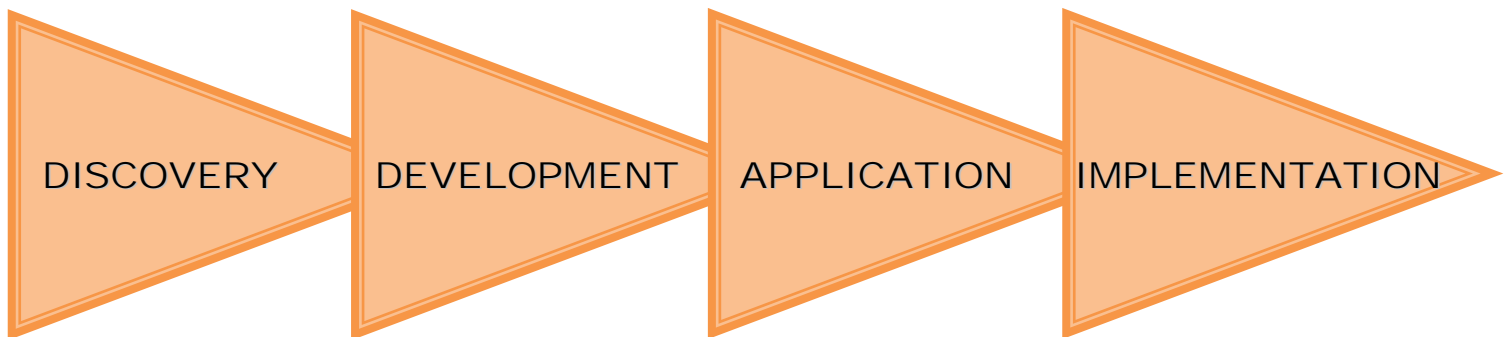

The University of Texas System

***PhD Program in
Translational Science***



**STUDENT HANDBOOK
2013-2014**

Joint Degree Institutions:

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

The University of Texas at San Antonio

The University of Texas at Austin / College of Pharmacy

Collaborating Institution:

The University of Texas School of Public Health / San Antonio Regional Campus

Please note that the policies of the Translational Science PhD Program are regularly reviewed and updated; therefore, any printed copy may not be the most current. Current policies are provided in the TS PhD Student Handbook that is electronically available at the TS PhD website: http://iims.uthscsa.edu/ed_trans_sci_phd.html



Translational Science PhD Program
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 7757
San Antonio, TX 78229-3900
<http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/>



Translational Science PhD Program
The Graduate School
The University of Texas at San Antonio
One UTSA Circle
San Antonio, TX 78249
<http://www.graduateschool.utsa.edu/>



WHAT STARTS HERE CHANGES THE WORLD

Translational Science PhD Program
College of Pharmacy
The University of Texas at Austin
2409 University Ave. A1900, PHR 4.220
Austin, TX 78712-1113
<http://www.utexas.edu/pharmacy>

Pharmacotherapy Education & Research Center
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 6220
San Antonio, TX 78229-3900
<http://som.uthscsa.edu/PERC/>



The University of Texas School of Public Health
P.O. Box 20186
Houston, TX 77275
<http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/>

San Antonio Regional Campus
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 7976
San Antonio, TX 78229-3900
<http://www.sph.uth.tmc.edu/Campuses/San-Antonio/>

UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, UT San Antonio, and UT Austin are accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097) to award certificates and baccalaureate, masters, doctoral, and professional degrees. The UT School of Public Health is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (800 Eye Street, NW, Suite 202, Washington, DC 20001-3710) to award certificates, masters, and doctoral degrees.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES	1
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS	2
University Faculty and staff as Students in the TS PhD Program	
Application Materials	
Advanced Degree	
Documentation of Academic Record	
Demonstration of Ability to Participate in an Advanced Academic Program	
Demonstration of Proficiency in English	
Personal Statement	
Letters of Recommendation	
Curriculum Vitae	
Copy of U.S. Medical License/Certificate	
Authorization for Security Background and Sanction Check	
APPLICATION PROCESS	5
Application	
Application Deadlines	
Application review	
Home Institution Designation	
Applicant Selection	
Transferring Credit	
Transfers into the TS PhD Program	
Change of Major	
Non-Degree-Seeking Students (NDS)	
REGISTRATION	9
PROGRAM-RELATED CHANGES	10
Course-related Changes / Interruptions in Matriculation	
Adds, Drops, and Withdraws	
Non-enrollment and Leave of Absence	
Change of Home Institution	
TUITION & FEES	12
DEGREE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS	13
Individualized Degree Plan	
Course Requirements	
Course Selection	
Academic Calendars	
Grading	
Class Attendance	

EDUCATIONAL DOMAINS AND CURRICULUM SEQUENCE	16
Domains	
A Clear Understanding of Translational Science	
Responsible Research Conduct	
Expertise in Research Design and Analysis in their Scientific Discipline	
Ability to Lead, Motivate, and Manage Collaborative Team Science	
Utilization of Multi-level cultural Proficiency	
Communicate Effectively	
Display Competence in the Business of Translational Science	
Evidence Based Implementation and Policy	
Curriculum Sequence	
Milestones	
ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY AND DISSERTATION	19
Qualifying Examination	
Written Exam	
Oral Exam	
Doctoral Dissertation	
Final Oral Examination (Defense of Dissertation)	
SUPERVISING PROFESSOR and DISSERTATION COMMITTEE	24
Supervising Professor	
Composition of the Dissertation Committee	
STUDENT EVALUATION and PROGRESSION TO PhD CANDIDACY	26
TS COGS Assessment of Progression to Qualifying Examination	
Semi-annual Evaluation of Student Progress	
Course Relevance	
99-hour Rule	
Graduation	
SEMI-ANNUAL STUDENT EVALUATION	28
Requirement for Semi-annual Student Evaluation	
Due Dates	
Procedure	
OTHER PROGRAM POLICIES & REQUIREMENTS	30
Student Orientation	
Release of Information	
Student IDs	
Parking	
Financial Aid	
Immunization Requirements	
Student Health and Health Insurance	
Laptop Computer Requirement	
Ethics, Professionalism, and Conduct	

PROGRAM OVERVIEW and OBJECTIVES

Definition. Translational Science (TS) is a scientific discipline that investigates methods to move discovery more efficiently and effectively into application. TS investigators must respond, interact, facilitate change, and conduct research within and among varied organizational behaviors, structures, and cultures. TS conducts rigorous studies that close the knowledge gaps between different levels of the research process – the basic science laboratory, clinical research discoveries, and application of these research findings toward disease prevention and management, and strategies to improve human, community, and global health.

Mission. The Translational Science PhD (TS PhD) program is a unique interdisciplinary joint doctoral degree program involving four Texas institutions:

Joint Degree Institutions:

- The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
- The University of Texas at San Antonio
- The University of Texas at Austin and its College of Pharmacy

Collaborating Institution:

- The University of Texas School of Public Health, San Antonio Regional Campus

The TS PhD program is a research-intensive doctoral program in the evolving field of translational science. Methods and mechanisms of studying the processes of translational science are now emerging. These four institutions have collaborated and pooled their academic and scientific resources to offer an education and training program that will provide developmental opportunities for students who will become the next generation of scientists in this emerging scientific field.

Goal. The goal of the Translational Science PhD Program is to provide an in-depth, rigorous, and individualized multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional research education and training program in translational science that will prepare research scientists to integrate information from multiple domains and conduct independent and team-oriented research to improve human and global health.

Objectives. The overall aim of the TS PhD program is to train future research scientists to have the capacity to integrate information from multiple domains of basic, clinical, and population sciences and conduct research to improve human and global health.

The objectives of the TS PhD Program are to:

- Build on the scientific expertise provided at each institution to offer students a collaborative, team-oriented research environment that will promote their development into the future leaders of team-oriented, translational scientific research professionals.
- Provide fundamental curricular activities and valuable research and training opportunities in translational science research that will train students to conduct research utilizing concepts that are scientifically sound, ethical, culturally adaptive, and contribute to the health and healthcare of diverse populations.
- Teach students the advanced knowledge and mastery of skills required to develop a novel, scientifically sound translational science research proposal, conduct the research, and present and defend the research in a dissertation format.
- Support the intellectual environments of the participating institutions for the optimal training of future translational science research investigators.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The TS PhD program is an advanced scientific research doctoral program. Admission into the TS PhD program is based on a student's total record of achievements. Application materials are evaluated by the Admissions Committee of the multi-institutional TS PhD Program Committee on Graduate Studies (TS COGS). Applicants to the TS PhD program must demonstrate (additional details are listed below):

- One or more of the following academic requirements:
 - Completion of an advanced Professional Degree (*e.g.*, MD, DO, DDS, MSN, PharmD)
 - A Master's or Doctoral Degree in a health-related, science, or social science discipline
 - Enrollment in a clinical professional doctoral degree program with intent to graduate prior to the semester for which application is being made
 - Enrollment as a MD/PhD student with successful completion of the two-year pre-clinical curriculum
- Prior research or related experience
- GRE, MCAT, or other equivalent degree examination scores
- TOEFL or IELTS scores (for applicants from a country where English is not the native language)
- Documentation of potential for success in the degree program and as a translational science professional

UNIVERSITY FACULTY AND STAFF AS STUDENTS IN THE TS PHD PROGRAM

Residents or fellows in an approved residency or fellowship program may enroll as full-time or part-time students, as determined by the residency program. University faculty (non-tenure track) or staff may enroll in coursework only as part-time students and are encouraged to work with their College Dean, Department Chair, and/or Supervisor to determine availability and approval of release time for the completion of the educational and research activities required by the TS PhD program. The amount of course work that can be taken by faculty or staff in a given semester is subject to the 'quantity of work' rules outlined in each university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures* (HOP). Any approved release time should be in accordance with university policy.

