

**Health Outcomes & Implementation Science**

and

**Biomedical Informatics**

# **Student Handbook**

Fall 2024 Cohort

Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics

College of Medicine

<http://hobi.med.ufl.edu/>



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## Welcome and Introductions

Welcome to the **Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics**, housed in the University of Florida's College of Medicine. We are excited you have chosen to pursue your graduate degree with us.

The **College of Medicine** is the largest of the six colleges that make up the **UF Health Science Center**. It is comprised of 28 research-oriented departments and ranks **No. 14** nationally among public medical schools according to U.S. News & World Report. The College's mission is to improve health care in Florida, our nation and the world through excellence and leadership in education, clinical care, discovery, and service.

The Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics is proud to contribute to the mission of the College through our extensive research portfolio and innovative graduate education programs. The strength of our research contributes significantly to the university's annual research expenditures of more than \$1 billion, and our total annual research budget is close to \$30 million. Our goal is to continue this momentum and remain at the top of the College of Medicine's funded departments.



Our research focuses on evaluating the health effects of public policies and health care and conducting controlled field trials of preventative interventions in community and clinical settings. We are also home to the Institute for Child Health Policy, which focuses on research promoting the health of children, adolescents, and young adults.

Our MS and PhD programs provide you with innovative and specialized training. You will gain a specialized set of tools that will prepare you for a diverse set of career opportunities developing, implementing, and evaluating clinical and community-based health programs.

We are very proud of our students and their development into the next generation of researchers in Health Outcomes and Biomedical Informatics. Welcome to our department!

**Elizabeth Shenkman, PhD**  
**Chair, Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics**  
**Director, Institute for Child Health Policy**  
**Co-Director, Clinical and Translational Science Institute**

Welcome to our graduate programs in **Medical Sciences** with concentrations in **Biomedical Informatics** and **Health Outcomes & Implementation Science**! We hope this handbook will serve as a resource for you during your journey through your degree.

We want to ensure you have the best possible experience during your time with us, and we are all here to support and guide you through the completion of your degree.

Our education programs have a lot to offer. Our high-quality and experienced faculty facilitate learning that leads to stronger research capabilities, leadership skills, and successful tools for the field. This foundation prepares our students for a wide range of careers in the health sciences, including those who are clinicians pursuing research careers. We encourage you to pursue as many additional experiences as you can during your time with us.

We have compiled this handbook to serve as a resource for you as you advance through your degree program. We are committed to helping you graduate with an outstanding education and a strong foundation for growth as you move on to the next phase of your career.

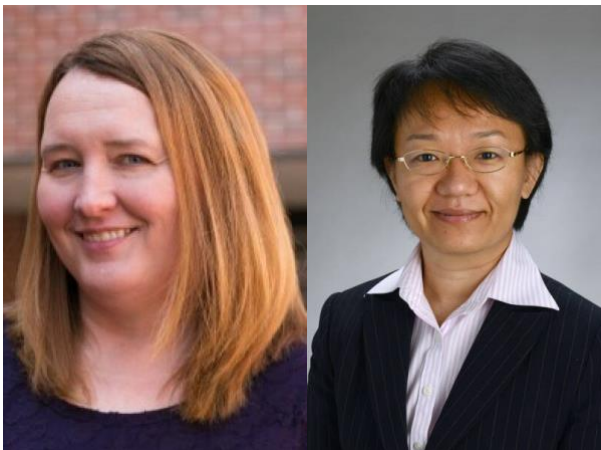
We look forward to working with you. Welcome!

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## About the University of Florida



The **University of Florida** is one of the nation's largest research universities. It is Florida's oldest university and has educated students at the Gainesville campus since 1906. UF is an important component of Florida's economy, providing over 100,000 jobs throughout the state and having an annual economic impact of over \$12.56 billion.

UF is home to 16 academic colleges and more than 200 research centers and institutes. It employs nearly 5,000 faculty members and enrolls over 56,000 students per year. UF is one of only 21 public, land-grant university members of the Association of American Universities (AAU).

### Health Science Center

The **UF Health Science Center** (HSC) is the country's only academic health center with six health-related colleges (*Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health and Health Professions, and Veterinary Medicine*) located on a single, contiguous campus. UF Health Shands Hospital, UF Health Children's Hospital, UF Health Shands Cancer Hospital, UF Health Heart & Vascular and UF Health Neuromedicine Hospital and nine research institutes and centers – UF Health Cancer Center, Clinical and Translational Science Institute, Emerging Pathogens Institute, Genetics Institute, Institute on Aging, Diabetes Institute, Institute for Child Health Policy, Norman Fixel Institute for Neurological Diseases and the Evelyn F. and William L. McKnight Brain Institute – are also located on the HSC campus.

The mission of the HSC is to promote health through outstanding patient care, innovative and rigorous education in the health professions and biomedical sciences, and high-impact research across the spectrum of basic, translational, and clinical investigation.



## College of Medicine

The **College of Medicine** is the largest of the six colleges in the HSC. The Gainesville campus is comprised of **28** clinical and basic science departments with **over 1,300** faculty members. The Jacksonville campus houses an **additional 400 physicians and scientists**. The UF College of Medicine works in close collaboration with UF Health Shands Hospitals, the Malcolm Randall Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and several other community healthcare sites and other affiliated hospitals in Florida.

The College's medical education program has graduated more than 4,000 MD physicians since its first graduating class in 1960. The College also offers graduate degree programs in Medical Sciences, Biomedical Engineering, Physician Assistant Studies, and the Interdisciplinary Program in Biomedical Sciences, allowing talented researchers and professionals not interested in pursuing an MD the opportunity to pursue careers in medical and health care fields.

## Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics

**The Department of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics (HOBİ)** is comprised of a diverse, multidisciplinary faculty of health services researchers, epidemiologists, biomedical informaticians, economists, biostatisticians, psychologists, and social scientists whose goal is to advance the scientific knowledge necessary to improve health care delivery, leverage big data, advance health research, and help the most vulnerable populations. The Department is also the home of **the Institute for Child Health Policy**, which conducts innovative policy studies and intervention trials to promote the health of children, adolescents and young adults.

The department is home to **more than 30 faculty members** and **close to 200 employees**. Faculty and staff information, including contact information, can be found on the HOBİ website.



*UF Malachowsky Hall (Data Science & Information Technology Hall)*

## HOBİ Graduate Programs Overview

Our graduate programs are designed to give graduates the necessary knowledge to conduct health outcomes assessments and clinical effectiveness research in a range of biomedical, clinical and community-based research settings. Upon completion of the program, students will understand how to develop and evaluate health interventions, treatments, prevention practices and policies and determine what works on a large-scale and why.

For students studying Health Outcomes and Implementation Science, the curriculum provides training in research methods, methods for translating research into policy and practice, and health policy processes and their influence on health care practices and delivery in both clinical and community settings. Students will learn to evaluate the effects that existing and proposed health policies have on health care access, quality, and costs. They will also gain in-depth exposure to current issues in dissemination research and implementation science. Throughout the curriculum, special focus will be placed on health disparities and vulnerable populations.

For students studying Biomedical Informatics, the department provides training to better understand how to leverage information (data + meaning) from biomedicine, which can be applied to a number of different contexts (examples may be based on the role an informatician may play in an organization, how to categorize and process biomedical information, or how to leverage AI or data science tools to enhance health care outcomes).

*The structure of our PhD programs provide one-on-one mentored research experience with faculty and the opportunity to be a part of ongoing research being conducted in the department.*

Faculty from the department's three divisions (***Biomedical Informatics, Clinical and Population Health Integration, Implementation Science and Health Interventions***) are actively involved in the teaching and mentoring of students in our programs, as coordinated through the department's Education Office, Leadership Committee, and Graduate Faculty Committee.

## Student Mentoring and Guidance

### PhD Programs

Prospective students should identify a potential mentor during the application process to assess a student's alignment with the research skills and topic of a potential Research Mentor's projects. The PhD student's Research Mentor will serve as the Chair of their dissertation Supervisory Committee. In many cases, the mentor will also serve as the supervisor of a student's research assistant position. Occasionally, a PhD student will need to change research mentors during their program; the Education Office can help students in these situations.

### MS Programs

Education leadership will provide advice/recommendations to MS students about potential mentor matches during the student's first year. MS students are expected to identify a mentor by the time they have completed **12 credits** in the program or have finished their first year.



The MS student’s Research Mentor will serve as the Chair of their Supervisory Committee, regardless of their status as a thesis/non-thesis student. Additional members may be added if the chair approves, and will be submitted for approval by the Graduate School.

### **Adding/Updating Committee Members**

Students can update their mentor or committee selection using our Supervisory Committee Agreement form, which is found [here](#) and should be sent to the Education Office via DocuSign. To request a change after the selection of an initial mentor, students must be in good academic standing, and both the original and proposed new mentors must be aware of and agree to the change. Research mentor changes can occur for a number of reasons, including a faculty member’s resignation, a student’s change in research interests or a faculty member’s funding availability.

If the change request involves a conflict or perceived poor fit between the student and Research Mentor, students must first meet with Dr. Bylund or Dr. Liu before initiating the change request.

## **Supervisory Committee**

MS and PhD students must select Supervisory Committees by the end of the semester in which the student has accumulated 12 credits. This is typically the end of the student’s second semester; however, students enrolling in 12 credits their first semester must select their Committee by the end of that semester. The Dean of the Graduate School is an ex-officio member of all Supervisory Committees.

