HONOR SYSTEM - A Student Honor Code was revised by the Albany Medical College student body and was approved by the Board of Trustees on August 6, 1997. Article I of the Student Honor Code of the Albany Medical College states in part:

"As students of medicine and of the medical sciences, we embrace the foregoing physician statement and hereby acknowledge the confidence that has been bestowed upon us along with the responsibilities attendant with this privilege. As future physicians, teachers, and scientific investigators, we recognize the importance of conducting ourselves at the highest level of professional ethics and our duty to serve our mentors, our colleagues and ultimately our patients."

Students, at the time of registration at Albany Medical College, are required to sign a statement that they have read the Honor Code and that they pledge to abide by that Code. Students whose behavior denotes a lack of fitness for the practice of medicine or for the conduct of scientific research shall be considered to be in violation of the Honor Code. Complete copies of the Honor Code are available in the Graduate Studies Program Office and will be made available to accepted students prior to matriculation.

STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS AND IMMUNIZATIONS - It is a New York State requirement that all students be protected by a comprehensive medical health insurance plan. Proof of such health insurance must be presented to the Graduate Studies Program Office prior to registration or coverage may be arranged through the Student Health Program Office, (518) 262-5773. All students will be provided with a physical examination form and an immunization documentation form to be completed by their physician prior to matriculation.

COURSE WORK AND CREDIT HOURS - Normal course load for a fulltime student consists of 10 to 16 credit hours each semester. The lower and upper limits of fulltime registration are 10 and 18 credits each semester. A maximum of 15 credit hours of research each semester may be recorded. Matriculated students registering for course loads outside this range are required to receive the approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies. In the Center for Nurse Anesthesiology, credit for graduate-level practicum courses is allocated according to the individual course and ranges from 200 to 300 practicum hours per credit hour. In the Center for Physician Assistant Studies, credits for graduate level full time rotations range in 40 hours per week or 160 to 200 hours per credit hour.

Courses for graduate credit must be approved by the Executive Committee as recommended by the Curriculum Committee, through the Graduate Studies Operating Committee. New graduate-level courses to be considered for approval must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee by the graduate faculty responsible for the course and accompanied by a detailed course description. Each credit for graduate-level courses is allocated on the basis of 15 lecture hours for didactic courses or 30 laboratory hours for research courses. Courses given at other institutions require the review and recommendation for approval by the Curriculum Committee, through the Graduate Studies Operating Committee. The final approval must come from the Executive Committee to be eligible for graduate credit at The Albany Medical College. The Executive Committee must approve all courses, and the Office of the Graduate Studies Program shall give notice of approval to the Registrar in writing.

COURSE EVALUATION - The Curriculum Committee reviews information from student and faculty evaluations of courses taught each semester and makes recommendations to the
Graduate Studies Operating Committee, Student evaluations, using instruments designed by the Graduate Student Organization in concert with the Curriculum Committee and processed anonymously online with the summary of results forwarded to the Curriculum Committee. Faculty evaluations of courses are gathered by the course director and forwarded to the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee has responsibility for comparing previous year's evaluations and making recommendations to the Executive Committee through the Graduate Studies Operating Committee. The Curriculum Committee will communicate any recommendations to each course director.

**COURSE CANCELLATION** - A request to cancel a course may be made by the Course Director if less than five students register for the course. When a request is made to cancel a course the Curriculum Committee will review and advise the Center Directors on the impact of the course cancellation. Then the Center Directors and the Vice Dean for Academic Administration will vote on the request for course cancellation within 48 hours of the course director's request.

**GRADING SYSTEM AND REPORTING OF GRADES** - All courses that have been approved for graduate credit are graded as follows: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, or F. For each credit hour earned, numerical values are allotted to these grades as follows: A=4, A-=3.7, B+=3.3, B=3, B-=2.7, C+=2.3, C=2, C-=1.7, D=1, and F=0. These numerical values are multiplied by the number of credit hours allotted in each course to obtain "quality points." The grade point average (gpa) is obtained by dividing the total number of quality points by the total number of credit hours. The grades of D and F are not acceptable for course credit toward a graduate degree but will be used in calculating the gpa. Research credits are submitted as S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory). Other courses with the recommended approval of the Curriculum Committee may be graded as P (Pass) or F (Fail) Grades of S/U or P/F are not included in gpa calculations. Aspects of professionalism may be incorporated into the grade.

The criteria for assigning the grade of S (Satisfactory) include enthusiasm for research, excellent work-ethic, independent thinking, keeping current with the literature, conducting experiments in an appropriate and timely manner, thoroughly analyzing the data, keeping excellent records of the experimental procedures and outcomes, writing the results in the form of abstracts, manuscripts, and presentations, and the ability to interact well with others in the laboratory. If the student's mentor believes that the student is not performing up to expected standards the mentor may assign a grade of U (Unsatisfactory).

