student completes W-4 for federal/state tax withholding
- Salary subject to Student FICA (social security) if not registered in a minimum of 3 units.
- Student receives UAB W-2 for filing of tax returns

**Important Note:** This brief discussion of tax items (and that below) is not to be considered tax advice. Please refer to the IRS publications listed above. Where needed, students should seek competent tax counsel or contact the IRS directly via their website.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Question:** How do I know what kind of graduate student appointment I have?

**Answer:** You should receive a letter from your program director describing the nature of the award. Any time the award changes, the letter should be reissued. If you don't have a letter, ask for one.

**Question:** I am paid on my advisor's research grant, but I am just working on my thesis. Why are taxes being deducted?

**Answer:** You have an assistantship. A research grant is awarded to the university for the purpose of conducting research, not training. Your advisor cannot give you fellowship support from a research grant.

**Question:** I am on an NIH Training Grant. Is this a fellowship or an assistantship?

**Answer:** NIH Training Grants (e.g., T32, T35, T42) are treated like fellowships.

**Question:** Where can I find out tax information?

**Answer:** To help in the preparation of federal taxes, students may wish to consult IRS Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education. (<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p970/index.html>) This useful publication addresses a variety of issues related to graduate students and their tax obligations. Chapter 2 of Publication 505 may also be helpful, which describes who must pay estimated tax. Publication 970, Tax Benefits for Education: (<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p505/>).

Yearly 1098/1099 information can be accessed through [www.tra.vangent.com](http://www.tra.vangent.com).

**Question:** Are fellowships taxable by the State of Alabama?

**Answer:** Your fellowship is not taxable by the State of Alabama. It is recommended that you visit the following web site: <http://financialaffairs.uab.edu/content.asp?id=297463>

**Question:** Is there a student recommended contact person who can assist in preparing my tax returns?

**Answer:** Yes. The contact information is as follows:

Sara "Sally" Mask  
H&R Block  
34 Green Springs Plz  
Birmingham, AL 35209  
205-945-1529  
[sara.mask@tax.hrblock.com](mailto:sara.mask@tax.hrblock.com)

## **A Tax Guide for the MSTP Student**

Calculating and paying Federal (IRS) and State income taxes can be challenging for the one who is new to actually having income to pay taxes on. But the issue can get particularly involved for those in the MSTP. And in Alabama, it's even trickier, since Alabama treats certain types of stipends differently than the IRS for determining taxable income. This "brief" guide is a supplement to what has been put together by Dr. Lorenz. Many items here overlap and repeat what Dr. Lorenz has written.

This document is NOT intended to be a complete, step by step protocol (although I wish such a thing were possible!) But after reading both documents, I hope that you will have 95% of the info you need to understand your taxes while in the MSTP and that you will have the tools and vocabulary to figure out the remaining 5%.

Note, you can easily find IRS documents, forms and instructions by google-ing "IRS" and the publication number, i.e. "IRS 1040" should take you right to the IRS site where you can get a .pdf copy of a 1040 form.

Disclaimer! Do NOT assume anything I have written is complete or accurate. Things change year to year, and despite my years of experience in preparing taxes, I do NOT claim to know everything. So please verify this information by reading the appropriate IRS documents. Also keep in mind that this advice is independent of the MSTP. I am personally writing this as an aid to you. And while I may ask the MSTP's help in getting this document to you, it is not vetted by the MSTP, and UAB and the MSTP will take no responsibility for what is written herein.

There are many different types of taxes: sales taxes, use taxes, real estate taxes, personal property taxes, etc. But as far as your stipend is concerned there are only two types of taxes that apply. INCOME taxes, and PAYROLL taxes. Payroll taxes are taxes that are generally assessed on ALL of your income below (for 2006) about \$97,000. Payroll taxes are also known as "FICA", of which there are two: 1) Social Security Insurance, and 2) Medicare/Medicaid. Due to a special ruling and the special situation graduate students are in, our scholarships and stipends are EXEMPT from all payroll taxes. So you do not owe any SS or Medicare/Medicaid on your stipend. (Warning, a very long aside follows, in smaller print...skip ahead if you must)

That essentially saves you about 7.5% on every dollar we are paid. But you must keep in mind that future Social Security payments we will receive WILL BE LOWER than they could be, because Social Security payments are roughly based on your last 40 years of earnings subject to payroll taxes. I.e. I'm 35 years old, and I have no contributions yet to Social Security. At age 67 I will be eligible for my "full" benefits, which will only be based on 32 years of earnings. Those years of "zero" earnings will bring down the amount I am paid monthly. Should I die at 60, then it's been a "good deal", since I was spared the taxes as an MSTP and would never have earned any SS anyway. Should I die at 97, then I will have had 30 years of SS payments (from 67 to 97 years old) that are reduced by those "zero" years. Another thing to understand is that SS is an insurance program, where in addition to paying you when you are "old", you are covered NOW for disability, should you become disabled while working. The amount of disability insurance received for the amount one is charged is quite high...that is, it's a great deal

compared to buying private disability insurance. While an MSTP you will not be paying payroll taxes so you are NOT covered by any disability insurance (assuming you don't have previous income where you have paid payroll taxes). Although morbid, you need to understand that should you get hit by a car while crossing University Ave and be unable to work in any job again, you are not insured, while essentially every other UAB employee would receive Social Security disability payments for the duration of the disability.

Since payroll taxes don't apply to the MSTP student, we are left with only income taxes.

### **What counts as taxable income by the IRS?**

The short answer is ANY money that comes from UAB that goes into your pocket that you do not then use for 1) Tuition or 2) REQUIRED school fees and books, is taxable. Since your tuition and fees are paid by the MSTP BEFORE they show up in your check, essentially your entire stipend is taxable income. Now, the IRS clearly spells out certain items which ARE taxable to students. Those examples include reimbursement for books, reimbursement for travel, and health insurance. This is clearly explained in IRS Publication 970. Even though health insurance is required for attending classes at UAB, it is specifically addressed by the IRS and is TAXABLE if UAB pays for it (see page 34 of Pub 970). In the time since I have left UAB, I understand that UAB will be changing the method used to pay your health insurance such that it will likely appear as excess income on your paychecks which they then subtract away, making it harder for you to "forget" to claim your health insurance on your taxes. I must emphasize that the tax treatment of paid health insurance is considered by some to be controversial, and I would not take my comments as 100% accurate.

Note, that although your mentor or department may "require" you to attend that scientific meeting in DC, San Diego or the Bahamas, you STILL will owe income taxes on the money paid to offset your costs of going on the trip (hotel, airfare, meals, etc...see section 1 of Pub 970). I'm not sure I can find another grad student that actually reports and pays taxes on that money, but I just needed to warn you. Because, like your health insurance, UAB may change the method used to pay you such that the IRS will see those payments even if you don't report it on your own.

For Federal/IRS purposes, it does not matter what your stipend is called. Regardless of whether it is a scholarship, an assistantship, a fellowship, etc, it's all the same to them as long as you are a student and receive money in excess of tuition and required fees. As I will explain later, for FEDERAL purposes, your classification by UAB and "who actually pays you" (i.e. which grant) affects only how you REPORT and PAY your taxes, but NOT what you will owe. But for ALABAMA income taxes, there IS a difference in what you owe, which you can read about below.

