

**STUDENT AND FACULTY HANDBOOK**

**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES  
PROGRAM**

**THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE  
HEALTH SCIENCES**

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER**

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## **Introduction**

The Ph.D. program in Biomedical Sciences (IBSP) is an integrated, interdisciplinary, research-oriented graduate program that involves faculty from the Departments of Anatomy and Neurobiology; Microbiology, Immunology, and Biochemistry; Pathology; Pharmacology; Physiology, and their affiliate faculty from St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Unlike traditional, department-based graduate programs, the IBSP provides the Ph.D. or M.D./Ph.D. degree-seeking student the opportunity for a broad-based, cross-disciplinary training that is essential in today's competitive research environment. The IBSP consists of five tracks: Cancer and Developmental Biology; Cell Biology and Physiology; Microbiology, Immunology, and Biochemistry; Molecular and Systems Pharmacology; and Neuroscience.

## **Faculty**

Faculty contributing to the IBSP can be grouped into three categories: (1) regular faculty, (2) affiliate faculty, and (3) outside members from non-participating UTHSC departments or other institutions. Regular faculty members are those with full-time primary appointments in one of the participating departments at UTHSC. Affiliate faculty members are employees of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or the Veterans Affairs Medical Center who have received a primary academic appointment in one of the participating departments. Faculty mentors, whether regular or affiliated faculty, are expected to cite their UTHSC affiliation on all publications in which IBSP students are coauthors. Outside members who have primary academic appointments from non-participating departments or who are from other institutions may serve on student committees but may not be a research advisor. Outside members are the only faculty not required to retain graduate-faculty status. A complete list of the graduate faculty is at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/CollegeInfo/index.php?page=Faculty](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/CollegeInfo/index.php?page=Faculty).

Faculty members select an IBSP appointment in one of the five tracks and must notify the IBSP Director of desired appointments or any changes in appointment status. Faculty members may mentor students in any of the tracks, as the student's track affiliation is determined by the student's research

topic and academic plan of study. Consequently, faculty may have students in their laboratories at the same time who are earning degrees in different tracks. Faculty may serve as outside committee members for students pursuing degrees in tracks in which those faculty members do not have a primary appointment. A complete list of primary faculty appointments in IBSP tracks can be found at each track's website.

### **Students**

The IBSP enrolls approximately 20 students each year. Three types of Ph.D. degree-seeking students matriculate into the IBSP: (1) "typical" students who enter with no formal declaration of track affiliation and select a Research Advisor only after completing a series of laboratory rotations, (2) students who select a Research Advisor at the time of acceptance and directly enter a laboratory, and (3) students seeking a dual M.D./Ph.D. degree. Second- and third-year medical students are eligible to enter the dual-degree program under certain conditions, and they are expected to identify a Research Advisor prior to CGHS matriculation or after completion of a limited number of abbreviated laboratory rotations.

### **Admission Committees**

Each department chair appoints a Track Director or Co-Directors who head the track's admission committee. The committee is responsible for the recruitment and selection of students to be admitted to the track. Recruitment of students who have expressed an interest in more than one track is coordinated with the assistance of the Program Director. Track Directors and Co-Directors serve on the IBSP Admission Committee, which is chaired by the Program Director. Track admission committees recommend their selections to the Program Director. However, offers of admission may only be made by the Program Director with approval by the Dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences. Notification to accepted students should only occur after the Dean has approved the request for admission.

## **Stipends, Insurance, Scholarships, Fellowships, and Training Grants**

All students enrolled in the IBSP receive a waiver of tuition for six years of study. The IBSP provides 15 months of stipend and insurance support for typical students who complete laboratory rotations before selecting a Research Advisor. Subsequent stipend and insurance support is provided by the Research Advisors. Should a Research Advisor lose funding, the IBSP may provide bridge funding in which the student stipend and insurance will be covered by the program for a short period of time. To help avoid the need for bridge funding, Research Advisors must have at least 20 months of future funding available to accept a new student; exceptions may be made by the CGHS Dean at the request of the Track Chair. If a funding lapse occurs, a bridge-funding request will be made by the Research Advisor's Chair and negotiated with the Dean of the College of Medicine (COM) and Dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences. Upon receipt of bridge funding, Research Advisors must agree in writing to restart funding for students once any grant containing non-PI salary money is obtained. Should all funding options fail, students will be required to find a new, funded Research Advisor or be terminated from the program.

Students who directly enter a laboratory must receive stipend and insurance support from the Research Advisor upon matriculation. M.D./Ph.D. students and students who directly enter a laboratory are not eligible for bridge-funding protection; consent on rare occasions may be obtained from the CGHS Dean. If financial assistance is not approved, such students must identify a new, financially-supporting Research Advisor or leave the program.

The CGHS provides up to \$3,000 of additional annual funding to select students who qualify for Alumni Endowment Scholarships. These scholarships are intended to enhance the recruitment of outstanding applicants who are nominated at the time of application. Students must remain in good academic standing to continue receiving the scholarship.

Many fellowships are also available to supplement the stipends of IBSP students. A complete list is at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Funding/index.php?page=Scholarships](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Funding/index.php?page=Scholarships). For example, the

Alma and Hal Reagan Fellowship is awarded through competition to outstanding graduate students conducting cancer research.

Training grants awarded to participating faculty may also be used to provide stipend and insurance support to eligible students. Principal investigators applying for training grants are encouraged to request tuition and fee support for students as well.

### **Academic Standards**

The admission, retention, and graduation standards are the same as those of the CGHS. Students in the IBSP must maintain a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 3.0 as the standard for successful progress. All students are subject to the CGHS Honor Code:

[www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Judicial/index.php?page=HonorCode](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Judicial/index.php?page=HonorCode).

### **Core and Elective Curricula**

All IBSP students must complete a minimum of 9 credit hours of core courses, as specified by their Track requirements. Included in this requirement is a biostatistics course, but the Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research course (IP 801), required of all Ph.D. students in the College, will not be considered as part of the core curriculum.

In consultation with their Research Advisor and Track Director, all students must select a minimum of 6 elective credit hours to supplement the core curriculum. Each track provides a list of acceptable elective courses to assist students in their selections. A complete listing of courses can be found in the course catalog at <http://www.uthsc.edu/registrar/students.php#catalogs>.

