College Bylaws

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Introduction

The Bylaws assure that all programs of the College of Graduate Health Sciences have access to the policies that govern the activities of the College.

College Organization

The College of Graduate Health Sciences (CGHS) is the University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) unit through which provision is made for formal study beyond the bachelor’s degree, except for qualified degrees and postdoctoral programs supervised by the professional colleges. The College has the additional responsibility of promoting advanced study and research.

The College is campus-wide with respect to its faculty, policies, programs, and relationships. In the administration of graduate policies and programs, the established lines of executive and administrative authority within the University are followed.

The executive and administrative head of the graduate programs at UTHSC is the Dean of the College of Graduate Health Sciences, who reports to the Chancellor UTHSC. The Dean receives recommendations on College issues from the Graduate Studies Council. The Council is chaired by the Dean and consists of the Chair or Director of each program within the College, a representative from St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital, and a student representative. The Council is advised by the following committees appointed by the Dean of the College: Credentials Committee and Curriculum Committee.

The Graduate Studies Council is responsible for reviewing new courses and programs in the CGHS. The Council also recommends the appointment of faculty to the Dean. It shall be within the province of the Council on its own initiative to plan and to recommend institution of programs of graduate instruction; to set standards of admission and curricula; and to assemble, organize, and interpret information pertaining to the graduate programs at UTHSC. Recommendations arising from these activities shall be submitted to the Dean. When program matters that are of concern to a particular college or other unit are under consideration, the administrative head of that unit shall be consulted.

The Credentials Committee is responsible for reviewing applications for appointment to the faculty and recommending faculty appointments to the Graduate Studies Council. The Credentials Committee meets as need, at least twice yearly, to review applications for appointment to the faculty. Procedures for obtaining appointment to the faculty are detailed under Faculty.

The Curriculum Committee advises the Graduate Studies Council on curriculum matters, including review and approval of new course proposals and new programs of study. Each program director or chair communicates new course proposals or changes to courses or the program curriculum to the Curriculum Committee for review, comment, and approval. For the Joint Program in Biomedical Engineering, the joint curriculum is coordinated at regular joint faculty meetings; the program director or chair communicates new course proposals or changes to courses or the program curriculum to the Curriculum Committee for review, comment, and approval. The Curriculum Committee meets monthly. New course proposals for
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courses to be offered in the Fall term are due March 31; proposals for the Spring term are due August 31. All courses having five or more students must be evaluated using CoursEval™ or an equivalent evaluation tool.

Administratively revised November 27, 2012 and May 14, 2013

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Inclement Weather Policy

The UTHSC administration determines when the campus is closed because of inclement weather and announces that status as follows: (1) a telephone hotline (901-44UT ICE or 901-448-8423) with up-to-the-minute information, (2) the UTHSC Web site, (3) WREG Channel 3 television station, and (4) FM 100 radio station.

When the campus is closed, all CGHS classes and other activities occurring on the campus are cancelled. CGHS faculty and students working at other locations (e.g., St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital or VAMC) are subject to the policies of the resident institution.

For further information, contact your course director or research advisor directly.

Revised 26 February 2008

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Catalog and CenterScope Statements

Statements are extracted from the section on the CGHS in the UTHSC Catalog and The Center Scope. The statements have been developed over a number of years, under the auspices of nine different deans or administrative officers. Thus, the origin of some has been lost. Nevertheless, as an official publication of The University of Tennessee Health Science Center, the Catalog and The Center Scope statements have the force of policy.

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Faculty

In general, the CGHS faculty consists of faculty members whose primary appointment is in one of the professional colleges of UTHSC and who are actively engaged in research. In certain instances, faculty of other institutions may be appointed to the graduate faculty. Members of the graduate faculty are responsible for the instruction of candidates for the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. Appointment to the graduate faculty is made by the Dean upon the recommendation of the Program Chair.

The faculty are responsible for establishing and maintaining a standard of excellence for graduate work within the College. The postbaccalaureate programs for which the faculty are responsible are listed in the CGHS section of the Catalog. The faculty, along with the Dean, will continuously monitor ongoing programs to ensure that their level of excellence is maintained. Appointment to the College is required before a faculty member may (1) direct a graduate course and serve on thesis or dissertation committees or (2) supervise the research of students working toward degrees awarded through the CGHS.
Appointment to the Faculty

Any paid, affiliated, or adjunct faculty member at UTHSC who holds an earned doctorate or the highest degree appropriate to the field and has demonstrated an interest in research may be nominated by a Chair for appointment to the CGHS faculty.

For appointment as a faculty member in the CGHS, the Program Chair submits a curriculum vitae (in Faculty Handbook format), along with a request form, to the Dean, who may approve the appointment without further review. The Dean may appoint to graduate faculty status tenure track or nontenure-track faculty or faculty who hold affiliated, secondary, or adjunct appointments. The Dean has the option of consulting with the Credentials Committee. All faculty appointed to the CGHS are listed on the CGHS website.

Certification to Direct Degree Research

Graduate faculty approved to direct master’s research shall have published in peer-reviewed journal(s), shall have served on thesis or dissertation committee(s) or supervised postdoctoral student(s) for at least one year, and shall have initiated an active program of research.

Graduate faculty approved to direct doctoral research shall have established an independent program for research, in addition to the requirements for directing master’s research. Approval to direct degree research shall remain valid as long as an approved member holds an appointment in the CGHS.

When faculty are recommended by the Program Chair to be a Research Advisor to direct degree research, the Dean shall forward the CV and request form to the Credentials Committee of the Graduate Studies Council for their recommendation. Upon the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, the Dean grants final approval.

To be a Research Advisor to direct master’s or doctoral degree research, graduate faculty from affiliated institutions must first be appointed as affiliated faculty in one of the graduate programs of the CGHS and follow the process outlined in the preceding paragraph for certification. Adjunct (volunteer) faculty will not be approved to direct master’s or doctoral degree research.

Appeal Procedure

In the event that an individual is not recommended by the Program Chair or by the Graduate Studies Council for an appointment in the CGHS or for certification to direct degree research, the individual may appeal to the Dean.

