Doctor of Philosophy in Behavioral Neuroscience

Boston University School of Medicine
Graduate Medical Sciences

Student Guide 2017-2018
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History of the Behavioral Neuroscience PhD Program

Our Program originated when a group of clinicians and researchers began to work together on topics of common concern. After the Second World War, there was an increased demand for care of brain-injured soldiers, and one of the topics funded by the Veterans Administration was aphasia, the loss of an ability to produce or comprehend language. Of three National Veterans Aphasia Centers that the VA established, one was in Framingham, Massachusetts, and in 1952, the Framingham center moved into the then new Boston VA Hospital in Jamaica Plain, now known as the VA Boston Healthcare System.

The VA attracted clinicians and researchers in neurology, psychology, linguistics, audiology, and speech pathology. Among the early professionals who went to the VA were Norman Geschwind, Harold Goodglass, Davis Howes, Edith Kaplan, and Martin Albert. Then, in 1965, on the strength of the research team already in place at the VA, Drs. Geschwind and Goodglass were able to obtain NIH funding for a Program Project grant that formally established an Aphasia Research Center at the VA, which still exists, and is the longest standing Program Project in NIH history. In 1969, when Dr. Geschwind transferred to Harvard Medical School, he continued as a co-investigator, and Dr. Harold Goodglass became the Program Director of the Aphasia Research Center, a position he held until 1996, when Dr. Martin Albert became the Center’s Director.

The cadre of established investigators that gathered over the years made the VA Center a world leader in neurobehavioral research aimed at broadening our understanding of brain-behavior relations and translating basic research in cognitive neuroscience to clinical applications. Since the 1970s, the topics of special focus have expanded to include not only language deficits, but also many other cognitive and neurobehavioral disorders, including memory disorders, executive function disorders, cognitive changes of normal aging, and neuropsychiatric disorders. Clinical conditions causing these disorders, and studied within the framework of the Ph.D. Program in Behavioral Neuroscience, include Alzheimer’s disease, traumatic brain injury, stroke, alcoholism, PTSD, and others.

The various VA activities attracted students from throughout the United States and abroad. They attended hospital rounds, and many conducted research with the diverse patient populations on the hospital wards. Courses were also developed on the topics related to the disorders studied by the researchers and seen on the wards.

As the VA courses and active research projects attracted more and more professionals, the need for a Ph.D. Program in Behavioral Neuroscience became increasingly clear. This eventuated in the Program being formalized and approved officially by Boston University in 1985, under the direction of Drs. Marlene Oscar Berman, Martin L. Albert, Harold Goodglass, and Edith Kaplan. The Founding Director of the Behavioral Neuroscience Program was Dr. Marlene Oscar Berman who served in the leadership role for nearly 30 years when she chose to step down from the role in 2014. The new Program was the first interdisciplinary degree-granting program at Boston University School of Medicine (BUSM). Since its inception, the Program has turned out two generations of productive and respected behavioral neuroscientists.
Mission Statement

The mission of the Behavioral Neuroscience Ph.D. Program is to provide students with a firm foundation in basic principles and methods of Experimental Neuropsychology in preparation for embarking on a career as an experimental neuropsychologist and behavioral neuroscientist in academia or industry.

The Behavioral Neuroscience Ph.D. Program is unique in that the focus is on human neurobehavioral disorders in relation to brain structure and functioning. The Behavioral Neuroscience Program provides a true translational link between cutting-edge research and its emphasis on medical patient care. Our students and alumnae represent strong, talented, and highly productive professionals. The strength and uniqueness of the Behavioral Neuroscience Program is exemplified in the quality and constitution of our course offerings, faculty and research opportunities.

The Behavioral Neuroscience Ph.D. Program is an interdisciplinary program administered through the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences, BUSM, and consists of faculty members mainly in the Departments of Neurology, Psychiatry, and Anatomy & Neurobiology, BUSM (many holding joint appointments within the VA Boston Healthcare System).

The key features of the program are:

• The delineation and analysis of perceptual, cognitive, linguistic, affective, and behavioral disorders observed in neurologic disease, as these disorders contribute to an understanding of normal brain function and its modification by pathology.

• The subject matter which derives primarily from clinical populations with neurological disorders affecting higher processes, particularly from the study of syndromes involving selective impairment of functional systems such as memory, language, attention, executive functioning and/or purposeful movement.

• An emphasis on current methods of clinical assessment, neuropsychology, experimental design, and the neurosciences integrated into a broad program focused on clinical research. There is also some opportunity for basic science research, but limited.
Program Contacts

Program Director

Carole Palumbo, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Neurology, BU School of Medicine
Associate Professor Environmental Health, BU School of Public Health
Health Science Specialist, VA Boston Healthcare System
Principal Investigator, US Army Research Institute of Environmental Medicine

Email: cpalumbo@bu.edu
Office: R1020

Directors of Required Core Courses

Human Neuropsychology - I and II
   Dr. Carole Palumbo
cpalumbo@bu.edu

Basic Neurosciences
   Dr. Carole Palumbo
cpalumbo@bu.edu

Neuropsychological Assessment
   Dr. Roberta White
   rwhite@bu.edu

Functional Neuroanatomy in Neuropsychology
   Dr. Francesca LaVecchia
   fvecchia@bu.edu

Statistics
   Varies by course choice
Program Overview

Academic Requirements
The program of study for the Ph.D. degree includes a minimum of 16 semester courses (64 credits) of graduate level study. Candidates with a master's degree in a related field are required to complete a minimum of 8 graduate-level semester courses (32 credits), of which at least half will be courses offered by the Behavioral Neuroscience Program. If a student's background requires more than the minimum of eight courses, the student may transfer the number of courses corresponding to that required in excess of the eight. Normally no more than four courses may be taken concurrently, and students must register for at least one course each semester until completion of all departmental course requirements unless granted an authorized leave of absence.

Required Core Courses
The intent of the core course requirements is to provide students with a firm foundation in basic principles and methods of Behavioral Neuroscience and Experimental Neuropsychology.

Human Neuropsychology - I and II
Course emphasizes the relationship of the field of neuropsychology to other medical and scientific disciplines. Includes electrical activity of the brain, the study of consciousness and emotions, cerebral dominance, pathologies of language, sleep and its disorders, traumatic brain injuries, psychiatric aspects of neurological disease and the pathologies of memory, intelligence, perception, and motor function.

Basic Neurosciences
Overview of neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neuroanatomy, neurobehavior, and neuropsychopharmacology. Processes occurring at the cellular and physiological levels are related to known central nervous system dysfunction of brain function and selected topics such as Parkinson's Disease, schizophrenia, neurotoxicology, aphasia, sleep, electrophysiology, and neuroimaging.

Neuropsychological Assessment
Emphasis on quantitative and qualitative analyses of standardized and experimental tests of cognitive functions useful in differential diagnosis of neurological syndromes with an emphasis on the Boston Process Approach to neuropsychological evaluation.

Functional Neuroanatomy in Neuropsychology
Overview of central nervous system, structure and function; basic understanding of neurobehavioral symptoms and their relationship to neuropathology, neuroepidemiology, including vascular infections, and congenital, degenerative, and toxic insults to the central nervous system, and will include laboratory examination of a specimen of a human brain.

Statistics
The Behavioral Neuroscience Program does not have a program specific statistics course. Suggested options for statistics courses include Introduction to Biostatistics (SPH BS 704), Practical Skills for Biosatistics Collaboration (SPH BS 715), and Introduction to Statistical Computing (SPH BS 723). If a student finds other BU courses
they are interested in taking they should discuss the course with the student’s advisor and also the program Director.

