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**AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF VETERINARY  
MEDICINE**



**BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR MS & PHD PROGRAMS**



## COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

July, 2011

On behalf of the faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine at Auburn University, we welcome you to our graduate program in the Biomedical Sciences.

Our 100-plus CVM faculty members are known internationally for teaching, research and outreach. Today, we have approximately 80 trainees enrolled in M.S. and Ph.D. programs and the College has more than 360 students enrolled in the professional DVM program. We are located in Auburn, Alabama, two miles southwest of Auburn University's main campus, near the intersection of Wire Road / Conway and Shug Jordan Parkway. Call (334) 844-3700 for directions or to schedule a visit, or write us at the Office of Research and Graduate Studies, College of Veterinary Medicine, Auburn University AL 36849.

The Biomedical Sciences (BMS) ***Policies and Procedures Guidelines*** should be used as a reference manual as you decide upon graduate school as a career option, as you embark upon your graduate studies, or as you review the various programmatic and graduation requirements.

Each year, through the BMS Graduate Program Committee, we will review all Graduate School expectations and requirements, and post timely updates to our ***Policies and Procedures Guidelines***. The Committee represents the entire CVM Faculty and takes the role of graduate student mentorship and the associated responsibilities seriously – as should each and every student. We expect the highest level of achievement, scholarship and ethical conduct from all faculty, staff and students. We endeavor to provide each and every matriculating student the tools and opportunities for the greatest individual growth and success as their educational pursuits unfold. Working together, we will support your aspirations and goals at Auburn University and the College of Veterinary Medicine!

War Eagle,

Frank F. Bartol, Ph.D.  
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*Owing much to the past, Auburn's greatest debt is ever to the future.*

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## **PHILOSOPHY AND EXPECTATIONS**

Graduate education is based on one of the oldest models of learning known - the apprenticeship. This method of instruction predates the medieval period during which it reached its peak both in terms of formality and the ubiquity with which it was used by craft guilds. The model is simple but effective. By working with a master craftsman (in this case a senior scientist), a young apprentice (in this case a graduate student) can learn by example and by trial and error, while being corrected and educated by the mentor. Through a close association, the student learns both the skills required to perform science and also the strategies, philosophy, and ethics of science. All science is performed by applying the scientific method. It will be your task to apply this method in the formulation of hypotheses and the design of strategies to test them under the supervision of your major professor.

What makes graduate education different from a craft or trade is scholarship. Only the intellectual effort to push back the frontiers of knowledge in their discipline discriminates a scholar from these other pursuits. Scholars love knowledge and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The department and the faculty expect students to enter into this apprenticeship with the understanding that the responsibility for learning is theirs. While faculty members are obligated to provide instruction and facilities, the actual work must be the students. This experience will in all cases require extraordinary effort, both alone and cooperative, on the part of the student. Late nights and weekends are a normal part of the work week of a young scholar. The expectation of all students is to perform at the peak of their ability. The goals are lofty and the experience rewarding. Those with the will win the greatest rewards in future positions and opportunities.

## **OBTAINING INFORMATION**

Finding information can be a task, even for the most knowledgeable individual. However, it is less of a task if you know whom or what to consult. For technical information, a student should first look to his advisor, co-workers and advisory committee members. In addition to these primary sources, the entire faculty is accessible for assistance. For information regarding Graduate School regulations, the CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies can provide current information. You are also encouraged to visit this Offices web site <http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu/orgs> for Graduate Studies information. International students should consult the International Student Handbook and the International Student Advisor in order to maintain their status with U.S. Immigration Service.

The Graduate School section of the Auburn University Bulletin (also found online at: [http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/bulletin/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/bulletin/)) presents regulations of the Graduate School and course descriptions. A schedule of courses offered throughout the University is published prior to registration. A Graduate Student Guide has been prepared by the Graduate Student Organization and contains sections on administrative and academic matters, student life, and food and entertainment.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

It is the responsibility of the graduate student to read this document as well as documents on the Auburn University Graduate School web page [www.grad.auburn.edu](http://www.grad.auburn.edu) and to abide by the policies and requirements of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Auburn University. Recognize that in

the event of a discrepancy between policies stated in this Handbook and policies stated by the Graduate School that Graduate School policies will take precedent. Review the Graduate School website each semester to learn new policies and policy changes.

The ultimate responsibility for registration, oral examinations, thesis and dissertation examinations and other Graduate School deadlines resides with the student. In attempting to meet these deadlines, the student should solicit the advice of his/her advisor, the CVM Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS) and the Auburn University Graduate School.

## **ADVISOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The advisor should be able and willing to provide leadership, direction and encouragement to the student. Advisory committee members should be selected for their specific contributions to the students area of research and ideally will complement the knowledge and expertise of the major advisor. It is in the best interest of the student to maintain contact with his/her advisory committee throughout the program of study. The student and committee should work together to avoid confusion regarding criteria upon which completion of each phase of the graduate program is based and when the student is ready to move forward onto the next phase.

