



RUTGERS

School of Graduate Studies

“Our goal is to produce biomedical scientists with the proficiency and potential to solve the complex biological problems they will encounter....”

Newark Health Science Campus

at the
New Jersey Medical School
and
Rutgers School of Dental Medicine



PhD Student Handbook



“....to develop scientists who will contribute new knowledge in the biomedical disciplines through creative research and scholarship”.

<http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/>

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

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SGS FORMS

http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/current_students/forms.php

FOREWORD

This handbook is informational only and does not constitute a contract between Rutgers University and any student. The handbook may be changed by Rutgers without prior notice to students. Any rules, regulations, policies, procedures or other representations made herein may be interpreted and applied by Rutgers to promote fairness and academic excellence, based on the circumstances of each individual situation.

This handbook represents a program of the current curricula, educational plans, offerings and requirements of the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies. The School reserves the right to change any provisions, offerings, tuition, fees, or requirements at any time within the student's period of study at Rutgers. In addition, Rutgers may at any time eliminate, modify or change the location of any School, Institute, Center, Program, Department, course or academic activity.

This Student Handbook is to assist you in understanding the operations, procedures, and rules of the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies, Newark Health Science Campus. Some pertinent University policies have been summarized to highlight their relevance to graduate students. Official policies are available online at <http://policies.rutgers.edu/view-policies/table-contents> (Rutgers), <http://academicaffairs.rutgers.edu/rutgers-biomedical-and-health-sciences-policies> (Rutgers RBHS), and <https://grad.rutgers.edu/current-students/policies-procedures-students> (Rutgers SGS). Please notify the SGS office of any omissions or errors in this publication so that they can be corrected (phone: 973-972-4511).

In addition to the SGS policies and requirements described in the Handbook, each track, program or department has its own specific requirements for completion of the degree. Students should become familiar with those policies and consult the guidelines of each.

Information in this Handbook is posted on the SGS website: <http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/>. The web site also contains information on seminars, fellowships, job opportunities, policy changes, housing, and other subjects of interest to the SGS community; students and faculty are urged to consult this resource. Information regarding issues or interest will be sent to all students via Email. All students have been given an Email account and must monitor it for announcements.

The Graduate School at Newark offers programs leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Master of Science (25 credits with a 5 credit thesis), Master of Biomedical Science (30 credits, no thesis), and Certificates in Stem Cell Biology, Pharmacological Sciences, and Neuroscience. Joint MD/PhD, DPT/PhD and DMD/PhD, MS/MBA (with the Rutgers School of Business), MS/MPH (with the Rutgers School of Public Health) programs also are available.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF:

Rutgers-SGS Vice Dean's Office			
Vice Dean	Kathleen Scotto, PhD	972-5333	kathleen.scotto@rutgers.edu
Chief Business Officer	Yelena Schroeder	972-5332	ys546@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Budget Analyst	Kimberly Pemberton	972-8384	pemberki@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Rutgers-SGS Registrar's Office			
Associate Director of Enrollment & Academic Services/Registrar	Barbara Coleman-Lee	972-8385	leebea@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Management Assistant	Maribel Larracuentas	972-8385	ml1174@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Rutgers-SGS Newark Health Science Campus			
Senior Associate Dean	Andrew Thomas, PhD	972-4511	gsbsnadm@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Associate Dean for Student Affairs	Carol Lutz, PhD	972-4511 972-0899	lutzcs@njms.rutgers.edu
Assistant Dean for Career Development	Doreen Badheka, PhD	972-0908	doreen.badheka@rutgers.edu
Assistant Dean for Program Development	Larry Gaspers, PhD	973-972 5379	larry.gaspers@rutgers.edu
Assist. Dean for Pre-Dental Programs	Vincent Tsiagbe, PhD	972-2612	tsiagbvk@sdm.rutgers.edu
Associate Director of Administrative Services	Nadine Stevens	972-4511	stevenna@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Staff Assistant	Talia Young	972-4511	tey9@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Program Assistant	Beatrice Suffrant	972-7225	suffrabe@gsbs.rutgers.edu
Program Coordinator	Leslie Lucy	972-4511	lucyle@gsbs.rutgers.edu

The Graduate School Office of Student Affairs and Admission is located in Room C696 of the Medical Science Building (MSB), 185 S. Orange Ave. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The Graduate School Vice Dean's Office and Registrar's Office are located in the Stanley S. Bergen Building on Bergen Street, 5th floor, Room 517. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

B. REGISTRAR'S OFFICE

The School of Graduate Studies is responsible for the registration of SGS students. The Graduate School Registrar's Office is responsible for preparation, maintenance and issuance of all official grades and records pertaining to SGS students.

C. OTHER RELEVANT PHONE NUMBERS

Department	Contact	Ext	Location
Emergency numbers	Police, Fire, and Medical	973-972-4490	
Computer Center		973-972-7227	MSB-C631
Financial Aid Office	Ms. G. Hubert	973-972-4376	ADMC-1208
Library	Reference Desk	973-972-4358	LIB-M917
SGS Registrar's Office:			
Associate Director, Enrollment & Academic Services	Ms. B. Coleman-Lee	973-972-8385	SSB 5 th Fl, Rm 517

Management Assistant	Ms. M. Larracuentes	973-972-8385 SSB 5 th Fl,
<i>Visa Information</i>	Ms. S. Otte	973-972-6138 SSB GA72
Student Health Services	Ms. G. Lopez	973-972-8219 DOC-1750
United Healthcare Student Resources		1-800-505-4160

II. STUDENT SERVICES

STUDENT/ HOUSESTAFF OMBUDSPERSONS

What is a student/housestaff ombudsperson at Rutgers?

Under the Rutgers RBHS policy ([Student/Housestaff Ombudspersons Policy](#)), each Dean has appointed an ombudsperson as a designated, confidential resource for students and house staff ("visitors") seeking information or solutions to problems. The unique nature of the ombudsperson is one of neutrality, impartiality and independence from the School's and University's established administrative structures. Thus, the ombudsperson is not a student/house officer advocate and does not represent the student's or house officer's interests. The ombudsperson is also not an agent of the institution, is not responsible for academic or disciplinary decisions concerning students or house staff, and is independent of all administrators who are, such as deans or program directors. Instead, the ombudsperson aims for fairness, and impartially considers the interests of all parties. The ombudsperson does not make decisions, render judgments or administer sanctions. Instead, she or he identifies options, provides information, refers visitors to other resources if appropriate, facilitates communication between people, may mediate disputes or negotiate resolutions between parties, and recommends changes in policy or procedure to School/University administrators.

The assistance of an ombudsperson is informal and non-adversarial, separate from existing formal grievance and complaint procedures. Bringing complaints or problems to the ombudsperson does not constitute placing the University on formal notice. Visitors can always invoke the formal procedures. Sometimes the ombudsperson herself or himself may recommend this course of action and refer the visitor to the appropriate office. In any case, the ombudsperson will not participate in a formal process.

Each Rutgers School has also identified another individual as a research ombudsperson whose focus is on research disputes and problems. This person is available to assist faculty and staff as well as students and house staff on issues related to research.

http://njims.rutgers.edu/about_njims/ombudsperson.cfm

Confidentiality:

The ombudsperson strives to maintain confidentiality and respect privacy to the maximum extent permitted by law. The ombudsperson will not keep records with any personally identifiable information, and usually will not share any information received from visitors without the visitors' permission. However there are legal and ethical standards which may require the ombudsperson to disclose certain kinds of information, such as statutory violations, imminent threats of serious harm to an individual (the visitor or others), or to the University and its property, or about serious misconduct, harassment or the commission of a crime. The ombudsperson must also comply with court orders and valid subpoenas.

Relationship with the Dean, School/University administrators, faculty, other students/housestaff: The ombudsperson maintains a great degree of independence within the School and University hierarchy. The ombudsperson is answerable only to the Dean, annually summarizing for the Dean the office's activities without revealing any personal or confidential information about cases. The ombudsperson also makes recommendations to the Dean for specific and systemic changes and improvements in School policy, procedure, environment, etc., based upon the pattern of problems and complaints brought forward by visitors. The ombudsperson has the full

support of the University's Office of Academic Affairs, Office of AA/EEO and Office of Legal Management. The ombudsperson, in addition, is authorized to approach any individual - administrator, faculty member, other student or house officer - in pursuit of information, resolutions to problems or complaints, or to make recommendations.

School of Graduate Studies Ombudsperson
Christine Rohowsky-Kochan, PhD
Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Physiology and Neuroscience
rohowscm@njms.rutgers.edu
P: (973) 972-7394

DISABILITY SERVICES FOR THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Faculty

Faculty who are seeking more information regarding disability services can follow this link for more details: <https://oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/office-of-disability-services/faculty/>
<https://oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/office-of-disability-services/>

The **Disability Services Coordinator** should be contacted for more information

Jenna Rose, MA | Coordinator
Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences | Office of Disability Services
Stanley S, Bergen Jr. Bldg, Suite 1441| 65 Bergen St. Newark, NJ 07017
jenna.rose@rutgers.edu | oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/ods
c: 973-634-4823

Please contact Nadine Rose at stevenna@gsbs.rutgers.edu as the SGS-RBHS School facilitator once accommodations are approved.

Students Applying for Services

Students with a documented disability looking to apply for reasonable accommodations and services at the School of Graduate Studies should go to the following website for more information:

<https://oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/office-of-disability-services/>
<https://oasa.rbhs.rutgers.edu/office-of-disability-services/student-accommodations/>

1. **Complete and submit the [Registration Form](#) :**

<https://radr.rutgers.edu/resource/registering-services-and-general-inquiries>

Registration forms should be returned to the disability coordinator. Once your form is received, you will receive a confirmation email of your submission.

2. **Schedule an intake meeting**

You will need to make an appointment for an intake meeting with the SGS disability coordinator.

3. **Submit appropriate documentation**

You must provide the ODS office with the [appropriate documentation](#) that meets with guidelines for your disability, by email, fax, or by bringing the documentation to your appointment.

4. Once you have completed the intake and your documentation has been reviewed, ODS will make an appropriate determination of reasonable accommodations based on the nature of your disability. You will receive written correspondence regarding the approval/disapproval of your accommodation request.

5. Following the review, your coordinator will contact you with the results and assist you with the next steps.

RUTGERS WEB SITE (<http://www.rutgers.edu>)

RUTGERS RBHS WEB SITE (<http://rbhs.rutgers.edu>)

SGS NEWARK CAMPUS WEB SITE (<http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/>)

All students are required to have an email account with the Academic Computing Services (ACS) network and should check their email daily. The Rutgers, Rutgers RBHS, and SGS web sites contain information about policies, procedures, curriculum, courses, seminars, housing, fellowships, announcements, and the Student Handbook.

COMPUTER SERVICES

The Academic Computing Center located in the Medical Sciences Building, Room C632, provides investigators and students with off-the-shelf desktop applications as well as powerful development tools for genetic engineering, molecular modeling, research and publication graphics, and statistics.

The Center is linked to similar centers at other units of Rutgers as well as to many departmental computing systems through a sophisticated high-speed network, providing a variety of resource-sharing services. This network is in turn connected to the Internet, allowing investigators at Rutgers to exchange information with users throughout the world.

The Computer Center is usually open from 8:30 am to 10:00 pm during the week and is accessible remotely at all times. It also is open from noon to 5:00 p.m. on weekends from September through May. Consult the Rutgers web site for up-to-date information on hours and services.

The NJMS Alumni Computer Laboratory is located in MSB-B624 and is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. The Center has PC workstations with campus host access. It offers instruction and a variety of software applications.

Software can be downloaded by students here: <https://software.rutgers.edu>

GOLDEN DOME ATHLETIC CENTER AT RUTGERS

At this time the Golden Dome is not open to our students. Please check back for the most up-to-date information as this is a rapidly changing situation.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

All students enrolled in degree programs at SGS are considered members in the Graduate Student Association. The group's objectives are to cultivate interest in the biomedical sciences and to encourage mutual assistance, social involvement, and other activities vital to a wholesome environment for graduate studies. The GSA has a webpage (http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/student_organizations/index.php) on the SGS webpage, can be found on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/gsanewark/>) and Instagram @gsarutgerssgsnewark.

HOUSING

For a general view of housing options, please visit the SGS website <http://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs> and looking for Housing under the Prospective Students tab. You can locate information for both University housing and off campus housing here (https://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs/prospective_students/housing.php)

LIBRARY (973) 972-4580

The George F. Smith Library of the Health Sciences currently houses more than 105,000 volumes of monographs, texts and periodicals, and receives more than 2,200 periodicals in the basic and clinical sciences. Individual study carrels are equipped for use of audiovisual aids.

The library offers many services, including computer-generated bibliographies in medicine, dentistry, the basic sciences, on-line journals, and OVID literature search. A modest fee is charged for this service to faculty, students, and staff of Rutgers.

Consult their web site (<http://libraries.rutgers.edu/health-sciences>) for information on hours and services.

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

The Student Health Services Center is located in Suite 1750 of the DOC building. The center is open 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Students will be able to reach a physician 24 hours a day by calling 973-972-8219. There is a mandatory annual fee for this service.

Students are provided with advisory and screening services and a degree of outpatient care and preventive medicine. In the event of a more serious illness, the service offers assistance in obtaining referral, consultation, hospitalization, or emergency treatment. The Student Health service is limited to students, and is not available to their spouses or other dependents.