APPLICATION MATERIALS

All required documentation described below must be submitted for an applicant to be considered by the TS PhD Admissions Committee. All documents become the property of the applicant institution(s) and are not returned to the applicants. Applicants should utilize the **Checklist of Required Documentation for Application** that is available on the TS PhD website.

The following admission requirements will be applied to all applicants:

1. **Advanced Degree:** Applicants must demonstrate at least one of the following: a) completion of an advanced **Professional Degree** (*e.g.*, MD, DO, DDS, MSN, PharmD); b) completion of a **Master's or Doctoral Degree** in a health-related, science, public health or social science discipline; c) enrollment in a clinical professional doctoral degree program with intent to graduate prior to the semester for which application is being made; or d) enrollment as a MD/PhD student with successful completion of the two-year pre-clinical curriculum. Enrollment/Graduation must be from an accredited college

or university in the United States or proof of equivalent training at a foreign institution. Faculty on tenure-track are not eligible for acceptance into the TS PhD program.

2. **Documentation of Academic Record:** For the purpose of evaluating the application, copies of all transcripts are acceptable for inclusion with the application. **If selected for admission, official transcripts will be required from all colleges and universities attended.** Transcripts must be sent from the college/university in a sealed envelope directly to the Registrar's Office at the Home institution. Transcripts from foreign colleges/universities must be officially translated, including GPA, by a credentialing agency approved by the Registrar's Office of the Home institution. The translated transcript should be sent from the credentialing agency in a sealed envelope directly to the Registrar's Office at the Home institution.
3. **Demonstration of Ability to Participate in an Advanced Academic Program:** Official documentation of a satisfactory score for the combined verbal and quantitative portions of the **Graduate Record Examination (GRE)**, or an equivalent, is required. The GRE score will be considered along with the other admission criteria. Scores on GRE tests taken more than five years prior to the date of application are not acceptable. *Applicants may request a waiver for the GRE requirement if they provide evidence that they have earned a doctoral degree (i.e., MD, DO, JD, DVM, PharmD, DDS, PhD, etc.) from a regionally accredited U.S. institution, are currently certified by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), have passed all three steps of the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), or were previously enrolled in the Graduate School of one of the joint degree institutions.*
4. **Demonstration of Proficiency in English – Foreign Nationals Only:** Official documentation of a satisfactory score on either the **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** or the **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** is required for applicants from a country where English is not the native language. A minimum TOEFL score of 600 (paper test), or equivalent, or a score of 7.0 on the IELTS, is required. Scores on tests taken more than two years prior to the date of matriculation are not acceptable. *TOEFL or IELTS may be waived for those applicants whose post-secondary education was conducted in a country where English is the native language. ECFMG certified physicians will also be granted a waiver. Consistent with Texas Education Code, Section 51.842(b), an applicant's standardized test scores, when used to make admission or scholarship decisions, will be compared with scores of other applicants from similar socioeconomic backgrounds, to the extent such information is available.*
5. **Personal Statement:** Applicants must submit a personal statement (1-3 pages) that describes the applicant's past training and experience, future career goals and objectives, scientific research interest, and how the TS PhD program will prepare them to achieve the stated research interest and career goals. The Personal Statement should include but is not limited to:
 - A statement of the applicant's background and purpose for applying to the TS PhD program,
 - Applicant's interest in and commitment to a translational science career
 - Applicant's potential to develop into a successful scientist, as evidenced by research training/experience, prior publications, etc.
 - Research interest and its applicability to the TS PhD program
 - Identification of a potential Supervising Professor, if applicable

- Career goals and how the TS PhD program will contribute to their attainment

The personal statement should be submitted/uploaded with the online application.

6. **Letters of Recommendation:** Applicants must provide **three (3) letters of recommendation** from faculty or other individuals who are familiar with and can provide information about the applicant's academic, research, and/or professional abilities and performance. In addition, letters of recommendation should provide an assessment of the applicant's potential to succeed in a doctoral program and develop into an independent research investigator. These letters should be on letterhead and submitted/uploaded with the recommendation form in the online application.
7. **Curriculum Vitae.** A current CV should be submitted with the online application.
8. **Copy of U.S. Health Professional License/Certificate:** If applicable, a copy should be submitted with the online application.
9. **Authorization for Security Background and Sanction Check:** A security background and sanction check is required before a recommendation for student admission can be forwarded to the Dean's Office of the Graduate School. This form is available from the TS PhD website. The completed form should be submitted to the TS PhD Program Office for signature and handling.
10. **Immunizations:** If admitted to the TS PhD program, all State of Texas immunization requirements must be met prior to registration. A list of the required immunizations for the UT Health Science Center may be found at the student services website at:
http://nursing.uthscsa.edu/shc/hc_immunization.asp.

Proof of immunization will be required. Because students in the TS PhD program will attend class and possibly conduct research at four UT institutions, all immunization requirements of all institutions must be met, even if an immunization is not required at a student's Home institution.

As a result, students in the TS PhD program are required to have the hepatitis B immunization, which is a requirement at UT Health Science Center. If you are admitted into the TS PhD program, you WILL BE REQUIRED to show proof of completion (or near completion) of the Hepatitis B immunization series or show serologic confirmation of immunity to Hepatitis B virus prior to enrollment (Texas Administration Code Title 25, Part 1 Section 97.63). The Hepatitis B immunization series is administered over a period of six months. Applicants are advised to begin the immunization series as soon as possible after applying for admission.

11. **Insurance:** All students in the TS PhD program are required to maintain **valid medical insurance** while enrolled – either through employer, personal purchase, or school-sponsored purchase. Students will be required to show proof of insurance or purchase medical insurance each semester.

APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLICATION

The Translational Science PhD program utilizes a single application source through the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio.

- The due date for the fall 2012 semester is March 1, 2012.
- The due date for the fall 2013 semester is January 15, 2013.
- Starting with the fall 2014 class, applications will be accepted through November 1 of each year for the incoming class for the subsequent fall semester.

Applicants have the responsibility for the timely submission of application materials to the TS PhD program in order to meet the deadlines established by each institution's Graduate School for registration and course enrollment.

The Online Application for the TS PhD program is available at:

<http://apply.embark.com/grad/UTHSCSA/>.

Required documentation for application for **All Applicants** includes (see Admission Requirements for additional details):

- Online application
- College/university transcripts (official)
- GRE scores (if entering with a Master's degree only; excluded upon approval of waiver)
- Letters of recommendation (3)
- Personal Statement
- Curriculum Vitae

In addition, for **Foreign Nationals**:

- TOEFL or IELTS scores
- Visa

In addition, for **Licensed Health Care Professionals**:

- Medical license/certificate

Official test scores and transcripts should be sent to:

Office of the Registrar
UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 7702
San Antonio, TX 78229-3900
Institution Code: 6908

Requests for an exemption to any of the general admission requirements that are not addressed in the online application should be addressed to the TS PhD Program Director at:

Program Director
TS PhD Program
IIMS – Research Education
UT Health Science Center at San Antonio
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 7757
San Antonio, TX 78229-3900

International Students: Students from outside the U.S. who possess the qualifications or equivalents outlined in Admission Requirements are eligible to apply to the TS PhD Program. Any international student accepted into the program will generally be required to have an F-1 student visa and, as a stipulation of the F-1 student visa, must be a full-time student in the program. Students with a J-1 visa may also apply for admission to the TS PhD program. J-1 visa students are subject to different immigration regulations, some of which reside with the U.S. Department of State. As a result, admission of a J-1 visa student will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the student's Home institution.

APPLICATION REVIEW

Once complete, all application documents and required admission materials will be made available to the Admissions Committee of the TS COGS. The Admissions Committee will review each application individually and will consider the applicant's personal statement, undergraduate and graduate course work and degree(s), scores on the GRE and TOEFL/IELTS (if applicable), letters of recommendation, CV, and all other required documentation submitted with the online application.

HOME INSTITUTION DESIGNATION

Each student in the TS PhD Program must declare a Home institution. The Home institution will be the institution of record for admission, dissertation research, and graduation, and it will be the primary institution for fees, financial aid, student health services, and other student services.

Based on the information provided in the application, a Home institution that best meets the needs and interests of the applicant will be determined by the TS COGS Admissions Committee. One or more members of the Admissions Committee and/or the TS Program Director will meet with the applicant, either in person or by phone, for the purpose of discussing the program with the applicant and advising him/her of the committee's recommendation regarding the selection of a Home institution. Agreement must be reached between the applicant and the advisees, and agreed to in writing, prior to forwarding a recommendation for admission.

