



UMMC[™]

John D. Bower
School of Population Health

2020 – 2021

Student Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Student Handbook

The John D. Bower School of Population Health (SOPH) Student Handbook, the University of Mississippi Medical Center (UMMC) Bulletin, and the [UMMC Document Center](#) are the primary sources of policies and procedures for SOPH students. Individual departments in the SOPH may also have student policies, procedures, and guidelines related to specific academic programs, and they may be obtained from the Program Director of each program. The Student Handbook presents information, which at the time of publication, accurately describes student related policies and procedures. The Student Handbook is neither a contract nor an offer to contract. The SOPH may revise the Student Handbook, policies, and procedures at any time without prior notice.

History

The John D. Bower School of Population Health at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson was established in 2016 by the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning.

Mission

The mission of the John D. Bower School of Population Health is to provide world-class graduate training to prepare the next generation of scientists and health care professionals to improve the health of individuals, populations, and communities through enhancing health care systems and health policies.

Vision

The John D. Bower School of Population Health is protecting populations by addressing the multiple determinants of health.

Administration and Departmental Leadership

Administration

Interim Dean and Associate Dean of Student Affairs: Natalie W. Gaughf, PhD, ABPP
Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Faculty Affairs: Sydney Murphy, PhD, MS

Departmental Leadership

Department of Data Science

Chair: Robert Hester, PhD
Program Director: Jeannette Simino, PhD

Department of Population Health Science

Chair: Leandro Mena, MD, MPH
Program Director: Charles Chima, DrPH, BMBS, MS

Department of Preventive Medicine

Chair and Residency Director: Joshua Mann, MD, MPH

Degree Programs

The John D. Bower School of Population Health offers programs leading to Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degrees.

Master of Science Degree Programs

Executive Master of Science in Population Health Management

Master of Science in Biostatistics and Data Science
Master of Science in Population Health Science

Doctor of Philosophy Degree Programs

Doctor of Philosophy in Biostatistics and Data Science
Doctor of Philosophy in Population Health Science

Degree Requirements

The basic requirements for the degrees of Master of Science (MS) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) are as follows.

Master of Science (MS) Degree

Master of Science Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): A student who completes a master's degree should:

- demonstrate mastery of a body of knowledge in the discipline; the level of the material and/or the extent of mastery must be above that for the baccalaureate degree,
- use and/or understand the basic methodologies of the discipline
- retrieve, evaluate, and utilize information relevant to the discipline
- communicate, both orally and in writing, in a manner and level of proficiency that is standard for the discipline
- conduct research or produce creative work (for thesis MS)
- function as a professional in the discipline (for non-thesis MS)

Thesis: Some programs may require a thesis as a requirement for graduation. The thesis should show evidence of original investigation and must be approved by the Thesis Advisory Committee, Program Chair, and the SOPH Dean.

Thesis Advisory Committee: An examination and thesis defense are mandatory in programs requiring a thesis. The candidate's advisory committee conducts the examination. The [Masters Advisory Committee Nomination Form](#) should be submitted to the Office of the Dean for the Dean's written approval. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare and deliver the completed forms to the appropriate office or individual.

Thesis Defense: The candidate's advisory committee chair must certify that the candidate passed the oral defense of the candidate's thesis. The [Thesis Defense Certification Form](#) should be submitted to the Office of the Dean.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Degree

Doctor of Philosophy Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): A student who completes a doctoral degree should:

- demonstrate broad and advanced knowledge within the discipline
- successfully use a range of methodologies of the discipline
- independently perform original research
- communicate effectively
- function as a professional in the discipline

Dissertation Advisory Committee: A written dissertation and oral defense are mandatory in all PhD programs. The dissertation is prepared under the direction of the student's advisor and must be approved by the candidate's advisory committee and the Dean of the SOPH. The [Doctoral Advisory](#)

[Committee Nomination Form](#) should be submitted to the Office of the Dean for approval. It is the responsibility of the student to prepare and deliver the completed forms to the appropriate office or individual.

Qualifying Examination and Admission to Candidacy: An examination to qualify students for admission to candidacy for the PhD degree is administered by each program within the SOPH. The qualifying examination is given to graduate students in good academic standing upon completion of coursework. The composition of the examination (oral, written, comprehensive, or research based) varies from program to program. Information on the specific format used within a program may be obtained from the relevant program director or from the program's policy manual. Following completion of the qualifying exam with a passing score, the [Doctoral Qualifying Examination Certification Form](#) must be submitted to the Office of the Dean. Two (2) weeks after satisfactory completion of the qualifying examination and any additional prerequisites, the student must submit an application for [Admission into Doctoral Candidacy Form](#) to the Office of the Dean.