We are excited to announce innovative advances to the mental health service that the school and University will provide for you beginning on August 1, 2022. Based on student feedback, the service has been designed to simplify making appointments. The program integrates the medical care, therapy, and psychiatric health care provided by the Student Wellness Program into Student Health Services and will be administered by Student Health. This change will improve access to care, and the integration of these services will allow us to care for you as a whole person. If you are currently seeing a therapist through the Student Wellness Program, and for continuity of care, you can remain with same therapist.

A quick reminder that just like medical visits, therapy visits are available by telehealth or in-person. And just like medical visits, therapy visits are available to students without additional cost, regardless of insurance. Please call 973-972-8219 to make an appointment.

Additionally, students may find the resources at this link helpful: <https://gradresources.org/crisis/>. The National Grad Crisis Line [1.877.GRAD.HLP](tel:1877GRADHLP) (1.877.472.3457) helps graduate students reach free, confidential telephone counseling, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and information and referral services provided by specially trained call-takers. Caring, professional staff and well-trained volunteers answer around the clock.

All counselors have completed training to understand the unique issues faced by graduate students. In addition to listening to and empathizing with a caller's concerns, counselors assess

the caller's lethality risk, counsel, and offer various local support services and mental health resources for follow-up.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Students are encouraged to reach out to Dr. Badheka (doreen.badheka@rutgers.edu) for a one-on-one meeting regarding career development and job search. During the one-on-one meeting students discuss career interests, map a plan to achieve career goals, develop a job search strategy, learn about best practices in resume writing, informational interviewing, and creating a LinkedIn profile. Master's students are encouraged to meet Dr. Badheka at the beginning of their second semester. This will give them enough time to work on developing hard and soft skills. In addition to Dr. Badheka, students also have access to [Rutgers Career Exploration and Success](#). In addition, students are highly encouraged to attend the events organized by the student organization, Alliance for Career Advancement (ACA).

III. STUDENT AFFAIRS

NON-MATRICULATED (NON-DEGREE) STATUS:

Students with baccalaureate degrees may apply for non-matriculated status in order to enroll in courses at the Graduate School. Permission to take courses is contingent upon fulfillment of the specific course prerequisites and availability of facilities to accommodate the applicant. Preference is given to teachers or professional workers in neighboring industries and hospitals who are seeking to further their knowledge of biomedical sciences or striving to advance their careers through continuing education. Foreign applicants are not eligible for non-matriculated status.

Application for Admission as a Non-matriculated Student

Before admission to non-matriculated status is considered, the Graduate School office must have on file:

- (1) A complete application and application fee.
- (2) Official transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate schools attended.
- (3) Recommendations from two individuals, preferably academic instructors with knowledge of the applicant's academic performance in science-related fields.

Students accepted to the School for non-matriculated status may take courses while registered as non-matriculated students, but, as with degree candidates, are required to maintain a 'B' average in their coursework. No more than 15 credits can be taken as a non-matriculated student. If accepted into a SGS degree program, upon approval by the Associate Dean, these credits will count towards the degree.

Policy for entering a degree program from non-matriculated status

REGISTRATION

Unless granted a formal leave of absence, students enrolled in degree programs are required to register every semester until the degree is granted. Registration for any semester is not complete until tuition, all required fees have been paid, and all required immunizations and health insurance have been obtained.

Registration will not be permitted beyond the first week of courses. Credit will not be given for courses in which the student was not registered. The SGS assesses a \$50 late registration fee.

Time Status for Masters Students and Certificate Students:

Full Time status = 9 credits or more per semester

Part Time status = 4.5 credits or less

TUITION AND FEES POLICY/ STUDENT RESIDENCE AND IN-STATE TUITION

Eligibility for in-state tuition rates is predicated upon the student having a New Jersey domicile. Residence established solely for the purpose of attending Rutgers **does not** constitute domicile for tuition purposes. Students residing in New Jersey for a period of twelve (12) months before first enrolling at Rutgers are presumed to be domiciled in this State for tuition purposes. Students residing in New Jersey for a period less than twelve (12) months before first enrolling at Rutgers are presumed **not** to be domiciled in New Jersey unless evidence of establishment of domicile in New Jersey is provided.

For those students residing in New Jersey less than twelve months before first enrolling, please refer to the Rutgers policy on Student Residence and In-State Tuition to determine what documents and information must be submitted with the application for Reclassification as a New Jersey Resident. The application and pertinent supporting documentation must be submitted to the **RBHS** Registrar's Office for review and approval

The entire policy entitled "Student Residency for Tuition Purposes" can be reviewed on the Rutgers website at <http://policies.rutgers.edu/view-policies/academic-%E2%80%93-section-10>.

- Term Bills/Billing and Payment Plans – Payment for tuition and fees can be made via ScholarChip (<https://tuition.scholarchip.com/>), by calling the cashier's office to make a credit card payment, or by visiting any of the cashier's offices. According to Rutgers policy, term bills are expected to be paid prior to the start of the semester. As such, any students who have account balances that remain unpaid or have made no payment arrangement by September 1st will have Holds placed on their accounts. If the balance is not paid by September 15th, the student will be deregistered from all courses and administratively withdrawn. Once students have been administratively withdrawn, they will not be reactivated and re-registered until payment is made directly to the cashier's office and a receipt is submitted to the Registrar's Office. PLEASE REFER TO REGISTRATION MATERIALS FOR WHICH FEES YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING. PAY THOSE FEES IMMEDIATELY AFTER REGISTRATON TO AVOID DE-REGISTRATION.

Any student who has been awarded financial aid may defer payment of tuition and fees until receipt of such aid. A deferment form must be completed in the Financial Aid Office. Tuition and fees become due and payable immediately when financial aid (including loans from any source, scholarships, or other subvention) is received.

ADD OR DROP COURSES

Students may add or withdraw from a course with approval of the instructor (where necessary) and the program advisor. Add/Drop forms may be obtained on the SGS website: <http://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs> (Students & Faculty > Forms). Please note that some forms are now DocuSign forms.

Students submitting a completed Add/Drop form within 10 academic days of the start of the course will receive a full tuition refund and the course will not appear on their official transcript. Students withdrawing from a course between 11 and 15 academic days after the course begins will receive an 80% tuition refund. No tuition will be refunded beyond 15 academic days after the

course has begun. Withdrawals beyond 10 academic days after the course begins will be noted as "W" on the official transcript. Withdrawals will NOT be granted during the final third of a course.

A student wishing to add or drop a course **after online registration has closed** should complete the Add/Drop DocuSign form and have appropriate approval of the course instructor (if needed) and advisor prior to the start of the course. Registration will not be permitted beyond the first week of a course without approval of the course director and program director. Credit will not be given for courses in which the student was not registered.

CROSS REGISTRATION

SGS participates in a cross-registration program with Rutgers University (Newark Campus) and New Jersey Institute of Technology through the "CHEN" (Council of Higher Education of Newark) program. Grades for courses taken through the CHEN program are included in the SGS transcript and grade point average. The following procedures are to be followed:

1. Obtain a CHEN form from the SGS Office and permission from your departmental Graduate Program Director to take the course.
2. Obtain the approval of the SGS Associate Dean on the CHEN form.
3. Bring the form to the CHEN-affiliated school and obtain approval from the course instructor or department Chairperson to enter the course(s).
4. Bring the approved CHEN forms to the Host Registrar, who will register you at the affiliated school. The Host Registrar will forward copies of the form and grades to the Rutgers Registrar, who will transmit them to the SGS Office.

GRADES

Grades are assigned according to the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Quality</u>
A	4.0	Excellent
B+	3.5	Very Good
B	3.0	Good
C+	2.5	Marginal
C	2.0	Poor
F	0.0	Failure

I	Incomplete
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory
W	Official Withdrawal

(A grade of "D" issued prior to the Fall 2011 Academic Year will contribute 1.0 quality point/credit).

To be considered in good academic standing, students must maintain at least a 3.00 grade point average and an average grade of "B" or better in the core courses, as designated by their program, as a requirement for graduation. A 3.00 GPA is required for graduation.

CALCULATING GPA

The method of determining the cumulative Grade Point Average is as follows: Each course's semester credit hours with a A grade is multiplied by 4.0 quality points; B+ grade by 3.5 quality

points; B grade by 3.0 quality points; etc. The total number of quality points divided by total of semester hour credits completed constitutes the GPA.

Quality Points Example: A student who takes a 3 credit course and earns a grade of A receives a total of 12 quality points for that course (grade of A is valued at 4 points; 4 quality points x 3 credits = total of 12 quality points). If the student earned a grade of B in the same 3 credit course the total quality points would have been 9 (grade of B valued at 3 quality points x 3 credits).

GPA Calculation Example: A student who has completed a total of 30 credits and who has a total of 116.50 points has a GPA of 3.88 which is calculated by dividing 116.50 by 30.

Transfer credits and credits for courses graded Satisfactory or Pass, while included in earned credits, are not included in the GPA hours or the GPA calculation as they do not have any point value.

Repetition of any course results in both the original grade and the new grade appearing on the transcript; however, the quality points from the earlier grade are not calculated into the student's cumulative GPA.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

A grade of "I" is normally given only when circumstances beyond the control of the student prevent completion of course requirements. Students receiving a grade of "I" are responsible for finding out from the instructor the exact work required to remove the "Incomplete" grade. Incomplete grades must be converted to a letter grade no later than the end of the next semester in which the course is offered, unless otherwise approved in advance by the Campus SGS Senior Associate Dean. If a grade is not received during this time frame, the "I" will be converted to an "F".

REPEATED COURSES

Students repeating a course that they failed or from which they withdrew must re-register for the course and are subject to paying tuition for that course. Master's students are only allowed to repeat three courses during their matriculation, whereas Certificate students are allowed to repeat only one course. Courses repeated while in a non-matriculated status will count towards the course repetition regulation for those students who progress to matriculated student status.

If a course is repeated, both grades will remain on the transcript, but only the repeated grade will be used for calculation of the GPA.

TRANSCRIPTS

All students of the University are entitled to transcripts of their academic record. Requests for official transcripts can be submitted online (<https://transcripts.rutgers.edu/transcripts/index.html>) or via the SGS Registrar's Office by written application. There is a processing fee, set by the Registrar's Office, for each transcript. Unofficial transcripts are available via the my.rutgers Portal via the Banner Self Service channel at: <http://my.rutgers.edu>. **Only currently enrolled students will be allowed to enter the secure area.**

GRADUATE PROGRAM TRANSFERS

Credits for graduate level courses taken at colleges or universities in the United States may be transferred after the first semester for students in good academic standing and upon approval of the Program Advisor and the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean. Only courses in which the student earned at least a B grade or equivalent are transferable. The number of credits shall not

exceed the number of credits given for an equivalent course at SGS. If a course is of lesser scope or depth than a similar course at SGS, the Program Advisor may request transfer of less than the total credits originally awarded. A maximum of 10 credits may be transferred toward the PhD degree after successful completion of one semester.

Students wishing to transfer from one department/track program to another within SGS must apply through the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean. Such a transfer does not extend the period of SGS stipend or the maximum time permitted to obtain the Ph.D.

Students withdrawing from the doctoral program are eligible to receive a thesis-based M.S. degree with permission of the doctoral program director/track director, PhD/Master's Transfer Committee and the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean. In certain circumstances, students may petition the Senior Associate Dean to be eligible to receive a MBS degree. Students transferring from a doctoral to a MS degree program, who at the time of the transfer have completed 30 or more credits and have fulfilled the course requirements for the MS degree that they are pursuing will be coded as in thesis phase status and will be subject to the fees associated with their degree and time status. If at the time of transfer the student has completed less than 30 credits, they must fulfill the academic and tuition/fee obligations of the program to which they transfer. **At a minimum, all students transferring from the doctoral to the Master of Science program are required to register for the 5 credit Masters Thesis Research and pay tuition for these credits.** Students who transfer from a doctoral program to a masters program are no longer eligible to receive a Graduate Fellowship. This policy applies to all graduate programs within and between the institutions participating in the Graduate Center-Newark (New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rutgers-RBHS, Rutgers-Newark).

LEAVE OF ABSENCE / REINSTATEMENT

Graduate students in good academic standing who cannot maintain continuous registration may apply for a leave of absence, in writing, to the Senior Associate Dean through their Program Director. A SGS student may be granted a leave of absence for a period not to exceed one year. Please note that different rules apply for International students in accordance with INS regulations.

The SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean's Office must receive written notification of the student's intent to return one month prior to the expiration of the leave. If the leave was for medical reasons, the student must document medical clearance to return. Except for Parental Leave, no fellowships will be paid to a student during the leave of absence and registration is not required.

Parental Leave – Graduate students in the PhD program will receive full stipend support for up to 6 weeks of parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child. Either parent is eligible. The Program Director, Mentor (where applicable) and SGS office must be informed in writing of the student's intent to take parental leave and the applicable dates.

International students holding a student visa who wish to temporarily leave the United States must obtain permission of the department chairman and the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean's Office 30 days prior to their travel, in addition to any requirements from the International Student Office. Students granted permission must then apply for a new I20 or IAP-66 in order to return to the U.S. Any foreign student who leaves the United States without the consent of the SGS Dean's Office is subject to disciplinary action.