APPLICANT SELECTION

Following review, the Admissions Committee will present each application to the full TS COGS and make a recommendation to accept or decline the application. After review and discussion, the decision to accept or decline will be made by the full TS COGS with a formal recorded vote, and a recommendation will be forwarded to the Graduate Dean of the selected Home institution, utilizing policy and procedure established by the Home institution. Recommendation for admission to the TS PhD program will be made for the most highly qualified applicants regardless of ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, nation of origin, or disability.

Approved Applicants. After sequential review by the Admissions Committee, the TS COGS, and the Graduate School of the Home institution, approved applicants will be formally notified of the outcome by the Graduate Dean of the Home institution and will be matriculated into the TS PhD Program through the approved Home institution. All application materials for matriculated students will be forwarded to the Home institution to be part of the student's record.

Non-Approved Applicants. The TS COGS, under signature of the Program Director, will notify applicants who are not accepted into the TS PhD Program. Application materials will be maintained with the records of the TS COGS and will be disposed of according to state retention schedules.

CREDIT TRANSFERS / ACCEPTANCE OF EARNED CREDITS

Admission into the TS PhD program requires a formal application. All students entering the TS PhD program must meet all TS PhD Program admission requirements and deadlines and will be subject to the same review process as other applicants.

Students entering the TS PhD program may have taken relevant graduate level course work from another institution that meets core or elective requirements for the TS PhD. Per accreditation requirements, the number of semester credit hours that may be transferred from another program must not exceed the majority of the hours from the TS PhD program degree-granting institutions. Credit transfers will not be approved if the courses were completed more than five years before enrollment in the TS PhD program or do not meet the standards described for credit transfers. All requests for transferred semester credit hours will be reviewed by the TS COGS and/or Admissions Committee for applicability to completion of the TS PhD program. Following approval by the TS COGS, and by the Graduate Studies Committee of the student's Home institution (if a separate committee is established for the TS PhD program at the institution), recommendation will be made to the Graduate School Dean of the student's Home institution for final approval.

The total number of semester credit hours awarded for credit may vary depending upon the student's program of study; however, the total transfer credits awarded cannot exceed 49%¹ of the total credits required for the student's declared program of study. At least 51% of the total credits in a student's degree plan must be earned through regular semester credit hour (SCH) instruction at the institutions participating in the joint TS PhD degree program (UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, UT San Antonio, UT Austin, or UT School of Public Health).

Credit transfers and/or acceptance of earned credits² may include:

- Transfer Credits from an Outside University³: Students are expected to complete most or all coursework at one of the participating institutions. A total of six semester-credit-hours of doctoral coursework may be transferred into the TS PhD from an "outside" graduate school. Requests to transfer more than six SCH will be evaluated by the TS COGS on a case-by-case basis. Approved transfer credit hours from an outside institution will count toward the total number of semester-credit-hours required for the TS PhD program.
- Applicants who are Changing Doctoral Degree Programs or have Completed Graduate/Doctoral Coursework Outside a Degree Program (within the institutions participating in the joint TS PhD program)⁴: Applicants who are currently enrolled in another doctoral degree program at one of the participating universities, or who have taken graduate level coursework outside of a degree program at one of the participating universities (as a non-degree-seeking student or otherwise) that is equivalent to coursework required in the TS PhD program, may request to have those graduate-level courses applied to the TS PhD program. Approved courses/hours will count toward the total number of courses/semester-credit-hours required for the TS PhD program.
- Course Exemption: Students who have taken a course in a completed graduate degree program that is equivalent to a core or elective course in the TS PhD program may request course exemption. An exemption will keep the student from repeating coursework from a prior program, but it will not

¹ This equates to 35 semester-credit-hours (SCH) for the required 72 SCH to complete the TS PhD program.

² In all cases, considerations for transfer of coursework will be made on an individual basis.

³ An Outside University is defined as a university other than the four participating universities for the TS PhD program.

⁴ The UT School of Public Health is one of the Institutions participating in the joint TS PhD program. Credit transfers from students in the UTSPH fall into this category for the purposes of credit transfers.

exempt the student from taking the total number of semester-credit-hours required by the TS PhD program.

Primary consideration for transfer or acceptance of earned credits will be that the course(s) in question fully meet(s) the learning objectives/outcomes and competencies of the equivalent course for the TS PhD program. The TS COGS is responsible for reviewing the course requests to ensure that the course(s) meet the standards of the TS PhD program in terms of course level, course content, quality, comparability, and relevance to the TS PhD degree.

Process to Request Course Transfer or Exemption: To qualify for transfer credits or course exemption, an admitted student must submit official college transcripts for the requested credits and request an evaluation of the courses. Credit must have been earned from a regionally accredited college level institution with an earned grade of “B”, or its equivalent. Applicants may also be asked to produce course information (such as a catalog description or other documentation) for courses for which transfer credit is being requested. The applicant’s transcripts will be carefully reviewed by the TS COGS, TS Admissions Committee, and/or the course director of the course being challenged. Credit transfers will not be approved if the prior courses were completed more than five years before enrollment in the TS PhD program, if the courses are irrelevant to the TS PhD program, or if the student earned a low grade. Once the review is complete and the TS COGS votes to approve credit transfers, the student will be exempted from having to enroll in TS PhD courses that duplicate prior training.

NON-DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS (NDS)

NDS students may enroll in TS PhD course work and receive Graduate course credit if this option is available at the university offering the course. NDS students are independent of the TS PhD program. Application as a NDS student may be submitted to the Graduate School of any of the participating universities in the TS PhD program, and acceptance and enrollment will follow the procedures established by each Graduate School.

Qualifying course credit earned as a NDS can be applied toward the TS PhD degree following formal application, review, and acceptance into the TS PhD program. Enrollment as a NDS to obtain course work for the TS PhD is dependent on the regulations of the TS PhD institutions, as follows:

UT Health Science Center	4 semesters
UTSA	12 SCH
UT Austin	6 SCH
UTSPH	16 SCH

A PhD in Translational Science cannot be obtained as a NDS student.

REGISTRATION

REGISTRATION

Concurrent Registration: Students may register and take courses concurrently at more than one of the universities participating in the joint TS PhD degree program. Registration for courses offered by the UT School of Public Health will require the student to apply and be accepted as a non-degree-seeking (NDS) student.

International students are limited to enrollment in no more than two partner universities, including the Home institution, at the same time, and the concurrent enrollment must be equivalent to full-time enrollment (9 semester credit hours). International students are also limited to one distance or online class (up to 3 semester-credit-hours) per semester. Concurrent enrollment for international students must be pre-approved by the Designated School Official (DSO) of both institutions before student registration and the census date of both institutions. The student is responsible for informing and providing documentation of the concurrent enrollment to both institutions. Any subsequent changes to the approved concurrent enrollment status must be approved, in advance, by the DSO of both institutions who gave the initial approval. Maintenance of full-time enrollment status will directly impact a student's eligibility for employment, scholarship, or other financial awards.

Academic Calendars: The academic calendars for each institution differ, and students are expected to review the academic calendars each semester to ensure that registration is completed by the deadline established by each institution and/or prior to the beginning of the first day of classes. The location of classes will be determined by the student's individualized degree plan. Students registering concurrently in more than one of the participating institutions should verify compatibility of class schedules before registration.

Good Standing: A student must be in "good standing" at all institutions in order to be eligible to register. Good standing can include: GPA of 3.0 or better, having no unpaid tuition or other institutional debts, having no institutional holds, or any other restriction that would not allow registration. With the exception of specified requirements for all students (see Other Program Requirements), good standing is defined by each university.

Registration When No Class Is Being Taken: To maintain student status, a student will register each semester at each joint-degree institution. Provisions are available for zero-credit-hour (placeholder) registration if no classes are being taken at an institution during a semester. Placeholder registration will not activate any coursework-specific tuition and fees but the institution may have the option to assess certain extraneous fees, such as parking, ID badge, recreation, etc. attributable to that institution's management or maintenance of certain services provided for all enrolled students. Every effort will be made to keep fees that duplicate services available through the Home institution to a minimum.

Use of Resources: A student must register at any university participating in this degree program if the student plans to use that university's resources (such as, attending classes, taking examinations, conducting research, using laboratories, etc.). Students enrolled in research or thesis courses must be registered at their Home institution in all semesters during the research phase of their degree plan.

PROGRAM-RELATED CHANGES

COURSE-RELATED CHANGES / INTERRUPTIONS IN MATRICULATION

Any student who is receiving financial aid, has a visa status other than permanent resident or citizen, or is receiving military educational benefits must contact and receive written clearance from the Home institution's Financial Aid Office, the Veteran Services Office, and/or the Office of International Students **before** the request is approved by the TS COGS.

ADDS, DROPS, AND WITHDRAWAL

Adds and Drops: Students may add or drop a class(es) at an individual university, within program guidelines, within the deadline set by that university, and not after the official census date set by that university. Drops are subject to the deadline or conditions of the individual university and require consultation of the Home institution. *For courses taken at the UT Health Science Center, students may drop a class only if a passing grade is being earned.* There is a six-course drop limit established by the Texas Senate (SB 1231). This legislation is applicable to all Texas public colleges and universities.

Course Withdrawal: Student withdrawal from a class(es) after the drop deadline will follow the guidelines and requirements of any documentation and approvals required by the university where the class is offered. Consultation with the Home institution is also required.