Once the Supervisory Committee has been selected, the student must complete the [HOBISupervisory Committee Agreement](#). The student must obtain signatures from all committee members before submitting the Agreement to the Education Office. The signed Agreement will be reviewed and approved by the Associate Chair of Education before the committee is entered into the UF Graduate School system.

*Please keep in mind, all milestones/examinations completed with your supervisory committee must follow [UF Graduate School](#) and [HOBIS departmental policies](#).*

The **MS Supervisory Committee** will be composed of a minimum of **2** and maximum of **5 members**. MS Supervisory Committee qualifications are as follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Member Type</b>	<b>Required to be HOBIS faculty?</b>	<b>Graduate Faculty Status (GFS)</b>	<b>Must be tenured or accruing tenure?</b>
<b>1</b> (required)	Chair/Research Mentor	Yes	Required, must have GFS in HOBIS	Yes
<b>2</b> (required)	Co-Chair -or- Member	Yes	Required, must have GFS in HOBIS or another department	Yes
<b>3-5</b> (optional)	Additional Members	No	GFS not required; requires special approval	No

The **PhD Supervisory Committee** will be comprised of a minimum of **4 members**. PhD Supervisory Committee qualifications are as follows:

Member	Member Type	Required to be HOBI faculty?	Graduate Faculty Status (GFS)	Must be tenured or accruing tenure?
<b>1</b> (required)	Chair/Research Mentor	At least two members of the committee must be HOBI faculty	Required, must have GFS in HOBI	Yes
<b>2</b> (required)	Co-Chair* -or- Member		Required, must have GFS in HOBI	At least one of the two must be tenured/accruing tenure
<b>3</b> (required)	Member		Required, must have GFS in any department	
<b>4</b> (required)	External Member	Cannot be HOBI faculty	Required, must have GFS in a department outside the College of Medicine	No
<b>5-8</b> (optional)	Additional Member	No	GF status not required; requires special approval	No

\*co-chair is necessary when the Chair does not have their primary faculty appointment in HOBI.

Students who wish to have a Supervisory Committee Chair different from their Research Mentor must obtain approval from the Research Mentor, Dr. Bylund, and the proposed Chair.

Changes in Supervisory Committee members are acceptable until the midpoint of the student's final term as long as the dissertation defense has not occurred. No changes in Supervisory Committee are allowed after the defense.

## Workplace and Community Engagement

In our programs, we explore ways to bring better health outcomes to our communities and individual patients. This goal requires a commitment to engage with perspectives that may not be regularly shared or heard. It is our intent that students from varied backgrounds and with unique viewpoints be well served by our programs.

This includes meeting students' learning needs both in and out of class, and acknowledging that the diversity that students bring to HOBI should be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. What we achieve, we achieve together as a team consisting of faculty, staff, and students from a multitude of backgrounds. Maintaining a breadth of academic, personal, and professional experiences generates opportunities for us all to learn and grow.

It is our intent for HOBI courses to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Since our discussions will require collaboratively working with different people having different experiences and

coming from different walks of life, we ask all enrollees in our programs to engage in discussion with care and empathy for the other members in the classroom, in HOBİ events, and in general.

Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let us know of ways to improve the effectiveness of our programs for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

## Education Governance

HOBİ has **4 education committees** dedicated to overseeing the educational standards and student experience in our degree programs.

### **Curriculum Committee**

The HOBİ Curriculum Committee is comprised of HOBİ faculty from the department's three divisions and two current students, one from each concentration. Curriculum committee members participate in the evaluation and review of all degree and non-degree educational activities in the department. The committee reviews and votes on new courses, requests from students to transfer credits, and any course modifications. This committee meets monthly.

### **Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee**

The HOBİ Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee is comprised of HOBİ faculty from the department's three divisions and two current graduate students, one from each concentration. The committee is charged with the responsibility to review and make decisions on admissions, and to assist in student recruitment methods and efforts. This committee meets monthly.

### **Evaluation Committee**

The HOBİ Evaluation Committee is comprised of HOBİ faculty from the department's three divisions. The committee is charged with overseeing academic milestones and student progress like the doctoral preliminary and qualifying exams, MS thesis and capstone guidelines, dissertation proposal guidelines, and the department's PhD student End of Year Evaluations. This committee meets monthly.

### **Student Experience Committee**

The HOBİ Student Experience Committee is comprised of HOBİ faculty from the department's three divisions and two current graduate students, one from each concentration. The committee is charged with overseeing department activities focused on improving the graduate student experience. This committee meets monthly.

## Curriculum

### **MS Curriculum in Health Outcomes and Implementation Science (HOIS)**

The **MS in Medical Sciences** with a concentration in **Health Outcomes & Implementation Science** is a minimum **32 credit hour** degree program. The curriculum is comprised of:

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Core – 9 credits</b>		
GMS 6822	Measuring and Analyzing Health Outcomes	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6851	Fundamentals of Dissemination and Implementation Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6885	Translational Health Research Design	3 Letter-grade
<b>Research Rigor and Ethics – 2 credits</b>		
GMS 7877	Responsible Conduct of Biomedical Research	1 Letter-grade
GMS 6848	Ensuring Rigor and Reproducibility in Clinical and Translational Research	1 Letter-grade
<b>Statistics Courses – 3 credits</b>		
PHC 6052 or STA 6166	Introduction to Biostatistical Methods or Statistical Methods in Research I	3 Letter-grade
<b>Methods – Select 3 courses (6-9 credit hours)</b>		
GMS 6829	Longitudinal Research Design *	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6832	Economic Methods for Evaluating Value in Health Care*	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6844	Time Series and Quasi-Experimental Design for Health Outcomes Research *	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6813	Pragmatic Clinical Trials*	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6846	Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis in Clinical, Health Services Research, & Public Health*	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6803	Data Science for Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6850	Foundations of Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6020 or PHC 6022	Clinical Trial Methods or Design & Conduct of Clinical Trials*	3 Letter-grade
<b>Health Outcomes Courses – Select 1 course (3 credits)</b>		
GMS 6833	Health Outcomes Research in Vulnerable Populations	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6835	Health Outcomes Research in Children*	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6812	Health Outcomes Research in Cancer	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6802	Health Outcomes Research for Chronic Diseases*	3 Letter-grade
<b>Implementation Science Foundations Courses (minimum 3 credits)</b>		
GMS 6836	Foundations of Learning Health System Research	1 S/U
GMS 6852	Community Engaged Research for Clinical Effectiveness and Implementation Science Studies	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6853	Improvement and Implementation Science in the Learning Health System	3 Letter-grade
<b>Capstone Mentored Research Experience – (6 credit hours of one course option)</b>		
GMS 6905	Independent Study in Medical Sciences (Non-Thesis Eligible) -or-	6 Letter-grade
GMS 6971	Research for Master's Thesis (Thesis Eligible)	6 S/U
<b>Total: 32-35 credits minimum</b>		

\*not currently being taught but substitutions are available

## PhD Curriculum in Health Outcomes and Implementation Science (HOIS)

The PhD in Medical Sciences with a concentration in Health Outcomes & Implementation Science is a minimum 90-credit hour degree program, with 46-50 credits devoted to coursework, outlined below.

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Core – 15 credits</b>		
GMS 6822	Measuring and Analyzing Health Outcomes	3 Letter-grade

GMS 6851	Fundamentals of Dissemination and Implementation Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6885	Translational Health Research Design	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7906	Grant Writing for Health Outcomes Studies	2 Letter-grade
GMS 7887	HOBI PhD Research Seminar (2 credits in fall & spring semesters during years 1 & 2)	4 S/U
<b>Research Rigor and Ethics – 2 credits</b>		
GMS 7877	Responsible Conduct of Biomedical Research	1 Letter-grade
GMS 6848	Ensuring Rigor and Reproducibility in Clinical and Translational Research	1 Letter-grade
<b>Statistics Courses – 6 credits</b>		
PHC 6052 or STA 6166	Introduction to Biostatistical Methods or Statistical Methods in Research I	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6053 or STA 6167	Regression Methods for the Health & Life Sciences or Statistical Methods in Research II	3 Letter-grade
<b>Methods – Select 4 courses</b>		
GMS 6829	Longitudinal Research Design*	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6832	Economic Methods for Evaluating Value in Health Care	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6844	Time Series and Quasi-Experimental Design for Health Outcomes Research*	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6813	Pragmatic Clinical Trials	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6846	Meta-Analysis in Clinical, Health Services Research, & Public Health	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6803	Data Science for Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6850	Foundations of Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6020 or PHC 6022	Clinical Trial Methods or Design & Conduct of Clinical Trials	3 Letter-grade
<b>Health Outcomes Courses – Select 1 course</b>		
GMS 6833	Health Outcomes Research in Vulnerable Populations	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6835	Health Outcomes Research in Children*	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6812	Health Outcomes Research in Cancer	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6802	Health Outcomes Research for Chronic Diseases*	3 Letter-grade
<b>Implementation Science Foundations Courses (Minimum 3 credits)</b>		
GMS 6852	Community Engaged Research for Clinical Effectiveness and Implementation Science Studies	2 Letter-grade
GMS 6836	Foundations of Learning Health System Research	1 S/U
GMS 6853	Improvement and Implementation Science in the Learning Health System	3 Letter-grade
<b>Advanced Electives – 9 credits</b>		
	<b>To be determined in consultation with student's mentor</b>	
<b>Research Credits – 40 - 50 credits</b>		
GMS 7979 & GMS 7980	Advanced Research Research for Doctoral Dissertation	40-44 S/U
<b>Total: 90 credits minimum</b>		