Students not returning from leave of absence within the approved date may be required to re-apply to the Graduate School and undergo a new admissions process.

VACATION

A three-week vacation period is granted annually to SGS doctoral students by permission of the department. The Program/Track Director should provide appropriate notification of student vacations, with approved dates, to the Graduate School Administrative Office via e-mail to the Associate Dean or to the SGS-Newark division Program Supervisor.

FELLOWSHIPS - SGS

A limited number of graduate fellowships and tuition waivers are available to full-time matriculated doctoral students. These fellowships are based on merit and students must remain in good academic standing to be eligible for continued support. The Graduate School currently awards Graduate Fellowships to full-time (9 credits per semester) doctoral students in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. SGS Graduate Fellowships are subject to availability of funds
2. Students not in good academic standing (grade-point average below 3.00 or failure to satisfy core curriculum requirements of their program) are subject to discontinuance of fellowship and tuition remission.
3. For students entering the Ph.D. program, SGS Fellowships are awarded during the first 21 months of doctoral study. Students who are beyond 21 months are expected to obtain support from their advisors, department or other sources.
4. Failure to pick up stipend checks/direct deposit statements may result in suspension of payment. Students are required to inform the SGS administrative office if they are unable to pick up their check or statement. Students receiving direct deposit are also required to pick up statements and sign the timesheet each pay period. Direct deposits will be terminated for students who fail to sign the timesheet.
5. Full-time doctoral students are not required to pay tuition after the 4th year; a \$200 per semester "thesis phase" (maintaining matriculation) fee is required.

FELLOWSHIPS - EXTRAMURAL SUPPORT

Application for a competitive extramural predoctoral fellowship generally involves a considerable amount of work on the part of the student and faculty. Award of these fellowships, however, is beneficial to everyone involved.

Students awarded a competitive fellowship will receive a supplement to bring their stipend to \$3,000 above the SGS fellowship award. Students who receive an external award higher than the current fellowship award will not receive the supplement. All award letters must be forwarded to the SGS office for the student's file and for verification of fellowship award amount and fellowship duration. It is the responsibility of the student and the Program Director/Class Advisor to ensure that the SGS receives this information. Students can also receive a one-time bonus of \$500 after they have submitted their first fellowship application to an agency.

FINANCIAL AID

Rutgers RBHS has a Financial Aid Office (<https://scarlethub.rutgers.edu/contacts/rbhs/>) to assist students with their applications for Financial Aid. Matriculated students enrolled in the SGS in a degree or certificate program who are United States citizens or Permanent Residents are eligible to apply for financial assistance. All awards are based on need. Need is defined as the

difference between the total cost of attending Rutgers (tuition, fees, books, supplies, instruments, rent, utilities, food, transportation and personal expenses) and the ability of the family to contribute toward those educational costs as determined by a federally-approved system of need analysis (GAPSFAS).

Financial aid is usually provided by or through federal and state agencies, foundations, corporations, and the University itself. Grants are regarded as "gift" assistance and need not be repaid, although they may carry certain provisions to which one must adhere. Loans can be repaid over an extended period after the student graduates from the school. Where aid is offered in the form of a job, the student is paid an hourly rate for work actually performed.

DOCTORAL STUDENT TRAVEL AWARDS

All doctoral students in good academic standing at the end of their first semester will be encouraged and financially supported by SGS to attend a scientific meeting in either the 2nd or 3rd semester (usually prior to entering the mentor's lab). The meeting they attend will be determined by their respective program director and it is expected that a faculty member or post-doc will accompany the student in order to help them navigate the meeting and scientific presentations. Financial support will be up to \$1,000 per student. The final amount will be determined on an individual case basis to be approved by the Associate Dean.

The SGS currently offers up to \$750 for travel expenses to doctoral students who have an approved thesis proposal and who are presenting papers at scientific meetings. The guidelines for these awards are:

1. A formal abstract acknowledging Rutgers School of Graduate Studies as a research site.
2. The student must be first author on the abstract to be presented.
3. The research must be part of the approved dissertation proposal.
4. Doctoral candidates are eligible for a total of two awards, but only one award will be made within any 12-month period.
5. The request for an award must be accompanied by a copy of the formal abstract and a Rutgers Travel Advance form approved by the department chairman and departmental budget approval, as well as the SGS internal Student Travel Approval Form.
6. Once you have completed your travel you will need to submit the Rutgers Travel Expense Form with the appropriate signatures including departmental budget approval to the SGS office for final approval and submission to accounts. Please consult the SGS office for the most up to date information.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION

1. All international students must hold valid passports issued by their country of origin.
2. International students must provide the SGS office with the following documents upon registration:
 - a. Photocopy of their Passport showing passport number, expiration date, photograph and the page with the stamped visa.
 - b. I-94 card number and expiration date (admission card that is stapled into the passport).

3. A written request, utilizing the [SGS internal F-1 Travel Request Form](#) (Travel and Fellowship Forms) must be made to the SGS office 30 days in advance (unless it is an absolute emergency) for a new I-20 or IAP-66 form in the event a student wishes to temporarily leave the United States. Under no circumstances should the student leave the country without notifying the SGS office.
4. International students transferring from another institution must provide the following documents to the SGS Office prior to enrollment:
 - a. Photocopy of their passport showing passport number, expiration date, photograph and the page with the stamped visa.
 - b. Original I-94 card number and expiration date
 - c. Original IAP-66 or I-20 form issued from the previous school with U.S. Immigration approval.
 - d. F-1 School Transfer Form.
 - e. Rutgers SGS Internal I-20 Application Form.
5. Students must inform the SGS office of any change in status, i.e., receiving permanent residency status, immediately.
6. Students must notify the SGS Office 60 days in advance of their I-20 or IAP-66 expiration so that an extension may be granted.
 - Extensions are eligible only if delays are caused by compelling academic or medical reasons which are in compliance with F-1 and J-1 regulations
 - Delays due to academic probation or suspension are not acceptable
 - Program extensions cannot be filed once end date on current I-20 is met
7. Any student who does not have proper documentation or does not comply with U.S. Immigration and Naturalization regulations is subject to dismissal from the University.
8. Optional Practical Training (OPT)
 - Students must be in full-time F-1 status for one academic year before requested start date of OPT. Students can read more about OPT [here](#).
 - Student must apply to Rutgers Global or International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) prior to program completion date
<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/students/>
 - The OPT period must not exceed 14 months beyond the student's program completion date
9. Reportable events must be submitted in a timely fashion to ISSS. These include the student's:
 - Enrollment status – within 30 days after deadline for registering for classes
 - Current U.S. address – within 30 days after deadline for registering for classes
 - Start date of next term – within 30 days after deadline for registering for classes
 - Changes in student's or dependent's legal name – within 21 days
 - Changes in student's or dependent's U.S. address – within 21 days
 - Authorization by DSO to drop below full-time study – within 21 days
 - Failure to maintain Status or complete program – within 21 days
 - Academic or disciplinary action taken due to criminal conviction – within 21 days

- Dependent's early U.S. departure – within 21 days
- Dependent's status age-out – upon event
- Termination date and reason for termination
- Graduation – within 21 days
- Certification of authorized employment – upon event
- Other data generated by standard procedures such as: program extensions; school transfers; changes in level of study; change in program funding; employment authorizations; and, reinstatement

10. Maintaining F-1 Student Status

To maintain legal F-1 student status, students:

- Must be making normal progress towards completion of degree
- Must not drop below full-time course of study without prior DSO authorization
- May only reduce course load one time during entire degree program due to compelling academic or medical reasons
- Must enroll for at least half-time of the school's official full-time standard when reduction of course load is pre-approved because of academic difficulty. **Note:** Documentation from Academic Advisor is required.
- Must have documentation for reduced course load because of medical conditions
- Students must be certified by a licensed medical professional
- Maximum limit of 12 months per program level

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International Student Office:

<https://global.rutgers.edu/international-scholars-students/students/prospective>

Department of Homeland Security (DHS):

<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/>

Department of State (DOS):

(Travel, passport renewals, embassies & consulates)

<http://state.gov>

Internal Revenue Service (IRS):

<http://www.irs.gov/>

Social Security Administration (SSA):

<http://www.ssa.gov/>

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS):

<https://www.nafsa.org/professional-resources/browse-by-interest/bcis-officially-changes-name-uscis>

TAXATION OF FELLOWSHIPS

The following information is intended to clarify the federal tax regulations for fellowship and scholarship stipends. Although Rutgers cannot offer personal tax advice, this is the opinion and interpretation of the SGS and the University. Definitive determinations regarding tax obligations must be made by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Information on taxes related to fellowships can be found on the IRS and NIH web sites listed below.

According to the IRS, fellowships and scholarships are tax-free for degree-seeking students ONLY if used for tuition, fees and other required educational expenses. Since tuition for doctoral

students generally is paid separately from the stipend, **it is likely that most or all of your stipend will be subject to federal income tax.** This is true whether the stipend comes from a grant or from the SGS. All fellowship awards are subject to Federal income tax. Checks will be issued to students on a bi-weekly basis. Students do not pay social security, unemployment or disability taxes. SGS fellowships **are not** intended as payment for services and **are not** subject to New Jersey State tax. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that these taxes are not being deducted.

Some foreign countries hold tax treaties with the United States, and Federal income taxes on stipends will not be deducted from students from these countries; New Jersey State taxes will be deducted. Countries having these treaties also have certain criteria regarding taxation. (Please see your Consulate General's Office for more information on the treaty laws or contact the Graduate School Office.) An 8233 form must be filed along with the student's W-4 form if you are exempt from Federal tax.

All students must file income tax returns with the Federal and State Governments at the end of each calendar year. It is the responsibility of each student to file prior to the deadline (April 15)

Graduate fellowships awarded by this institution are to further the recipient's education. They are not intended as payment for services and do not directly benefit the institution.

The difference between being paid on a research grant or from other sources involves withholding tax.

Students being paid from a research grant are considered to be working on the grant project and, therefore, receiving wages. Thus, money is withheld for taxes based on the number of dependents indicated on the W-4 form filled by the student with the University. The amount of the fellowship, in the form of wages, is reported to the IRS on Form W-2. These students can adjust the number of dependents so that the money withheld approximates the tax they will owe at the end of the year, leaving them with little or no additional tax obligation (or resulting in a refund).

Students paid from the SGS directly are not considered to be working and the University is not required to withhold taxes unless requested. This has certain advantages and disadvantages. Although the paycheck may be somewhat larger than that received by a student paid from a research grant, the amount of the stipend is reported to the IRS on Form 1099 and it is likely that the student will be subject to federal income tax on the stipend payments. Thus, students not having taxes withheld may find that they owe money they no longer have. This is especially true for students with a working spouse. Based on this potential problem, it may be advisable to file a W-4 form and have a minimal amount of money withheld each pay period, giving the same safety feature as for those receiving stipends from a research grant. **W-4 forms can be picked up at the SGS administrative office.** For students requiring additional information, please refer to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) web site:

<http://www.irs.gov/>

New Jersey State Tax on Scholarships and Fellowships

SGS fellowships are not New Jersey State taxable or reportable because they satisfy three necessary criteria:

1. Their primary purpose is to further the recipient's education or training; and
2. They are not payments for services rendered; and
3. They are not for the benefit of the grantor.

Details can be found on the New Jersey Department of Treasury website at:

http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/pdf/other_forms/tgi-ee/2006/061040nr.pdf

CHANGE OF NAME

It is the responsibility of the student to complete a change of name affidavit form and submit it with supporting documentation to the SGS Registrar's Office when appropriate. The form can be found at <http://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs> (Students and Faculty >Forms)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

It is the responsibility of the student to complete a change of address form and submit it to the SGS Student Affairs Office when appropriate. The form can be found at <http://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs> (Students and Faculty > Forms)

IV. SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

A complete listing of policies is available on the Rutgers website at <http://policies.rutgers.edu/view-policies/table-contents>, the Rutgers RBHS website at <http://academicaffairs.rutgers.edu/rutgers-biomedical-and-health-sciences-policies>, or the SGS Newark Health Science Campus website at https://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs/current_students/academic_info.php.

The following summarizes selected policies pertinent to graduate students.

STANDARDS OF SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

A student's satisfactory academic progress is evaluated by the following committees and /or individuals:

- a. Thesis advisor
- b. Departmental Graduate Program Committee/Track Graduate Program Committee
- c. Departmental Chairperson or Track Director
- d. SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean

All students are expected to achieve satisfactory levels of academic and research proficiency as stipulated by the individual SGS programs for theory and laboratory practice. In addition, federal regulations require the School establish Satisfactory Academic Progress standards for students who are awarded federal financial aid funds. The following standards apply to all matriculated students, whether they are financial aid recipients or not. Students who fail to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress during any semester may be placed on Financial Aid probation or suspension or may be dismissed, in accordance with the policies of the School. The standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress measure a student's performance in three areas: completion rate, cumulative grade point average (GPA) and maximum time frame. The student's academic progress shall be evaluated annually. Students admitted for the Fall semester will be evaluated at the end of each Spring semester, and students admitted for the Spring semester will be evaluated at the end of each Fall semester and in the Spring following their initial Fall semester enrollment. Academic Progress will be evaluated for both part-time and full-time students.