### **What counts as taxable income by Alabama?**

In general, states generally count as income everything that the IRS does. But for reasons unknown, Alabama taxes ASSISTANTships like regular income, but traineeships and Fellowships are EXEMPT from Alabama income taxes. You will not find this explicitly stated

in any Alabama tax document, but it has been settled in Alabama “Revenue Court”. So you will save roughly 5% (the Alabama tax rate) when not on an assistantship. Anyway see below for the ways in which you can be classified by UAB which affects how you report and pay taxes.

### **What about “local” taxes?**

Local taxes are income taxes assessed by the city of Birmingham and Jefferson County. Together they amount to 1.5% of your income. They are taken directly “off the top” of your stipend. That is, you don’t have to do anything to file or pay your taxes. If you owe them, they’ve already been taken out of your check. You don’t have to file a city or county tax return. If I recall correctly, if you owe Alabama taxes then local taxes will be automatically paid from each paycheck. But if you do not owe Alabama taxes (i.e. you are on a traineeship of fellowship) then local taxes will not be subtracted....

### **What’s the difference between “withholding” taxes, “paying” taxes, and “owing” taxes?**

This is a good time to mention that when you have Federal or State taxes withheld from your paycheck you **MAY OR MAY NOT ACTUALLY OWE** that money. Until you file your taxes, neither you nor the government knows how much you owe in taxes. Tax withholding is supposed to be your best guess at what you might owe, and then you “square up” in April. If you paid more than you owe, you get a refund. If you paid too little, you have to send a check. If you paid **WAY** too little, you **MAY** owe a penalty-More on this later. The reason I brought this up now is to distinguish that **LOCAL** taxes that come out of your paycheck **ARE** what you owe. You don’t file later. In a sense, your paystub **IS** your tax return and the local taxes get paid on the spot. But for Federal and State taxes, any money that is withheld from your paycheck is calculated based on the guidelines that **YOU** provide to UAB (via a W-4 form). **JUST BECAUSE MONEY IS WITHHELD FROM YOUR TAXES DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU OWE THAT AMOUNT. BUT ALSO REMEMBER THAT JUST BECAUSE NOTHING IS WITHHELD FROM YOUR PAYCHECK IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU DON’T OWE.** It simply means that you are responsible for getting the IRS its money and UAB will not act as the middle man. This is covered rather well in the document provided by Dr. Lorenz.

### **What will my total taxes be when I finally do file?**

I can only cover the most basic of instances here, namely that of a non-married student, no children, with only MSTP income, and no significant tax deductions. Let’s start with Federal taxes. Follow along with a printed copy of form 1040. I have provided a sample 1040 form you can use. You may be eligible to use simpler forms like the 1040A, or the 1040 EZ; the 1040 just has more lines, most of which you skip and ignore.

MSTP students are **NOT** eligible for either the Lifetime Learning Credits or the Hope Education Credits.

## Federal Taxes

Assuming that you've been in the MSTP for the whole tax year (i.e. 2nd year students and up) then your income for the year will be your stipend (\$23,000 I believe for 2007, but of course the increase came mid-year 2006 so that your total for 2006 will be less...). Regardless of your status as a student (fellowship, assistantship, etc) you put your income, \$23,000 on line 7. If you were a student for part of the year, then, of course, your income will be less. Your total monies from the MSTP stipend goes on line 7 whether you received a W-2 or not. The amount on line 7 is going to be the total you got paid for the year in stipend, which should be shown on your last paystub of the year, the December check. Now this is where the options can diverge. If you received a W-2 for your entire stipend amount (i.e. your amount on your W-2 matches the "year to date" amount on your paystub), you do nothing further. But if you DID NOT receive a W-2, or if the W-2 only shows a PORTION of your stipend for the year then you must indicate on line 7 HOW MUCH of the \$23,000 (or whatever) that you placed in line 7 is actually from stipend received that is NOT on a W-2. For example, for most of you in the labs, the MSTP pays for part of your stipend, and the mentor pays the rest. In this case, only your mentor's contribution will be reported on a W-2. For the sake of illustration, let's say your mentor paid \$13,000 of the stipend, and the MSTP program paid the rest. You would then receive a W-2 in the amount of \$13,000. But your TOTAL goes on line 7 (\$23,000) and then you must write in, to the left of the "\$23,000" the amount that was NOT reported on a W-2. You do this by simply handwriting "SCH \$10,000" there on "dots" to the left. The SCH stands for scholarship or course. What the IRS wants to know is what amount of line 7 they should NOT expect to see a W-2 for. That is, in most cases for most people, line 7 is simply the addition of all their W-2s. But in the case of scholarships, this alerts them NOT to expect line 7 to match your W-2s.

Now, for those who file online, you can't really "write in" anything on the form. But most software allows you to associate "details" with each line, similar to writing it on the form, or attaching a footnote. So add a note/detail/whatever in your tax software that says "SCH \$XX,XXX". If you are following along on the .pdf I filled out, I could not enter any info on the dots, so it's missing in that sample 1040.

Keep in mind that I don't know how UAB is handling health insurance and student health fee payments. They may report this on a W-2, in which case it gets reported on line 7.

Now let's go down the page of the 1040. As you can see, lines 8 to 21 don't likely apply to you. So you just ignore them. But line 21 is where you would list reimbursements for books, travel, and health insurance paid by UAB PROVIDED ITS NOT ALREADY ON THE W-2. Total up the lines and this goes on line 22. I'm not going to include any "other income" for this illustration. You can then see that lines 23 to 35 likely don't apply to you. So leave them blank (blanks are the same as zeros) and you end up with \$23,000 on line 37, which carried to line 38.

On line 40 you take the "standard deduction" which is available to every tax filer. The amount differs based on your filing status. But for single folks it's \$5150 for 2006, so enter this amount here. Of course, you MAY OPT to take an "itemized deduction" instead and use it if it exceeds \$5150. Look up "schedule A" which deals with itemized deductions so you can see what types

of items are deductible. But in 99% of the cases with MSTP students, the standard deduction exceeds the itemized.

Line 41 is the standard deduction deducted from your income, for a total of \$17,850.

Line 42 is where you get to account for the number of “dependents” you have. In most cases, the number is “1”, you depend on yourself. If you are married and filing jointly, this would be “2”. If you are married with 3 children, this could be “5”. But keep in mind that some parents will claim their post-college children as dependents. If you claim yourself as a dependent AND your parents ALSO claim you as a dependent, then someone is going to be in trouble. Verify with your parents that they are not claiming you as a dependent before you claim yourself. I think they are only allowed to claim you up until age 24 (not positive about this) and there are other rules. But talk to them first. Anyway, each dependent allows you to subtract \$3300 from your income, so your net “taxable income” on line 43 is now \$14550. In order to figure out your tax due to the IRS, go to page 67 of the 1040 Instructions and use the tax tables. In this case, the federal tax on your income is \$1794. The rest of the 1040 is self-explanatory.

The IRS expect to be paid this amount by April 15 through a combination of three ways 1) direct withholding from your paycheck 2) checks mailed to them quarterly as estimated payments and 3) a check mailed with your tax return when you file. In general though, the US tax system is a “pay as you go” system, where the IRS expects to receive taxes from you as you earn the income. So don’t expect to be allowed to wait until April to pay all of your taxes, or you will be penalized. Dr. Lorenz covers this a bit in her tax document. I’ll also discuss it a little more here. But please read form 1040-ES which covers paying estimated taxes to avoid under-withholding penalties.

