

# **COMPARATIVE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

## **GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2024-2025



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**VETERINARY  
MEDICINE**

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Dear CBSC Students,

Congratulations on your recent acceptance into the Comparative Biomedical Sciences graduate program within Oklahoma State University's College of Veterinary Medicine! Pursuing an advanced degree shows you are an individual with clear personal and career goals, and your acceptance into our competitive program proves that you also have the credentials, experience, and motivation necessary to reach these goals.

You will find your educational experience at the College both challenging and rewarding. OSU is a research-intensive university as defined by the Carnegie Foundation. This recognition is extended to institutions that sustain a high level of contemporary research and scholarship where graduate students are an essential part of those endeavors. We are dedicated to providing students like you with the knowledge and skills needed in the short term to earn your degree and also in the long term to be successful in the career paths your degree opens. OSU graduates live in more than 100 different countries across the globe, where they have become leaders in their respective fields.

We are very proud of the reputation enjoyed by our College, its faculty, and its graduates. Our dedicated faculty will engage you as an individual. They will strive to meet your educational and professional needs through coursework, independent study, and scholarship and academic advisement. Our graduate courses will help you develop and expand your critical thinking abilities in a highly collegial atmosphere as you gain the knowledge and skills so essential for success in today's world. You will have ample opportunities to present your research results both on and off campus, and you will find many avenues for your own personal and professional development.

Each graduate student has a research advisor who serves as your mentor in becoming a research scientist. You will also have a thesis or dissertation advisory committee to help you through your individual program of study and research. The CVM also has a very active graduate student association through which you can develop collegiality with your fellow CBSC students and interact with faculty in an informal atmosphere. Likewise, OSU has a Graduate and Professional Student Government Association through which you can discuss and engage the faculty and administration on issues that are important to you. I hope you will review their website and become active in the group (<http://gpsga.okstate.edu>). We provide many opportunities for participation in a diverse range of lifestyle activities throughout both the campus and the community.

Please don't hesitate to contact the Graduate Program Office or my office directly, if we can be of further assistance in any way. Again, congratulations on your acceptance, and welcome to OSU's College of Veterinary Medicine!

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Risco, DVM, Dipl. ACT  
Dean

## **Overview of the CBSC Graduate Program**

The College of Veterinary Medicine's Comparative Biomedical Sciences (CBSC) graduate program offers MS and PhD students paths to careers in animal and human health through research in focus areas of:

- Clinical Sciences
- Infectious Diseases/Parasitology
- Physiology
- Stem Cell Biology
- Toxicology/Pharmacology

Sixty faculty members participate as teachers and mentors for 60+ students in the program, which is recognized for excellence in training students in biomedical sciences by the National Research Council study of doctoral programs. The CBSC program offers students learning opportunities and research training tailored to their interests. CBSC students hold bachelor's or master's degrees in biological science or DVM or equivalent veterinary degrees and come from all over the world to study at Oklahoma State University. Our program originated in 1992 and since that time, we have graduated over 190 students.

## **Responsibilities of Faculty and Graduate Students**

The CBSC graduate faculty members are excited about teaching and mentoring you as a graduate student. We do not take this responsibility lightly but are committed to doing everything that we can to make sure that your time in the CBSC program will train you to be a research scientist, well-equipped to take on the challenges of science and discovery so vital for our world to prosper. We, of course, need your full participation in your graduate program. For CBSC students with 0.5 FTE GTA or GRA appointments, you are expected to devote yourselves fully to your assistantship responsibilities and graduate studies during the entire academic year for each year that you are in the program. For full description of assistantship responsibilities, please see pages 9-11. Likewise, for students without assistantships, we want to help you maximize your participation in your graduate studies so that you can complete your degree in a timely fashion. The University, Graduate College and CBSC program have specific requirements and rules that you will have to fulfill to earn your degree. The graduate coordinator is available to help you understand and meet these requirements and rules, but you are individually responsible for completing all requirements for your degree. Our CBSC program has advising and mentoring mechanisms in place to help you assess your progress towards earning your degree. Our goal is to help you complete your degree so that you can gain the scientific viewpoints, expertise and skills needed to be successful in your future career. Our program averages

five years for a PhD and two to three years for a Master's. Milestone checklists are provided to guide students through their academic program (see Appendix D).

## **Degrees Offered**

MS, PhD, Dual DVM/MS, Dual DVM/PhD, Clinical Residency/MS, Clinical Residency/PhD, PhD-MBA, and PhD-Entrepreneurship

### **MS Degree**

#### *Program Admission Requirements*

- Earned BS or higher degree in sciences
- 3.0 GPA or 75% of the maximal GPA preferred
- Statement of purpose stating how earning a graduate degree in CBSC will further your education and career goals
- Three letters of reference from individuals able to assess your potential for success in graduate studies
- Admissions decisions are made by the CBSC Graduate Education Advisory Committee based on the overall quality of the application

#### *Graduate College Admission Requirements*

##### Domestic and Permanent Residents

- Must complete an application for admission
- Non-refundable application fee of \$50
- One original transcript from each college or university attended

##### International

- Must complete an application for admission
- Non-refundable application fee of US \$75
- One original transcript from each college or university attended
- A TOEFL or IELTS score
  - \*English Language Proficiency for Admission
  - <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/international-students/index.html>
- A Financial Affidavit is required for applicants expecting to be F1 or J1 visa holders prior to an I-20 being sent

### *Degree Requirements*

- The MS may be earned with 30 credit hours beyond a bachelor's degree or 21 hours beyond the DVM or equivalent degree including required coursework:
  - CBSC 5013 Comparative Biomedical Sciences I: Cell and Molecular Biology
  - CBSC 5023 Comparative Biomedical Sciences II: Pathophysiology
  - STAT 5013 Statistics for Experimenters I
  - CBSC 6110 Seminar (2 credit hours)
  - CBSC 5000 MS Research and Thesis (max of 6 credit hours)
  - Graduate-level approved electives
- Students who have GTA assistantships will rotate through available labs before selecting a thesis advisor. Those with GRA assistantships have their thesis advisor assigned when their acceptance letters are sent. See page 15
- Select thesis advisory committee (minimum 3 members) See page 15
- Develop Plan of Study in Graduate College Round-Up including required and elective coursework (by end of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester)
- Complete required and elective courses to meet credit hour requirements
- Conduct MS thesis research project and write MS thesis  
(To view the Thesis/Dissertation Review Webinar visit <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html> and scroll down to Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines)
- Present public seminar and defend MS thesis (last semester with at least two credit hour enrollment)

Checklist for Masters Students: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html> under "Graduation"

### **PhD Degree**

#### *Program Admission Requirements*

- Earned BS or higher degree in sciences
- 3.0 GPA or 75% of the maximal GPA preferred
- Statement of purpose stating how earning a graduate degree in CBSC will further your education and career goals
- Three letters of reference from individuals able to assess your potential success in graduate studies
- Admission decisions are made by the CBSC Graduate Education Advisory Committee based on the overall quality of the application

## *Graduate College Admission Requirements*

### Domestic and Permanent Residents

- Must complete an application for admission
- Non-refundable application fee of \$50
- One original transcript from each college or university attended

### International

- Must complete an application for admission
- Non-refundable application fee of US \$75
- One original transcript from each college or university attended
- A TOEFL or IELTS score
  - \*English Language Proficiency for Admission
  - <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/international-students/index.html>
- A Financial Affidavit is required for applicants expecting to be F1 or J1 visa holders prior to an I-20 being sent.