The program shall clearly inform students of the criteria for satisfactory academic performance. A student's satisfactory academic progress is evaluated each semester by the department/track.

Minimum academic requirements for good academic standing, established by the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies (SGS), are as follows:

1. Grade Point Average (GPA)

Satisfactory Academic Progress will require that students who have attempted 12 or less credits have earned a GPA of at least 2.5; those who have attempted 13 or more credits must have

earned a GPA of at least 3.0. In addition, students must earn an average grade of “B” (3.00/4.0) in the Core courses(s) of their program to be in good academic standing and to graduate.

For courses graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory scale, an "S" grade (Satisfactory) will be awarded in those instances where the student has performed class work necessary to pass the course. S/U grades do not contribute to the GPA.

For students receiving an “Incomplete” grade, the required work must be completed no later than the end of the next semester in which the course is offered, unless otherwise approved in advance by the Campus SGS Senior Associate Dean. If a grade is not received during this time frame, the “I” will be converted to an “F”.

In the thesis phase, a student’s progress and performance on the qualifying examination, thesis research, written dissertation and defense will be evaluated at the end of each semester by either the departmental graduate committee or defined special committees. During thesis phase students must earn a grade of “S” in the Thesis Research course. A grade of “U” in the Thesis Research course will result in the student not making Satisfactory Academic Progress status.

2. Completion Rate and Maximum Time Allowance

Students must complete their degree within a maximum number of years for that degree. Each semester maximum time allowance will be evaluated to determine whether each student can complete the program without exceeding the maximum years in which courses are attempted. For students not in full time status the maximum time from matriculation to graduation may be prorated at a level up to 1.5 times the full-time maximum. Leaves of absence and time devoted to study at another institution for a dual degree or at external scholarly programs are not included in these time allowances. The program advisors shall evaluate whether each student has made adequate progress toward his/her degree or certificate according to the following schedule.

	Maximum time from matriculation to graduation
Doctoral Degrees – 70 credits	7 years

As part of the Satisfactory Academic Progress assessment, each student’s completion rate will be evaluated by comparing the number of attempted credit hours with the credit hours earned. In order to achieve Satisfactory Academic Progress, a student must earn a minimum percentage of credits attempted in accordance with the chart below.

Degree Program	Measurement Interval	Percentage of Credit Hours That Must be Passed
PhD	Years 1, 2	50%
	Years 3 and beyond	75%

When assessing SAP for students who were on an approved Leave of Absence during the evaluation period, the completion rate will be prorated. Coursework and grades taken prior to a student’s current level must be approved for application to the current level and will be counted for SAP based on that determination.

3. Notification of Lack of Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students who fail to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress will receive written notification from the Office of the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean, with copies to the Rutgers Office of Financial Aid, program advisor and SGS Registrar’s Office. The notification shall indicate the nature of the deficiency, any methods that may be available for correcting the deficiency and any consequences that have resulted or may result. These include Financial Aid warning,

Financial Aid ineligibility, Financial Aid probation, and/or academic plan, suspension or dismissal. A student may re-establish Satisfactory Academic Progress by demonstrating to the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean achievement of the completion rate and GPA required.

4. Financial Aid Warning

Students who are deemed not to be making Satisfactory Academic Progress will be placed on “financial aid warning status” for a period of one semester, during which the student will continue to be financial aid eligible. This status is assigned to a student automatically once it is determined that the student is not progressing satisfactorily and is effective for the next semester. No appeal is necessary and the student will be reviewed again at the end of the next semester. If, at the end of the next semester the student is not progressing satisfactorily, they will be ineligible for Financial Aid and may appeal or be placed on Financial Aid Probation.

5. Appeal for Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility

Students who wish to appeal for reinstatement of Financial Aid eligibility should submit a written appeal in accordance with the SGS academic appeal process. A final determination will be provided in writing. Exceptional circumstances warranting an appeal and possible exception include death of a relative and injury or illness of the student.

6. Financial Aid Probation

Financial Aid probation is awarded to a student if the Appeal has been approved. While on Financial Aid probation for one semester, the student is eligible to receive financial aid.

7. Academic Plan

An Academic Plan is created for a student who will not be able to complete the necessary benchmarks to regain SAP status within the period of time on Financial Aid probation of one semester. The Academic Plan includes benchmarks that must be completed successfully for each successive semester in order to continue on the plan and continue to be eligible for Financial Aid.

8. Dismissal or Withdrawal

Students who are dismissed or withdrawn from the School are not making Satisfactory Academic Progress and are not eligible to receive financial aid

9. Other Institutions

Students enrolled in SGS courses as students in Joint or Dual Degree Programs with other institutions are subject to the standards of academic progress, counting only semesters when the student’s enrollment is administered by SGS. If the terms of the Joint Program include stricter requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress, the stricter requirements will be enforced.

10. Documentation

Documentation of decisions concerning Financial Aid warning, Financial Aid probation and/or academic plan, dismissal, appeal, or re-establishment of Satisfactory Academic Progress shall be transmitted to the affected student and maintained in the SGS student academic files on record in the SGS Registrar’s Office in accordance with Rutgers record retention requirements.

11. Dissemination

Documentation of decisions concerning probation, dismissal, appeal, or re-establishment of Satisfactory Academic Progress shall be transmitted to the affected student and maintained in the SGS student academic file on record in the SGS Registrar's Office.

12. Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress Established upon Matriculation

Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress that are distributed to a student upon matriculation are applicable for the duration of the student's continuous matriculation in the same program, unless any changes in standards are made.

Individual divisions or programs may establish additional academic standards.

ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCESS

Determination of academic performance and fulfillment of academic requirements is the responsibility of the student's department or track, in accordance with the guidelines set by the department/track and the graduate school. Either the departmental graduate committee or the track graduate committee will evaluate the student's progress and performance during each phase of the graduate program; i.e., course work, qualifying examination, thesis research, written dissertation, and defense. These committees report to the department chair/track director.

Appeals of committee decisions should be made to the department chair/track director. Any decision to end a student's continuation in the program is made through the department chair/track director to the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean. The SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean may bring the matter back to the department/track for clarification or reconsideration. Students have the right to appeal a departmental/track decision to the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean, who will evaluate the issues. Based on the evaluation and review, the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean may concur with the department/track, bring the issue back to the department/track for further discussion, or bring it to the Dean of the SGS.

Determination of satisfactory academic performance and the successful fulfillment of academic requirements for all Rutgers School of Graduate Studies ("SGS") students are the responsibilities of the SGS Track (aka "Program") Directors, and will proceed in accordance with the academic policies and guidelines of the SGS and the specific graduate tracks.

The Track Directors will review student performance and progress at each phase of a specific program, and will determine if a student can or should be permitted to continue. If the Track Director initiates an academic action against a student, he/she will communicate this information to the Senior Associate Dean and the affected student. Evaluation of a student's progress by the Track Director shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the student's grade point average, course work, candidacy examinations, thesis research, and the written dissertation and defense.

If a Track Director initiates any academic action and/or has determined that a student cannot continue in the specific graduate program because of academic insufficiency, the student has the right to appeal the academic action to the SGS Student Affairs Committee ("SAC"), an "ad hoc" committee that shall be composed of at least other three (3) faculty at the SGS. The SAC will convene an academic appeals hearing at which both the Track Director and the student shall appear and give testimony, and provide the SAC with documentation in support of their position. At the close of the academic hearing, the SAC shall deliberate privately and decide whether to affirm, reject or modify the Track Director's academic action. The SAC shall convey its recommendation to the SGS Dean or the Dean's designee, the Track Director and the affected student. If the student does not agree with the SAC's decision, the student has a right to appeal this decision to the Dean or the Dean's designee, whose decision is final and non-appealable.

IV. PROCEDURE

1. A student who wishes to appeal an academic action must submit a written request to the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean within three (3) business days of his/her notification of the academic action from the Track Director. Otherwise, the student has waived his/her right to appeal the academic action, and this shall become the final academic decision.
2. When a student requests an academic appeals hearing pursuant to this policy, he/she will ordinarily be permitted to continue in the program pending the outcome of the appeal(s) process.
3. Upon notification of a student's request for an academic appeals hearing, the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean shall convene the SGS Campus Student Affairs Committee ("SAC") and notify the SGS Dean.
4. Once the members of the SAC are selected, a Chairperson shall be designated. The Chairperson or his/her designee shall request all pertinent documentation from the Campus Senior Associate Dean.
5. The Chairperson of the SAC will schedule an appeals hearing of the SAC within ten (10) business days of his/her receipt of the documentation from the Campus Senior Associate Dean, and shall notify the student, the Track Director and any other individual(s) the Chairperson determines may have information relevant to the appeal. Notification shall include, at a minimum, the date, place and time of the meeting. The SAC will review the testimony and the documentation provided to them in advance, as well as any documentation received at the hearing.. The SAC will make a written recommendation to the Dean within five (5) business days of the appeals hearing. The Track Director and the student will be provided with a copy of this recommendation at the same time as the Dean.
5. The student has the right to appeal the SAC's recommendation to the SGS Dean or the Dean's designee within three (3) business days of his/her receipt of the SAC recommendation. Otherwise, the student has waived his/her right to appeal to the Dean or the Dean's designee.
6. The Dean will render a final, non-appealable academic decision within a reasonable period of time, but in no event later than forty-five (45) days after the last date of the appeals hearing. The Dean will notify the student, the Campus Senior Associate Dean, the Chairperson of the SAC and the Track Director of this decision. A copy of the decision will be sent to the student by both regular and certified mail, return receipt requested.

Student Preparation for the Appeal Meeting:

1. The student who has requested an appeal of an academic action is encouraged to seek the support and consultation of his/her advisor and/or the SGS Ombudsperson throughout the academic appeals process. The student may also consult with an attorney of his/her choice, but the student may not be represented at the appeals hearing by legal counsel. Legal counsel may be present outside the hearing room to consult with the student during or after the appeals hearing. The student may be accompanied to the appeals hearing by an advocate of his/her choosing who may address the SAC at the close of the testimony, but this advocate may not be an attorney by profession.
2. The student must provide to the Campus Senior Associate Dean a detailed statement of the facts and circumstances supporting the appeal and provide a list of persons with information relevant to the appeal. These documents will be received before the academic appeals hearing is scheduled, although for good cause the student will be permitted to supplement these materials at any time up until a final, non-appealable decision is rendered.
3. The Student Affairs Committee will review the submitted information and may request additional materials from the student, the Track Director, or any other individual(s) to clarify issues pertinent to the matter.

The Appeals Hearing:

1. Within ten (10) business days of his/her receipt of a complete set of appeals materials, the Chairperson will schedule an appeals hearing that will include the SAC members, as well as the student, the Track Director and any other individual(s) who the Chairperson determines may have information relevant to the appeal.
2. The SAC Hearing will not be taped or transcribed, although the SAC may, at its discretion, designate an employee of the SGS as a note-taker during the testimonial phase of the hearing.
3. At the appeals hearing, the Track Director and the student will be asked to present background information and supporting documentation to the SAC.
4. The Campus Senior Associate Dean or his/her designee and any other persons invited by the Chairperson to present supporting materials or discuss issues relevant to the appeal may also be present at the appeals hearing.
5. After the SAC has heard from all essential or requested individuals, the appeals hearing will be adjourned and the SAC will deliberate on the appeal in a closed session attended only by its members. The SAC will convey its recommendation to the student in writing with written copies to the SGS Campus Senior Associate Dean and the SGS Dean within five (5) business days.
6. Within three (3) business days of his/her receipt of the SAC's decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the SGS Dean. The SGS Dean may, at his or her discretion, seek information and consult with any other party(ies), including the student, members of the program's academic standing committee, members of the SAC and the Senior Associate Dean, and shall render, within a reasonable period of time but in no event later than forty-five (45) days after the last day of the appeals hearing, a final and non-appealable written decision and shall provide written copies of the decision to the student by regular and certified mail, Return Receipt Requested, and to the SAC Chairperson and the Campus Senior Associate Dean.

ACADEMIC STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Students are active participants in the academic process and are required to support the integrity of that process. Cheating, plagiarism, forgery or the use of external resources to circumvent the student's academic responsibilities shall be considered a violation of the regulations of the University. A formal charge against a student substantiated by a duly scheduled University hearing is punishable by dismissal or suspension. Students must also uphold standards of professional and ethical conduct as outlined below.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTION/TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR SGS

Technical Standards refer to non-academic requirements that are essential for meeting the academic requirements of the program. Within any area of specialization, students must demonstrate competence in those intellectual and physical tasks that together represent the fundamentals of biomedical research in their chosen discipline. Enrollment is contingent on the result of certain medical laboratory test (e.g., TB) and fulfillment of immunization requirements. For details see the Rutgers RBHS policy on Student Essential Functions, see the RBHS website <https://academicaffairs.rutgers.edu/rutgers-biomedical-and-health-sciences-policies>

The Ph.D. and M.S. degree programs at the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies require a laboratory-based research dissertation. Granting of these degrees implies that the recipient has demonstrated a base of knowledge in the field and the ability to independently apply that knowledge to solve a particular problem by forming hypotheses, designing and conducting experiments, interpreting the experimental results, and communicating the results and their interpretation to the scientific community. Thus, a candidate for the Ph.D., M.S., or MBS degree in

the biomedical sciences must possess abilities and skills that allow for observation, intellectual and conceptual reasoning, motor coordination, and communication. The use of a trained intermediary is not acceptable in many situations in that a candidate's judgment will be based on someone else's power of selection and observation.