The criteria to be considered for receiving a grade of P (Pass) includes enthusiasm for the material presented, class participation, an excellent work-ethic, reading the literature, conducting experiments and/or completing assignments in an appropriate and timely manner. If the student does not perform at the expected level during the course, the course director may assign a grade of F (Fail).

Graduate courses taken at other institutions through cross-registration will be included in calculating the gpa. Courses taken at other institutions prior to admission shall not be calculated in the gpa, although such courses may be used to fulfill the degree requirements. Subject to recommended approval by the Progress Committee, a student may remediate or repeat a didactic course in which a grade of C, D, or F was received. Although both grades will appear on the transcript, only the remediated or repeated grade will be used to calculate the gpa. All recommended approvals made by the Progress Committee must receive the approval of both the Graduate Studies Operating Committee and the Executive Committee before they are put in to effect.

Grades should be recorded by Student Records within one week after the end of the course. If a student fails to complete course requirements the grade of incomplete (I) will be recorded on the
transcript and the student will be notified. All requirements in a course must be completed within one month following the last day of examinations in that course. An incomplete (I) will be converted to Failure (F) on the transcript, if the student fails to complete all requirements. Exceptions may be granted for health or emergency reasons.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT - A request to transfer credit to meet a specific Albany Medical College center requirement or elective should be initiated by the student's Center and forwarded to the Office of the Graduate Studies Program. The letter should clearly state which Center requirement or elective each transferred course would replace and should provide assessment of the course in terms of 1) the course content compared to the course that it is intended to replace, and 2), in the case of courses taken several years ago, the appropriateness of the course's material in the current field of study. The supporting documentation must include a detailed description of the course(s) and a certified transcript, and in addition, a student may be required to take a competency examination. Given that the student will be receiving an Albany Medical College degree, he/she should generally not transfer more than half of their total AMC didactic credits; however students may request on a case-by-case basis that additional credits be transferred. Research credits earned at other institutions are not transferable. Requests for transfer of credit must be made within the first year of study in the program. The Curriculum Committee will evaluate the courses for transfer and will recommend the credits for each course. The Committee will determine whether the credits to be transferred are appropriate for fulfilling Graduate Studies Program requirements and will make the appropriate recommendations to the Graduate Studies Operating Committee for review prior to presenting the final recommendation to the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will determine the number of credits acceptable for transfer and will submit their decision and the certified transcript to the Registrar. The approved courses shall be entered on the Albany Medical College Graduate Studies Program transcript showing institution, course title, and credit hours. Grades earned at another institution or program will not be used to calculate the gpa for Albany Medical College graduate students. The above does not apply to grades earned at another institution through cross-registration or by other approved mechanisms while a matriculated student at Albany Medical College.

A student who has completed a course or degree program in the Graduate Studies Program of the Albany Medical College may, within two years, transfer all non-research credits with a grade of A or B into a doctoral program, at the request of the Center Graduate Director. These grades will be reflected in the gpa with the recommendation of the Curriculum Committee and approval of the Executive Committee.

If a continuously matriculated student transfers from one Center to another while pursuing the same degree, research and course credits are transferable, subject to the approval of the new Center. The Curriculum Committee, with the support of both Centers, will determine whether the results of a successfully completed Written Preliminary Examination may be transferred from one Center to another. Recommendation for action will be made to the Graduate Studies Operating Committee for review prior to presenting the recommendation to the Executive Committee.

If a continuously matriculated student transfers from the Masters degree program to the Doctoral degree program (which requires the approval of the Center and the Graduate Studies Operating Committee), all research and didactic credits are transferable.

AUDITING OF COURSES - Auditing students are permitted to register, but not for credit, in any course approved for graduate credit. The audit must be approved by the Course Director and by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies prior to registration. Limitations and tuition charges set for non-matriculated Students apply. Audit shall be indicated on the transcript by the designation AUD. A course taken for audit credit cannot, at a later time, be used for credit or to satisfy degree requirements for that course.
COURTESY COURSE ATTENDANCE - Students, fellows, and other staff members of Albany Medical Center may attend lectures in a course with permission of the instructor and/or supervisor without registration. Courtesy course attendance cannot be considered as registration for auditing of courses. Such individuals may not register at a later time in order to claim credit for such attendance.

REGISTRATION - Responsibility for notifying graduate students of critical dates such as registration rests with the Office of the Graduate Studies Program in conjunction with the Office of Student Records. Students must be registered continuously (for every semester) until completion of the Defense of Thesis, or request a Leave of Absence. Students must register by the date specified or be subject to a late fee of $20. Registration for matriculated students is accomplished through a computerized registration process.

