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## Introduction

Welcome to the graduate program of the Department of Molecular Biosciences (MBS) (formerly Cell Biology, Microbiology and Molecular Biology (CMMB)). We are a comprehensive research and training department located in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of South Florida. We offer thesis and non-thesis MS degrees in both Microbiology and Cell & Molecular Biology, along with a PhD in Cell and Molecular Biology. Our graduate program mission is to prepare students for professional careers in-19(p)-1 -9(c)-6(a)-9(d)-2(e)49(m)-19(i)8(a)-9(,)8( )-17(g)-9(o)-2(ve)3(r)-9(n-19m)-19(e)3(n)7(t)-1

here are very specific academic requirements located in-19(p)289(t)-15(h)7(e)3( )] TJETQq0.00000912 0 612 792 reW\* nBT/F2 11 T1 -catalog-archives.aspx) that must(p)244(b)10(e)3( )] TJETQq0.00000912 0 612 79

advisory committee, the department chairman, and college and graduate school deans are available to assist you in-19(p)199(m)-19(e)3(e)3(t)-15(i)8(n)7(g)-9( )-199(t)-15(h)7(e)3(s)-23(e)3( )-199(r)-9(e)49(q)-23(u-19i)8(r)-9(e)3(n) policies, regulations, and rules. If the requirements contain-] TJETQq0.00000912 0 612 792 reW\* nBT/F1 11 T1 of the University and Office of Graduate Studies, have not been satisfied, then a graduate degree will not be awarded. Therefore, we ask that you familiarize yourself with the content of this handbook as soon as possible, and should you have any questions at all then please direct them to the MBS Graduate Director or Graduate program Specialist.

Again-19, we would like to welcome you to our degree program(p] TJETQq0.00000912 0 612 792 reW\* nBT/F1 11 T1

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# Graduate Education at USF

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Graduate Education at USF is administered at three levels. The USF Office of Graduate Studies (<http://www.grad.usf.edu>) is the hub of graduate education at USF and oversees:

- Compliance of all graduate programs
- Incoming graduate applications
- USF Graduate student policy
- USF graduate fellowships and awards
- Graduate student success initiatives (i.e. workshops, seminars, symposia)
- Graduate student recruitment and marketing
- Thesis and dissertations
- Approval of new graduate programs and courses
- Orientation and commencement
- Graduate student appeals/petitions.