A student whose behavior or performance raises questions concerning his or her ability to fulfill the essential functions may be required to obtain evaluation and/or testing by a health care provider designated by the School, and to provide the results to the Campus Student Health Service for the purpose of determining whether the student is fit to pursue the educational program. If the student is deemed fit to pursue the program, the School reserves the right to require actions recommended by the health care provider, including further testing, counseling, monitoring, leave of absence, etc.

Observation

The candidate must be able to acquire knowledge by direct observation of demonstrations, experiments, and experiences within the laboratory and instructional setting. Examples are physiological or pharmacological responses in animals, studies of microbiological cultures and organisms, identification of normal and abnormal cells or tissues through a microscope, and interpretation of results obtained on various instrumentation.

Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities

The candidate must be able to measure, calculate, analyze, reason, integrate and synthesize information to solve problems.

Motor Skills

The candidate must possess motor skills necessary to perform procedures required for experimentation within the chosen discipline. These skills may include, but are not limited to, surgery in animals, handling of animals, transfer of microorganisms to various mediums, preparing chemical and often toxic materials and solutions, preparation of anatomical specimens for microscopic examination, manipulating electronic and other complex equipment. Such actions require coordination of muscular movements and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

Communication

The candidate must be able to communicate and discuss his or her experimental hypotheses and results to the scientific community, both in scientific journals or directly at scientific meetings, seminars, or in the laboratory to the research team.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

The candidate must possess the emotional and mental health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of responsibilities inherent in managing a scientific laboratory, the ability to function under the stress inherent in biomedical research, and the ability to understand and comply with ethical standards for the conduct of research.

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS and PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law to protect the confidentiality of student records. Under the provisions of FERPA, the University is permitted to provide information of a "directory" nature (e.g., name, e-mail address, etc.) without written consent, unless the student specifically requests that such information not be disclosed.

If you do not wish your directory information to be released you must advise the SGS Manager of Enrollment and Academic Services in writing by September 15th. Please consider your decision carefully before requesting directory information exclusion as you may not receive information from external agencies and scientific societies on scholarship opportunities, membership and subscription offers, etc., unless you specifically send your address information to those agencies. The address of the SGS Registrar's Office is as follows:

Ms. Barbara Coleman-Lee
Associate Director of Enrollment and Academic Services
Rutgers School of Graduate Studies
Stanley S. Bergen Building, Room 517 (5th floor)
65 Bergen St.
Newark, NJ 07103

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN THE RUTGERS SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Code of Professional Conduct: All students have a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in their academic and professional endeavors. They are expected to observe generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another's work, to refrain from falsifying data, to acknowledge the published work of others in an appropriate manner, and to refrain from receiving or giving aid during examinations or other work requiring independent effort. When submitting written material, students take full responsibility for the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments and imply that both the ideas and words used are their own. All students are expected to respect the property of faculty and other students, and not use research equipment or laboratory supplies of others without permission.

The following general examples are designed to clarify what is not permissible. The list is not all-inclusive, but intends to establish that no form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated by the school, its faculty, or its students.

- * Providing false information in any academic document or academic exercise
- * Forging, plagiarizing, or altering any academic document
- * Intentionally impeding or interfering with the ability of fellow students to use academic materials or to complete academic work
- * Taking another student's belongings or taking University equipment for personal use.
- * Knowingly assisting a fellow student in any of the above activities.

Specific examples of appropriate behavior in examinations, research papers, oral presentations and qualifying exams are given below:

Examinations: The purpose of an examination is to assess a student's knowledge of a topic defined within a course or courses. **Unless given explicit written instructions to the contrary, a student must work without assistance on an examination.**

- Classroom examination: Each student will provide answers to questions as directed. Unless otherwise stated, no material (books, calculators, computers, communication devices) of any kind can be used during an examination.
- Take-home examination: Each student will provide answers as directed. Unless otherwise stated, research and writing must be done individually without assistance or exchange of information with others. The ability to use source material in the research of answers will be defined for each examination. But, unless stated otherwise, all source material should be cited appropriately as outlined below.

Research Papers: The purpose of preparing a research paper is to help a student think deeply about a topic after reading about and/or discussing a subject. These reports are also used by the faculty to see how well a student understands various problems and concepts. Papers must be written in your own words and are expected to reflect your own ideas and your synthesis of the material presented.

- Because you are expected to read about the subject, research papers can include background material from journals, textbooks and, sometimes, websites. All material used to develop an idea or concept in a research paper must be properly cited.
- Proper citation should be given immediately after every idea or fact that derives from another source. A complete bibliographic reference is then written at the end of the paper. Both immediate citation and bibliographic references must be used to appropriately cite work by others. Appropriate citation styles are available in citation handbooks located in Rutgers's Smith Library (<http://libraries.rutgers.edu/smith>).
- Plagiarism is the use of sentences or ideas that are, or are nearly, identical what someone else has written or said. Plagiarizing written or oral work by others is not permissible. Express yourself using your own words.
- Some facts are considered common scientific knowledge and do not need to be cited (e.g., "all eukaryotic cells are enclosed by membranes"). If you are unsure or have any questions about using material, you should ask the faculty.
- Using the exact wording of another author is very rarely done in scientific papers. However, when you do that, the words must be in quotes followed by a citation (e.g., "Cats are very friendly animals" [Smith et al., 2003]).
- Ignorance of appropriate citation guidelines is not an excuse so it is always safer to cite sources rather than omit citations.
- Keep all notes regarding research papers at least until your grade is finalized.

Oral and Poster Presentations: Presentations of data and ideas, both orally or in poster format, are important forums to disseminate scientific information. As a student, you may be called upon to make oral presentations for class assignments or to present your research work. These presentations will also occur at crucial times during your doctoral training, such as your doctoral defense, and in your professional career, so it is important that you present your ideas and work clearly and distinguish your work from that of others. During presentations, you should follow these guidelines:

- All text should be in your own words. Ideas taken from other sources should be cited on a slide or orally and, in the case of poster presentations, referenced in a bibliography, similar to a written paper.
- Quotations are rarely used and must be offset by quotation marks and attributed to their source(s) on the same page or slide.
- Figures given without attribution should be your own. Any figures not produced by the presenter must be attributed. Exceptions to this rule are when a mentor gives you explicit permission to use one of his/her figures or slides without providing written attribution. However, even in this case, you should orally attribute the person(s) who produced the figure or slide.

Candidacy Examinations: All PhD students must take a candidacy examination before entering candidacy for the PhD degree. The nature of the examination contains both written and oral components (see Part VI. C of the Student Handbook). Students are expected to write their proposal in their own words, using their own ideas. Source material should be referenced as is expected in any written scientific paper unless instructed (in writing) otherwise by the examination committee chairperson.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Acts of plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are subject to appropriate disciplinary action. Students, faculty and administration have the right to place charges of ethical misconduct against a student directly with the Dean or his designee. Frivolous accusations of misconduct, however, may themselves be considered violations of the code of professional conduct. The adjudication of such charges shall occur as described in the Rutgers Policy on

Students Rights and Disciplinary Procedures, Section E before a Hearing Body constituted as described below.

HEARING BODY

Each SGS Division shall have a Hearing Body that makes recommendations to the Dean on disciplinary matters that cannot be resolved at the level of the department or Associate Dean. The Hearing Body shall be composed of two students, two members of the faculty and one member of the administration. The student representatives shall be elected by the Graduate Student Association. Faculty representatives are selected by the Dean from nominations from each department. The composition of the Hearing Body must be approved by Executive Council.

STUDENT GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

Graduate students are encouraged to seek resolution of complaints and grievances at the departmental level by bringing the issue to their department chairman or graduate program director. If the issue cannot be resolved at that level, it can be brought to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. The Associate Dean may offer advice, attempt to resolve the issue, or where appropriate, suggest the matter be brought to the SGS Student Hearing Body or the University's Office of Affirmative Action. Complaints related to racial, ethnic or sexual harassment or discrimination may, if the student wishes, be brought directly to the Office of Affirmative Action.

Each school of Rutgers has a Hearing Body that can be convened by the Associate Dean to make determinations of fact and recommend disciplinary action regarding all infractions of rules, regulations and standards of the University. The SGS Hearing Body consists of two students, two members of the faculty and one member of the administration.

STUDENT RECORDS

1. The records of students at Rutgers shall be considered confidential material and shall include the admissions application material, academic records, faculty evaluations and all health records.
2. The President of the University, the Dean of the school where the student is enrolled, the Associate Dean and the student's advisor shall have access to the student's record.
3. The Associate Dean may determine which parts of the student's records may be shared with members of the faculty for specific purposes and may, at his discretion, require student consent before information is released to the faculty.
4. Students are hereby informed that all materials submitted by faculty members as confidential prior to January 1, 1975 are not available to be reviewed by the student without the permission of the faculty member. Subjective evaluations submitted after that date are available. Students who wish to inspect and review their educational records may do so by making an appointment with the Associate Dean. **In addition, Rutgers RBHS has implemented the BANNER Web for Student Information System. This product provides a website which allows all current students to view their academic and financial records, as well as Schools' course schedules.** Students in certain programs will be able to register on-line.

The links to Web for Student are available from the "my.rutgers" portal:
<https://my.rutgers.edu/portal/>

The University maintains the following records on individual students:

1. General Academic File - Graduate School Office and Registrar's Office

2. Student Health Records - Student and Employee Health Center.
3. Financial Aid Records - Office of the Director of Financial Aid.

Access to these records will be given to university personnel with a legitimate educational interest in the records as determined by the University. Information will be released to other agencies and individuals only in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, a copy of which is available on the Rutgers Office of Policy and Project Management website.

You may request copies of information contained in your educational records. Request for copies should be directed to the Registrar.

The following information may be released for legitimate purposes at the discretion of the University: student's name, address, telephone listing. If you do not wish such information to be released, inform the Associate Dean in writing.

If you believe your educational records contain a factual inaccuracy, you may apply to the Associate Dean to have the inaccuracy removed from your records. Non-academic disputes or grievances will be resolved according to procedures described under "Students' Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures."

ENROLLMENT AT Rutgers RBHS

Rutgers RBHS policy states that, - except for authorized dual degree programs no student registered in the graduate program shall at the same time be enrolled as a medical or dental student.

RECORDING LECTURES

When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communication or recording devices.

Some courses may be recorded for students' review of the lectures. However, no course is required to be recorded by SGS.

POLICY ON POSTDOCS ATTENDING SGS COURSES

With agreement of the SGS Senior Associate Deans, the following policy has been developed for postdocs wishing to attend graduate courses at SGS:

"Postdoctoral Appointees are eligible to attend graduate courses at the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies (SGS) at the discretion of the instructor and pending available space and resources. The instructor may write a letter attesting to participation in the course, but no formal record will be kept by SGS and postdocs will not be considered students within SGS. Postdocs are not required to pay tuition, but fees may be assessed to cover actual costs of supplies."

While this benefit has always been available, it was thought appropriate to formalize it. The policy has been posted on the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs web site.

EMPLOYMENT

Full-time graduate students are expected to devote their energy to completing the program as expeditiously as possible and should not be engaged in outside employment. Students accepting a fellowship do so with the understanding that they are not permitted to work on a regular basis outside the normal functions of their educational programs. In the event of unusual circumstances,

students may request approval from their department/track **and** the SGS to work up to 20 hours per week.

Note: Contact the SGS office for procedures regarding salary. Your department/track should NOT complete a "Staff Position Request" form; it may jeopardize issuance of your stipend check.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS

The University I.D. card is to be worn in all University buildings, and presented upon request by a security officer. The card is prepared by Rutgers RBHS Human Resources, ADMC Building 5. Letters for the issuance of an I.D. card are prepared by the SGS office at the beginning of the semester for new students. Students are expected to retain their cards throughout their stay at the Graduate School. Replacement cards are \$20.00.

SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS

Students must provide the Graduate School office with their social security numbers for purposes of identification and for stipend taxation. International students not holding social security cards are required to apply for a tax identification number (ITIN) when they arrive at the Graduate School. International students will receive information regarding social security numbers and tax identification numbers at the mandatory international services orientation.

PATENT POLICIES

University policy requires all personnel, including students, to assign to the University the right to any patentable material developed while the inventor was engaged in activities supported with University funds. Student research and study pursued as a result of enrollment are included in these activities.

GUIDELINES FOR RUTGERS SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Social media has changed the way we interact with our audiences across the world. We now have a new ability to engage people any time of the day wherever they are - whether it's through a Facebook posting or a YouTube video that goes viral. The document associated with the link below is designed to provide a framework of best practices for faculty, staff, and students at every stage of the process - from creation through promotion and training.

https://communications.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/0089_Social_Media_Guide_0628.pdf

It is important to remember that social media practitioners must also adhere to the same university policies in the digital arena as they do offline. That includes policies that address such issues as protecting student and patient privacy, as well as the use of university logos and images.

HEALTH AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The University requires that each person enrolled in its programs **on a full-time matriculated basis** who participates in clinical experience, have health and accident insurance protection. The University provides a Student Medical Benefit Plan. Students not wishing to join must provide evidence at registration of coverage through an alternative plan. Students shall make such other insurance policies available to the University for review when requested.

IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The following is a summary of Rutgers policy. To review the complete Rutgers **“Student Immunization & Health Requirements Policy”** Go to **Immunization & Health**

Requirements:

http://njms.rutgers.edu/departments/family_medicine/shs/documents/ImmunePacketCat4RBHS-Newark.pdf

Forms should be directly uploaded to the patient portal: <https://patient-rbhs.medicatconnect.com>

1. Each student shall undergo a complete history and physical examination prior to matriculation or enrollment and at annual or other appropriate intervals thereafter if indicated by the initial findings.
2. Each student shall receive tuberculin testing (intradermal PPD) with appropriate follow-up of positive reactions prior to matriculation or enrollment. Annually thereafter, students with negative reactions shall be re-tested. Those with positive reactions shall be followed and treated as appropriate.
3. Each student born on or after January 1, 1957 must submit documented proof of immunity to measles, mumps and rubella prior to matriculation or enrollment. (People born before 1957 are considered to be immune from childhood exposure to the naturally occurring diseases.)
4. Before being permitted to work with materials or procedures that pose potential risk of exposure to HIV or HBV (hepatitis B), appropriate training in practices and operation of facilities shall be provided, proficiency in biosafety must be demonstrated, and students must be immunized against HBV.

SMOKING POLICY

In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for all Rutgers personnel and visitors, smoking is not permitted in any University facility. Tobacco products are not available for purchase within the University.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

It is the policy of the University to assist students whose performance has been impaired by drugs and/or alcohol dependency, mental disorder, or other medical disorders while maintaining a balance between the individual's rights and the University's duty to safeguard the public health and effectively discharge its mission.

The University is committed to the rehabilitation of all impaired students whenever possible, but when attempts at rehabilitation fail or are inappropriate, impairment is sufficient grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal. Where an incident involves a violation of state law, the Office of Legal Management will be consulted to determine whether there is an affirmative duty to report that violation. Every effort will be made to preserve the confidentiality of all referred and identified students and of individuals making referrals when indicated.

Brochures for Drug and Alcohol Abuse are available. The following procedures have been established to deal with students suspected of drug or alcohol abuse:

1. Students suspected of being impaired, based on their performance or on other more direct evidence, will be reported to the departmental chairman.
2. The chairman will evaluate the evidence and seek consultation with other faculty and/or students if it is deemed necessary.
3. If the evidence warrants further action, the chairman will discuss the matter with the student. This may be done along with the departmental Graduate Committee or with the student's advisor, at the chairman's discretion.

4. If the chairman and/or departmental Graduate Committee concur that the student is in need of help for drug or alcohol abuse, the student will be referred to the Student Mental Health Service, or other appropriate professional help.
5. As a result of this referral, two outcomes are possible:
 - a. The student agrees, in which case the chairman will monitor his or her progress and appropriate adjustments will be instituted in the student's program.
 - b. The student resists, in which case disciplinary action, based on the student's performance, will be instituted. This may result in dismissal from the program. If this occurs, the student will be advised of the option to take the matter to the Graduate School Hearing Body, as established in the Students Right and Responsibilities Document.

Impaired Students Program

Rutgers RBHS has established an "Impaired Students Program". Further information on the policy and program can be obtained at the Graduate School Office.

SCHOOL CLOSING

The Rutgers website, my.rutgers.edu and the following Radio stations will announce the suspension of Rutgers classes in the event of adverse weather conditions:

<u>Northern New Jersey</u>	<u>Central New Jersey</u>	<u>Southern New Jersey</u>
WCBS - 880 AM WOR - 710 AM	WCTC - 1450 AM WMSG - 98.3 FM	WKYW - 1060 AM

Please also be aware of new Rutgers Alerts that can be sent to you via text messages. See the SGS office or your email for details.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

IDPs are done annually, and they provide students a platform to introspect, self-assess, and create goals for research, professional, and career development. Ph.D. students are expected to work on their IDP towards the end of every academic year and discuss it with their thesis mentor, their track director, and/or their career advisor, Dr. Doreen Badheka. NIH guidelines require that all NIH annual progress reports must include a section to describe how IDPs are used to identify and promote the career goals of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers associated with the award. Additionally, the Rutgers School of Graduate Studies requires each Ph.D. student submit an annual IDP before the end of the academic year for the first four years of their Ph.D. program.

V. UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

CAFETERIA

The University Hospital Cafeteria is located on B-level of the Hospital.

DUPLICATING SERVICES

Each department will make arrangements to meet the duplicating needs of its own students. Photocopy machines for student use are also located in the George F. Smith Library located on C level of the Medical Science Building.

NEW MOTHER'S ROOM

There are two lactation lounges for new mothers. New mothers can access both or either one. A lounge is located on G-level of the Medical Science Building (MSB G649). The room contains lockers and a refrigerator. Access to the room is limited. For access, SGS Newark-RBHS students and NJMS postdoctoral researchers can contact Dr. Ellen Townes-Anderson (andersel@njms.rutgers.edu). Another lactation lounge is located in the Cancer Center (G1207). For access, SGS Newark-RBHS students and NJMS postdoctoral researchers can contact Kandice Sanders (kandice.sanders@rutgers.edu), Chavonne Sewell (clonge@njms.rutgers.edu), or Jennifer Yaney (jdalesan@njms.rutgers.edu).

Guidelines for Room Use

- Respect privacy of users (please knock before entering).
- Clean up after yourself.
- Do not leave or prop room door open.
- Room should remain locked at all times.
- Do not share room access information
- Label items stored in the refrigerator (Name, phone recommended)

PARKING PERMITS

The University provides parking facilities for faculty, students, and staff. Parking is by permit only. Please visit the SGS office for the most up to date information about how to obtain parking.

SHUTTLE SERVICES

The University provides shuttle services within the Newark area and at large. Find more information about Transloc, Campus Connect, Campus Connect Express, Newark Penn Station Local, Newark Penn Station Express, Kearny route, Newark Penn Station Midnight Express Security Shuttle, and all routes here: <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/dots/newark>

TELEPHONE USAGE

Students may use departmental phones **with permission** only for interoffice calls or other official matters.

VI. CURRICULUM

SGS offers the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Combined MD/PhD, DPT/PhD, DMD/PhD, and Medical Residency/PhD are available.

The degree may be obtained in the Multidisciplinary PhD Program. On occasion, the MS degree may be granted to a student who cannot continue for the PhD in these disciplines.

Degree requirements include at least a *B* (3.00) average and substantial research experience culminating in a thesis or dissertation. The course of study is continuous and includes summers. All doctoral graduate students assist in the teaching program of their department.

Full-time doctoral (PhD) students are expected to carry a course load of 9 credits per semester or be engaged full time in dissertation research.

All doctoral graduate students are required to pass the following courses, Responsible Conduct of Research, the core course "Introduction to Biomedical Sciences - IBMS", Professional Skills I (Presentations), Professional Skills II (Grantsmanship) and a course in Experimental Design and Statistics. All students will also participate in 3 research rotations. Each Track may have required courses associated with that track.

Rutgers School of Graduate Studies requires each Ph.D. student in biomedical science submit an annual Individual Development Plan (IDP) before the end of the academic year i.e. before August 30th for the first four years of their Ph.D. program. Additionally, [NIH guidelines](#) require that all NIH annual progress reports must include a section to describe how IDPs are used to identify and promote the career goals of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers associated with the award. The Rutgers IDP and other information related to IDP is available at http://njms.rutgers.edu/sqs/current_students/career_development_idp.php

A. PROGRAMS

1. Doctoral Programs

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree is awarded on the basis of achievement in a wide range of course work; a comprehensive qualifying examination evaluating the breadth and depth of background knowledge; intensive research experience during which the candidate demonstrates ability to initiate, perform, and analyze original experimental work; a written dissertation; and public defense of the dissertation through a final oral examination. Students in SGS will not be considered for admission to Rutgers dental or medical schools while they are in training for a PhD degree.

The requirements for the PhD degree are usually completed in five years or less, but must be completed within seven years. While students may enroll in the PhD program part time, **all PhD students must be registered full time for at least one academic year during the dissertation research.** Minimum requirements are:

- a. At least 40 semester credits of relevant graduate level course work beyond the baccalaureate level, including the IBMS course with at least a 3.00 (*B*) average.
- b. A Candidacy Examination
- c. A research proposal acceptable to the candidate's Advisory Committee and the Executive Council of the Graduate School.
- d. A dissertation based upon independent research, prepared by the candidate and evaluated by an Examination Committee.
- e. A public defense of the dissertation before an Examination Committee.

2. MD/PhD, DPT/PhD, DMD/PhD, Clinical Residency/PhD/ Programs

SGS offers a combined degree program with Rutgers-New Jersey Medical School (MD/PhD), Rutgers-School of Health Related Professions (DPT/PhD), Rutgers School of Dental Medicine (DMD/PhD). Certain clinical residencies at NJMS have established combined residency/PhD with SGS. The requirements for the PhD portion of the combined programs are as described above.

B. SELECTION OF A MENTOR

Doctoral students are encouraged to become aware of the research programs of individual faculty members during their first year in the graduate school. This can be done by attending seminars, rotating through laboratories, and discussions with the faculty. The student should recognize that the SGS stipend currently is for 18 months, but it can take five to seven years to complete a Ph.D. program. The resources, activity of the laboratory, and the likelihood of continued stipend support are additional factors to consider when selecting a mentor. Graduate students, tracks and the SGS should be advised by the department chair and prospective mentor of the likelihood of continued stipend support after their SGS fellowship ends. The mentor should be selected preferably by the end of the second semester, but no later than the end of the third semester to ensure continuity of stipend support.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS PERFORMING RESEARCH FOR THE PHD DEGREES AT AN OFF-CAMPUS LOCATION

Most research for the PhD degree is done on campus with one of the faculty of the SGS-Newark Health Science Campus. In cases where students choose to perform research in a laboratory that is not on our campus the following guidelines must be followed:

- The off-campus advisor must have an appointment in the graduate school.
- The student must have a mentor-of-record who is a full member of the graduate school faculty
- At least two members of the thesis advisory committee must be from the full-time graduate faculty
- The arrangement must be approved by the department (program director and chair)/track (class advisor and track director) and the Executive Council.
- At least two advisory group meetings per year must be scheduled to monitor progress in thesis research
- The work to be performed must conform to the same standards as those applied to other students in SGS (high standards of excellence, scholarly in nature, non-proprietary and hypothesis driven).

C. CANDIDACY EXAMINATION FOR ENTRY TO THESIS PHASE

Candidacy Examination for Entry into Thesis Phase

Before progressing to the thesis phase of their doctoral studies, all students must pass a Candidacy Examination (formerly referred to as Qualifying Examination). In order to qualify for thesis phase, doctoral students must also complete 40 credits of combined coursework and research, including the specific requirements defined by their program and/or track. They must have an overall GPA of 3.0 or greater. Approved transfer credits will count towards the required 40 credits.

The purpose of the exam is to evaluate the student's preparedness to apply and synthesize the knowledge acquired during their graduate studies in the context of their proposed thesis research project. The evaluation should address:

- Understanding of relevant biomedical science topics related to the proposed research.
- Knowledge of the literature and ability to integrate those concepts into the research plan.
- Viability of the research proposal and ability to explain the project aims.
- Familiarity with planned experimental approaches and interpretation of results.

The candidacy examination is expected to occur in April to June of the student's second year, although it may occur later with permission of the track director. Each track will set a deadline date for submission of the written component by all students in the track. The tracks in the Multidisciplinary PhD Program in Biomedical Science will follow a consistent candidacy examination format. The candidacy examination will incorporate the Thesis Proposal, which will provide a background, rationale and plan of experimental design that is to be pursued in the intended mentor's laboratory. This combination of qualifying examination and thesis proposal has several advantages over the current practice of separating these steps:

- Increased efficiency because students do not prepare two separate research proposals
- A more robust and independently developed thesis proposal
- Earlier transition to full-time thesis research
- Thesis proposal can be utilized as the foundation of an individual fellowship application

The candidacy examination will follow the format below.

First part: a research proposal using the format of a research grant, with Specific Aims, Significance (which includes extended background), and Approach (which included Preliminary Data and Experimental Design). The text of the written proposal should be a maximum of 10 pages, single-spaced, excluding references. There should also be a one-page abstract. The overall proposal should follow the layout of the research component of a NIH NRSA fellowship grant, except that the background section is expected to be more extensive and show knowledge of the breadth of literature underlying the proposed research. Writing this section will help the student develop a comprehensive background for their thesis work. The preliminary data section should include only original data generated by the student. It should be noted that there is no requirement for the student to have preliminary data, but it is encouraged where possible. Work from others in the lab or from published papers supporting the proposed hypothesis/aims can be included in the background section (with appropriate attribution). A minimum of two aims should be proposed by the student for their planned thesis research. While it is recognized that all of the aims should be related to the research focus of the mentor's lab, there should be at least one subaim that represents a new direction not already encompassed in the mentor's or other faculty members' current or pending research grants. Prior to writing the Candidacy Examination proposal, the student will develop the Specific Aims page that has been approved by the mentor. This Specific Aims page will be shared with the Track Director and Class Advisor in March to be used to assemble the Candidacy Examination Committee.