Admissions

Graduates of The University of Tennessee and of other accredited institutions are eligible to apply for admission to the College of Graduate Health Sciences. The College considers applicants not only from Tennessee, but also from other states and countries if they have completed the necessary prerequisites for advanced study. Equal educational opportunity is offered to all persons without regard to race, religion, sex, age, creed, color, national origin, or physical handicap.

A student must have completed undergraduate prerequisites for graduate study, as determined by the respective graduate program. An undergraduate major in a specific discipline usually is not required as a
prerequisite for admission. Only a limited number of students are accepted. Admissions are restricted to the self-determined capacities of the programs involved in graduate study.

The adequacy of preparation for graduate study may be determined from the applicant’s record or by examination at the time the student makes application to the CGHS. In the case of a student whose preparation for formal graduate study is inadequate, a program of prerequisite course work may be required as determined by the graduate program accepting the student. Such courses will not be credited toward meeting the formal course requirement for an advanced degree.

Regular students are students who seek admission to one of the doctoral or master’s degree programs offered by the College. Regular students must register for at least nine semester hours to be considered full-time. Students must submit an official application and must fulfill the admission criteria for the College, as well as the criteria of the respective program. Application forms are available on the UTHSC home page (http://www.uthsc.edu/) or from the Office of Enrollment Services. Applications are to be submitted by the student electronically or by mail directly to the Office of Enrollment Services. All documents including Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) scores, transcripts, and letters of reference are to be sent to the Office of Enrollment Services directly by the appropriate agency, the student’s institution, or the appropriate individuals. Student inquiries will be entered immediately into the Admissions Prospective Screen via electronic network. All official correspondence regarding the application is the responsibility of Office of Enrollment Services. Programs may, if desired, correspond with prospective applicants on an informal and informational basis. Admission as a regular student requires a bachelor’s degree or its equivalent with an undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 from an accredited college or university and a Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) combined score totaling at least 1000 for the verbal and quantitative sections. In addition, the score on each component must be at or above the 25th percentile score for that section. Some programs may require a higher GRE score for admission. Individuals with a professional or graduate degree in science from an accredited US/Canadian institution may petition for an exception. Three letters of recommendation from previous instructors or persons capable of judging the applicant’s qualifications for graduate study are also required.

If an applicant does not enter the CGHS in the semester in which admission is requested, the student may be granted entry within the next two semesters with approval of the Program Chair and the Dean. Once admitted and registered, students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment, unless permission is given for interrupted registration (see section on Residency). Revised August 9, 2010.

Admission to the CGHS entitles the student to register for graduate courses but does not mean that the student is admitted as a candidate for an advanced degree. Candidacy for an advanced degree will be determined after the student has satisfied criteria established by the program in which the student seeks training and by the College.

International applicants must present (1) a complete and accurate chronological outline of all previous education; (2) authorized college or university records, with certified translations if the records are in a language other than English; (3) evidence of financial resources sufficient to provide the student with adequate support during the period of registration as a student; (4) evidence of proficiency in English; and (5) documentation that the student can provide transportation from the country of origin to UTHSC and return.

Any applicant to the graduate program whose first language is not English and who has earned neither a bachelor’s nor a master’s degree from a college or university in an English-speaking country must have achieved a TOEFL score of at least 213/79 on the computer-based/Internet-based exam or an IELTS score of 6.5 (earned within 2 years prior to application).

Any applicant to the CGHS whose first language is not English but who has earned a baccalaureate or master’s degree from a college or university in an English-speaking country where instruction was in
English may be exempted from the requirement for the TOEFL or IELTS examination. If there is cause to doubt the student’s proficiency in English, programs may, at their discretion, require additional examinations and/or other evidence of proficiency prior to registration. UT Health Science Center policies require that individuals, including graduate students appointed as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) who teach in UTHSC programs, must be certified by the program Chair as being proficient in the English language.

The complete file, including application, official certificates, descriptive titles of courses taken, and detailed transcripts with marks gained in final examinations, must be submitted to the Office of Enrollment Services at least 3 months prior to the semester in which admission is desired. Successful applicants will receive a certificate of acceptance to be presented to the United States Consul with the application for a student visa. UTHSC will not accept visas issued for admission to other colleges or universities.


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Immunizations

The UTHSC requires that all entering students undergo tuberculin (TB) skin testing at registration and document prior immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, polio, and tetanus by recorded evidence of immunization. Documentation of receipt of two doses of measles (rubeola) vaccine after the first birthday is required unless born prior to 1957. Anyone with unknown or negative history of varicella must undergo serological testing. University Health Services will determine whether immunization documentation is adequate. Students who are unable to document immunity to these infections may be enrolled, provided required immunization and TB testing are obtained within 10 days of registration. Students may be exempted from this requirement if contraindications are established by University Health Services. A TB skin test will be given at orientation for anyone without proof of a TB skin test within the last 3 months. A two-step TB skin test will be given to students without documented prior testing within 5 years. Students with a positive TB skin test must show clearance from a local or state health department.

University Health Services is required to ensure that students are immunized against hepatitis B. However, exceptions to this policy may be made for individual students making such a request by providing reasonable cause and by signing a statement of declination. Students known to be hepatitis B antigen- or antibody-positive (or already immune) or for whom contraindications are established by a healthcare provider or University Health Services may be exempted from this immunization. Students have until the end of the first semester enrolled to start the series of three injections for hepatitis B immunization.

