College Of Medicine

General Information

<table>
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<tr>
<th>College of Medicine Administrative Staff</th>
<th>(251) 460-6280</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>John V. Marymont, MD, MBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies</td>
<td>Mark Taylor, Ph.D.</td>
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College Of Medicine web site
http://www.usahealthsystem.com/comadmissions

Departments Of Instruction

- Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
- Comparative Medicine
- Microbiology & Immunology
- Pharmacology
- Physiology & Cell Biology
- Interdisciplinary Basic Medical Science
- Biomedical Engineering

Degree Requirements

Graduate

The Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine awards the Ph.D. degree in Basic Medical Science and is designed for students interested in careers in biomedical investigation. Students receive specialized research training in one of the following tracks:

- Biomedical Engineering
- Cancer Biology
- Cell & Molecular Biology
- Infectious Disease and Host Defense
- Lung Biology
- Vascular Biology

General Education Requirements

Requirements For Admission

The requirements for admission to the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Basic Medical Sciences are:

1. The applicant shall possess, by the time of matriculation, a baccalaureate degree or the equivalent from an accredited college or university.
2. Two semesters or three quarters of undergraduate work are recommended in each of the following: physics, general chemistry, organic chemistry, biology, English composition, and mathematics (including calculus and statistics).

3. A grade-point average of at least 3.0 for all undergraduate and graduate work, on a 4.0 scale.

4. Satisfactory standing at the last educational institution attended.

5. Satisfactory scores on all standardized achievement examinations. The Graduate Record Examination is required. In addition, foreign applicants must present evidence of competence and fluency in spoken and written English with a TOEFL score of at least 95-100.

Matriculation is contingent upon review and recommendation by the Admissions Committee of the Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences.

**Procedures For Admission**

Applications for the Basic Medical Sciences Interdisciplinary Graduate Program are accepted for matriculation in the Fall Semester. Matriculation in the Summer Semester is possible in limited circumstances. The Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program does not accept students on a “non-degree” or “provisional” basis.

Applications for admission (U.S. citizens) are available through the Office of Admissions, 2500 Meisler Hall, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama, 36688-0002. Foreign applicants should apply through the Office of International Services at 2200 Meisler Hall, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama, 36688-0002. Application materials can be accessed through the university's web site: https://applynow.southalabama.edu/Datatel.erecruiting.Web.External/Pages/Welcome.aspx.

Information for the graduate program can be obtained on-line http://www.usahealthsystem.com/ (click on admissions) or by contacting the Director of the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences, 5851 USA Drive North, MSB 2366, College of Medicine, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama 36688-0002; Telephone: (251) 460-6153; FAX: (251) 460-6071; E-mail:lflagge@southalabama.edu.

To be considered for review by the Admissions Committee, an applicant must submit the following:

1. A completed application form.
2. A certified transcript from each college or university attended.
3. An official report of all scores on standardized achievement examinations (GRE, TOEFL).
4. Supplemental materials required for the program in Basic Medical Sciences must be submitted directly to the Graduate Office for the Basic Medical Sciences Interdisciplinary Graduate Program at 5851 University Drive North, MSB 2366, College of Medicine, University of South Alabama, Mobile, Alabama 36688-0002. Supplemental materials include:
   a. Three letters of recommendation from instructors, advisors, or other persons qualified to evaluate the student’s academic performance and potential in graduate school.
   b. A personal statement

All other documents for admission review (transcripts, test scores and letters of recommendation) must be official, and become the property of the University of South Alabama.

**Program**

**Required Course Work**

Students will matriculate into the first year interdisciplinary core curriculum for the Ph.D. Program in Basic Medical Sciences without the necessity to choose an advanced program prior to entry. In year one, students complete IDL 576, IDL 577, IDL 580, IDL 581, GIS 501, and three research rotations. The purpose of rotations is to acquaint the students with various research problems under investigation and aid in the selection of a major professor in their area of specialization.

By the end of the first year, each student selects a major professor and matriculates into an advanced program. Advanced curricula are determined by the program, in conjunction with the student’s Dissertation Committee. Students will develop communication skills by presentation of formal lectures and seminars and the completion and approval of a written research proposal.

**Dissertation Committee**

Typically, by the end of one and a half years of study, the student will consult with their major professor, departmental Chair, and the Director of the Graduate Program to select at least four additional graduate faculty members to serve on the Dissertation Committee. At least two members should be from outside the student’s major department or program. In special situations, one member may be selected from another institution with the recommendation of the departmental Chair, the Director of the
Graduate Program, and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School. The student shall convene the first committee meeting no later than six months following the selection of the Dissertation Committee.

The purpose and duties of the Dissertation Committee are:

1. To establish a suitable academic and research training program for each student.
2. To counsel the student in professional development.
3. To administer and judge a written and oral qualifying exam plus a closed and open defense of the dissertation at the end of a student's training program.
4. To assist the student in receiving superior scientific training and obtaining opportunities for postdoctoral training and/or employment upon graduation.

The student, in consultation with the major professor, shall prepare and submit a two-page research project description to the Dissertation Committee no later than the end of one and a half years of study. This document must be reviewed and approved by the Dissertation Committee.

The Dissertation Committee shall meet with the student at six-month intervals to review progress. At each meeting, the student shall submit a one or two-page progress report and make an oral presentation of the progress being made on the project in an orderly and professional manner and discuss any significant problems which have arisen with a view toward gaining constructive criticism from the committee. At the conclusion of each of these reviews, the Dissertation Committee shall meet in executive session to discuss the acceptability of the student's progress. Documentation of the committee meeting and the student's progress report shall be submitted to the Graduate Office after each meeting.