After the student has enrolled, an advisory committee should be selected by the student and major professor (and department chair/graduate program officer). The advisory committee is responsible for developing the students Plan of Study and conducting the MS and PhD examinations. The Plan of Study should be prepared by the student and the advisory committee and filed with the Graduate School as soon as feasible. It should not be delayed beyond the second semester of work. The Graduate School recognizes that changes may be warranted, and a form is available for amendments as required by student needs, research interests and course availability.

### ***ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES:***

**MS students:** A student works under the direction of an advisory committee composed of three members (identified by the student and major professor and then formally) recommended by the appropriate department head or chair (here, the BMS GPO the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies). Two must be members of the Graduate Faculty (Graduate Faculty information including application material can be found at: <http://graduate.auburn.edu/gfast>).

**PhD students:** After the student has enrolled in the doctoral program, an advisory committee should be selected by the student, major professor and department head or chair (here, the BMS GPO - the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies). The advisory committee is responsible for developing the student's Plan of Study and conducting the doctoral general and final examinations. It should consist of at least three members of the Graduate faculty. At least two, including the major professor, must be members of the Graduate Faculty at Level Two. The formal appointment of the advisory committee occurs when the Plan of Study is approved by the Graduate School. The Plan of Study should not be delayed beyond the second semester of doctoral work.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR MS**

A minimum of 30 semester hours determined by the student's advisory committee is required, to include at least six semester hours of core course work and at least 21 semester hours in the major area of concentration. All credit hours applied toward the

minimum degree requirement must be earned in 6000, 7000, and 8000-level courses, which are courses for only graduate students. Up to two semester hours of graded seminar courses may be counted toward meeting minimum degree requirements.

The core course work for students in Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology or Pathobiology must include courses in two of the four categories: biochemistry, statistics, biophysics and molecular biology. All core courses must be at the 7000-level. Core requirements for students in Clinical Sciences also may be satisfied by courses VBMS 7070, 7090, 7210, 7280, 7470, 7500, 7530, and 7640 (and ANSC 7600 - limited to Residents in Theriogenology).

### ***THESIS OPTION:***

Students must register for a minimum of four semester hours of Research and Thesis (VBMS 7990). Up to six hours of VBMS 7990 may be counted toward meeting minimum degree requirements. Students may register for one or more hours of VBMS 7990 per semester. Up to six semester hours of Research Problems (VBMS 7970), which must be distinct from the students thesis research topic, may be counted toward meeting minimum degree requirements.

### ***NON-THESIS OPTION:***

The availability of a non-thesis option is dependent upon the discretion of the advisor, committee and department. If approved, students must register for 3 semester hours (minimum and maximum credit) of Non-thesis Research (VBMS 7980; this is your research project). Up to three semester hours of Research Problems (VBMS 7970) may be counted toward minimum degree requirements. Students must pass a Comprehensive/Final Exam at the end of their MS program under the non-thesis option. This exam is the same final examination format as for Thesis Option students.

Note, under the non-thesis option, VBMS7990 cannot be counted toward graduation.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR PhD**

The following is a brief outline of the Graduate School and the Biomedical Sciences (BMS) Graduate Program requirements for a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences. For additional information regarding Admission and Application Requirements; Advisory Committee and Plan of Study; General Doctoral Examination; and Final Examination go to the following web site: <http://www.grad.auburn.edu>. A minimum of sixty semester hours is required, with the content to be determined/approved by the students advisory committee. Of these, thirty or more must be graded (e.g., A, B or C) graduate level course work (6000-level and above) beyond the bachelors degree and at least 18 of the thirty hours must be completed as a graduate student at Auburn University. The other thirty semester hours of course work may include the courses numbered 7970 and 8990. A maximum of four semester hours of 7990 (Research and Thesis) from a completed Masters program may also be counted.

All BMS Ph.D. students must take a minimum of twelve semester hours of core course work consisting of courses in at least two of the following four categories: biochemistry, statistics, biophysics and molecular biology. Of the twelve semester hours, no more than nine can be taken in any one category. All core courses must be at the 7000-level. It is the students responsibility to consult with their mentor, their committee, and ORGS to determine whether a particular course

satisfies this core course requirement. This is usually accomplished when the students Plan of Study is approved by the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies.

All doctoral students must complete a minimum of 10 hours of VBMS 8990. Enrollment in 8990 may take place at any time the student and the advisory committee deem appropriate. During any one semester, the number of hours of 8990 in which the student enrolls should reflect the amount of time being spent on the dissertation and the degree to which university resources are being utilized. Students may enroll, during any one semester, for as few as one hour or as many as 16 hours of 8990. The requisite 10 hours of 8990 should be included in the Plan of Study.