### **Additional Curriculum Requirements**

All IBSP students must participate in a journal club or course that follows a journal-club format (such as **PATH 834** Pathology Seminars or **ANAT 821** Neurosciences Seminar) during the second year of study. Certain tracks may require participation for additional years.

## **Research Colloquia and Laboratory Rotations**

Before the start of each fall semester, faculty members are contacted by their Track Director to identify those wishing to accept a student into their laboratories in the upcoming academic year. To be eligible, a faculty member must be a member of the graduate faculty and have financial approval from his/her departmental Chair.

During the first weeks of the fall semester, each track holds a Research Colloquium in which eligible faculty members provide a brief (15-minute) overview of their laboratories' research programs. Interested students may then arrange for a subsequent meeting with particular faculty members or a tour of the laboratories. Students will use these interactions as the bases for selecting laboratory rotations.

There are six 6-week laboratory rotation periods in the first year. Tracks may specify which periods their students perform rotations, but all tracks will adhere to the 6-week schedule. Prior to and during the rotation process, each student will be assigned a temporary mentor to assist in academic decisions. The temporary mentor will not be selected from the pool of rotation faculty.

The rotation process enables students to be exposed to the diversity of research laboratories within the IBSP. Confirmation of a rotation laboratory is through mutual agreement between the student and faculty member. Two restrictions are placed on laboratory rotations: (1) faculty members may accept no more than two students during a single rotation period, and (2) faculty members may not ask students to spend more than 20 hours per week performing rotation research. The latter limitation is intended to protect the student's time needed to perform well in classes. Students will receive one credit hour in **IP 900** Doctoral Dissertation and Research for each semester that they participate in laboratory rotations.

## **Selection of Research Advisor and Faculty Committee**

Each track specifies the minimum number of rotations that must be completed before a student may select a permanent Research Advisor. Factors involved in final selection of a Research Advisor

include (1) mutual acceptance by the student and advisor, (2) certification by the Graduate Studies Council of the faculty member to direct Ph.D. work, (3) the ability of the faculty member to provide financial support for the research project, including the student's stipend after the IBSP fulfills its commitment, and (4) approval by the faculty member's Chair and the IBSP Director.

During the second year of study, the student and Research Advisor select a Faculty Committee composed of five members of the graduate faculty, including the Research Advisor who serves as Chair. The Faculty Committee Appointment form is available on the CGHS website at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FCAF](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FCAF). One or more committee members must have a regular full-time appointment with UTHSC, at least two members must come from within the track, and at least one member must come from outside the track. One outside member may be from a non-participating institution. The purpose of the Faculty Committee is to assist the student and ultimately to approve the dissertation.

Students keep the Faculty Committee up to date on the progress of their research through annual committee meetings. The CGHS requires that students have at least one documented committee meeting each year and submit an Annual Student Progress Report form, signed by their committee, to the CGHS administrative office. This form is available at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Progress](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Progress).

### **Qualifying Examination for Admission to Candidacy**

Students must be formally admitted to Ph.D. candidacy through examination by their Faculty Committee. The timing and format of the admission exam are defined by each track. A single pass or fail is determined for the entire exam; a simple majority determines the vote. When the student passes, he/she should have each committee member sign the Application for Admission to Candidacy form, which can be printed from [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Candidacy](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Candidacy). The student will deliver the form, along with a written summation by the exam chair and a copy of the student's unofficial transcript, to the Program Director's office. Assuming the student is in good



standing and has met all core and elective requirements, the Program Director will in turn relay the Candidacy form with attachments along to the Dean's office.

If the student marginally passes, he/she may be asked to re-write portions of the proposal if parts are deemed weak, or the student may be told that at the next meeting he/she will be tested on a weak knowledge area. If the student marginally fails, he/she may be required to complete only a portion of the exam rather than completely retake the exam. If the student completely fails and is in good academic standing, then he/she may be allowed to complete a full second exam at a later date. Any student who fails the admission-to-candidacy exam twice may be offered to work toward an M.S. degree or be required to withdraw from the program.

### **Master's Degree Exit-Option Requirements**

While all students accepted into the IBSP program are expected to pursue the Ph.D. degree, some will opt for a terminal M.S. degree instead. It is anticipated that such a decision will not be made until after the completion of the first-year curriculum, and the student must notify the Program Director and CGHS office of intent to seek the terminal M.S. option. There are several key differences between the requirements for the M.S. degree and the Ph.D. degree. For the M.S. degree, students must be enrolled a minimum of four semesters. They will complete the same first-year core curriculum as Ph.D. candidates, but are only required to acquire 3 elective credit hours. In the second year, M.S. candidates must participate in a journal club; however, they are not required to complete the **IP 801** Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research course. Candidates for the M.S. degree will select a Research Advisor at the end of the first year and form a Faculty Committee composed of the advisor, one track-faculty member, and one outside track-faculty member. Soon after the decision to opt for an M.S. degree has been made, the candidate should meet with the committee to outline the research objectives. Admission to candidacy for the Master's degree must be granted no later than the end of the second month in the semester in which the thesis is to be submitted. The form to apply for admission to candidacy is at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Candidacy](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=Candidacy).

The research component of the M.S. degree requires publication-quality data that may not stand alone, but that will contribute significantly to an eventual publication. The work should at least begin to test a hypothesis and serve as the focus of appropriate introduction and general discussion chapters of a thesis. To finish degree requirements, candidates will write a thesis and defend it in the form of an oral presentation before an open audience and the Faculty Committee, followed by a question-and-answer session with the Committee alone. The format and applicable deadlines for the thesis and its defense are those defined in the CGHS Policies. After the oral defense, the student must submit a Report of Final Examination form to the CGHS administrative office as part of clearance for graduation. This form is available at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FinalExam](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FinalExam).

### **Student Transfer or Termination from a Laboratory**

Just as the initial selection of a Research Advisor and laboratory is predicated on mutual consent, continuance in a laboratory is dependent upon sustained agreement between the student and Research Advisor. While not encouraged, in certain situations a student may leave a laboratory and perform a limited number of abbreviated rotations to identify a new Research Advisor. Transfers should be initiated only after extensive discussions among the student, Research Advisor, Track Director, and IBSP Director. A Research Advisor may also ask a student to leave his/her laboratory even though the student is in good academic standing. However, demonstrated research deficiencies of the student must be recorded through Faculty Committee meetings before termination may be initiated. Dismissal from one laboratory does not necessarily preclude the student from entering another laboratory to complete his/her degree requirements. Requests for student transfers and dismissals must be in writing and must be approved by the Dean.