The subsequent preparation of the full written proposal should proceed with assistance from the mentor, however, the mentor should not write the document and it should not be extracted from previous grants. The proposal when complete will be accompanied by a form on relative contributions to the ideas and writing, and will be signed by both the student and mentor. The student is expected to spend no more than 3-4 weeks writing the proposal, typically during March-May of their second year.

It should be noted that the specific aims may change/evolve/refine as science moves forward. However, after the proposal is sent to the committee, the student should not change the proposal. The committee should not give direct feedback prior to the exam; serious flaws or comments should be shared only with the committee chair. All other comments will be discussed at the exam.

Second part: an oral presentation by the student to their Candidacy Examination Committee. The presentation should be no more than 20 minutes. During this presentation the student will be expected to describe and explain their proposed research project and answer questions from the committee members. The committee is charged with gauging the competency and preparedness of the student to undertake research work at a doctoral level. The oral exam should be completed by the end of June of the second year.

Students are encouraged to practice their presentation and answer questions with other students and/or lab members prior to the oral exam.

The Candidacy Examination Committee for each student will be appointed by the Track Oversight Committee. It will have 4 voting members, including the Class Advisor or her/his designee, who will chair the examination committee. This will help to ensure consistency across examinations. The remaining 3 members of the examination committee should have appropriate expertise and experience relevant to the student's chosen subject matter. One member should be from outside of the mentor's home department or center/institute. The student's prospective mentor may attend the oral examination, but cannot participate in the questions, discussion or voting. However, the mentor can request a break, with the student temporarily excused from the meeting, if he/she wishes to convey a concern or provide key information to the examination committee. It is expected that a pass in the Candidacy Examination should be by unanimous consent of all voting members of the committee. In the case of a tie vote, the Senior Associate Dean will be the deciding vote. The committee can also recommend a conditional pass, setting specific tasks that the candidate must complete, which can include a repeat of the oral examination. If the student fails the initial candidacy examination, a reexamination must take place within 3 months of the first examination.

A Qualifying Examination Report Form, signed by each member of the Examination Committee, must be submitted to the SGS within one week following the examination. Upon notification of successful completion of the Qualifying Examination the Dean shall inform the student that he or she is admitted to candidacy for the PhD Degree.

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEDURES AFTER ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY FOR THE PHD DEGREE

a. Thesis Advisory Committee

Following admission to candidacy for the PhD degree, a Thesis Advisory Committee must be formed to guide the student during the doctoral research. The department chairperson/track director nominates the committee members on the Thesis Advisory Committee Nomination Form, which is submitted for approval by the Executive Council. The Thesis Advisory Committee must be formed by the beginning of the student's third year in the program.

The Thesis Advisory Committee normally consists of the thesis advisor and at least two other members, one of whom is from an area outside of the student's immediate area of research interest. The thesis advisor must be a full member of the SGS faculty. At least one of the two remaining members must be either a full or adjunct member of the SGS and at least one of the two must not have a primary appointment in the mentor's department. Each nomination should be supported by a brief explanation for the individual's selection to the thesis committee.

The mentor must convene a meeting of the student and the Thesis Advisory Committee at least annually, preferably every 6 months, to review the student's progress. Progress report forms are available on the SGS website as well as in the Department and SGS offices. Completed reports must be submitted to the SGS office annually. (A member from outside the University need attend only one of the meetings provided the member is advised of the progress and given the opportunity to comment.) The student should receive a written report summarizing the conclusions of the meeting and future directions of the project. Copies of the report should be submitted to the SGS.

b. Research Proposal

The department chairperson/track director notifies the SGS of approval of the student's research prospectus by the thesis advisory committee. The proposal should be relatively short to avoid the student spending months writing a mini-dissertation.

c. Preparation of Dissertation and Manuscript

After completion of the dissertation research, the student prepares a dissertation in the format specified by the SGS. In addition, each student is expected to submit one or more manuscripts in the style of an appropriate journal to be examined by the Final Examination Committee along with the dissertation.

A complete dissertation **must be submitted to the committee at least 2 weeks ahead of the scheduled defense date. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in having to reschedule the defense.**

d. Dissertation Examination Committee

The Final (Dissertation) Examination Committee consists of a minimum of six members, including at least one from outside **all Rutgers campuses** and at least two who are readers new to the thesis research. The outside member requirement may be fulfilled by a reader. Departments/tracks may add additional requirements as they see appropriate. Readers are nominated by the thesis advisory committee and approved by Track Director and SGS. At least one reader must be from outside the primary department/track and one reader must be from outside **all Rutgers campuses**. Nominations should be supported by an explanation of the reader's relevance to the research area.

e. Defense of Dissertation

The time and place of the dissertation examination are scheduled by the thesis advisor. The information is then communicated to the SGS Office for appropriate posting on the SGS website and to the scientific community. A single page dissertation abstract in a word document is submitted to the SGS Student Affairs Office via an email attachment for duplication and distribution **at least three weeks before the date of the final examination. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in having to reschedule the defense.**

After the public oral defense, each member of the final examination committee signs a Report of Final Examination Form attesting to the outcome. This form must be approved by the department chair prior to submitting it to the SGS. The candidate shall be given, in writing, necessary changes or improvements of the dissertation.

f. Final Written Dissertation

When all appropriate revisions have been made and the dissertation is in final form, a letter so stating should be sent to the SGS by the Thesis Advisor, with the department chairperson's written approval. **Minor revisions must be completed within six months of the defense** or the student may be required to re-defend the dissertation before a new examination committee.

The revised and accepted dissertation (4 copies for PhD) must be presented to the SGS Office by April 1 for May commencement.

Distribution:

Original: SGS
First copy: Advisor
Second copy: Graduate Student
Third copy: Library (PhD Dissertations only)

E. GUIDELINES FOR DOCTORAL THESIS PREPARATION rev. 08.07

1. Submit one original and 3 good quality copies (**not** stapled, hole-punched or otherwise bound) directly to the SGS administrative office.
2. PAPER: standard size, 8 1/2" x 11" bond; 25% rag content or better for the original. A lesser quality paper may be used for the copies.
3. MARGINS: 1 3/4" from left; 1 1/4" from top; 1" from right and bottom
4. FORMAT: Single side, block format, double space throughout the text. Font style and minimum size must be either Times New Roman (12 pt) or Ariel (11 pt).
5. TITLE PAGE: Should contain **ONLY** the following:
 - a. title in capital letters;
 - b. name of the candidate with degree(s), university, and date already awarded;
 - c. the following statement for PhD candidates:

"A Dissertation submitted to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PhD Degree"
 - d. this statement is followed at the bottom of the Title Page by:

"Newark, New Jersey 07103" and "Month and Year" during which the thesis is being presented.
6. PAGE NUMBERING: The title page does is not numbered, but all other pages are numbered consecutively in Arabic, starting with the page following the title page as page 2.
7. FORMAT
 - a. Table of Contents
 - b. Acknowledgements
 - c. Abstract
 - d. Introduction
 - e. Rationale
 - f. Materials and Methods
 - g. Experimental Results
 - Section I
 - Section II (Divide if appropriate)
 - Section III
 - h. Discussion
 - i. Summary and Conclusions
 - j. Bibliography
 - k. Appendix, Abbreviations
8. FOOTNOTES: Are allowed to be included at the bottom of the same page.
9. ACKNOWLEDGMENT: Include the sources of financial support.
10. ABSTRACT: Not to exceed 350 words, double-spaced.
11. FIGURES, TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS:
 - a. Should be numbered **consecutively** in Arabic numbers.

- b. Should include self-explanatory legends and title on the same page. If this is not feasible, use the next numbered page and turn the figure so that it faces the legend.
 - c. Type legends preferably 1 1/2" space.
 - d. Do not use oversized tables, figures or illustration; if necessary, reduce to 5" x 8" overall.
 - e. Insert figures, tables and illustrations as close as possible to the text describing the results.
12. ABBREVIATIONS: Use standard chemical symbols, Journals, units of measurements, etc.
13. REFERENCES:
- a. References may be arranged in the text either by mentioning the surname of the first (1-3) authors and year of publication, or by consecutive numbers in the order of citation.
 - b. Give the **complete title and all co-authors (surnames and initials)** of each paper included in the bibliography. Arrange in alphabetical sequence according to senior (co) author's surname, or in the numerical order of citation in the text.
 - c. Multiple lines of each reference should be typed single spaced.
 - d. Allow double space between references.

Use a new page for each segment or division.

F. THESIS DEFENSE GUIDELINES

The thesis Advisor serves as a member of the TEC and moderates the defense but serves without vote.

Procedure:

The Advisor welcomes the audience and announces the event (thesis defense of...) and describes that the defense will proceed according to the following format:

- Student presents a summary of the thesis work, 45 – 50 minutes
- Questions are asked by the general audience and questions of a broad nature may be asked by members of the TEC
- The general audience will be asked to leave; members of the TEC stay to question the candidate

Advisor introduces the TAC followed by members of the TEC

Advisor asks that questions be held until the end of the presentation

Advisor introduces the candidate

(prior to questioning by the TEC the Advisor may ask the student to leave so that the TEC can be informed of information pertinent to the defense)

TAC – thesis advisory committee

TEC – thesis examining committee

G. GRADUATION /GRADUATION FEE

After successful completion of course work with at least a *B* (3.00) average and approval of the dissertation/thesis, the Executive Council will recommend to the Rutgers Board of Trustees the award of the appropriate degree.

A University graduation fee is no longer being assessed to graduating students.

**ADDENDUM
GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (GSA)
CONSTITUTION**

Article I Name

Section I The name of the organization shall be "Graduate Student Association, Newark Health Science Campus"

Article II Purpose

Section I The purpose of this association shall be to cultivate and promote the basic medical sciences; to promote among graduate students mutual improvements, social involvement and fraternalism; and generally to do all things advisable, desirable or necessary in the interest of graduate studies and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

Section II This organization shall function not only as the Graduate Student Association but also as the student governing body.

Article III Membership

Section I The members of this association shall consist of persons whose qualifications and classifications are set forth in Article I of the Bylaws.

Article IV Government

Section I Legislative Body: The legislative body and governing body of this association shall be its active membership assembled at any Business Session, as provided in Article I of the Bylaws. All the privileges, powers, duties and functions granted this association are its accepted authority.

Section II Administrative Body: This association shall be administered by its active membership provided for in Article IV of the Bylaws.

Article V Officers and Representatives

Section I The elected departmental representatives to the Association shall constitute an Executive Committee that shall consist of one representative from each department of the SGS and two representatives from the Master's program at SGS.

Section II The Executive Committee shall have as its officers, a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section III The officers of the Executive Committee shall be elected annually by the members of the GSA

Section IV Each representative and alternate to the Executive Committee shall be appointed by majority vote of the graduate students of his/her department.

Section V The term of office of each representative/alternate shall be for one year.

Section VI The term of each officer of the GSA shall be for one year.

Section VII Departmental representatives may not serve concurrently as Executive Council officers.

Officers will be excluded from Executive Committee voting. The president will vote only to break a tie.

Article VI **Sessions**

Section I The business sessions of the Association shall be conducted by the membership as provided in Article II of the Bylaws.

Article VII **Quorum**

Section I More than half of the active membership shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the association. At any meeting in which attendance does not constitute a quorum, those present shall discuss the business at hand but no votes shall be taken.

Section II Two Thirds of the departments being represented shall constitute a quorum of the Executive Committee. At any meeting in which attendance does not constitute a quorum, those present shall discuss the business at hand but no votes shall be taken.

Article VIII **Amendments**

Section I This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by a 3/4 majority vote of all active members, provided the proposed amendment(s) has been presented at a previous meeting.

BYLAWS

Article I **Membership**

Section I Classification

- A. Active
- B. Associate
- C. Non-quorum

Section II Qualifications

- A. Active membership in this Association shall be limited to students registered as full time graduate students in the Rutgers-SGS, Newark Health Science campus.
- B. Associate membership is conferred by this Association to those students that hold non-matriculated status, or part time status (including Masters Candidates) who do not pay dues.
- C. Non-quorum membership is conferred by this Association to those individuals not in the above two categories who attend a meeting, or meetings, of the Association.

Article II **Meetings**

Section I At least two meetings of the Association shall be held each year. The exact time and place shall be specified as required.

Section II Special meetings of the Association may be called by the President or by the request of 10 members made to the President.

Article III **Money/Funds**

Section I All monies/funds required for Association functions shall be approved by a 2/3 majority

vote of the Executive Committee.

Section II All money issues voted upon favorably are expected to be equally financed by all active members. Students with special membership may contribute to funds if so desired without obligation.

Article IV **Officers**

Section I Election of officers of the Association will take place during the month of February and will be determined by majority vote of the GSA.

Section II Permanent or temporary vacancies occurring in office shall be filled by appointment by the President for the unexpired term of office.

Section III Term of office of all elected officers shall begin in February and end the following year when the new officers are elected.

Section IV Departmental representatives and alternates will be elected by majority vote in their respective departments immediately following election of the GSA officers.

Section V The Association shall be responsible for providing elected representatives of its student body to serve as student Senators to the Rutgers ~~Student~~ Senate as described by the Rutgers ~~Student~~ Senate Constitution and By-laws.