ADD/DROP COURSES - Changes in courses or credits may be accomplished by submitting a completed, signed Graduate Studies Program Add/Drop Registration Form to the Office of the Graduate Studies Program. A student may add a course prior to the completion of 30% of the course, based on total contact hours. The procedure for withdrawal is to use the Add/Drop form together with the written approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies. A student may withdraw from a course prior to completion of 30 percent of the course. Such withdrawals shall be indicated on the transcript by W. A student withdrawing from a course after 30% of the course has been completed but prior to completion of 60% will receive a grade of W/P (withdrawn/passing) or W/F (withdrawn/failing) at the discretion of the Course Director. The determination of 30% and 60% is based upon total contact hours. W, W/P, and W/F are not used to calculate the GPA and a course in which a student has received one of these grades does not count in the determination of credits for fulltime student status. Requests for course withdrawal after completion of 60 percent of a course will be denied. Exceptions may be made if a health or emergency reason exists. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, after consultation with the Course Director, will decide on the validity of any requested exception.

FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM - The Faculty of the Graduate Studies Program shall be selected from the faculty members of the Albany Medical College. Each Center shall prepare an annual list of its graduate faculty and a list of those faculty who may serve as mentors. All research center mentors must be fundable scientists. All research for degree purposes must be conducted under the direct supervision of a faculty member of the Graduate Studies Program.

CENTER PEROGATIVE - The statements in this rulebook reflect the minimal standards and requirements of the Graduate Studies Program. A Center may establish more rigorous standards and additional requirements. Before matriculation, students will be provided with a written set of the Center's supplemental rules and regulations, if such supplemental rules and regulations exist in that program. Such requirements are subject to review and recommendation for approval by the Curriculum Committee. Recommendation for action will be made to the Graduate Studies Operating Committee for review prior to presenting the recommendation to the Executive Committee. The final approval must come from the Executive Committee. Center requirements are available in the Graduate Studies Program Office.

DOCTORAL STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT - Upon matriculation, doctoral students may receive Albany Medical College financial support. This support may be either in the form of a Predoctoral Stipend or as a Predoctoral Research Assistant. This support is dependent upon the student being in good academic standing. This would include maintaining a grade point average of at least 3.0. If a student should be placed on academic probation, stipend support may be terminated.

Graduate students do not cease to be full-time students on the day they successfully defend their thesis, as time is needed to make revisions to the thesis and get it bound. For doctoral students,
stipend support may be extended beyond the defense of thesis as deemed necessary by the thesis advisor/mentor but will not normally exceed 30 days following successful defense of the thesis.

**Pre-doctoral Research Assistant** - This category includes all students supported by Albany Medical College institutional and grant funds. These students are considered to be temporary employees and will receive a W-2 form or other statement of taxes, (such as a 1042-S form) at the end of the calendar year. However, this employment is for educational purposes and the students are exempt from the AMC Drug Screening and Criminal Background Checks, (as approved by the Vice Dean for Academic Administration and AMC Human Resources on 2/23/04).

A Predoctoral Stipend is provided to support doctoral students on a NIH Training Grant. It is a subsistence allowance to help defray living expenses during the student's research training experience. These funds are not payment for services and are therefore not salaries. However, all or part of this income may be subject to Federal or State income tax. (*See table below.) Albany Medical College does not issue a W-2 or 1099 form for Predoctoral Stipend income. Students receiving a Predoctoral Stipend are advised to use their final stipend check stub at the end of the calendar year as a statement of stipend monies received in calculating their annual tax returns. Students may ask AMC Payroll to send them a letter indicating the amount received during the calendar year. Students You may wish to seek the advice of a qualified tax attorney or accountant.

**Employment of Master of Science Students** - It is permitted, but not encouraged, for an basic science M.S. student to work outside their mentor's lab.

**Laboratory Rotations** - It is recommended that three rotations be completed by the end of the first academic year. The length and scope of the rotations will be defined by each Center. Students can only rotate through laboratories in their own Center. If a student wishes to rotate through a different Center, a Director from each of the concerned Centers must meet with the student to determine the goal of the rotation.

**Center Transfer** - A student may request transfer from one Center to another within the Graduate Studies Program. Such a request should be submitted to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies who will notify the appropriate Center Directors. The determination on whether a transfer is feasible must be decided by mutual agreement of the involved Center Directors.

**Program Transfer** - A student may request transfer from the M.S. to Ph.D. Program within the same Center. To be eligible the student must have a grade point average of at least 3.0 and written support must be provided by the Center Director (s) and the student's mentor or graduate director. The request will be reviewed and acted on by the Graduate Studies Operating Committee.

In the event that a Ph.D. student's GPA falls below the acceptable level of 3.0, or a student wishes to change programs for another reason, the student may request transfer to the M.S. program. The Center Director (s) and the student's mentor or graduate director must provide written support. The request will be reviewed and acted on by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies. After completion of the requirements for the M.S. program, including thesis defense a student may reapply to the Ph.D. Program.