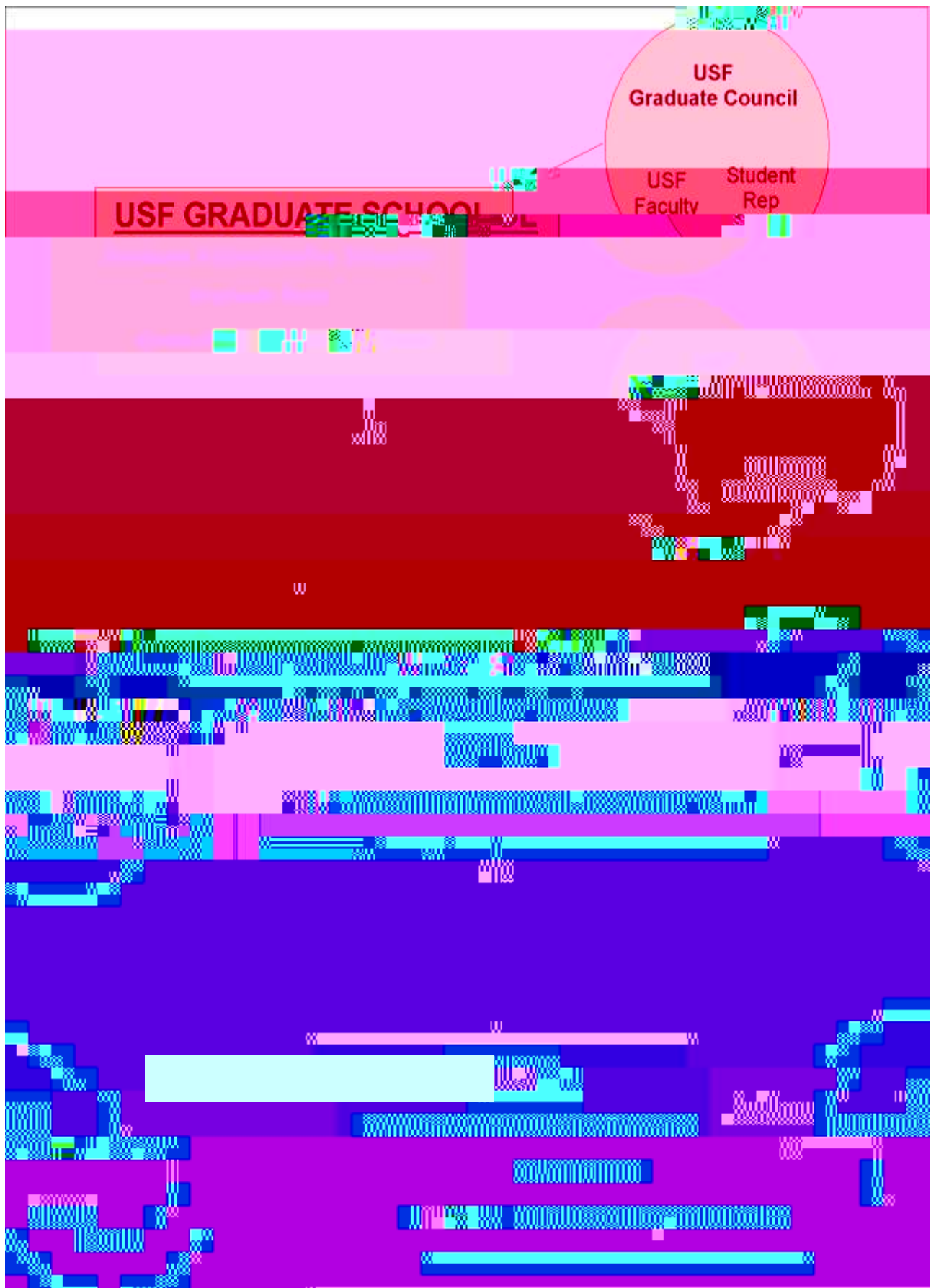
The USF Office of Graduate Studies is administered by a Dean (currently Dr. Ruth Bahr) and an Associate Dean (TBD). They work with the USF Graduate Council (a committee made up of USF graduate faculty and two graduate student representatives) to review and approve policies, programs, and courses. In addition, the Graduate Deans are advised by a committee made up of the Graduate Coordinators (typically Associate Deans from each college), which meet monthly to discuss pertinent graduate issues. The USF Office of Graduate Studies also houses the Graduate and Professional Student Council (GPSC). This is a student group that serves as a voice for graduate students and meets regularly with the Deans. All graduate students are invited to become members of this group.

The next level of graduate education is administered at the college level. For MBS, this is the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). The Associate Dean for UG and Grad studies works with the CAS and SNSM graduate committee to evaluate and approve programs and courses, evaluate graduate appeals, advise on program development, and assess and recommend graduate policies.

The third level of graduate education occurs at the Departmental level. Each Department typically has a faculty member assigned as a Program Director (Currently, Dr. Brant Burkhardt). The Program Director serves as the first point of contact for all program information as well as information on graduate policy and procedures. In MBS, the Program Director also serves as coordinator of admissions and recruitment, monitors student progress, coordinates the orientation, advises students on MBS specific issues, and is involved in scheduling MBS graduate courses.

It is important for each student to know all the key administrators in each of the above units, and to actively participate in workshops and orientations that provide additional information about graduate education and professional development at USF. The USF Office of







### Incoming Course/Degree Requirements

It is expected that candidates for graduate degrees in the department of MBS will have completed courses equivalent to those required for the B.S. in Cell and Molecular Biology, or Microbiology, at USF.