Dissertation Defense: The dissertation defense is conducted by the candidate's advisory committee and consists of a public presentation and defense of the dissertation in accordance with the [SOPH Thesis and Dissertation Defense](#) policy. In private deliberation, the advisory committee determines the acceptability of the defense and dissertation. Further questioning of the candidate may be included in the committee's deliberations. The dissertation must be submitted to the advisory committee at least 10 days before the examination. All advisory committee members must be present at the final oral examination at which time they sign the [Dissertation Defense Certification Form](#).

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admission

Requirements for admission into the SOPH may be found in the [SOPH Admission Requirements policy](#).

Required Technology and Software

Every student is required to have a laptop computer that meets the minimum requirements for both PC and Mac computers. Students should purchase a laptop meeting or exceeding these requirements from regular retail channels. Students are personally responsible for maintenance/repair of their laptop. All students are required to maintain up-to-date virus and spyware detection software on their laptops. Students should acquire their laptops prior to orientation. Specific departments or academic degree programs may have additional requirements for computers and/or software.

At a minimum, a student's computer configuration should include:

- Speakers and a microphone/headphones with built-in microphone
- Webcam
- Wi-Fi and/or Ethernet connection (Broadband connection to the internet and related equipment)
- Windows 10 operating system
- Microsoft Office Suite installed
- Antivirus and spyware software
- Updated Adobe Flash Player and Oracle Java
- Firefox, Google Chrome, and/or Internet Explorer browser

A student may also need access to:

- USB ports

- Printer

Visit the [UMMC Software Portal](#) (The Hub) to see a complete list of available software. Students have the option to download the Microsoft Office suite for free while enrolled. Visit <https://portal.office.com/account> for more information.

Orientation

SOPH students must complete UMMC general orientation and SOPH student orientation (online courses in Canvas) prior to their first semester course registration.

Enrollment

Once students are accepted into a program, they must be continuously enrolled in classes until the degree is completed or they have been granted a leave of absence as outlined in the [SOPH Enrollment policy](#).

Registration

Registration for classes is not permitted unless an applicant has received official notification of acceptance into a specific SOPH academic program or enrolled as a non-degree seeking student (NDSS). Registration for courses must be approved by the program director and academic advisor. No credit is given for any course for which a student is not officially registered. Students and academic advisors must complete the required [Registration Approval Form](#).

Course Load and Fees

Current tuition and fees can be found on the [UMMC Estimated Cost of Attendance and Tuition webpage](#). Tuition is subject to change pending information from the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL). A full-time course load in the SOPH is outlined in the [SOPH Course Load policy](#).

Transfer of Graduate Credit

With the approval of the program director and the Dean of the SOPH, a limited amount of graduate credit earned at another recognized institution may be accepted toward degree requirements at UMMC per the [SOPH Transfer of Credit](#) policy. The [Transfer of Credit Approval Form](#) can be found on the SOPH website.

Compliance Training

All students and student/employees must receive institutional compliance training in accordance with the institutional compliance training policy and procedure per the [SOPH Student Compliance Training](#) policy.

Human Research

Individuals working with human subjects must undergo training to ensure confidentiality of human subjects and appropriate treatment of human subjects.

Mandatory Immunizations

All students, including distance education students, regardless of physical presence on the UMMC campus, are required to comply with the [Immunization Requirements for UMMC Students](#) policy.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in good taste and to present themselves in a manner appropriate to their profession per the [SOPH Dress Code](#) policy.

Distance Education

Students receiving instruction through distance education shall be provided comparable access to student support services per the [SOPH Distance Education](#) policy. Policies that apply to traditional face-to-face courses also apply to distance education courses.

International Travel for Non-Citizen Alien Students on Stipend

Non-citizen alien students receiving a stipend will be allowed a maximum of three (3) weeks leave time for international travel per the [SOPH International Travel for Non-Citizen Alien Students](#) policy. The [International Student Travel and Leave Request Form](#) must be submitted.

Grading

Grades for academic credit are awarded based on a four (4) point grading scale per the [SOPH Grading](#) policy.