All BMS Ph.D. students must fulfill a requirement of having written at least one grant proposal sometime during enrollment in the BMS program and of having the grant proposal subjected to peer review. The mechanism for satisfying this requirement is determined by the students advisor and advisory committee. A Grant Proposal Requirement Form ([www.vetmed.auburn.edu/uploads/images/3105/grantpro2.pdf](http://www.vetmed.auburn.edu/uploads/images/3105/grantpro2.pdf)) documenting the procedure and format used for meeting the requirement and date fulfilled, should be submitted to the Office of the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies for inclusion in the student's file. This form will serve to verify compliance in the process of clearance for graduation.

## **RESEARCH PROPOSAL FOR THESIS OR DISSERTATION RESEARCH**

Thesis-option MS students and all PhD students will be required to prepare a research proposal for their thesis/dissertation research, to include as a minimum the following: literature review, objectives, experimental design, materials and methods, budget. The proposal should be prepared soon after a topic has been identified and before the research is initiated; it will be critiqued and approved by the major professor and advisory committee. Aside from serving to define the project, this assignment will provide early exposure to fundamentals of grant writing.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS**

The procedures which must be followed to consummate MS or PhD degree programs are listed in the AU Bulletin. Progress can be monitored most effectively by frequent meetings between student and advisory committee. At least two meetings per year should be held to ensure that the advisory committee is well informed as to a students progress, although a student can request a meeting of his/her advisory committee as he/she deems necessary. Additionally, the advisory committee may require a student to prepare a report or take an examination whenever the committee considers it necessary to evaluate a students progress.

If a graduate student is deemed to be making unsatisfactory progress toward his/her degree by a simple majority of his/her committee, then they may be dropped from the Graduate School. The students advisory committee must prepare a statement of grievances and in a meeting with the student discuss these grievances and suggest steps necessary for remediation. The statement of grievances must have the unanimous support of all members of a students advisory committee. The student will be warned that corrective measures must be taken within a specified time period or action will be initiated that could result in the student being dropped from the Graduate School.

## **SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Through the initial recruitment process, the student should:

1. Obtain application forms from the Graduate School and apply by submitting all required materials to the Graduate School by the deadlines published in the AU Bulletin. The Graduate School forwards the application to the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies who maintains an application file for the upcoming academic year and forwards information to the appropriate departmental graduate program officer for screening committee review. The Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, upon a departmental decision, makes a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School, who sends a letter notifying the applicant of the decision.
2. Apply for an assistantship, if applicable, through the department involved.
3. Become familiar with the requirements for the degree program as published in the AU Bulletin.
4. Consult with the departmental graduate program officer and/or assigned adviser and become familiar with the departmental procedures.
5. Meet with an advisor (or GPO), plan a schedule of study for the first semester.
6. Submit a proposed schedule for fulfilling the residency requirements (forms are available at the Graduate School or on the web at [www.grad.auburn.edu](http://www.grad.auburn.edu) ).
7. Establish an advisory committee through the major professor and department head or chair. Official appointment of the advisory committee occurs when the Plan of Study is approved by the Graduate School.
8. Prepare a Plan of Study approved by the advisory committee and Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. ORGS should receive the Plan of Study in duplicate and will submit the forms to the Graduate School.
9. Complete course work, including language requirements, if any, as detailed in the Plan of Study.

For MS students:

10. Request graduation check via ORGS and the Graduate School no later than the last day of the semester (graduation day) prior to the semester of graduation.
11. Arrange for the final comprehensive examination through the advisory committee. Notify the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least one week in advance using a form obtained from the Graduate School.
12. All students must be registered for at least one course the semester of graduation.

For PhD students:

10. Arrange for the general written and oral examinations through the advisory committee. After the written examination, schedule the general oral examination using a form obtained from the Graduate School. The form should be submitted to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies at least one week in advance of the scheduled examination.
11. Submit the dissertation proposal for approval by the advisory committee and become familiar with The Guide to the Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations, available at [www.grad.auburn.edu](http://www.grad.auburn.edu) or the University Bookstore.
12. Prepare dissertation and submit a committee-approved first draft to the Graduate School for review and approval by the outside reader (representative of the graduate faculty).
13. Study recommendations of the outside reader and make appropriate changes in the dissertation.
14. Request graduation check in the Graduate School no later than the last day of the semester (graduation day) prior to the semester of graduation.

15. On approval of the dissertation by the Dean of the Graduate School, arrange for final oral examination.
16. All students must be registered for at least one course the semester of graduation.

## **TUITION WAIVERS FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Auburn University has a program to provide in-state tuition fellowships to Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). Graduate Assistants with fellowships pay no tuition, although an enrollment fee is charged each semester (\$237 in 2007; the amount increases as tuition increases).