### Out of State Students

All students admitted to the University of South Florida after fall 2008, and who did not previously reside in the state of Florida for 12 months prior to matriculation, will be considered an out-of-state student for tuition purposes. Should a student under this classification receive financial support (please see below) via a Research Assistantship (RA), or Teaching Assistantship (TA), then they will be considered in-state students for tuition purposes ONLY during the semester(s) of support. Aipf supofBT/F2 792



MBS Graduate Committee will evaluate any such applications and determine if the student in question will be readmitted to the program. In such cases, MBS may require student to undertake additional course work, to demonstrate competency and retake any qualifying examinations. Any student readmitted to the program must adhere to the policies contained within the Graduate Catalog in the year of readmission; however, the time to degree requirements will be calculated based on the original date of admission. Students taking any examination in each semester must be enrolled for a minimum of 2 credit hours of graduate credit. PhD students who advance to candidacy must enroll in at least 2 credits of BSC7980 in EVERY semester thereafter. Those students funded by Graduate Assistantships or Teaching Assistantships are expected to register as full-time students. Students with an approved leave of absence will not be subject to these requirements.





## Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

The department of MBS, the USF Office of Graduate Studies and the University of South Florida hold academic integrity and honesty in the highest regard. Students are individually responsible for being aware of, and complying with, University Regulations and Policies, and must conduct themselves accordingly. Specific information with regards to these policies can be obtained from the USF Office of Graduate Studies. Students should note that the regulations apply not only to your coursework, but to your research activities as well.

## USF Academic Probation

The USF Office of Graduate Studies will automatically place any student on academic probation if their TOTAL graduate GPA falls below 3.00 (referred to as P1 probation). This probation will be effective from the beginning of the following semester (summer included). Students with a graduate GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters (referred to as P2 probation) will be prevented from registering for classes without the permission of the MBS Graduate Director and the CAS Associate Dean for Graduate Studies. Students that have 3 consecutive semesters with a total GPA below 3.00 will be placed on P3 probation and will not be able to enroll in any classes without the permission of the MBS Graduate Committee, the CAS Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and the Assistant Dean from the USF Office of Graduate Studies. Notification of probation will be made to the student by the USF Office of Graduate Studies, and in writing by the MBS Graduate Director. Students that are placed on probation must schedule an immediate meeting with the MBS Graduate Director AND Major Professor to construct an academic plan to remove the probation. At the end of each probationary semester, there are several possible outcomes:

1. Removal of the probation. Students who have increased their graduate GPA to 3.0 or above will now be considered in academic good standing. This can only be initiated by the USF Office of Graduate Studies.
2. Continued probation. Students whose GPA remains below 3.0, will progress to P2 or P3 status, and will be prevented from enrolling in classes unless approved by the MBS Graduate Committee and the CAS Associate Dean for Graduate Studies (P2), or the USF Office of Graduate Studies (P3).
3. Dismissal from the MBS program. The MBS Graduate Committee may proceed with academic dismissal or recommend to the student voluntary withdrawal from the MBS Graduate Program following P1, P2 or P3 probation.

No grade of C- or below will be accepted towards a graduate degree. Should a student find themselves on academic probation upon the completion of their required coursework/classes then they will not be able to graduate. Both the total and major GPA must be above 3.00. If the student is on P1 or P2 probation at the time of intended graduation, they MAY be permitted to enroll in further classes to rectify the situation. The Major Professor and advisory committee will be responsible for determining the makeup and expectations for these additional classes. If a student is on P3 probation at the time



of intended graduation, a petition of removal must be filed with the USF Graduate School. Such students will have ONE additional semester to clear the probation.

CAS and MBS

### Transfer of Credits

Students are permitted to petition the MBS Graduate Committee to transfer graduate credit earned at any regionally accredited institution in the United States. The evaluation of such petitions will be made on a case-by-case basis, and at the sole discretion of the MBS Graduate Committee. All credit transferred must have a B grade or better, and in no instance will more than 12 graduate hours be permitted for transfer. Courses that receive an S grade cannot be transferred. The transferred credit will be assigned a T grade by the USF Graduate School and will not count towards the institutional GPA. All courses, including any transferred credit, cannot be older than 7 years at the time of graduation for a MS degree, or older than 8 years at the time of graduation for a Ph.D. Most credits earned in satisfaction of degree requirements must be earned through instruction offered on the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida. It should be noted that credit previously applied to an awarded degree cannot be used towards a graduate degree at USF.