**Research in Behavioral Neuroscience**
Research to be arranged with mentor and approval by program Director

**Additional Courses**
A plan of coursework beyond the core courses is developed on an individual basis by the student’s faculty advisor (with the approval of Program Director) tailored to the student’s background experience and ultimate career goals.

**Other courses offered by the Behavioral Neuroscience PhD program include:**
- Behavioral and Biological Aspects of Stress and Trauma
- Forensic Practice in Neuropsychology and Neuroscience
- Adult Neurologic Communication Disorders
- Brain Asymmetry: Functional and Structural Differences Between Hemispheres
- Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory and Perception
- Seminar in Neuroimaging
- Case Studies in Neuropsychology
- Neurobehavioral Considerations in Addictions and Neurotoxicology
- Neurobehavioral Disorders
- Neurobehavioral Consequences of Neurological Disease
- Memory Disorders
- Child Clinical Neuropsychology
- Directed Studies
- Research

**Journal Club**
Prior to completing the qualifying exams students are required to attend twice monthly Journal Club. Journal Club is an informal gathering over lunch. At least one faculty member will attend each Journal Club meeting but the responsibility for presenting research will lie with the students. Students will each present either their own research, or a published paper for discussion. There is no grading associated with Journal Club. The purpose of Journal Club is for students to have an opportunity to present and discuss research in the field of Behavioral Neuroscience in a supportive and relaxed environment.
Qualifying Exams

- Upon completion of the required coursework the student must prepare for and pass the qualifying exam
- The student, in consultation with the student’s advisor and the program Director, assembles an ad hoc committee consisting of 5 members and a chair, representing 5 specific areas of Behavioral Neuroscience
- The student must demonstrate competency in these 5 areas, and an ability to discuss any issues related to Behavioral Neuroscience, via an 8-hour written exam and a 2-hour oral exam

Dissertation

- The dissertation provides documentation of a student’s creative scholarship and ability to design, execute and report an original research project
- The dissertation research must involve collection, processing and analyses of original data
- The completed dissertation must approximate 2-3 research papers meeting current standards of publication in peer-reviewed journals
- The student must demonstrate:
  - Proficiency in a significant area of Behavioral Neuroscience (i.e., cognition and brain behavior relationships)
  - Ability to describe the dissertation research clearly and succinctly in oral and written contexts
  - Mastery of defending methodological approaches used

Program Timeline for Students

- All students on the 64 credit track must complete the program within 7 years of matriculation.
- All students on the 32 credit track must complete the program within 5 years of matriculation
  - As per the GMS Handbook “a student requiring additional time beyond the maximum time of completion must submit a petition to the Associate Provost of GMS with a support letter from his/her graduate program director or chairman at least six (6) months prior to the deadline. An extension will only be allowed in extenuating circumstances.”
- Years 1 and 2 should focus on completing all required core courses as well as taking optional courses that will provide a broad education in Behavioral Neuroscience
  - Year 1 includes required core coursework and research rotations
  - Year 2 incudes completion of core coursework as well as additional coursework
- By the summer following the first year of coursework the student should be working fulltime in the research lab of his/her mentor/advisor.
- The student should pass the qualifying exam no later than during the Fall semester of Year 3, preferably during the summer following the second year of coursework
- The following years should be focused on working fulltime in the research lab on dissertation related activities as well as supporting the work of the mentor’s research lab.
Sample Curriculum

First Year
  Fall:
  • Human Neuropsychology I
  • Basic Neurosciences
  • Neuropsychological Assessment
  • CNS Functions
  Spring
  • Human Neuropsychology II
  • Basic Neurosciences
  • Case Studies – Neurobehavioral Disorders
  • Case Studies – Neurobehavioral Consequences of Neurological Disease

Second Year
  Fall
  • Case Studies in Neuropsychology – Neurobehavioral Disorders
  • Brain Asymmetry: Function and Structure
  • Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory and Perception
  • Statistics
  Spring
  • Seminar in Neuroimaging
  • Stress and Trauma
  • Child Neuropsychology
  • Forensic Neuropsychology

Third Year through Completion of the Program
  • Directed studies
  • Research
  • Elective courses
Qualifying Exams

Students must demonstrate mastery of the field of Behavioral Neuroscience via the qualifying Exam. Students must pass two parts of their Qualifying Examination before they may submit a dissertation proposal. Students are eligible to take the Qualifying Exam only after they have completed all of their formal core course requirements. There are two parts to the Qualifying Exams: one written and one oral.

*It is recommended that students start putting together their committee and collecting readings approximately 6 months prior to the anticipated date of the qualifying exam.*

**Material/Topics to be covered**

Students choose 5 topics of study and a faculty committee member for each topic. Topics can be centered on any area of Behavioral Neuroscience (e.g., aging; aphasia and related disorders; drugs and behavior; dementias; emotion; memory; recovery of function, etc.).

The topics should not be directly related to the area of the dissertation, because the latter will be covered when the dissertation is written.

Although there is no fixed amount of assigned reading, the average is about the equivalent of one book and 10-15 original journal articles for each of the 5 topics. The student should be familiar with recent research findings, and should have a broad historical perspective as well.

The student should discuss their choices of topics and committee members with their mentor. In addition, the student must meet with the Program Director to discuss their choices of topics and committee members for approval. Putting together a committee and topics is often an evolving process. Students should expect to have ongoing discussions with the Program Director for advice and guidance prior to finalizing the committee.

**Qualifying Examination Committee**

Faculty members who hold an appointment in the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences of BUSM, or in the Graduate School of Boston University, are eligible to be on the Qualifying Exam Committee.

The Committee consists of five members plus a chairperson. The Chair, plus a minimum of three members must be Behavioral Neuroscience/GMS faculty (see GMS faculty listing).

A student may include a faculty member outside of the Behavioral Neuroscience faculty only if the expertise of a given topic does not exist among the Behavioral Neuroscience faculty. A student may include a faculty member outside of GMS faculty only if the expertise of a given topic does not exist among the GMS faculty.

If the student chooses to have Committee members who do not hold a GMS appointment, the student may be request a "Special Service Appointment" for that committee member. A Special Service Appointment lasts for the duration of the qualifying exam study period.
and written and oral exams. The student should submit a "Special Service Appointment" request to GMS via OnBase (access request form here).

**Sample Email to a Potential Committee Member**

Faculty members understand they may be approached to serve on a student’s Qualifying Exam Committee. If you do not yet know the faculty member well it is best to send an email to determine whether the faculty member is willing to meet with you to discuss being a committee member for your qualifying exam.

Faculty members often know in advance if they have upcoming grant submission deadlines or travel for conferences, etc. Therefore, it is best if your email contains at least an approximate timeframe during which you plan to take your qualifying exam.

Below is an example of an email to a potential committee member. This is just an example. You should word this in your own style and change it however feels right to you. This is just an example. It is also Ok to suggest a general topic then talk about specifics once you meet with the faculty member.

Dear/Hello Dr. __________

My name is ___ and I am a ____(e.g., 2nd, 3rd, etc)___ year student in the Behavioral Neuroscience PhD Program at BUSM. I have been meeting with Dr. ___(mentor)___ and Dr. Carole Palumbo to discuss possible topics and faculty members for my qualifying exams.

I am interested in the topic of __________ and am hoping you are willing to meet with me to discuss the possibility of you serving as a committee member on my qualifying exam.

I am planning/hoping to take my Qualifying Exams ____(insert time – e.g., in the late Spring/early Summer)____

Please let me know if you are willing to meet with me to discuss being involved as a committee member.

Thank you

__________
**Written Portion of the Qualifying Exam**

1. **Duration:** Approximately eight hours (total time).

2. **Format:**

   Each of the members provides two types of written questions, one *factual* and the other *general/synthesis*.

   a. **Factual questions**
      
      One question, or set of questions, from each of the five examiners - each examiner’s question requiring approximately 45 minutes to answer.
      