\*not currently being taught but substitutions are available

## MS Curriculum in Biomedical Informatics

The MS in Medical Sciences with a concentration in Biomedical Informatics is a minimum 36-credit hour degree program, with at least 22 credits specific to the BMI concentration. The curriculum is comprised of:

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses - select all (13 credits)</b>		
GMS 6803	Data Science for Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade

GMS 6804	Translational Bioinformatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6805	Information Modeling in Biomedicine	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6850	Foundations of Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7887	Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics Research Seminar	1 S/U
<b>Foundation Courses – select 4 courses (12 credits)</b>		
GMS 6806	Security and Privacy in Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6856	Introduction to Biomedical Natural Language Processing	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7858	Causal Artificial Intelligence for Health Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7866	Principles of Referent Tracking in Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6822	Measuring and Analyzing Health Outcomes	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6405 or PHC 6001	Theoretical Foundations of Public Health or Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health	3 Letter-grade
STA 6166 or PHC 6050 or PHC 6052 or BME 6938	Statistical Methods in Research I Statistical Methods for Health Sci Res I Introduction to Biostatistical Methods Introduction to Biomedical Image Analysis and Imaging Informatics	3 Letter-grade
CEN 5035	Software Engineering	3 Letter-grade
COP 5725	Database Management Systems	3 Letter-grade
<b>Advanced Electives – select 2 courses (5-6 credits) from below, with up to 1 course substitution subject to mentor approval</b>		
CAP 5100	Human-Computer Interaction	3 Letter-grade
CAP 5510	Bioinformatics	3 Letter-grade
CAP 5635	Artificial Intelligence Concepts	3 Letter-grade
CAP 6610	Machine Learning	3 Letter-grade
COP 5725	Database Management Systems	3 Letter-grade
COT 5405	Analysis of Algorithms	3 Letter-grade
COT 5615	Mathematics for Intelligent Systems	3 Letter-grade
COP 5618	Concurrent Programming	3 Letter-grade
PHI 5135	Graduate Logic	3 Letter-grade
BME 6938	Special Topics: Machine Learning for Health and Biomedical Applications	3 Letter-grade
STA 6167	Statistical Methods in Research II	3 Letter-grade
STA 5325	Fundamentals of Probability	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6848	Ensuring Rigor and Reproducibility in Clinical and Translational Research	1 Letter-grade
GMS 6857	Clinical Decision Support Systems	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6885	Translational Health Research Design	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7093	Introduction to Clinical and Translational Research	2 Letter-grade
<b>Capstone Mentored Research Experience (6 credit hours of one course option)</b>		
GMS 6905 GMS 6971	Independent Studies in Medical Sciences (Non- Thesis Eligible) or Research for Master's Thesis (Thesis Eligible)	6 Letter-grade 6 S/U
<b>Total: 36 credits minimum</b>		

## PhD Curriculum in Biomedical Informatics

The **PhD in Medical Sciences** with a concentration in **Biomedical Informatics** is a minimum **90-credit hour** degree program, with at least **39 credits** specific to the BMI concentration. The curriculum is comprised of:

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Core – All Required (17 credits)</b>		
GMS 6803	Data Science for Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6804	Translational Bioinformatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6805	Information Modeling in Biomedicine	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6850	Foundations of Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7877	Responsible Conduct of Biomedical Research (Formerly GMS 7003)	1 Letter-grade
GMS 7887	HOBI PhD Research Seminar ( <b>2 credits in fall &amp; spring semesters during years 1 &amp; 2</b> )	4 S/U



<b>Foundation Courses – Select 4 courses (12 credits)</b>		
GMS 6806	Security and Privacy in Clinical Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6856	Introduction to Biomedical Natural Language Processing	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7858	Causal Artificial Intelligence for Health Research	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7866	Principles of Referent Tracking in Biomedical Informatics	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6822	Measuring and Analyzing Health Outcomes	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6405 or PHC 6001	Theoretical Foundations of Public Health Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health	3 Letter-grade
STA 6166 or PHC 6050 or PHC 6052	Statistical Methods in Research I Statistical Methods for Health Sci Res I Introduction to Biostatistical Methods	3 Letter-grade
BME 6938	Introduction to Biomedical Image Analysis and Imaging Informatics	3 Letter-grade
CEN 5035	Software Engineering	3 Letter-grade
COP 5725	Database Management Systems	3 Letter-grade
<b>Advanced Electives – 11 credits subject to mentor approval including but not limited to suggestions below</b>		
CAP 5100	Human-Computer Interaction	3 Letter-grade
CAP 5510	Bioinformatics	3 Letter-grade
CAP 5635	Artificial Intelligence Concepts	3 Letter-grade
CAP 6610	Machine Learning	3 Letter-grade
COP 5725	Database Management Systems	3 Letter-grade
COT 5405	Analysis of Algorithms	3 Letter-grade
COT 5615	Mathematics for Intelligent Systems	3 Letter-grade
COP 5618	Concurrent Programming	3 Letter-grade
BME 6938	Special Topics: Machine Learning for Health and Biomedical Applications	3 Letter-grade
STA 6167	Statistical Methods in Research II	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6848	Ensuring Rigor and Reproducibility in Clinical and Translational Research	1 Letter-grade
GMS 6857	Clinical Decision Support Systems	3 Letter-grade
GMS 7093	Introduction to Clinical and Translational Research	2 Letter-grade
STA 5325	Fundamentals of Probability	3 Letter-grade
STA 6826	Stochastic Processes I	3 Letter-grade
PHC 6053	Regression Methods for the Health and Life Sciences	3 Letter-grade
GMS 6029	AI Journal Club	1 S/U
<b>Research Credits (50 credits)</b>		
GMS 7979 & GMS 7980	Advanced Research Research for Doctoral Dissertation	50 S/U
<b>Total</b>	<b>90 credits minimum</b>	

## Transfer of Credits/Course Substitutions

### Eligible Courses

All transfer of credit and course substitution requests must follow the UF Graduate School guidelines for graduate degrees. Only **graduate level courses (5000-7999)** with a grade of **B or higher** will be considered for transfer of credit. Research credits will not be transferred. An MS degree earned in a discipline other than HOBI will require special evaluation before being considered for transfer of credit.

### **Maximum Credits for Transfer of Credit**

No more than **30 credits** from a previously earned MS degree can be transferred to a PhD program. Up to **15 credits** can be transferred to an MS degree program. If the credits to be transferred to an MS degree are from outside of UF, a maximum of **9 credits** will be considered for transfer.

### **New Guidance from the Graduate School: Master's Degree Acknowledgement (MDA)**

Programs may apply a student's **prior master's degree** (up to 30 credits) towards their UF doctoral program. The overall coursework, and degree program as a whole, must apply significantly to the coursework required in HOBI programs to be eligible to use this process, known as the [Master's Degree Acknowledgement \(MDA\)](#).

If approved, students would only need a **minimum of 60 credits at UF** to receive their doctoral degree. This approval is up to program/faculty discretion; if less than 30 credits are deemed appropriate, students may transfer courses via **individual course-by-course requests**.

Master's degrees earned **outside the U.S.** will need to be [externally evaluated](#) to request transfer of credit through the MDA process. The evaluation process will help determine if they are equivalent to a US Master's degree.

The Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee and the Curriculum Committee will coordinate the review of credentials for the MDA process. The Curriculum Committee will review course-by-course requests. Please contact the Education Office for more details.

### **Process**

Transfer of credit requests and course substitution requests will be reviewed by the department's Curriculum Committee.

The HOBI Curriculum Committee will consider:

- (1) Accepting previously completed graduate courses in place of HOBI degree requirements (retrospective Transfer of Credit). This includes courses previously completed at the University of Florida, in graduate degree or graduate certificate programs.
- (2) Allowing degree credit for courses not included in HOBI degree curriculum (prospective Course Substitutions).

**Before submitting a request, students should review all official UF Master's or PhD guidelines, including in the HOBI Handbook, as well as UF's Graduate Catalog.**

Individual course-by-course requests and course substitutions are requested by submitting the [HOBI Course Substitution/Transfer of Credit Form](#) to the Education Office. A rationale for the substitution(s) that explains how the course(s) relate directly to the HOBI degree must be included. The student's Research Mentor must approve and sign each request.

### **Timing**

**Transfer of Credit requests** must be submitted during the **first semester of enrollment**. Previous academic transcripts and syllabi for all courses proposed for transfer of credit must be included.

**Course Substitution requests** must be submitted at least one month before scheduled registration for the proposed course.

### **Course Substitutions**

The HOBI Curriculum Committee will review all requests and **approve, deny, or request more information**. Students will be informed of the approval/denial of prospective course substitution requests by the start of the proposed course's semester.

All transfer of credit requests approved by the Curriculum Committee are then submitted by petition for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School (with documentation in GIMS). Once the Graduate School has approved the transfer of credit request, credits will officially be recognized in the student's plan of study.

## **Registration**

General registration requirements are set by the Graduate School in the Graduate Catalog: <https://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/>.

**MS students in the Department of Health Outcomes and Biomedical Informatics can be enrolled on a *part-time or full-time* basis.**

**PhD students in the Department of Health Outcomes and Biomedical Informatics are required to be enrolled on a full-time basis *after successful completion of the Qualifying Exam*.**

Based on the timing of our programs, and the type of research being pursued by our students, we expect PhD students to enroll each term (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Any circumstances that may require a more flexible enrollment should be discussed with the Education Office prior to any changes.