## *Degree Requirements:*

- The PhD requires a total of 60 credit hours, including required coursework:
  - CBSC 5013 Comparative Biomedical Sciences I: Cell and Molecular Biology
  - CBSC 5023 Comparative Biomedical Sciences II: Pathophysiology
  - STAT 5013 Statistics for Experimenters I
  - STAT 5083 Statistics for Biomedical Researchers or STAT 5023
  - CBSC 6110 Seminar (3 credit hours)
  - CBSC 6000 PhD Research and Thesis (up to 45 credit hours)
- Students who have GTA assistantships will rotate through available labs before selecting a dissertation advisor. Those with GRA assistantships have their advisor assigned when their acceptance letters are sent. See page 15
- Select dissertation advisory committee (minimum 4 members) See page 16
- Develop Plan of Study in Graduate College Round-Up including required and elective coursework (by end of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester)
- Complete required and elective courses to meet credit hour requirements
- Pass written and oral qualifying exam and present research topic to dissertation advisory committee (between 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> credit hours)
- Apply for Admission to Doctoral Candidacy in Graduate College Round-Up (after passing the qualifying exam). Must be in candidacy at least six months prior to graduation.
- Conduct PhD dissertation research project and write PhD dissertation
  - (To view the Thesis/Dissertation Review Webinar visit <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/student-resources.html> and scroll down to Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines.)
- Present public seminar and defend PhD dissertation (last semester with at least two credit hours enrollment)

Checklist for Doctoral Students: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html> under “Graduation”

### **DVM/MS or DVM/PhD Degrees**

- Applicant initially applies for admission to the OSU DVM program
- Once a student has been admitted to the DVM program, then they may apply for admission to the CBSC graduate program
- DVM studies are initiated first, while graduate studies courses and research can be taken during summer semesters, as electives or a step-out year during DVM studies
- Matriculation of graduate studies requires at least one to three years post-DVM

### **Veterinary Medical Residency/MS or PhD Degrees**

- Veterinarians must apply for and be accepted to OSU CVM residency program
- Residents (in consultation with their residency section chief) apply for admission to the CBSC graduate program
- Residency/MS students take 21 credit hours and complete their thesis research during the latter part of their residency
- Residency/PhD students take 51 credit hours and typically require one to three additional years post-residency to complete their degree (see Milestone Checklist Appendix D)

### **PhD-MBA and PhD-Entrepreneurship Degrees**

- Must be a current PhD student in the CBSC program
- These programs are above and beyond the credit hours required for the CBSC PhD program and are entered into toward the end of the student's PhD degree studies



## **Graduate Student Financial Support**

Most graduate students in the Comparative Biomedical Sciences graduate program are supported financially by a graduate teaching assistantship or a graduate research assistantship.

An offer of an assistantship is a commitment by a unit/department/school/program to provide financial support to admitted graduate students. Assistantships are an investment made by a unit/department/school/program and are granted primarily to enable the student to pursue an advanced degree and gain valuable experience. Accepting an assistantship brings with it a professional obligation to fulfill all the responsibilities associated with the assistantship assignment. Included in this professional obligation is the expectation that students who have accepted an assistantship will diligently pursue their degree to completion. In recognition of this commitment and to provide adequate time for students holding assistantships to devote to study, employment as a graduate assistant is limited to a total, from all University sources (including external grants and contracts), of 0.50 FTE (an average of 20 hours per week) in the Fall and Spring semesters, and 0.75 FTE (an average of 30 hours per week) between the end of the Spring semester and the beginning of the Fall semester. Students on assistantships are expected to follow the university staff holiday schedule. Exceptions to this limitation may be requested by the employing unit or graduate program to the dean of the Graduate College.

### **Graduate Teaching Assistantships**

A limited number of graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs) are available for those applicants with qualifications to instruct in veterinary anatomy, histology, infectious diseases, or parasitology. All applicants are assessed for their suitability to serve as GTAs. GTAs hold 9-month 0.5 FTE salary positions with subsidized major medical insurance and receive in-state tuition and fees rates and tuition waivers for all courses required for their degree. (See Assistantship Waivers and Health Insurance on page 12.)

A Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) must be admitted to and meet the requirements of the Graduate College, be fully admitted to a graduate degree program, enrolled, and be under the supervision of an appropriate graduate faculty member. In consultation with the supervisor, the GTA works to gain instructional skills and an increased understanding of the discipline. The GTA is provided a stipend and their primary responsibilities are to support the University's instructional mission. Services provided by a GTA may include: classroom or laboratory teaching; advising and mentoring of students; proctoring examinations; grading papers, homework, and/or projects; assisting with preparation and management of materials and programs that are utilized in

imparting knowledge or in the instructional process; or providing other general assistance in the instruction process. GTAs may not be given duties to support faculty research or those primarily clerical in nature.

OSU policy requires all persons who are non-native English speaking to demonstrate an acceptable level of spoken English before being employed in an instructionally related capacity, including laboratory assignments. Graduate students who serve only as laboratory assistants (e.g., setting up and/or maintaining equipment) are not required to comply with the provisions of this section. More information about the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) test can be found here. <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/international-students/ita-exam-overview/>

### **Graduate Research Assistantships**

A limited number of graduate research assistantships (GRAs) are available for those applicants with interests and qualifications in particular areas of research supported by research grants from external funding agencies to a particular faculty mentor. The potential for applicants to serve as GRAs is assessed initially based on applicant statements of purpose and coursework on college transcripts. GRAs hold 12-month 0.5 FTE salary positions with subsidized major medical insurance and receive in-state tuition and fees rates and tuition waivers for all courses required for their degree. (See Assistantship Waivers and Health Insurance on page 12.)

A Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) must be admitted to and meet the requirements of the Graduate College, be fully admitted to a graduate degree program, enrolled, and be under the supervision of an appropriate graduate faculty member. A GRA is provided a stipend and their primary responsibilities are to provide general support to the University's research mission. These responsibilities may or may not relate directly to the student's thesis or dissertation. Duties of the GRA primarily involve applying and mastering research concepts, practices, or methods of scholarship. Services provided by a GRA may include assisting faculty members in a research or creative activity; performing degree-related professional or administrative services that support research, instruction, professional development, or outreach missions of the University; or assuming responsibility for designated scholarly endeavors. "Perform degree-related professional or administrative services" does not include jobs that are outside the student's field of study.

As part of a graduate student's educational experience, OSU makes a number of GRAs available on a routine basis. Graduate students on a GRA are expected to devote full-time effort to their graduate programs. While the GRA appointment provides a modest stipend for an average of 10 or 20 hours per week for a 0.25 or a 0.50 FTE assignment, respectively, in recognition of contributions to the

OSU research enterprise, it does not indicate that no additional time and effort may be required of the graduate student who is actively pursuing a graduate research degree. Depending on the stage of the research project and the graduate student's advancement in the program, the student may be enrolled in research credit hours for academic credit or only enrolled in formal coursework. Irrespective of that enrollment, it is expected that the graduate student is working full-time toward completion of the advanced degree. OSU, like most institutions nationwide, does not define the research credit hour as equating to a specific amount of time and effort, as the nature of research is highly dependent on the individual's progress on the project. For instance, general OSU policy only requires a minimum enrollment in two credit hours when a graduate student is working on a research project and using OSU resources unless they are employed as a GTA/GRA.