**Degree Requirements - Doctor of Philosophy Degree in the Basic Sciences** - The course of study for the Ph.D. takes approximately five to six years. The residency requirement is two years.
A minimum of 74 credit hours is required for the Ph.D. degree. The number of required course work credits is between 24 and 30, depending on the Center and 50 credit hours of research. (A Center cannot require more than 30 didactic credits. The required credit hours of course work is comprised of didactic and elective courses selected by the student in consultation with a mentor. The required number of credits does not include credits for journal clubs. A course in Ethics will also be required. All students are required to demonstrate competence in English in the oral and written communication of their research. Upon recommendation of a Center or Thesis Committee, students may be required to undertake remedial English training.

A maximum of 15 credit hours of research and a total of 18 credit hours may be recorded each semester. If a student registers for more than three didactic credits, the amount of research credit must be reduced by the corresponding amount. Students are expected to register for research credits during all semesters while engaged in thesis research, even if the research credit requirement has been fulfilled. In the event that a student's GPA falls below the acceptable level of 3.0, the student may request transfer to the M.S. program. After completion of the requirements for the M.S. program, including thesis defense, a student may reapply to the Ph.D. Program.

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY EXAMINATIONS** - Doctoral students are required to pass three examinations: The Written Examination, the Oral Examination, and the Thesis Defense. The Graduate Student Progress Committee, through the Graduate Studies Program Office, must be informed in advance of the scheduled examination dates. After completion of the examinations, the Graduate Student Progress Committee, through the Graduate Studies Program Office, must be notified in writing of the result of each examination. Appropriate forms for notification are available in the Graduate Studies Program Office or may be found on the intranet under forms [http://intranet.amc.gradstu/Forms/forms.html](http://intranet.amc.gradstu/Forms/forms.html).

In order to take these examinations, students must be in good academic standing as defined by a minimum GPA of 3.0 and satisfactory grades in research.

All components of the Written Examination must be completed by the end of September at the start of the third year of fulltime enrollment. By the end of September at the beginning of the fourth year, doctoral students must pass the Oral Examination. The minimum interval between passing the Oral Examination and the Thesis Defense is nine months. Students’ progress toward meeting these deadlines will be monitored by the Graduate Student Progress Committee.

All students are required to demonstrate competence in English in the oral and written communication of their research. Upon recommendation of a Center, Oral Examination Committee, or Thesis Committee, students may be required to undertake remedial English training.

**WRITTEN EXAMINATION** - By the end of September at the start of the third year, students matriculating in a Ph.D. Program within a specific Center take a written examination prepared by representatives from that Center. In order to take these examinations, students must have achieved a minimum GPA of 3.0 and be in good academic standing. Both the format and scope of the exam are specified by the Center. Each Center will define the passing criteria prior to the exam. The purpose of the exam is to evaluate student progress in two areas: [1] comprehensive evaluation of the student's scientific background and [2] evaluation of the student's ability to use that knowledge to address research problems. Following the completion of this exam, the student's research mentor will submit a report to the student, the Office of Graduate Studies, and members of the student's thesis committee. If the student fails the Written Exam, he/she will have to retake the exam within six months of the original exam but not later than December of the third year. Students will only be permitted to retake this examination once. If the student fails the reexamination, he/she is subject to dismissal.
ORAL EXAMINATION - Doctoral students will select an Oral Examination Committee by September 30th of their third year of study, although centers may require the committee formation prior to this date. The Oral Examination Committee consists of the mentor (nonvoting) and five voting members. The voting members will include at least one holding a primary appointment in the student's Center, at least one not holding a primary appointment in the student's Center, and at least three must be from within the Institution. A maximum of two members may be individuals from outside of the Albany Medical College. The final committee composition is subject to approval by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies. The student's mentor shall be a nonvoting member of both the Oral Examination Committee and Thesis Defense Committee and shall serve as the chair of both committees. The mentor (chair) of the committee is required to have an appointment in the Graduate Studies Program of the Albany Medical College. The committee is selected by the graduate student, mentor, and center director; the final committee composition is subject to the approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies.

By the end of September at the beginning of the fourth year, students must pass an Oral Examination. To be eligible for this examination, the student must have earned a minimum of 12 didactic course credits and 20 research credits, and be in good academic standing. This examination is based upon a NIH-style research proposal submitted by the student to his/her Oral Examination Committee at least two weeks prior to the exam. The research proposal must follow the standard NIH guidelines and be based upon the student's proposed area of research. The student will be examined on the proposal as well as related subjects. A four-fifths vote of approval by the committee is required for successful completion of this examination. Following the completion of this exam, the student's research advisor will submit a report to the student, the Graduate Studies Program office, and members of the student's thesis committee. The research proposal shall remain on file in the Center office.