### **Selecting Coursework**

Prior to the start of each semester, students should meet with their Research Mentor to review their academic progress, plan their courses for the next semester, and complete the [\*\*HOBI Course Registration Form\*\*](#).

Courses being offered each semester will be posted on the [\*\*HOBI Current Course Schedule site\*\*](#). The Course Registration Form must be submitted 48 hours via DocuSign prior to the end of the university's regular registration period, prior to the Drop/Add period. Deadlines and process will be communicated by e-mail each semester by the Education Office.

The Education Office will complete the student's registration. Students will receive e-mail confirmation when their registration is complete.

### **Add/Drop Policy**

Graduate students are free to adjust their schedules during the drop/add period, while consulting with their mentors and, if necessary, submitting a new course registration form.

Students are allowed a limited number of schedule adjustments after the midpoint deadline of the semester, pending approval. A schedule adjustment is defined as any of the following:

- Adding a course

- Dropping a course
- Switching coursework hours for another course (research hours, independent study, etc.).

Students requesting additional adjustments must petition the Associate Chair or Associate Director for approval. A successful petition would require a letter of support from the student's Research Mentor.

***Students will be held fee liable for ANY course adjustments made after the stated university add/drop deadline.***

## Elective Courses

**MS students** may propose to take additional courses as electives beyond their degree requirements, with the approval of their Research Mentor. If elective courses are not approved as course substitutions, students can still take these courses; however, they will not count towards the credits required for completion of the degree.

**PhD students** may select advanced electives in consultation with their Research Mentor. Elective courses are intended to augment the student's specific area(s) of interest and may be taken from departments across campus. The option to enroll in a graduate certificate program is also available to our students through elective coursework, if desired.

PhD students may also propose to take additional courses as electives beyond their degree requirements and credit count, with the approval of their Research Mentor. These courses will not count towards the credits required for completion of the degree.

## Research Courses

### MS Research Credit Policies

**MS students** will complete 6 credits of **GMS 6905** *Independent Studies in Medical Sciences* (capstone project for non-thesis) or **GMS 6971** *Research for Master's Thesis*. These should be taken in two sequential semesters.

Students enrolled in **GMS 6905** *Independent Studies for Medical Sciences* (capstone project for non-thesis) will work with their primary mentor at the beginning of their first semester registering for **GMS 6905** to develop a project proposal. The supervisory committee should agree to the project proposal before the student begins work on it. At least a week before the final exam milestone, the student shall meet with their committee [in person](#) and present a final report to the supervisory committee members. No formal public presentation is required.

Students enrolled in **GMS 6971** *Research for Master's Thesis* will work with their primary mentor at the beginning of their first semester registering for **GMS 6971** to develop a thesis proposal. The supervisory committee should agree to the thesis proposal before the student begins work on it. A public thesis defense is required for MS thesis students.

To enroll in **GMS 6905** *Independent Studies for Medical Sciences* or **GMS 6971** *Research for Master's Thesis*, students must initiate the process several weeks prior to registration.

For more information, please refer to the MS Thesis/Non-Thesis sections later in this handbook.

## PhD Research Credit Policies

**PhD students** in the Health Outcomes and Implementation Science track will complete a minimum of **40 credits** of independent research study. PhD students in the Biomedical Informatics track will complete a minimum of **50 credits** of independent research study.

**GMS 7979 *Advanced Research*** can be taken after the completion of the student's core courses, or in unique circumstances during fall and spring semesters, as well as in summer semesters.

*Starting Fall 2024, students may use 7979 research credits to reach the requisite 9 credits for Fall/Spring enrollment.*

**GMS 7980 *Research for Doctoral Dissertation*** must be taken after a student successfully defends their proposal and achieves candidacy, and must be taken continuously until they graduate.

There is no set minimum number of credits of either **GMS 7979** or **GMS 7980** that a PhD student must take in order to graduate.

## Research Contracts

To enroll in **GMS 6905**, **GMS 6971**, **GMS 7979** or **GMS 7980**, students must initiate the process several weeks prior to registration. To enroll each semester, students must:

- Complete a [Research Contract](#). This will outline the contact time with the instructor (Research Mentor), time allocated by the student, and specific plans and deliverables to be completed during the semester.
- Submit the signed contract to the Education Office via DocuSign for registration.

At the end of each semester, students must have completed the work in the contract in order to receive credit (**S/U**). Incomplete deliverables will result in the student receiving a grade of Incomplete ("**I**"), which will be changed once the student has completed the work.

## Final Term Registration

During a student's intended final term in the program, they must follow the university's minimum registration requirements when selecting the credit count for **GMS 6905** (non-thesis), **GMS 6971** (thesis), or **GMS 7980**. If a student holds an assistantship, then they must enroll full-time for their final term.

If the final term is either fall or spring, **3 credits** are required; a minimum of **2 credits** are required if the final term is summer. This requirement does not replace any other circumstances that may require further enrollment (e.g., if the total research credits listed on the curriculum in the Handbook have not already been completed, or if a student holds an assistantship during their final term in the program).

## EEP Student Registration

UF EEP participants in HOBI should request their requisite credit hours through our [Course Registration form](#). Once that form is completed, we will register you during the EEP enrollment period.

As mentioned previously, EEP PhD students will be expected to pursue full-time enrollment once they've passed their qualifying examination. This policy is designed to support student's timely

completion of their dissertation and degree program. If you have any questions/concerns about making this transition, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Education Office (Matt and/or Liv).

If you plan on participating in the University's Employee Education Program, make sure to complete the following steps to ensure timely registration:

1. Apply as a degree or non-degree seeking student.
2. Once accepted for admission, please reach out to your Research Mentor/Education Office to identify courses (make sure you are identifying the courses that are [EEP-eligible](#)).
3. After courses are identified, you may complete the [UF EEP application](#) and receive approval from UF EEP and the supervising approvers in your department.
4. To be officially registered for the courses identified in your EEP application, please fill out the DocuSign registration form above. The Education Office will receive this completed form and register you for courses when the EEP enrollment period is open.

*You must complete the UF EEP application every semester you plan to register for coursework.*

## MS Non-Thesis Option

The MS degree for students taking the non-thesis option will prepare and present a capstone project to their full committee that shows independent investigation. The capstone project will be based on work completed during **GMS 6905 Independent Studies in Medical Sciences**. *The capstone meeting must follow the department's [Defense and Exam Attendance policy](#).* MS degree students taking the non-thesis option must also participate in at least one mentor-approved Grad Development Professional Skills seminar or professional development workshop. Confirmation of participation must be shared via email with the Education Office at the beginning of an MS student's final term. Upcoming topics and registration information are available at: <https://graddev.ufhealth.org/professional-skills/>.

### **Project Requirements**

The capstone project final meeting is a closed meeting; all members of the student's Supervisory Committee must be present during the capstone meeting. Immediately following the capstone meeting, the student will meet with the Supervisory Committee for the results, and determine if any revisions or additional work are required to finalize completion of the degree.

The capstone project final meeting will consist of a summary of the work presented in the project for 15 minutes. This can include an introduction to the project, to emphasize its demonstration of independent research. 30-45 minutes will be reserved for discussion and questions from the committee. Once the chair determines that the introduction and discussion establishes the potential of the student's research, the committee will deliberate separately and evaluate the project and oral discussion.

The capstone project must identify a viable project for further research, either through its implementation in a clinical setting or with further development for publication.



## MS Thesis and Defense

The MS degree for students taking the thesis option culminates with the preparation and presentation of a thesis that shows independent investigation. The thesis will be based on work completed during **GMS 6971** *Research for Master's Thesis*.

Students enrolled in **GMS 6971** *Research for Master's Thesis* will design and complete a research thesis with the guidance of their Research Mentor. This mentored research experience is designed to lead to a publishable manuscript. **GMS 6971** will end in the preparation of the MS thesis paper and an oral thesis defense. Students should request confirmation of their progression to the thesis defense stage be sent by their mentor(s) to the Education Office upon confirming that all coursework requirements have been met in their final term.

Per Graduate School policy, thesis students are required to take at least **3 credits** of 6971 in their final term (**2 credits** if the final term is summer). Students may schedule the oral thesis defense once the Supervisory Committee determines the thesis is ready to be defended. This defense typically occurs near the midpoint of the semester during which the student plans to graduate. In alignment with the Graduate School, the thesis must be successfully completed prior to the submission deadline.

### Defense Requirements

The thesis defense will be open to all members of the department, College of Medicine, and anyone outside of the College who wishes to attend. All members of the student's Supervisory Committee must be present during the oral thesis defense. Under extenuating circumstances, committee members may be present electronically by phone or video conference per the department's Defense Exam and Attendance [Policy](#). Immediately following the thesis defense, the student will meet with the Supervisory Committee for the results, and determine if any revisions or additional work are required to finalize completion of the degree.

The thesis defense will consist of a summary of the work presented in the thesis during a 30 to 45-minute period, with time for public questions. Once the chair determines that the public portion of the defense is complete, the committee will ask further questions regarding the research included in the thesis. Once the committee's questions are complete, the committee will deliberate separately and evaluate the defense.

The written thesis must be of publishable quality and in a form suitable for publication. This format is guided by the UF Graduate School. Students should review the [Guide for Preparing Theses and Dissertations](#) before beginning to prepare their thesis.

## PhD Dissertation Defense

The PhD dissertation defense will culminate with the preparation and presentation of a dissertation that shows independent investigation. The thesis will be based on work completed during **GMS 7980**.