      Factual questions can require lots of short answers or just test a student’s knowledge of the literature (e.g., "What are the major structures making up the limbic system [or basal ganglia, or fronto-cerebellar system, etc.], and what functions do these structures serve? Cite relevant studies in your answer.").

   b. **Synthesis questions**
      
      One question from each of the five examiners - each examiner’s question requiring approximately 45 minutes to answer.
      
      Synthesis questions typically require that students understand theoretical issues in the field (e.g., "Describe and evaluate various hypotheses or models that have been proposed to explain 'executive functions.' What disorders result in impairments of executive functioning, and how are these deficits defined and evaluated?").

Each Committee member grades his/her two types of written questions on a Pass/Fail basis. The entire written exam must be passed before the oral exam can be taken.

*If a student does not pass the written portion of the qualifying examination (any one of the five topic areas), the student can retake the failed portion(s) of the examination one more time. This can be in the same form as the original exam, or the student may write a comprehensive review paper on the weak topic(s). The format and topic(s) of the re-examination will be decided upon by the committee.*

*A student may not go on to the oral exam until s/he has passed the written exam.*
**Oral Portion of the Qualifying Exam**

Approximately two weeks after the written Exam, the five faculty members and the Chair, who acts as a moderator, meet to give the oral portion of the Qualifying Examination. An important purpose of the oral Exam is to assess the student’s ability to speak in front of a group. The examiners may ask about material that was weakly presented by the student in the written Exam, and/or about any topic within the field of Behavioral Neuroscience.

An informal discussion takes place among the six faculty members prior to, and just following the oral portion of the Exam. At the end, a vote is taken to evaluate the student’s performance (Pass/Fail).

Approximately two hours are needed in all. The student’s participation in the oral portion of the examination usually takes about one hour, and an hour is reserved for discussion among Committee members (the one hour for discussion is split between pre-exam and post-exam discussions).

The Chair (moderator) of the Committee will have all members of the Oral Examination Committee (and the moderator) sign an “official grade form,” which will be returned to the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences.

In addition to the Chair and Committee, the Program Director will attend all Qualifying Oral Exams as available.

*If a student does not pass the oral portion of the qualifying examination, the student can re-take it one more time. The format and topic(s) of the re-examination will be decided upon by the committee. For example, it can be in the same form as the original oral exam, and/or the student can conduct a seminar on topics to be decided by the committee.*
Dissertation

The purpose of the dissertation is to provide documentation of a student’s creative scholarship and ability to design, execute, and report an original research project, the results of which will signal progress in a significant area of Behavioral Neuroscience; to describe this dissertation research clearly and succinctly in oral and written contexts; to exercise mastery of methods in defending the methodological approaches employed; and to place in perspective the advance in knowledge achieved by the dissertation research. As a final goal, the defense of the dissertation and the dissertation itself will serve as an indicator of the student’s ability to embark on a career as a behavioral neuroscientist and experimental neuropsychologist.

Dissertation Committee
A student’s dissertation committee is composed of the first 3 readers, 2 additional committee members and a chair. The research mentor/advisor serves as the first reader. Both the first reader and the chair must hold a permanent Behavioral Neuroscience/GMS faculty appointment. A minimum of 3 of the 5 committee members (the 5 committee members does not include the chair) must have permanent GMS faculty appointments (see GMS faculty listing).

If the student chooses to have Committee members who do not hold a permanent GMS appointment, the student may request a "Special Service Appointment" for that committee member. A Special Service Appointment lasts for the duration of the dissertation research and defense. The student should submit a "Special Service Appointment" request to GMS via OnBase (access request form here).

The student proposes a principal dissertation advisor and possible readers for the dissertation (the principal dissertation advisor may be the same as, or different from, the student’s academic advisor) to the Program Director. The readers and additional committee members should be faculty with expertise in the topic area of the dissertation.

Dissertation Proposal
Before embarking on his/her dissertation research (usually in the 3rd year), the student must develop a dissertation proposal outlining clearly and distinctly the nature of the research to be undertaken. The Behavioral Neuroscience Program dissertation proposal requirement is that the proposal include a background and introduction, brief review of the pertinent literature, specific aims, methods proposed, anticipated findings/hypotheses, and an assessment of the importance of the research when completed.

The research being proposed must be based in Behavioral Neuroscience and must include data from objective cognitive assessment as well as data based on brain-behavior relationships which may include neuroimaging, neurological exam results, a discussion of how the behavioral data fits in with known brain pathology and/or networks, and/or neurologically based biomarkers (e.g., measures of cardiovascular
risk factors, genetics, biochemical markers, etc.).

The dissertation proposal is reviewed by the student’s dissertation committee. When needed, the student’s dissertation committee may be expanded to include additional members who have areas of particular expertise pertinent to the proposed research. Unanimous approval of the proposal by the committee members is required for the student to proceed with the research under the advisor’s guidance.

**Dissertation Research Process**

When the proposed research involves human participants, the proposal must also be submitted to the Institutional Review Boards of all cooperating institutions for their approval.

Data for the dissertation must be original data collected by the student and analyzed by the student. If a student intends to use a large epidemiological dataset (e.g., the Framingham Heart Study data, or data from the TRACTS center at the VA) the student must have contributed to the collection of those data equivalent to the amount of data that would be collected in a student’s non-epidemiology study. When using data from an epidemiological dataset the student must be the person who conducts the statistical analyses. The student may have guidance on the most appropriate statistics to use, but s/he must be the person who performs all analyses, including statistical, on the dataset.

The completed dissertation must approximate 2-3 research papers meeting current standards of publication in peer-reviewed journals.

Dissertation Committee meetings should be arranged to evaluate progress of the research. The student should present their proposal and/or work to date to the committee at each of these meetings then allow time for discussion. The student should meet with the Dissertation Committees at least once or twice per year. When the research has been completed, the student submits a draft of the completed dissertation to the advisor and readers for initial approval. The student should expect edits and suggestions and to revise the dissertation over several more drafts.

**Oral Defense**

Subsequent to approval of the dissertation by the student’s dissertation committee, the student must present an oral defense of the dissertation to his/her dissertation committee and to a wider audience of students, faculty and colleagues. The purpose of the final oral defense is to demonstrate the student’s ability to communicate clearly the background, purpose, methods, results, and relevance of the research conducted by the student.

The student’s oral defense committee will consist of the dissertation advisor, the two readers, two additional committee members, and the Chair of the oral defense committee. In addition to the Chair and Committee, the Program Director will attend all
Oral Dissertation Defenses as available. In a closed session, the members and Chair of the oral defense committee decide on the outcome of the oral defense of the dissertation, and if positive, recommends to GMS that the dissertation is acceptable and fulfills the degree requirements. Finally, GMS, upon further ascertaining that the student has met all other degree requirements, recommends award of the degree.

The student should anticipate the possibility of minor changes required following the defense. Therefore when scheduling the defense, the student should consider the GMS deadlines to be met in order to graduate in January or May and leave enough time to make minor edits and have the formatting reviewed and approved by GMS.
F31 Grant Applications for Dissertation Funding

http://www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/f31-grant-series/

Grant Description
As per NIH, the purpose of the Ruth L. Kirschstein Predoctoral Individual National Research Service Award (F31 Grant) is “to enable promising predoctoral students to obtain individualized, mentored research training from outstanding faculty sponsors while conducting dissertation research. The proposed mentored research training is expected to clearly enhance the individual’s potential to develop into a productive, independent research scientist. The F31 is also used to enhance workforce diversity through a separate program.” For more information, visit the F31’s NIH website here.