NON-ENROLLMENT AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Students who need to cease enrollment for one or more semesters may apply for a Leave of Absence from the Home institution. Procedures, authorization, and approval of a Leave of Absence will follow the established policy of the student's Home institution; however, the TS COGS should be notified of the request for LOA and action taken. The time limit for reaching candidacy or completing the degree will be extended by the number of terms the students is on approved Leave of Absence. Students who do not enroll for classes for two long semesters without a formal leave of absence, or who do not return from a formal leave of absence, will be reviewed by the TS COGS. A student who is dismissed from the TS PhD program under this circumstance will be required to re-apply to the TS PhD program if he/she wishes to complete the program. This application and completed coursework will receive the same review by the TS Admissions Committee as for any new applicant.

CHANGE OF HOME INSTITUTION

Change of a student's Home institution designation will be approved only for exceptional or necessary circumstances. This option will not be approved if a student's immigration status, military educational benefits, or financial aid would be jeopardized. A request to change Home institution should be submitted, in writing, to the TS PhD COGS through the Program Director and should include:

- Cover memo that describes the basis for the request to change the Home institution
- *TS PhD Request to Change Home Institution Form*, signed by the Graduate Schools of both institutions

International students may not change the Home institution if the change impacts the student's immigration status; however, a change of Home institution will be allowed if no immigration status impact is anticipated and if the transfer is necessary to maintain the student's status in the program.

The request to change Home institution should follow the procedures outlined above; however, additional time should be allowed to complete all procedures required to maintain compliance with F-1 visa transfer procedures.

The transfer process must be accomplished **prior to** the actual move of the student from the current Home institution to the new Home institution. Such transfers will require the approval of the current Home institution's Designated School Official (DSO), confirmation and acceptance of the transfer from the pending Home institution, and full compliance with F-1 visa transfer procedures. An international student will not be transferred from one institution to another until that student has been admitted and registered, before the census date of the initial Home institution. Last minute transfer requests will not be processed.

TUITION and FEES

TUITION RATES

Rates for in-state and out-of-state student tuition and fees are established by each institution. Please refer to the TS PhD website for links to current rates for Graduate School tuition and fees at the TS PhD universities.

RESIDENCY

Each TS PhD student must establish domicile residency status for the purpose of assessing tuition and fees. This status will be determined by the Home institution. Once residency has been established, the residency designation will be the same for the enrollment in any of the universities that are part of the TS PhD program.

PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES

TS PhD students will enroll each semester at each university offering the course(s) selected by the student, in accordance with the student's individualized degree plan. Payment of tuition and fees will be made to each university based on the number of semester credit hours selected. Some non-coursework specific fees paid to the Home institution may be waived by the other universities, but other non-coursework-specific fees (ID badge, for example) may be charged each semester to maintain the student's status and access to university facilities. Assessment of such fees is dependent on individual university policies and may be handled on a case-by-case basis. Tuition and fees are subject to adjustment. Students receiving any form of financial aid that is not automatically or fully distributed by the Home institution to cover the payment of all tuition and fees at the other universities are responsible for the payment of those additional tuition and fees.

TS PhD students will follow each university's policies and procedures in regard to payment schedule date, refund dates, late fees, non-payment designation, etc. for each university in which the student is registered.

DEGREE and COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of the TS PhD program requires the satisfactory completion of:

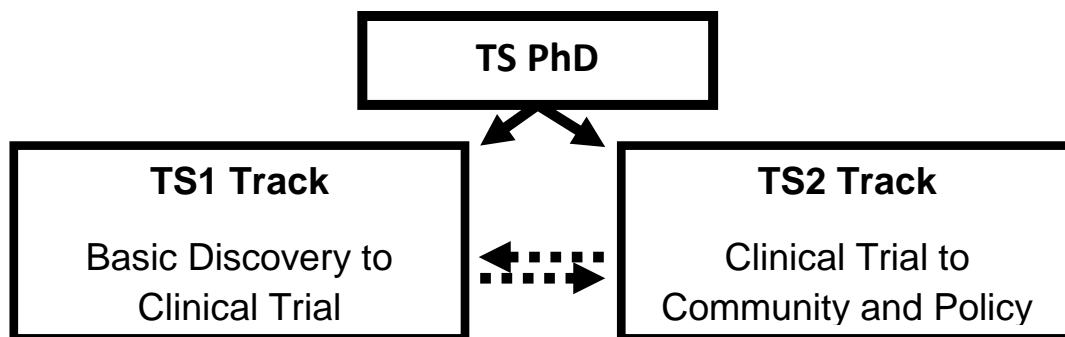
- Required and elective coursework
- A qualifying examination for admission to candidacy
- An approved research project and doctoral dissertation; and
- Final oral examination (defense of dissertation)

INDIVIDUALIZED DEGREE PLAN

Prior to the start of the first semester, each student admitted into the TS PhD program will meet with a TS PhD Academic/Graduate Advisor at the Home institution to discuss research and career goals and establish an individual curriculum to meet those goals. The individualized curriculum may be modified as the student's goals mature, subject to review and approval by the Academic/Graduate Advisor and/or Supervising Professor, as long as all course requirements are met or exceeded.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 72 hours of graduate coursework is required for the translational science doctoral degree candidate. An overall grade point average of 3.0 must be maintained for program continuation and completion. The TS PhD program and track structure is summarized in the following figure:



The plans of study and specific courses to be taken by students will vary, depending on the choice of the TS1 or TS2 translational science track, individual student interest, student background/discipline, and program goals.

All translational science doctoral students will be required to take a minimum of:

1. **24 hours of Core Curriculum:** Core courses will provide essential knowledge, skills, and training in the competencies necessary to conduct translational science research. Where courses are offered with similar content within multiple UT components, students may choose the one course that meets their individualized needs and/or is more convenient for them.
2. **Electives:**
 - a. **12 hours of Prescribed Track Electives:** Prescribed track electives will provide additional depth and breadth specific to each student's track. If more than one course meets the requirements,

as with the core courses, students will select the course that most effectively meets their educational needs from a list of recommended courses.

- b. 6 hours of free electives:** Additional elective courses are offered to meet the unique educational needs of individual students to successfully conduct their dissertation research and progress in their career development.

A **Directed Elective**, Topics in Translational Science, is required for at least two of the total elective hours.

- 3. 30 hours of research/dissertation:** The TS PhD is a research intensive program of study. For this reason, students are encouraged to become involved in research and may begin taking supervised Research credit hours in the first semester of enrollment, with approval from an advisor or the TS PhD program director. Enrollment in Dissertation hours will begin after the student is admitted to candidacy, selected a Supervising Professor, developed a research proposal, and established a Dissertation Committee. A minimum of 30 hours combined of research and dissertation hours are required for completion of the TS PhD degree, along with other requirements.

COURSE SELECTION

Selection of prescribed and free electives will be determined in collaboration with the Academic/Graduate Advisor and/or Supervising Professor, will be based on an individualized degree plan for the student, and will require the written consent of the Academic/Graduate Advisor or Supervising Professor prior to enrollment.

Core, Prescribed Elective, and Free Elective courses have been selected and approved for the TS PhD program from each of the participating University of Texas component institutions; however, course offerings at each university will change from time to time, courses may be dropped from university catalogs, and/or new courses will be evaluated at least annually for inclusion in the TS PhD degree program. Please refer to the Curriculum section of the TS PhD website, which will list current course offerings and provide links to the individual university websites and online catalogs.

ACADEMIC CALENDARS

Students will comply with the calendar(s) of the institutions in which they are enrolled for the purposes of registration and course schedules. Please refer to the TS PhD website and/or the Graduate School website of the individual universities for specific information about current academic calendars.

GRADING

Existing grading systems will be utilized by each institution. Students will be given letter grades (A, B, C, D, or F), Pass/Fail, Credit/No Credit, +/-, or Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, as per the policy of the institution's Graduate School. Students must maintain a 3.0 ("B") average for all classes giving letter grades. Students who are graded as failing or having unsatisfactory performance in a core course will be required to repeat the course or take an equivalent course within the educational domain. Students with failing or unsatisfactory performance in an elective course may re-take the course or take a different course of at least the same semester credit hours, as long as the curriculum guidelines are met for the student's individualized degree plan. Failure in more than one core class will be reviewed by the institution(s) in which the class(es) was taken and a procedure to remediate, if possible, will be determined by that institution, in consultation with the Home institution and the TS COGS.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

The TS PhD faculty believe that attendance at scheduled classes and examinations is crucial to meeting course and program objectives. Therefore, regular attendance in class is expected of each student. Attendance is defined as being present within 15 minutes after the scheduled beginning of the class and until 15 minutes before the scheduled ending of the class.

Excused Absences: Excused absences may be granted by the Course Director/Instructor in cases such as formal presentations at scientific meetings, illness, or personal emergency. Excused absences are considered on an individual basis and require electronic communication with the Course Director to request an excused absence. The email request to the Course Director must provide details regarding the circumstances and specific dates. It is expected that students will provide *advance notice* of absence for scheduled events.