### Leave of Absence

In certain exceptional or unavoidable circumstances, it is permissible for a student to take a Leave of Absence (LOA) from their graduate studies. These are granted for a total of up to 2 years, and require the approval of the Major Professor, the MBS Graduate Director, the College of Arts & Sciences and the USF Office of Graduate Studies. Any absent time that results from an approved LOA will not count towards the degree program time limits outlined in this handbook. Students must enroll in appropriate graduate credit the first semester following the expiration of LOA or they will fall to Non-Degree status, and must reapply to the USF Office of Graduate Studies for readmission. Returning students should contact the Registrar's Office for instructions on how to reactivate their status. Doctoral candidates must also ensure that their candidacy is reactivated by contacting the USF Office of Graduate Studies.

### Time to Degree and Time Limit Extensions

Students admitted to MBS MS degrees must complete all degree requirements within 5 years of the original date of their admission. Courses applied to MS degrees cannot be older than 7 years at the time of graduation. Students admitted to the Ph.D. program must complete all degree requirements within 8 years of the original time of their admission. Courses applied to Ph.D. degrees cannot be older than 8 years at the time of graduation. It is important to note that students who have fallen to inactive status, and been readmitted to the MBS Graduate Program, must meet the time to degree requirements from the original date of admission, even if those times have been changed since they were originally admitted. Students with an approved LOA do not have the time of their absence counted in the time to degree calculations. Due to extenuating circumstances, a student may require additional time to complete their degree. In such instances the student must complete a "Time Limit Extension" (TLE) Request and submit it to the USF Office of Graduate Studies. The TLE should only be used if the student is within a few semesters of graduation, and will not be approved for periods of time in excess of 2 years. A student will be permitted to submit only ONE TLE request to the USF Office of Graduate Studies during the course of their degree program. The TLE request requires the



be a completed and final version that is ready for evaluation by their advisory committee. If a student fails to submit all copies of their final thesis or dissertation by this 2 week deadline then the seminar/defense will automatically be cancelled, and the student will be responsible for rescheduling it.

### Graduation Requirements

There are several USF specific deadlines that must be met successful graduation. These include, but are not limited to, matters concerning the dissertation/thesis, class registration, seminar defense, credential certification etc. These dates are available from the USF Office of Graduate Studies website located here: <https://www.usf.edu/education/graduate/graduate-support-office/grad-stud-resources/dates-and-deadlines.aspx>. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of these dates and comply with all deadlines and requirements. Be aware that a number of these \_\_\_\_\_ and cannot be waived or altered. In the semester of graduation all Ph.D. students are required to be registered for 2 hours of BSC 7980 Doctoral Dissertation and 1 hour of BSC7936 PhD Seminar. In the semester of graduation all MS thesis students are required to be registered for 2 hours of BSC/MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters and 1 hour of BSC6935 Thesis Seminar. During the semester in which the degree is to be awarded, students must submit to the MBS Graduate Office a photocopy of the abstract, title page, and committee approval page that has been signed by his/her committee. This must occur at least a week preceding the thesis/dissertation deadline of the USF Office of Graduate Studies. Upon completion of the degree requirements, the MBS graduate office will complete the certification for graduation paperwork only after receiving email confirmation from the USF Office of Graduate complete the c

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# The MS Non- Thesis Degree

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# MBS GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

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*M.S. in Biology, with a concentration in Cell Biology & Molecular Biology*

## Non-Thesis MS- Biology Program Catalog Requirements 2023-2024

Minimum of 30 credits required (*approved by MBS*)

Core Requirements - 6 credit hours

**BSC 6393 Advances in Life Sciences Credit Hours: 1 (Taken 3 times)**

**BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology Credit Hours: 1 (Taken 3 times)**

Concentration (required) - 15 credit hours minimum

**Students select courses approved by the supervisory committee or department.**

**Please contact Graduate Program Specialist for List of Approved Classes**

Non-Thesis (Electives) - 9 credit hours minimum

**BSC 6939 CMNT Seminar (in either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 07.75 Tm0 G.73 407.75 Tm0 G[( )] TJETQq0.0**