Students will use **GMS 7980** to develop their research project, after fulfilling all steps to achieve Candidacy (see later sections on Advancing to Candidacy). This project will culminate in at least one publishable manuscript.

Per Graduate School policy, dissertation students are required to take at least **3 credits** of 7980 in their final term (**2 credits** if the final term is summer), unless students are employed as a graduate assistant. Graduate assistants in HOBI PhD concentrations in their final terms must comply with full-time enrollment regulations for graduate assistants.

Students may schedule the dissertation defense once the Supervisory Committee determines the dissertation is ready to be defended. The defense typically occurs near the midpoint of the semester during which the student plans to graduate. Students should request confirmation of their progress to the dissertation defense stage be sent by their mentors to the Education Office at the beginning of their final semester.

The public portion of the dissertation defense will be open to all members of the department, College of Medicine, and anyone outside of the College who wishes to attend. Students will present for 45-60 minutes on the development of their research agenda and dissertation during the public portion, with some time reserved for questions from the audience. Immediately following the public portion of the defense, the student will meet privately with the Supervisory Committee to answer any committee questions. The committee will deliberate and evaluate the defense. It will then meet with the student to share the committee's feedback on the dissertation and defense, as well as any potential revisions or changes required for completing the dissertation prior to its final submission to the Graduate School's Editorial Office.

All members of the student's Supervisory Committee must be present during the oral dissertation defense. The Committee Chair and the student must be physically present at the defense. The other members should be present at the defense. Under extenuating circumstances, other committee members may be present electronically by phone or video conference per [UF Graduate School](#) and [HOBI departmental policies](#).

The dissertation must demonstrate independent research and be written in a format suitable for publication, based on the Graduate School's guidelines. Students should review the [Guide for Preparing Theses and Dissertations](#) before beginning to prepare their dissertation.

## PhD Admission to Candidacy

All PhD students will complete the following examinations or milestones before they can be admitted to candidacy:

1. **Preliminary Examination**, a written examination assessing knowledge of the program's core curriculum via course objectives (*only for HOIS students*)
2. **Qualifying Examination**, assessing knowledge of the student's chosen general area of research. For BMI students this includes additional questions testing more general BMI competency.
  - a. Written Portion

- b. Oral Portion
- 3. Dissertation Proposal**
  - a. Written Proposal
  - b. Oral Proposal Defense

Students will complete the examinations or milestones sequentially. All milestones must follow the department's [Defense and Exam Attendance policy](#); please direct any questions to the Education Office.

The first milestone for HOIS students, the Preliminary Examination, is offered and assessed regularly once per year at the end of summer C semester by the HOBI Examination Committee. It may be offered again as necessary.

The Qualifying Examination is offered by the student's Supervisory Committee after the student selects a general topic for their dissertation and after coursework is completed (except for the seminar). For HOIS students, the Preliminary Exam must be successfully passed first.

The final step in the candidacy assessment process is defense of the dissertation proposal itself. Both the Qualifying Examination and Dissertation Proposal Defense have oral and written assessments during each stage.

### **Preliminary Examination (HOIS students)**

Examination Objective: The Preliminary Examination is the first part of the candidacy assessment process, and is intended to determine if the student is well prepared in the fundamentals of the core content areas of the degree program and ready to launch independent dissertation research.

HOIS PhD students first complete the Preliminary Examination, offered and assessed regularly once per year after the Summer C semester, with a potential future examination offered to students who fail their first examination attempt or for other special circumstances. This examination is overseen by the HOBI Evaluation Committee in collaboration with HOIS Program Graduate Faculty (made up of HOBI graduate faculty who teach and/or are primarily appointed in ISHI and CliPHR).

Eligibility: To be eligible to take the Preliminary Examination, the first part of the candidacy assessment process, students must:

- (1) Complete the following courses:
  - a. GMS 6822 (Measuring and Analyzing Health Outcomes)
  - b. GMS 6851 (Fundamentals of D&I Research)
  - c. GMS 6885 (Translational Health Research Design)
- (2) Obtain approval from their chair (and co-chair, if applicable)
- (3) Achieve a minimum 3.00 GPA and be in good academic standing

In addition, students should also complete all human subject trainings required by the University of Florida's IRB-01 prior to the preliminary examination. This includes:

- (1) IRB training (UF\_IRB803v\_OLT) <https://mytraining.hr.ufl.edu/>
- (2) HIPAA and Privacy General Awareness (UF\_PRV800v\_OLT) <https://mytraining.hr.ufl.edu/>
- (3) CITI training (<https://research.ufl.edu/rcr/rcr-training/citi-rcr-training/>)

From these training materials, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of basic considerations and responsibilities when conducting human subject research. Students should also be able to describe the following: the **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act**, The **Nuremberg Code**, The **Belmont Report**, and the **Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment**.

Process to take exam: Students interested in taking the Preliminary Examination should first obtain signed permission from all members of their Supervisory Committee, and the Chair of the Supervisory Committee should request (in writing) permission for the student to take the examination to the Office of Education no later than two months prior to the examination date (see below for scheduling of the exams).

Format: ***Proctored, written (short essay) examination***

Students have 6 hours to complete the Preliminary Examination. The Preliminary Examination is administered in two 3-hour blocks with a 30-minute break in between, during which lunch is provided. The Preliminary Examination is comprised of short answer essay questions (12 pt font, 350-700 words) which come from the core curriculum courses.

Students will take the exam together in one room at the same period of time, on their own laptops, using HonorLock.

Student Preparation: By the end of May, the Education Office will contact students eligible for the exam to communicate the date of the exam and ask for documentation showing eligibility for the exam (e.g., approval from mentor, human subjects training). The Evaluation Committee will prepare a guide for students to help them prepare for the exam. In early June, the Education Office will hold a meeting for students planning to take the exam to explain the process, share the guide, and answer any questions.

Assessment: HOIS Program Graduate Faculty are responsible for reviewing and grading students' completed Preliminary Examinations, as follows:

Following the exam, the answers will be anonymized and distributed to the grading committee for a special Preliminary Examination Grading Meeting to be held in the latter part of August. The two faculty members assigned as graders will lead discussion on their assigned question.

All grading committee members present at the meeting will vote on passing decisions for each student response, designating one of three outcomes for each student: (1) **Pass**; (2) **Partial Pass** (the student must retake one or more questions); and (3) **Fail**. Voting is contingent on the presence of a quorum of the HOIS Program Graduate Faculty.

Review time for examination responses typically takes between **10-15 business days**. Any extraordinary delays will be communicated to the student in a timely fashion. Within this time period, the Associate Chair of Education will inform students and their respective Supervisory Committee Chairs of the decision.

Members of the Education Office will take notes during the Preliminary Examination Grading Meeting and add personalized feedback to students on strengths and weaknesses of their answers, based on the graders' evaluation.

If a student fails the preliminary examination, including a partial pass, the student is allowed to retake the examination one more time only. (If a partial pass, the student will retake only the portion of the examination related to the failed questions). In the event of a second failure, the Chair of the student's Supervisory Committee may petition the HOBI Department Chair and Associate Chair of Education for a third attempt if there are extenuating circumstances. This letter needs to be submitted within **30 days** of the exam result being shared.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the Education Office when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible prior to the Preliminary Exam. The Education Office will work with the student to make the appropriate accommodations for the exam.

Student Experience: Feedback from students about the preliminary exam process will be collected as part of the annual student experience and satisfaction survey distributed by the Education Office.

### **Qualifying Examination (HOIS students)**

Examination Objective: The Qualifying Examination is the second phase of assessing the suitability of the HOBI student to be formally admitted to PhD candidacy.

The Qualifying Examination will be a 2-part examination, administered by the student's Supervisory committee and uniquely tailored to the student's specific area of focus and interest within Health Outcomes and Implementation Science. In preparation for this portion of the examination, students are asked to submit a list of 30-50 references that are directly relevant to their dissertation topic. This list should include seminal as well as current research. Students are encouraged to use readings covered in specialty classes that relate to their topic, to ask members of their Supervisory Committee for recommendations, and to complete a thorough literature review.

Students should also submit a one-page narrative that describes their general dissertation topic in Health Outcomes and Implementation Science. This narrative should resemble a typical specific aims page of a grant proposal, describing the significance of the dissertation topic and its position in the broader literature, as well as provide a summary of the aims of the planned dissertation (recognizing that the aims will be further developed through the proposal defense described below). The list of references and narrative are due to the Supervisory Committee (and HOBI Education Office) approximately **two months** prior to the date of their Qualifying Examination. This list of references, once approved by the Supervisory Committee, will be the foundation for the Qualifying Examination. Students will use this as their reading list and subsequently demonstrate mastery of this list in answering the questions for this section of the examination. Students are recommended to set their exam dates as soon as possible after submission of their reference list.

The Qualifying Examination will be comprised of:

**1. Written Qualifying Examination: Take-home, open book essay examination.**

Students will have 48 hours to complete the Written Qualifying Examination. Students will receive the written examination from the Assistant Director of Education. The written examination will be comprised of 3-4 essay questions, from which students will select two questions to complete and

submit. Essay questions will be developed by the student's Supervisory Committee and will be specific to the student's area of research focus. Students will be asked to sign an affidavit confirming that they have not used any generative AI tools in constructing any portion of their exam answers.

## 2. Oral Qualifying Examination:

At the time of setting the Oral Qualifying Examination, the written Qualifying Examination date can also be set. The Oral Qualifying Examination must be set for a date 7-10 days following completion of the Written Qualifying Examination.