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E-mail

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center provides every student with an e-mail account that enables the administration, faculty, and staff of the College of Graduate Health Sciences to send official electronic correspondence to students. Students are responsible for checking and maintaining their UTHSC e-mail account, as it is the only account that will receive official College communications. Should students desire, they can forward e-mail from their official University e-mail address to any e-mail account they choose. Please note, however, that if students elect to forward e-mail and that process fails, they will still be held accountable for reading and responding in a timely fashion to any official information sent to the official University e-mail address. (Effective September 7, 2007)
Annual leave policy

Students in the College of Graduate Health Sciences are research trainees who are focused on their educational goal and commit the time and effort required to achieve this goal. Nevertheless, the College considers personal time an important component in a healthy academic experience. To this end, the College has established a personal leave policy for students:

- Students are granted two weeks per academic year of vacation days in addition to specific administrative closings or holidays in their working environment. Students must obtain signature approval on the leave form from their mentor and program director at least one week in advance.
- Specific requests for religious holidays should be discussed with the mentor and honored when they do not present undue hardship to laboratory and career goals.
- The mentor and student should discuss possible situations that will necessitate working holiday hours in order to complete critical experiments, obtain data for grant submissions or bring manuscripts to the submission stage.

Should a student require additional leave, for example to travel internationally, they must arrange this with their mentor. Such an arrangement may include working during administrative holidays to gain additional days or forgoing leave in order to accrue time at a later date. Students who wish to accrue time in excess of the two weeks per year may do so with the approval of their mentor. The College has a policy that any student who will be absent for more than four weeks must make a written request to their Program Chair and receive permission of the Dean prior to their absence as stipulated in the College bylaws: MS Residency and PhD Residency. A student who is absent for more than four weeks without permission will be withdrawn. (Effective May 24, 2011. Modified October 23, 2012)

Family and medical leave policy

National Research Service Award (NRSA) trainees. The College will follow NIH NRSA policy for parental leave (NIH NOT-OD-08-064). This policy provides NRSA trainees up to 60 calendar days (equivalent to 8 work weeks) of paid (for students receiving stipends) parental leave per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave. The College policy extends the leave to include care for immediate family members with serious health problems and for serious health conditions that temporarily prevent the student from fulfilling program requirements. Use of the leave must be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Note that extended periods of leave may affect adequate academic progress and may necessitate withdrawal from the graduate program.

Non-NRSA trainees. The College will provide non-NRSA trainees up to 60 calendar days (equivalent to 8 work weeks) of unpaid parental leave per year for the adoption or the birth of a child. Either parent is eligible for parental leave. The College policy extends the leave to include care for immediate family members with serious health problems and for serious health conditions that temporarily prevent the student from fulfilling program requirements. Use of the leave must be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Note that extended periods of leave may affect adequate academic progress and may necessitate withdrawal from the graduate program.

Approved April 23, 2013
Absence policy

Students who are absent from class or research setting for reasons other than an anticipated annual leave must immediately notify their instructors and mentor (when applicable) to arrange an excused absence. An excused absence will not incur a grading penalty and may require make-up work; faculty may require documentation of illness or unavoidable event in order to grant an excused absence.

Students who need to leave the University for greater than four weeks must discuss their need with their advisor before making a written request for a leave of absence to their Program Chair. The Program Chair will forward the request, along with a recommendation, to the Dean. If the Dean does not grant the leave of absence, the student may appeal the decision as described under “Academic Due Process.” Students who are absent from their academic responsibilities for more than four weeks without approval of the Dean will receive non-passing grades in all courses for which they are enrolled and be withdrawn from the College. To re-enter the University after withdrawal, students must formally reapply.

Absences may affect a student’s academic progress, financial aid status, and immigration status. Students should consult with the appropriate University officials to assess the consequences of an absence.

Involuntary Leave of Absence. A student may be placed on an involuntary leave of absence if circumstances dictate that doing so is in the best interest of the student’s well-being or the University community (e.g., behavioral concerns or disruptive behavior). A student facing the possibility of an involuntary leave of absence will first be given an option to take a voluntary leave of absence. A student who has faced the possibility of an involuntary leave of absence, whether the leave is given as voluntary or involuntary, must provide evidence of fitness to return to studies before being reinstated. Such evidence must be from qualified professionals both external to the University and from University Health Services. A student who does not provide evidence of fitness to return within one-year of being placed on leave will be withdrawn and must formally reapply. Reinstatement of a student is at the discretion of the Dean.

Approved January 22, 2013

Grading

The College grading policies, using A, B, C, etc., do not provide sufficient resolution to be fair to all students. Therefore, the following system of grades, with equivalent quality point value, is adopted: A (4.0); A- (3.67); B+ (3.33); B (3.00); B- (2.67); C+ (2.33); C (2.00); C- (1.67); D (1.00); and F (0). Grades P (for progress) and N (for no progress) are used for grading work in research. These grades are not included in calculating the grade point average (GPA).

The following grading policies at UTHSC are applicable to graduate students:
- The grade of D is computed in the scholastic average but does not carry credit toward a degree. No graduate student will be allowed to repeat a course for the purpose of improving a grade.
- The designations WP or WF will be recorded to indicate pass or failure in those instances in which a student withdraws from a course before completing the work. Withdrawals are not allowed after the seventh week of the class.

The designation I will be used in those instances in which a student is unable to complete a course at the regular time because of an acceptable reason, but is performing at a passing level. In such cases, arrangements are to be made by the instructor for the student to complete the work, and the I is to be replaced by whatever grade the instructor considers the student to have earned.
The I designation cannot be permanent on a student’s record, and must be removed by the end of the semester or term following that in which it was received. In the case of a graduating student, this designation must be removed no later than the day before commencement. Failure on the part of a student to remove an I within the time limit allowed will result in the grade of F being reported and recorded as a permanent grade.

Students are required to complete evaluations for courses using CoursEval™ or an equivalent evaluation tool. Students not completing an evaluation by the deadline given by the course director will be given a grade of I (incomplete) until the evaluation is completed. If a student does not resolve a grade of I during the following semester, the I automatically becomes an F on the student’s permanent record.

Certain marginally failing students, as specified and recommended by appropriate progress and promotions committees, may record a passing score in a course previously failed by self-study review of the course and re-examination. In such cases, a $50 re-examination fee will be assessed. Students are required to register for the examination at the Registrar’s Office and pay the fee prior to taking the reexamination. When courses are repeated or credit is earned through reexamination, both the original grade and the repeat grade are computed in the grade point average.