Grade Forgiveness

Enrolled students who earn a grade of C or below in a course in the SOPH may retake the course once, according to the [SOPH Grade Forgiveness](#) policy.

Student Progression

Each PhD student's academic progress must be evaluated at least semi-annually by the program director, once at the end of the fall semester and again at the end of the spring semester as outlined in the [SOPH Student Progression Annual Review](#) policy.

Good Academic Standing

The [SOPH Good Academic Standing](#) policy defines a student in good academic standing as one who is making acceptable progress toward a graduate degree and who is eligible to register for and pursue academic coursework at UMMC for the current semester. Students are expected to remain in good academic standing throughout the entire course of their study.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress

All students must remain in good academic standing for purposes of continued financial support, i.e. Dean's scholarship and federal and state loans per the [SOPH Financial Aid Good Academic Standing](#) policy.

Adding or Dropping a Course

Classes may be added or dropped until the day specified by the academic calendar and in accordance with the [SOPH Add/Drop Course](#) policy. The [Add / Drop Request Form](#) must be submitted.

Academic Probation

The SOPH monitors student progression and if at any time during an academic year a student is not in good academic standing, the student will be placed on academic probation per the [SOPH Academic Probation](#) policy.

Withdrawal

Registration in an academic program makes the student responsible for completion of the course of study unless the student withdraws from the curriculum per the [SOPH Withdrawal](#) policy. The [Withdrawal Request Form](#) must be submitted. Any student who fails to remain continuously enrolled in their degree program and does not request an official leave of absence by the last day to register for the

semester will be administratively withdrawn from the SOPH per the [UMMC Withdrawal from Courses and/or Programs](#) policy.

Leave of Absence

Leave of absence from school for students currently booked may be granted by the Dean or designee per the [SOPH Leave of Absence](#) policy.

Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the SOPH for cause. This may include unsatisfactory academic performance, failure to pass qualifying examinations, poor research performance, breaches of scientific integrity, i.e., plagiarism, falsification of data, etc. or behavioral issues, i.e., harassment per the [SOPH Student Dismissal](#) policy. The [Leave of Absence Request Form](#) must be submitted.

Appeal of Dismissal

Students have the right to appeal a dismissal from the SOPH per the [SOPH Appeal of Dismissal](#) policy.

Academic Integrity and Student Behavior

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner and with the utmost integrity according to the [SOPH Academic Integrity and Student Behavior](#) policy.

Exit Survey

All students must complete an anonymous online exit survey prior to graduation. The collated results are used to assess program effectiveness.

Graduation and Commencement

Degrees earned in a graduate program are awarded at the end of each semester. Formal commencement ceremonies are held once a year at the end of the academic year (May). All graduates are encouraged to participate in commencement exercises. To be eligible for graduation and commencement, a student must complete all degree requirements and complete an Application for Diploma Form through the MyU portal at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to graduate per the [SOPH Degrees and Commencement](#) policy.

Non-Degree Seeking Students (NDSS)

Before registering for classes, individuals who wish to take graduate course work but are not students in a UMMC academic degree program may apply as NDSSs per the [SOPH Non-Degree Seeking Student](#) policy. The [Non-Degree Seeking Enrollment Request Form](#) must be submitted.

INFORMATION POLICIES

Information Policy

All employees, students, contractors, and other credentialed individuals must comply with the [UMMC Information Asset Management Policy](#) to reduce risk by protecting and supporting confidentiality, availability, and integrity of information assets.

Social Media

The SOPH utilizes social media. All students in UMMC schools and programs must comply with the [UMMC Policy and Guidelines for Personal Use of Social Media](#).

Email

Email, electronic mail, services are provided to the UMMC community in support of the missions and administrative functions of the university. Users of the email system are expected to comply with the [UMMC Information Security Management Program Policy](#). The email system may not be used for illegal or unlawful activities. Email users are expected to use the services in a professional and respectful manner. Email is the official mode of communications, and students receive information from the SOPH via their UMMC email accounts. Therefore, students are expected to check their UMMC e-mail accounts regularly.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Student Stipends

PhD students may receive stipends to cover living expenses per the [SOPH Student Stipends](#) policy.

Dean's Scholarship

The Dean's Scholarship is a full-tuition recruitment scholarship, which is awarded to PhD students for outstanding academic achievement.

Loans

Students may also apply for additional funding through various loan mechanisms. Students should contact the [Office of Student Financial Aid](#) to determine their eligibility.