Article V **Committees**

Section I Association committees shall be formulated by the Executive Committee. Association members requested for attendance at extra-association meetings, or to function as an extra-association member, shall be appointed by the President.

Section II The duties and functions of committees shall be outlined at the time of their constitution.

Article VI **Responsibility of Officers**

Section I It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all Association meetings, to approve all bills for payment, sign all documents, appoint members to committees, and perform such other duties as are customary to his/her office.

The President shall attend meetings of the Executive Council of the Rutgers-SGS at Newark.

Section II It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to assist the President in all duties as requested. He/she shall assume the duties of the President in his/her absence.

Section III It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to keep a record of the financial transactions of the

Association; to collect all monies; to pay out the same, provided assets are on hand and upon the presentation of a proper voucher, signed by the President. He/she shall make an accurate report of the Association's treasury at each meeting.

It shall also be the duty of the Secretary to keep minutes of all Executive Committee meetings and to distribute notices for all GSA events.

Section IV It shall be the duty of department representatives to assist the officers of the Executive Committee in fulfilling any and all of the aforementioned duties.

Section V It shall be the duty of alternates to assist the representatives with their duties upon request and to assume those duties in the representative's absence.

Section VI At the expiration of all officers' terms, they shall turn over to their successors all records, books, and other properties relating to their offices.

Section VII It is the duty of all incumbent officers to orient officers-elect as to the duties of their offices.

Article VII **Rules of Order**

Section I The Association shall be governed in all matters not governed by the Constitution and Bylaws, by Roberts' Rules of Order, Revised.

Article V **Voting**

Section I When a constituted quorum is present at a meeting of the Association, a simple majority will decide whatever issue is before the body, not involving the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section II When a constituted quorum is present at a meeting of the Executive Committee voting shall be by 2/3 majority, with one vote being cast by each department.

<http://academicaffairs.rutgers.edu/additional-resources/rutgers-biomedical-and-health-sciences-policies>

<http://policies.rutgers.edu/view-policies/table-contents>

http://njms.rutgers.edu/sgs/current_students/academic_info.htm

Rutgers SGS-Newark Health Science Campus Teacher-Learner Policy in Graduate Education

Section: SGS - Office of Student Affairs and Admissions Name: Rutgers School of Graduate Studies (SGS)-Newark Health Science Campus The Teacher-Learner Relationship and The Learning Environment in Graduate Education

Section: SGS - Office of Student Affairs and Admissions

Name: Rutgers School of Graduate Studies (SGS)-Newark Health Science Campus

The Teacher-Learner Relationship and The Learning Environment in Graduate Education

I. PURPOSE

The Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus strongly believes that teaching and learning should take place in a climate of mutual respect where students and faculty are equally responsible for maintaining a professional and collegial environment. An environment where students are evaluated based upon accomplishment, professionalism and academic performance. We are committed to maintaining a positive learning environment and the highest standards of behavior in the teacher-student relationship. Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus maintains its commitment to the highest standards of professionalism and preventing student abuse through education, by providing support for those who are subjected to mistreatment, and by responding with corrective action to incidences of abuse and unprofessionalism.

This policy addresses the behaviors required from all those who are involved in educating and research mentoring of our Master's and PhD students, including faculty members, staff, or students in a teaching role. It is intended to ensure an educational environment in which students, staff, volunteers, and faculty may raise and resolve issues without fear of intimidation or retaliation. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs oversees the implementation of this policy.

This policy is applicable to all the didactic courses taught by faculty of the Rutgers SGS-Newark Health Science Campus as well courses taken by graduate students in the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and the Rutgers School of Dental Medicine. This policy is also applicable to the 2-credit research rotation, the Master's thesis research, the Ph.D. thesis research and to the experiential learning courses (e.g. Pharmaceutical Internship and Teacher Training internship) where instructors are not part of the Rutgers SGS faculty.

This policy on mistreatment prevention and the learning environment has four main components:

1. A statement of the Rutgers SGS-Newark Health Science Campus standards of behavior with regard to mistreatment, including: a definition of mistreatment; examples of types of mistreatment; persons who may be the object or perpetrator of mistreatment; and the purpose of the policy on mistreatment.
2. A plan for the ongoing education of the Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus community concerning these standards of behavior and professionalism and the process by which they are upheld.
3. A description of the Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus process for responding to allegations of mistreatment.
4. A description of options that are available to all members of the Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus for reporting incidences of unprofessional behavior exhibited by anyone in the learning environment.

II. STANDARDS

The Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus is committed to cultivating an environment with a focus on quality education, fair treatment and ethical conduct. To do so, there are standards of behavior that we must maintain in the teacher-learner relationship. Inappropriate or destructive behaviors that would be considered unacceptable include:

- Verbal abuse (attack in words, or speaking insultingly, harshly)
- Comments and jokes of stereotypic or ethnic connotation, visual harassment (display of derogatory cartoons, drawings or posters)
- Physical contact, including any physical mistreatment or assaults such as hitting, slapping, kicking, throwing objects or threats of the same nature
- Inappropriate or unprofessional conduct that is unwarranted and reasonably interpreted to be demeaning or offensive
- Requiring a student to perform tasks intended to humiliate, control, or intimidate the student
- Unreasonable requests for a student to perform personal services
- Grading or assigning tasks used to punish a student rather than to evaluate or improve performance
- Purposeful neglect or exclusion from learning opportunities as means of punishment
- Sexual assault or other acts of sexual violence
- Sexual harassment
- Disregard for student safety

While constructive criticism is appropriate in the teacher-learning process, it should be handled in such a way as to promote learning and avoid purposeful student humiliation. Feedback that has negative elements is generally more useful when delivered in a private setting that fosters discussion and behavior modification. All feedback should focus on behavior rather than personal characteristics and should avoid derogatory labeling.

III. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION

The goal of educating the members of the Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus is

- A. To promote an environment respectful of all individuals and provide ongoing education to students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and other staff that emphasizes the importance of professional and collegial attitudes and behavior.
- B. To eliminate teaching and training behaviors that do not promote a positive learning environment, characterized by attitudes of mutual respect and collegiality.

The methods for disseminating and providing information and education to specific groups are described below and are subject to annual review by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs:

- i) Graduate (Master's and Ph.D.) Students
 - (1) The policy will be included in the Student Handbook.
 - (2) The topic will be addressed at all orientations.
 - (3) The policy will be added to all course syllabi.
 - (4) Questions to address teacher learner interactions will be added to end of course evaluations.
- ii) Faculty, Staff and Postdoctoral Fellows

- (1) An informative written message will be sent each year from the Associate Dean for Student Affairs to all departmental chairs.
- (2) Each year all faculty, teaching assistants, students and staff will complete a training and they will have to complete the attestation of this policy which should be link to the Rutgers portal.
- (3) Chairs will also direct the course directors and track directors (Master's and PhD level) to convey this information to all adjunct faculty who participate in the teaching process to ensure that all faculty are cognizant of the policy.

IV. COMMUNICATION OF COMPLAINTS AND RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

Due to the sensitive nature of such complaints and the need to occasionally deal with these issues either without the consent of the reporter or without revealing the identity of the reporter, several mechanisms need to be in place for resolution and communication of the resolution of the issue.

The faculty and administration must be able to assure learners they will be “protected” when making truthful reports of abuse or unprofessional behavior on the part of others, even when their identity must be disclosed. Such reporting is a professional obligation on the students’ part as members of our educational community. Members of our educational community including faculty and staff who witness others being abusive to learners or exhibiting unprofessional behavior are also expected to report these incidents. This will help to create a better learning environment for all.

A complaint should be reported as soon as possible but not more than 90 (ninety) days after the alleged incident. Several avenues (listed below) are open to the student who experiences an incident of inappropriate behavior and mistreatment or is the witness to unprofessional behavior. The same pathways may be used by faculty and staff who witness abusive and/or unprofessional behavior. In situations where the observed behavior does not involve a learner, the faculty and staff members also have the option of addressing the issue with a supervisor of the person exhibiting the behavior.

A. Informal Pathway

1. Addressing the Issue Directly

The student may consider speaking directly with the person. If the behavior stems from a misunderstanding or a need for increased sensitivity, the person will often respond positively and stop. Open communication may clarify any misunderstanding or issue(s) and lead to a successful, informal resolution.

2. Counseling and Guidance

A student, who has concerns about the learning environment, may speak with the Course Director, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or a Faculty Mentor.

3. Reporting to the Rutgers SGS Campus Ombudsperson

A student who has concerns about the learning environment can also speak with the SGS Newark Health Science Campus Ombudsperson who can provide counsel on how to address the situation and suggest additional resources or people to contact. Interactions with the ombudsperson are completely confidential and are not reported to any other Rutgers University entities or personnel.

4. Consultation with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs

If Steps 1, 2 or 3 are not successful or appropriate, a student must refer the complaint to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, who may attempt to achieve an informal resolution.

All involved parties must agree upon all informal resolutions. For tracking purposes, a written record of the resolution must be filed with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs; however, this can be done without reference to specific names.

B. Formal Resolutions via University Policy

Once an alleged mistreatment has been identified there are multiple tiers of formal resolution. Resolution of reported actions which are not egregious or reported in an anonymous fashion will be up to the discretion of the course director and other members of SGS administration. For tracking purposes, a written record of the resolution must be filed with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Any actions identified in the University Policies on sexual assault, sexual harassment, bullying and other types of harassment, or other violations of ethics or codes of conducts, must be reported and handled in accordance with policies that address these violations.

Resolution of reported actions which are recurrent or egregious will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs who will follow the procedures below:

Initial Inquiry

1. Inquiry into a violation of these standards of conduct committed by any individual will be initiated after a written complaint is filed with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. The complaint should be filed within 90 (ninety) days of the violation. The complaint should include the following:
 - a) Names of all parties involved
 - b) Approximate dates or date range of the violation(s)
 - c) Detailed and specific description
 - d) Additional documents or proof.
2. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs has the responsibility to protect the position and reputation of the complainant.
3. Upon receipt of a properly documented complaint, which has been made in good faith, the Associate Dean of Student Affairs shall inform the respondent of the nature of the charges and identify the complainant. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs shall also appoint an inquiry officer, who may not be a member of the same department as, or collaborator with, the complainant or respondent. The inquiry officer shall have no conflicts of interest or appearance of conflict of interest in the matter and have appropriate background to judge the issues being raised. He/she must be a faculty member of the Rutgers SGS Newark Health Science Campus. An inquiry officer will be appointed within two weeks of the receipt of a properly documented complaint and the complainant and respondent will be notified. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall also make every effort to protect the identities of both complainant and respondent with respect to the larger community.
4. The inquiry officer shall gather information and determine whether the allegation warrants a formal investigation. He/she shall then submit a written report to the Senior Associate Dean, the complainant, and the respondent. The report shall state what evidence was reviewed, summarize relevant interviews, and include conclusions. This report shall ordinarily be submitted within 30 calendar days of receipt of the written complaint by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. If the inquiry officer finds that a formal investigation is not warranted, the complainant shall be given the opportunity to make a written reply to the officer within 15 calendar days following receipt of the report to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. If the inquiry officer finds that a formal investigation is warranted, the respondent shall be given the opportunity to make a written reply to the report within 15 calendar days following submission of the report to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs. Such replies shall be incorporated as appendices to the report. The entire preliminary inquiry process shall be completed within 60 calendar days of the receipt of a properly documented complaint by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs unless circumstances clearly reveal that in the interests of the parties involved the process be expedited or warrant a delay. In such cases the record of inquiry shall detail reasons for the delay.
5. If the report of the inquiry officer finds that a formal investigation is not warranted, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs may:
 - i. initiate a formal investigation despite the recommendation of the preliminary inquiry officer, or

- ii. not initiate a formal investigation, but may attempt to address the issue through an informal pathway, or
- iii. drop the matter.

The Associate Dean for Student Affairs ordinarily shall complete the review within 10 days of receipt of the report. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall inform the concerned parties of the decision. In the event the Associate Dean for Student Affairs determines not to initiate a formal investigation, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall, as appropriate, protect the position and reputation of the complainant if the complaint is found to have been made in good faith.

6. If no formal investigation of the respondent is conducted, sufficient documentation shall be kept on file to permit a later assessment of the reasons that a formal investigation was not deemed warranted.
7. If the report of the inquiry officer finds that a formal investigation is warranted or the Associate Dean for Student Affairs decides the matter should be pursued through a formal investigation the Associate Dean for Student Affairs shall:
 - notify the complainant and respondent
 - initiate a formal investigation as provided below
 - Formal Investigation and Resolutions via University Policy (refer to policies.rutgers.edu and <http://uhr.rutgers.edu/policies-resources/policies-procedures> for additional information)

At the present time there are formal University Policies on Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment, Equal Employment Opportunity and Code of Ethics. There is also an established process for reporting compliance and ethics concerns which outline responsibilities of the student or employee, and the roles of the Office of Human Resources, the respondent, and the supervisor of the respondent. Any formal investigation and resolution process must comply with the guidance offered in these policies. Appropriate investigatory procedures will be utilized in situations where a formal investigation is deemed necessary. All resolutions, including but not limited to the imposition of discipline, shall be approved by the Dean or his designee and will comply with the procedures set forth in University policies and/or applicable collective bargaining agreements. Student complaints against fellow students are governed by the Student Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures Policy.