### **How do I pay?**

As I mentioned you pay your taxes through a combination of telling UAB how much to withhold from your paycheck, estimated taxes you mail to the IRS, and a check you mail when you file. **HERE ARE THE (simplified) RULES YOU NEED TO KNOW** in order to avoid penalties (found in form 1040-ES).

**RULE #1:** If you will owe less than \$1000 when you file, **NO PROBLEM**. You simply mail the IRS a check when you file. For example, first year students who have income for half a year will owe less than \$1000, so there is no penalty for not withholding taxes or making estimated payments. So anytime you will owe **LESS THAN \$1000** when you file, you will pay no penalties. Keep in mind that when I say “owe” in this case, I **DON’T** mean your total tax as shown on line 63 of the 1040. I mean the amount of line 63 that the IRS has **NOT YET GOTTEN WHEN YOU FILE**, i.e. line 76. Of course, if your total tax is less than \$1000, you cannot owe more than that. That means that all you have to do to avoid penalties is have taxes withheld to get you within \$1000 by the time you do your taxes. Alternately, you can pay estimated taxes to get you within \$1000. But if you simply don’t pay any taxes and then find at tax time you owe \$1794, then you will have to pay some penalty.

**RULE #2:** IF YOU OWE MORE THAN \$1000 come tax time, as shown on line 76, then to avoid penalties you must have paid, via a combination of estimated taxes and withholding, AT LEAST AS MUCH AS YOU PAID THE PREVIOUS TAX YEAR. This rule generally only come into effect if you get a big raise, win the lottery, etc. It simply means that in any given year, if you paid estimated taxes and/or withheld as least as much as you did last year, you are safe and owe no penalties, whether you owe \$1100 or \$11 Million.

In general, rule #1 is what you want to shoot for...get your payments within \$1000 and avoid all potential penalties.

The reason this is important to you is that depending on how you are classified by UAB, you may not be ABLE to have taxes withheld. For example, anyone paid solely through MSTP funds will not be eligible for having taxes taken directly out of their paycheck, so must make estimated taxes to avoid penalties. Estimated taxes have 4 dues dates, and you must pay roughly 25% of your tax liability at each due date. What you need to do is estimated how much you will owe in taxes for the year, and divide by 4, and pay this amount quarterly (very clearly explained how to do this on form 1040-ES). Remember, you only need to get within \$1000. And if you can do this via withholding, then you don't need to pay estimated taxes at all.

### **Alabama Taxes**

Look at a copy of Alabama form 40 and follow along. I could not get a filled-out sample form to print.

The basics in reporting and paying state taxes are the same as federal taxes. But there in one notable difference. Alabama only taxes the portion of your stipend that shows up on a W-2. It doesn't make any sense, but it's to your benefit so accept it. But REPORTING this difference can be confusing. Basically, in line 6 of form 40 you report ONLY THE AMOUNT that is reported to you on a W-2. From our example above, this is \$13000. You then follow the instructions for the form as written. Note, if you did not receive a W-2, your Alabama income is ZERO and you owe no Alabama income tax on your stipend.

But pay attention...you MUST tell Alabama WHY the amount you report to them differs from the amount on your FEDERAL 1040. That is because the IRS supplies a copy of your 1040 to the states, so that they can be sure everything matches. Therefore, you must make sure you fill out "Part IV" on Page 2 of form 40. Here on line 6 you write in the amounts from your Federal tax form, and then you get to explain why you claimed less for Alabama. Essentially, you have to tell them you reported \$10,000 less to them, because Alabama does not tax the non W-2 portion of the scholarship. So on line 6 I write is "Scholarship not taxable by AL" and then the amount "\$10,000" in the given space. Just make sure the amount you place on line 6 of Part IV, when added to line 6 of part I, adds up to the total amount you reported on your IRS 1040 on line 7. This means that even if you have no taxable income for Alabama, you must still file state taxes, because otherwise Alabama will assume you just neglected to pay them, since they'll get a copy of your 1040 which shows federal tax due.

Other issues such as withholding and estimated taxes are the same. That is, Alabama wants its money as you go. In order to avoid STATE penalties you must be within \$100. This can be very hard to estimate in advance, so be careful. One almost always overpays state taxes and gets a refund. Or, you can avoid the penalty by withholding at least as much as you owed the previous year.

### **Final notes**

There is no way for me to possibly cover everyone's scenario and answer everyone's questions. But I hope this gives you some additional insight into the US tax system as it pertains to MSTP students. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me. I will make every attempt to answer your specific question. Also, if anyone finds any errors, or feel something needs additional clarification, let me know and I can update/modify this document.

Good luck!

Sotirios Keros, MD, Ph.D.  
UAB class of 2006  
[keros1@gmail.com](mailto:keros1@gmail.com)

From Payroll Services website: <http://financialaffairs.uab.edu/content.asp?id=343657>

The term "trainee" payments is used by the University, but defined by the IRS as a "fellowship" payment. Fellowship payments have specific tax reporting requirements for federal and Alabama state filings. The following are points that you should consider when completing the required tax documents. Trainee/Fellowship payments are not reported to any tax agency.

Exception: Trainee/Fellowship payments made to a NRA with NRA Tax ramifications are subject to 1042S reporting requirements. NRA Tax is identified on your payslip.

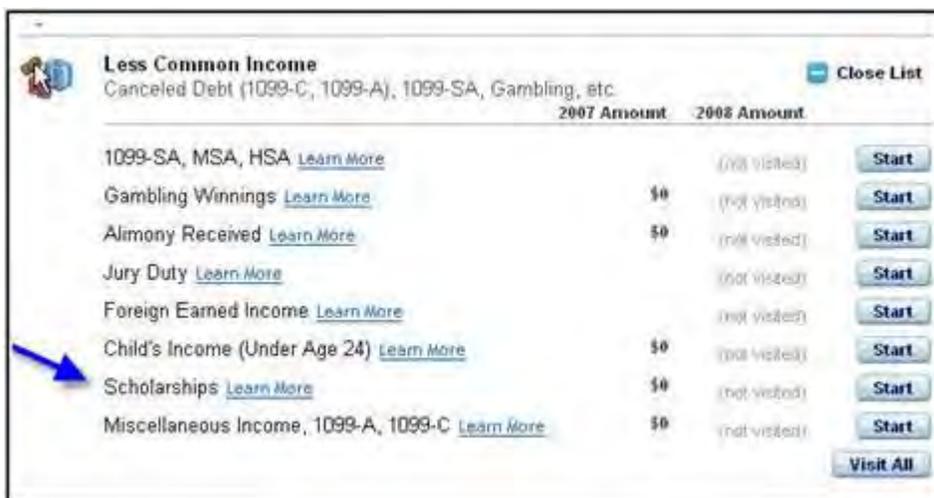
Exception: Trainee/Fellowship payments made through UAB Payroll Services to UAB students are reported on the 1098T form. This information is reported to the IRS.

Trainee/Fellowship payments made to US citizens or RA taxed as US citizens are reportable to the federal government.