STUDENT RESOURCES

SOPH Student Body

The SOPH Student Body serves as the planning organization for all SOPH students. The Student Body maintains four leadership positions:

- Chair, Data Science
- Vice Chair, Data Science
- Chair, Population Health Science
- Vice Chair, Population Health Science

They serve as leaders of the SOPH Student Body and represent SOPH students in the ASB.

Associated Student Body (ASB)

The ASB of UMMC serves as the governing body of all students. The SOPH is represented in the ASB by SOPH students chosen annually.

Office of the Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

The University of Mississippi Medical Center offers a comprehensive program of student support services through the [Office of Academic Affairs](#), the Office of the Chief Student Affairs Officer, the individual schools, the Office of Academic Support, Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of Student Accounting, the Office of Student Records and Registrar, the Student and Employee Health Service and the University Police. The Medical Center believes these services are an important adjunct to the total educational program and essential to the continuing fulfillment of the institution's purpose.

Office of Academic Support

The [Office of Academic Support](#) provides the following support services:

[Academic Consulting Services](#). Academic consultants meet individually with learners and provide assistance with developing the skills and behaviors that are essential to academic success and professional development (e.g., time management, study skills, and testing strategies).

[The Academic Success Kiosk \(ASK\)](#). ASK is an online, self-paced resource. ASK addresses time management, study skills, and professionalism.

[University Tutoring Services](#). University Tutoring Services is a peer tutoring program available to students experiencing academic difficulty. Supportive instruction is provided by peers with similar educational backgrounds.

[Writing Support Services](#). Writing coaches are available to assist students with assigned coursework and papers. The goal is to add value to the educational experience through writing critique and support.

[Academic Accommodations](#). UMMC policy provides for reasonable academic accommodations to be made for students with verified disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis as specified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Students in the School of Pharmacy should apply for academic accommodations through the University of Mississippi, Oxford Campus.

Student and Employee Health

The [Student Employee Health Department](#) is responsible for student health and on-the-job employee injuries. Services include nursing care, first aid, and over-the-counter medications. Standard sick call hours are staffed by a nurse practitioner and/or physician. The department manages TB screening, flu vaccinations, and other vaccinations. A Quick Care Clinic is also available to UMMC students and employees.

Student Assistance (LifeSynch)

UMMC coordinates opportunities for students to receive confidential counseling services for school-related, personal, and family matters through [LifeSynch](#). Dependents and household members may also receive services. Professionals are available to speak with you 24/7 to help address your issues and guide you to appropriate resources.

Student Counseling and Wellness Center

The [Student Counseling and Wellness Center](#) helps UMMC students manage the stresses and difficulties of daily life, life inside and outside the classroom.

Office of International Services

The [Office of International Services](#) is part of UMMC's Department of Human Resources, provides professional support and advising services to international faculty, staff, students, and scholars at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and serves as a resource to all departments on immigration regulations and requirements.

Campus Police and Security

UMMC [Campus Police and Security](#) can be reached at 601-815-3072 for emergencies and at 601-815-7777 for non-emergencies.

Division of Information Systems (DIS)

The [DIS - Help Desk](#) provides a group of analysts who work to help UMMC users with on-campus computer issues, password resets, Canvas and UMMC Webmail support, and more. Phone: 1 (877) 347-5041 (toll-free); Email: servicedesk@umc.edu

SOPH Student Orientation (Canvas course)

Students will remain enrolled in the course throughout their tenure as SOPH students. The course serves as a resource for information, policies, instructions, resources, and contact information. Additional student resources are described in the course.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student Complaint Policy

Students have the right to complain, whether verbally or in writing, regarding any area of academic or student life without fear of coercion, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal from the institution or its employees; [Student Comment and Complaints webpage](#) is a resource. More information is available in the [SOPH Student Complaints](#) policy.

Mistreatment / Title IX Reporting and Policies

All mistreatment is of serious concern to this institution and is strictly prohibited. For more information, visit the [Mistreatment and Title IX Policies website](#). Title IX Coordinator: (601) 815-5150

Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. More information is available in the UMMC Notification of Rights under FERPA Policy and Notification of Directory Information under FERPA.

Professional Conduct Policy for Students and Their Mentors

The following guidelines for students and their mentors are provided by the AAMC Group on Graduate Research, Education, and Training (GREAT) and can be accessed in full at www.aamc.org/gradcompact.