Graduate Program in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science
Department of Pathology, Medical Laboratory Science Division
August 20, 2015

Section I: Division Policies – Graduate Program

A. Academic Performance and Conduct

Student Rights and Responsibilities

As stated in the University of Utah Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities ("Student Code": http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html), "Students at the University of Utah are members of an academic community committed to basic and broadly shared ethical principles and concepts of civility." Students are expected to treat others and to be treated with integrity, autonomy, justice, respect and responsibility. If a student in the Division perceives inappropriate conduct or a violation of ethical principles either toward themselves or others, or is accused of such, they should first discuss their concerns with their mentor or the involved faculty member. If the mentor has a conflict of interest, students may bring their concerns to their supervisory committee, to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), or to the Division Chief and Department Chair. The Division Chief should be informed of all instances of perceived academic misconduct, as described below. **The Department encourages informal resolution of problems, but concerns regarding inappropriate conduct or ethical issues that cannot be resolved informally by mutual consent with all parties will be handled as outlined in the Student Code**. Specific division policies on academic standards, academic misconduct and resolving student-mentor difficulties are described below.

Students who feel they may have a disability for which they would like to seek accommodation should consult the U of U Center for Disability Services at: http://disability.utah.edu/ [(801) 581-5020; 200 S. Central Campus Drive, Room 162].

The University of Utah is committed to ensuring a quality environment where all members of the university community are treated in an equitable and fair manner. Students who feel they have been subjected to illegal discrimination or harassment may consult the University of Utah Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action at: http://www.oeo.utah.edu/ [Park Building, Rm 135, (801) 581-8365]

Policy on Standards of Academic Performance

The graduate program in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science is a degree granting division of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Division of the Department of Pathology at the University of Utah School of Medicine. It is the responsibility of the Division to train graduate students and to monitor the progress of students and assure that all requirements for graduation are satisfactorily completed.

The Division (also referred to herein as the Program) maintains high academic standards. Occasionally, unacceptable or incomplete academic performance will require assessment of the student, and appropriate action. Examples of situations requiring attention are: 1) failure to pass all courses (grade of B- or better); 2) GPA (either cumulatively or in a particular semester) of less than 3.0; and 3) unsatisfactory completion of laboratory rotations or research performance;

and 4) unsatisfactory progress toward completion of thesis research within the time-frame specified by the division. In addition, even in the absence of the triggering criteria listed above, an unsatisfactory pattern of academic performance may require an assessment of the student and the need for appropriate action. The student, the student's advisor, the Director of the Graduate Studies in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science, and the Department Chair will be notified of perceived failures to meet the academic standards. The student's advisor, in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies for Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science, will decide on an appropriate action and the decision will be reported to the student. Unacceptable academic performance could lead to a maximal sanction of dismissal from the Program (see Student Code, University Policy 6-400; http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html).

In cases requiring dismissal from the Program, the Director of Graduate Studies will file a "Recommendation for Change of Graduate Classification" form with the Graduate Records Office. The student may appeal the decision, following the procedure outline in the Student Code (University Policy 6-400).

Policy on Standards of Academic Conduct

In a research environment, there is an absolute need for trust between a student and their mentor. Students in the department are held to the highest standards of academic and professional integrity, and academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct includes but is not limited to 1) cheating, 2) plagiarism, 3) misrepresenting one's work, 4) fabrication or falsification of data, 5) disobeying any Program rule for academic work, and 6) intentionally helping another person commit an act of misconduct.

Students committing misconduct can expect up to three levels of sanction; sanctions imposed by the instructor(s), sanctions imposed by the Program, and sanctions imposed by the University. At a minimum, cheating on an examination will result in a grade of "0" by the instructor for that exam. An instructor may impose a maximum sanction of failing the student in the course. The Program could expel the student from the Program, and the University could expel the student from the University or even revoke a previously awarded degree. For each level of sanction, the student has the right to appeal. All cases of misconduct will be documented in the student's file.

Program Rules for Academic Work

The following rules apply for all written assignments and exams (including the preliminary exam and dissertation proposal), unless specifically contradicted by the course instructor (courses) or student advisor when the student is actively engaged in thesis research (thesis committee):
  1) A student must work entirely alone.
  2) A student may not share information about any aspect of the exam with any student who has not already taken the exam that year, or its equivalent in future years.
  3) A student must direct all questions concerning examinations to the course instructor or student advisor (mentor) as appropriate.
  4) It is the student's responsibility to obtain clarification from the instructor or mentor if there are questions concerning these requirements.

  5) A student may not plagiarize.

The department faculty reserves the right to use electronic software to scan reports and proposals for evidence of plagiarism.