*Please Note:* Neither the IBSP nor participating departments will be financially obligated if an M.D./Ph.D. student or a student who directly enters a laboratory opts or is asked to leave a Research Advisor's laboratory. The inability of such a student to find a new, financially-supporting Research Advisor will result in dismissal from the program.

### **Academic Due Process**

If a student is denied continuation in the IBSP, by failing to maintain good academic standing for an extended period of time, by failing admission to candidacy, or through termination from a research laboratory, the student has a right to a hearing. The IBSP adheres to the appeal process of the CGHS, the specifics of which can be found in *The CenterScope* ([www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/](http://www.uthsc.edu/centerscope/)).

### **Dissertation Defense**

Students write their dissertation after completion of experiments and with the approval of the Faculty Committee. The dissertation is submitted to the Faculty Committee prior to an oral, public defense of the student's work, which is followed immediately by a separate oral defense to the Faculty Committee alone. The format and applicable deadlines for the dissertation and its defense are those defined in the CGHS Policies. All committee members should be provided a copy of the final dissertation at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense date. After the oral defense, the student must submit a Report of Final Examination form to the CGHS administrative office as part of the clearance process for graduation. This form is available at [www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FinalExam](http://www.uthsc.edu/grad/StudentInfo/Forms/index.php?page=FinalExam).

## **Appendix 1: Core Course Descriptions**

Depending upon the student's research track, the following courses may be used to meet the core curriculum requirements.

### **ANAT 823 Cellular Neuroscience: Spring semester, odd-numbered years (3 credit hours)**

Cellular Neuroscience provides the student with an overview of the cellular and molecular processes by which nerve cells communicate. The course covers classical theories and concepts as a basis for appreciation of recent research advances. Lectures by the faculty will provide core material to guide the students in presentation of current research topics. Extensive reading of the literature will supplement those lectures and presentations.

### **ANAT 841 Behavioral Neuroscience: Fall semester, even-numbered years (3 credit hours)**

This is a course designed to introduce graduate students in the Neuroscience Graduate Program to behavioral approaches to the study of neuroscience. This course will combine lectures with review of both classic and current literature in order to develop an extensive appreciation of behavioral techniques used to study neuroscience questions.

### **ANAT 825 Developmental and Molecular Neurobiology: Spring semester, even-numbered years (3 credit hours)**

This one-semester course will serve as an introduction to developmental neurobiology with special emphasis on the molecular analysis of nervous system development. A brief introduction to molecular analysis will be followed by lectures and student-led discussions of research papers that focus on major epochs/events in the development of the nervous system.

### **ANAT 827 Functional Neuroanatomy: Fall semester (3 credit hours)**

Functional Neuroanatomy is a lecture-and-laboratory course dealing with the structure and function of the mammalian central nervous system. The emphasis of the course is on human neuroanatomy, but comparisons are made with the rodent brain, using the rat as a model system. The

first one-third of the course provides a synopsis of core concepts and tools used in contemporary neuroanatomical research. This material focuses on an understanding of the principles underlying neuroanatomical approaches, as well as their advantages and potential pitfalls. The final two-thirds of the course covers the basic organization of the central nervous system including in-depth consideration of its major sensory, motor and limbic components. This part of the course includes laboratory study on the gross anatomy of the brain.

**IP 805 Essentials of Molecular Biology: Spring semester (3 credit hours)**

This course covers the essentials of prokaryotic and eukaryotic molecular biology. Topics include DNA and RNA structure; DNA replication, repair, and recombination; the mechanism and regulation of transcription; and protein translation. Fundamental concepts are reinforced by the discussion of human genetic diseases. Recommended text: Alberts et al., *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.

**IP 806 Biochemistry: Fall semester (3 credit hours)**

The course presents the fundamental aspects of biochemistry including biochemical and biophysical principles (bonding, properties of water, thermodynamics, ionization and acid-base theory, and enzymology); structure, synthesis, and function of proteins and enzymes; metabolism of sugars, amino acids, nucleotides, nucleosides, vitamins, coenzymes and lipids; energy production and conversion; mitochondria and bioenergetics; photosynthesis; membrane transport proteins; and cytochrome P450. Recommended text: Devlin, *Textbook of Biochemistry with Clinical Correlations*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed.

**IP 841 Essentials of Cell Biology: Fall semester (3 credit hours)**

This course provides an introduction to the cell and includes topics such as animal cell structure; membrane compartmentalization; membrane transport; nuclear structure and dynamics; protein transport and modification; receptor signaling; cell motility and migration; cell cycle

regulation; extracellular matrix and cell adhesion; general principles of development; and bacterial cell structure. Recommended text: Alberts et al., *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed.

**PHYS 612 Physiology and Biophysics (Medical Physiology): Spring semester (5 credit hours)**

This course, required of physiology graduate students, consists of a closely integrated series of lectures, conferences, and laboratory experiences presenting the physical underpinnings and functional properties of living matter and its reactions to internal and external stimuli. The physiology of the body's various systems is detailed, and their integration into a coordinated functional unit is described. For the Cell Biology and Physiology track, a minimum of a B grade is required in this course. A student must retake the course if he/she does not meet this minimum requirement for the CBP track.

## **Appendix 2: Cancer and Developmental Biology**

Developmental and cancer biology are two complementary disciplines that can be viewed as the yin and yang of cell survival. Whereas developmental biology is concerned with the acquisition and maintenance of normal cellular function, cancer biology focuses on the disruption and deletion of normal cellular function. Research within the Cancer and Developmental Biology track reflects the complete continuum of cell development, from the regulation of normal cell division to the abnormal development of cancer. The track has a diverse group of research faculty with appointments in 11 different departments both at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Interactions and collaborations among the faculty bring together research expertise that focuses on the cell cycle, cell proliferation, cell differentiation, apoptosis, cell migration, angiogenesis, tumorigenesis, metastasis, and stem cell biology. Faculty research interests in this truly interdisciplinary program encompass a wide range of fields, including molecular genetics, cell biology, biochemistry, structural biology, model organism biology and novel therapeutics.

