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# Biomedical Science PhD Program

# Milestones Made Easy

The following provides a brief synopsis of some of the milestones and requirements of Ph.D. students in Biomedical Science. All forms referred to in this document are available as PDF files on the [**The Graduate School website**](http://grad.uconn.edu/current-students/forms/). **However, all official paperwork should be filed through the  Registrar's Office on the UConn Health campus, Room AM039, MC 1827, *regardless of the address on the forms.* If you are submitting via email to Storrs, you MUST copy the UConn Health Registrar’s Office at Registra@uchc.edu.**

## Degree Standards

Where can I find the degree standards and policies that pertain to my graduate education?

* [The UConn Graduate School catalog](http://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/)

## Credits and Registration

How many total credits are required for the University of Connecticut Ph.D. degree?

* At least 45 credits

How many credits of content coursework are required?

* Content coursework is defined as any credits that do not have the GRAD designation.
* At least 30 credits of content coursework are required for the degree, or at least 15 credits if you have a Masters degree in the same or a closely related field (your advisory committee must approve this)

How many credits of Doctoral Dissertation Research (GRAD 6950) are required?

* At least 15 credits

What is considered full time enrollment if I am a Graduate Assistant?

* At least 6 credits per semester

What is considered full time enrollment if I am a Graduate Fellow (i.e., supported by an institutional or individual federal training grant)?

* At least 9 credits per semester
* An exception is combined DMD/PhD students. In the dental school years, they will register for continuous registration, either GRAD 6998 (first two years of dental school) or GRAD 6999 (last two years of dental school).

How many credits of coursework should I take in the first year of the Biomedical Science Ph.D. program?

* The program guideline is 8-10 credits per semester, with at least 6 credits per semester of content coursework other than lab rotations, independent study, and graduate seminar.

How many credits of coursework should I take in the second year of the Biomedical Science Ph.D. program?

* The program guideline is 6 credits of content coursework for the year other than lab rotations, independent study, and graduate seminar (this does not pertain to students with a Masters degree in the same or a closely related field).

How do I register for courses?

* Through the [**Student Administration System**](http://studentadmin.uconn.edu/) (PeopleSoft), except for laboratory rotations and independent study. For these, complete the required forms (found on the [**Current Student**](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/current/)page) and submit them to the UConn Health Registrar’s Office, AM039
* You will need your NetID and password to register in the Student Administration System

## Laboratory Rotations

How many laboratory rotations (MEDS 6496) are required?

* Three

Can I opt out of the third laboratory rotation?

* Under certain circumstances, the third laboratory rotation may be waived. You will need to summit a [**waiver form**](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2020/08/Third-Rotation-Waiver-Form_Updated-8-11-20.docx) to the Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee at UConn Health.
* Even if the third rotation is waived, three rotation **talks** are required.

Who will sign my laboratory rotation forms in the first year?

* A member of your first year advisory committee or the Associate Dean.

## Advising and Mentoring

What are the different types of advisory committees I will have during my program?

* A first year advisory committee consisting of two faculty members.
* A thesis advisory committee consisting of the Major Advisor and at least 2 other faculty.
* A General Examination Committee consisting of at least five faculty including all members of the thesis advisory committee.

How is my academic performance evaluated in the first year of the program?

* The Academic Review Committee, consisting of all first year advisors, will review the performance of first year students in coursework and lab rotations at the end of each semester.

When should I select a thesis advisor and area of concentration of Biomedical Science?

* By the beginning of the second year.
* Complete and submit the [**Change of Major Advisor Form-Part 1**](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2015/08/2017_Change-of-Major-Advisor.pdf) and
[**Change of Major Advisor Form-Part 2**](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2015/08/2017_Change-of-Major-Advisor-II.pdf)when you select a thesis advisor and area of concentration.

How often should I meet with my thesis advisory committee?

* At least once per year, and ideally once per semester. It is to your advantage to meet with your advisory committee frequently to discuss your progress and set goals.

## Degree Milestones

### Plan of Study

What is the [**Plan of Study**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2019/02/Plan-of-Study-Doctor-Philosophy.pdf)?

* A listing of the credits you will complete in the degree program

When should I submit the Plan of Study?

* The Plan of Study should be submitted for approval after selecting a thesis advisor and advisory committee. It must be approved prior to taking the General Examination
* A change of Plan of Study form must be submitted if you drop courses listed on the plan or add courses that you want to be used in the final degree audit.