In the event that a student fails the Oral Examination, he/she will have to retake the exam within six months of the original exam but no later than the end of March of the fourth year. Students will be permitted to retake the Oral Exam once.

The Oral Examination is not open to the public. The thesis defense for a Master's degree cannot substitute for the Oral Examination for the Ph.D. Degree.

Doctoral students who matriculated in the Fall of 2004 or earlier will be awarded a Master of Science degree upon successful completion of the Oral Examination and having completed 12 credits of graduate course work and 20 credits of research. Students will automatically be enrolled in the M.S./Ph.D. pathway if they do not have a M.S. in the discipline of the program in which they are matriculated.

As of the class matriculating in the Fall 2005, only two separate tracks will be available: either the M.S. or the Ph.D degree. Each degree program will require a thesis defense. If a student in the Ph.D. program decides to leave the doctoral program following successful completion of their oral examination and decides to instead obtain an M.S. degree, they will be required to write and successfully defend an M.S. degree thesis.

THESIS DEFENSE COMMITTEE - The composition of the Thesis Defense Committee is determined by the same rules as specified for the Oral Examination Committee and is usually the same Committee. The Thesis Defense Committee is required to meet at intervals of six months to review the progress of the thesis research and to make appropriate recommendations. The student's mentor is responsible for submitting the six-month student progress report to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies.

The following procedures are to be followed for submission of the dissertation, defense of dissertation, and evaluation of defense.
Each Ph.D. student is expected to complete 50 credit hours of thesis research, the Center required number of didactic credits, and complete a set of hypothesis-driven experiments.

**FINAL DATA SET MEETING** - At the time of the final Data Set meeting, the doctoral student must have at least one peer-reviewed journal article (in press or published), on which the student is the first author. The student must attach a copy of the published article(s) and/or a copy of the journal acceptance letter(s) to the Data Set Committee meeting form. Prior to the defense of the Ph.D. Thesis, the student must convene a thesis committee meeting for the presentation of the data set that comprises the thesis. At least four of the five voting members of the student's thesis committee must agree that the data set is sufficient for the thesis and that essentially no more experiments are necessary. A final target date for the thesis defense will be scheduled for no later than four months beyond approval of the final data set. If the student fails to defend their thesis within this time period they will be required to petition the Student Progress Committee for an extension. A letter will be written to the student's postdoctoral employer indicating that they have not yet completed their degree requirements. The student's funding may be discontinued at the discretion of their mentor.

**SUBMISSION OF THESIS FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** - Copies of the thesis must be submitted to the members of the Thesis Defense Committee at least three weeks before the scheduled date of the defense. Each member of the Committee must review the dissertation promptly. If any Committee member finds the dissertation not representative of the approved data sets or not coherently written, the chair of the Committee is to be notified in writing, with copies to the other Committee members, within one week of receipt of the dissertation. The nature of the objection(s) will be specified. The chair and the student must decide together whether to revise the dissertation or to defend it as originally submitted. If revisions are made, the revised pages must be distributed to the members of the Committee at least one week before the date of the defense. If there is a decision to delay the thesis defense, members of the committee and the Office of Graduate Studies must be notified in writing describing the nature of the delay. A new target date for the final defense must be set at that time.

A copy of the dissertation will be delivered to the Graduate Studies Program Office for public display in the Albany Medical College Schaffer Library no later than one week prior to the date of the defense. Consult the Instructions for Submission of the Ph.D. Thesis available in the Graduate Studies Program Office.

The student will acquire a copy of the form "Final Examination Report for the (Ph.D./M.S.) Degree." This form requires the signature of the mentor and committee members and should be completed at the time of the defense. The form must be returned to the Graduate Studies Program Office promptly after the defense.

**DEFENSE OF THESIS** - A minimum of four voting Committee members must be present at the defense. It is highly recommended that students defend their thesis no later than April 15th. A student will not be permitted to graduate unless all degree requirements are completed by May 1st.

**EVALUATION OF THE THESIS DEFENSE** - The candidate will present a public seminar of the thesis research after which the Thesis Defense Committee will evaluate the thesis in closed session. Following the seminar and an open question and answer session, the student and the Thesis Defense Committee will convene privately for the final examination, which should last no more than two to three hours. The examination is restricted to the research and to allied topics that relate to the candidate's dissertation. The student will be expected to defend his/her thesis in terms of hypothesis, experimental approach, data interpretation, conclusions, and future studies. At the end of the examination, each committee member will cast either a PASS or FAIL vote.
A defense is successful if a student receives at least four PASS votes. If a student receives more than one FAIL vote the defense is unsuccessful. Following this meeting the chair of the Thesis Defense Committee will submit a final report of the examination to the Office of Graduate Studies. In all cases, a thesis defense is unsuccessful if four PASS votes have not been recorded in the Graduate Studies Program Office following the examination. If the thesis defense is not successful on the initial attempt, a second defense may be granted upon the recommendation of a majority of the Thesis Defense Committee and the recommendation of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, subject to approval by the Executive Committee. If the student fails the reexamination he/she is subject to dismissal. Publication of portions of a student's research prior to submission of the dissertation is permissible. The thesis must be defended within seven years from the date of initial registration, except under extenuating circumstances that are acceptable to the Graduate Student Progress Committee and the Executive Committee.