# MBS GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## *Non-Thesis M.S. in Microbiology*

### Non-Thesis MS Microbiology Program Catalog Requirements 2023-2024

Minimum of 30 credits required (*approved by MBS*)

Core Requirements - 6 credit hours

**MCB 6205 Bacterial Pathogenesis Credit Hours: 3**

**MCB 6305 Advanced Bacterial Genetics Credit Hours: 3**

Additional Required Courses - 3 credit hours

**BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology Credit Hours: 1 (Taken three times)**

Electives - 21 credit hours minimum

Select from the following or other graduate courses approved by the supervisory committee:

- Please contact

- BSC 5425 Genetic Engineering and Recombinant DNA Technology Credit Hours: 3
- Note: Additional courses not on the list may be substituted with the approval of the thesis committee and MBS Graduate Director.

BSC 6939 CMNT Seminar (in either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of residence)

BSC 6932 (1 hrs) Masters Qualifying Exam during final semester

BSC 6910 Directed Research may be applied here

BSC 6905 Independent Study may be applied here

15 additional hrs of credit must be at 6000-level

15 credits must be in MBS courses

Due to rule changes at USF, NO 4000-level credit will be applied to NT-MS degrees after January 2016

Submission of a written scientific review on an approved topic

Successful completion of a final oral exam at the completion of the structured course work

BSC 6932 NTMS Qualifying Exam







paper will review a topic of your choosing that has NOT been included in the coursework of your other classes. The topic must be approved by your non-

A student who fails the oral examination twice will be dismissed from the program.

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# The MS Thesis Degrees

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# MBS GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## *Thesis M.S. in Microbiology*

### Thesis MS Microbiology Program Catalog Requirements

Minimum of 30 credits required (*approved by MBS*)

- 15 of the 30 credit hours must be in courses of a microbiological nature. Approval of such courses will be made by the MBS Graduate Director.

Core Requirements - 6 credit hours (Courses below are offered in alternative Fall semesters)

**MCB 6905 Bacterial Pathogenesis Credit Hours: 3**

**MCB 6305 Advanced Bacterial Genetics Credit Hours: 3**

Additional Required Courses - 4 credit hours

**BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology Credit Hours: 1 (Taken three times)**

**PCB 6920 Advances in Cell and Molecular Biology during Fall Semester of first year\* Credit Hours: 1**

Electives - 7 credit hours minimum

Select from the following or other graduate courses approved by the

Presentation Requirement (1 presentation at national/regional professional meetings)

Submission of acceptable thesis

*\* For Fall admissions. Students admitted in Spring will take this course in the Spring of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year.*



# MBS GRADUATE PROGRAM TIME LINES

MS

## MS-Microbiology Thesis Program

\_\_\_\_\_ tracking example through program in 2.5 years \*

*\*based on successful completion of oral qualifying exam in the time specified, good academic standing and continuation of research during summer sessions*

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Semester 1 (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC 6910 Directed Research or Laboratory Rotations if required</li> <li>• PCB 6920 Advances in Cellular &amp; Molecular Biology</li> <li>• MCB 6205 Advanced Bacterial Genetics OR MCB 6305 Bacterial Pathogenesis (Each course offered in alternate Fall semesters) (1<sup>st</sup> core course)</li> <li>• BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology (1 of 3)</li> <li>• Submit Annual Progress Report by December 15<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Establish MS Laboratory and Major Advisor</li> </ul>
.....	
Semester 2 (spring)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC 6910 Directed Research</li> <li>• BSC 6956 Scientific Grant Writing (optional as of Fall 2024/ elective)</li> <li>• GMS 6103 Foundations of Medical Microbiology and Immunology (elective example)</li> <li>• BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology (2 of 3)</li> <li>• Form thesis committee</li> </ul>
.....	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC 6910 Directed Research</li> <li>• Work on thesis proposal</li> </ul>
.....	
Semester 3 (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC 6910 Directed Research</li> <li>• BSC 6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology (3 of 3)</li> <li>• MCB 6205 Advanced Bacterial Genetics OR MCB 6305 Bacterial Pathogenesis (Each course offered in alternate Fall semesters) (2<sup>nd</sup> core course)</li> <li>• Submit Thesis Proposal to Thesis Committee</li> <li>• Complete Oral Qualifier by November 15<sup>th</sup></li> <li>• Submit Annual Progress Report by December 15<sup>th</sup></li> </ul>
.....	
Semester 4 (spring)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC/MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters (9 credits)</li> </ul>
.....	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC/MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters (6 credits)</li> </ul>
.....	
Semester 5 (fall)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BSC/MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters (8 credits)</li> <li>• BSC6935 Thesis Seminar (1 credit)</li> <li>• <i>Defend thesis and graduate</i></li> <li>•</li> </ul>