The Oral Qualifying Examination will be a 2-hour meeting between the student and all members of their Supervisory Committee. Physical attendance to the meeting is mandatory for the student and Supervisory Committee Chair/Co-Chair. While physical attendance for all members is heavily encouraged, [as per our department policy found here](#), virtual attendance for other committee members is subject to approval by the HOBI curriculum committee. Exceptions to the department's defense exam and [attendance policy](#) can be requested by the student taking the exam.

The Oral Qualifying Examination will primarily be a discussion of the Written Qualifying Examination, allowing the committee members to follow up on the written questions (and responses) and to expand on other topics related to the content area of the student's chosen dissertation topic, with the primary goal to determine if the student has comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of this content area.

Immediately following the Oral Qualifying Examination, the Supervisory Committee will meet without the student to determine the outcome. The student will be notified of the committee's assessed outcome (per below) by his/her Chair immediately after the oral examination, at the Oral Qualifying Examination, or in special circumstances, no later than 24 hours after the oral examination (in writing).

### Qualifying Examination Outcomes

There are four possible outcomes of the qualifying examination:

1. **Pass**
2. **Conditional Pass:** Student is allowed to proceed to the dissertation proposal, but is required to remediate an area of weakness identified by the Supervisory Committee. The Supervisory Committee will outline an action plan that will be agreed upon by the committee members and the student.
3. **Fail:**
  - a. **With option for reexamination** - The student will be allowed to repeat the examination after completing remedial work specified by the Supervisory Committee and outlined in a remedial action plan agreed upon by the student. Per Graduate School Policy, at least one semester of additional preparation is required before the student can retake the examination (the examination cannot be retaken during the same semester).
  - b. **Without option for reexamination** - The student will not be allowed to re-take the examination, and thus not allowed to complete the PhD. The Supervisory Committee may recommend completion of a MS degree. A student who fails the examination may petition for re-examination per Graduate School policy.



### Qualifying Examination Process

1. Students should submit their reference list and narrative at least 2 months prior to the expected exam date.
2. Once the list is submitted, students should contact their committee members to identify a suitable date, and contact the Education Office, to identify a date, time, and location for the oral portion of the exam.
3. A date should also be confirmed at the same time for the written portion of the exam. It is recommended that the written portion of the exam be completed and submitted to the Education Office 1 week prior to the date of the oral portion of the exam.

### **Qualifying Examination (BMI students)**

Eligibility: To be eligible to take the Qualifying Examination, students must:

- (1) Complete **all core, foundation and advance elective coursework (excludes research seminar)**
- (2) Obtain approval from their chair
- (3) Achieve a minimum 3.00 GPA and be in good academic standing

In addition, students should also complete all human subject trainings required by the University of Florida's IRB-01 prior to the preliminary examination. This includes:

- (1) IRB-01 local training (via <https://mytraining.hr.ufl.edu/>)
- (2) HIPAA training (via <https://mytraining.hr.ufl.edu/>)
- (3) CITI training (via <https://research.ufl.edu/rcr/rcr-training/citi-rcr-training/>)

From these training materials, students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of basic considerations and responsibilities when conducting human subject research. Students should also be able to describe the following: **The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, The Nuremberg Code, The Belmont Report, and The Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment.**

***The Qualifying Examination should be taken within 1 semester of completing all coursework, and MUST be taken within 1 year of completing all coursework.***

Process to take exam: Students interested in taking the Qualifying Examination should first obtain signed permission from all members of their Supervisory Committee, and the Chair of the Supervisory Committee should request (in writing) permission for the student to take the examination to the Office of Education no later than two months prior to the examination date (see below for scheduling of the exams).

Examination Objective: The Qualifying Examination is the second phase of assessing the suitability of a HOBI student to be formally admitted to PhD candidacy.

The Qualifying Examination will be a 2-part examination, administered by the student's Supervisory committee and uniquely tailored to the student's specific area of focus and interest within Biomedical Informatics. In preparation for this portion of the examination, students are asked to submit a list of 30-50 references that are directly relevant to their dissertation topic. This list should include seminal as well as current research. Students are encouraged to use readings covered in specialty classes that

relate to their topic, to ask members of their Supervisory Committee for recommendations, and to complete a thorough literature review.

Students should also submit a one-page narrative that describes their general dissertation topic in Biomedical Informatics. This narrative should resemble a typical specific aims page of a grant proposal, describing the significance of the dissertation topic and its position in the broader literature, as well as provide a summary of the aims of the planned dissertation (recognizing that the aims will be further developed through the proposal defense described below). The list of references and narrative are due to the Supervisory Committee (and HOBI Education Office) approximately **two months** prior to the date of their Qualifying Examination. This list of references, once approved by the Supervisory Committee, will be the foundation for the Qualifying Examination. Students will use this as their reading list and subsequently demonstrate mastery of this list in answering the questions for this section of the examination. Students are recommended to set their exam dates as soon as possible after submission of their reference list.

The Qualifying Examination will be comprised of:

1. Written Qualifying Examination: Take-home, open book essay examination.

Students will have 48 hours to complete the Written Qualifying Examination. Students will receive the written examination from the Assistant Director of Education. The written examination will be comprised of 5 essay questions, from which students will select 3 questions to complete and submit.

2 questions (student can choose 1) will assess a student's competency in BMI relevant to the student's area of focus and 3 questions (student can choose 2) will assess a student's in-depth knowledge of their chosen dissertation topic.

Essay questions will be developed by the student's Supervisory Committee and will be specific to the student's area of research focus. Students will be asked to sign an affidavit confirming that they have not used any generative AI tools in constructing any portion of their exam answers.

2. Oral Qualifying Examination:

At the time of setting the Oral Qualifying Examination, the written Qualifying Examination date can also be set. The Oral Qualifying Examination must be set for a date 7-10 days following completion of the Written Qualifying Examination.

The Oral Qualifying Examination will be a 2-hour meeting between the student and all members of their Supervisory Committee. Physical attendance to the meeting is mandatory for the student and Supervisory Committee Chair/Co-Chair. While physical attendance for all members is heavily [encouraged](#), virtual attendance for other committee members is subject to approval by the HOBI curriculum committee. Exceptions to the department's defense exam and attendance [policy](#) can be requested by the student taking the exam.

The Oral Qualifying Examination will primarily be a discussion of the Written Qualifying Examination, allowing the committee members to follow up on the written questions (and responses) and to expand on other topics related to the content area of the student's chosen dissertation topic, with the primary goal to determine if the student has comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of this content area.

Immediately following the Oral Qualifying Examination, the Supervisory Committee will meet without the student to determine the outcome. The student will be notified of the committee's assessed outcome (per below) by his/her Chair immediately after the oral examination, or in special circumstances, no later than 24 hours after the oral examination (in writing).

### Qualifying Examination Outcomes

There are four possible outcomes of the qualifying examination:

1. **Pass**
2. **Conditional Pass:** Student is allowed to proceed to the dissertation proposal, but is required to remediate an area of weakness identified by the Supervisory Committee. The Supervisory Committee will outline an action plan that will be agreed upon by the committee members and the student.
3. **Fail:**
  - a. **With option for reexamination** - The student will be allowed to repeat the examination after completing remedial work specified by the Supervisory Committee and outlined in a remedial action plan agreed upon by the student. Per Graduate School Policy, at least one semester of additional preparation is required before the student can retake the examination (the examination cannot be retaken during the same semester).
  - b. **Without option for reexamination** - The student will not be allowed to re-take the examination, and thus not allowed to complete the PhD. The Supervisory Committee may recommend completion of a MS degree. A student who fails the examination may petition for re-examination per Graduate School policy.

### Qualifying Examination Process

1. Students should submit their reference list and narrative at least 2 months before the expected exam date.
2. Once the list is submitted, students should contact their committee members to identify a suitable date, and contact the Education Office, to identify a date, time, and location for the oral portion of the exam.
3. A date should also be confirmed at the same time for the written portion of the exam. It is recommended that the written portion of the exam be completed and submitted to the Education Office 1 week prior to the date of the oral portion of the exam.

## **Dissertation Proposal**

The Dissertation Proposal is the third and final phase of assessing the suitability of the HOBI student to be formally admitted to PhD candidacy. It should take place within six months of successful completion of the qualifying examination. The dissertation proposal will consist of:

### **Abstract** – 30 lines maximum

The abstract should briefly describe the entire proposed project, including the objectives and the planned methods.

### **Specific Aims** – 2 pages maximum

Specific aims should clearly describe what is being proposed, including the hypotheses that will be tested.

### **Significance** – 2-5 pages

Significance should describe the relevance of the proposed project to the field of Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics research. This section should also establish the innovative approach of each of the Specific Aims in the context of a complete review of the existing literature.

**Preliminary Studies** (optional) – *no page limit*

Preliminary studies can describe any pilot work that has already been done leading up to the proposed project.

**Design and Methods** – *5-10 pages*

Design and methods must clearly describe the plan for accomplishing the proposed project, clearly addressing each of the Specific Aims. Included in this section must be: timeline, power calculation(s) (if applicable), statistical tests to be performed, strengths, and limitations.

**Literature Cited** – *no page limit*

The proposal must be written in 12-point font, single-spaced, with a targeted or recommended length of 12-15 pages. Students must also prepare all IRB forms necessary to conduct the proposed research. All studies being submitted to IRB-01 should use the web based [myIRB submission system](#).

An oral dissertation proposal defense will accompany the written proposal. The student will work with their Supervisory Committee Chair to prepare the dissertation proposal. After Chair approval, the student will send it to the Supervisory Committee for review. Once the Committee members agree it is ready for defense, the Assistant Director will set up a dissertation proposal defense date.

