

## **School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences**

**DOCUMENT TYPE:** policy

**REVIEW PERIOD:** 3 years

**TITLE:** Admission Policy

**PURPOSE:** To define minimum requirements for admission into the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences.

**POLICY:** Selection of applicants is made on a competitive basis, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, genetic information, or veteran status. A student with a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution may apply for study in areas in which competence has been demonstrated by scholastic performance.

Prospective students must submit an online application for admission to the Office of Student Records and Registrar an official transcript of undergraduate and graduate (if applicable) grades, and an official statement of scores (verbal, quantitative and analytical) received on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), three letters of recommendation for PhD programs, and a personal statement. With the exception of those students applying for admission directly from a Master's Degree program, the GRE examination must be taken within five years of application. Information regarding the GRE may be obtained from the [Educational Testing Service](#), Princeton, NJ 08540. International applicants must have transcripts evaluated in a course-by-course report from [World Education Services](#) (WES) at or [Educational Credential Evaluators](#) (ECE).

Additional prerequisites may be required by individual programs, and these may be determined by contacting the specific program to which the applicant desires admission.

Initial evaluation of applicants for admission to graduate programs is made on the basis of undergraduate (and graduate, if applicable) scholastic performance, letters of recommendation and scores received on the GRE. Those applicants for whom the initial evaluation indicates the scholastic competence necessary to successfully pursue a graduate degree may be further evaluated by personal interview.

Coursework in the sciences more than 10 years prior to application for admission is not acceptable except where competency is validated by subsequent higher level coursework that is less than 10 years old. Decisions as to the acceptability of course work will be made by the graduate program in which the student is enrolled and approved by the Dean.

PhD applicants will be evaluated based on the following:

- Baccalaureate degree in a relevant scientific discipline
- GPA (3.0 or better)
- Three letters of recommendation (see MS Biomedical Sciences exception below)
- A personal statement

- A GRE score  $\geq 300$  on the combined verbal and quantitative scores is preferred
- Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores are  $\geq 300$  will be granted full admission to the School of Graduate Studies. Students whose combined verbal and quantitative scores are  $< 300$  will be considered for conditional admission based on the recommendation of the program director. To be removed from conditional status the student must, within the first semester of admission, attain a GPA of  $\geq 3.0$ , or retake the GRE and score  $\geq 300$ . Conditional students who fail to meet the criteria listed above will be dismissed from the program. Notwithstanding the above, individual programs may set higher minimum standards than those required by the School of Graduate Studies.

MS applicants will be evaluated on the following:

- Baccalaureate degree in a relevant scientific discipline
- GPA (3.0 or better preferred)
- Three letters of recommendation (see MS Biomedical Sciences exception below)
- A personal statement
- A GRE score  $\geq 295$  on the combined verbal and quantitative scores,
  - Or a DAT score  $\geq 15$ ,
  - Or an MCAT score  $\geq 492$  (new format)
 is also acceptable for those applying to the MS-Biomedical Sciences and MS-Clinical Anatomy programs.

For both the Masters in Clinical Investigation and Masters in Pathology, program admission specific requirements can be found in the specific program section of this Bulletin.

**English Language Proficiency.** Applicants whose native language is not English and/or who have completed their tertiary education primarily outside of the USA must submit official scores of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or Pearson Test of English-Academic (PTE-A) as evidence of English language proficiency.

- TOEFL-Internet Based Test (IBT): 79 or higher
- TOEFL-Paper Based Test (PBT): 550 or higher
- IELTS: 6.5 overall band score or higher
- PTE-A: 53 or higher

However, this requirement may be waived for students who are currently enrolled at a college or university in the United States and/or who demonstrate a proficiency in written and spoken English following a personal interview. Admission of a student to a graduate program must be approved by the program director and by the dean of the Graduate School. No individual may enroll in graduate level courses without proper approval and notification from the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences.

**Conditional Acceptance-** Acceptance to the School of Graduate Studies is conditional; the Admission Committee may rescind an offer of acceptance at any time before matriculation if an applicant fails to maintain expectations upon which the acceptance was based. Examples include, but are not limited to, a significant decline in academic performance, failure to complete prerequisites or other course work and

degrees in progress, patterns of unprofessional behavior and incidents discovered in a criminal background check.

**Criminal Background Checks (CBCs)** - Any preadmission agreement executed by the degree program with a student shall be void if there is a disqualifying incident or pattern of unprofessional behavior in the CBC prior to enrollment.