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other may be from any other relevant department at USF. Please note that the inclusion of committee members from outside MBS will require approval of the Major Professor and MBS Graduate Director.

The committee must be established within two semesters of entering the program. The responsibility for forming the committee lies with the student. This time limit requirement is in place to ensure that the advisory committee is formed in sufficient time to administer and supervise the thesis proposal and oral qualifying examination.

The paperwork required to form or change a committee is available on the MBS website, and from the MBS Graduate Office.

The Graduate Director, the College Dean, and the USF Office of Graduate Studies Dean must approve the supervisory committee.

All students in the MBS graduate program are required to hold annual committee meetings at a minimum, in the Fall Semester of each year. Students are encouraged to hold as many additional meetings as required and permitted by faculty availability.

Students should be aware that their advisory committee exists not only to examine and evaluate them, but to provide help and support during their research careers at USF. Students should make use of each member of their committee as is appropriate and reasonable.

### Thesis Proposal

MS students will be required to produce a thesis proposal that is approved by their advisory committee. It will form the basis and starting point for their oral examination (see below). It is expected that students will work on the proposal during their first summer semester (2<sup>nd</sup> for spring admits), and present it to their thesis advisory committee for evaluation and approval during the oral examination in the Fall Semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Spring admitted students are, where appropriate, eligible to present this document to their thesis committee during the spring of their second year. There are no specific requirements for the content of this proposal; however it must form a cohesive scientific document, with referencing, that outlines the background knowledge, preliminary data and proposed direction of

spring admitted students will attempt their oral in the fall of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

The examination is expected to be conducted after, or in concurrence with, the completion of all formal course work, except for the BSC6930 Lectures in Contemporary Biology and any BSC6905 / MCB 6919 Independent Study requirements.

A request for oral examination must be coordinated through the MBS Graduate Office.

The oral examination will comprise of a formal thesis proposal presentation, which the public may attend, followed by a private period of questioning by the thesis advisory committee.

Students should submit a final version of their thesis proposal to the MBS graduate office no less than 2 weeks before the proposed oral examination date. The MBS graduate program assistant will then be responsible for distributing the proposal to the student's advisory committee. If the proposal is not received within 2 weeks of this meeting the proposed oral examination will be cancelled and it will be the student's responsibility to reorganize this meeting.

The thesis proposal presentation should be in powerpoint format and should last 30-45 minutes. Students must give an outline of their work, including relevant background information, preliminary studies and the proposed framework and timeline for their thesis research.

Following the presentation, the thesis advisory committee will question the student on their thesis proposal.

This questioning will then lead into a more detailed period of questioning, focusing on the student's general knowledge of their field of study.

A unanimous vote of the examining committee is necessary to pass the examination.

An evaluation rubric will be utilized to assign a final grade for the examination.

Students must take the examination at least one semester before the thesis is presented.

Should a student not pass the oral examination they may retake it, one time only, upon the written consent of the Major Professor and the advisory committee.

A student who fails the oral examination twice will either have the choice of petitioning to join the NT-MS program, or pursue graduate education opportunities outside of MBS.

Any deadline extensions for taking the oral examination require the approval of the MBS Graduate Director.

Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two graduate hours during the semester that the comprehensive examination is taken.

### Required Enrollment in Thesis Research

Following successful completion of the oral qualifying exam MS students must enroll in BSC / MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters when engaged in research, data collection, or writing activities relevant to the MS thesis.

Advisors should assign the number of credits in this course appropriate to the demands made on faculty, staff, and university facilities; but in no event will the number be less than 2 hours per semester.

The total number of earned thesis credits cannot be less than 8 for graduation.