Following the thesis defense, corrections should be made and the copies of the thesis to be bound must be submitted to the Schaffer Library no later than May 1st. Bound copies of the fully corrected and approved thesis must be presented to the Schaffer Library and to the student's Center Office, and the dissertation must be registered with Dissertation Abstracts, Inc, Ann Arbor, Michigan. The student will pay the fee for this registration.

Graduate students do not cease to be full-time students on the day they successfully defend their thesis, as time is needed to make revisions to the thesis and get it bound. For doctoral students, stipend support may be extended beyond the defense of thesis as deemed necessary by the thesis advisor/mentor but will not normally exceed 30 days following successful defense of the thesis.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN THE BASIC SCIENCES

The course of study for the Masters of Science degree usually will extend over a two to three year period. The residency requirement for a M.S. candidate is one year.

A minimum of 32 credit hours is required for the M.S. degree. The number of required course work credits is between 12 and 18, depending on the Center and 20 credit hours of research. (A Center cannot require more than 18 didactic credits. Course work is comprised of required and elective courses selected by the student in consultation with a mentor. The required number of credits does not include credits for journal clubs. A course in Ethics will also be required. All students are required to demonstrate competence in the oral and written communication of their research in English. Upon recommendation of a Center or Thesis Committee, students may be required to undertake remedial English training.

THESIS RESEARCH AND DEFENSE - MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN THE BASIC SCIENCES

In order to qualify for the thesis defense, students must be in good academic standing, with a minimum gpa of 2.5. Fulltime M.S. students are required to complete all requirements and receive their degree within two to three years except in extenuating circumstances that are acceptable to the mentor, the Graduate Student Progress Committee, and the Executive Committee.

Students in the M.S. Degree program will select a thesis committee by September first of their second year of study. The Thesis Committee consists of the mentor who is the nonvoting chair and three voting members. One member must be from the student's Center and one must be from outside the student's Center. The remaining member may be from either inside or outside of AMC. The Committee is selected by the graduate student, mentor and Center Director; the final committee composition is subject to the approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies.

The M.S. Thesis Committee will meet twice each year to monitor the student's progress and to fine-tune their research program. At least two months prior to the defense of the Masters thesis,
the student must convene a thesis committee meeting for the presentation of the data sets that
comprise the thesis. At least two of the three voting members of the student's thesis committee
must agree that the data sets are sufficient for the thesis and that no more experiments are
necessary. A final target date for the thesis defense will be scheduled at this meeting. The thesis
defense will be conducted as described previously for the Ph.D. program except that the public
seminar is optional. The evaluation of the M.S. Thesis Defense will be identical to that of the
Ph.D. Defense.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS - MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN THE CLINICAL SCIENCES
– Center for Nurse Anesthesiology - The course of study for the Masters of Science degree in the
Center for Nurse Anesthesiology extends over a 26 month period. A minimum of 40 credit hours
of course work and 8 credit hours of research are required for the M.S. degree. Graduate
students in the Center for Nurse Anesthesiology are required to maintain a gpa of 2.5 to remain in
good academic standing, pass ANES 505, 506, 507A, 507B, 511A and 511B with a C or better,
and all other courses with a B or better.

THESIS RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS - MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN NURSE
ANESTHESIOLOGY - The thesis research requirements for the Masters of Science Degree in
the Center for Nurse Anesthesiology are designed to provide the graduate student the opportunity
to develop skills in critical thinking and clinical judgment. The outcome of the thesis research
requirements is for the graduate student to prepare a scholarly project, or proposal, according to
Center guidelines and develop and make a formal presentation to the Center and the
Department. Evaluation of the thesis research will be completed by the mentor and a faculty
reader.

No later than May 31st during the first year of study, the student will select a faulty mentor who
will evaluate the thesis research. The faculty mentor will be a member of the Center for Nurse
Anesthesiology or the Department of Anesthesiology. The faculty mentor will serve as the
primary responsible individual for evaluation of the thesis research.

No later than September 30th during the second year of study, the student will select a faculty
reader who will evaluate the thesis research. The faculty reader will be a member of the Center
for Nurse Anesthesiology, Department of Anesthesiology or a member of one of the basic
sciences research centers.