1. Graduate student tuition and fees are waived, provided the students are on a one-quarter time or greater appointment and paid according to the approved salary structure (if paid no less than \$600 per month [FY 2007] as either a graduate research assistant (GRA) or graduate teaching assistant (GTA). Waivers are available only to graduate assistantships assigned for an entire semester, defines as beginning no later than the eighth class day of the semester or September 1<sup>st</sup> for fall semester and ending no earlier than the last of classes each semester.
2. Note: GRAs and GTAs are ineligible for tuition and fee waivers with the accumulation of 40 credit hours for MS trainees and 80 hours for PhD candidates.

## **OTHER BMS GRADUATE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

### ***ANNUAL STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT***

An annual student progress report is due June 1st of each year. To remain in good standing in our graduate program, a completed and signed Annual Progress Report is due for all graduate students. Forms can be obtained on the ORGS website. Completed forms with original signatures should be turned in to the ORGS (106 Greene Hall).

The progress report should be filled out by the student's mentor (or graduate program officer if a mentor has not as yet been identified). It should be discussed with the student privately or with the student's committee. If there are any additional issues, they may be added to the document (it is not a fixed length). The form shall be signed by the student, mentor and members of the committee (if a committee is in place).

### ***SEMINAR AND JOURNAL CLUB***

Scientific presentations and critical examination of current literature are an integral part of academic life. In order to develop proficiency in these skills, a student will be expected to participate regularly in one or more journal clubs or specialty conferences consistent with his/her area of interest.

All BMS MS and PhD students must average at least two scholarly presentations per year during their graduate training. This requirement can be satisfied in many ways, such as presentations in departmental seminars, final thesis defense, and formal oral presentations at local, regional and national scientific meetings. The mechanisms for satisfying this requirement are determined by the

student's advisor and advisory committee as approved by ORGS. Each year, the Annual Progress Report will be used to document compliance in the process of clearance for graduation. Effective September 1, 2007 - students will have the option of: 1) averaging two oral presentations per year as noted above, or 2) averaging one oral presentation and then one poster presentation at local, regional or national scientific meetings.

Beginning in the fall semester (August 1, 2008), graduate students will be required to attend 6 identified college-wide seminars per academic year (at least 12 will be identified and scheduled through the academic year) to remain in good standing. The seminars will be comprised of MS and PhD defense presentations, Joy Goodwin, Phi Zeta and Diabetes Day events (to be identified one (1) month in advance of the presentation, seminar or event)

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### ***SCHEDULING OF MS AND PHD FINAL EXAM SEMINARS***

We request scheduling of MS and PhD defenses on Thursdays and ideally beginning at 1 pm. ORGS *must* be notified at least one (1) month prior (required in 2008-09) to the proposed date of the public defense presentation. We will be responsible for seminar announcements (1 month, the week prior, and within a day of the defense).

### ***ETHICS IN GRADUATE EDUCATION***

Graduate students, just as any other member of society, will find themselves facing ethical decisions whose outcome could significantly affect their careers. It is obvious that theft of laboratory equipment, falsification of data, and plagiarism are unacceptable behaviors. However, other choices might not be so straightforward. Graduate students are expected to conform not only to the Auburn University Code of Student Conduct (see Tiger Cub) but also to the unwritten code of proper scientific conduct. Ethical considerations should always supersede expediency-based decisions. Students should expect the same degree of ethical conduct from faculty members.

The usual type of ethical decision that a graduate student may confront is in the presentation of data and interpretation of results. In fact, in some instances the student may not recognize that there is an ethical component to such a decision. There are many ways in which data can be interpreted and/or made to look better than the totality of the experimental results. Thus, how to present data often involves ethical decisions. When such a question arises, the obvious source of guidance is the major professor. Faculty members are expected to utilize and teach sound ethical practices to their graduate students, in part, through regular discussions and intellectual challenges. If a major professor does not illustrate, through his or her actions, what is expected of a student, but instead is the source of ethical conflict, the student should contact other members of his/her advisory committee and the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies. Alternatively, personnel in the Graduate School are usually able to give appropriate and confidential guidance to students.

Faculty members sometimes neglect discussion of ethical questions with their graduate students, assuming that good ethical judgment has already been acquired. In some instances it might seem that an entire career rests with the success or failure of an experiment, or with the students ability

to satisfy a demanding major professor. Under pressures of graduate training and competitive scientific research, the student may be confronted with conflicting values and the most ethical choice may not always be clear. Although society has high expectations regarding the ethical behavior of scientists, most scientists set even higher standards for themselves and their colleagues. Determining truth in science is difficult enough without having to contend with intentional misrepresentations of fact.

### **USE OF ANIMALS**

All research involving the use of animals must be approved by the Auburn University Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) in keeping with the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act, the Health Research Extension Act, and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Before animals can be used at Auburn University for research, teaching, demonstration, display, breeding, production, or maintenance, the IACUC must review and approve the protocol for the proposed activity. The protocol must be described on the AU Animal Subjects Review Form. A protocol review number (PRN) is assigned to all approved protocols. A current PRN is required in order to acquire animals, to use facilities for housing of animals, and to use the animals. Written information about requirements for the use of animals is available from the AU Office of Animal Resources and the Director of Laboratory Animal Health at the AU College of Veterinary Medicine. The Director of Animal Resources and the Director of Laboratory Animal Health facilitate orientation/training for all faculty, graduate students and staff as needed, to ensure compliance with regulations and principles for the use and care of vertebrate animals used in research and teaching while facilitating high standards of good laboratory practice.