**Grade Point Average Requirements**

The minimum cumulative GPA needed for successful progress is established and communicated to the student in writing by each program. This GPA level may be higher, but no lower, than 3.0, which is the standard of the College. If, after 18 semester hours of regular class work, a student’s cumulative GPA falls below the minimum, or if, in the view of the student’s Faculty Committee, the student is not making adequate progress, including research, the case is reviewed by the program’s Graduate Studies Committee or equivalent. The committee will then submit a recommendation to the Program Chair or Program Director for resolution of the deficiency. The plan will be communicated to the Dean for review. After consideration of the plan and other factors relevant to the student’s progress, the Dean will decide whether to allow the student to continue in the program.

**Appeal of Grades**

Students may appeal grade if they feel that the grade was assigned inappropriately and not in accord with the course statement of policy distributed at the beginning of the course. The appeal is directed to the course director and then to the Program Chair. If resolution of the issue is not made at the program level, then appeal is made in writing to the Dean. The Dean or designee may appoint an Ad Hoc Committee of faculty to review the appeal and make a recommendation to the Dean for decision.

Graduate education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This evaluation includes not only periodic objective evaluations such as the GPA, performance on comprehensive examinations, and acceptance of the thesis or dissertation, but also subjective appraisal by the faculty of the student’s progress and potential.

Continuation of graduate study within the College results from positive action taken by the program’s Graduate Studies Committee. Grades are not necessarily the sole criterion used in determining whether or not a student is permitted to continue. Other attributes, primarily those concerned with the level of professionalism expected of a student in a particular discipline, may be considered.
Programs may have requirements for continuation or graduation in addition to the minimum requirements set forth in the UTHSC Catalog. It is the student’s responsibility to be familiar with the special requirements of the program.

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**Academic Due Process**

If a student is denied continuation in a program, the student has a right to a hearing at the program level before the Graduate Studies Committee or any other appeals committee that the Program Chair deems appropriate. The student must be informed in writing of the reason for termination from the program and of the right to appeal. A written request by the student to the Program Chair for such a hearing must be filed within 5 working days after receipt of the written notification of the original action. The hearing should be scheduled by the Chair promptly but should allow sufficient time for the student and the program to prepare. At the hearings, both the student and the program should present pertinent written and oral documentation, which may include statements by and examination of witnesses. The student may bring any person(s), excluding legal counsel, whom the student feels can contribute to the presentation. Committee consideration is conducted without the presence of legal counsel. Confidential records will be kept of all proceedings. The result of this hearing will be communicated in writing to the student within 5 working days of the hearing excluding holidays and administrative closings.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this hearing, the student has the right to appeal this recommendation before an ad hoc appeals committee appointed by the Dean. A written request for such an appeal must be filed with the Dean within five days of the notification of the results of the program hearing. If the student does not file such an appeal within this time, the Dean will inform the student in writing of the dismissal from the program.

The ad hoc appeals committee will be formed from the graduate faculty and may include a student member. The ad hoc appeals committee has the right to examine witnesses appearing before the Graduate Studies Committee of the program in support of the student or in support of the action taken by the program. The appeals committee will make a recommendation to the Dean or designee who will then make a decision and communicate this decision in writing to the student within 10 working days.

During the period in which appeals are scheduled at the program or College level, the student will continue to receive a stipend. However, if the student is dismissed after decision by the Dean or designee, stipend support will cease. Students not satisfied with the result of this second-level hearing have the right for further appeal to the Chancellor of UTHSC.

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**Transfer of Credits**

Courses taken at another institution for graduate credit, completed with a grade of B or better, and accepted by the student’s program in the College may be transferred into the student’s UTHSC degree program. The number of hours that may be transferred will be determined by the student’s Faculty Committee, but at least 50% of the credit hours for a master's or Ph.D. degree must be earned at UTHSC. Transferred courses must be listed on the Admission to Candidacy form and approved by the Program Chair and the Faculty Committee. Students seeking to transfer more than 1 semester’s courses from another institution must do so in writing to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Official transcripts must be received directly by the Registrar from the previous institution(s) and appropriately authenticated before transfer of graduate credit will be approved. Credits transferred into the
student’s graduate program will not affect the minimum residency requirements and normally will not be included in calculations of the student’s grade point average.

Program faculty must inform the Registrar in writing of non-UTHSC courses to be added to a student's transcript. The following information is required: (1) student name, (2) course name and number, (3) name of other institution, (4) whether the course is for credit only or for both credit and computing the student's GPA.

Students taking a course at an institution other than UTHSC must (1) request that an official transcript be sent from the institution where the course was taken to the UTHSC Registrar upon completing the course and (2) notify the Registrar that a transcript is being sent.

Revised 25 October 2005

Employment

Under some circumstances, full-time graduate students are permitted to supplement the stipend by employment within or outside the University. It is a conflict of interest for a student to work for a member of the student’s committee. It is the responsibility of the Program Chair and the student’s Faculty Committee to determine whether such employment interferes with the expectations of that program regarding the student’s acceptable progress in course and research work and in the amount of time the student is expected to spend in research and service. If the Program Chair determines that employment would interfere or would be a conflict of interest with the student’s program, the Chair may limit such employment.

Tuition Waiver

Upon recommendation of the Program Chair and approval of the Dean, applicable tuition may be waived. Waiver of tuition will be made available to students in return for creditable service as determined by the program.

Doctoral students may be granted a waiver of tuition for up to 6 years and master's-only students may be granted a waiver of tuition for up to 4 years by the College. If a student fails to complete all the requirements for the degree by the allotted time, the student or the program will be responsible for paying tuition until the requirements for the degree are completed.

Only full-time students as defined by the CGHS are eligible to receive a waiver of tuition.

Students who choose to obtain employment at another institution or attend another educational institution while continuing to pursue their degree will not be eligible to receive a stipend, insurance, or waiver of tuition.

Students whose mentor leaves the University for another academic institution will not be eligible for a waiver of tuition if they choose to remain enrolled at UTHSC while studying at the institution where the mentor has moved. The mentor may make arrangements before resigning from UTHSC to pay the tuition associated with those students who remain enrolled at the University but study with the mentor at the new
institution. Otherwise, students will be required to (1) pay the appropriate tuition and fees if they choose to remain at UTHSC or (2) transfer to the other institution.