The requirements for the thesis research will be completed during the fall semester of the second
year of study.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS – MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN THE CLINICAL
SCIENCES – THE CENTER FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES – The course of study for
the Master of Science degree in the Center for Physician Assistant Studies extends over a 28-
month period. The program consists of 67 credits during the first four terms of didactic
instruction, and 39 clinical and research credits over the last three terms. Graduate students in
the Center for Physician Assistant Studies are required to maintain a GPA of 2.5 to remain in
good academic standing and must pass all courses with grades of C- or better.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS - MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
STUDIES – The thesis requirements for the Master of Science degree in the Center for Physician
Assistant Studies are designed to provide the graduate student the opportunity to develop skills in
critical thinking and clinical judgment. The outcome of the thesis requirements is for the graduate
student to prepare a scholarly project developed according to the Center guidelines and to make
a formal presentation based on the project to the Center. Evaluation of the project will be
completed by the Mentor, a Content Specialist, and a faculty Reader. The requirements for the
project will be completed during the final 12 months of study. (See "Master's Project Guidelines" contained in the Student Handbook of the Center for Physician Assistant Studies.)

COMMENCEMENT - Please note: for a student to receive a graduate degree at the annual Commencement Exercises, all requirements must be completed by May 1 of that year. Please see the checklist of degree requirements for details. Graduate students who have satisfactorily completed all requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy or Master of Science degree are recommended to the Board of Trustees of the Albany Medical Center to receive their graduate degrees at the annual Commencement Exercise. Attendance at Commencement is required for all degree candidates.

EXIT INTERVIEW - By no later than May 15th, the student must complete an exit interview in the Graduate Studies Program Office before leaving Albany Medical College. The interview will include submitted copies of all published papers with the student as first author; completion of the NSF Survey of Earned Doctorates; forwarding address information and clearance form.

LABORATORY RESPONSIBILITIES – When a student leaves AMC for any reason including withdrawal, leave of absence, or graduation, the student must update all laboratory notebooks and information.

ACADEMIC STATUS - Poor academic achievement may lead to dismissal from the Graduate Studies Program. Failure to maintain a GPA that meets the standards of the Graduate Studies Program and the Center, or failure to pass any of the required examinations or two unsatisfactory evaluations in research are possible reasons for academic dismissal.

The Graduate Student Progress Committee will evaluate the academic performance of each student at the end of each semester. The Graduate Student Progress Committee, upon determining that a student is performing in an unsatisfactory manner, will, through the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, notify the student and Center Director concerned in writing. Doctor of Philosophy and Masters of Science students are required to maintain minimum GPAs of 3.0 and 2.5, respectively. A student may be granted one probationary semester by the Graduate Student Progress Committee and the Executive Committee if there are reasonable expectations that an acceptable GPA can be obtained during this probationary period. At the request of the Center, subject to approval by the Graduate Student Progress Committee and the Executive Committee, a graduate student may be allowed a second probationary semester to improve his or her GPA. Institutional support in terms of stipend and health insurance, which is determined by the center and research mentor, may not be provided to a student during this second probationary period. If at the end of the second semester of probation the student's GPA is not acceptable, the student may be subject to dismissal.

Students failing the Written Examination, Oral Examination, or the Thesis Defense are subject to dismissal. If a student fails any of these examinations, he/she will have to retake the exam within six months of the original exam. Each of these examinations may be repeated once. The Written Exam may not be retaken later than December of the third year; the Oral Exam must be retaken no later than the end of March of the fourth year. If the student fails the reexamination, he/she is subject to dismissal.

A student who receives two grades of Unsatisfactory (U) in research will be dismissed unless the mentor and the Center Director successfully petitions the Graduate Student Progress Committee and the Executive Committee for continued matriculation based on extenuating circumstances.

TIME TO DEGREE COMPLETION FOR Ph.D. DEGREE - Doctoral students are subject to dismissal for failure to complete all requirements within seven years from the date of matriculation. The Mentor and Center Director may petition the Graduate Student Progress
Committee and the Executive Committee for an extension based on extenuating circumstances. Periods of time granted as a leave of absence do not apply toward the seven-year program completion rule.

**TIME TO DEGREE COMPLETION FOR MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE** - students (excluding students in the M.S./Ph.D. Pathway) are subject to dismissal for failure to complete all requirements within three years from the date of matriculation. The mentor and Center Director may petition the Graduate Student Progress Committee and the Executive Committee for an extension based on extenuating circumstances. Periods of time granted as a leave of absence do not apply toward the three-year rule program completion rule.

Students may also be dismissed for violation of the Student Honor Code of the Graduate Studies Program. All procedures in the Honor Code will be followed. Notification of dismissal for any cause will come from the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies.