### **Assistantship Duties and Requirements**

A student with an 0.50 FTE assistantship is expected to devote, on average, 20 hours per week to their duties as a graduate teaching or research assistant; the remainder of academic effort is devoted to his/her own studies and research. The time devoted to the assistantship may vary from day to day and week to week as long as it does not exceed the average given above.

In addition, all students holding a graduate assistantship are required to be full-time students. (See Enrollment and Advising on page 14). For Fall and Spring semesters, students employed 0.50 FTE must be enrolled in at least six credit hours to be considered full-time, while students employed less than 0.50 FTE must be enrolled in at least nine credit hours to be considered full-time. However, full-time enrollment for students admitted to doctoral candidacy is two credit hours. For the summer term, students employed at any level must be enrolled in at least two credit hours during any summer session to be considered full-time.

International students who are dependent upon an assistantship for their financial guarantee must remember that forfeiture of that assistantship may require the re-submission of a newly revised financial guarantee to the Office of International Students and Scholars. Students who forfeit their graduate assistantships risk rescission of tuition waivers, as well as any health insurance coverage for graduate assistants provided by the University.

(Note that all graduate student benefit programs, such as tuition waivers, are only available to individuals with a primary classification as a graduate student enrolled in a degree program, which does not include certificate-seeking or non-degree seeking graduate students. OSU employees taking graduate classes do not qualify for graduate student benefit programs, irrespective of whether their employment is a benefit-eligible position. One cannot selectively opt out of certain benefits to seek eligibility for other benefits. Please contact the Graduate College or Human Resources if you have questions.)

## **Assistantship Waivers**

Waivers: GTAs and GRAs employed at least 0.50 FTE in the fall/spring semester (average of 20 hours per week) and are enrolled in a minimum of six (or two for doctoral candidates) eligible graduate hours will receive a tuition waiver (hours of enrollment must be required per the graduate degree program). Summer tuition waivers for the same GTA or GRA for spring semester will apply during the summer regardless of summer employment. Tuition waivers cannot be applied to independent study, leveling, undergraduate or outreach type courses. Granting of these tuition waivers is also contingent upon the student submitting an electronic GTA/GRA (GSSI) tuition waiver agreement through the Graduate College website (<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>), by the fifth day of the semester, in which they acknowledge their employment, enrollment and good academic standing responsibilities. Once enrolled, good academic standing (i.e., not on academic probation – beyond probationary admission) is a requirement for OSU tuition waiver eligibility. Once matriculated, a graduate student going on probation is not eligible for tuition waiver benefits. This does not preclude a GTA/GRA appointment(s). Graduate programs can request a one-time exception for exceptional circumstances from the graduate dean. For more information regarding tuition waiver benefits or academic standing, please visit the Graduate College website (<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/>).

Any graduate student employed as a GTA and/or a GRA less than 0.50 FTE total per week will not be eligible for any type of tuition waiver benefit.

## **Health Insurance**

Graduate Teaching or Research Assistants employed in a 0.25 FTE GTA/GRA position during the fall or spring semesters and who are enrolled in at least nine graduate credit hours throughout that entire semester are eligible for subsidized single-person-coverage health insurance through OSU for the fall (or spring) semester. Note: Spring semester eligibility coverage continues through the following summer regardless of employment or enrollment status.

Graduate Teaching or Research Assistants who are not eligible for health insurance coverage during the summer session by virtue of their eligibility during the previous spring semester but who are employed in a 0.25 FTE GTA/GRA position during the eight-week summer session and enrolled in at least two graduate credit hours are eligible for subsidized single-person-coverage health insurance through OSU for the summer term.

The University subsidizes the student's coverage on a semester-by-semester basis. Students receiving the GTA/GRA insurance are required to pay the semester health fee. Information on the policy is available at OSU Human Resources <http://hr.okstate.edu/student-health-plan>.

The Oklahoma State University Board of Regents requires that all visa-holding (i.e. non-immigrant) students at OSU be covered by health insurance. The OSU Student Insurance Policy is the recommended health insurance and will be billed to all non-immigrant student accounts automatically. Payment for the student insurance is included in the costs listed on the financial affidavit that international students are required to submit to receive a F-1 or J-1 visa.

The insurance premium can be waived for non-immigrant students sponsored by the United States Government, a foreign government recognized by the United States of America, or certain international, government sponsored or non-governmental organizations. Such waivers will be based on the government or organization guaranteeing payment of all health care expenses including evacuation and repatriation.

The insurance premium will also be waived for students who provide documented evidence of health insurance coverage by an employer. Non-immigrant students employed by OSU and eligible for both employer-provided insurance and international student health insurance may select between the two, as long as the insurance selected includes evacuation and repatriation coverage.

Students covered by a private medical insurance plan with benefits comparable to or better than the OSU plan, may request a waiver from OSU's international student health insurance requirement. Coverage must be in effect from the first day of their first semester classes for a 12-month period.

To use alternate insurance, students must complete and submit a waiver request no later than the fifth day of classes. Waiver forms can be found on the International Students and Scholars (ISS) website at <https://icl.okstate.edu/iss/>. If a student holds an appointment as at least a 0.25 FTE OSU GTA or GRA position, OSU provides a subsidized student health insurance policy.

### **Graduate Fellowships**

The CBSC program aids student's applications for external graduate fellowships. [usa.gov Graduate Fellowships](https://www.usa.gov/Graduate-Fellowships)

## **Enrollment and Advising**

New graduate students will meet with the CBSC Graduate Program Coordinator to discuss course options for their first semester, with advisor approval. In most cases, students are expected to complete the required core courses (except for CBSC 6110 Seminar) during their first three semesters in the CBSC program. Following completion of the first year, and after completing rotations, GTAs will select a lab who will be their faculty advisor and will help them with selection of courses appropriate for the student's interests and needs to complete their degree studies. GRAs are accepted into the program with an advisor in place.

Students on GTA or GRAs must maintain a 0.5 FTE and be enrolled in six credit hours for both the fall and spring semesters (two hours for doctoral candidates). A minimum of two credit hours are required for summer for domestic students and international students if using any university facilities to support research and/or thesis/dissertation writing.

Students are required to follow their Plan of Study to ensure that proper courses are being taken and timelines are being followed. Students are required to complete a pre-enrollment advising meeting with the Graduate Program Coordinator before each fall and spring semester.

Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment during the entirety of their graduate studies unless otherwise approved by the CBSC graduate program. In addition, the Graduate College requires that all students be enrolled in a minimum of six credit hours during their final academic year and two credit hours during their final semester (session) of graduate studies immediately prior to graduation. For PhD students, degree completion and graduation cannot occur earlier than 6 months following admission to doctoral candidacy.

## **Progress toward Earning Your Degree**

### **Annual Review**

Progress towards earning your graduate degree is tracked and assessed using the CBSC Annual Review and Milestone Checklist. Separate Milestone Checklists are available for the MS and PhD degrees and list each of the steps which must be completed to earn your degree and the timeframe for completing these steps.