MS students who have not completed their oral qualifying examination \_\_\_\_\_ to enroll in BSC / MCB 6971. Such students should instead register in BSC6910 Directed Research.

Z GRADES are given for thesis research until the semester the thesis is approved. The USF Office of Graduate Studies will give a grade of S during the semester of approval; it will only appear on the transcript for this semester.

### Presentation Requirements

Students in the MBS MS program are required to give one presentation of their research, excluding the Masters seminar. Students should meet this requirement via a poster or oral presentation based on their thesis research at a national/regional professional meeting. On campus or local presentations \_\_\_\_\_ count towards this requirement. The graduate committee must approve the presentation.

### MBS Policy for the MS Thesis Seminar

All MS students must be enrolled in 1 hour of BSC 6935 Thesis Seminar during their final semester, in addition to at least 2 hours of BSC/MCB 6971 Thesis: Masters.

The thesis seminar is open to the public and must be announced two weeks prior to the presentation.

The thesis seminar should be held at least two weeks before the USF deadline to submit completed theses to ProQuest.

Students are required to submit to the MBS Graduate Office a request for the Masters thesis seminar at least two weeks before the proposed date

The MBS Graduate Director, the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and each of the student's committee members must sign the request for thesis seminar form. This form should contain the date, time and title of the proposed seminar.

Students should ensure that the USF Office of Graduate Studies holds on record their most recent



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# The Ph.D. Degree

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# MBS GRADUATE PROGRAM TIME LINES

## PhD Program

\_\_\_\_\_ tracking through program in 5 years \*

*\*based on successful completion of written and oral qualifying exams in the time specified, good academic standing and continuation of research during summer sessions*

Semester 1 (fall)      • BSC 7910 Directed Research or Laboratory Rotations if required  
•

- Semester 6
- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
  - Give Research Seminar in BSC6930
- 

- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
- 

- Semester 7
- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
  - *Annual Progress Report by December 15<sup>th</sup>*
  - *Hold Annual Committee Meeting*
- 

- Semester 8
- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
- 

- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
- 

- Semester 9
- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
  - *Annual Progress Report by December 15<sup>th</sup>*
  - *Hold Annual Committee Meeting*
- 

- Semester 10
- BSC7980 Doctoral Dissertation
  - BSC7936 PhD Seminar
  - *Defend thesis and graduate*
-

### Departmental Residence Requirements

A minimum of four years of graduate work beyond the Bachelor's degree is required. The student must earn at least 90 post-baccalaureate semester credits. At least one academic year of residence must be on the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida.



The written proposal *cannot be based in the same* that the student will use to carry  
 out their thesis research

The written proposal *cannot be based on the analysis of* that the student will  
 investigate during their thesis research

The written proposal *cannot be based on the analysis of the* that the student will  
 investigate during their thesis research

Students should refer all questions regarding overlap of written exam topic and dissertation research to their major professors. In situations where the major professor feels unable to judge issues of potential overlap, they should in turn consult the MBS Graduate Committee.

### III. APPROVAL OF EXAM TOPIC

Students will generate an examination topic, and an approved set of specific aims in BSC 6956 Scientific Grant Writing during the Spring Semester of their first year (2<sup>nd</sup> year from spring admitted students). Please see the course instructor and syllabus of this class for specific requirements and deadlines. It is expected that students will consult extensively with their Major Professor, dissertation advisory committee, as well as the course instructor during the generation of these aims. Those students who do not yet have a defined Major Professor should consult directly with the course instructor or Graduate Director. At the beginning of the summer semester, immediately following completion of BSC 6956 Scientific Grant Writing, students will be required to submit their final specific aims to their Major Professor. The Major Professor will then circulate the specific aims to the st

Final grading of the proposals will be carried out during a panel discussion of all faculty involved in the review process. The MBS Graduate Director will serve as the mediator of the meeting and will be responsible for distributing the graded exams and faculty comments to the students. Students that do not pass the written exam will be provided with one additional chance to complete the exam successfully. The timeline and format of any remediation will be determined during the panel discussion. Those students who do not successfully pass the written qualifying exam after 1 round of remediation may petition to switch to the MS program (thesis or non-thesis), or seek graduate education opportunities outside the MBS department. Admittance to either MS program will be determined by the MBS Graduate Committee based on

minutes. Students must give an outline of their work, including relevant background information, preliminary studies and the proposed framework and timeline for their dissertation research.