Programs and/or faculty who apply for extramural training grants should include funds to cover the cost of tuition for the student slots that are requested.

Revised 23 August 2011.

**Stipends**

The Dean is responsible for the administration and award of stipends for full-time graduate students enrolled in the College. Funding for most first-year graduate student stipends is provided by the College. Funding for subsequent years(s) of graduate stipend support is ordinarily the responsibility of the respective program.

The stipend levels of graduate students in the College of Graduate Health Sciences will be established early in the calendar year for the next academic year. Each graduate program may establish the annual stipend for its students so long as the stipend level for all students in a given year of matriculation and/or program are consistent (for example: all first-year graduate students, $23,000; second-year graduate students, $23,500, etc.). Any recommendation for a stipend that is not within the above guidelines requires approval of the Dean.

Students receiving a grant/fellowship that provides more than the amount of their current stipend will receive the full amount of the grant/fellowship or the current stipend amount plus an additional $2500, whichever is greater.

Students receiving a grant/fellowship less than the amount of the current stipend will receive the full stipend plus an additional $2500, with the difference between the original stipend and grant/fellowship stipend plus the $2500 being provided by the original source of the stipend support (e.g. mentor grant).

Partial stipends may be awarded to full-time and part-time students in some programs. Such awards will be approved by the Dean only after recommendation of such by the Council.

It is permissible for a program to recommend admission of a graduate student in a graduate program of the College with no stipend support. Approval of the Dean is required.


**Program Director**

Each program has appointed a faculty member (Director) whose responsibility is to direct course registration for graduate students in that program, to see that students are meeting requirements for their degree program, and to make students aware of courses available from other programs. The Program Chair may designate the Program Director to sign concerning academic matters within the College.
Periodic Program Review

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission requires a five to seven year cycle of program review of undergraduate and graduate educational programs that are not separately accredited. This review consists of an internal self-study of the program followed by a review by external consultants. The stated purpose of the review is “to ensure that standards of the discipline are being met and that adequate financial support is evident.” (THEC Meeting January 26, 2012, Information item II.A).

At a minimum, the self-study will consist of a program overview and review of the curriculum, academic standards, faculty, facilities and resources, student practices (recruitment, admission, evaluation), budget and finances, evaluation and assessment, and cost-to-benefit analysis. The external review will consist of confirmation of the information in the self-study, an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses for each item in the self-study, a statement regarding whether the program is meeting the standards of the discipline, an analysis of the resources and institutional support, and recommendations to strengthen the quality of the program. A more detailed discussion of the review process is located in the CGHS Program Review Guide.

Research Advisor

Choosing a Research Advisor to serve as the primary mentor is the single most important decision a graduate student has to make. The Research Advisor is usually chosen after laboratory rotations are arranged by the Program Director.

Certificate Programs

Certificate programs offered by the College generally require fewer credit hours than M.S. of Ph.D. programs and have less intensive research experiences. Admission requirements follow the minimum guidelines of the College with the exception that there is no requirement for a Graduate Record Examination. A command of English is essential, and some students may be required to provide TOEFL or IELTS scores. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 in the required courses is required for successful completion of the certificate program.

Administratively added May 15, 2013

Master of Science Degree

Residency

The minimum residency requirement for the master’s degree is two semesters of full-time study or equivalent. A semester of full-time study is defined as nine or more hours of graduate credit earned in one semester. Part-time students and students who are deficient in preparation for their advanced study may require more than two semesters for completion of the requirements for the degree.
Candidates have 6 calendar years from the time of first enrollment in a master's or doctoral degree program to complete the master's degree. An extension for extraordinary circumstances (e.g., an official leave of absence) may be considered by the Dean upon written petition from the student.

All master’s degree students, except those on active military duty, will enroll each semester. All students must adhere to the leave policies of the College (see Absence and Annual leave policies).

Modified January 22, 2013

Credit Hours

A candidate for a master’s degree must complete a minimum of 30 semester credit hours of graduate courses; specific programs may require additional credit hours for completion. The program of study must be approved by the student’s Faculty Committee and the Program Chair. Eighteen semester hours or more of credit are required in the discipline. The student must continue to register for Course 800 for the entire period during which the student is engaged in thesis research, including the semester in which the thesis is accepted by the College. (Effective July 1, 2007)

If a full-time or a part-time student's faculty committee certifies that the student has completed all experimental work for the degree and will be primarily writing and completing the thesis in the next semester of enrollment, then the student may register for three credit hours of research. If the student fails to submit an approved thesis by the deadline for graduation in that semester, the student will be required to register for nine credit hours in the subsequent semester(s). (Effective July 1, 2007)

A master's degree candidate in the Epidemiology Program, the University of Tennessee – University of Memphis Joint Graduate Program in Biomedical Engineering, Dental Sciences Program, Biomedical Sciences Program, or Pharmaceutical Sciences Program may elect to take the degree with a project option. Credit hour requirements for each option are detailed in the Catalog under the specific program.


Language

A command of written and spoken English is essential. Failure to demonstrate competence in the use of written and spoken English may constitute grounds for termination of graduate work.

Research and Thesis

Requirements for the master’s degree include the successful completion of a suitable research problem, the student’s demonstration of scholarly attainment, and the potential to do independent research. This phase of the master’s program takes the form of a major research project reported in the form of a thesis or project. (Not less than six nor more than twelve semester hours of credit for the thesis shall be included in the 30-semester credit hours required for the degree.)

The subject of the research shall be determined by the student in consultation with Faculty Committee members and the Program Chair. The scientific content and style of the thesis are the responsibility of the student and student’s Faculty Committee. The thesis must be formatted and delivered according to the electronic thesis and dissertation policies outlined in these bylaws under "ET/D Program Policies".