Trainees in this category should retain their 31DEC20XX payslip for a record of the year-to-date information. Copies of payslips may be accessed through Oracle Self Service. Instructions for accessing this information are available online ([http://www.uab.edu/adminsystems/documentation/hr/self\\_service/doc\\_payslip.pdf](http://www.uab.edu/adminsystems/documentation/hr/self_service/doc_payslip.pdf))

Assistance in determining how to report these payments is available in most online filing software. The typical question and explanation, a copy of which is from the Turbo Tax software program, is below.

Also included is the information on where to report fellowship payments on the 1040 Internal Revenue Service Forms as defined by IRS publication 970.



	2007 Amount	2008 Amount	
1099-SA, MSA, HSA <a href="#">Learn More</a>		(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Gambling Winnings <a href="#">Learn More</a>	\$0	(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Alimony Received <a href="#">Learn More</a>	\$0	(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Jury Duty <a href="#">Learn More</a>		(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Foreign Earned Income <a href="#">Learn More</a>		(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Child's Income (Under Age 24) <a href="#">Learn More</a>	\$0	(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Scholarships <a href="#">Learn More</a>	\$0	(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>
Miscellaneous Income, 1099-A, 1099-C <a href="#">Learn More</a>	\$0	(not visited)	<a href="#">Start</a>

The screenshot shows a software interface for entering tax information. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Personal Info, Federal Taxes, Federal Review, State Taxes, Print & File, and Tools. Below these are sub-tabs: Income, Deductions and Credits, and Other. The main heading is "Taxable Scholarships and Fellowships".

Text in the interface:
   
If you are a candidate for a degree, then scholarship, fellowship, and grant income are **not taxable** as long as the funds are used for tuition, fees, books, supplies, or equipment.
   
If you are **not** a candidate for a degree, then scholarship, fellowship, and grant income are **taxable** and should be reported here.
   
Enter the amount of **taxable** scholarship, fellowship, and grant income you received. [Explain this](#)

**Note:** Do not enter payments you already reported elsewhere on your return (e.g., on Form W-2 or 1099-G).

Taxable Amount

At the bottom, there are "Back" and "Continue" buttons.

The screenshot shows a "How To Report" section with the following text:
   
How you report any taxable scholarship or fellowship income depends on which return you file.
   
**Form 1040EZ.** If you file Form 1040EZ, report the taxable amount on line 1. If the taxable amount was not reported on Form W-2, enter "SCH" and the taxable amount in the space to the left of line 1.
   
**Form 1040A.** If you file Form 1040A, report the taxable amount on line 7. If the taxable amount was not reported on Form W-2, enter "SCH" and the taxable amount in the space to the left of line 7.
   
**Form 1040.** If you file Form 1040, report the taxable amount on line 7. If the taxable amount was not reported on Form W-2, enter "SCH" and the taxable amount on the dotted line next to line 7.

At the bottom, there is a summary line:
   
7 Wages, salaries, tips, etc. Attach Form(s) W-2 SCH \$\$\$

This information is taken directly from the Alabama Administrative Code (810-3-14-.02 Exclusions from Gross Income) found in detail below. As for reporting the income, the State of Alabama tax form does require disclosure of the payments, but they should be qualified as scholarship/fellowship payments. The graphic below indicates the line on which the payments should be reported.

Enter amount here and on page 1, line 14.....		2	00
<b>PART IV</b>  <b>General Information</b>  <b>All Taxpayers Must Complete This Section.</b>	1	<b>Residency</b> <input type="radio"/> Full Year <input type="radio"/> Part Year If you were a part-year resident of Alabama during 2007, indicate your period of residence: Check only one box. From: 2007 through 2007. Total months:	
	2	Did you file an Alabama income tax return for the year 2007? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	3	If no, state reason.	
	4	Give name and address of present employer(s), Yours: _____ Your Spouse's: _____	
	5	Enter the Federal Adjusted Gross Income ●\$ _____ and Federal Taxable Income ●\$ _____ as reported on your 2007 Federal Individual Income Tax Return.	
	6	Do you have income which is reported on your Federal return, but not reported on your Alabama return (other than your state tax refund)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, enter source(s) and amount(s) below. (other than state income tax refund)	
		Source	Amount
	Source	Amount	00
7	Do you have income included in this return from a grantor trust? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

From Alabama Administrative Code: 810-3-14-.02 Exclusions from Gross Income

(1) Items which are excluded from gross income are listed in § 40-18-14(3), Code of Alabama 1975, as follows:

- (a) Amounts received under life insurance policies and contracts paid by reason of the death of the insured, in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 101.
- (b) Amounts received, other than amounts paid by reason of the death of the insured, under life insurance, endowment or annuity contracts determined in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 72.
- (c) The value of property acquired by gift, bequest, devise, or descent, in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 102 - the income from such property shall be included in gross income.

1. Gross income does not include a fellowship or grant that is an outright gift with no obligation on the part of the recipient. Payments to an individual as a scholarship at an educational institution or as a fellowship grant are excluded from the gross income of the student to the extent that services are not required of the student in order to receive the payments. The value of contributed services and accommodations are also excluded from gross income. If there is a condition that a person must teach or enter into employment, payments are not gifts.

2. Payments for teaching, research, or other services in the nature of part-time employment required as a condition to receiving the scholarship or fellowship grant are not exempt and should be included in gross income.

3. Prizes, awards, and scholarships are not specifically addressed by Alabama income tax law. The Department will look to 26 U.S.C. § 74, Prizes and Awards, and 26 U.S.C. § 117, Qualified Scholarships, as guidance to determine whether specific prizes, awards, and scholarships are excluded from gross income.

- (d) Interest upon obligations of the United States or its possessions; or securities issued under provisions of the Federal Farm Loan Act of July 18, 1916. Examples of exempt obligations include U.S. Savings Bonds, U.S. Treasury Notes or Bills, obligations of the Bank for Cooperatives, Federal Land Banks, Federal Intermediate Credit Banks, Federal Home Loan Banks, Productions Credit

Associations, Federal Financing Bank, and the Tennessee Valley Authority. Interest received from the United States government earned on other than investment obligations, such as interest on tax refunds, is subject to Alabama income tax and should be included in gross income.

(e) Amounts received which are excludable from gross income under 26 U.S.C. § 104, relating to compensation for injuries or sickness.

(f) Amounts received which are excludable from gross income under 26 U.S.C. § 105, relating to amounts received from accident or health plans.

(g) Interest on obligations of the State of Alabama and any county, municipality, or other political subdivision thereof. It should be noted that interest on obligations of other states and political subdivisions thereof is taxable.

(h) The rental value of a parsonage provided to a minister of the gospel, to the extent excludable under 26 U.S.C. § 107.

(i) Income from discharge of indebtedness to the extent allowed by 26 U.S.C. § 108, with the exception that the reductions in tax attributes required by 26 U.S.C. § 108 shall be applied only to the net operating losses determined under Alabama income tax law and to the basis of depreciable property. The basis reductions of depreciable property shall not exceed the basis reductions for federal income tax purposes. All other tax attribute reductions required by 26 U.S.C. § 108 shall not be recognized.

(j) Gain from the sale of a personal residence to the extent excludable for federal income tax purposes under 26 U.S.C. § 121.

(k) Contributions made by an employer on behalf of an employee to a trust which is a part of a qualified cash or deferred arrangement, as defined in 26 U.S.C. § 401(k)(2) or 5 U.S.C. § 8437, subject to the limitations of 26 U.S.C. § 402(g).