### **PHI ZETA**

The Society of Phi Zeta, the honor society of veterinary medicine, promotes excellence in scholarship and research. Each year, the Auburn Epsilon chapter of Phi Zeta sponsors a college-wide research forum which enables students and other college members to make poster or platform presentations. Plaques and monetary prizes are awarded.

### **TEACHER TRAINING**

Most students who obtain advanced degrees will be involved subsequently in teaching as part of their regular activity. The College will strive to provide opportunities for students to gain teaching experience in either the professional or graduate program.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT TRAVEL**

Graduate students are encouraged to attend scientific meetings that support their graduate studies. As a general guideline, students are expected to present a paper or poster in order to obtain financial support for travel. Funding for travel to most meetings is limited and extramural grant funds should be used when available. Some national societies provide travel grants for students to attend their annual meetings. In these instances, students are encouraged to avail themselves of these opportunities and apply to the societies for travel grants prior to attending the meeting.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION SENATOR**

Students in BMS are entitled to elect a representative to serve a one-year term as a senator in the Graduate Student Council (GSC). Being a GSC senator gives one an opportunity to cooperate with other GSC senators to influence topics of interest to all graduate students (e.g., Graduate School and University policy, graduate student welfare). The GSC meets several times each semester.

## **GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH FORUM**

The Graduate Student Research Forum provides students and faculty an opportunity to become familiar with research being conducted at Auburn. Students are selected to give platform or poster presentations of their work; a competition exists for various prizes. BMS has been well presented by speakers at several forums in the past, and a continuing participation in this activity is encouraged.

## **EXIT INTERVIEW**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the graduate program, the faculty encourages each student to participate in an exit interview with the Colleges BMS Graduate Program Committee after the final examination. Opinions expressed in this interview will be used in assessing the graduate program. In order to obtain a candid account of a students opinion, the students advisor and advisory committee members are excluded from the exit interview.

## **RECORDING AND REPORTING RESULTS**

Research is a team effort, and it is important that the contribution of all members of a team be recognized in the final reports, which are usually in the form of publications. It is often desirable to determine who shall be responsible for writing a particular report and who shall be co-authors at the time the research is initiated. There are no hard and fast rules in determining authorship; this determination is one of the responsibilities of the advisor. Another responsibility of the advisor is to oversee the projects under his/her direction. Whereas the day to day conduct of research is often done by many individuals in a laboratory, the person who has the ultimate responsibility to the agency from which research support has been obtained is the principal investigator (PI). It is therefore important that data be accurately recorded in an appropriate manner so that the PI has continual access to the data and that the original observations and record books be retained in the PIs laboratory. While this may appear inconvenient, the importance of maintaining the accuracy and integrity of records cannot be underestimated. Certainly, the one who has the greatest impact on research results is the person making observations and recording data. Yet, the person held responsible for reported research is the PI. It is therefore important that all laboratory personnel (students, postdoctoral fellows, technicians, visiting scientists, etc.) adhere to the laboratory standards of the PI in charge of a project. In the case of students, this is usually their advisor.

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## MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

### ***APPLICATION TO THE BMS GRADUATE PROGRAM:***

1. A satisfactory Graduate Records Examination score is required for all graduate programs. GRE scores will be evaluated in conjunction with applicant's academic record. The GRE exam may be exempted for applicants possessing an earned doctorate (DVM, MD, DMD, etc.).
2. International Students: TOEFL 550 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) paper version (pBT), 213 on the computer version (cBT), and 79 on the Internet version (iBT). Additionally, successful applicants must score minimums of 16 on the listening, reading, speaking, and writing components of the iBT. Auburn University's ETS institution code is 1005. Auburn will also accept a 6.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam.

### ***DUAL DEGREE DVM/MS OR DVM/PHD PROGRAM (DDP)***

The dual degree program allows students to pursue DVM and graduate degrees simultaneously in a time-and content-integrated manner. Graduates, particularly DVM/PhD graduates, will have strong backgrounds both in veterinary medicine and research so as to be well prepared for successful careers in academia, industry and/or specialty clinics.

Note that students must be admitted into the College of Veterinary Medicine program via application to the Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and to the graduate program via application to the Auburn University Graduate School (GS). Students already admitted to the Graduate School may apply for admission to the DVM program in order to gain entry to the combined degree program. Such students must meet three criteria to be allowed to pursue this course of study:

1. The applicant must express, in writing, their commitment to continue their graduate program as part of a DVM/MS or DVM/PhD program. A personal statement should be provided that is less than 500 words, describing the applicants reasons to pursue the DVM and graduate curriculum simultaneously and stating long-term career goals.
2. The applicant must meet with the Associate Dean for Research and/or the BMS Graduate Program Committee and demonstrate that they are capable of and dedicated to pursuing a combined program.
3. Three letters of recommendation are required from individuals who can comment on the applicants potential as a researcher. One letter shall come from the students major advisor indicating that the applicant was granted specific permission for application by their major advisor.