A student whose progress is found to be unsatisfactory by a majority of the committee members at two such successive meetings shall be placed on probation. If the student's progress is then found to continue to be unsatisfactory, the Director of the Graduate Program (in consultation with the Dissertation Committee, the Student Evaluation and Promotions Committee (SPEC), and the departmental Chair in the student's area of specialization) may take necessary action up to and including a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School for academic dismissal of the student.

Changes in the composition of an established Dissertation Committee may be initiated by the student with the consent of the Chair of the Dissertation Committee. Changes in committee composition must be recommended by the Chair of the student's program of study and the Director of the Graduate Program, and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Qualifying Examination

The Qualifying Examination, composed of separate written and oral examinations, will be completed no later than the end of the third year in the program. The written component will focus on the student's approved research project and be prepared in the form of a hypothesis-driven research grant proposal. The written document must be approved by the Examination Committee (the student's Dissertation Advisory Committee and one outside member of the Graduate Faculty appointed by the Department Chair or Program Director who serves as its Chair) prior to scheduling of an oral examination. The student's oral defense of the written proposal and their knowledge of the underlying basic medical science discipline will comprise the oral component of the Qualifying Exam. Should the student fail one or both components of the Qualifying Exam, the student will be allowed to retake that component of the exam once more.

Candidacy

The approved research proposal must be filed in the Graduate Office and will be submitted as the formal Research Proposal to the Graduate School within one month of the student's successful completion of the Qualifying Examination. The Research Proposal must also be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School. Upon satisfactory completion of the Qualifying Exam and acceptance of the Research Proposal, the student will be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. Students will not be permitted to register for Dissertation Research (799) until the candidacy requirement is satisfied.

Academic Standards

To remain in good academic standing in the Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Basic Medical Sciences, a student must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.0. If the cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the Graduate School will place the student on academic probation. The student must return to good academic standing within two semesters from the time of being placed on probation. When it becomes evident that it is impossible to remove the probationary status, the Director will recommend dismissal from the Graduate Program.

At the request of the Director of the Graduate Program, SPEC will review student progress and could recommend dismissal on the basis of unsatisfactory performance on preliminary/qualifying examinations, unsatisfactory research progress, scientific
misconduct or failure to meet other requirements of the Ph.D. program in a timely manner. When appropriate, SPEC will meet with the student prior to formulating a recommendation to the Director of the Graduate Program.

**Student Appeals**

Any student wishing to appeal a SPEC recommendation for dismissal must present their case at a meeting of the SPEC which may also be attended by a student advocate (e.g. Department Chair, Program Director or other designated member of the College of Medicine Graduate Faculty). The student advocate can speak on the student's behalf during this meeting. Following the appeal hearing, SPEC will render a decision in a closed session. A majority vote of committee members present is required. Any recommendation regarding the appeal will be forwarded to the Director of the Graduate Program and Dean of the College of Medicine. Following administrative review, the Dean will communicate the recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School.

In the event that a student is dissatisfied with the appeals decision rendered by SPEC, he or she can initiate an "administrative appeals procedure" as stipulated in the University Undergraduate/Graduate Bulletin. In the case of administrative appeal, the Dean will serve as the final arbitrator for the College of Medicine.

**Degree Requirements**

In addition to the requirements set by the Graduate School, the following requirements must be completed for the Ph.D. degree in the Basic Medical Sciences: completion of the core and advanced curricula, a minimum overall 3.0 grade-point average on all work attempted for credit, qualifying examination, a completed dissertation approved by the student's major professor and a majority of the Dissertation Committee, and closed and open defenses of the research presented in the dissertation.

All requirements for the Ph.D. degree should normally be completed within four to five years from the date of matriculation, and must be completed within seven years. A student who has not satisfactorily completed a dissertation in a seven-year period must apply for a defined extension to complete the degree. This request must be approved by the major professor, the Chair of the department, the Basic Medical Sciences Graduate Program Executive Committee, the Director of the Graduate Program, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

If the student does not complete the degree requirements in the defined extension period, the Director of the Graduate Program, with the advice of the Graduate Executive Committee, may recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School appropriate action up to and including dismissal.

Additional information is available by contacting Department Chairs or Track Coordinators.

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<th>Departments</th>
<th>Chair</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biochemistry and Molecular Biology</td>
<td>William Gerthoffer</td>
<td>(251) 460-6402</td>
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<td>Comparative Medicine</td>
<td>Jonathan Scammell</td>
<td>(251) 460-6239</td>
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<tr>
<td>Microbiology and Immunology</td>
<td>David Wood</td>
<td>(251) 460-7108</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacology</td>
<td>Mark Gillespie</td>
<td>(251) 460-6497</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physiology and Cell Biology</td>
<td>Troy Stevens</td>
<td>(251) 460-7004</td>
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<tr>
<th>Tracks</th>
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<tr>
<td>Biomedical Engineering</td>
<td>Silas Leavesley</td>
<td>(251) 460-6168</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancer Biology</td>
<td>Ming Tan</td>
<td>(251) 445-9853</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cell &amp; Molecular Biology</td>
<td>Ronald Balczon</td>
<td>(251) 460-6776</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infectious Disease &amp; Host Defese</td>
<td>Paul Brett</td>
<td>(251) 414-8179</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lung Biology</td>
<td>Mary Townsley</td>
<td>(251) 460-6815</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vascular Biology</td>
<td>David Weber</td>
<td>(251) 460-6840</td>
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