(l) Contributions, made by an employer for an employee for an annuity contract, which would be excludable from the gross income of the employee, in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 403(b), subject to the limitations of 26 U.S.C. § 402(g).

(m) Amounts excludable in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 125, relating to cafeteria plans.

(n) Amounts excludable in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 132, relating to certain fringe benefits.

(o) Amounts excludable in accordance with 26 U.S.C. § 129, relating to dependent care expenses.

(2) In addition, items of income which federal law prohibits the states from taxing, or which are otherwise exempt from taxation by the Code of Alabama 1975, are excluded from gross income. For example, the daily subsistence allowance paid to state law enforcement officers pursuant to § 36-21-2, Code of Alabama 1975, is excluded from

gross income. Also, federal law exempts from taxation allowances for quarters, subsistence, uniforms and travel furnished military personnel by the United States Government.

(3) Other items of income are exempt:

(a) Income of foreign missionaries - see § 40-18-2.1, Code of Alabama 1975.

(b) Certain retirement allowances, net income realized from a financial business, personal exemptions and dependent exemptions - see § 40-18-19.

(c) Certain severance payments - see § 40-18-19.1.

(d) Military retirement benefits - see § 40-18-20.

(4) For interpretation of federal statutes adopted by the Alabama legislature, see Rule 810-3-1.1-.01, Operating Rules.

(5) The provisions of the federal "Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997" which were adopted by Alabama Act 98-502 have the same effective date for Alabama income tax purposes as they do for federal income tax purposes.

Authors: Ann F. Winborne, CPA, Ed Cutter, CPA, John Danziger, and Rebecca S. Whisenant

Authority: §§ 40-2A-7(a)(5) and 40-18-14, Code of Alabama 1975

History: Adopted through APA October 1, 1982. Amended: Filed July 27, 1988. Amended: Filed May 15, 1992, effective June 19, 1992. Repealed and New: Filed May 3, 2000, effective June 7, 2000.

**1040** Department of the Treasury • Internal Revenue Service  
**U.S. Individual Income Tax Return** 2010  
 Name, Address, and SSN  
 Filing Status  
 Exemptions  
 Income  
 Adjusted Gross Income  
 Tax and Credits  
 Other Taxes  
 Payments  
 Refund

Page 2

Form 1040 (2010)

**1040** Department of the Treasury • Internal Revenue Service  
**U.S. Individual Income Tax Return** 2010  
 Name, Address, and SSN  
 Filing Status  
 Exemptions  
 Income  
 Adjusted Gross Income  
 Tax and Credits  
 Other Taxes  
 Payments  
 Refund

Page 1

Form 1040 (2010)

One of your fellow students (Jennifer Guimbellot) was kind enough to share her experience with the 1098-T in 2007 and how it can be used on your tax form. I am going to try to explain below (based on her experiences). However, as always, the MSTP will take no responsibility for this advice and if you have questions or concerns, you should verify the information by reading the appropriate IRS documents or discussing this with the IRS. If you call the IRS, please note the date and time, as well as the name and ID number of the person who talks to you.

Note that the 1098-T has two boxes of interest to you. Box 5 is where they put anything that they pay to or for you - essentially your stipend, fees, tuition (sometimes), travel, etc. Box 2 is the amount billed for tuition (which we paid for you). This document is essentially a tax document that you should retain in case of any problems (ie audits).

Note that in some cases the amount of tuition paid on your behalf is added to the taxable scholarships/grants box, which raises your taxable stipend several thousand dollars. According to Student Accounting, this amount is reported to the IRS. In this case, if you ignore the information on the 1098-T, and later are audited, the amount of money reported to the IRS and the amount on the 1098-T will not match what you reported on your tax forms.

However, Ms. Williamson from the IRS (IRS ID: 5906648) said if, and only if, the amount paid for your tuition is rolled into the amount listed in box 5 on the 1098-T, you have 2 choices. 1) you can list the full amount in box 5 as income, and later deduct the amount in box 2 as amount billed for qualified tuition (this is because the IRS sees this as amount you paid, even if it is paid on your behalf by a program, parent, etc) 2) you can subtract the amount of scholarship money used to pay tuition (should be the amount in Box 2, but you can get a printout from Student accounting to be sure) from the total amount in box 5, and report that as your total taxable income (at least from UAB).

Either choice is valid. However, you cannot do both (subtract the tuition amount from box 5, and then claim it later as tuition paid). You can only choose one way. But she did say whichever one gets us the better refund is okay!

CORRECTED

FILER'S name, street address, city, state, ZIP code, and telephone number		1 Payments received for qualified tuition and related expenses \$	OMB No. 1545-1574 <b>2011</b> Form <b>1098-T</b>	<b>Tuition Statement</b>
		2 Amounts billed for qualified tuition and related expenses \$		
FILER'S federal identification no.	STUDENT'S social security number	3 If this box is checked, your educational institution has changed its reporting method for 2011 <input type="checkbox"/>		<b>Copy B For Student</b>  This is important tax information and is being furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.
STUDENT'S name		4 Adjustments made for a prior year \$	5 Scholarships or grants \$	
Street address (including apt. no.)		6 Adjustments to scholarships or grants for a prior year \$	7 Checked if the amount in box 1 or 2 includes amounts for an academic period beginning January - March 2012 <input type="checkbox"/>	
City, state, and ZIP code				
Service Provider/Acct. No. (see Instr.)	8 Checked if at least half-time student <input type="checkbox"/>	9 Checked if a graduate student <input type="checkbox"/>	10 Ins. contract reimb./refund \$	

Form **1098-T**

(keep for your records)

Department of the Treasury - Internal Revenue Service

## Appendix XIV: Comments on timing of USMLE Step 2

The timing of when you take Step 2CK and Step 2CS became more complex with the 2010 application cycle. Remember, you are required to pass Step 2CK and take Step 2CS in order to graduate. Here are some points to consider:

Step 2CK is becoming more important for programs across all residencies. Many Internal Medicine programs are now requiring a Step 2CK score before they will rank an applicant. This implies that you may want to take Step 2CK as soon as you feel comfortable with your knowledge.

**Note:** MSTP students do NOT have to finish their required clerkships prior to taking this test. The UASOM strongly suggests that everyone take Step 2CK before December 15<sup>th</sup> of the year you are applying to residencies so that you can have a reasonable expectation that your score will be available to residencies when they do their Rank Order List (they list you in order, just as you list them). Remember, you are required to pass Step 2CK; hence, you also want to take it soon enough to be able to study and retake the exam if necessary.

If you don't feel comfortable taking your Step 2CK prior to December 15th, then you need to directly contact each residency you are interested in and discuss your options. We have heard that at least some residencies are waiving this Step 2CK requirement for MD/PhD students, but this is done on a case-by-case basis. Communication is KEY.

Step 2CS is a test that has a very long lag time (often two months) before the grades are announced. If you match in certain states, you will have to post a passing score before you begin your internship. We suggest you pair taking Step 2CS with the OSCE and take it after you learn about your OSCE results. This would mean scheduling Step 2CS about seven weeks after you take your OSCE. The OSCE should be given in August and October, and you can expect your results four to six weeks after the test. It would be wise to know that you have passed your OSCE before you take Step 2CS. Some individuals who fail the OSCE are likely to perform better on Step 2CS after the remediation course, and they would be wise to delay taking Step 2CS until after remediation if possible. MSTP students are allowed to take their senior OSCE prior to the completion of all of their MSIII clerkships on a case-by-case basis. It should be taken in the Summer/Fall prior to their graduation date.