Unexcused Absences: Repeated unexcused absences make it impossible to achieve course objectives. Students with excessive unexcused absences in a course will automatically receive a failing grade (Fail/Unsatisfactory/F) unless makeup assignments or agreement for an “incomplete” has been approved by the Course Director. In general, allowable unexcused absences will be determined based on course credit hours, for example:

Course Credit Hours	Allowable Unexcused Absences
4	3
3	3
2	2
1	1

Individual course instructors (classroom and online) may establish their own requirements, and these may differ from the chart above. Always make sure you understand the attendance policy of each course instructor.

EDUCATIONAL DOMAINS and CURRICULUM SEQUENCE

DOMAINS

Eight educational domains form the foundation for the TS PhD educational objectives. Within each domain are specific competencies that each candidate will have to fulfill (See Curriculum Appendix). The eight domains for every graduate of this PhD program include:

- 1. A Clear Understanding of Translational Science:** Students will articulate what constitutes T1 and T2 translational science and the inter-relationships between the two broad tracks.
- 2. Responsible Research Conduct:** Students will be knowledgeable about and be able to apply research ethics and work effectively with regulatory groups within their organization(s).
- 3. Expertise in Research Design and Analysis in their Scientific Discipline:** Students will formulate research questions and appropriately design experiments and studies to test hypotheses. They will develop specific analytic strategies based on the study design and assure that their studies are adequately powered to test the hypotheses.
- 4. Ability to Lead, Motivate, and Manage Collaborative Team Science:** Students will work effectively in and be able to lead interdisciplinary research teams to (a) identify health related problems and (b) design and conduct research to address the problems.
- 5. Utilization of Multi-level Cultural Proficiency:** Students will be able to identify the different cultures that exist within and among (a) organizations and (b) communities (locally and globally). In recognizing these differences, students will learn to use cultural competence and work effectively to conduct research investigations in different settings.
- 6. Communicate Effectively:** Since communication is a key domain of translational science, students will demonstrate oral and written competency in their ability to communicate research clearly to other translational scientists *via* journal articles and scientific presentations. They will be able to effectively write abstracts and manuscripts, give oral presentations, and communicate the relevance of their scientific expertise. Beyond the core requirements, students will receive training in grant writing and be expected to develop grant applications for career development (*e.g.*, NIH F32 or K-grant series) or independent funding.
- 7. Display Competence in the Business of Translational Science:** Students will become functionally informed about intellectual property licensing and the processes of developing products, drugs, or devices for human use. They will be able to design and implement research protocols to study improvement in health care processes and outcomes. Students will be able to function within different legal, regulatory, and economic environments.
- 8. Evidence Based Implementation and Policy:** Students will be able to independently read and interpret the scientific literature in their content area. They will be able to systematically review a body of scientific literature to apply to policy implementation. They will be able to make data based decisions and inform policy and guideline development.

CURRICULUM SEQUENCE

Prospective students applying to the TS PhD program must have a Master's or Professional (*e.g.*, MD, DDS, DO, PharmD) degree prior to enrollment in the program. While there is no prescribed sequence of courses for the TS PhD program, some courses are offered only one time per year and some courses

require prerequisites, so students and their academic/graduate advisors must develop the individualized degree plan accordingly to maintain an established schedule to graduation. The TS PhD requires a minimum of 72 hours. Some students will exceed this, particularly in the completion of the dissertation research.

SAMPLE THREE-YEAR CURRICULUM (FULL-TIME STUDENT) FOR COMPLETION OF TRANSLATIONAL SCIENCE PhD (BASED ON EDUCATIONAL DOMAINS)					
Year 1, Fall		Year 1, Spring		Year1, Summer	
	SCH		SCH		SCH
Translational Science (Core)	1	Research Design- Methods2 (Core)	2	Track and/or Free Electives	6
Responsible Conduct (Core)	2	Research Design- Biostatistics2 (Core)	2		
Research Design-Methods1 (Core)	2	Leadership & Team Science (Core)	3		
Research Design- Biostatistics1 (Core)	2	Track Elective	2		
Scientific Communication (Core)	2				
TOTAL SCH/SEMESTER	9		9		6
Year 2, Fall		Year 2, Spring		Year 2, Summer	
Business of Translational Science (Core)	3	Cultural Proficiency (Core)	3	Track and/or Free Electives	3
Evidence-Based Policy & Implementation (Core)	2	Track and/or Free Electives	3	Research	3
Track and/or Free Electives	4	Research	3		
TOTAL SCH/SEMESTER	9		9		6
Year 3, Fall		Year 3, Spring		Year 3, Summer	
Research/Dissertation	9	Research/Dissertation	9	Research/Dissertation	6
TOTAL SCH/SEMESTER	9		9		6
PRE-REQUISITE: Master's, Doctoral, or Professional Degree (anticipated minimum of 2 to 4 years beyond undergraduate education)					
SCH, semester credit hour					

MILESTONES

To maintain progression toward completion of the TS PhD program in three years, as a full-time student, the following expectations and milestones should be met:

- Year 1:**
- With the academic advisor, develop individualized curriculum plan
 - Enroll in and successfully complete selected core, track elective, and/or free elective courses
 - Identify area of research interest
 - If not already selected, network for purposes of identifying a Supervising Professor
- Year 2:**
- With the academic advisor, review and/or revise individualized curriculum plan
 - Enroll in and successfully complete selected core, track elective, and/or free elective courses
 - Establish a qualifying examination committee
 - Successfully complete the qualifying examination
 - File for admission to candidacy
 - Select a Supervising Professor
 - Form a Dissertation Committee
 - Prepare and submit a dissertation proposal
 - Begin the dissertation research project
 - Complete scheduled Semi-Annual Evaluations
- Year 3:**
- Complete the dissertation research project, including writing the dissertation, revising the dissertation, and successfully completing the final oral defense
 - Complete scheduled Semi-Annual Evaluations
 - Apply for graduation
 - Schedule, announce, and present the final oral examination (defense of dissertation)
- Subsequent Years:**
- Completion of unfinished tasks from previous years
 - Complete scheduled Semi-Annual Evaluations

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY and DISSERTATION

COMPREHENSIVE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The qualifying exam will be administered before the start of dissertation research, and admission to candidacy will be contingent on its successful completion. The qualifying examination should be completed near the end or following the completion of core coursework. It is recommended that the student, at the time of the written portion of the qualifying exam, should have completed the bulk (at least 75%) of core course work, including at least one course in each domain.

The qualifying exam will include both written and oral components. The exam will be comprehensive and will include questions and/or assignments covering:

1. Knowledge/Information gained through the translational science coursework; and
2. The basic knowledge required for the chosen area of research.

The purpose of the qualifying exam is to identify students who can apply knowledge gained in coursework to solve problems they may not have seen before; therefore, students should be familiar with both their coursework and the current literature.

The format of the exam and composition of the Dissertation Committee is determined by the TS Committee on Graduate Studies (TS COGS). Additional criteria may be set by an institution regarding committee structure and approval mechanisms. Students should confirm the requirements of the TS PhD program and the Home institution's Graduate School.

Supervising Professor: The student must select a Supervising Professor prior to the initiation of the Qualifying Exam. The Supervising Professor will chair all steps of the Qualifying Exam.

Completion of the Qualifying Exam: Every effort will be made to accommodate the individualized nature of the TS PhD program, and scheduling of the qualifying exam will be individualized to promote student progress. The timing of the QE will be determined jointly by the candidate and the Supervising Professor, in collaboration with the Dissertation Committee and the instructors/graders for the Written Exam on Course Content. If needed and agreed upon, portions of the QE may be tasked to be completed between semesters; however, the faculty members grading the QE are not expected to do this outside established semesters. Since faculty participants in the QE will come from different institutions, attention must be paid to different academic schedules.

Upon successful completion of the Written Exam on Course Content, the Dissertation Committee will assess the Written Dissertation Proposal and Oral Defense of the Dissertation Research at a set date and time. The Supervising Professor will utilize the results of all portions of the qualifying exam as the basis for evaluating the student's performance and will report its judgment of performance to the TS COGS and the Home institution, following existing policy and procedure. Students must receive an overall grade of "Pass" on each component to be admitted into candidacy.

Components of the Qualifying Examination: The qualifying exam is composed of two parts: (1) the Written Exam on Course Content and (2) the Dissertation Proposal (written and oral).