The Cancer and Developmental Biology track is appropriate for students seeking training in cutting-edge research in the following areas:

- Animal models for tumorigenesis and development
- Tumor suppressor and oncogenic signaling pathways
- Angiogenesis
- Cell proliferation and cell death
- Differentiation
- Development
- Pathology
- Normal stem cells/tumor-initiating cells
- Novel therapeutic approaches

Students in the Cancer and Developmental Biology Track must complete the required curriculum described below. In addition, students may take elective courses, but are encouraged to complete the electives during the fall semester of the second year. Students also participate in a seminar course each semester beginning with the fall semester of the first year.

### **Required Curriculum**

- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841, fall
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805, spring
- Pathology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PATH 834, fall
- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806, fall
- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861, spring
- Special Topics, related to Career Development (1 credit hour)--PATH 840, spring
- Molecular Biology of Cancer (4 credit hours)--IP 940, fall
- Ethics (1 credit hour)--IP 801, spring
- Statistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (but otherwise normally in fall)

### **Electives**

Students may take one additional elective course up to 3 hours at any time in any track before the end of Spring, Year 2. As preparation of the qualifying exam written materials will be time-intensive, it is recommended that any optional elective be completed by Fall of Year 2.

### **Laboratory Rotations**

Students will have the opportunity to complete up to six 6-week laboratory rotations beginning in the fall semester of the first year. The rotation laboratories may be selected at either UTHSC or St. Jude (or both), whereas minimally one UTHSC-based laboratory rotation is required. After two rotations with CDB-track faculty members, students may choose a mentor or continue with additional



rotations. If a student decides to choose a mentor outside of the CDB-track faculty, at least two rotations with CDB-track faculty members must be completed before a mentor can be declared.

### **Admission-to-Candidacy Exam**

By the end of the second year, students must successfully defend their proposed research topic to the Faculty Committee. To do so, the student develops the overall design of the project and several potential specific aims through discussions with the Research Advisor on a topic related to the dissertation research. The student then schedules an inaugural committee meeting, to be held no later than March of the spring semester of the second academic year. The purpose of the first meeting is to summarize preliminary data to date and to propose to the Faculty Committee the specific aims that will form the basis of the written admission-to-candidacy exam. The deadline for submitting the one-page specific-aims page of the qualifying-exam written proposal to the Faculty Committee and Track Director is February 1<sup>st</sup>. Approval for the one-page aims may be obtained in person at the inaugural committee meeting or be obtained by email from committee members.

The first committee meeting to review project background, and to approve the general approach to complete the agreed-upon specific aims, should be completed by mid-March. Following initial topic approval with committee input at the inaugural committee meeting, the student will then prepare the full written qualifying-exam proposal.

The written proposal of the research plan adheres to the format of an NRSA (F31, predoctoral) proposal of 7 pages: 1 page of specific aims (approved by the committee), plus 6 pages of the proposal that includes significance, innovation and approach. In addition, the proposal must include a complete list of all literature cited. Students typically require a minimum of 2 weeks of dedicated time to prepare the written proposal, and it is the responsibility of the Research Advisor to provide the student with sufficient time to do so. The written proposal is intended to demonstrate the student's understanding of the research plan and should be written in his/her own words. Preliminary data may be included, but it is not necessary that the student include preliminary data that he/she has generated

on the project. Data from prior lab members may be included as long as the data are cited as work of others. The written proposal should not be directly edited by the Research Advisor nor by members of the Faculty Committee prior to its distribution. However, this does not preclude the student from consulting with the Research Advisor, Faculty Committee, or any other colleague on specific issues that may arise during the writing of the proposal. Input should be in the form of indications where changes are needed and suggestions for improvements with the student being required to act on those criticisms to finally produce the proposal. Written proposals are due to the Faculty Committee and the Track Director by April 1<sup>st</sup> of the second year. The admission-to-candidacy exam date should also be scheduled no later than April 1<sup>st</sup> of the second year. It is recommended that students schedule the qualifying exam several months in advance so that all committee members are able to attend.

Admission-to-candidacy exams should be held between April 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup> of the second year. The deadline for reporting the outcome of all admission-to-candidacy exams is June 1<sup>st</sup> of the second year.

The admission-to-candidacy exam format is as follows. When the meeting convenes, the student will be asked to leave the room briefly. At that time, the Research Advisor should remind the committee members of the courses that the student has completed so that they have a reference point for testing the student's fund of knowledge. A chair of the meeting will be selected; this cannot be the Research Advisor. The chair will be responsible for running the meeting and for writing up a synopsis of the meeting once it is completed. The student will be asked back into the room and should proceed with about a 30-minute presentation (approximately 20 slides) of his/her proposal. Interruptions should be limited to points of clarification. After the presentation, the chair will ask a committee member to initiate the questioning. The Q&A session should last no more than two hours. Questions should begin with the proposal, but may branch out to test the student's knowledge in pertinent areas.

After the Q&A session, the student will be asked to leave the room, and the committee will discuss his/her performance on both the written and oral portions of the exam. A single pass or fail is determined for the entire exam. However, if the student marginally passes, he/she may be asked to re-write portions of the proposal if parts are deemed weak, to be re-tested in the Q&A portion in a

shortened, re-examination meeting (to be held within 2-3 weeks of the initial examination), or the student may be told that at the next meeting he/she will be tested on a weak knowledge area. As one example, he/she may not be required to completely re-write the proposal, but may be asked to repeat the Q&A session in a shorter duration in the re-examination period. If the student completely fails, then a full second exam will be required to be completed prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>. A simple majority is needed for a passing vote. After a decision has been reached, the student will rejoin the room, and the chair will summarize the discussion leading up to the decision. Other committee members may give additional advice as they see fit. If the student passes, he/she should have each committee member sign the admission-to-candidacy exam form. The student will deliver the form, along with the written summation of the exam by the chair and a copy of the student's unofficial transcript, to the Program Director's office. The Program Director will in turn pass this material along to the Dean's office. The deadline for meeting all the requirements for admission to candidacy will be June 30<sup>th</sup> of the second year.