## **Appendix XV: The University of Alabama at Birmingham Drug Free Campus Policy for Students**

**December 14, 1991**

(Replaces policy dated September 26, 1990.)

NOTE: See also the following related policies:

- Drug-free Workplace Policy;
- Drug Screening Policy for Student Athletes;
- School of Medicine "Policy on Impairment and Chemical Substance Abuse";
- School of Dentistry "Policy on Impairment and Chemical Substance Abuse";
- School of Nursing "Policy on Impairment and Chemical Substance Abuse."

### **Policy Statement**

This policy is applicable to all students enrolled in credit course(s) or degree-granting programs at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and to all students receiving academic credit at UAB (other than for continuing education units) for study in a program in a foreign country conducted by UAB alone or in conjunction with a foreign university.

Unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, or dispensing of illicit drugs, controlled substances, or alcoholic beverages by any UAB student on UAB property or as part of any UAB-sponsored or UAB-sanctioned activity is prohibited. The legal possession, use, or distribution of alcoholic beverages on UAB property or at UAB-sponsored or UAB-sanctioned activities is governed by the UAB *General Policy Regarding the Use and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages* and applicable local, state, and federal laws.

In certain situations, the University is required to report the activities prohibited by this policy to appropriate law enforcement authorities. In all cases, the University may report activities prohibited by this policy to appropriate law enforcement authorities if it appears that the activity is a violation of law.

### **Disciplinary Actions**

Violations of this policy constitute nonacademic misconduct and will be subject to established disciplinary action for nonacademic misconduct in accordance with stipulations in the *Direction Student Handbook* or other applicable procedures. Violations of this policy by students should be reported to the appropriate student affairs office or other office handling student nonacademic misconduct in the same manner in which other instances of nonacademic misconduct are reported.

In some cases of violation of this policy for unlawful use, a student may be given, at the discretion of the University, the option to participate satisfactorily in an approved drug or alcohol

abuse assistance or rehabilitation program in lieu of dismissal. Participation in such an assistance or rehabilitation program is at the expense of the student.

### **Drug-free Awareness Program**

At least annually, UAB shall inform students of the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse on campus, of the existence of this policy statement and its penalties for violations, and of available drug and alcohol counseling, rehabilitation, and assistance through the following activities:

1. Publication, at least annually, of this policy in appropriate student publications and distribution to students in UAB's foreign programs and to students in programs conducted in conjunction with foreign universities;
2. Inclusion of this policy in future editions of student class schedules and/or registration materials, student handbooks, and student catalogs;
3. Dissemination of this policy and of information at student orientation and assistance programs regarding the dangers of drug and alcohol use and abuse and available rehabilitation programs; and
4. Continuation, and expansion, of the UAB drug and alcohol awareness program which includes sponsorship of the "Alcohol/Drug Awareness Week" and publication of pamphlets and other materials.

### **Applicability to Other Policies**

Other drug-free policies created to cover specific areas of the University may be more restrictive than this policy but may not be less restrictive. At a minimum, other such policies must include, or reference, the provisions of this policy. Violators will be subject to the provisions of the more stringent policy but will not be punished under more than one policy for the same offense.

This policy does not revoke or otherwise interfere with policies in the health professional schools designed to determine whether health care professionals are impaired and to offer rehabilitation, subject to the above provisions.

The wording in the "Non-academic Conduct" section of the *Direction* student handbook which relates to causes of dismissal due to the use, possession, etc. of illicit drugs, controlled substances, or alcoholic beverages references only certain provisions of this more extensive policy. The entire policy is applicable in all cases even if the policy itself is not printed in full.

### **Attachments**

The "Applicable Legal Sanctions," "Drug and Alcohol Use Health Risks," and "Drug and Alcohol Counseling, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Programs" attached to this policy are a part of the policy but may be revised from time to time without affecting the policy itself.

### **Effective Date and Implementation**

This policy is effective immediately upon its being signed by the President.

The offices of the appropriate Vice Presidents are responsible for the development and maintenance of procedures to implement this policy within their areas of responsibility.

In addition to being distributed to students on the UAB campus, this policy will be distributed to students in UAB's foreign programs and to students in programs conducted in conjunction with foreign universities. The Vice President for Student Affairs is responsible for all distributions to students covered by this policy.

## **Appendix XVI: UAB School of Medicine “Policy on Impairment and Chemical Substance Abuse” (B7-01)**

(Revised July, 1983, March, 1989, August 1989, and 1992)

### **I. PREAMBLE**

Physicians must conduct patient care activities as fully in control of their manual dexterity and skills, mental facilities, and judgment as possible. Similar conditions pertain to students of medicine and those who teach them, whether the teachers are physicians or not. Lack of such control (generally termed IMPAIRMENT) has many causes, some of which are preventable at some stage of development. This statement of policy pertains particularly to the misuse or abuse of chemical substances, as a potentially preventable cause of impairment and to illegal activities pertaining to chemical substances. The implications and consequences of impairment are considerable, especially in circumstances in which patient care activities and the education of physicians are conducted. The School of Medicine recognizes its responsibility to endeavor to provide an optimal environment for patient care, education and research. Therefore, the School of Medicine, as a matter of policy, will regard faculty and student misuse or abuse of chemical substances, or any other activity known so promote impairment, as misconduct subject to proscription. However, impairment as a condition will be considered an illness for which remedial or ameliorative efforts will be offered. This document is intended to outline the ways in which the School of Medicine will implement and administer this policy.

### **II. PURPOSES**

The primary purpose of this policy is the protection of patients, faculty, and students. The attainment of this primary goal requires the accomplishment of additional or related objectives:

- A. The identification of impaired individuals, and the offering or rehabilitation when possible.
- B. The identification of individuals whose activities form a behavior pattern likely to lead to impairment, and the interruption of such patterns of behavior before impairment occurs.
- C. The development of measures (e.g., educational programs) to assist all faculty and students to avoid activities likely to lead to the development of preventable impairment.
- D. The proscription of activities which are illegal, and which may subject the involved individual, other individuals, and the School of Medicine to legal penalties or consequences, in addition to deterioration of the atmosphere and circumstances under which the care of patients and the educational program are conducted.

### **III. DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE**

## A. DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions and explanations, qualifications, or stipulations regarding certain terms as used in this statement of policy:

1. Chemical substance MISUSE will be defined as the self-administration of any chemical for any reason other than its intended proper use. Chemical substance ABUSE will be defined as the personal use of any chemical substance that is specifically proscribed by law or by regulation pursuant to legal authority (e.g., Schedule I drugs); the personal misuse of any legally controlled substance; or the personal use of any normally legal chemical substance (e.g., alcohol) in a manner that produces significant impairment or that produces the likelihood of the development of impairment.

2. IMPAIRMENT will refer to any condition, regardless of cause, which interferes with the individual's ability to function as normally expected. Impairment may exist in one or in multiple domains, including psychomotor activity and skills, conceptual or factual recall, integrative or synthetic thoughts processes, judgment, attentiveness, demeanor, and attitudes as manifested in speech or actions, in this document, the term impairment will include addiction to and/or physical dependence upon any chemical substance(s) misused or abused, as defined above.