Applicant and Sponsor Resources

Application Overview
Successful F31 Sample
Successful F31 Sample 2
Successful F31 Sample 3
Successful F31 Sample 4
Sponsor Plan Template

Please Note: The text of the applications is copyrighted. It was obtained from the NIGMS website. You may use it only for nonprofit educational purposes provided the documents remain unchanged and the investigator and grantee organization are credited. Some parts of the applications are redacted to protect personal and other private information, such as commercial interests and pending publications or funding, as well as the confidentiality of recommendations.

F31 FAQ's

FAQ's
BU's BEST Program/Grant Resources

BUSM is one of 17 institutions awarded the competitive NIH Biomedical Experiences in Scientific Training (BEST) grant. This award, called “BU’s BEST” is designed to prepare our trainees for the current and changing biomedical workforce. Our program provides resources to analyze current workforce data with input from key stakeholders both on and off campus, to provide insight and guidance for career path development for both PhD students and post-doctoral fellows. An innovative software tool will help us to understand the job market and skills required to be competitive for these positions so that we can offer opportunities for trainees to gain needed skills. The trainees will be guided by advisors and their individual development plans to participate in a wide array of workshops and seminars designed to allow them to consider, explore and gain experience in achieving their individual goals in a variety of sectors. To provide hands-on experiences, short-term shadowing opportunities and longer-term internships will be an integral component of the program. Additionally, we will be participating in the development of an exciting new software tool that will enable trainees to learn of job opportunities and then consider how best to prepare for the chosen careers. Taken together, our strong and supportive training environment at Boston University School of Medicine is further transformed by BU’s BEST into one that is readily responsive to an ever-changing biomedical landscape. Trainees are highly encouraged to participate in the BU’s BEST program so as to take advantage of the wealth of unique resources available to them.

*Among other resources for F31 grant applicants, BU's BEST provides Skill Enhancement Workshops on Grant Writing periodically. Furthermore, the program owns a few copies of the NIH version of “The Grant Application Writer's Workbook” by S.W. Russell and D.C. Morrison that can be loaned out to GMS students applying to the F31 Grant. For more information on the workshops, on how to borrow these books, or any other questions regarding BU's BEST, please contact the Program Director, Chelsea Barbercheck, or visit BU’s BEST located at the GMS Career Development Office (L306).
GMS Student Handbook

All students should review the GMS Student Handbook that provides information beyond the program specific information in this Behavioral Neuroscience Student Handbook.

The full GMS Student Handbook can be accessed [here](#).

The following pages contain particularly relevant excerpts copied directly from the GMS Student Handbook.
GMS Division Office Contact Information and Organization

Throughout your graduate studies at BUSM, you will have many interactions with the staff in the GMS office. GMS will be an important resource for information throughout your graduate career from your initial orientation and registration through commencement! Below is a list of the GMS office staff and a brief synopsis of who to contact for your specific needs. Please be sure to stop by the office to introduce yourself. We look forward to helping you succeed in your graduate studies.
The GMS office may be contacted at the following address and phone/fax numbers:

Boston University School of Medicine
Division of Graduate Medical Sciences
72 East Concord Street, L-317
Boston, MA 02118
T: 617-638-5255 F: 617-638-5740

For specific questions or concerns, please refer to the following Division Office faculty/staff members:

**Dr. Linda Hyman**
Associate Provost and Associate Dean, GMS
Professor of Microbiology
lhyman@bu.edu
*Contact Kimberly Arena (contact information listed below).*

**Dr. Hee-Young Park**
Assistant Dean, GMS
Professor and Chair Medical Sciences & Education
hypark@bu.edu
*Contact Victoria Ha (contact information listed below).*

**Dr. Andrew Henderson**
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**Dr. Stephen Brady**
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**Chelsea Barbercheck**
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**Lynese Wallace**
Manager, Diversity and Inclusion
Lynesewa@bu.edu
The GMS Website
The GMS Website has information from Orientation to Commencement, as well as everything in between! Specific program websites are linked to the GMS website for easy access. If you have questions about registration procedures, financial aid or student life, please check the website (http://www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/).

The Graduate Medical Sciences Student Organization (GMSSO)

The purpose of the Graduate Medical Sciences Student Organization (GMSSO) is to bring students together from all departments and programs of GMS, to share ideas, and to pursue common student issues with a combined voice. The GMSSO meets once per month (every second Wednesday) and consists of one or two representatives elected from each department and program. Representatives consist of both Ph.D. and Master’s candidates. Members report back to their department or program after meetings in order to keep the information and feedback flowing between faculty, graduate students and the GMSSO. For the most up-to-date information about the GMSSO, please visit their website or email them at (gmsso@bu.edu).

E-Mail Communications

Throughout your studies at GMS, you will regularly receive important information from the GMS office, your department or program, and course managers that will be e-mailed to your BU e-mail address. You will be responsible for checking your BU e-mail on a daily basis to keep current. If you wish to use another e-mail server, please be sure to forward your BU e-mail account’s mail to your preferred e-mail account. Once again,
students are expected to check their e-mail on a daily basis. All students should obtain a BU computer account/e-mail account from the computer lab in the library. Contact http://www.bu.edu/tech/ with any additional questions.

Student Link

Student Link is an access point to the University Class Schedule, online class registration, personal information, financial account access, and much more. Please visit Student Link and login with your username and Kerberos password.

Degree Advice is a tool for students and faculty advisors to follow the progression of degree requirement completion for their students. This tool can be found within Student Link under the Academics tab. Please click here for complete instructions on how to access Degree Advice.

Blackboard

Blackboard is the online tool utilized for all of the courses offered by GMS. Login in to Blackboard Learn with your username and Kerberos password for course announcements, lecture materials and general course information, including updates class schedules.
**Academic Deadlines**

Students should consult the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences Graduation Calendar that is published annually each summer:

**2018 Ph.D. Graduation Calendar**

This calendar lists deadlines for degree requirements that include the filing of a dissertation prospectus (outline), diploma applications (M.A./M.S., Ph.D.), abstract approval, scheduling of oral examination, oral examination deadlines, etc. All forms for M.A./M.S. and Ph.D. programs can be found [here](#).

**The Alumni Medical Library**

The Alumni Medical Library is located in the Instructional (L) Building of the Medical School on the 11th, 12th, and 13th floors.

Please visit the Alumni Medical Library [website](#) for more information.

**Print/Copy Card Policy**

The Alumni Medical Library provides [Free Medical Library Print/Copy Cards](#) for all BUSM students. With an ID, students are eligible for up to 100 pages or 200 double-sided pages of print or copy during each of the two following time periods:

- January 1 – June 30
- July 1 – December 31

Every page after the first 100 (or 200 double-sided) may be purchased at $0.12/page.

A second option for students is to use the FedEx Office located in the CABR Building at 700 Albany Street. You may stop by the office in person, or you may submit your printing project online through their online service at [https://docstore.fedex.com/bu](https://docstore.fedex.com/bu) and pick up your papers after printing. Please see the FedEx/Kinko Office [website](#) for more information.
**Student Health Services**

*Student Health Services* is a center designed to help meet your health care needs while at Boston University. Their offer medical services, a crisis intervention counselor, chiropractic care, and behavioral medicine services by appointment or on an emergency basis (see below). They are available to help address your immediate and ongoing health care needs.

You may use Student Health Services if you are:

1. A full-time BU student, regardless of your insurance choice.
2. A student who participates in at least 75 percent of the full-time curriculum.
3. Any student with the Student Health Insurance Plan.
4. A summer student or a participant in one of the high school summer programs.

Student Health Services is located at the Charles River Campus at 881 Commonwealth Avenue, phone 617-353-3575.