### **Sample Curriculum—Cancer and Developmental Biology Track**

#### **YEAR 1**

##### **Fall Semester**

- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841
- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806
- IBS Seminar (1 credit hour)--IP 810
- Pathology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PATH 834
- 2 Laboratory Rotations (1 credit hour)--IP 900

##### **Spring Semester**

- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805
- Science as a Profession (1 credit hour)--PATH 840
- Up to 4 Laboratory Rotations (1 credit hour)--IP 900
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801
- June 30<sup>th</sup> deadline to choose a Research Advisor
- Participation in Cancer seminars at discretion of current rotation advisor

## **YEAR 2**

### Fall Semester

- Molecular Biology of Cancer (4 credit hours)--IP 940
- Dissertation Research (variable credit hours)--IP 900
- Elective course
- September-December: form Faculty Committee and schedule the inaugural committee meeting
- Participation in Cancer seminars at discretion of Research Advisor

### Spring Semester

- Statistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (but otherwise normally in fall)
- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- February: Specific Aims Exam topic approval
- June 1<sup>st</sup>: All admission-to-candidacy oral exams must be complete
- June 30<sup>th</sup>: Deadline for all revisions, any additional requirements or a second-chance oral defense

## **YEAR 3**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Department Seminar Attendance

## **YEAR 4 AND BEYOND**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Cancer Seminar
- Students will defend their dissertation in front of their faculty committee in order to complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

### **Appendix 3: Cell Biology and Physiology**

Cell Biology and Physiology explores functional relationships within cells, between cells and their environments to form tissues, between tissues to form organs, communications among organs to form body systems and the mechanisms involved in coordination and regulation of the multiple systems to sustain a viable organism. It is essential to understand the details of these processes at the cellular and molecular levels to seek insight into the dysregulation of this fine-tuned biological system under pathophysiologic conditions and to enable us to develop therapeutics for the treatment of human diseases.

Faculty members under this program are involved in cutting-edge research on diverse topics, including cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, respiratory, neurodegenerative and hematopoietic diseases. Investigations are conducted at the cellular and molecular levels on specific topics such as signal transduction, cell adhesion, cell division and death, cell migration and tumor metastasis, animal models of diseases including genetically engineered mice, cytoskeleton, cerebral circulation, inflammatory responses, gene therapy, ion channels and wound healing.

Students in the Cell Biology and Physiology Track are required to complete the core course curriculum consisting of Biochemistry (IP 806); Essentials of Cell Biology (IP 841); Physiology and Biophysics (Medical Physiology--PHYS 612), and Essentials of Molecular Biology (IP 805) during the first year. In addition, students are required to take elective courses equivalent to a minimum of 3 credit hours, by selecting two units (2 credit hours) from the Advanced Physiology course (PHYS 912) during the second year and the Scientific Presentation course (PHYS 919 if not LBC 711) during their third year. Students may take optional elective courses, which are generally chosen in consultation with the student's research advisor based on the student's research interest. Students will also take a seminar course (PHYS 919) by attending the physiology seminar series, participating in lunch discussion with guest speakers and presenting two seminars in this platform during the course of their dissertation (usually one during third year and one on the day of their dissertation defense).

Additionally, students are expected to participate in journal clubs and present their research work in national meetings.

### **Core Curriculum**

- Physiology and Biophysics (Medical Physiology) (5 credit hours)--PHYS 612, spring
- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841, fall
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805, spring
- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806, fall

Also, for overall IBS and CGHS requirements:

- Biostatistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (but otherwise normally in fall)
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801, spring

### **Electives**

- Advanced Physiology (2 credit hours)--PHYS 912, fall
- Other elective (at least 1 credit hour)

### **Optional**

- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861, spring
- Cell Biology Techniques (2 credit hours)--MSCI 934, spring
- Bioinformatics I (2 credit hours)--MSCI 814, spring
- Bioinformatics II (1 credit hour)--MSCI 815, spring
- Essentials of Animal Experimentation (2 credit hours)--CMED 711, fall
- Physical Biochemistry & Applications in Structural Biology (3 credit hours)--MSCI 812, spring
- Principles of Mass Spectrometry (2 credit hours)--MSCI 928, fall

### **Laboratory Rotations**

Students will participate in a minimum of two 6-week-long laboratory rotations starting in September of the first year. During the rotations, students will work in the labs of individual faculty who will be taking students that particular year and spend a maximum of 20 hours per week. Under the Cell Biology and Physiology (CBP) track, rotation mentors will be asked to write a brief report, which will be used by the CBP graduate committee to assess students' enthusiasm and dedication to the graduate program. CBP students will be required to choose their first two rotations in the laboratories

of CBP faculty, and to provide a convincing justification to choose a mentor outside the track. Students may choose a mentor after their second rotation and begin their dissertation research. Students must choose their mentor by June of the first academic year. This allows students to begin their dissertation research work and spend full time in their mentor's laboratory. A maximum of six lab rotations (2 during first semester and 4 during the second semester) is allowed.

### **Admission-to-Candidacy Exam**

Toward the end of the second year, students will complete admission-to-candidacy, which involves writing a grant proposal in NIH F31 format and successfully defending the proposal to their Faculty Committee. The committee will examine the student's preparedness to pursue a Ph.D. in the IBS program. This will require student knowledge in the chosen research topic as well as in the core curriculum and related topics. The committee then votes pass or fail. This should be completed by May 15 of the second year. If a student is unsuccessful in the first attempt, he/she may retake the exam during the fall of the third year.