NOTE: Graduate students may not participate in research which requires either an industrial or federal security classification that a priori restricts the thesis or dissertation publication rights of the student and/or the university. However, in a rare instance, student research findings may become classified after the graduate research is completed, and the post-classified status is beyond the control of the student or mentor. Students involved with research that receives a post federal security classification will receive special consideration to accommodate their graduation requirements. Approved 10/27/2009

Students in the Epidemiology Program, the University of Tennessee – University of Memphis Joint Graduate Program in Biomedical Engineering, Dental Sciences Program, Biomedical Sciences Program, or Pharmaceutical Sciences Program may elect to graduate with a Master of Science through either a thesis or a project option. In the thesis option, students will produce a treatise on their research subject and results; in the project option, students will produce a publication-quality manuscript. Both thesis and project options must be defended orally. Students graduating under the project option must satisfy all the residency, credit hour, language, Faculty Committee, and candidacy requirements previously stated, in addition to fulfilling the specific course distribution requirements of the program. Curriculum requirements for students electing each master's degree option are described in the Catalog under the specific program.

Administratively revised May 14, 2013

Thesis and Project Defense

The granting of M.S. and Ph.D. degrees is symbolic of the intellectual atmosphere of a university, and, as such, the events associated with their defense are of particular importance to our College and University. Thus, all oral thesis, project, and dissertation defenses will take place on the campus of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. The College must be notified at least 2 weeks prior to an oral defense.

The program director or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs can assist in locating an appropriate space for the oral defense. Videoconferencing technology will be provided if requested.

Approved January 22, 2008

Faculty Committee

No later than the end of the first academic year of full-time graduate study, the student and Research Advisor are to select a Faculty Committee with the following composition:
- the faculty committee must have at least three members, including the Research Advisor;
- at least one member must be a full-time UTHSC faculty member;
- at least one member must come from outside the program/track;
- one outside member may be from another institution;
- with the exception of an outside member from another institution, all members must be credentialed by the College to serve on a student’s faculty committee.

The members of the Faculty Committee should be chosen with the intent that they will be familiar with the type of research project being conducted. The purpose of the Faculty Committee is to advise and evaluate the student’s scholarly activity and to certify that the student has defended a thesis that is worthy of the degree. The Chair of this committee is to be the student’s Research Advisor, who must hold a regular appointment in the Graduate Faculty and must be approved to direct at least master’s level research. The Program Chair will submit in writing the list of the Faculty Committee members to the Dean. (Revised 14 November 2011)

The Faculty Committee will, within the semester of appointment, submit to the Program Chair a general description of the direction of the research project.
It is the responsibility of the Research Advisor to convene the Faculty Committee at such times as may be helpful in advancing the student’s progress. The Faculty Committee must meet at least once each academic year to monitor the student’s progress and must prepare an annual report of progress for the Program Chair and the Dean.

Revised 25 November 2008

Admission to Candidacy

Each student is responsible for filing an application for admission to candidacy (which must be signed by the Program Chair and members of the Faculty Committee) after the conditions indicated below have been met. Application forms may be obtained in the program office or from the College web site.

Admission to candidacy for the master’s degree must be granted no later than the end of the second month in the semester in which the thesis is to be presented to the college. Application may be made only after the student successfully completes the prerequisite courses and 18 semester hours of graduate course work.

Admission to candidacy for the master’s degree requires (1) certification by the student’s Faculty Committee and the Program Chair that the student has successfully completed sufficient graduate courses and has demonstrated an ability to do graduate work of satisfactory character and (2) approval by the Dean of the student’s proposed program. The Dean will inform the Program Director of admission to candidacy. Upon admission to candidacy, all master's students must be enrolled full-time, unless an exception is approved by the Dean.

Examination

After admission to candidacy and completion of the thesis or project manuscript, each candidate must pass a general oral examination on the completed project. The examination will be conducted by the student’s Faculty Committee.

Prior to the examination, the Program Chair must certify to the Dean that all program requirements have been met. In special cases, a written exam may be substituted for the oral exam. In the case of failure, the candidate may not appear for reexamination until at least one semester has elapsed and permission is granted by the Faculty Committee. The result of the second examination is final.

Revised November 8, 2004

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

Residency

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded for exceptional scholarly attainment and demonstrated capacity in original investigation. Requirements for the degree are, therefore, not determined merely in terms of a fixed number of courses, credits, and years of resident study, but primarily in terms of arrangements that guarantee sustained, systematic study; productive research; and superior attainment in a particular field.

Doctoral programs normally include six or more semesters of full-time study beyond the bachelor’s degree. At least one academic year of the required term of study must be in residence at UTHSC. The student must
be admitted to candidacy within 3 years, and all requirements must be completed within 8 years, from the
time of a student's first enrollment in a doctoral program. An extension for extraordinary circumstances
(e.g., an official leave of absence) may be considered by the Dean upon written petition from the student.

Revised 27 November 2007

All doctoral degree students, except those on active military duty, will enroll each semester. Students who
need to leave the University for greater than four weeks must discuss their need with their advisor before
making a written request for a leave of absence to their Program Chair. The Program Chair will forward the
request, along with a recommendation, to the Dean. If the Dean does not grant the leave of absence, the
student may appeal the decision as described under “Academic Due Process.” Students who are absent
from their academic responsibilities for more than four weeks without approval of the Dean will receive
non-passing grades in all courses for which they are enrolled and be withdrawn from the College. To re-
enter the University after withdrawal, students must formally reapply. Approved March 23, 2010.

Credit Hours

Selection of specific courses, their number, and sequence will be determined by the student in consultation
with the Research Advisor, Faculty Committee, Program Director, and Program Chair, subject to the
general regulations of the College.

A minimum of 24 semester hours of Course 900 is required of all doctoral candidates before the
dissertation will be accepted. The student must continue to register for Course 900 for the entire period
during which the student is engaged in dissertation research, including the semester in which the
dissertation is accepted by the College. (Effective 1 July 2007)

If a full-time or part-time student's faculty committee certifies that the student has completed all
experimental work for the degree and will be primarily writing and completing the dissertation in the next
semester of enrollment, then the student may register for three credit hours of research. If the student fails
to submit an approved dissertation by the deadline for graduation in that semester, the student will be
required to register for nine credit hours in the subsequent semester(s). (Effective 1 July 2007)

Doctoral students are required to successfully complete the course 801 IP, Integrity in the Conduct of
Scientific Research, in order to graduate.