Dissertation Proposal Process

Once the proposal has been recommended for defense by the committee members, the student can work with the Education Office to schedule the defense. The defense date should be set for a date at least 3 weeks after the proposal has been submitted and the committee's recommendation has been made. The proposal defense must follow the department's milestone and exam attendance policy; exceptions to the policy must be submitted to the Education Office for review by the Curriculum Committee.

The Proposal Defense will be an overview of the research proposal that is approximately 30 minutes long supported by slides. It should focus on the proposal topic and methodology.

The Supervisory Committee will then evaluate the written proposal and the oral presentation. 30 minutes will be given for questions by the Committee, to be answered by the student. The Committee will meet without the student present to determine the outcome of the proposal defense. The results will be communicated to the student immediately (and to the HOBI Associate Chair of Education) that same day.

**Dissertation Proposal Outcomes:**

1. **Pass** with no revisions
2. **Pass with minor revisions** – the student must revise and submit revisions to all committee members
3. **Pass with major revisions** – the student must revise and resubmit. At the discretion of the Supervisory Chair, the committee may be reassembled

4. **Not acceptable** – student and Chair must meet with the HOBI Associate Chair of Education

Any recommended revisions must be completed within **3 months** from the time of proposal presentation. A re-examination may be requested, but it must be recommended by the student's Supervisory Committee Chair and approved by the HOBI Associate Chair of Education and Chair of the Department.

### **Admission to Candidacy**

A doctoral student does not become an actual candidate for the PhD degree until granted formal Admission to Candidacy. This admission requires approval from the student's Supervisory Committee, the HOBI Chair, the Associate Dean for Graduate Education, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

Approval is based on:

- 1) The academic record of the student;
- 2) The Supervisory Committee's opinion on overall fitness for candidacy;
- 3) Successful completion of the Preliminary Examination (HOIS students);
- 4) Successful completion of the Qualifying Examination;
- 5) Successful Dissertation Proposal defense

Documentation: The **Graduate Qualifying Exam Milestone Form** will be prepared by the Assistant Director several days prior to the dissertation proposal defense. This will be the second set of signatures on a new version of this form, since the milestone requires data about the Qualifying Examination, the Dissertation Proposal defense, and the dissertation topic approval date, all to be finalized in the Qualifying Exam Milestone.

The Assistant Director will circulate the form to the student's mentor and full committee, to gather the results of the dissertation proposal defense.

After the form has been completed and shared with the Education Office, the results will be provided to the Graduate School via the Grad Qualifying Exam milestone in SIS and will be visible in ONE.UF.

For recordkeeping purposes, the date of Admission to Candidacy is recognized as the date that the Qualifying Examination Milestone has been updated as satisfactory.

### **Expectations for Dissertation Work**

A doctoral student is responsible for developing and conducting all work leading toward and contributing to their dissertation, as appropriate to their topic and study design. This may include, but is not limited to: literature review, data collection, data management and analysis, and writing. After the student's successful dissertation proposal defense and admission to candidacy, the student and their mentor will establish expectations for developing and conducting dissertation work, which must be approved by the student's Supervisory Committee. Following committee approval, the dissertation expectations will be documented in the student's IDP.

As a general rule, any data collection, management, or analysis activities conducted *prior* to the student's admission to candidacy must be approved by the student's Supervisory Committee to be included in the dissertation. In some circumstances, a doctoral student may require the involvement of other individuals in certain data collection, management, or analysis activities that lead toward the

dissertation. For example, a student's dissertation topic may require use of data collected by other individuals under the direction of the mentor (e.g., through a project in the mentor's laboratory). In cases where the dissertation requires use of state claims and encounters data that are maintained by the department, it may be necessary for certain data management activities to be conducted by other department staff or faculty who have access to these data. Any exceptions to the student's direct involvement in activities leading toward the dissertation must be approved by the student's Supervisory Committee and documented in the student's IDP.

## General Graduation Requirements

### Credits

MS students must earn a minimum of **33 credits** for the **Health Outcomes and Implementation Science** concentration or **36 credits** for the **Biomedical Informatics** concentration to obtain a degree. No more than **9** of the **33/36 credits** (earned with a grade of B or higher) can be transferred from previous coursework earned outside of UF. Up to 15 credits may be eligible for transfer from programs at UF. At least **half** of the **33/36 credits** must be courses within HOBI.

PhD students must earn a **minimum of 90 credits** to obtain a degree. No more than **30 credits** of a master's degree from another institution can be transferred to the PhD program.

Credits to be transferred generally need to be coursework that is taken for a letter grade, with the equivalent of a B or better as the result.

### Grade Point Average

Students must achieve an **overall GPA of B (3.0) or better** to be awarded a degree. Grade point averages are computed on all courses at the **5000 level or above** and the **first 6 semester credit hours** of **eligible 3000/4000 level** coursework outside the major.

Grades earned in courses transferred for credit do not count towards the student's grade point average.

Students must also maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or better throughout their graduate career. Students who fall below a GPA of 3.0 during any semester may request an exemption to remain in the program one additional semester. This exemption must be requested through the student's Research Mentor and approved by the Curriculum Committee. If the exemption is granted and the student fails to raise their GPA during the following semester, or falls below a 3.0 GPA in any subsequent semester, the student is subject to being dismissed from the program.



## Policies and Resources

### Conduct and Honor Codes

We expect our students to maintain the highest levels of honesty, integrity, and ethical conduct. Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by all UF [Student Conduct and Honor Codes](#). Any incident involving violation of these codes - including fraud, plagiarism, and cheating - will not be tolerated and may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

- **Fraud** typically involves intentional and deliberate misuse of data leading to falsification of results. This includes the fabrication of data or omission or concealment of conflicting data.
- **Plagiarism** is the use of someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. This includes the use of material with only slight modification or without proper credit given to the original source.

Ignorance of UF student honor codes by a student will not be an excuse for any actions that occur in violation. All incidents will be handled according to the guidelines of the UF Office for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution.

### ChatGPT and Other AI-Based Academic Writing and Research Tools

Given the growing usage of automated knowledge resources like ChatGPT and similar generative AI tools, we encourage students to carefully consider whether using any such resources requires attribution and/or citation, and whether the resulting work could be considered original and/or a form of plagiarism.

Since AI tools are used in various research projects in HOB1 and increasingly used in higher education, the department actively encourages students to increase their knowledge of these tools and to utilize them when appropriate, with an end goal of generating their own knowledge output for their coursework and research. As of the 2023-24 academic year, the department will include any statements about appropriate use of generative AI tools in a course's respective syllabus.

In cases where it is unclear if a student authored any academic coursework or research material, the department may require additional documentation regarding the tools used and the original content or material produced by the student.

We encourage students to actively contact instructors if there are any questions about any types of permitted use of AI writing tools.

The department also currently prohibits the use of generative AI tools for any academic milestones (e.g., preliminary examination, qualifying examination, and dissertation proposal).

If the department determines that there is inappropriate academic usage of AI-based writing tools, a student's case may be submitted to the Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution Office in the Dean of Student's Office, in compliance with the University Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct.

## Counseling & Wellness Center

The UF [Counseling & Wellness Center](#) provides a number of counseling services for students. Their staff is comprised of licensed psychologists, licensed mental health counselors, clinical social workers, psychiatrists, psychiatric fellows, psychiatric nurse practitioners, postdoctoral associates, psychology interns, counselor education interns, and practicum counselors. All of their staff are generalists and students can schedule appointments for a variety of needs. The Counseling & Wellness Center website also contains many [self-help resources](#), and has a phone line available 24 hours (352-392-1575).

## Dates and Deadlines

The [Graduate School Academic Calendar](#) publishes all annual critical dates and deadlines. This includes deadlines for drop/add, fee payments, thesis/dissertation submission, and graduation.

The Graduate School also sends notification of important deadlines and critical dates via the [Graduate Student Listserv](#). This Listserv also keeps all UF graduate students informed of academic, research, and financial opportunities. All currently enrolled graduate students are added to the listserv by their GatorLink e-mail account; there is no way to opt out of the listserv. NOTE: the listserv archive is only available through UF Wi-Fi/wired networks, or through a UF VPN connection (see below).

## E-mail and Off-Campus Access

HOBİ graduate students are **required** to use their GatorLink e-mail as their primary e-mail address to ensure they receive important information from the University and department. Email to your ufl.edu address should not be forwarded to a non-UF email, to avoid third-party spam filtering of official university communications.

If you need to access UF web resources from off-campus, such as online journals for which UF has purchased a license/subscription, you must log into the Libraries via a [VPN](#) connection.

## HIPAA Training

In addition to conduct and honor codes, we require our graduate students to maintain active HIPAA General Awareness training (PRV800) for the duration of their graduate degree. Any certification of up-to-date training should be shared with the Education Office.

## Individual Development Plan (myIDP)

All PhD Students in HOBİ are required to complete an Individual Development Plan on an annual basis. This plan must be submitted by December 1 of each year. Once you have completed this [form](#), please upload a copy of your report to our website submission [tab](#).

## End-of-Year (EOY) Evaluations

To comply with the Graduate School's PhD student annual evaluation requirement, the Department will distribute end-of-year evaluations to both students and mentors to facilitate discussion of student progress (academically and professionally) over the past year. This process will be conducted and overseen by the Education Office each summer.