### **Sample Curriculum—Cell Biology and Physiology Track**

#### **YEAR 1**

##### **Fall Semester**

- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841
- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Lab Rotations (1 credit hour)--IP 900
- IBS Seminar (1 credit hour)—IP 810

##### **Spring Semester**

- Physiology and Biophysics (Medical Physiology, 5 credit hours)--PHYS 612
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805
- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861 (*optional course*)
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Lab Rotations (1 credit hour)--IP 900
- Assemble faculty committee

## **YEAR 2**

### Fall Semester

- Advanced Physiology (2 credit hours)--PHYS 912, offered once in two years. Therefore, this course is available during Fall Semester of 2nd or 3rd year. Although part of the elective section, this course is a requirement for CBP-track students. However, they can elect to take one of the 7 units to fulfill the 2 credit hours. The 7 units are: (1) Gastrointestinal Epithelium, (2) Respiratory Physiology, (3) Vascular Biology, (4) Heart, (5) Ion Channels and Electro-physiology, (6) Developmental Biology--Animal Models, and (7) Lipids in Cell Signaling.
- Doctoral Dissertation and Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Lab Rotations (if needed)

### Spring Semester

- Doctoral Dissertation and Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Biostatistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (otherwise normally in fall)
- Take admission-to-candidacy exam (place where appropriate)

## **YEAR 3**

### Fall Semester

- Advanced Physiology (2 credit hours)--PHYS 912, as described above (if not taken during second year)
- Doctoral Dissertation and Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919

### Spring Semester

- Doctoral Dissertation and Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Scientific Writing (3 credit hours) [*formerly ENGL 7808 at U of M via Dr. David Armbruster; not in UTHSC Catalog for 2016-2017*]

## **YEAR 4 AND BEYOND**

- Doctoral Dissertation and Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Physiology Seminar (1 credit hour)--PHYS 919
- Students will defend their dissertation in front of their faculty committee.



#### **Appendix 4: Microbiology, Immunology, and Biochemistry**

Students entering the Microbiology, Immunology and Biochemistry (MIB) Track receive state-of-the-art training designed to prepare them for a research-focused career in academia, industry, or governmental agencies. The goals of the MIB track and its faculty are to ensure that students have the necessary skills to become independent scientists and to successfully compete at the next level of their career development. To achieve these goals, it is essential that students choose a dissertation project that ignites their passion for research. The MIB track is composed of faculty performing cutting-edge research at UTHSC and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital that spans a wide range of research interests, including:

- Molecular and cellular bases for bacterial and viral infectious diseases
- Mechanisms of normal and abnormal immune function
- Chronic inflammatory and immune-mediated diseases in humans
- Animal models of human diseases
- Vaccine design and development
- Cancer gene therapy
- Genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, and methods to study large biological data sets
- Mechanisms of protein localization and transport
- Cell signaling
- Genetics, biochemistry, and cell biology of transcriptional regulation in prokaryotes and eukaryotes
- Bioinformatics, quantitative trait mapping, and data-mining methodologies

Qualified minority students have an opportunity to participate in a one-of-a-kind T32 training grant to study bacterial pathogenesis. This grant provides a much-needed way to help produce a larger professional talent pool of underrepresented minorities in academia and industry upon completion of their graduate training.

Students in the MIB track are required to complete a minimum of 9 credit hours of a core curriculum consisting of courses that explore emerging concepts in Molecular Biology, Cell Biology and Biochemistry in addition to the Biostatistics and Ethics courses required by the IBS program. The MIB track offers a diverse range of electives allowing students to tailor the program to meet their specific research interests. Students are required to complete a minimum of 6 credit hours of electives, and these are typically chosen in consultation with the student's faculty mentor.

In addition to the core and elective courses, first-year students will participate in a weekly seminar course (IP 810) where they learn how to read, discuss and present a recent scientific journal article. Students in the MIB track also participate in a literature-based journal club where second-year students and above present a recent research paper to fellow students and faculty. Second-year students also have an opportunity to obtain teaching experience as Teaching Assistants in two different laboratory sessions for the second-year medical students taking the Medical Microbiology course.

The following courses comprise the required and elective curriculum for students in the MIB track:

#### **Required Curriculum**

- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841, fall
- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806, fall
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805, spring
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801, spring
- Biostatistics for IBS (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (otherwise normally in fall)

#### **Electives**

- Physical Biochemistry & Applications in Structural Biology (3 credit hours)--MSCI 812, spring
- Bioinformatics I (2 credit hours)--MSCI 814, spring
- Bioinformatics II (1 credit hour)--MSCI 815, spring
- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861, spring
- Principles of Mass Spectrometry (2 credit hours)--MSCI 928, fall
- Techniques I: Biochemical and Cellular Methods (2 credit hours)--MSCI 934, spring
- Techniques II: Methods for Nucleic Acids (2 credit hours)--MSCI 935, fall
- Immunity and Inflammation (3 credit hours)--MSCI 931, fall

### **Laboratory Rotations**

Students in the MIB track will participate in a minimum of 2, or up to a maximum of 6, lab rotations, each lasting 6 weeks. During the rotations, students will work in the laboratories of individual faculty who have sufficient funds to take a student that particular year. Students typically choose their faculty mentors in the spring of their first year, upon mutual agreement with the faculty member according to IBSP policies. This allows students to begin developing their dissertation project and working in the lab full-time before the end of their first year.

### **Admission-to-Candidacy Exam**

During the fall of their second year, students will form their Faculty Committee, and at the end of the spring semester of their second year, students will take the Admission-to-Candidacy exam (or Qualifying Exam). This exam, which determines whether a student is sufficiently prepared to pursue a Ph.D. in the IBS program, consists of two parts. First, students will write an NIH F31-style proposal on their dissertation project and submit the proposal to their Faculty Committee. If acceptable, the student then meets with the committee in a closed-door session where the committee members assess the student's competency on fundamental aspects of molecular biology, cell biology and biochemistry. Once the student has demonstrated proficiency in the core topic areas, the committee will expand the questioning to topics covered in the proposal. The committee then votes either pass or fail; a simple majority determines the vote. If a student does not pass the first time, he or she may have an opportunity to retake the exam before the beginning of the fall semester of his or her third year. Successful completion of the exam results in admission of the student to candidacy to pursue a Ph.D.

## Sample Curriculum—Microbiology, Immunology, and Biochemistry Track

### **YEAR 1**

#### Fall Semester

- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806
- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841
- IBS Seminar (1 credit hour)--IP 810
- MIB Journal Club (participation; no credit hours)
- Lab Rotations #1 & #2 (2 credit hours)--IP 900

#### Spring Semester

- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801
- Elective #1
- MIB Journal Club (participation; no credit hours)
- Lab Rotations (variable credit hours)--IP 900
- Select faculty mentor (must select by end of semester if not before)

### **YEAR 2**

#### Fall Semester

- Elective #2
- Dissertation research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- MIB Journal Club (participation; no credit hours)
- Assemble dissertation committee (Faculty Committee)

#### Spring Semester

- Elective #3
- Biostatistics for IBS (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (otherwise normally in fall)
- Dissertation research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Take admission-to-candidacy exam (must complete by end of Spring Semester)
- MIB Journal Club (participation; no credit hours)

### **YEAR 3**

- Dissertation research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- MIB Journal Club (participation; no credit hours)

### **YEAR 4 AND BEYOND**

- Dissertation research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Students will defend their dissertation in front of their faculty committee.