Revised 23 January 2007

Language

A command of written and spoken English is essential. Failure to demonstrate competence in the use of
written and spoken English may constitute grounds for termination of graduate work.

Faculty Committee

Usually during the second year of study toward the Ph.D. degree, the student and Research Advisor are to
select a Faculty Committee with the following composition:
- the faculty committee must have at least five members;
- at least one member must be a full-time UTHSC faculty member;
- at least one member must come from outside the program/track, and this person may be from another
institution;
- with the exception of an outside member(s) from another institution, all members must be credentialed by
the College to serve on a student’s faculty committee.
Bylaws of the College of Graduate Health Sciences

The members of the Faculty Committee should be chosen with the intent that they will be familiar with the type of research project being conducted. The purpose of the Faculty Committee is to advise and evaluate the student’s scholarly activity and to certify that the student has defended a dissertation that is worthy of the degree. The Chair of this committee is to be the student’s Research Advisor, who must hold a regular appointment in the Graduate Faculty and must be approved to direct doctoral research. The Program Chair will submit in writing the list of the Faculty Committee members to the Dean. (Revised 14 November 2011)

The Faculty Committee will, within the semester of appointment, submit to the Program Chair a general description of the direction of the research project.

The student keeps the Faculty Committee up to date on the progress of the research by written reports and/or oral presentations. These mechanisms allow the Faculty Committee to provide suggestions that might improve or help solve the research problem. In most programs, the Faculty Committee has the responsibility for administering the oral and/or written comprehensive examinations. These are graded on a pass/fail system. Comprehensive examinations are given to all Ph.D. students. Once the student has successfully completed the examination, an application is filed by the student in the Dean’s office to officially admit the student to candidacy for the degree. Comprehensive examinations may be retaken once. A second failure may mean dismissal from the College or suggestion to pursue the master’s degree only. Students pursuing the master’s degree may not be required to take comprehensive examinations.

It is the responsibility of the Research Advisor to convene the committee at such time (not less than each academic year) as it may be helpful in advancing the student’s progress, although the student’s Research Advisor will be responsible for day-to-day direction of the student’s research. The student’s progress and development will be monitored and guided by the Faculty Committee. The committee will submit each academic year a written report (on an academic year basis) on the student’s progress to the Program Chair and Dean.

Revised 25 November 2008

Admission to Candidacy

Each student is responsible for filing an application for admission to candidacy (which must be signed by the Program Chair and members of the Faculty Committee) after the conditions indicated below have been met.

Application forms may be obtained in the program office or the College web site. The Dean will inform the Program Director of the student’s admission to candidacy.

Admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree must be granted at least two semesters prior to the date on which the dissertation is to be submitted to the college. Admission to candidacy for this degree depends upon the student’s (1) passing the required comprehensive examination, (2) demonstration of research potential and accomplishment at least equivalent to that for completion of a master’s thesis, (3) certification by the student’s Faculty Committee and the Program Chair, and (4) approval by the Dean. Upon admission to candidacy, all graduate students, including those who have been enrolled part-time, must be enrolled full-time for the remainder of their program, unless an exception is approved by the Dean.

Examination

The "Application for Admission to Candidacy" form, signed by the Faculty Committee after satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examination, is presented to the Dean who approves the applicant’s admission to candidacy.
A comprehensive examination (written or oral and written) covering the fields indicated by the program must be passed prior to admission to candidacy. In the event of failure, the candidate may not appear for reexamination until permission is granted by the program. The result of the second examination is final.

A final examination (oral or oral and written) on the student’s dissertation special field and other fields that the student’s Faculty Committee may specify will be administered after all course requirements have been completed and the student has been certified by the Program Chair that requirements have been met. It is the student’s responsibility to see that an essentially complete copy of the dissertation in a form approved by the Research Advisor is distributed to the Faculty Committee for their examination and comments at least 4 weeks before the examination. An ostensibly final copy of the dissertation must be submitted to the committee at least 1 week before the final examination. The date and time of the final examination are set by the Chair of the Faculty Committee and should be announced publicly. Other graduate students and faculty are encouraged to attend both the presentation for the oral defense and the questioning that follows. Programs may designate another committee member to serve as Chair of the Final Examination.

Research and Dissertation

Research accomplishment is a principal requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, and the dissertation must show substantial evidence of independently achieved and original results. This research and preparation of the dissertation must in each case be conducted in accordance with general College policies and under the immediate direction of the student’s Research Advisor and Faculty Committee.

The subject of the research shall be determined by the student in consultation with the Research Advisor, Faculty Committee, and Program Chair.

NOTE: Graduate students may not participate in research which requires either an industrial or federal security classification that a priori restricts the thesis or dissertation publication rights of the student and/or the university. However, in a rare instance, student research findings may become classified after the graduate research is completed, and the post-classified status is beyond the control of the student or mentor. Students involved with research that receives a post federal security classification will receive special consideration to accommodate their graduation requirements. Approved 10/27/2009

The dissertation is written after completion of experiments or other graduate studies designed to answer the questions posed by the statement of the problem. The scientific content and style of the dissertation are the responsibility of the student and student’s Faculty Committee. The dissertation must be formatted and delivered according to the electronic thesis and dissertation policies outlined in these bylaws under "ET/D Program Policies".

Approved April 28, 2009

Dissertation Defense

The granting of M.S. and Ph.D. degrees is symbolic of the intellectual atmosphere of a university, and, as such, the events associated with their defense are of particular importance to our College and University. Thus, all oral thesis and dissertation defenses will take place on the campus of the University of Tennessee Health Science Center. The College (and the Campus Calendar, when one is implemented) must be notified at least 2 weeks prior to an oral defense.

The program director or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs can assist in locating an appropriate space for the oral defense. Videoconferencing technology will be provided if requested.