3. MEDICAL STUDENT will refer to any individual formally enrolled in the University of Alabama School of Medicine in pursuit of the M.D. degree, either alone or in combination with any other degree, regardless of the specific location of the student (e.g., campus or program assignment).

4. RESIDENT will refer to any individual enrolled in any post-M.D. program under the purview of the School of Medicine in permit of qualification for specialty or subspecialty board certification. As such, this term will include individuals sometimes referred to as "fellows", "associates", "physicians-in-training", or any analogous or equivalent term(s).

5. FACULTY will refer to any individual who holds a formal faculty appointment in the University of Alabama School of Medicine, regardless of status (full-time, part-time, or voluntary), condition of tenure, or primary departmental or other affiliation.

## 6. SCOPE

This policy will pertain to medical students, residents and faculty of the University of Alabama School of Medicine. Since individuals in these categories may have varying relationships to the School and to other entities, it is necessary to delimit the authority of the School of Medicine.

The School shall have the authority (within the limits of University roles and regulations) to establish the necessary qualifications, circumstances and conditions for application and admission to and continued enrollment in the education programs under in purview, for appointment to the faculty; and for the retention of a faculty appointment.

Residents are students in programs under the purview of the School of Medicine, and are also typically employees of a hospital or other entity. In the latter capacity, they may be subject to other or additional policies pertaining to employees; those policies may contain different provisions, and may be more or less stringent than this policy. In many or most cases, residents are also licensed physicians and fall under the purview of various legally established licensing bodies. The authority of the School of Medicine shall be limited to the admission to and continued enrollment of the resident in the educational program.

With regard to medical students and residents, the provisions and procedures of this policy are considered to pertain to "nonacademic behavior" and will be distinct and separate from policies and procedures pertaining to academic performance, except in instances in which unsatisfactory academic performance is found to result in whole or in part from impairment.

Faculty members may also have additional obligations or relationships. Those who are physicians are subject to rules and policies pertaining to hospital staff privileges and are subject to review by medical licensing bodies. They may have additional contractual or other relationships to other entities pertaining to the practice of medicine or to the conduct of laboratory or clinical research. The authority of the School of Medicine over members of the faculty shall be limited to appointment to and retention of faculty status in the School and to activities conducted in the course of faculty duties.

Some of these relationships may not be severable. For example, hospital staff privileges may require faculty appointment (and vice versa), and the practice of medicine and/or the conduct of research may be integral parts of the duties of faculty members.

The extent to which confidentiality regarding impairment can legally be maintained also will vary among these categories of individuals. Alabama law requires that physicians, hospitals, and clinics report M.D. personnel (including residents and other post-M.D. students) who are licensed to practice medicine and who are impaired, or suspected of being impaired, from any cause, including drug and alcohol abuse (Titles 34-24-59 and 34-24-361, Alabama Code). There are no legal reporting requirements for medical students and non-physician faculty members, unless they perform illegal acts.

It is now legally permissible to report licensed physicians to the Alabama Impaired Physicians Program, rather than to the Board of Medical Examiners. If that is done, the Impaired Physicians Program will protect the confidentiality and the license of the practitioner, provided he or she complies with the treatment program designated by the Impaired Physicians Program.

The School of Medicine has now entered in to a contractual agreement with the Alabama Impaired Physicians Program, under which the Impaired Physicians Program will assume similar responsibilities for medical students, unlicensed residents, and non-physician faculty members of the School of Medicine. The activities under this contractual arrangement include investigation, intervention, treatment, and maintenance programs for

chemical substance abuse and impairment that may result therefrom.

#### IV. PROVISIONS AND PROCEDURES

A. Medical students and residents enrolled in, and faculty members of the University of Alabama School of Medicine will become subject to the procedures and consequences of this policy if and when there is reason to conclude that the individual is impaired as a result of chemical substance abuse, or that he or she may be abusing chemical substances, even if not obviously impaired. The direct observation of chemical substance abuse or observations of aberrations in performance and/or behavior may be cause for this conclusion.

B. Further, any such individual shall become subject to the procedures and consequences of this policy upon conviction of any illegal act pertaining to chemical substances. It is the responsibility of each individual subject to this policy to inform the Dean of the School of Medicine within five days of any conviction related to chemical substances (see section IV.D.).

C. Upon making observations leading to the above outlined conclusions, any School of Medicine faculty member, resident or student will be expected to, and any other individual may, notify the Office of the Director of the Alabama Impaired Physicians Program. The director will arrange for appropriate investigation and intervention.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR: TELEPHONE (205) 263-6441 OR (800) 239-6272  
HELP-LINE: TELEPHONE (205) 263-3947

#### V. FURTHER ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

If an individual is found to be an abuser of chemical substances, further actions and consequences will depend upon the full circumstances. Some of the major options for further action are:

A. If the individual is found to be an occasional, recreational, or experimental abuser of chemical substances, but has no evidence of significant ongoing impairment, he or she will be placed on probation by the Dean upon satisfaction from the Impaired Physician Program. The individual will be subject to continuing surveillance, including the possibility of repeated unannounced mandatory substance testing. A substantiated violation of probation will constitute grounds for dismissal from the School of Medicine.

B. An individual who is found to be impaired as a result of chemical substance abuse will come under the treatment and surveillance provisions of the Impaired Physicians Program.

C. Beyond services normally offered by Student Health or similar Services or by the Impaired Physicians Program and support provided by available health insurance coverage, the cost of the treatment program will be responsibility of the individual. If rehabilitation attempts are successful, the individual will be subject to continuing surveillance. Any subsequent substantiated violation of this policy will constitute grounds for dismissal from

the School of Medicine.

D. An individual found to be impaired as a result of chemical substance abuse who is unable or unwilling to enter and to comply with a treatment program, or who is not rehabilitated after reasonable efforts, will be subject to dismissal from the School of Medicine.

E. Although this policy pertains primarily to the personal misuse and abuse of chemical substances, it is further the policy of the University of Alabama School of Medicine that the violation by a medical student, resident, or faculty member of any state or federal statute, or regulation established pursuant to such statute, pertaining to the manufacture, improper possession, sale or other distribution of chemical substances is strictly prohibited. Such violation, if substantiated, will subject the offering individual to dismissal from the School of Medicine, in addition to any other legal consequences that may result. An individual who fails to notify the Dean of the School of Medicine within five days of a legal conviction pertaining to chemical substances will be subject to dismissal from the School of Medicine.

## VI. RECORDS

In this section relating to Records, the following specifications and provisions will pertain:

A. References to FACULTY FILES in this document pertain to files maintained in the Office of the Dean. An individual faculty member may review the contents of his or her file upon written request to the Dean.

B. References to STUDENT FILES in this document pertain to files maintained in the Office of the Dean in the case of residents, and maintained in the Student Records section of the Office of Student Services in the case of medical students. An individual resident may review the contents of his or her file by written request to the Dean. Medical student files are maintained in accord with the UAB Student Records Policy.

C. Entry into the Impaired Physicians Program, or into a chemical substance treatment program approved by the Impaired Physicians Program will be entered into the student or faculty records. Success or failure of treatment or rehabilitation efforts will also be entered into the pertinent record.