## **Appendix 5: Molecular and Systems Pharmacology**

The Molecular and Systems Pharmacology Track provides a broad training in pharmacology, molecular biology, and cell signaling. The research interests of the faculty in the molecular therapeutic track include neuropharmacology, behavioral neuroscience, cancer pharmacology and drug development, cardiovascular pharmacology, and cell signaling and the regulation of gene expression. The Molecular and Systems Pharmacology Track is uniquely positioned to integrate pharmacologic and molecular approaches to problems in addiction, cancer therapeutics, cardiovascular disease, cell signaling, and regulation of channels. The general areas covered in our track are:

- Drug Targets and Disease
- Pharmacology
- Receptor Kinetics and Structure
- Signal Transduction
- Transcriptional Regulation

Students in the Molecular and Systems Pharmacology Track are required to take the core courses listed below totaling 9 credit hours. Students choose at least 6 credit hours of additional elective courses that suit the individual student's needs. Any course required by other IBS tracks is acceptable as an elective. Other graduate-level courses can be used to satisfy the elective requirement upon approval from the track director. Students are also required to participate in a journal club beginning in their second year through completion of the program.

### **Required Curriculum**

- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806, fall
  - Biostatistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (otherwise normally in fall)
  - Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805, spring
  - Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801, spring
  - Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841, fall
- OR
- Cellular Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 823, spring, odd-# years

## **Electives**

- Functional Neuroanatomy (3 credit hours)--ANAT 827, fall
- Behavioral Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 841, fall, even-# years
- Developmental & Molecular Neurobiology (3 credit hours)--ANAT 825, spring, even-# years
- Foundations of Pharmacology (variable)--PHAR 801
- Special Topics in Pharmacology (variable)--PHAR 840
- Modern Pharmacology Research Techniques (variable)--PHAR 803
- Current Topics in Clinical Pharmacology (variable)--PHAR 802
- Bioinformatics (3 credit hours)--MSCI 814 and MSCI 815 together, spring
- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861, spring
- Tools of Molecular Biomedical Research (4 credit hours)--MSCI 929 Techniques in Molecular Biology
- Pathobiology of Cancer (3 credit hours)--IP 940 Molecular Biology of Cancer, fall
- Systems Physiology (3 credit hours)--PHYS 612, spring [Physiology & Biophysics (Medical Physiology), 5 credit hours]

## **Laboratory Rotations**

Students are required to do three lab rotations with IBS program faculty. These rotations can occur during any of the six prescribed rotational periods during the first year. After three rotations, a student may begin work in his or her chosen mentor's lab or may elect to do more rotations. A mentor's lab must be identified by the end of the first year.

## **Admission-to-Candidacy Exam**

Admission to candidacy occurs in two steps. A written qualifying exam is administered at the end of the second year that covers the core curriculum. A written dissertation proposal then must be orally defended in front of the Faculty Committee by the end of the third year.

## Sample Curriculum—Molecular and Systems Pharmacology Track

### **YEAR 1**

#### Fall Semester

- Biochemistry (3 credit hours)--IP 806
- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841
- IBS Seminar (1 credit hour)--IP 810
- Lab Rotations (variable credit hours)--IP 900

#### Spring Semester

- Cellular Signaling (3 credit hours)--MSCI 861
- Essentials of Molecular Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 805
- Lab Rotations (variable credit hours)--IP 900
- Elective

### **YEAR 2**

#### Fall Semester

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Elective
- Journal Club

#### Spring Semester

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801
- Biostatistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845 (spring 2017; otherwise normally in fall)
- Journal Club
- Assemble faculty committee
- Take admission-to-candidacy exam

### **YEAR 3**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Journal Club

### **YEAR 4 AND BEYOND**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--IP 900
- Journal Club
- Students will defend their dissertation in front of their faculty committee in order to complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

## **Appendix 6: Neuroscience**

The Neuroscience Track provides broad research training in neurophysiology, neuroanatomy, neuropharmacology, molecular and cellular neuroscience, developmental neurobiology, and behavioral neuroscience. The Neuroscience Track is composed of 43 faculty from multiple departments at UTHSC and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital who are actively involved in neuroscience research, graduate student courses, seminars, guidance committees, and other functions necessary for the continued development of a graduate program. Members of the Neuroscience Track Committee will be appointed by the chairman of the Anatomy and Neurobiology Department and will include the Neuroscience Track directors.

Basic and clinical Neuroscience research at UTHSC and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital focuses on intracellular signaling pathways, neuronal excitability, synaptic transmission, sensory processing, retinal biology, neurological and neurodegenerative disorders, brain tumors, neurogenetics and neural development, and mental and addictive disorders. Techniques in use include genetics and molecular biology, bioinformatics, optical imaging and neurophysiology, functional MRI, neuropharmacology and neurochemistry, neuroanatomy, and behavior.

Students in the Neuroscience Track complete their core curriculum by taking Functional Neuroanatomy (ANAT 827), any 2 of the 3 Neuroscience courses listed below, and a statistics course. Students will choose at least 6 credit hours of additional elective courses that suit the individual student's needs. Any course required by other IBS tracks is acceptable as an elective. Other graduate-level courses can be used to satisfy the elective requirement upon approval from the track director.

**Seminar** — Students must take at least 4 semesters of Neuroscience Seminar with Special Topics. Special Topics course includes a discussion of a publication by the seminar speaker followed by a meeting with the seminar speaker. After this, students must either take Neuroscience Seminar without Special Topics or attend at least one seminar course or journal club suited to their research topic.



Symposium — All neuroscience students must take Neuroscience Symposium in the Spring term of each year. Students may opt not to take this course if they are defending their dissertation that semester.

Teaching — Students are expected to assist with teaching in Neuroanatomy lab at least one term. The total time commitment in lab is 15 hours for one term. Students may opt for additional teaching experience by volunteering for more than one term. Students should take Functional Neuroanatomy before completing this requirement.