Following the presentation the dissertation advisory committee will question the student on their proposal.

This questioning will then lead into a more detailed period of questioning, focusing on the student's general knowledge of their field of study.

A unanimous vote of the examining committee is necessary to pass the examination.

An evaluation rubric will be utilized to assign a final grade for the examination.

Should a student not pass the oral examination they may retake it, one time only, upon the written consent of the Major Professor and the advisory committee.

A Ph.D. student who fails the oral examination twice will either have the choice of petitioning to join the MS program (thesis or non-



expected to be in PowerPoint format, and should last from 30-45 mins, allowing at least 15 minutes

## MBS Policy for Doctoral Seminar and Defense

Be sure to consult the ETD Process Checklist before the semester you anticipate for graduation. <https://www.usf.edu/graduate-studies/students/electronic-thesis-dissertation/etd-process-checklist/dissertation.aspx>

All doctoral students must be enrolled in 1 hour of BSC 7936 Ph.D. Seminar during their final semester, in addition to at least 2 hours of BSC 7980 Doctoral Dissertation.

The defense/seminar is open to the public and must be announced two weeks prior to the presentation.

The dissertation defense examination should be held at least two weeks before the USF deadline to submit completed dissertations to ProQuest.

Students are required to submit to the MBS Graduate Office a request for the final oral defense of the Ph.D. degree at least four weeks before the proposed seminar date.

The MBS Graduate Director, the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and each of the student's committee members must sign the request for oral defense form. This form should contain the date, time, title of the proposed defense seminar and the name of the Chair of defense.

Students should ensure that the USF Office of Graduate Studies holds on record their most recent dissertation advisory committee form. Any discrepancies in the makeup of the committee may prove cause for delay of the defense.

Changes to the Ph.D. committee must be completed at least 6 weeks BEFORE the Ph.D. final dissertation examination, and all committee members must agree to the change.

Changes to a graduate committee will not be approved to facilitate graduation.

Students wishing to graduate during the summer must make arrangements with their graduate committee by the end of the Spring Semester.

A minimum of three members, including the Major Professor is required to proceed with the defense.

If a member cannot attend in person, participation is permissible via speakerphone or video conference.

The final Ph.D. Oral Examination is the culmination of the student's graduate education and is a significant formal event.

This examination will be conducted by the student's advisory committee, but shall be chaired by

a senior and distinguished scholar, appointed by the USF Office of Graduate Studies Dean.

The chair may not be a member of the student's advisory committee or any member of the MB faculty.

The defense should demonstrate mastery of the student's general field of research, as well as a grasp of the fundamental principles of biology, and how they apply to the student's dissertation research.

The defense/seminar should comprise of a concise summary of the research completed to satisfy the requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

Upon completion of the defense/seminar, the public will be invited to ask questions.

After completion of public questioning the student's graduate advisory committee will continue questioning the student in private.

Each student is expected to defend his/her research to the unanimous satisfaction of each member of the dissertation advisory committee.

Following a successful oral defense, the Major Professor should bring the original successful defense form to the MBS Graduate Director for approval and processing. This form must bear the original signatures of each member of the dissertation advisory committee.

### Chair of the Ph.D. Defense Examination Committee

The Dissertation Defense shall be presided over by an external dissertation committee member from outside the Department, School, or equivalent, hosting the doctoral program, but may be within the academic discipline.

Or, a non - committee member (a.k.a. Outside Chair). If the Chair is from another institution, this individual must be approved for Affiliate Graduate Faculty status. As such the MBS Graduate Office will require a copy of the outside Chair's CV at least 10 weeks before the proposed seminar date.

The Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair's role encompasses overseeing the proceedings as well as serving as the student's advocate, by ensuring fairness of the examination process.

Faculty holding joint, courtesy, or adjunct appointments in the degree - granting academic unit (i.e. Department or equivalent) cannot serve as the Defense Chair.