**APPEAL OF DISMISSAL** - A student dismissed because of inadequate academic, research, or clinical performance may make a written request for reinstatement into the Graduate Studies Program no later than ten working days after receiving written notification of termination. Unless there is a patient safety issue, a student may continue to attend classes and clinical rotations pending the final outcome of the appeal of dismissal. Such a request must be forwarded to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies who shall convene and chair an ad hoc review committee no later than fourteen working days after receipt of the request. This committee will consist of four members of the graduate faculty, not from the Graduate Student Progress Committee and chosen by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, a graduate student, not from the student's Center and chosen by the Graduate Student Organization, a director from the student's Center (nonvoting), and the student's mentor (nonvoting). All members must be present to review and act on the appeal request. Counsel for the student and Albany Medical College may be present in an advisory capacity only and may not address the committee. The student will be allowed access to any pertinent information prior to the hearing that is allowed by the Right of Privacy Act. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee shall be polled. A majority vote will decide to uphold or deny the request. The recommendation of the committee will be transmitted to the Dean of the Albany Medical College who will make the final decision. The procedure for appeals of dismissal (or other adverse actions) due to circumstances other than academic or research is given in the Honor Code.

**GRADUATE STUDENT PERSONAL LEAVE TIME** - Graduate students may be granted a personal leave each year. The time allowed will be determined by mutual agreement of the mentor and student. The suggested guideline for use by the mentor and student is two or three weeks per year.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE** - A leave of absence will not be granted for less than one semester or for more than two years. Written application for such a leave is required and must include the reason(s) and duration for the proposed leave. The application must be countersigned by the student's mentor and the Center Director(s). The Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies will grant or deny requests for a leave of absence. A leave of absence is usually granted for one year at a time. A second year may be requested if needed. A student on a leave of absence may be required to commence repayment of loans prior to completion of their leave, in accordance with Federal Education Law.

A leave of absence does not count toward the maximum time allowed in a degree program, (seven years for a Ph.D. and three years for a M.S. degree program).

If a student does not return from a leave of absence by the designated time or does not apply for and receive an extension, the student will be dismissed from the Graduate Studies Program.
MATERNITY LEAVE
Maternity Leave (6 weeks for a natural birth or up to 8 weeks for a surgical birth) with continued stipend support is available for graduate students. Additional leave may be arranged by way of the Graduate Studies Program Leave of Absence Policy.

Recognizing that certain reproductive health hazards may be associated with continued exposure to chemicals, infectious agents or gases in the laboratory, or to clinical settings, students are required to notify their supervisor as soon as they are aware that they are pregnant. Adherence to the AMC Environmental Health and Safety Policy and Procedure No. 1.704.130: Potential Reproductive Health Hazards is mandatory.

TRANSFER POLICY - Graduate students who wish to transfer to other graduate programs/schools will be assisted only under the following conditions. The transfer process will be initiated upon receipt of an administrative fee of $500. The administrative fee may be waived at the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies. Students receiving scholarships and/or stipends will be assisted only if their reasons for transferring are exceptional. Albany Medical College will reconsider and may curtail further scholarship and/or stipend support for any students who declare their intention to transfer.

If a student in the doctoral or masters degree program does not complete their studies and will be attending another medical or graduate school, the Albany Medical College will notify the student's medical or graduate school in writing.

AMENDMENTS - The Rules and Regulations of the Graduate Studies Program may be amended as approved by the Executive Committee.

EXCEPTIONS - A student who feels justified in requesting an exception to any of the regulations contained herein may do so in writing to the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will make a final ruling on the request for exception within two months of the receipt of the request.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS - The postdoctoral fellowship is a period of apprenticeship meant to advance the professional career of research scientists. With guidance of the mentor in whose laboratory the fellow works, the postdoctoral fellow will enhance his/her knowledge base, management skills and research and other skills necessary for a satisfying, productive and successful professional career. In order to initiate the fellowship, the fellow and the mentor must develop an agreement that outlines the objectives, requirements, time frame and outcomes of the fellowship experience. An annual review of the fellow's performance will be required. The fellow will also evaluate their experience from their perspective on an annual basis in order to assure that the fellowship is successful. Documentation of the reviews must be filed with the Center Director. Individual AMC health insurance will be provided.

ADMISSION TO THE STUDY OF MEDICINE AT THE ALBANY MEDICAL COLLEGE - Graduate students cannot apply for admission to the M.D. degree program of the Albany Medical College before the start of the academic year in which all of the requirements for their Ph.D. or M.S. degree are expected to be completed. The last date for defense of thesis is August 1st. All revisions must be completed and the thesis submitted for binding to the Schaffer Library prior to matriculation. Failure to meet either of these deadlines will result in forfeiture of the student's acceptance to the Albany Medical College M.D. degree program. Completion of a graduate degree program at Albany Medical College does not assure admission to the M.D. Program, although the Albany Medical College Admissions Committee may consider accomplishments by a student in the Graduate Studies Program.

Students please refer to your Center's individual rulebook for additional rules.