You will meet with your advisor and advisory committee at least once yearly (with a deadline of the end of each spring semester) to assess your progress towards earning your degree. Your progress will be assessed by your advisor and

advisory committee on your Annual Review. If you are assessed to be making adequate progress towards earning your degree, you will be able to enroll for courses for the summer and fall semesters. You will meet with the Graduate Program Coordinator each spring and fall semester to discuss your enrollment, progress, deadlines, etc. Your advising hold will be removed after these meetings. If your advisor and advisory committee assess that you are not making adequate progress towards earning your degree, they will develop a plan for you to correct any deficiencies in your progress and a timetable to accomplish the plan. If you fail to accomplish the corrective plan, you may be dismissed from graduate studies.

### **Selecting Dissertation Advisor**

Those students who have GTA assistantships will rotate through available labs before selecting an Advisor. Those with GRA assistantships have their Advisor assigned when their acceptance letters are sent.

**Role of the Advisor:** The Advisor's primary responsibility is as a mentor. As a result, it is expected that the Advisor will establish the closest working relationship with the student. The Advisor must hold an appropriate OSU Graduate Faculty appointment but need not hold an OSU faculty appointment if not serving as Chair (see below, "Roles, Responsibilities and Qualifications of the Chair and Advisory Committee Members"). The Advisor guides and counsels the student in the research or scholarly effort, ensuring compliance with applicable research regulations. The Advisor serves as the primary resource for the graduate student in identifying potential committee members for the student's Advisory Committee. The Advisor is responsible for reporting to the Advisory Committee on the student's progress. It is the Advisor's responsibility to mentor the student toward a research, scholarly or creative project that is original and worthy of the degree sought. The Advisor is typically involved in the preparation of scientific or creative presentations, manuscripts for publication, etc.

### **Change of Advisor**

Occasionally, situations arise in which the original student/advisor relationship cannot continue. Two examples are provided below:

**Student's Research Advisor Leaves the Institution:** Should a student's Research Advisor leave OSU before the student completes his/her degree, the following steps may be taken after consultation with the Research Advisor and Graduate Program Coordinator:

- For a master's student or doctoral candidate who need only complete their research project to finish the degree, the student may complete the research project under the direction of the original Research Advisor. If the Advisor is also the Chair of the student's Advisory Committee, a new Chair would be appointed. The original Research Advisor can continue as a member of OSU's Graduate Faculty, participate in the student's thesis/dissertation defense, and fulfill his/her obligations to the student.
- For a master's or doctoral student (defined as not having met the requirements for doctoral candidacy) who is in the early stages of their program and research project, he/she may choose a new Advisor and start a new research project.
- A student may also choose to transfer to the Advisor's new educational institution, with the Advisor's approval.

**The student will have 30 calendar days to identify a new Advisor (unless an alternate timeframe is agreed upon in writing between the CBSC graduate program and the student). If a student is unable to secure a new Advisor within the stated timeframe, there is no obligation on the part of the program, Graduate College or Oklahoma State University to provide a new one. Without an Advisor, the student will not be eligible to continue in the CBSC graduate program.**

***Student/Advisor Relationship:*** When it is determined that a graduate student and Advisor can no longer work together, and all efforts for conflict resolution within the program have been exhausted, it is the responsibility of the student to identify a new Advisor or change to another degree option or program. **The Graduate Program Coordinator can assist with this process, but Oklahoma State University is under no obligation to provide the student a new Advisor. The student will have 30 calendar days to identify a new Advisor (unless an alternate timeframe is agreed upon in writing between the CBSC graduate program and the student). If a student is unable to secure a new Advisor within the stated timeframe, the student will not be eligible to continue in the CBSC graduate program.**

Graduate Research Assistants are supported by research grants from external funding agencies to a particular faculty mentor who serves as the student's advisor. If a GRA finds a different advisor, the new advisor must financially support the student. The CBSC graduate program is under no obligation to financially support a GRA who came into a specific laboratory.

Students can identify a new advisor and have a change of laboratory only one time. This change must occur at or before the student has been in the CBSC graduate program for one year. After one year in the program, if a graduate student and advisor can no longer work together, the student must leave the program.

Often, a change of Advisor will result in the student pursuing a different research project, which may necessitate the forming of a new Advisory Committee more appropriate to the new project. The student and the new Advisor will be responsible for filing any applicable Graduate College forms for Plan of Study and Advisory Committee composition.

### **Important Links:**

[Graduate Faculty Database](#)

Oklahoma State University Guidelines for Best Practices in Graduate Education:  
<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>

### **Selection of Advisory Committee Members**

Recommendation of Advisory Committee members should be a collaborative activity between the graduate student and their Advisor and/or Committee Chair. Although the student has the ultimate responsibility for recommending his/her Advisory Committee membership, his/her Advisor is a valued resource that can provide insight that will help the student make informed decisions. The student should meet with potential Advisory Committee members prior to recommending them to better understand their experience, availability, mentoring style and willingness to serve as an Advisory Committee member. Remember the possibility of including non-research, adjunct or affiliate faculty on your committee. Just make sure the faculty is a current member of the OSU Graduate Faculty. The corresponding milestone checklist outlines number of committee members required for what program (see appendix D).

### ***Roles, Responsibilities and Qualifications of the Chair and Advisory Committee Members:***

***Chair:*** The primary responsibility of the Chair of a graduate student's Advisory Committee is to monitor the progress of the student toward degree completion. The Chair is commonly the research Advisor, but this is not a requirement. The Chair must have a strong familiarity with the academic requirements appropriate to the degree sought. The Chair must hold an appropriate OSU Graduate Faculty



appointment, typically a tenure-track appointment in the academic unit in which the graduate degree is housed. The Chair's duties include convening meetings of the Advisory Committee, as appropriate; ensuring compliance with University and Graduate College policies, procedures and requirements; overseeing the Plan of Study and thesis/dissertation submission processes; and ensuring that the research topic undertaken is appropriate to satisfy degree requirements with the results openly accessible. If the Chair is not also the Advisor, the Chair should serve as a liaison with the Advisor with regard to progress of research in fulfillment of degree requirements.

**Expert Committee Member(s):** The Advisory Committee must include at least one Expert Member whose expertise and counsel serve the graduate student in attaining the research, scholarly, creative or professional preparation goal that is worthy of the degree sought. Expert Members must hold an appropriate OSU Graduate Faculty appointment. Typically, such individuals are faculty members in the student's graduate program. An Expert Member's responsibilities include guiding the research, scholarly or creative activities throughout the process, approving the Plan of Study, reviewing draft documents, attending regular meetings of the Advisory Committee, and interacting regularly with Advisory Committee members to facilitate and monitor degree completion progress.

**Outside Committee Member:** The Advisory Committee must also include one *Outside Member* who serves as the representative of the Graduate College and ensures a high level of integrity in the processes that the Advisory Committee utilizes to review and evaluate the student throughout the graduate program. The Outside Member must be a member of the OSU faculty and Graduate Faculty. The Outside Member may be an adjunct faculty or affiliate member, but must not be a faculty member from the academic unit or graduate program of either the graduate student, Advisor or the Chair of the Advisory Committee. The Outside Member ensures that appropriate academic standards are applied in evaluating the student, and that the student is dealt with in a fair manner consistent with OSU policies. The Outside member also provides expert advice when appropriate to the student in the conduct of research and writing of the dissertation.