## Funding for Professional Travel

Pending available funds, the Health Outcomes and Biomedical Informatics Student Travel Award typically provides up to **\$1000** per student per year to **8** students.

Any student whose planned travel meets the criteria outlined below should submit a HOBIS Student Travel Award application to the Academic Specialist **at least 90 days in advance of the planned trip**. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis by the faculty in the appropriate division. Travel to conferences, symposia, and special research opportunities is essential for the professional development of advanced research students. In order to assure that funds benefit the largest possible cross section of graduate students, priority will be given to doctoral-level students who are:

1. Invited to give major talks and are not offered funds from the meeting organizers
2. In the final year of their program **and** are presenting work at a national meeting where they will be evaluated by potential employers
3. Offered a unique opportunity to conduct research on material at an off-campus site or be involved in a special collaboration that may be available only under a limited set of circumstances

### Supplemental Travel Funding Opportunities Outside the Department (pending available funds):

- **UF Graduate Student Council Travel Grants:** The UF Graduate Student Council provides travel grants of up to **\$350**. Eligibility criteria and application details are found at: <https://sg.ufl.edu/resources/gsc/grants/>
- **UF Office of Research Travel Grant:** The UF Office of Research has a program to supplement student travel when other funding sources are insufficient. RGP guidelines for travel funding cap awards at **\$400 per trip** and require **1:1 matching funds** from the department and/or college. These funds are primarily for assistance with the cost of travel, particularly airfare. These grants are one-time awards to Graduate Students. **RGP cannot provide any retroactive reimbursements.** <https://research.ufl.edu/finding-funding/internal-competitive-funding.html>
- **College of Medicine Office of Graduate Education:** If you are the presenting author, you are eligible for at least **\$300 per fiscal year**. Travel is paid through your mentor or the department, and then the Office of Graduate Education transfers appropriate funds to the account that funded the travel once the expense report has been cleared through university accounting. **The OGE does not provide up-front funding, nor does it directly reimburse students.** <https://biomed.med.ufl.edu/students/student-reporting-tools/student-travel-funding-request/>
- **Center for European Studies:** These grants are open to all UF graduate students, regardless of discipline, although the **subject** of the research or talk must be related to Europe or European Studies. Application instructions and deadlines can be found at: <https://ces.ufl.edu/funding/student-funding/>

## Health Insurance

UF requires all newly admitted students, both domestic and international, to show proof of health insurance. Students can purchase the UF Student Health Insurance Plan, administered through [UnitedHealthcare](#), or provide evidence of comparable coverage from an outside entity.

UF graduate students on an appointment as a graduate assistant, teaching assistant or research assistant, or those on a Predoctoral Fellowship appointment may also qualify for the [GatorGradCare](#) health insurance plan.

## Housing

On-campus housing is available on a limited basis for both single and married students who are admitted or enrolled and maintain proper academic progress toward a degree at the University of Florida. There is generally a waiting period of at least several months. Contact [Graduate and Family Housing](#) for more information.

Off-campus housing assistance can be found through [Off-Campus Life](#).

## Leave of Absence

The HOBI Education Office recognizes that students may need time away from their academic work to take a leave of absence for a variety of personal circumstances. We request that students contact us to determine the appropriate course of action connected to maintaining satisfactory progress in their respective programs.

1. Leave of Absence Policy
  - a. Students in need of short-term academic leave that may jeopardize their satisfactory progress during the current semester should contact the Education Office to address current semester coursework.
  - b. Students who need leave for one semester should consult their mentor, as well as the Education Office, for approval from the Associate Chair or Associate Director for Graduate Education.
  - c. Students taking leave longer than one semester should first meet with their mentor to identify how work and academic progress will be impacted. Students should then meet with the Education Office to develop a plan for maintaining progress, as well as reintegration into the program. Students will need approval from the Associate Chair or Associate Director for Graduate Education.
  - d. Students who do not enroll at UF for three consecutive terms, including the summer term, must apply for readmission to the Graduate School. Readmission is not guaranteed.
2. Summer Leave
  - a. Students can request leave, or an exception to enrolling in summer, depending upon their status in the department.
    - i. MS students do not need to register for summer terms.
    - ii. PhD students who use EEP for tuition or are self-funded are encouraged to register for summer, and must enroll full-time (defined as 6 credits for summer) once they have completed their qualifying exam. A request for an exemption to summer registration can be made to the Education Office.
    - iii. PhD students who have a GRA are able to take leave in compliance with the existing GAU contract (i.e., 5 days per term). Additional leave should be reviewed

with the student's mentor and approved by the Education Office. Hours worked during the summer should be monitored in compliance with GRA and other university policies (e.g., regulations pertaining to visa compliance).

MS and PhD students requesting leave for more than 3 terms would need to formally apply for readmission to UF. This includes MS students who do not enroll in 3 consecutive terms, even if they do not apply for leave.

1. Enrollment expectations
  - a. Students at HOBI may be considered one of the following types:
    - i. Full-time
      1. Students are considered full-time when they are PhD students
    - ii. Part-time
      1. PhD students pursuing coursework as an EEP student can enroll part-time on a temporary basis until the completion of the qualifying exam.
      2. MS students can enroll part-time.
  - b. PhD students are expected to enroll each term (Fall/Spring/Summer), unless otherwise listed above.
  - c. Any disruption to a PhD student's continuous enrollment should be discussed with the Education Office.

#### Leave from Work

1. Leave from a GRA position is governed by UF HR policy and the existing GAU contract. If leave is longer than one term, there is no guarantee of funding continuation in the future. Students must confirm with their mentors the availability of funding and the potential timing of their return.
2. Requests for a leave of absence are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Graduate Research Assistants must notify their Research Mentor/supervisor and the Assistant Director of any intended leave of absence.
3. Graduate assistants are expected to work during all academic terms (Fall, Spring, Summer C). There are no program expectations for graduate assistants to work on holidays or breaks between academic terms. Circumstances may arise (grant deadlines, etc.) that necessitate work during these breaks; during these temporary situations, clear communication between faculty supervisors and students is expected.
4. Personal time is paid up to five days per semester appointment, which is credited at the beginning of each semester. This leave may not be used in less than one-day increments, and leave is not cumulative from semester to semester. Graduate assistants should contact their supervisor to schedule leave.

For more information, see <https://benefits.hr.ufl.edu/my-benefits/explore/eligibility/ga/>.

## Libraries

The [Health Science Center Library](#) is located in the Communicore Building of the Health Science Center. It has a large collection of journals, texts, and reference materials, over 100 computers, and ample study space. A GatorOne card is required to check out materials.

Health Outcomes & Biomedical Informatics, like other study programs, is assigned a specific librarian liaison who can help you find resources in your particular subject area. A list of librarian liaisons in the Health Science Center Library can be found at <http://library.health.ufl.edu/services/library-liaisons/>.

The HOBI librarian liaison has prepared a guide to library resources for HOBI students at <https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/hobi>

There are also several other libraries across the main UF campus, including [Library West](#), which houses the Humanities, Business and Social Sciences holdings, and [Marston Science Library](#), containing the Agriculture, Life Sciences, Engineering, Physical Sciences, Mathematics and Earth Sciences holdings.

A list of subject specialists for other libraries can be found at <http://apps.uflib.ufl.edu/staffdir/SubjectSpecialist.aspx>.

## Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of the University of Florida to provide an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. Sex discrimination and sexual harassment will not be tolerated, and individuals who engage in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action. The University encourages students, faculty, staff, and visitors to promptly report sex discrimination and sexual harassment.

The [Office for Accessibility and Gender Equality](#) provides more information on definitions, policies, training, and [reporting](#) prohibited conduct.

## Traffic and Parking Regulations

All UF students can register a car and obtain a parking decal from Transportation and Parking Services ([TAPS](#)). Eligibility for parking decals is determined by the student's local address and academic classification. To obtain a parking decal, please review the [student permit options](#).

## UF Police Department

[UFPD](#) should be contacted for any non-emergency situations occurring on campus by calling 392-1111. All emergencies should be reported by dialing 911.

The Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol ([SNAP](#)) is a free nightly service for students that can provide an escort after dark to anywhere on campus. You can use the SNAP by Spare app to request a ride.

## Work Expectations for Graduate Assistants

Any graduate assistants who are granted office space are expected to work at their designated work location, as set by their offer letter. Any potential adjustments to the work location, and regular

working hours, should be discussed with supervisors, and aligned with the department's [hybrid work policy](#).

Desks available in the common suites on HOBI's floor in Malachowsky Hall are reserved primarily for those students with a graduate assistantship. If you foresee needing regular desk space in Malachowsky to do your work, please contact Matt Mitterko to plan for that accordingly.

### Work Environment

Graduate research assistants are expected to work in a designated work location, unless otherwise negotiated with their supervisors. Many employees in HOBI utilize a hybrid work option, and our graduate students also have this option. An alternate work location form should be completed and approved by the supervisor. Days and times should also be identified when in-person meetings and other physical presence expectations for work in the department are required.

### **Work-Related Injuries (Worker's Compensation)**

For non-serious injuries as an RA, you should first contact the Worker's Compensation office at 392-4940 for assistance filling out the forms. You may then go to the Student Infirmary or another designated site for treatment. For serious injuries you should go directly to the Shands Emergency Room for treatment. Upon arrival you should inform the admitting clerk of your graduate status and that the injury is work related. As soon as possible after treatment, contact the Worker's Compensation office so that a worker's compensation form and accident/injury form can be prepared. After year one, you should report to your departmental worker's compensation representative (the department in which your payroll is processed).