1. Written Exam on Course Content

- **Administering the Written Exam on Course Content:** The Written Exam on Course Content will test the student's background in translational science based on core didactic coursework. Because the TS PhD student may select from multiple courses for most domains, every effort will be made to include questions specific to the course(s) taken by the student. All efforts will be taken to ensure that all students cover similar content in this portion of the qualifying exam. Specific criteria related to the Written Exam on Course Content include:
 - The exam will be a take-home exam, and a two-week time period will be allowed for completion.
 - The exam will include one question per domain in the TS PhD curriculum (eight questions total). The course instructor for the course taken by the student to fulfill the course requirement for each domain will write the question. The Supervising Professor will review all questions and clarify prior to administering this portion of the qualifying exam.
 - The response to each question will be limited to 1,000 words. Literature citations are not part of the word count. Students who wish to add exhibits or other addenda must get prior approval from the instructor/question writer.
 - The responses will be typed and submitted electronically as a PDF file.
 - Students will not be released from lab or class responsibilities while they are completing this portion of the qualifying exam. Students will be responsible for scheduling their workloads appropriately.
 - The Written Exam on Course Content will be scheduled at a time mutually agreed upon by the student, the Supervising Professor, and the participating instructors/question writers and graders. Sufficient time will be required to solicit and review the questions, so scheduling should begin as early as possible. Unless agreed upon by the student and other involved parties, responses will not be accepted during scheduled holidays or time periods between semesters.
- **Participants in the Written Exam on Course Content: Participants will include:**
 - **The Supervising Professor**
 - **The instructor(s) from one core course in each of the eight TS domains or, if an instructor is not available, a faculty member from one of the participating universities with expertise in the area of instruction, to be selected by the Supervising Professor and TS COGS**
 - **A secondary grader, selected from the TS COGS and/or from one of the participating institutions, with the approval of the TS COGS and Supervising Professor**
- **Grading the Written Exam on Course Content:**
 - **Graders:** Each exam question will be graded by two people – the course instructor who wrote the question and a second person from the TS COGS or graduate faculty who is knowledgeable about the question/domain/topic. The Supervising Professor and TS COGS will select the second grader.
 - **Grading Scale:** The Course Content questions will be graded using the following criteria:
 - **Exceptional:** Indicates that the answers fully and completely address the questions with no major and very few minor flaws or shortcomings.
 - **Very Good:** The answers fully and completely address the questions with minor flaws or shortcomings.

- **Satisfactory:** Indicates that the answers fully and completely address the questions but contain no more than one substantive flaw or shortcomings or several minor flaws.
 - **Marginal:** The answers contain numerous flaws and shortcomings; however, on balance the answers address the questions and are more correct than incorrect and more complete than incomplete.
 - **Unsatisfactory:** The answers are nominally complete, but do not suitably address the questions. For example:
 - Answers to questions are substantively different from the questions asked
 - The answers address the questions, but contain numerous flaws and shortcomings
 - **Fail:** The answers are substantively incomplete (e.g., unanswered, or only one out of three parts are answered) or are nonsensical.
- **Grade Assignment:** After each grader has assigned a tentative grade to the question, the graders will meet and discuss their assessments. If the assessment of the two graders is similar, the graders will arrive at a consensus grade for the exam and report that consensus grade to the Supervising Professor. If the graders' assessments are dissimilar, the graders will request the Supervising Professor to appoint a third reviewer, who will independently grade the question. Following that, the graders will arrive at a consensus grade for the question and report that consensus grade to the Supervising Professor.
 - **Overall Grade:** The graded questions will be reviewed by the Supervising Professor, who will discuss any questions or comments with the graders prior to tabulating the overall grade for the Written Exam on Course Content. The overall grade will be based on performance as follows (see "follow-up" below for additional criteria):

Grades on the Course Content Questions	Overall Grade
Grade of Satisfactory (or better) received on each question	Pass
Grade of Unsatisfactory (or lower) on two of the questions, or a grade of Fail on one question and a grade of Marginal on another question	Fail

2. **Dissertation Proposal:** The Dissertation Proposal will consist of written and oral components. The Dissertation Committee, chaired by the Supervising Professor, will be responsible for evaluating and grading these components.
 - **Dissertation Committee:** Following completion of the Written Exam on Course Content, the student will have 30 days to form the Dissertation Committee and 60 days to complete the written and oral Dissertation Proposal portions of the Qualifying Exam. It is recommended that the student begin the process of organizing the Dissertation Committee in advance.
 - **Dissertation Committee Members:** The Dissertation Committee will have **at least** four members, but may have additional members if required by the Graduate School of the student's Home institution. All Dissertation Committee members must be approved as Graduate Faculty by the TS COGS for the TS PhD program and must also meet the requirements of the student's home Graduate School. Dissertation committee membership will include (at a minimum):
 1. The Supervising Professor (may be from any of the four UT institutions included in this joint program)
 2. Graduate Faculty from the TS PhD program from the student's home department and/or institution

3. Graduate Faculty from the TS PhD program from a second UT component institution participating in the joint degree program
4. A member from an outside institution (is not part of the TS PhD program) who is an expert in the student's dissertation field

The proposed composition of the Dissertation Committee must be evaluated and approved by the TS COGS, and it is the responsibility of the student and Supervising Professor to present the proposed composition of the Dissertation Committee to the TS COGS for approval. Additional site-specific criteria may be set by the Graduate School of an individual institution, such as approval by a Graduate committee at the Home institution, in addition to approval by the TS COGS.

Written Dissertation Proposal:

- **Administration of the Research Proposal:** The student will prepare a written research proposal that will be the basis for the dissertation research. The Dissertation Proposal will be submitted to the Dissertation Committee at a time mutually agreed upon by the student and the Dissertation Committee, but at least two weeks prior to the scheduling of the Oral Exam.
- **Research Proposal Format:** The Research Proposal will be prepared using the following format:
 - Face Page
 - Abstract
 - Literature Review (up to five pages)
 - Research Plan (up to six pages, including Specific Aims page)
 - Specific Aims (one page)
 - Research Strategy
 - Significance
 - Innovation
 - Approach (including Hypotheses, Rationale, Preliminary Studies, Approach, Methods, and Analyses)
 - Relevance of Proposed Research to Translational Science
 - Cited Literature (not included in page limitation)
- **Grading the Research Proposal:** The Research Proposal will be graded by all members of the Dissertation Committee using the Written Dissertation Proposal form. If the assessment of the graders is the same, that grade will be reported to the TS COGS Chair. If the graders' assessments are dissimilar, the graders will request the TS COGS Chair to appoint an additional reviewer, who will independently grade the Research Proposal. The graders will arrive at a consensus grade and report that grade to the TS COGS Chair. The Dissertation Committee may request that advised revisions be made to the written dissertation proposal prior to final approval. These revisions must then be incorporated into the oral

Oral Exam on Dissertation Research:

- **Administration of the Oral Exam:** The oral exam will consist of a presentation of the Dissertation Proposal (a preliminary explanation of the proposed research project which will be defended at the completion of the dissertation) and should include background, methods, and proposed analyses. The Dissertation Committee, through questioning, will engage the candidate in a discussion of the proposed research to delineate the strengths and weaknesses of the approach. The oral exam will follow the submission of the written Dissertation Proposal and will be scheduled at a time mutually agreed upon by the student and the Dissertation Committee.

- **Grading the Oral Exam:** The Oral Exam will be graded by all members of the Dissertation Committee using the Oral Defense of Dissertation Proposal form. A consensus grade will be reported to the TS COGS Chair.

3. Follow-up for Students Who Do Not Pass: Any student not meeting the criteria for a passing grade on any component of the QE, or for any question of the Written Exam on Course Content that is rated as Marginal or below, will be subject to additional testing or other remediation on that component/question. The Supervising Professor and TS COGS will review the student's performance and make recommendation(s) as appropriate:

- The student may be required to pursue specific remediation in the areas requiring further study, including taking further coursework, followed by a re-take of exam question(s).
- The student may be allowed to retake the qualifying exam or portions(s) of the exam. Such testing may include, but is not limited to, additional readings, a written paper, an oral exam, or a retaking of the exam component or question. The nature and content of the additional testing will be determined by the faculty member who authored the exam question. A re-take of any exam component/question will be graded according to the procedure outlined above. The final grade on the comprehensive exam will be assigned after the additional testing.
- The student may be dismissed from the graduate program.

Students who fail the comprehensive qualifying exam on the second attempt will be dismissed from the TS PhD program. Any student wishing to transfer to a Master's program will be responsible for identifying an appropriate program and making application.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Each doctoral candidate must complete an approved body of research and submit a dissertation as one of the requirements for graduation. The dissertation must be an original scholarly contribution based on the independent research conducted by the candidate, under the supervision and guidance of the Supervising Professor. A Dissertation Committee will provide additional advisement. The student must submit and orally defend the research proposal to the Dissertation Committee. Once approved, this is forwarded to the TS COGS for review and approval, upon the recommendation of the Dissertation Committee. Approval by the Graduate Studies Committee of the student's Home institution may also be required. These approvals are required prior to enrollment for dissertation credit hours. The student must satisfy the research and dissertation course requirements, with respect to the number of semester credit hours (minimum of 30), number of semesters, and/or continuous enrollment requirements of the Home institution and as required by the student's research schedule and individualized degree plan. Enrollment for the dissertation course will be required during any semester where a student receives supervision by the Dissertation Committee, utilizes assistance from a faculty member, or otherwise uses the resources of any of the UT institutions to further the progress of the dissertation. The format of the dissertation will be in compliance with the rules of the student's Home institution.