The advisory committee should be formed by the time the Plan of Study is submitted, which is generally by the end of the third semester for PhD students and the end of the second semester for MS students.

### **Important Links:**

Best Practices: Advisory Committees and Defenses:

<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>

Plan of Study Workshops: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>

Plan of Study Portal: <https://apps.okstate.edu/pos>

### **Examinations**

No qualifying exam is required for the MS degree.

A qualifying exam is required for the PhD degree. The format will be determined by the advisor and advisory committee. Students are expected to take their qualifying exam between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> credit hours of coursework. The completion of the qualifying exam is at the decision of the faculty advisor and dissertation advisory committee.

## **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Once the qualifying exam has been completed an Admission Candidacy Form must be submitted in Graduate College Round-Up. Admission to doctoral candidacy marks the transition from the course study portion of the PhD program to the research phase of the PhD degree and is associated with certain privileges such as a reduction in full-time enrollment. You must be in candidacy at least six months prior to graduation.

## **Writing Your Thesis or Dissertation**

Your advisor and thesis/dissertation advisory committee will help you decide when you have made sufficient progress on your research project to begin writing your thesis or dissertation. The Graduate College has a thesis/dissertation page which will provide guidance on writing your thesis/dissertation. There are also workshops or an online module that you will need to attend or complete during the final semester of your graduate program while you are writing your thesis/dissertation. Your advisor or members of your advisory committee are also valuable resources for understanding how to write your thesis/dissertation.

## **Important Links:**

Thesis/Dissertation Templates:

<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>

Best Practices: Advisory Committees and Defenses:

<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>

## **Thesis or Dissertation Seminar and Defense**

Once you have completed writing your draft thesis/dissertation, your advisor can help you decide when you are ready to present your thesis/dissertation research at a public seminar and to defend your thesis/dissertation before your advisory committee to complete the requirements for your degree. The thesis/dissertation seminar and defense must be scheduled to occur during fall or spring semester or during summer session during normal university working hours. The university does not allow degree completion (thesis/dissertation seminar or defense) to occur during university holidays, breaks or between semesters or sessions. The seminar and defense must be advertised at least one week before its scheduled date. Remember to communicate with the Graduate Program Coordinator at [cbsc@okstate.edu](mailto:cbsc@okstate.edu) when scheduling your thesis/dissertation defense.

During the final portion of your graduate studies, there are several forms that must be completed and deadline dates which must be met in order to assure that all requirements for your degree have been accomplished. The items and their deadlines are available on the Graduate College academic calendar on their website <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>.

## **GTA/GRA Vacation/leave policy**

### **University Catalog**

- Graduate students on assistantship appointments do not accrue vacation leave; nor do they accrue sick leave.
- Arrangements for any variations in work hours, including time off for attending a conference/professional meeting, vacation, jury duty, illness, or related use of sick time should be made individually with the faculty sponsor/supervisor.
- If a graduate student on a GRA/GTA appointment is ill or anticipates being away from campus for an extended period, (i.e., two weeks or more during the spring or fall semesters), a leave of absence is strongly recommended. Please refer to the OSU Graduate College's leave of absence policy for instructions on how to request, submit, and obtain university approval for a leave of absence; see section 7.1 of the OSU Catalog.

## **Change of Status**

### **Change of Degree Program**

Once these changes have been made, they are permanent.

#### **MS to PhD**

A student admitted to the MS program may, after a minimum of one academic year, petition the graduate coordinator for approval to by-pass the master's degree and proceed directly to the PhD. This petition must demonstrate that the student has exceptional academic and research competency and must contain a letter from the thesis advisor, endorsed by a majority of the thesis advisory committee (if one has been appointed), justifying the proposed change. If the request is approved, the student will still be required to apply through the Graduate College for admission to the CBSC PhD program.

#### **PhD to MS**

A PhD degree student may request to change to the MS degree with consent of the dissertation advisor, dissertation advisory committee (if one has been appointed) and the graduate program coordinator. The Graduate College must be notified of this change by the student by emailing [grad-academici@okstate.edu](mailto:grad-academici@okstate.edu).

#### **Changes in Academic Status**

The Policy for Academic Probation and Dismissal from the Graduate College are provided in the Oklahoma State University Graduate Catalog.

## Academic Standards

- Required minimum grade point average for continuation in program is 3.00 or higher. Failure to maintain a 3.00 or greater GPA results in the student being placed on academic probation and can result in dismissal from graduate studies.
- Grades of B or A are required for all required coursework. A “C” grade may be allowed on plan of study pending committee approval.
- Grades of D or F or two UR grades may result in dismissal from graduate studies.
- One UR grade results in probation the following semester: two UR grades result in loss of assistantship and possible dismissal from the program.
- Students receiving an I or IUR grade must make arrangements with the instructor to complete the course requirements within a period of one year from the date of an incomplete grade. Failure to do so will result in a default grade and can result in dismissal from graduate studies.
- Assessment of whether the student is making satisfactory progress towards earning their degree is made by the student’s Advisor (and advisory committee if one exists) at least once annually prior to the end of spring semester using the Annual Review. Failure by the student to make adequate progress is referred to the Graduate Education Advisory Committee for their consideration and may result in dismissal from graduate studies.
- Satisfactory academic progress includes continuing to work with an Advisor. Students who are without an Advisor for more than 30 days, the student will not be eligible to continue in the CBSC graduate program.

***Dismissal from the Graduate Program:*** Graduate students may be dismissed from their program for failure to meet academic standards. In such instances, the students will be notified of the intent to dismiss and informed of their rights for due process and appeal (*See p. 24-32*). If a student appeals the decision to dismiss, s/he must be allowed to maintain enrollment and continue working toward the graduate degree in the same manner as any other graduate student in the program during the appeals process. Continued enrollment is not required to appeal. Once the decision of the appropriate appeals panel is made, it will be final.

- Students are expected to conduct themselves with a high standard of academic integrity. Violations of the standards of academic integrity may result in dismissal from graduate studies.
- Students are expected to follow legal requirements for research ethics and safety including training in ethical conduct of research training and compliance with all appropriate rules for university Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, Radiation Safety Office, Laser Safety Program and any other applicable health and safety unit or guideline.

## Academic Integrity

Oklahoma State University's Academic Integrity policy identifies behaviors that violate the fundamental values of academic integrity. These behaviors are described below:

**Unauthorized Collaboration:** Completing an assignment or examination with other students, turning in work that is identical or very similar to others' work, or receiving help on assignments without permission of the instructor. This may also include excessively relying upon and borrowing the ideas and work of others in a group effort.

**Plagiarism:** Presenting the written, published or creative work of another as the student's own work. Whenever the student uses wording, arguments, data, design, etc., belonging to someone else in a paper, report, oral presentation, or other assignment, the student must make this fact explicitly clear by correctly citing the appropriate references or sources. The student must fully indicate the extent to which any part or parts of the project are attributed to others. The student must also provide citations for paraphrased materials. The following are examples of plagiarism:

Copying another student's assignment, computer program or examination with or without permission from the author.

