

IBS Program Overview

The IBSP allows students to design their curriculum around their educational and research needs. Instead of requiring a “one size fits all” core curriculum of all students, the IBSP recognizes that some students are ready to specialize as soon as they enter graduate school. Others, who are less certain of their specific research discipline, have the opportunity to take more general coursework while they explore their multiple interests.

When applying to the IBSP, students are encouraged to select one of our five research tracks. This will allow them to immediately enroll in core and elective courses related to their research interests. Alternatively, students may prioritize their top three track interests on the application form and may subsequently work with the program and track directors to determine the best core curriculum for them. Any student may switch from his/her original track of interest to another at any time during the first year, in contrast to some programs that impede a student’s ability to transfer from one department to another.

All students complete a core curriculum of nine credit hours followed by a minimum of six elective credit hours, but biostatistics and ethics are the only courses required of all students. The remaining core and elective courses depend upon the student’s academic background and research interests, and a list of pertinent course offerings can be found at each track’s website.

After completing laboratory rotations in the first year, students select their research advisor and begin their dissertation research. During the second year, students select their dissertation committee of five faculty members who can best guide them through their graduate research. Also, during the second or third year, students will complete an admission-to-candidacy exam, the format of which depends upon the research track and is described at each track’s website. All that remains is a defense of the student’s dissertation following the research phase of his/her training.

Laboratory Rotations

Identifying a research advisor is the single most important decision a student will make in graduate school. This is best accomplished by performing rotations through prospective laboratories. Students are expected to complete a minimum number of laboratory rotations, determined by each track, to identify a research advisor. All tracks adhere to a schedule of six 6-week rotation periods that occur throughout the first year. This allows students to choose when they rotate through a laboratory, and it also allows students to rotate through laboratories in multiple research tracks. After completing rotations, students select a research advisor based on mutual consent.

Stipends and Scholarships

Tuition is covered by the College of Graduate Health Sciences for the first 6 years. In addition, the College offers stipend support and coverage in the University's single-student health insurance plan to all incoming IBSP students for the first 16 months. After that time, students receive an annual stipend and UTHSC student health insurance coverage from their supporting mentor.

Currently, students receive a stipend of \$25,000 in addition to payment of their UTHSC student health insurance premium annually. Outstanding graduates of US institutions are eligible for Alumni Endowment Scholarships that contribute up to \$3,000 of additional annual support.

Admission Requirements

The minimum requirements for admission are a bachelor’s degree with a documented grade-point average of 3.0. In addition, three letters of recommendation and official scores on the General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) must be submitted. A minimum combined score of 300 is required on the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE. To be competitive, international applicants should have a GRE score above 300

and must also demonstrate proficiency in English by a TOEFL score above 213/79 on the computer-based/internet-based exam. Our institution code for the GRE and TOEFL is 1850.

M.D./Ph.D. Students

The IBSP participates in a dual-degree program for students already enrolled in the UTHSC College of Medicine. Second- and third-year medical students are eligible to enter the dual-degree program, and they are expected to identify a research advisor prior to IBSP matriculation or after completion of a limited number of abbreviated laboratory rotations. After completing the Ph.D., students then return to medical school to complete their final years in the M.D. program.

When and How to Apply

The application cycle typically opens in mid-August every year. Most students apply before December, and those applying before January 15 will be given priority status. The final application deadline is March 1. Applications are reviewed as received, and our top domestic candidates are supported for travel to campus for interviews beginning in February. It is important that you complete the application and send all required materials as soon as possible. You can apply online, and it is free and easy. Use the link under Future Students to access the online application, and choose Option 2. Most of the options on the Application Checklist are self-explanatory, but under Planned Course of Study, choose the Integrated Biomedical Sciences--PhD option. Then, select up to three tracks of interest using the dropdown menus associated with the Concentration options. We will assume that the first concentration you select is your preferred research track.

For US applicants, official transcripts and official test scores should be sent directly from the contributing source and not by the student. Three recommendation letters are required and should be sent on letterhead by the recommenders. All documents should be sent to the address below.

For non-US applicants, official test scores should be sent directly from the contributing source and not by the student. Official transcripts and three recommendation letters (on institutional letterhead) are required and should be sent to the Office of Enrollment Services (address listed below). Transcripts from any non-US institution must be verified and certified to generate a grade-point average (GPA) based on a 4.0 scale. Verification must be completed before matriculation in August.

Service agencies include, but are not limited to, Educational Credit Evaluation (ECE) at <http://www.ece.org/> and World Education Services (WES) at <http://www.wes.org/>. A document-by-document certification is not acceptable. These agencies charge a fee for their service.

Documents and any other supporting materials for the application should be mailed to:

Office of Enrollment Services
University of Tennessee Health Science Center
910 Madison Avenue, Suite 520
Memphis, TN 38163