**Behavioral Medicine (Mental Health)**

*Behavioral Medicine (Mental Health)* services for students is available on the Medical Campus. All full-time students are eligible for care, regardless of health insurance. Part-time students who have Aetna Student Health insurance also are eligible.

The clinic is located in the Solomon Carter Fuller Mental Health Building, 85 E. Newton St., Suite 816. Initially, it will be staffed two days per week – Mondays from 9a.m.-6p.m. and Wednesdays 9a.m.-5p.m. – by clinicians not affiliated with the Medical Campus. Hours may increase with demand. The location was chosen specifically to be mindful of maintaining student privacy and confidentiality.

The following services will be available:

- Evaluation
- Consultation
- Short-term treatment (both medication management and psychotherapy)
- 24-hour coverage for psychiatric emergencies

When longer-term treatment is indicated, students will be referred to a provider in the community. Student Health Services is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all patient health information in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws. To make an appointment, please call 617-353-3569 and request an appointment at the BUMC clinic.
**Medical Insurance**

By state law, students must have medical insurance. You will automatically be charged for health insurance unless you verify and complete an insurance waiver on Student Link. The medical insurance coverage offered by Boston University is effective August 23, 2016 to August 22, 2017. The Boston University Student BASIC Plan is available at a cost of $2,014. The Boston University Student PLUS Plan is available at the cost of $2,782. New graduate students may waive participation until September 30, 2016. The deadline for covered students to upgrade from the BASIC Plan to the Student PLUS plan is also September 30, 2016. To waive or upgrade, please visit Student Link. For more information about health insurance, please consult the student accounting services website.

**Office of Disability Services**

Boston University takes great pride in the academic and personal achievements of its many students and alumni with disabilities. The University is committed to providing equal and integrated access for individuals with disabilities to all the academic, social, cultural, and recreational programs it offers. This commitment is consistent with legal requirements, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA") of 1990, and embodies the University's historic determination to ensure the inclusion of all members of its communities.

The goal of the Office of Disability Services is to provide services and support to ensure that students are able to access and participate in the opportunities available at Boston University. In keeping with this objective, students are expected and encouraged to utilize the resources of Disability Services to the degree they determine necessary. Although a significant degree of independence is expected of students, Disability Services is available to assist, should the need arise.

Dr. Rachel Weiss serves as the liaison between GMS and the Office of Disability Services. Please contact her (racweiss@bu.edu) with any disability service questions.

**Identification Cards**

Terrier Cards are issued by the Terrier Card Office. Students are assigned an ID number by Boston University.

A student is entitled to a new card only when there are changes to the information on the card. A replacement fee of $40.00 is charged for replacing a lost or stolen card. The Public Safety Department maintains a photographic database of all employees, faculty and students. Identification cards are to be worn at all times while on medical center
property. For those who require access to restricted areas, a combined Photo Identification / Access Control card is issued.

Medical campus students may obtain their ID at:

Medical Campus Identification Office
710 Albany Street, ground level (parking garage)
Open Monday – Friday: 7:00am-9:00am and 12:30-3:00pm
617-638-6879

**Lockers**
A limited number of coat and book lockers are available for assignment on a yearly basis to full-time graduate students. If you wish to be assigned one of these lockers, please visit the GMS Office (Room L-317). Students have an option to bring their own padlock or purchase a padlock from GMS for $5.00. **All lockers must be emptied by August 1, 2017 unless notified otherwise.** At that time, the BUSM Maintenance Office will clear out anything remaining in the locker in preparation for the 2017/18 academic year.

**Study Rooms**
BUMC students, in concert with the student services and administrative offices of the medical campus, developed and adopted the following guidelines for use in study rooms. The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that study room space is used in a productive and collegial manner for group study. These guidelines are posted in each study room so that medical campus students may actively manage their study room spaces. Please click [here](#) for complete study room guidelines. The majority of study rooms are on the BUMC central campus. Auditoriums are typically not for group study. Please see the following link to check study room availability:

[Study Rooms Available » Educational Media Center » BUMC](#)

**Meditation Room**
In recognition of the need for space dedicated to meditation, reflection, and group prayer, BMC has secured space in South Block, 35 Northampton Square for prayer on Fridays. The Boston University community is also welcome to use the chapel located at 88 E. Newton Street, 2nd Floor for prayer at any time. Please click [here](#) for complete meditation guidelines.

**GMS Student Lounge**
The GMS Student Lounge is located on the 14th floor of the L-building (L-1406) next to the Hiebert Lounge. All incoming students are given ID access to this room for the duration of their studies with GMS. If you have trouble with your room access, please contact Francisco Patiño at fjpatino@bu.edu.
Transportation/TranSComm

Boston University Medical Campus and Boston Medical Center are members of TranSComm (Transportation Solutions for Commuters, Inc.). TranSComm works to bring more frequent and accessible public transportation to the Medical Center community and provides information on transportation services.

TranSComm’s efforts include coordination with the MBTA on transit and bus service; offering ride-sharing and carpooling options; providing information on shuttle service within BUMC; and promoting other environmentally-sound transportation options of interest to Medical Center commuters. TranSComm is dedicated to improving air quality, accessibility and minimizing traffic congestion and pollution in the historic South End of Boston. Please call 617-638-7473 for personalized assistance with your commute.

Please consult the TranSComm website for:

- Destination at BUMC
- Directions to BUMC by car
- Directions to BUMC by Public Transportation: bus and subway (MBTA)
- Shuttles (Please note you may obtain schedule for the shuttle that runs between the medical campus and the Charles River Campus here).
- Security Escort Service
- Carpooling
- Zipcar
- Bicycles and Bike Rack Locations

The BUS: Boston University Shuttle

Traveling between Boston University’s Charles River and Medical campuses is now easier than ever due to the enhanced The BUS (Boston University Shuttle) service. The BUS makes it convenient for the BU community to access the many resources, programs, and activities available throughout the University—and it’s free! Please consult the BUS schedule.

Boston University Medical Campus Public Safety

The BUMC Public Safety Department is responsible for providing a safe and secure environment and minimizing the opportunity for loss of personal and institutional assets. Public Safety officers are hired based upon education, experience, and their willingness and ability to provide customer friendly service to the medical center community. The ninety members of the Public Safety Department are involved in a
continuous training program that addresses all relevant aspects of policing and all aspects of medical center operations.

The BUMC Public Safety Department is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is one Command and Control Center located at 750 Albany Street. Service calls for security, facilities, and emergency responses are dispatched from this location, and can be reached at 617-414-4444. Please add this number to your cell phone address book for easy access in case of an emergency.

We encourage you to contact the Command and Control Center to report suspicious and unusual activity. The public safety desk officer will dispatch an officer to respond to the problem immediately.

In addition to the 24-hour response, Public Safety provides many other services described below:

• **Lost and Found**
The Public Safety Department documents and maintains custody of all recovered property at the medical campus. Please contact the Command Control Center at 617-414-4444 if you find property. An officer will be dispatched to secure the property and attempt to return it to its owner. In the event that you should lose or misplace property, or if property is stolen from you, please contact the Command and Control Center at 617-414-4444 to report the loss. The desk officer will dispatch an officer to meet you and document your loss if necessary.

• **Escorts**
The Public Safety Department will provide vehicular or pedestrian escorts to the garages, lots, and surrounding medical center buildings during night and weekend hours upon request. Escorts are subject to availability by calling the Command and Control Center at 617-414-4444. The Public Safety Department recommends that you utilize the shuttle services that transport to the garages, lots, surrounding medical center buildings, and authorized MBTA stops available to you.