### ***GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN DDP ARE:***

1. Must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better in both the DVM and graduate curricula.
2. In the DVM/PhD DDP, one may elect to interrupt the DVM curriculum for one or two years between the first and second years to pursue graduate education and research goals. This requires approval by the CVM Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

3. The chair or co-chair of the graduate program must be a CVM faculty member and at least two other members of the students graduate advisory committee must be CVM graduate faculty members.
4. From the DVM curriculum 6 (MS DDP) or 9 (PhD DDP) credit hours may be applied towards GS requirements of 30 total semester hours (MS) or 30 semester hours of graded course work (PhD). Courses for dual credit may be selected from relevant electives or core courses (VMED 5110, 5111, 5120, 5130, 5131 5520, or 5260 that are dual-listed as a 6000 level course equivalent). The DDP student will have special assignments in dual credit courses (e.g. term paper) supplementary to the workload of veterinary classmates.
5. The DDP student must fulfill all requirements and minimum performance standards of the DVM curriculum, of the graduate programs in the Biomedical Sciences, and of the academic department/research unit providing financial support.
6. Progress will be reviewed at least annually by the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program Committee/CVM Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies and by the CVM Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Continuation will require overall endorsement by the reviewers and the students graduate advisory committee.
7. All DDP presume a year-round effort by the students with vacation breaks similar to graduate students.

### **HEALTH BENEFITS:**

Graduate Assistants health benefits are implemented by the Graduate School.

### **PROCEDURES FOR REQUESTING A CHANGE OF RESIDENCY DECISION**

The following outlines the process by which a student may request the initial decision of residency for tuition purposes be changed by the Office of Admissions and Records.

1. The student must submit a letter to the Senior Associate Director of Admissions and Records, addressed to the Residency Committee, requesting residency reclassification and outlining the circumstances that have changed since the initial residency decision.
2. Along with the letter, the student should submit whatever evidence they feel is relevant to their appeal. Examples of the types of evidence that may contain information relevant to reclassification can be found in Auburn University Guidelines (the Tiger Cub).
3. The letter of request for appeal and the supporting evidence must be received no later than the business day before the committee meets. The Office of Admissions and Records will prepare all materials for presentation to the committee regarding each individual appeal.
4. The committee will vote on the merits of each appeal and as it relates to the written guidelines as adopted by the State of Alabama and the Auburn University Board of Trustees.
5. The Residency Appeals Committee Chair will send a letter to the student informing them of the final decision and reason.
6. All proceedings and votes will be recorded and filed in the Office of Admissions and Records.
7. The students may submit further appeals to the Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services if desired.

### ***INITIAL DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY***

In order to be initially classified as eligible for resident tuition, students must demonstrate that they or their parent, guardian or spouse qualify for one of the eligibility categories prior to the first day of class. A signed statement is required that qualification for the eligibility category claimed has been met prior to registration.

### ***CHANGE IN ELIGIBILITY FOR ALABAMA IN-STATE TUITION***

Students determined to be eligible for resident tuition will maintain that eligibility upon re-enrollment within 12 months of their most recent enrollment, unless there is evidence that the student subsequently has abandoned resident status (e.g., registering to vote in another state). Students failing to re-enroll within 12 months must establish eligibility upon re-enrollment.

Students initially classified as ineligible for resident tuition will retain that classification for tuition purposes until they provide clear and convincing evidence that they have established permanent domicile in Alabama. The burden of proof of change in eligibility rests on those requesting change. Evidence relevant to an initial determination of eligibility is also relevant to establishing a change in eligibility. Non-resident students who carry an academic load considered normal (10 or more hours per term) for students at Auburn University will be presumed to be in the State of Alabama primarily for the purpose of gaining an education and, thus, have not demonstrated the intent to establish a true domicile in Alabama. Clear and convincing proof may overcome this presumption, but again, the burden of proof rests on those requesting change in eligibility. Any change in resident tuition eligibility occurring during an academic term will not become effective until the registration for the succeeding term. The following types of evidence may contain data to establish 12-month residency in the State of Alabama. In all cases, the person must be at least 19 years of age or married, and financially independent. Otherwise, the persons residency will be based on that of the parent or guardian.

1. Ownership of rental or residential property in the State of Alabama and continuous occupation thereof on an extended term of not less than 12 consecutive months.
2. Full-time permanent employment in the State of Alabama.
3. Possession of State of Alabama License(s) required doing business or practicing a profession in Alabama.
4. Legal marriage to a bona fide Alabama resident.
5. Registration to vote in the State of Alabama.
6. Holding a current Alabama resident income tax return.
7. Holding a current Alabama drivers license.
8. Registration of vehicle in Alabama, and payment of property taxes, thereon.
9. Evidence of local banking activity within the State of Alabama for 12 consecutive months prior to making application for residency change.