D. If a medical student enters and successfully completes a chemical substance abuse treatment program, those facts will be communicated to the director of the residency program with which the student is matched following graduation from the School of Medicine. If a medical student does not receive the M.D. degree because of failure successfully to complete a chemical substance abuse treatment program, that fact will be communicated to any institution or other entity making inquiry regarding the former student's performance, provided that the former student authorities a release of information.

E. Similar disclosures will be made regarding any individual covered by this policy to the

medical licensure body of any state to which certification is made by the School of Medicine as required for consideration of the individual for license to practice medicine. Failure of any resident or faculty member successfully to complete a chemical substance abuse treatment program, and resulting dismissal for this reason, will be communicated to any institution or other entity making inquiry regarding the individual's performance, provided the individual authorizes a release of information. Similar disclosures will be made regarding any individual dismissed from the School of Medicine as a result of illegal activities related to chemical substances.

F. Activity restrictions imposed as a result of actions under this policy will be communicated to individuals or entities (e.g., residency program director, student preceptor, hospital quality assurance or similar committee, liability risk management) on a confidential need-to-know basis.

G. Probation resulting from chemical substance abuse without impairment will not be entered into student or faculty records unless and until there is a substantiated violation of probation. Communications regarding probationary status will be made only to the person or persons charged with the responsibility for surveillance of the individual under the terms of probation.

The overriding consideration in all cases will be the safety of patients or others and the safety of the individual in question.

## VII. CANDIDATES FOR ADMISSION OR FACULTY APPOINTMENT

Candidates for admission as medical students or residents to any program of the School of medicine and candidates for appointment to the faculty of the school of medicine will require to provide (among all other items of information) a statement that he or she does or does not abuse chemical substances as defined herein. Further, he or she must indicate any prior legal convictions pertaining to the use, possession, sale or other distribution of illegal or legally controlled substances pertaining to or related to the abuse of alcohol or any other chemical substance; and the consequences of any such convictions. Failure to provide the above required information, past legal convictions for activities related to illegal or legally controlled substances, and/or information or evidence that reasonable establishes a past pattern of chemical substance abuse will be grounds to decline to accept the candidate for admission to a program or for appointment to the faculty. However, prior legal convictions related to chemical substances will be considered along with all other information pertaining to the individual, and will not produce automatic disqualification for admission or appointment. Discovery that false or fraudulent information was provided prior to matriculation or to appointment to the faculty will be grounds for dismissal.

## VIII. IMPAIRMENT FROM OTHER CAUSES

This policy pertains primarily to the subject of chemical substance abuse and impairment that may result therefrom. It shall be the responsibility of the Dean to deal with impairment resulting from other causes in accord with principles contained herein. In so doing, he will

seek the advice and guidance of the School of Medicine Committee on Impaired Students and Faculty as he deems necessary or advisable.

#### IX. POLICIES PERTAINING TO ALCOHOL USE

The University of Alabama at Birmingham and each of its educational units, including the University of Alabama School of Medicine, has established policies pertaining to the use and serving of alcoholic beverages. Medical students, residents, faculty members and others are expected to behave in accord with those policies. Students, residents, faculty members and others who participate in the planning or organization of events which will involve the serving of alcoholic beverages are expected to comply with all applicable institutional policies, as well as with laws and governmental regulations pertaining to the subject, and to be aware of issues of personal liability that may be involved.

#### X. ADMINISTRATION AND DUE PROCESS

Upon notifications by the Impaired Physicians Program that an individual covered under the terms of this policy warrants probation or dismissal, the Dean will refer the matter to the Faculty Council of the School of Medicine, who will then advise the Dean regarding the appropriate action. The individual will be notified of the recommendation(s) of the faculty Council, and will be given a period of at least then (10) working days in which to notify the Dean of his or her intent to appeal the recommendation. Appeal will be directly to the Dean of the School of Medicine, whose decision will be final. No further avenue of appeal will be offered by the School of Medicine.

**Appendix XVII: The University of Alabama at Birmingham General Policy  
Regarding the Use and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages**

**GENERAL POLICY REGARDING THE USE AND CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC  
BEVERAGES**

**October 1, 2012**

NOTE: This policy replaces the General Policy Regarding the Use and Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages dated October 17, 1986, and Office of the Provost Academic Programs Alcoholic Beverage Policy dated October 16, 1997.

**Introduction**

Diversity of opinion and freedom of choice are concepts which have long been an integral part of higher education tradition. This freedom, however, entails the exercise of personal accountability, including the obligation to make informed decisions regarding use and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Within the academic and social environment of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, alcohol may be served at certain occasions. In an effort to ensure that alcohol is used only in a responsible manner, the following policies are established.

**General University Policies**

**1. Compliance**

The use of alcoholic beverages must be in compliance with federal, state and local laws; the regulations of the Alabama ABC Board; and other university policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the Drug-Free Workplace Policy and the Drug-Free Campus Policy for Students.

**2. Approval and Location of the Event**

The service of alcoholic beverages on campus is limited to areas approved in advance by the dean/vice president or his/her designee. A “responsible person” must be designated for every function at which alcoholic beverages are served. That individual is responsible for ensuring that this policy and other related policies (see “Compliance”) are followed.

**3. Controlled Areas**

Alcoholic beverages may not be taken outside predetermined boundaries of the university-sponsored event. Steps should be taken to ensure that alcoholic beverages are contained within these boundaries. All alcoholic beverages should be consumed or disposed of by all guests or participants before they leave the premises.

**4. Event Advertisements**

Advertisements or invitations to university-sponsored events where alcoholic beverages are being served should emphasize the nature of the event and not alcoholic beverages.

**5. Self-Service**

Alcoholic beverages served at a university-sponsored event must not be freely available to attendees. A designated server or hired professional bartender must be on duty at the event to limit the size and number of drinks served. If the function involves a sit-down meal at which alcohol is served, waiters and/or waitresses should be instructed to ask before automatically refilling wine or liquor glasses.

**6. Proper Identification**

Alabama state law prohibits purchase, consumption or serving of beer, wine or distilled spirits by persons under legal drinking age. It is also a violation of Alabama state law to purchase alcohol for, or serve alcohol to, persons under the legal drinking age. Therefore, at all university-sponsored events where alcoholic beverages will be served, the designated server or hired professional bartender will be required to check for proper identification before serving any alcoholic beverages and must reject any questionable forms of identification. Alcoholic beverages may not be served at functions where the majority of attendees are under legal drinking age.

**7. Non-Alcoholic Beverage Alternatives**

Alternative non-alcoholic beverages must be equally available and accessible at all university-sponsored events where alcoholic beverages are served. Water should not be the only alternative beverage offered.

**8. Food**

Food must be made available to those in attendance at all university-sponsored events where alcoholic beverages are served.

**9. Hours of Service**

Service of alcoholic beverages must be discontinued at least one hour before an event is scheduled to end.

**10. Refusal to Serve Intoxicated Guests**

If a participant or guest at a university-sponsored event where alcoholic beverages are being served appears to have exceeded his or her consumption limit, the designated server or hired professional bartender must discontinue serving alcoholic beverages to this individual.

**11. Individual Responsibilities**

Failure to comply with the policies and regulations stated within this document or violation of the law may result in civil and/or university action.

**Implementation**

The Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Financial Affairs and Administration are responsible for procedures to implement this policy.

## **NOTES**