Approved January 22, 2008
ET/D Program Policies

ET/D Terminology

The generic term "ET/D" refers to master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and other related or associated documents written in partial fulfillment of the requirements for "theses-based" master's degrees (M.S.) and "dissertation-based" doctoral degrees (Ph.D.) conferred by the University. The following policies have been initiated or reviewed by the ET/D Task Force Group directed by the CGHS Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, responsible for the ET/D program.

ET/D Procedures and Instruction

Starting the ET/D Process: When a student, in consultation with their research committee and adviser sets an expected graduation date, it is the student's responsibility to inform the CGHS Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs of this date. Upon receipt of this date, additional instructions will be given to the student in concert with the current ET/D Guide. All graduate students must attend at least one CGHS sponsored ET/D Workshop (offered shortly after the beginning of each semester) prior to starting work on their ET/D. Distance learning students are required to attend an online Learning Management System version of this workshop (under construction). Exact dates and times for the ET/D and related workshops, i.e., Microsoft Word (not required) will be published on the CGHS website calendar and Announcements.

ET/D Media: All final approved ET/Ds must be saved in Portable Document Format (PDF) and be compliant with the archival quality PDF/A-1b specification. Any request for deviations from this specification must be submitted to the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for consideration. Additional approved multimedia files can be utilized according to the provisions in the current ET/D Guide.

ET/D Approval: Approved ET/Ds are due in the office of the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs with the following deadlines and provisions:

1. If the student wishes to participate in the graduation ceremonies and receive their certified diploma at graduation, the final approved ET/D must be delivered to the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs no later than noon May 1st for Spring, and noon November 1st for Fall, unless special permission is granted by the Dean.
2. Students who complete all graduation requirements within 20 days following the commencement ceremony will receive a diploma dated with the date of the commencement ceremony, otherwise the diploma will have the date of the next commencement ceremony. Note: the date on the diploma is not the date of degree completion. The date of degree completion is when all requirements are met and approved.

Modified 3/3/12 per Registrar

3. Students who do not complete all of the requirements for the degree by the end of the semester will be required to register for the next semester.

Modified 3/3/12 per Registrar

ET/D Security and Dissemination
ET/D and Copyright: All authors of an ET/D should be aware of the current federal copyright laws, and it is recommended, although not required, that you register a copyright for your thesis/dissertation. Refer to http://www.copyright.gov or http://library.uthsc.edu/reference/copyright for general information. Authors of ET/ Ds are provided with two options for copyright; do it yourself registration at the .gov site, or request that ProQuest/UMI register a copyright for you. See the current ET/D Guide on the CGHS website for details. The University of Tennessee's policy concerning student copyrights is as follows:

"A student must, as a condition of a degree award, grant royalty-free permission to the University to reproduce and publicly distribute, on a non-commercial basis, copies of the thesis or dissertation" (The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees 1984). This includes paper or electronic products.

Even if an author does not "officially" register their copyright, authors are required to add a copyright notice and symbol to their ET/D. Details are provided in the current CGHS ET/D Guide.

ET/D and Patent Review: If a student ET/D is involved in a patent review process, it is imperative that the student inform the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs immediately. Documents undergoing patent review are sequestered until either the embargo period has ended or the student's advisor informs the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs that the review process has been completed. If the review process progresses to a patent pending status or is rejected, the student's advisor must inform the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs of this status change so that the dissemination status of the ET/D can be changed accordingly. Refer to the current CGHS ET/D Guide for additional details.

ET/D Standard Dissemination: Document security for displaying student theses or dissertations from the CGHS campus will mirror the current UMI/ProQuest document security policies. Students may select world-wide accessibility once delivered to UMI/ProQuest; Students and advisors may elect an embargo of either 6 months, 1 year, or a maximum of two years. An embargo means that the whole of the thesis or dissertation will not be available until the embargo period has expired. However, the title, the abstract and meta data for the manuscript will be made available on the CGHS ET/D web server and the UMI ProQuest site immediately upon approval and delivery of the manuscript to UMI/ProQuest. For work under patent review, authors must carefully consider the contents of their abstract so that proprietary or patentable information is not revealed. If changes to the embargo are needed after an embargo has been approved and submitted to UMI/ProQuest, it is the responsibility of the student and/or the student's mentor to submit a request with justification to the CGHS Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for approval. If approved, the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs will change the meta data associated with the abstract on campus display, and reset the CGHS embargo "clock" for this ET/D. Once approved by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, it is then the responsibility of the student and/or mentor to contact UMI/ProQuest: Dissertations Group (disspub@proquest.com; phone: 800-521-0600 x7020) to request a change in the embargo options.

ET/D Task Force Advisory Group

The ET/D Task Force, served by students, faculty, and staff, will be directed by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs responsible for the CGHS ET/D program. The Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs will solicit at least one faculty or student volunteer from each CGHS Program through the respective Program Chairs. The Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs will strive to create a balance of faculty and student representation on this Task Force. Task Force members will be asked to serve a minimum of one year. This Task Force will meet every other month, or more often if deemed necessary by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs or by a consensus of Task Force members. At least two library representatives, and the part-time manager of external format reviewers will also be asked to serve on this Task Force. Additional members may be asked to volunteer their services to the Task Force by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs if their considered expertise is deemed necessary. This Task Force will make recommendations to the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for coordinating CGHS ET/D procedures and policies. Task Force
recommendations that may require CGHS policy codification will be brought to the attention of the Graduate Studies Council by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs.

Approved 9/22/09. Effective immediately.

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 Attendance at Graduation

Students are required to attend because graduation is a way to celebrate educational success and recognize excellence. Those students unable to attend graduation must petition the Dean in writing to receive their degree in absentia.

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 Commencement Policy

A student who successfully defends and submits their final thesis or dissertation by noon May 1 will participate in the May graduation ceremony and receive their diploma at that time. Participation in graduation is mandatory.

Approved 4/28/09. Effective immediately.

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Adopted November 1997
Major revisions adopted April 2003

Contact Us

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