Is there a “language or related area” requirement for the Biomedical Science Ph.D.?

* No.

### General Examination

When should I take the General Examination (also called the qualifying or prelim exam)?

* This should be completed by the end of the second year of study..
* Consult your area of concentration for its specific guidelines and format requirements.

What is the composition of the General Examination Committee?

* Five faculty members including all members of the advisory committee.

When should the results of the General Examination be submitted?

* The [**Report on the General Examination**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2018/02/Report-on-General-Exam-Doctoral.pdf) form should be submitted immediately following completion of the examination.
* The Report must be submitted **by a faculty member** (not the student).

### Dissertation Proposal

What is the [**Doctoral Dissertation Proposal**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2018/02/Dissertation-Proposal-for-Doctoral-Degree.pdf)?

* A brief description of the dissertation work, including the location of where the work is being done and approvals for human subject or animal research (if applicable).

When should I submit the Dissertation Proposal?

* Ideally, soon after completing the General Examination. However, the Dissertation Proposal should be submitted no later than the end of the third year.

How do I submit the Dissertation Proposal?

* Have it approved and signed by your thesis committee.
* Send it to the Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee for approval, who will forward it to The Graduate School at Storrs for final approval.

### Ph.D. Candidacy

When am I a candidate for the Ph.D. degree?

* After 1) passing the General Examination, 2) completing all coursework on the Plan of Study, and 3) approval of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal the Graduate School at Storrs.

### Public Defense and Final Steps

Where can I find the information I need for completing the degree?

* The following link on the Storrs Graduate School website has all the information you will need: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/graduation/graduate-programs/>

What are the initial steps?

* [**The Dissertation Tentative Approval Page**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2018/03/Dissertation-Tentative-Approval-Page.pdf) and a draft copy of your thesis must be submitted electronically to The Graduate School at Storrs (degreeaudit@uconn.edu) at least 14 days prior to the date of your oral/public defense (the final examination). Follow the directions on the form and **copy the UConn Health Registrar's Office (****registrar@uchc.edu****)**
* The oral/public defense must be listed on the [**UConn Events Calendar**](https://events.uconn.edu) at least 14 days prior to the defense. On the calendar page, scroll down to the bottom and click on the "+Submit Event" button. Input the information for your defense.  For the Primary calendar, select “Graduate School-Theses and Dissertation Defense” calendar.  Under cross-list, add “UConn Health Graduate School” calendar. This will insure that your information is also shared with the Graduate Office at UConn Health.
* After the oral/public defense, complete the [**Report on the Final Examination**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2017/08/Report-on-Final-Exam-Doctoral.pdf)
* IMPORTANT: Follow the steps in the [**Dissertation Submission Checklist**](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2017/10/Dissertation-Submission-Checklist.pdf)

Once I pass the oral/public defense, can I make changes to my written dissertation?

* Yes. Individuals on a visa should submit their final dissertations within 3 weeks following successful completion of the Final Examination.
* Domestic students do not have a time limit, but should submit their final dissertations in a timely manner.

After I complete the Final Examination, what are the next steps?

* Submit the final paperwork to the **UConn Health Registrar’s office, AM039,** and upload the dissertation into [**Open Commons**](http://opencommons.uconn.edu/), the University's repository for scholarly work.
* Degree conferral dates are in May, August or December. Your degree conferral date will depend on when you submit the dissertation and final paperwork
* The end of your assistantship will be when you submit the Dissertation Checklist and required paperwork to The Graduate School.

## Helpful Hints

* **Make copies of all required paperwork** and store them in a safe place.
* **Submit all paperwork to the UConn Health Registrar’s Office, AM039.** See instructions above for the Tentative Approval Page.
* Paperwork that contains any type of **grade** (for independent study, lab rotation, General Examination report, Final Examination report) must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office **by a faculty member**.

## Important Links

* [UConn Graduate Catalog](https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/)
* [UConn Health Graduate School Website](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school)
* [UConn Graduate School Website](https://grad.uconn.edu)
* [Graduate School Forms](https://grad.uconn.edu/enrollment-services/forms/)
* [UConn Health Specific Forms](https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/current)
* [Doctoral Degree Program Information](https://registrar.uconn.edu/graduation/graduate-programs/), including links to the doctoral dissertation preparation
* [Dissertation Checklist](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2017/10/Dissertation-Submission-Checklist.pdf)

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