

Drexel University College of Medicine M.D./Ph.D.
Program

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Adopted by the Executive Committee April 2003

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The MD/Ph.D. program is consistent with the guidelines and requirements of both the [Drexel Medical Student Handbook of the Drexel University College of Medicine \(DUCOM\)](#) and [Division of Biomedical Science Programs of DUCOM's Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies \(GSBSPS\) Handbook](#). The following describes academic policies and procedures pertaining to the M.D./Ph.D. Program that are not included in those documents:

- I. The MD/Ph.D. Steering Committee shall be comprised of one faculty member from each of the four DUCOM Basic Science Departments, one faculty member from the Department of Pediatrics at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children, and a minimum of three members from other clinical departments chosen from among the regional campuses of DUCOM. Candidates representing basic science departments will be nominated by the Director or Associate Director of the M.D./Ph.D. Program, the Division of Biomedical Science Programs Director, or the departmental chairs. The members from the pediatrics faculty will be nominated by the Director or Associate Director of the M.D./Ph.D. Program or the academic chair of Pediatrics. Candidates to represent other clinical faculty will be nominated by the Director, the Associate Director, or any member (voting or ex officio) of the M.D./Ph.D. Steering Committee. The nominations will be conducted in agreement with any academic chair of clinical departments. In addition, the deans or research deans or designees of the Drexel University School of Biomedical Engineering, Science and Health Systems (one per school), the deans of students for medical students and biomedical graduate students, the associate dean for admissions, the Vice Dean for Education and the Senior Vice Dean for Research of DUCOM will all serve as members ex officio, with vote. The Senior Vice Dean for Research and the Vice Dean for Education of DUCOM will be consulted on candidates. The M.D./Ph.D. Steering committee must approve any candidate for membership.
- II. The M.D./Ph.D. Steering Committee serves as the oversight and admissions body for the M.D./Ph.D. Program. The M.D./Ph.D. Steering Committee includes three sub-committees - Advisory, Curriculum, and Admissions.
 - a. The standard route of entry is prior to beginning medical school. Admission is based on undergraduate grades, MCAT and CASPer test scores, letters of recommendation, laboratory and clinical experiences, and personal interviews.
 - b. The program doesn't accept transfer applications from students in the M.D. or Ph.D. programs.
- III. M.D./Ph.D. students' performance will be reviewed annually by the M.D./Ph.D. Advisory sub-Committee.
- IV. M.D./Ph.D. students must follow the **Guidelines for Promotion outlined in the [Drexel Medical Student Handbook](#)** to complete and Pass all Medical School coursework (remediation permitted). Students will be considered for dismissal from the program with a failure in any course.
- V. M.D./Ph.D. students must pass the Step I and Step II exams in the first sitting. Failure to meet this requirement will result in grounds for dismissal from the MD/PhD program and return to the MD program because exam failure prolongs the program completion timeline. The student can appeal the decision to MD/PhD Advisory Committee.
- VI. M.D./Ph.D. students must complete two laboratory research rotations. The first rotation must be scheduled in the summer between Years 1 and 2. The second rotation should be scheduled after Year 3 of Medical School. The rotation laboratory supervisor(s) should be chosen in consultation with the M.D./Ph.D. Program Director and the Program Director of the specific graduate program.

- VII. Graduate studies formally begin at the end of Year 3 of Medical School. The first three years of medical schools substitute the first year of coursework in the Division of Biomedical Sciences Programs, except for the **Responsible Conduct of Research IDPT 500S**. Students should follow their graduate program's handbook during the graduate studies phase.
- VIII. Progress toward completion of the Ph.D. involves the following timeline:
- M.D./Ph.D. students must declare their choice of a Graduate Program and a dissertation advisor after the second rotation and before the start of the Fall Semester of Year 1 of graduate work and members of their dissertation committee by the end of the Spring Semester of Year 1. The dissertation committee must include at least one member with an M.D. degree or dual M.D./Ph.D. degree.
 - M.D./Ph.D. students are strongly encouraged to apply for an NIH F30 NRSA award in Ph.D. 2.
 - M.D./Ph.D. students should complete their Ph.D. studies and defend their dissertation within four years of starting graduate studies. Extension of this time limit is subject to the recommendation of the M.D./Ph.D. Advisory Committee for decision by the program director.
- IX. M.D./Ph.D. students **must** have successfully defended and submitted their dissertation to ProQuest, as well as all required forms to the graduate school **prior to** starting Year 4 of Medical School.
- X. M.D./Ph.D. students are required to participate in clinical experiences throughout their Ph.D. studies, particularly during the months before entering Medical Year 4. Arrangements for this experience will be made by the M.D./Ph.D. Advisory Committee members. Clinical engagement can include shadowing opportunities, volunteer clinics, and clinical trial observations, among others. The clinical engagement should be documented on the annual Individual Development Plan, and a faculty supervisor/mentor should be designated for each experience. The faculty supervisor must provide written feedback for the trainee's record on the quality of the experience and the participation by the M.D./Ph.D. trainee.
- XI. M.D./Ph.D. students must demonstrate clinical proficiency prior to entering Year 4 of the medical school curriculum for medical education. To do so, they will complete clinical refresher sessions with the clinical skills group.
- XII. M.D./Ph.D. students can participate in the research elective during Year 4 of the medical school curriculum as outlined in the [Drexel Medical Student Handbook](#).
- XIII. The MD and Ph.D. degrees will be conferred only upon completion of the requirements for **BOTH** degrees. Students should not apply for graduation after the Ph.D. completion.
- XIV. The MD/Ph.D. Steering Committee has been authorized by the BMedSci Executive Committee and the Educational Coordinating Committee of DUCOM to enforce the Policies and Procedures of the M.D./Ph.D. Program.