

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Overview of Steps Leading to Graduation

1. Permission to Write (PTW)

- Receive permission at committee meeting
- Submit status report paperwork to the Student Drop Box (Alkek building - GSBS lobby - N204)
- Defense date must be scheduled within 6 months or PTW expires

2. Defense Date

- 2-3 Months before defense: Submit Completed Defense Date Form to the Student Drop Box (GSBS lobby).
- 2-3 Months before defense: If student is not a US citizen, contact International Services Office (ISO) to discuss visa arrangements (*e.g.* OPT).
- Two weeks before defense: Student should contact program administrator (PA) to arrange for generating the public defense flyer and review of signature page.
- Two weeks before defense: Submit copy of dissertation/thesis Signature Page to GSBS-graduation@bcm.edu for review and approval.
- Two weeks before defense: Student should submit dissertation/thesis to thesis advisory committee.

3. Public Defense

- One week before defense: Public notice of thesis defense must be given (*e.g.* posting of public defense flier, distribution of defense flier via email list serve). This should be coordinated with the program administrator.
- A copy of the defense flier/notice should be sent (via email) to GSBS-graduation@bcm.edu prior to the defense.
- Bring [Defense of Dissertation Results form](#) including defense rubrics and the Dissertation/Thesis Signature page to the defense.

4. Defense Results

- After defense, obtain original signatures from committee members, major advisor and program director on the Defense of Dissertation Results form. Ensure that defense rubrics are completed and signed.
- Ensure the TAC has outlined requirements in writing, if any, for completing/correcting thesis.
- If permitted, obtain committee member signatures on the Dissertation/Thesis Signature page at the conclusion of the defense. Note: It is recommended that you do not wait until the week of your graduation appointment to obtain these signatures. Without all original signatures on your dissertation/thesis your graduation will be delayed.
- Submit Defense Results form and completed defense rubrics to GSBS Student Drop Box (GSBS lobby).
- Once Defense of Dissertation Results form has been submitted, the Graduate School will provide (via email) instructions on submitting thesis/dissertation and other required graduation steps.

5. Planning for Graduation and Beyond

- Students have up to 2 months after the defense date to submit their final dissertation and to schedule a graduation appointment; this is also your graduation deadline. The day of the graduation appointment is the last day of active student enrollment.
- If student is not a US citizen or permanent resident, contact International Services Office to discuss visa arrangements following graduation. International students who have applied for OPT should be aware that the OPT start date cannot be changed.
- Students wishing to remain at BCM as a postdoctoral fellow or in a staff role should coordinate planned graduation dates with their [future hiring department](#) to ensure that their next position is ready immediately following graduation (if desired). Please note that it may take ~60 days or more for a new position to be approved and a graduating student hired (*e.g.* as a postdoc), so please plan well in advance.
- Prior to your graduation appointment, all committee members and program directors must sign the Dissertation/Thesis Signature Page. **Proxy or Digital signatures are not acceptable.** Use [blue](#)/black ink only.
- The Dean's signature on the Dissertation/Thesis Signature page will be obtained by GSBS after your graduation appointment.

6. Graduation Appointment

Two weeks prior to desired graduation date:

- Schedule Graduation Appointment via email to GSBS-graduation@bcm.edu
- All non-U.S. citizens, including U.S. permanent residents, should verify graduation completion date with ISO.

One week prior to planned graduation date:

- Complete and/or submit (via email) each of the following documents as separate files to GSBS-graduation@bcm.edu (for MS, PhD, and MD/PhD students).
 - i Curriculum vitae
 - ii Dissertation/Thesis Abstract
 - iii Title Page
 - iv A scan/image of your Signature Page with the Committee and Program Director signatures.
 - v FERPA Hold Removal (See the Office of the Registrar, only needed if a director restriction is in effect and student wishes to remove hold. Students with a hold will not appear in the Commencement Program.)
- Complete and submit the **GSBS Exit Survey** and the **GSBS Evaluation Survey**. Links to the surveys will be sent to you from the *GSBS Stars Shared Mailbox* (gsbs-stars@bcm.edu).
- Complete and submit the [Survey of Earned Doctorates](#) (PhD and MSTP students, only).
- Begin collecting signatures on the Graduation Clearance form (pages 1 & 2). **All signatures, except the BCM Security and the International Services Office (if applicable), must be obtained prior to your Graduation Appointment Date.** These signatures can be acquired digitally.

PhD Students:

Complete page 1 of the PhD Graduation Clearance Form and gather all the required signatures (*Advisor, Graduate Program Administrator and Departmental HR Person*).

Complete page 2 of the PhD Graduation Clearance Form with signatures from the following offices:

- 1) Financial Aid, finaid@bcm.edu
- 2) Student Account Services, sas@bcm.edu and
- 3) TMC Library, ras.check@library.tmc.edu (if needed, contact Jesse Gonzales).

You may gather up all the signatures on separate copies and merge all of the separate pages into one PDF document.

MS students:

Complete page 1 of the **Masters Graduation Clearance Form** and gather all the required signatures (*Advisor, Graduate Program Administrator and Departmental HR Person*).

Complete page 2 of the Masters Graduation Clearance Form with signatures from the following offices:

- 1) Financial Aid, finaid@bcm.edu and
- 2) Student Account Services, sas@bcm.edu and
- 3) *TMC Library*, ras.check@library.tmc.edu (if needed, contact Jesse Gonzales).

***If you are a CSTP student, you are not required to get the TMC Library signature.*

You may gather up all the signatures on separate copies and merge all of the separate pages into one PDF document

7. Dissertation (Ph.D.) / Thesis (M.S.) Submission = Graduation Day

- Attend scheduled graduation appointment.
- Bring the required 4 copies of your Dissertation/Thesis to the GSBS Offices (Alkek - N204). For MD/PhD students, a minimum of 5 copies of the dissertation are required. If additional copies are desired, these must be brought at the same time. ***Please bring your dissertation/thesis copies, separated by colored paper, in a box ready for shipping.*** Place the signed original Signature Page at the top of the stacked copies inside the box. The GSBS will acquire the Dean's signature. Once bound, the dissertation copies will be distributed as follows: the dissertation with the original signature page will be returned to you; a copy to your graduate program; a copy to your major advisor, and a copy to the Texas Medical Center Library. For MD/PhD students the 5th copy is designated for the MSTP Office.
- Bring a check/money order payable to Baylor College of Medicine or cash (exact amount), to pay for bindery costs. An estimate can be requested by emailing GSBS-Graduation@bcm.edu.
- Verify submission of all graduation forms: GSBS Exit Survey, GSBS Evaluation Survey, CV, Abstract, and FERPA Hold Removal form (if applicable). Verify final transcript (provided at Graduation Appointment) and Publications listed on the CV.
- After graduation appointment, obtain signatures for Security (required for all) and International Services Office (required for all non-U.S. citizens including U.S. permanent residents). These signatures must be obtained the day of graduation.
- Return the completed PhD/Masters Graduation Clearance form to the GSBS Student Drop Box in the GSBS Offices lobby (Alkek - N204).

Notes: The day of Dissertation/Thesis submission is your last day of active student enrollment with BCM. Your email and access to BCM will terminate at the end of the business day unless another BCM position has already been secured. Student health insurance will end the last day of the month in which a student graduates.