• **Motorist Assistance**
In addition to all the other services the Department of Public Safety offers, they are continually on call to assist motorists in need. In all BUMC lots, they will provide the following services:
  • Lock-out assistance for your vehicle*
  • Battery jumping *
  • Notification if you leave your lights on (through their permit database)

*Before they administer these services, they require that the motorist sign a waiver of liability.
• **Emergency Call Boxes**

The Public Safety Department has installed emergency call boxes at a variety of locations within and around the perimeter of the medical campus. Emergency call boxes are blue metal boxes that are easily identifiable by blue lights located above the box. These call boxes contain auto-dial phones that connect the caller immediately to the Command and Control Center once the emergency button is pushed. These phones should be used in emergencies only and automatically disconnect after 3 minutes. The Command and Control Center knows which phone you are using and will immediately dispatch an officer to your location.

• **Personal Safety Tips**
  
  • Do not compromise safety for the sake of convenience.
  • Utilize the shuttle services whenever possible.
  • Do not hesitate to contact public safety if you have security or safety concerns.
  • Take advantage of public safety-sponsored training programs.
  • Be alert and aware of your surroundings.
  • Trust your instincts. If you are concerned about something you see or hear, notify public safety and leave the area.
  • Use the buddy system. Whenever possible, walk with a friend.
  • Have your car or house/apartment keys in your hand before you reach the car or house/apartment.
  • Avoid short cuts. Stay in well-lit, well-traveled areas.
  • Secure your belongings. Don’t leave unlocked or valuables unattended.

• **Incidents Reports**

The Public Safety Department encourages all employees and students to report suspicious behavior and/or criminal activity to the Command and Control Center at 617-414-4444 as soon as possible. The Public Safety Department will document all reported incidents and forward those in need of further investigation to the department’s Investigations Unit. Public Safety Department incident reports are confidential property of BUMC and copies will only be released with the approval of the Office of the General Counsel. Requests for copies of Public Safety Department incident reports should be directed to Public Safety Administration at 617-414-4413.

**Office of Research Compliance**

The Office of Research Compliance website houses information regarding environmental health and safety, research and safety training, human subjects, animal care, the research occupational health program, and the research information management system. You may use this office as a resource for your research while with GMS.
**Fitness and Recreation at Boston University**

Boston University's Fitness and Recreation Center is located on the Charles River Campus and is easily accessible by the BUS.

The building provides approximately 270,000 square feet of space, supporting physical education, non-credit courses, intramurals, club sports, student organizations, and much more. This state-of-the-art fitness and recreation center contains:

- An 18,000 square foot weight and cardio room
- Two separate swimming pools
- 2 multi-use gymnasiums with seven courts
- An elevated 1/8 mile jogging track overlooking several areas
- Racquetball and squash courts
- Several multi-purpose activity and classrooms for dance, group exercise classes, martial arts, club and intramural meetings and health and wellness classes
- A 35’ climbing wall
- A Pro Shop that features workout gear, sports equipment, and rentals.

The Fitness and Recreation Center also houses a center for rehabilitation, fitness/conditioning, Emergency Medical Services education, expansive locker rooms for men and women, a family locker room, a snack bar, a pro shop, equipment issue, children's area, and administrative offices.

Membership to the Fitness and Recreation Center is automatically granted to all enrolled full-time undergraduate and graduate Boston University students.

**South End Fitness Center** will also be open for the 2016-17 academic year and is offering discounted membership rates for BU students and BMC employees. For more information phone 617-534-5822.
Division of Graduate Medical Science
Boston University School of Medicine

GMS Policies and Procedures

The following policies and procedures concern all graduate students in the Division of Graduate Medical Sciences at Boston University School of Medicine. Each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the policies and procedures of the Division and the more specific requirements of the individual departments or programs, which may supplement the Division policies and procedures. For the University policies, please check the following link: http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/

*Please see GMS handbook for full Policies and Procedures

5. REGISTRATION

6.1 General Instruction

An officially registered student is one who has (i) submitted course selections on a registration form or through online registration, (ii) paid or settled all charges, and (iii) received an approved receipt from the Office of Student Accounting Services.

Candidates for admission may not register until they receive a formal statement of acceptance. Matriculated students should register under the direction of GMS.

GMS students should consult with the Office of GMS registrar or view the GMS website for detailed instructions concerning the procedures to be followed during the announced registration period. Students must be registered for any regular semester or summer term during which a degree requirement is completed or when University facilities are used.

Registration must be completed within the official registration period to avoid a late fee. Registration deadlines are posted on the University registrar’s website.

All continuing students in good academic standing with an active Boston University email address may register online via Student Link. A student should meet with his/her faculty advisor or the program director to discuss course selection. An Advising Access Code should be obtained. The Advising Access Code is required to register online for the fall and spring semesters. Registration for summer terms usually does not require an Advising Access Code unless specifically dictated by the program. However, a student should still meet with his/her faculty advisor prior to summer registration.

Failure to register for two consecutive fall/spring semesters without having been granted an authorized leave of absence may result in termination of degree status, thus dismissal from GMS.
6.2 Full-time Students

A GMS student can be a full-time student by enrollment or by certification.

1. By enrollment:

A student enrolled in 12 to 18 credits per semester will be considered full time and will be charged full tuition and fees. A student may register for more than 18 credits only with approval of his/her program director and the GMS registrar.

A student enrolled in a Ph.D. degree program must maintain full-time status until completion of the degree.

6.4 Continuing Students

After completing all departmental or program didactic course requirements, Ph.D. degree candidates must register for fall and spring semesters as a continuing student (tuition charge equivalent to 2 credits) until all remaining degree requirements are complete. Registration for the summer terms is described under Section 8.21. Except during summer sessions, Ph.D. candidates’ continuing student status entitles students to officially audit one (1) course per semester, but only with prior approval from the Program Director and GMS registrar. Students may not audit 900-level courses.

6.5 Directed Study or Research

Students may register for directed study or research with the approval of the faculty member concerned. The minimum registration is a 2-credit course.

6.6 Registration Deadlines

The dates of the official registration period are provided on the Boston University registrar’s website. Late fees are charged to students who do not register or settle their tuition accounts during this official period. Students may not register later than one (1) week after the start of classes without written approval from the Associate Provost of GMS. Students who are not registered by the deadline will have their financial assistance offers revoked.

6.7 Compliance

Boston University requires all students to provide an emergency alert phone number. Students not in compliance will not be able to adjust their schedules or to register for future semesters.
6. ADDING OR DROPPING A COURSE

Students wishing to add or drop a course may do so through online registration on Student Link or by completing the Class Adjustment Request Form available on the GMS website. The Class Adjustment Request Form requires the signature of the student’s faculty advisor and/or course manager, and should be submitted to the GMS registrar.

Some courses cannot be added after the first week of class. No course may be added after the end of the second week of class.

A standard course dropped during the first five (5) weeks of class will not appear on the student’s permanent record. A standard course dropped after the first five (5) weeks of classes will appear on the student’s record as a Withdraw grade (W), and the student will be charged for the course. For the non-standard courses, check the student link for the deadlines to drop a course with or without a W.

Students are held responsible for completion of any course registered for unless they officially withdraw by the deadline set by the University Registrar described above or change to the status of auditor before the sixth week of class.

Standard courses may be dropped up to the end of the tenth week of class. After the tenth week, no course may be dropped. See important registration dates on the University Registrar website.

Financial aid will not cover courses taken as audits or for no credit. For exceptions see Continuing Student Status under Registration.

7. Graduation Calendar

M.A., M.S., and Ph.D. degrees are awarded in September, January and May. Commencement exercises are held in May only. Students must submit diploma applications to the GMS registrar by the appropriate graduation deadline. These deadlines are available on the GMS website. The diploma application is valid only for the graduation date specified; a new application must be submitted if the student does not graduate as planned. Diploma applications and the regulations on the preparation of thesis and dissertations are available on the GMS website.
8. **SUMMER TERM**

A GMS student is allowed to use the University facilities only during the summer terms in which they are registered.