The Director of Admissions and Records shall have the responsibility for determining whether a student shall be classified as an Alabama or non-Alabama student. The decision of the Director of Admissions and Records/Admissions Director shall be subject to review by the Residency Committee or the designated representative, upon written request of the applicant.

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## **ALABAMA AND NON-ALABAMA STUDENT POLICY**

For the purpose of assessing fees, applicants shall be classified as Alabama or non-Alabama students. Non-Alabama students are required to pay a non-resident tuition fee. An Alabama student is a person which shall be a citizen of the United States, or a resident alien, and who shall have resided and had habitation, home and permanent abode in the State of Alabama for at least 12 months immediately preceding current registration. In applying this regulation, applicant shall mean a person applying for admission to the institution, if applicant is married or 19 years of age, and financially independent. Otherwise, it shall mean parents, parent or legal guardian of his/her person. If the parents are divorced, residence will be determined by the residency of the parent to whom the court has granted custody. A person who establishes a guardianship for purpose of avoiding non-Alabama fees will be subject to non-resident tuition. No person who moves to Alabama for the primary purpose of attending college shall be considered to have demonstrated intent to establish domicile in the State of Alabama, and will generally not be considered eligible for classification as a resident student. Clear and convincing evidence to the contrary must be presented to overcome this presumption. In determining Alabama student status for purposes of assessing fees, the burden of proof is on the applicant.

### ***ADDITIONAL PERSONS ELIGIBLE FOR ALABAMA IN-STATE TUITION***

1. Military personnel on active duty stationed in Alabama, their spouses and dependent children (as defined by Internal Revenue Codes), as well as military personnel whose Home of Record is Alabama, who have continuously filed Alabama income tax returns for the duration of their service, and their spouses and dependent children.
2. Non-resident undergraduate students who have been awarded full academic, athletic or other similar performance tuition scholarships by Auburn University and graduate students appointed on assistantship of at least one-quarter time.
3. Full-time employees of a State of Alabama agency or institution, their spouses and dependent children.
4. Spouses and dependent children of a non-resident, provided the non-resident has been employed in Alabama full-time for at least 12 consecutive months prior to registration, has filed an Alabama Income Tax Return for the tax year prior to the year in which the student is admitted, and did not claim a credit on the Alabama return for income taxes paid to another state.
5. Non-resident students enrolled in programs included in the Southern Regional Education Board Academic Common Market, provided the student does not change to another program not included, is enrolled in 12 hrs per term and earns a 3.0 each term. In such cases of change, reduction in course load or failure to meet the GPA, the student will be classified as a non-resident for tuition purposes. See the Academic Common Market information in the *AU Bulletin* for specific policies.
6. Persons whose spouses by legal marriage are *bona fide* Alabama residents.
7. Spouses and dependent children of persons who establish domicile within the State of Alabama, provided that the person who establishes domicile is employed full-time in a permanent position in Alabama.
8. Non-resident persons enrolled in programs of Auburn University not funded by tax revenues of the State of Alabama.
9. Students enrolled in the College of Veterinary Medicine professional DVM program admitted under contract with the Southern Regional Education Board.

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## PROCEDURES FOR CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION AND LATER GRADUATION

1. Did you miss the deadline for requesting a graduation check? Was your plan of study sent in too late for a graduation check?
  - A. Request a graduation check for the next available term at [www.grad.auburn.edu](http://www.grad.auburn.edu) . Click on the graduation button in the upper right hand corner, fill in the 3-part electronic form, and we will access it from the Graduate School. We must have an approved plan of study on file.
  - B. When you have completed all of the requirements for your degree, including having all grades posted, request a Certificate of Completion from Sherry Ray (844-2131, [raysher@auburn.edu](mailto:raysher@auburn.edu) ). The request must be made before the last day of the term. The Certificate is valid for employment purposes, etc. you will not have to be registered during the term of graduation if the Certificate has been issued.
  - C. If you want to participate in the graduation ceremony during the term in which you requested the Certificate, please come to the Graduate School at least a week before the ceremony to get a pass. You will need to talk to Julie Reece (844-2125, [reeceju@auburn.edu](mailto:reeceju@auburn.edu) ). During the ceremony, they will call your name and you will get a blank diploma cover like all the other graduates, but you will not receive your diploma until the following term. Your name will not be in the Commencement program. You will need to order a cap and gown from the Bookstore; they may still be able to order invitations for you, too.
  - D. You will receive your diploma during the term of graduation. (Your name will be in that Commencement program.) Be sure to notify the Registrars office regarding how you want your diploma delivered to you.
2. Did you miss deadlines for final exams, dissertation or thesis submissions?
  - A. Follow instructions listed above. If you have already submitted a graduation check request, you will automatically be moved to the next graduation term if you miss any deadlines.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** Contact the ORGS or your Graduate Program Officer.

*Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies* – Dr. Frank F. Bartol  
*ORGS Graduate Student Liaison* – Amelia Pendleton

*2010-2011 Graduate Program Officers:*  
Anatomy, Physiology and Pharmacology – Dr. Ya-Xiong Tao  
Clinical Sciences – Dr. Anne Wooldridge  
Pathobiology – Dr. Fritz van Ginkel  
Scott Ritchey Research Center – Dr. Bruce F. Smith

## TIMELINES (MS DEGREE CANDIDATES)

Forms/ Requirements	Deadlines
Apply to graduate school	ASAP
Select advisor / committee	ASAP
Plan of Study Form	Before registration for 4th course
Register for class each semester	From 1st-10th day of semester ONLY* (summer semester register by 5th class day)
Final Plan of Study	By beginning of final semester
Graduation check	No later than last day of semester PRIOR to semester of graduation
Notify Graduate school of intent to graduate	No later than 15th class day of semester of graduation
Form 9 Proof of passing defense for Masters thesis	Due approximately mid-way through semester
Form 8 Proof of passing defense for non-thesis Masters	Due approximately mid-way through semester
Completion of program	5 calendar years

\* Students MUST be registered the semester they plan to graduate; there are courses you can register for just for this purpose if need be.

Thesis	Non-Thesis
30 credit hours total >50% at 7000-8000 level; rest at 6000 > 21 hr in major area of concentration > 6 hr in 2 of the core areas 4-6 hr in Research and Thesis VBMS 7990** 0-6 hr in Research Problem 0-2 hr in graded seminar courses	30 credit hours total >50% at 7000-8000 level; rest at 6000 > 21 hr in major area of concentration > 6 hr in 2 of the core areas 3 hr in Non-Thesis Project VBMS 7980** 0-3 hr in Research Problem 0-2 hr in graded seminar courses
Complete research project	Complete research project
Submit research proposal Submit to dept committee Submit to outside agency if funding required	Submit research proposal Submit to dept committee Submit to outside agency if funding required
Write thesis based on project	Write manuscript based on project suitable for publication
Present and defend thesis	Present and defend project
2 scholarly presentations/yr on average	2 scholarly presentations/yr on average

\*\* Can register for more if need arises, but these are the minimum requirement and maximum allowed to count toward the 30 hrs.

BIOL 6220 will no longer serve as a core course for students matriculating after 06/01/2008. Two new VBMS molecular courses will be offered regularly.

## TIMELINES (PhD CANDIDATES)

Forms/Requirements	Deadlines
Apply to graduate school	ASAP
Select advisor / committee	ASAP
Plan of Study Form	By second semester of program
Register for class each semester	From 1st-10th day of semester ONLY* (summer semester register by 5th class day)
Qualifying exam (admission to candidacy)	Graduate School form required
Final Plan of Study	By beginning of final semester
Graduation check	No later than last day of semester PRIOR to semester of graduation
Notify Graduate school of intent to graduate	No later than 15th class day of semester of graduation
Prepare dissertation and submit to Graduate School for outside reader approval	
Arrange for final oral examination	After dissertation draft approval
Completion of program	4 calendar years upon admission to candidacy (passing qualifying exam)

\* Students **MUST** be registered the semester they plan to graduate; there are courses you can register for just for this purpose if necessary.

Dissertation
60 credit hours total (beyond BS degree with > 18 hr in residence as a graduate student at Auburn University). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;30 hr graded at 6000-level or higher</li> <li>Remainder may include un-graded courses, VBMS 7990 and/or VBMS 8990.</li> <li>21 hr in major area of concentration</li> <li>10 hr VBMS 8990 (1-16 hrs/semester)</li> <li>A maximum of 4 hours of 7990 from a completed masters program may be counted.</li> <li>12 hr in 2 of the core areas (no more than 9 hr in any one category)</li> </ul>
Admission to candidacy (qualifying exam) General written/oral examinations through the advisory committee. After the written examination, schedule the oral examination using a form from the Graduate School. The form should be submitted to ORGS one week in advance of the examination. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit dissertation proposal (see The Guide to the Preparation and Submission of Theses and Dissertations at <a href="http://www.grad.auburn.edu">www.grad.auburn.edu</a> .</li> <li>Prepare dissertation draft, submit a committee-approved first draft to the Graduate School for review and approval by the outside reader (representative of the graduate faculty).</li> <li>Make appropriate changes to dissertation</li> </ul>
Request graduation check prior to the semester of graduation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On approval of the dissertation by the Dean of the Graduate School, arrange for the final oral examination.</li> <li>Present and defend dissertation.</li> <li>All students must be registered for at least one course the semester of graduation.</li> </ul>
2 scholarly presentations/yr on average required