**Fingerprint-Based CBC-** Effective July 1, 2004, Section 37-29-232 of the Mississippi Code requires that students enrolled in a health care professional academic program undergo fingerprinting and CBC. All accepted applicants are required to be fingerprinted. Students receiving a stipend must be fingerprinted and drug tested. Fingerprints will be submitted to the Mississippi Department of Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a criminal background check.

**Technical Standards for Admission.** Technical Standards are non-academic requirements essential for meeting the academic requirements of the programs in the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences. Within any area of specialization, students must demonstrate competence in those intellectual and physical tasks that together represent the fundamentals of research in their chosen discipline.

The PhD degree programs and some of the MS degree programs at The University of Mississippi Medical Center School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences require a dissertation or thesis based on independent research. Granting of those degrees implies the recipient has demonstrated a base of knowledge in their chosen field of study and the ability to independently apply that knowledge to form hypotheses, design and conduct experiments, interpret experimental results, and communicate these findings to the scientific community. Thus, a candidate for the PhD or MS degree in the health sciences must possess abilities and skills that allow for observation, intellectual and conceptual reasoning, motor coordination, and communication. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable.

The following technical skills are required of a successful PhD student:

**Observation** - The candidate must be able to acquire knowledge by direct observation of demonstrations, experiments, and experiences within the research and instructional setting.

**Intellectual/ Conceptual Abilities** - The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, reason, integrate and synthesize information to solve problems.

**Motor Skills** - The candidate must possess motor skills necessary to perform procedures required for experimentation within the chosen discipline. Those individuals with physical challenges are encouraged to contact the appropriate administration to determine their educational options within the chosen discipline.

**Communication** - The candidate must be able to communicate and discuss his or her experimental hypotheses and results to the scientific community.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes** - The candidate must possess the emotional and mental health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of responsibilities inherent in managing a scientific setting, the ability to function under the stress inherent in research, and the ability to understand and comply with ethical standards for the conduct of research.

**Application procedure.** The application may be obtained online from the [School of Graduate Studies website](#). All transcripts and documents submitted to the Office of Student Records and Registrar in support of an application become the property of The University of Mississippi Medical Center and will not be returned to an applicant or forwarded to another school or individual. Contact information: Office of Student Records and Registrar, University of Mississippi Medical Center, 2500 North State Street, Jackson, MS 39216, 601-984-1080, 601-984-1079 (Fax). If problems are encountered, please contact the graduate school office for assistance (601-984-1195).

**Deadlines for application.** The SGSHS accepts applications throughout the calendar year. However, applications for a specific academic terms must be received by the Office of Student Records and Registrar by the deadlines below:

- Summer Term: April 1
- Fall Semester: June 1
- Spring Semester: October 1
- Prospective PhD students who wish to attend the Graduate School Spring Recruitment Day must have applications submitted by December 15.
- MS Clinical Investigation: May 1
- MS Programs: June 1

**Students wishing to be considered for a graduate stipend for the upcoming Fall semester should apply for admission as early as possible, but not than April 1.** Stipends are assigned on a competitive basis. An applicant is considered for the enrollment period designated on the application. If the applicant is accepted and fails to enroll, or is not accepted, a new application must be submitted if consideration for a subsequent enrollment date is desired.

**Application Fee.** A nonrefundable fee of \$25 must accompany the initial application.

**Registration.** Registration for classes is not permitted unless the applicant has received notification of acceptance to a specific graduate program from the School of Graduate Studies in the Health Sciences. Registration for courses must be approved by the graduate program director and advisor. No credit is given for any course for which a student is not officially registered. All students and advisors must complete the required [Registration Approval Form](#) before each semester.

**Non-degree seeking students.** UMMC employees who wish to take graduate courses but are not members of a University of Mississippi Medical Center graduate program may apply as non-degree seeking students. Applicants must first complete an Approval to Register Form. The form and instructions for the Non-Degree Student are located on the [Graduate School website](#). Non-degree students may not earn more than 9 semester hours. Furthermore, successful completion of courses taken does not in itself qualify the individual for subsequent admission to a graduate program.

**Tuition and fees.** Tuition and fees for the academic year can be found on the institutional [website](#). Non-resident PhD students will pay in-state tuition. Tuition is subject to change pending information from the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL).

Effective Date: 11-11-2014

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**SCOPE:** All SGSHS students.