10.1 Ph.D. Students

A student enrolled in a Ph.D. program in GMS who is engaged in full-time research during the summer term as an essential component of their graduate degree program is eligible for Summer Research Registration Status. This eligibility is a no-cost mechanism whereby graduate students who are engaged in academic research during the summer can be appropriately registered as students for purposes of loan eligibility and tax considerations. Students seeking Summer Research Registration Status should complete a [Ph.D. Summer Research Status Registration Form](#), obtain appropriate signatures, and submit the form to the GMS registrar. This registration status will not generate a tuition charge. The form includes a certification of full-time study that will document the student’s commitment to research during the summer. By signing the forms, the department or program vouches that the student will be doing research full-time for the twelve (12) weeks of the Summer I and Summer II sessions. GMS will enter the registration status on the student’s record. Forms should be submitted before the beginning of the Summer II session. The form is available from the [GMS website](#).

Summer Research Registration Status is available only for Ph.D. students continuing their studies in the fall. This status does not satisfy the mandatory registration for the final two (2) semesters during which degree requirements are completed, thus a student planning to graduate on the September graduation date must register and pay the continuing student fee for the Summer II term.

9. **SUSPENSION OR DISMISSAL**

GMS reserves the right to academically withdraw, suspend, or dismiss a student at any time for reasons of scholarship or conduct as described under Section 26. Satisfactory academic standing will be assessed at both the program level by the standards set forth by the individual program and the GMS level by the academic standards set forth by GMS as discussed under section 14.21 in GMS Policies and Procedures. Failure to meet the academic standards at the program level and/or GMS level may result in suspension or dismissal.

12.1 Petitions

A student suspended or dismissed by a GMS program for academic performance reasons may petition for reinstatement. Such students must submit a letter to the Associate Provost of GMS requesting reinstatement within fourteen (14) days of receipt of notice of suspension or dismissal. The letter must be accompanied by the following documents:

- **Explanation for unsatisfactory academic performances**
- **Clear outline of how to improve performance if reinstated**
- **Support letter from the faculty advisor or Program Director**
Reinstatement of a suspended student is always subject to probationary status. In the event a student is reinstated, it is important for the student and faculty advisor or program director to review and assess the student’s progress.

A student who has been reinstated following academic suspension must achieve satisfactory academic standing, as stated under section 15.21.

10. LEAVE OF ABSENCE, WITHDRAWAL, AND REINSTATEMENT

13.1 Leave of Absence

Normally, students must register for each regular (i.e. fall/spring) semester until completion of all degree requirements. Upon written petition to the Associate Provost for GMS and for appropriate cause, a student is allowed up to a total of two (2) semesters of leaves [or for a total of one (1) academic year] of absence throughout degree completion without the necessity of reapplication and/or readmission.

Leaves of absence beyond two (2) semesters are granted only in exceptional cases, such as a substantiated illness, maternity or paternity leave, or military service. The student should petition to the Associate Provost of GMS with the approval of the program director.

Procedure for requests for a leave of absence is:

- The student should meet with their advisor and program director for approval.
- Submit a written request explaining the reason for leave of absence along with the required forms, including the program director’s signature, to the GMS Registrar.
- May be asked to meet with the Associate Provost.

If approved, a request for a leave of absence is effective on the day the written request is received by the GMS Registrar. A certificate of authorized leave of absence is issued and a copy is included in the student’s record. For a student who files for a leave of absence from the University, charges for tuition and fees are canceled in accordance with the University’s published refund schedule.

A student who is on a leave of absence and who has borrowed federal and/or private loans may be required to begin repayment while on leave.

The period of an authorized leave of absence is counted as a part of the total time allowed for completion of the degree requirements. Students may not complete any degree requirements in a semester for which they have been granted a leave of absence.
13.2 Leaves of Absence for Medical Reasons

Sometimes a student may need to interrupt his or her studies for medical reasons. A student requesting a leave of absence for medical reasons must submit a letter from their clinician, or s/he must be seen (or have the records reviewed) by Student Health Services or its designee. GMS reserves the right to require an involuntary medical leave of absence if it is determined that a student’s continued enrollment would create a significant risk to the health and safety of the student or others.

A student seeking to re-enroll after a medical leave of absence must demonstrate to GMS that the student’s health permits the successful completion of studies. Documentation needed to support this finding will be determined by Student Health Services or its designee, but will generally include information from the student’s clinician as well as an assessment by Student Health Services or its designee. The decision whether to permit a student to re-enroll is within the sole discretion of GMS.

13.3 Withdrawal

A student who wishes to withdraw from the University must submit the request and follow below procedures:

- Meet with their advisor and program director for approval.
- Submit a written request explaining the reason for withdrawal along with the required forms, including the program director’s signature, to the GMS Registrar.
- May be asked to meet with the Associate Provost.

If approved, a withdrawal is effective on the day it is received by the GMS Registrar and charges are canceled in accordance with the University’s published refund schedule, based on the effective date of the student’s withdrawal.

Absence from class does not reduce financial obligations or guarantee that final grades will not be recorded.

13.4 Reinstatement

A student who has voluntarily withdrawn from GMS will be subject to the regulations governing Readmission to a Degree Program under section 13.
16. ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND GRADUATION

16.1 Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)
In accordance with the Federal Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy 34 CFR 668.34, students enrolled in GMS are expected to adhere to the GMS Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy and guidelines from matriculation through graduation. All degree candidates’ academic records will be reviewed at the end of each semester by the programs in which they are enrolled to ensure that they achieve SAP. A student who fails to achieve SAP may be subject to academic action, including academic probation and/or dismissal. Further, students who fail to maintain SAP will not be eligible for the University certification to apply for federal and private educational loans.

The following criteria will be used to determine SAP at the GMS level. However, individual degree programs may have additional and/or varied academic standards that must also be met to remain in compliance.

16.11 GPA Requirement
• The minimum cumulative GPA requirement for graduation is 2.70.
• Current students who have a GPA of 2.69 or below and/or have not met program-specific academic standards will require a specific learning plan and will be put on Academic Probation for the duration of one (1) semester. Learning plans must be developed in consultation with a student’s faculty advisor and/or program director, and should be monitored closely as the semester progresses. Students have the one (1) semester of academic probation to improve their GPA to meet the minimum GPA requirement and/or the academic standards set by the program. Failure to do so may result in loss of eligibility for federal and private educational loans and/or dismissal from the program.

16.12 Pace of Academic Completion
In order to complete the degree requirements within the recommended timeline for program completion, students must complete a minimum of 67% of all courses attempted per semester.

16.13 Maximum Time of Completion
M.A. and M.S. degree candidates have a maximum of five (5) academic years from matriculation to complete their degree unless otherwise specified in program requirements. Doctorate degree candidates have a maximum of seven (7) academic years from matriculation to complete their degree. A student requiring additional time beyond the maximum time of completion must submit a petition to the Associate Provost of GMS with a support letter from his/her graduate program director or chairman at least six (6) months prior to the deadline. An extension will only be allowed in extenuating circumstances.

16.15 Residency Requirement
Students must be registered in the semester in which the degree requirements are completed and in the preceding semester. Students should check with the GMS registrar for specific registration guidelines.
19. EXAMINATIONS
Course examinations are given at the discretion of the course manager. Final examinations are generally administered in conjunction with the schedule published by the University Registrar’s office.

A student who is unable to attend an examination should contact the course manager as early as possible prior to the examination to discuss whether or not alternate arrangements can be made or if the student will fail the exam. A student who is absent from an examination may request a make-up examination only if the examination was missed for a serious reason (such as illness or family emergency). A student may be required to provide proof of the circumstances, such as a note from a physician. Special or make-up examinations will not be scheduled to accommodate a student’s personal travel plans.