Copying another student's computer program and changing only minor items such as logic, variable names, or labels.

Copying or paraphrasing material from an Internet or written source without proper citation.

Copying words and then changing them a little, even if the student gives the source.

Verbatim copying without using quotation marks, even if the source is cited.

Expressing in the student's own words someone else's ideas without giving proper credit.

**Multiple Submissions:** Submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit to more than one class (or to the same class if the student repeats a course) without permission of the instructors.

**Cheating on Examinations:** Gathering unauthorized information before or during

an examination from others, using notes or other unapproved aids during an examination, failing to observe the rules governing the conduct of examinations (for example, continuing to work on an examination after time is called at the end of an examination), or having another student take an examination for the student.

**Fabricating Information:** Making up references for a bibliography, falsifying laboratory or research data (for example, tampering with experimental data to obtain “desired” results or creating results for experiments that were not done), or using a false excuse for an absence or an extension on a due date.

**Helping Another Person Cheat:** Providing information about an examination to another student (for example, sending an electronic message with answers during an examination), giving unauthorized help on assignments, or failing to prevent misuse of work by others (for example, allowing another student to copy an examination, assignment, or computer program). A student must take reasonable care that examination answers are not seen by others or that term papers or projects are not plagiarized or otherwise misused by others. This category also includes taking an examination on behalf of another student.

**Unauthorized Advance Access to Examinations:** Obtaining an advance copy of an examination without the instructor’s permission or getting questions and answers from someone who took the examination earlier.

**Altering or Destroying the Work of Others:** Changing or damaging computer files, papers or other academic products that belong to others.

**Fraudulently Altering Academic Records:** Altering graded papers, computer materials/records, course withdrawal slips, or academic documents. This includes forging an instructor or advisor signature and altering transcripts.

All data, notebooks, records, and files in any form are the property of the laboratory PI and may not be removed without expressed written permission.

Instructors may identify other behaviors that violate academic integrity.

## Sanctions for Alleged Violations of Academic Integrity

Three sanctions are recommended based on the seriousness of the violation.

**Level one sanction:** award a grade of "zero" or "F" for the assignment or examination for violations including but not limited to the following:

- Copying a few sentences of material (1-5 sentences or a minor portion) from a written or Internet source without proper citation.
- Cheating on a quiz or minor assignment.
- Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment.
- Working on an assignment with others when the instructor asked for individual work.
- Using a false excuse to obtain an extension on a due date.
- Signing an attendance roster for someone who is absent or asking someone else to sign the roster to avoid being counted absent.

**Level two sanction:** award a grade of "F" for the course for violations including but not limited to the following:

- Turning in a paper copied from another student.
- Turning in a paper obtained in full or in part from a term paper "mill" or website.
- Copying material almost word for word from a written source and turning it in as one's own work.
- Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography.
- Getting questions or answers from someone who has taken an examination.
- Obtaining an unauthorized copy of an examination in advance.
- Using unauthorized notes during an examination.
- Having another student take an examination.
- Inappropriate use of technology (camera phones, text messaging, programmable calculator, etc.) during an examination.
- Copying from another student during an examination with or without his/her knowledge.
- Helping someone else cheat on an examination.
- Stealing an examination or problem answer from the instructor.
- Altering a grade or scoring on an examination or paper to obtain unearned credit.
- In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing one's own.
- Fabricating or falsifying laboratory or research data.

- Inappropriately sharing or using work on an online assignment or examination.
- Turning in work done by someone else.
- Submitting substantial portions of the same assignment to more than one class without permission of the instructors.
- For level two sanctions the transcript will indicate that a grade of “F” signifies that the student failed the course because of an alleged violation of academic integrity.

**Level three sanction:** recommend **dismissal from the graduate program** and suspension from the university for the following types of violations:

- Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity in a thesis or dissertation proposal, qualifying examination, comprehensive examination, thesis or dissertation, report for a creative component, thesis or dissertation defense, or professional education portfolio.
- Fabrication or falsification of research or laboratory data used in a creative component, report, thesis, or dissertation.
- Level two violations committed by veterinary medicine students.

## **Problems and Appeals**

### **Termination of Graduate Studies in Comparative Biomedical Sciences**

#### **University Policy**

A student who fails to meet the Oklahoma State University requirements for the MS or PhD may become ineligible for continued graduate degree studies and termination from the CBSC graduate program. A graduate student may be disqualified from continuing in the graduate program for a variety of reasons: the student has consistently performed below the acceptable standards for graduate studies (minimum GPA of 3.0) or the student has committed student misconduct or academic integrity violations resulting in termination.

#### **CBSC Program Policy**

Ineligibility for continued graduate studies in the CBSC graduate program and termination of graduate studies can also arise from a failure by the student to meet program-specific requirements or to make adequate progress towards earning their degree following written communication of deficiencies from thesis advisor and/or thesis or dissertation advisory committee.

#### **MS and PhD Students**

A student may be recommended for termination for:

- Failure to earn B grades in CBSC core courses.



- Failure to make adequate progress toward their degree as evaluated by the thesis advisor and thesis or dissertation advisory committee using the Annual Review.
- Failure to pass the thesis or dissertation defense.

### **PhD Students**

- Failure to pass the qualifying examination.

### **Procedure**

The CBSC graduate program coordinator will receive any communication from University units regarding termination of a student for his/her failure to meet University requirements or violations of student conduct or academic integrity and act on these to dismiss the student from the CBSC graduate program.

Issues regarding ineligibility of a student to continue CBSC graduate studies for failure to meet CBSC program-specific requirements will be referred to the College of Veterinary Medicine Graduate Education Advisory Committee for their deliberation and determination of action as provided in their By-Laws section 3.16. Referral must include written documentation outlining deficiencies with confirmation that deficiencies were communicated to the student. Appeals of any decisions regarding termination will follow the OSU Graduate Student Appeals Policy.

## **OSU Graduate Student Appeals Policy**

(Approved by the Graduate Council – September 21, 2012)

### **Introduction**

The fundamental principle of the Graduate Student Appeals Policy is that an equitable informal resolution is in the best interests of all parties and that formal Graduate Council Appeals should be reserved for rare situations. The Policy is applicable to all Oklahoma State University (OSU) graduate students in graduate degree or certificate programs and is not applicable to admission decisions.

As part of the application and matriculation process, all graduate students have the opportunity to review OSU graduate education policies, procedures and guidelines, including this Policy governing appeals. It is the responsibility of prospective and current students to read and understand this information, and any questions should be directed to the Graduate College. Matriculation in a graduate degree or certificate program is an implied consent by the student to abide by OSU policies and procedures, such as this Policy.

Students not adhering to their academic program or Graduate College appeal policies and procedures, not meeting appeal deadlines outlined in this Policy or otherwise acting in a manner inconsistent with this or other College or University policies may forfeit their rights to further appeals.

The Policy herein is intended for resolving graduate education issues not related to the Student Code of Conduct or grades in non-research related courses. Student Conduct Code violations are addressed by the Student Conduct Education and Administration, Housing and Residential Life, and Fraternity and Sorority Affairs (<http://studentconduct.okstate.edu>). Grade appeals in non-research related courses are reviewed by the Grade Appeals Board (Policies & Procedures, P&P, 2-0821), and issues related to academic integrity are reviewed by the Academic Integrity Panel (P&P 2-0822).