Changing the Doctoral Research Project: Significant changes in the planned dissertation research project (*e.g.*, addition or deletion of a Specific Aim, substantial modifications in experimental design or scope of research studies to be undertaken) must be reviewed and approved by the Supervising Professor and Dissertation Committee prior to consideration by the TS COGS and the Home institution's Graduate Studies Committee, if required. The written request to change the research project must be submitted to the TS COGS through the TS PhD Program Director. The written request should include:

- The revised research proposal
- A cover memo describing the basis for the request to change the dissertation research
- Completion of the *TS PhD Request to Amend Research Form*

FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION (DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION)

Completion of the dissertation will require a satisfactory final oral examination, as evaluated and approved by the Dissertation Committee. The final oral examination will cover aspects of the dissertation, information derived from the general field of the dissertation research, and other parts of the student's individualized curriculum as determined by the Dissertation Committee. Satisfactory completion of the final oral examination will be evaluated based on whether the student has:

1. Completed all work assigned by the Dissertation Committee;
2. Passed all examinations, including the final oral examination;
3. Completed the minimum requirements as outlined in the student's individualized curriculum plan and as required by the TS PhD program and the student's Home institution;
4. Completed a dissertation that meets the criteria outlined above for independent investigation and contribution to the scientific discipline; and
5. Submitted an approved abstract for publication in Dissertation Abstracts International.

Following a thorough review of the completion of these requirements, the Dissertation Committee will sign the approval sheets and provide an official recommendation to the TS COGS regarding the award of the doctoral degree.

If the dissertation is considered meritorious by a majority vote of the TS COGS, the TS COGS will accept the Dissertation Committee's approval and then inform the Graduate School of the student's Home institution. Final acceptance of the doctoral dissertation is accomplished by majority vote of the Graduate council or committee of the student's Home institution. The TS COGS will also inform the Graduate Schools of the other participating universities.

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR and DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR

The Supervising Professor will oversee all aspects of the student research project and must be a member of the TS Graduate Faculty. Selection of a Supervising Professor is largely dependent on the research interests of the student and the expertise of the Supervising Professor to mentor the student through the research and dissertation process in the chosen field of study. While it is expected that most students will choose a Supervising Professor from their Home institution, a student may work with a faculty member from one of the other participating institutions, including the UT School of Public Health. While the UT School of Public Health cannot award the joint degree, a faculty member from this institution may participate as a Supervising Professor if all requirements are met and if that faculty qualifies for TS Graduate Faculty status, including an appropriate appointment at the student's Home institution. The goal is to have the faculty member with the most appropriate content expertise serve as the Supervising Professor for the candidate's dissertation research.

In all cases, the experience of the proposed Supervising Professor will be closely reviewed by the TS COGS. If a TS PhD student identifies a Supervising Professor who is not a member of the TS Graduate Faculty, the TS COGS will separately assess the qualifications of that individual for recommendation to the Home institution's Graduate School for appointment to the TS Graduate Faculty. Requests for consideration of appointment to the TS Graduate Faculty may be considered concomitantly with the evaluation of an individual to serve as a student's Supervising Professor. The applicant Supervising Professor must submit:

- A letter of commitment to the TS PhD Program Director that includes:
 - A brief overview of the planned research project (to be reviewed/approved by the Supervising Committee once it is established)
 - Description of the student's role/activities in the research project
 - Statement of commitment to the student's education and training in the TS PhD program
 - If the student is a foreign national attending the TS PhD program on a student visa, agreement to provide a bi-annual statement regarding continued support for enrollment in the TS PhD program
- A NIH-style biosketch as evidence of research experience and funding
- A NIH-style trainee table as evidence of experience in supervising student dissertation (and other) research

If the TS COGS does not consider the proposed Supervising Professor to have sufficient experience, the student and the proposed Supervising Professor will be advised of this decision and the student will be required to select another Supervising Professor.

Changing the Supervising Professor: Change of the Supervising Professor requires review and approval by the TS COGS and the Home institution's Graduate Studies Committee, if required. This request should be submitted, in writing, to the TS COGS through the TS PhD Program Director and should include:

- Cover memo describing the basis for the request to change Supervising Professor (Form?)
- A letter from the proposed Supervising Professor that provides:
 - A brief overview of the research and the student's progress to date
 - Commitment to the student's education and training toward completion of the TS PhD

- If the student is a foreign national attending the TS PhD program on a student visa, agreement to provide a bi-annual statement regarding continued support for enrollment in the TS PhD program
- If the proposed Supervising Professor is not already a member of the TS Graduate Faculty, the following documents must also be provided:
 - A NIH-style biosketch of the proposed Supervising Professor as evidence of research experience and funding
 - An NIH-style trainee table of the proposed Supervising Professor as evidence of experience in supervising student dissertation (and other) research

COMPOSITION OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Prior to the submission of the Written Dissertation Proposal and Oral Defense of the Dissertation Proposal, and/or within 30 days of the completion of the Written Course Content portion of the Qualifying Exam, the student, with the help of his/her Supervising Professor, will establish a Dissertation Committee. The Dissertation Committee will have **at least** four members, but may have additional members if required by the Graduate School of the student's Home institution. All Dissertation Committee members must be approved as Graduate Faculty by the TS COGS for the TS PhD program and must also meet the requirements of the student's home Graduate School. Dissertation committee membership will include (at a minimum):

5. The Supervising Professor (may be from any of the four UT institutions included in this joint program)
6. Graduate Faculty from the TS PhD program from the student's home department and/or institution
7. Graduate Faculty from the TS PhD program from a second UT component institution participating in the joint degree program
8. A member from an outside institution (is not part of the TS PhD program) who is an expert in the student's dissertation field

The proposed composition of the Dissertation Committee must be evaluated and approved by the TS COGS, and it is the responsibility of the student and Supervising Professor to present the proposed composition of the Dissertation Committee to the TS COGS for approval. Additional site-specific criteria may be set by the Graduate School of an individual institution, such as approval by a Graduate committee at the Home institution, in addition to approval by the TS COGS.

Changing a Dissertation Committee: A change in membership of an approved Dissertation Committee requires review and approval by the TS COGS. This request should be submitted, in writing, to the TS COGS through the Program Director and should include:

- Cover memo that describes the basis for the request to change the Dissertation Committee
- *Request to Amend TS PhD Dissertation Committee Form*

Additional site-specific criteria may be set by the Graduate School of an individual institution, such as approval by a Graduate committee at the Home institution, in addition to approval by the TS COGS.

STUDENT EVALUATION and PROGRESSION TO PhD CANDIDACY

Student progress will be monitored regularly to ensure that students stay on track to receive their PhD degree in a timely manner. All students are expected to complete the degree within seven years. Students who are in the active military may receive an extension of up to three years to complete their degree, and other waivers may be considered on a case-by-case basis. All coursework at the time of admission to candidacy must have been completed within the previous five years, and students are expected to complete the PhD within three years of completion of the qualifying exam. After admission to candidacy, monitoring will be put in place to ensure relevance of coursework and progress toward the dissertation:

TS COGS ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESSION TO QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

Representatives of the TS COGS, including the Program Director(s), will meet with students who have not completed the qualifying examination after three years in the program to assess their progress and develop a plan for completing the qualifying exam. A formal letter documenting all issues and the educational plan will be sent to the student and his/her academic/graduate advisor or Supervising Professor. The academic/graduate advisor or Supervising Professor will meet with the student quarterly after this meeting to assess the student's progress and provide remediation when needed to assist the student's progress toward the qualifying exam. These meetings will be reported to the TS COGS, either directly or through a sub-committee established for the purpose of student advisement.

SEMI-ANNUAL EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

The Semi-Annual Student Evaluation will provide a process to systematically monitor the progress of the research and dissertation. After approval of the research plan and establishment of the Dissertation Committee, Semi-Annual Student Evaluation reports must be prepared, reviewed and approved by the student's Dissertation Committee, and submitted to the TS COGS at established intervals twice a year. The Semi-Annual Student Evaluation will be submitted in a prescribed format and include a written report of progress on the student's research work, including statements of objectives of the research, methods used, major results obtained, conclusions drawn, pre- or reprints of papers submitted for publication, and proposed direction of future work. The student will present the report during a formal meeting of the Dissertation Committee and is expected to provide a brief overview of his/her research and training activities, any problems encountered since the previous meeting with the Dissertation Committee, as well as plans for the future towards completion of the requirements in fulfillment of the TS PhD Program. The Dissertation Committee will evaluate the research progress made by the student and, if satisfactory, endorse both the progress and the direction of future work to be undertaken. This semi-annual evaluation will include consideration of student participation in and satisfactory completion of course work, research, seminars and other program activities. The semi-annual evaluation will then be submitted to the TS COGS or a student advisement sub-committee. If progress is unsatisfactory, the Dissertation Committee will discuss the reasons for this decision with the student, and the Supervising Professor and student will develop a plan for remediation. In the case of unsatisfactory progress, the student will present an updated progress report to the Dissertation Committee within three months. Additional details about the Semi-Annual Student Evaluation are described in a separate section.

COURSE RELEVANCE

Full-time students who have not graduated after five years in the TS PhD program will have the content of their coursework reviewed by the TS COGS for relevance to the student's degree plan and research. If

coursework is determined to be obsolete or irrelevant to the student's research, additional coursework may be required to fulfill the course requirements.

99-HOUR RULE

The TS PhD program will impose the 99-hour rule established by the Texas Legislature, which will require charging out-of-state tuition for graduate students who have more than 99 semester credit hours in the TS doctoral program.

GRADUATION

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded upon satisfactory completion of a minimum of 72 semester credit hours, submission of a dissertation, and satisfactory completion of a final oral examination (defense of dissertation). Students will apply and be approved for their degree and graduation by their Home institution. The degree awarded is a joint degree with the other partner institutions, and it is awarded on the official graduation date indicated to the University of Texas System and published by the Home institution. Students will attend the graduation ceremony of the Home institution. Graduate fees will be assessed by the Home institution.