### **Core Curriculum**

- Functional Neuroanatomy (3 credit hours)--ANAT 827, fall
- *Any 2 of the 3 courses below (6 hrs):*
  - Cellular Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 823, spring, odd-# years
  - Behavioral Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 841, fall, even-# years
  - Developmental and Molecular Neurobiology (3 hrs)--ANAT 825, spring, even-# yrs

### **Additional Requirements**

- Statistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845, spring 2017 (otherwise normally in fall)
- Neuroscience Seminar (1 credit hour), first 4 semesters, recommended every semester--ANAT 821
- Special Topics (1 credit hour), first four semesters--ANAT 840
- Neuroscience Symposium (1 credit hour), every Spring semester--ANAT 826

### **Electives**

- Any additional 6 credit hours (not including seminar/symposium-type classes)

### **Laboratory Rotations**

Students are required to do three lab rotations with IBS program faculty. These rotations can occur during any of the six prescribed rotational periods during the first year. After three rotations, a student may begin work in his or her chosen mentor's lab or may elect to do more rotations. A mentor's lab must be identified by the end of the first year.

### **Faculty Committee**

The Faculty Committee must meet the requirements in the Graduate College Policies and the IBS program. The committee should be formed as soon as possible after a mentor is chosen and before the end of the second year. In addition, the outside committee member should not be a member of the UTHSC Anatomy and Neurobiology Department including adjunct and affiliate members. At least two committee members must be full-time UTHSC faculty. The student will meet with his or her committee twice per year and submit a summary of that meeting to the track directors and program director.

### **Admission-to-Candidacy Exam**

At the end of the second year, students must pass a qualifying exam. The examination will consist of a written part consisting of a grant application in the form of an NIH F31 pre-doctoral fellowship, National Research Service Award (NRSA) followed by an oral examination. By May 1 the topic or choices of topics for the application will be provided by or approved by the Neuroscience Track Graduate Committee and will not be directly related to a student's expected thesis research. The written application will include 1 page of specific aims, 6 pages of the proposal, and additionally, a complete list of all literature cited must be included. The proposal should be generated independently and should not reflect input from the Mentor, other faculty or students. Applications must be completed and submitted to the track committee by June 1.

The track committee will schedule meetings for examinations between June 15 and June 30. At the meeting, not to exceed 2 hours, the student will answer questions about his or her proposal as well as questions related to his or her first two years of course work. Following the meeting, committee members will assign a passing or failing grade. In order to pass, the student must not receive a failing grade from more than one committee member. If the student partially fails, being weak in an identified area, he or she may only require re-writing specific parts of the proposal or re-examination of a certain subject. In this case, details and deadlines will be specified by the Neuroscience Track Graduate Committee, but will be no later than August 1. In the event that a student fails completely, a second

full exam will be required before August 1, and any written materials must be provided to the committee at least two weeks prior to the exam. As indicated in the College Policies, the result of the second exam is final. Neuroscience students will be admitted to candidacy after passing the qualifying exam and completing required program courses.

### **Dissertation Proposal**

By the end of their third year, students write a second NIH F31 grant application based on their ongoing and proposed Ph.D. research. This proposal is discussed with a student's Faculty Committee before approval to continue research.

### **Sample Curriculum—Neuroscience Track**

#### **YEAR 1**

##### **Fall Semester**

- Functional Neuroanatomy (3 credit hours)--ANAT 827
- Essentials of Cell Biology (3 credit hours)--IP 841
- Neuroscience Seminar (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Special Topics (variable credit hours)--ANAT 840
- Two 6-week lab rotations (1 credit hour)--ANAT 900

##### **Spring Semester**

- Cellular Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 823 (3 hrs), odd-# years
- Statistics (2 credit hours)--BIOE 845 (spring 2017; otherwise normally in fall)
- Neuroscience Seminar (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Special Topics (variable credit hours)--ANAT 840
- Neuroscience Symposium (1 credit hour)--ANAT 826
- Integrity in the Conduct of Scientific Research (1 credit hour)--IP 801
- One 6-week lab rotation (1 credit hour)--ANAT 900
- End of spring semester/summer: choose Mentor and begin research

*Please note: Students with an emphasis in neurocancer will take Essentials of Molecular Biology [IP 805, spring] and Pathobiology of Cancer [IP 940, fall] instead of Essentials of Cell Biology [IP 841, fall].*

*Please note: Students with an emphasis in neuropharmacology will take Biochemistry [IP 806, fall] and Cellular Signaling [MSCI 861, spring] instead of Essentials of Cell Biology [IP 841, fall].*

## **YEAR 2**

### Fall Semester

- Behavioral Neuroscience (3 credit hours)--ANAT 841, fall, even-# years
- Neuroscience Seminar (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Special Topics (variable credit hours)--ANAT 840
- Dissertation Research (variable credit hours)--ANAT 900
- Elective

### Spring Semester

- Developmental and Molecular Neurobiology (3 credit hours)--ANAT 825, spring, even-# years
- Neuroscience Seminar (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Special Topics (variable credit hours)--ANAT 840
- Neuroscience Symposium (1 credit hour)--ANAT 826
- Dissertation Research (variable credit hours)--ANAT 900
- Elective
- End of spring semester/summer: take admission-to-candidacy exam.

*Please note: Students with an emphasis in neurocancer will take Biochemistry[IP 806, fall] instead of Behavioral Neuroscience [ANAT 841, fall].*

## **YEAR 3**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--ANAT 900
- Neuroscience Seminar, each semester (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Neuroscience Symposium, Spring semester (1 credit hour)--ANAT 826
- 15 total hours of teaching assistance in Neuroanatomy Lab
- Complete and defend dissertation proposal.

*Please note: Students with an emphasis in neurocancer or neuropharmacology will additionally participate in cancer or pharmacology seminar, respectively.*

## **YEAR 4 AND BEYOND**

- Dissertation Research (9 credit hours)--ANAT 900
- Neuroscience Seminar, each semester (1 credit hour)--ANAT 821
- Neuroscience Symposium, Spring semester (1 credit hour)--ANAT 826
- Students defend their dissertation before their Faculty Committee to complete the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

*Please note: Students with an emphasis in neurocancer or neuropharmacology will additionally participate in cancer or pharmacology seminar, respectively.*