In addition, the University is committed to providing an environment of study and work free from gender discrimination and sexual harassment as prohibited by Title VII and Title IX (P&P 1-0702). Any individual who believes she/he may have experienced gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, or who believes that she/he has observed such actions taking place, may receive information and assistance regarding the University's policies and responsive processes from any of the following offices:

- Director of Affirmative Action / Title IX Coordinator, 408 Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-5371;
- Student Conduct Officer, 326 Student Union Building, 405-744-5470;
- Vice President of Student Affairs, 201 Whitehurst Hall; 405-744-5328; and
- System Senior Vice President, 101D Whitehurst Hall, 405-744-5627.

This Policy herein may apply to situations such as program requirements, plans of study, program dismissals, qualifying, comprehensive and preliminary exam procedures, and thesis/dissertation defenses. Moreover, typically only procedural issues are considered appealable – appeals must be based upon the unit/department/program's failure to adhere to their published rules and regulations as well as the Graduate College's or University's published rules and regulations. In general, professional and scholarly assessments made by faculty and advisory committees are not appealable.

Notes:

- The Dean of the Graduate College has the discretion to set other deadlines throughout the appeal process when a time sensitive matter is under consideration.
- In agreement with OSU Policy, written communication includes electronic formats such as email.

## **Appeals Process**

A student wishing to appeal the unit/department/program's failure to adhere to their published rules and regulations should follow the procedures outlined below. During the appeal process, the student should maintain enrollment and continue working on degree requirements. The Graduate College serves as a resource to all parties, including the students, involved in the appeal. Students, Graduate Faculty, and staff are encouraged to reach out to the Graduate College for assistance.

### **Time Frames**

All appeals at any level whether informal or formal require the student to provide written notification of appeal to the graduate program coordinator within 14 calendar days of the precipitating event, such as a program dismissal. If the graduate coordinator is an involved party, please seek advice from the Graduate College.

### **Deadlines**

Unless stated otherwise, all deadlines are by 5 pm central time on the day of the deadline or the next regular business day (Monday–Friday) when the deadline falls on a weekend (Saturday–Sunday) or OSU official holiday, such as Labor Day.

Time frames and deadlines that extend beyond the end of the academic terms (fall and spring semesters and summer sessions) are handled at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate College.

### **Documentation**

Written records are important to enhancing all parties' understandings of an issue. The situation being appealed should be documented in writing even during the informal process. The decision on all appeals must be provided in writing to all involved parties, especially the student. When the internal (unit/department/program) appeal processes have been exhausted

and a final decision is being communicated to the involved parties, the Dean of the Graduate College should be copied on the correspondence.

- All appeals, including those to the Dean of the Graduate College, must be in writing and contain the following in no more than two pages (12 point font; single spaced or greater; 1” margins):
  - information on the circumstances of the appeal,
  - specific procedural issues involved, and
  - remediation action sought.
- Appeals to the Dean of the Graduate College must be delivered to the Graduate College in person or to grad.dean@okstate.edu.

### **Informal Appeals Process**

A student’s first attempt to resolve a situation must be made directly with the involved parties. When not an involved party, the faculty advisor, research mentor, advisory committee member or graduate program coordinator is an excellent resource for the student.

Units/departments/programs organize their own appeals processes. If specified, the student should follow any graduate program or academic unit/department appeal procedures, up to and including the unit/department/program head. For graduate students, any appeal to the “dean” is the Dean of the Graduate College.

- Once unit/department/program-level appeals are exhausted, a written appeal should be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College.
  - Graduate students are encouraged to receive counsel from the Associate Dean of the Graduate College or her/his designee about the appeals process.
- In the absence of unit/department/program-level appeal procedures, the appeal process is first to the graduate program coordinator (if not an involved party), followed by an appeal to the unit/department head or graduate program director (if not an involved party).
- Once the unit/department/program-level appeals have been exhausted, the Dean of the Graduate College or her/his designee will determine if appropriate grounds for an appeal exist and will first attempt to resolve the issue informally.

- If grounds for an appeal based on the determination of the Graduate College do not exist, all involved parties will be informed in writing. (This decision is final and is not subject to further appeal within the University structure.)
- The outcome of the informal appeals process will be provided in writing to all involved parties by the Graduate College.
- Every attempt will be made to resolve appeals as quickly as possible, and all involved parties are expected to make themselves available. (When possible, the Graduate College will complete the informal appeals process within 60 calendar days.)

### **Formal Graduate Council Appeal Process**

A formal appeal to the Graduate Council can be made if all internal informal appeals have failed and the Dean of the Graduate College or her/his designee determines there are grounds for a formal Graduate Council Appeal. As noted above, appeals to the Graduate Council are based upon the unit/department/program's failure to adhere to its, the Graduate College's or the University's published rules and regulations. It would be exceedingly rare for an appeal to the Graduate Council to be beyond such a scope.

The Request to Appeal to the Graduate Council must be received by the Graduate College within 14 calendar days of delivery of the outcome of the informal appeals process.

- The Request to Appeal should contain the aforementioned information and supporting documentation.
- Appeals to the Dean of the Graduate College must be delivered to the Graduate College in person or to [grad.dean@okstate.edu](mailto:grad.dean@okstate.edu).

Once the Request to Appeal is received by the Dean of the Graduate College, the following process begins:

- The Dean of the Graduate College or her/his designee will meet with the student to discuss the situation and the appeals process as soon as possible, typically within seven calendar days. The student may waive this meeting.
- If after the Request to Appeal meeting, the student wishes to make a formal appeal to the Graduate Council, he or she will submit a final document to the Graduate College that will be shared with the involved parties. It should contain the following information in no more than two pages (12 point font; single spaced or greater; 1" margins):
  - information on the circumstances of the appeal,

- specific procedural issues involved, and
  - remediation action sought.
- Beyond the two page limit, the following should also be included:
    - listing of the involved parties (names and brief statement of involvement),
    - optional witness list (name, contact information and relevance to the appeal),
    - name and title of an advisor (optional – see description below), and
    - correspondence or other documentation relevant to the appeal. (Optional witness statements should be introduced here if relevant. In general, no witness will be permitted to participate in the hearing, if her/his contribution is not documented here.)
  - The involved parties will be given a deadline (typically seven calendar days) by the Dean of the Graduate College to respond in writing to the appeal. Unless otherwise directed, a single response should be submitted that is limited to two pages (12 point font; single spaced or greater; 1” margins). The response will be shared with the student. The Response should include the following:
    - Correspondence or other documentation relevant to the appeal.
  - Beyond the two page limit, the following should also be included:
    - name and title of an advisor (optional – see description below) and
    - optional witness list (name, contact information and relevance to the appeal) and witness statements should be introduced here if relevant. In general, no witness will be permitted to participate in the hearing, if their contribution is not documented here.

After receipt of a formal Graduate Council Appeal, the Dean of the Graduate College or her/his designee will form and be the ex officio chair of an ad hoc Graduate Council Appeals Committee that considers the case. This ad hoc committee shall be composed of the following:

- two members from Graduate Council nominated by the vice-chair of Graduate Council – the Dean of the Graduate College may not be one of the nominees, and
- one executive board member from the Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) nominated by the president of the GPSGA.