20. Grades and Course Credits
20.1 Grade Explanation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A to B-</td>
<td>Pass with credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+ or below</td>
<td>Considered failure (graduate credit not granted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete, with additional work required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Registration in a following semester necessary to complete requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. INCOMPLETE COURSEWORK AND FAILING GRADES

21.1 Incomplete Grades
An incomplete grade (I) is granted when a student cannot complete course requirements on time due to extenuating circumstances. A student may be required to provide proof of the circumstances.

An incomplete grade may be granted with the condition that the student will complete the coursework on his or her own and within a specific and mutually agreed-upon timeframe. In no case can that timeframe exceed more than one (1) year (twelve months) from the time the incomplete grade is assigned.

Course managers may not grant an incomplete grade as an alternative to submitting a poor or failing grade. In the event that a student does not complete coursework or make a timely request for an incomplete grade, the course manager must assign a grade.

If the incomplete coursework is not completed by the required completion date, a final grade of “F” will be entered by the GMS registrar. Receipt of an “F” grade is preventable only if the student successfully presents evidence to the Associate Provost for GMS that
further time is warranted. The evidence must be presented at least one (1) month prior to the required course completion date.

21.5 Failing grades
Grades of C+ or lower are failing grades. A student receiving such grades in total of eight (8) credit hours will be automatically dismissed from GMS. Additionally, credits for any class in which a student earn a grade of C+ or lower will not be counted towards total earned credits.

24. FACULTY AND RESEARCH ADVISOR

24.1 Faculty Advisor
The faculty advisor plays a central role in guiding the student’s academic program, assisting in course selection, monitoring progress, and providing guidance and counseling in academic matters. Upon entering GMS, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students are required to meet regularly with their faculty advisor to discuss their academic progress and course selections.

24.2 Research/Thesis Advisor
A candidate for a Ph.D. degree is required to have a research/dissertation advisor who is a member of GMS Faculty. The research advisor is always the first reader of the candidate’s Ph.D. dissertation. A Ph.D. candidate will not be permitted to start his or her dissertation

25.2 General Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree
The requirements for post-bachelor’s and post-master’s degree programs are as follows:

25.21 Post-bachelor’s
Candidates without a master’s degree or its equivalent are required to complete a minimum of 64 graduate level credits. Specific requirements relative to the selection of courses, seminars, and research or directed study will be determined by the student’s department or graduate program. Normally, no more than four (4) courses may be taken concurrently. Each student must register for at least one (1) course each semester until completion of all departmental or programmatic course requirements unless granted an authorized leave of absence. The number of courses that may be transferred to a post-bachelor’s program is explained in more detail in the Transfer of Credits under Section 22.
25.22 Post-master’s

In some cases, candidates with a master’s degree may be accepted into a post-M.A. program. These students are required to complete a minimum of 32 graduate level credits. In certain circumstances, the Admissions Committee of a department or program will require post-master’s candidates to complete the equivalent of sixteen (16) graduate-level courses (64 credits). Specific requirements relative to the selection of courses, seminars, and research or directed study will be determined by the student’s department or program. Normally, no more than four (4) courses may be taken concurrently, and each student must register for at least one (1) course each semester until completion of all departmental or programmatic course requirements unless granted an authorized leave of absence. Regulations regarding transfer of credit to a post-master's program are explained in more detail in the Transfer of Credits under Section 22.

25.23 Qualifying Examination

All Ph.D. students shall demonstrate mastery of their field in special examinations set by the student’s department or program. All parts of the qualifying examination must be passed and the GMS registrar is notified before the dissertation prospectus outline will be accepted by GMS. The number of members and the composition of the qualifying examination committee are dictated by the department or program. All qualifying examination committee members should be members of the GMS faculty.

25.24 Dissertation Prospectus Outline

At a stage in the research prescribed by the student’s department or program, the student develops a dissertation prospectus with the help of their readers and dissertation committee. The dissertation prospectus must be approved by the readers and the specific department chair or program director. The approved prospectus is submitted to the GMS registrar on or before the date specified under the Calendar and Important Dates available on the GMS website. The format of the prospectus and specific procedures for meeting the general guidelines vary among the departments and programs.

25.25 Dissertation

Candidates shall demonstrate their ability for independent study in a dissertation that represents original research or creative scholarship. After completing coursework, and all other pre-dissertation requirements, including the qualifying examinations, a student develops a dissertation proposal. In some departments and programs presentation of the dissertation proposal is part of the qualifying examination.
25.26 Dissertation Abstract

A dissertation abstract of 350 words or less that has been approved by the student’s first reader, program director and/or department chair must be submitted to the GMS registrar at least three (3) weeks prior to the scheduled dissertation oral defense. Additional materials may be required by individual departments or programs.

To complete, successfully defend, and submit the dissertation to the GMS registrar for timely graduation, a Ph.D. candidate will:

1. Submit the dissertation prospectus outline to GMS and diploma application at least three (3) months prior to the anticipated graduation date.
2. Submit a dissertation abstract, approved by the department or program, at least three (3) weeks prior to final oral exam.
3. The dissertation must be approved by the research advisor (who is the first reader) and the second readers, at which time the dissertation must be distributed to the remaining committee members at least two (2) weeks prior to the final oral exam. All members must have GMS faculty membership.
4. Submit a final oral exam schedule, approved by the department or program, at least two (2) weeks prior to final oral exam.
5. Defend the dissertation at the final oral exam. All committee members must approve the dissertation. Recommendations for corrections can be made at the final oral exam and the student must make these corrections to the satisfaction of all committee members before final approval is granted.
6. Submit the final approved dissertation (and associated fees and documents) to the GMS registrar by the appropriate graduation due date.

Failure to meet any of these deadlines may result in rescheduling of dissertation defense and/or graduation.

25.27 Final Oral Examination

Ph.D. students must undergo a final oral examination in which they defend their dissertation as a valuable contribution to their field and to demonstrate a mastery of their field of specialization. The examining committee is composed of five (5) or more faculty members, including the First, Second and Third (optional) readers and a committee chair. A Special Service Appointment is required for those committee members who are visiting, adjunct, and Emeritus faculty, Boston University employees not of faculty rank and examiners from outside Boston University.

All committee members are required to attend the Final Oral Examination. In special circumstances, a member can participate in the Final Oral Examination via audio/video communication or through a proxy.
26. **EMERGENCY CLOSING Procedures**

In the event of existing or projected weather conditions or other emergency/disaster situations, GMS may cancel classes. Cancellation of GMS classes will be communicated by posting the cancellation announcement on the GMS website and/or by the individual course manager. This may be independent of other closings throughout the medical campus.

If the medical campus is closed for the day, then no GMS classes will be held. Note that Boston University’s Charles River Campus may be closed while the Boston University School of Medicine remains open, in which classes will be held unless otherwise notified of the course cancellation by the course instructor/manager. Announcements and information regarding all Boston University closings or delayed openings will be made on local radio and television stations, as well as the GMS website.

31. **RESOURCES FOR TITLE IX**

Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center (SARP)
Staffed 24/7 by trained crisis counselors
Located in the Charles River Campus (CRC) at 930 Commonwealth Avenue
SARP@bu.edu
(617) 353-SARP (7277)

GMS Deputy Title IX Coordinator
*Dr. Gwynneth Offner*
Director of MS in Medical Sciences
Associate Professor in Medicine
goffner@bu.edu
(508) 358-4914

For more information please visit the Equal Opportunity Title IX webpage:
http://www.bu.edu/eoo/title-ix-2/