SEMI-ANNUAL STUDENT EVALUATION

REQUIREMENT FOR SEMI-ANNUAL STUDENT EVALUATION

Students who have successfully completed the Qualifying Examination and are proceeding with approved dissertation research will be evaluated by the Supervising Professor and Dissertation Committee at least once every six months throughout the remainder of their enrollment in the TS PhD program. The Semi-Annual Progress Report will be submitted in a prescribed format and include a written report of progress on the student's research work, including statements of objectives of the research, methods used, major results obtained, conclusions drawn, pre- or reprints of papers submitted for publication, and proposed direction of future work.

DUE DATES

The Semi-Annual Student Evaluation must be submitted to the TS COGS by August 31 and February 28 of each year regardless of the date the student was admitted to candidacy.

PROCEDURE

Format: The semi-annual evaluation will include:

- Completion of the *TS PhD Semi-Annual Student Evaluation* Form, which will be a written report of progress on the student's research work, including statements of objectives of the research, methods used, major results obtained, conclusions drawn, pre- or reprints of papers submitted for publication, and proposed direction of future work, as well as plans for the future towards completion of the requirements in fulfillment of the TS PhD Program.
- A formal meeting of the student's Dissertation Committee

Scheduling the Meeting: The Supervising Professor will serve as the meeting Chair and, with the student, is expected to establish the time and place of the meeting.

Student Presentation: The student shall be present during this formal meeting and is expected to provide a brief overview of his/her research and training activities, any problems encountered since the previous meeting, as well as plans for completion of the TS PhD. The semi-annual evaluation will also include consideration of student participation in and satisfactory completion of course work, research, seminars and other program activities.

Evaluation: The Dissertation Committee will evaluate the research progress made by the student and, if satisfactory, endorse both the progress and the direction of future work to be undertaken. The semi-annual evaluation will then be submitted to the Student Advisory Sub-committee of the TS COGS. If progress is unsatisfactory, the Dissertation Committee will discuss the reasons for this decision with the student, and the Supervising Professor and student will develop a plan for remediation. In the case of unsatisfactory progress, the student will present an updated progress report to the Dissertation Committee within three months.

Request for Extension: Requests for extension of the deadline for submission of all documents associated with the semi-annual evaluation (outlined above) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. A written request for extension should be sent to the TS PhD program director and should describe the reason for the request. This letter must include the signature of the Supervising Professor. Requests for

extension must be submitted at least five working days **before** the due date of the evaluation. Failure to submit a fully completed and signed evaluation or to provide a letter requesting an extension of the deadline will result in loss of up to three hours of research credit for the semester in progress.

OTHER PROGRAM POLICIES and REQUIREMENTS

STUDENT ORIENTATION

A TS PhD program orientation will be provided for all incoming TS PhD students at the UT Health Science Center prior to the first day of the incoming semester. The date, time, and location of this orientation will be provided by email to incoming students. Students are also expected to participate in the orientation program specific to the Graduate School of the student's Home institution, if offered.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Because this is a joint degree program, it will be essential that the participating universities are able to share and access relevant and academically pertinent data; therefore, each Home institution designates all other institutions participating in the TS PhD program as having a legitimate educational interest in the relevant educational records of the students who participate in the TS PhD program. All participating institutions will maintain confidentiality of the educational records in accordance with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Accordingly, the sharing of relevant educational records **will not** require a student release nor violate a student's FERPA rights.

STUDENT IDS

Students will obtain a Student ID from each institution at the time of enrollment in the first semester of the program. Thereafter, each institution will activate Student IDs according to individual institutional policy. The student ID card/badge must be carried by all registered students and must be presented to campus police upon request. The card/badge also allows access to certain campus facilities. A fee may be assessed for the processing and creation of the student ID/badge on each campus. Due to the importance of this card/badge and the fact that students in this TS PhD program may have to carry several cards/badges, all students should be encouraged to personally check the authenticity of all cards/badges with the appropriate institution authority on a regular basis.

PARKING

Students are expected to know and follow the parking rules and regulations of the universities where they are attending class, including campus speed limits, parking zones, police citation and warnings, parking fines, appeal procedures, and schedule and payment of parking fees.

Students will be eligible for parking permits at each institution in which they are enrolled. Parking fees will be paid to the institution that issues the permit. Students attending classes at multiple institutions should consult with the TS PhD administrative office to determine if reciprocity of parking permits or a reduced fee is available. For example, a reciprocal parking agreement between UT Health Science Center and UTSA allows students with a permit at one institution to park at another in specified areas:

UTHSCSA Permit	UTSA Permit
Zones I and II	Faculty /Staff A
Zones III and IV	Faculty/Staff B
Zone V	Commuter

FINANCIAL AID

All financial aid will be coordinated through the student's Home institution. Application of financial aid for the purpose of tuition and fees will be disbursed by the student's Home institution. Students receiving any form of financial aid that is not automatically or fully distributed by the Home institution to the other institutions for payment of tuition and fees at the other universities are personally responsible for the payment of those tuition and fees.

International students are **not** eligible to receive federal financial aid.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Because students in the TS PhD program will attend class and possibly conduct research at four UT institutions, all immunization requirements of all institutions must be met. All students entering and continuing in the TS PhD program must fulfill the immunization requirements of the State of Texas and UT Health Science Center, regardless of the requirements of the student's Home institution. A list of required immunizations may be found at the student services [website](#).

STUDENT HEALTH AND HEALTH INSURANCE

TS PhD students will utilize the student health services of the student's Home institution. All students entering and continuing in the TS PhD program must provide proof of medical insurance each semester, regardless of the requirements of the student's Home institution. Students who do not have access to private or corporate health insurance must elect institution-sponsored student health insurance.

TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

Laptop Computer: The TS PhD program requires that students have an Intel-based laptop computer with the capacity to connect to the Internet *via* a wireless connection. Some coursework will involve the use of laptop computers that are operational in a wireless mode. Recommended software is Microsoft Office Suite (can be purchased at the UT Health Science Center Bookstore with a student ID). Some courses may also require software specific to completion of the learning objectives of the course.

Laptops with an Apple Mac-based operating system must be able to also perform as a PC-based operating system.

Some universities require that wireless laptops be authenticated before accessing the campus' wireless computer networks. Please refer to websites or contact the telecommunications/networking departments for each university to determine their requirements **prior** to the start of classes. Typically, the authentication process can be completed by taking the laptop and your student ID to the correct department, and this authentication process should take about five minutes.

Student Email: TS PhD students will have an email account on each campus. Some institutions designate the email address, and others allow the student to make a choice. Each semester, students are required to provide the TS PhD administrative office with a list of their official email addresses on each campus. Each student will be responsible for checking all student-related email addresses on a regular basis.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Each university has its own fitness facility and recreational activities for students. In general, TS PhD students will have access to the facility and activities of their Home institution.

STUDENT HEALTH AND COUNSELING SERVICES

Each university provides student health and student counseling services, but there are differences in how each university provides these services. IT is recommended that students use their Home institution's health and counseling services unless there is an emergency while on the campus of one of the other institutions.

All UT System institutions provide institution-sponsored student health insurance for students who do not have private health insurance coverage. Proof of health insurance coverage, or purchase of student health insurance, is required for all TS PhD students.

LIBRARY SERVICES

TS PhD students may use the library services of any university where they are enrolled.

ETHICS, PROFESSIONALISM, AND CONDUCT

The TS PhD program expects all students to exhibit the highest standards of conduct, honesty, and professionalism. Academic misconduct includes activities that undermine the academic integrity of the institution. The university(ies) may discipline a student for academic misconduct as outlined in the *Catalogs and Handbooks of Operating Procedures* for each of the universities participating in the joint PhD degree program. Academic misconduct may involve human, hard-copy, or electronic resources. Policies of academic misconduct apply to all course-, department-, school-, and university-related activities including conferences and off-campus performances, as well as research work (including lab experiments, data collection and analyses). All cases of academic misconduct must be reported to the Dean of the Graduate School of the student's Home institution, and the seriousness of the violation may be taken into account in assessing a penalty. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- **Cheating.** Any attempt to use or provide unauthorized assistance, materials, information, or access in any form and in any academic exercise or environment is considered cheating and is expressly forbidden.
- **Fabrication.** A student must not falsify or invent any information or data including, but not limited to, records or reports, laboratory results, data analyses, and citation to the sources of information.
- **Plagiarism.** Plagiarism is defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own. Ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. The adoption or reproduction of ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, or research results of another person without acknowledgement is expressly forbidden. Credit must be given to the originality of others whenever:
 - Quoting the works of others
 - Using another person's ideas, opinions, or theories
 - Paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, results, or theories of others
 - Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material
 - Offering materials assembled or collected by others
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty.** A student must not intentionally or knowingly help another student commit an act of academic misconduct, nor allow another student to use his/her work or resources to commit an act of misconduct.


Each university participating in the TS PhD program maintains policies regarding academic conduct and discipline for students, which may also implicate faculty and staff. Should such circumstances arise, the policies and procedures of the student's Home institution will be followed, even if the infraction occurs at a different institution.


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