The chair and three members are required to be present and hear the case. In the case of scheduling conflicts, the vice-chair of the Graduate Council and/or the president of GPSGA will provide alternate nominees.

- The Committee membership is not publicized to the involved parties or the student.
- Potential Committee members will be vetted for conflicts of interest with the student, involved parties and witnesses.

In instances where conflicts arise related to the composition of the Committee as described above, the Dean of the Graduate College may request a variance from the Provost to ensure the formation of an equitable committee.

The Committee will be provided with the documents submitted by the student and the involved parties for review.

### **Hearing**

A hearing will be scheduled by the Dean of the Graduate College, typically within 30 calendar days of receiving the Appeal and Response documents. The Dean of the Graduate College will present a summary statement of the student appeal to the ad hoc Graduate Council Appeals Committee. The Committee will entertain separate testimony from the student lodging the Appeal and the individuals named in said Appeal. Neither will be present for the other's testimony. The student and the involved parties will each have five minutes to make an opening statement, if they so choose. In case of several involved parties, one individual should be selected as the representative for the involved parties.

The statement will be followed by investigative questions from the Committee to clarify the information provided by the student, involved parties and witnesses. All parties are dismissed after their time slots, and the Committee adjourns to closed session for deliberations.

A majority vote of this Committee shall determine the outcome of the case. The Committee may vote to deny or support the appeal in whole or in part or impose an alternative resolution. This decision and alternative resolution are binding and shall not be subject to further appeal within the University structure. The student, a representative of the involved parties, and other relevant individuals will be informed of the outcome of the Committee's deliberations by the Dean of the Graduate College – normally within seven calendar days of the hearing.

*Witnesses:* Individuals with direct knowledge of a situation may provide substantiating evidence to be considered by the Committee. Any party is permitted to have witnesses to assist with establishing the facts in the case. Witnesses are not required, and the *choice* to present witnesses has no bearing on the Committee's decision. Witness statements should be included in the documentation submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College for review by the Committee. Witnesses may accompany the student or involved party in the hearing. Witnesses typically do not give prepared statements, but generally are asked to respond to Committee member questions.

*Advisors:* Any party is welcome to have an advisor present. This individual is a silent observer, does not participate in the hearing process and has no direct communication with the Committee or other parties, but may be consulted with by her/his advisee during the hearing process.

- Within the time frame allotted, the student or involved party may call a short recess inside or outside the hearing room to consult with an advisor.

*Scheduling:* While every attempt to schedule all parties will be made, the focus of scheduling is on the student, Committee, and representative involved party. It is the responsibility of the student and representative involved party to ensure any other involved parties, witnesses and/or advisors are available for the hearing.

*Confidentiality:* Except as noted above, the appeals process is confidential and all documents, conversations and identities should be treated as such, to the extent allowed by law.



## APPENDIX A: SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

- **UCLA Graduate School Survival Guide:**  
<https://grad.ucla.edu/asis/library/survivalguide.pdf>
- **What Predicts Graduate School Success:**  
<http://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2012/09/cover-success.aspx>
- **Your First Year in a Ph.D. Program:**  
<http://chronicle.com/article/Your-First-Year-in-a-PhD/142953/>
- **The Successful Graduate Student: A Review of the Factors for Success:**  
<http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/10569.pdf>

## APPENDIX B. DEPARTMENT/COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

### Graduate College:

- Graduate College: <http://gradcollege.okstate.edu/>
- Current Student Resources:  
<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/resources/current-student-resources.html>
  - Academic Calendar
  - Fall/Spring/Summer Enrollment Guidelines
  - Graduate Assistantships
  - Graduate College Academic Calendar
  - Graduate Degree/Certificate Programs
  - Graduate Faculty Database
  - Graduate Student Appeals Policy
  - Graduate College Forms
  - Graduate Student Appeals
  - Graduation Checklist (Doctoral Degree)
  - Graduation Checklist (Master's Degree)
  - Leave of Absence Policy
  - OSU Guidelines for Best Practices in Graduate Education
  - OSU Best Practices: Advisory Committees and Defenses
- Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA):  
<https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/gpsga/>

- Test of English Language Proficiency: <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/prospective-students/international-students/index.html>

**University:**

- OSU Catalog: <https://registrar.okstate.edu/University-Catalog>
- Career Services: <http://www.hireosugrads.com/StudentsAlumni/>
- Edmon Low Library: <https://library.okstate.edu/>
- Family Resource Center: <https://reslife.okstate.edu/housing-options/neighborhoods/family-resource-center.html>
- Health Insurance (Student): <https://hr.okstate.edu/benefits/student-health.html>
- Information Technology: <https://it.okstate.edu/>
- Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence: <https://itle.okstate.edu/>
- International Student and Scholars Office: <https://lcl.okstate.edu/iss/>
- International Students Arrival and Orientation: <https://lcl.okstate.edu/iss/arrival-orientation.html>
- Office of Multicultural Affairs: <https://diversity.okstate.edu/departments/multicultural-affairs/>
- OSU High Performance Computing Center: <https://hpcc.okstate.edu/>
- OSU Writing Center: <https://osuwritingcenter.okstate.edu/>
- Residential Life: <https://reslife.okstate.edu/>
- Department of Wellness: <https://wellness.okstate.edu/>
- Student Accessibility Services: <https://accessibility.okstate.edu/>
- Student Affairs: <https://studentaffairs.okstate.edu/>
- Student Support and Conduct: <https://ssc.okstate.edu/>

- The OSU Student Union: <https://union.okstate.edu/>
- University Counseling Services: <https://ucs.okstate.edu/>
- University Health Services: <https://uhs.okstate.edu/>
- University Parking Services: <https://parking.okstate.edu/>
- Responsible Conduct Research Training:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/rcr/>
- OSU Research Compliance:
  - Appropriate Use of Human Subjects in Research:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/irb/index.html>
  - Appropriate Use of Animals in Research:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/iacuc/index.html>
  - Biosafety Program:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/ibc/index.html>
  - Radiation Safety Program:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/rso/index.html>
  - Laser Safety Program:  
<https://research.okstate.edu/research-compliance/lso/index.html>

## **APPENDIX C. TRAVEL TO PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS**

All travel must be pre-approved by the research advisor or chair of the committee and is contingent on the availability of funds. Please work closely with your faculty mentor and departmental staff assistants to make sure all travel procedures are followed. Key aspects of the travel process are listed below:

- Submitting an out-of-state or in-state travel request form
- Approval process for travel and funding
- Making travel arrangements (airline, driving, parking, taxi, train or bus, turnpike tolls, etc.)
- Registering for the conference or meeting
- Housing accommodations and meals
- Required documents for reimbursement
- Travel reimbursement programs, such as GPSGA and CBSC Travel Awards

### **Travel Grants**

Most support for travel to scientific meetings is provided by funding to faculty mentors. Some professional or scientific associations or societies offer competitive travel grants for student members. The CVM research office also supports travel for students to present their research at regional, national or international scientific meetings when travel is not supported by other means. The OSU Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) also sponsors travel grants. Information about the Graduate and Professional Student Government Association (GPSGA) travel grants can be found at this website. <https://gradcollege.okstate.edu/gpsga/funding-and-awards.html>