Definitions of Academic Misconduct

Because many graduate students are funded by training and research grants and must abide by federal standards, it is important to know the definition of scientific misconduct as the government defines it:

National Academy of Sciences Definition of Misconduct in Science
Misconduct in science is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism, in proposing, performing, or reporting research. Misconduct in science does not include errors in the recording, selection, or analysis of data; differences in opinions involving the interpretation of data; or misconduct unrelated to the research process.

University Policy Definition of Academic Misconduct
The University Student Code (http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html) further describes activities that constitute academic misconduct and academic sanctions that may be imposed, as follows:

1. "**Academic misconduct**" includes, but is not limited to, cheating, misrepresenting one's work, inappropriately collaborating, plagiarism, and fabrication or falsification of information, as defined further below. It also includes facilitating academic misconduct by intentionally helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

    a. "**Cheating**" involves the unauthorized possession or use of information, materials, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise, or the unauthorized communication with another person during such an exercise. Common examples of cheating include, but are not limited to, copying from another student's examination, submitting work for an in-class exam that has been prepared in advance, violating rules governing the administration of exams, having another person take an exam, altering one's work after the work has been returned and before resubmitting it, or violating any rules relating to academic conduct of a course or program.
    b. "**Misrepresenting one's work**" includes, but is not limited to, representing material prepared by another as one's own work, or submitting the same work in more than one course without prior permission of both faculty members.
    c. "**Plagiarism**" means the intentional unacknowledged use or incorporation of any other person's work in, or as a basis for, one's own work offered for academic consideration or credit or for public presentation. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, representing as one's own, without attribution, any other individual's words, phrasing, ideas, sequence of ideas, information or any other mode or content of expression.
    d. "**Fabrication**" or "**falsification**" includes reporting experiments or measurements or statistical analyses never performed; manipulating or altering data or other manifestations of research to achieve a desired result; falsifying or misrepresenting background

> information, credentials or other academically relevant information; or selective reporting, including the deliberate suppression of conflicting or unwanted data. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data and/or results.

2. "**Academic sanction**" means a sanction imposed on a student for engaging in academic or professional misconduct. It may include, but is not limited to, requiring a student to retake an exam(s) or rewrite a paper(s), a grade reduction, a failing grade, probation, suspension or dismissal from a program or the University, or revocation of a student's degree or certificate. It may also include community service, a written reprimand, and/or a written statement of misconduct that can be put into an appropriate record maintained for purposes of the profession or discipline for which the student is preparing.

Resolving Academic Misconduct Issues

The graduate program of the Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Sciences and University encourage informal resolution of minor problems involving standards of academic conduct. Students are urged to discuss problems with the involved instructor(s) and/or their advisor. Faculty may place letters of concern of conduct in the student's file if warranted.

A more formal process is required when there is a serious violation or if a student is charged with a second instance or multiple instances of academic misconduct. This process is detailed in the section entitled "Procedures to Resolve Academic Issues" of this document. All accusations of cases of misconduct that are verified in this process will be documented in the student's file.

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Student Pledge

I pledge to follow and promote these standards while a student in the Master's Degree Program in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science. I will strive to achieve academic excellence through diligent work, seeking help and guidance from department faculty, and by conscientiously attending to any remedial work required. I will not commit acts of misconduct and will promote the department's position by maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the **Policy on Standards of Academic Performance and Policy on Academic Conduct of the Master's Degree Program in Laboratory Medicine and Biomedical Science,** and that I have read and understand this statement and will follow the rules described therein. I further acknowledge and agree that it is my responsibility to ask questions about anything I do not understand.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Section II: Division Procedures – Graduate Program

A. Procedure for Resolving Problems in a Student-Faculty Advisor Research Relationship

Occasionally problems arise in the research relationship between a graduate student and faculty advisor. We encourage open communication and informal problem resolution but ultimately either the graduate student or the mentor may wish to terminate the research relationship because of dissatisfaction. It is important that both parties respect the needs of the other. The following guidelines are designed to help accomplish this.

Note that at any stage during the processes described below, the student may confer with his/her supervisory committee and/or the program's Director of Graduate Studies, who will serve as an advocate for the student.

If either the student or faculty advisor is dissatisfied with the research relationship, they should make every effort to communicate their concerns to the other at an early stage of dissatisfaction. However, if the perceived deficiencies persist and they are unable to resolve their concerns informally, they should initiate the following procedures:

- Schedule a meeting between the advisor and student in which they document in writing the specific concerns, the steps required to remedy the problems and a reasonable time frame to resolve the issues. The student may wish to invite the Director of Graduate Studies to this meeting.
  - This document should be signed by both advisor and student, and a copy given to the Director of Graduate Studies to place in the student's file.
  - If deficiencies are corrected within the specified time frame, this should be documented in writing and a copy of this letter sent to the Director of Graduate Studies.

- If the issues are not resolved within the designated time frame, the student and/or advisor should schedule a meeting with the supervisory committee, including the Director of Graduate Studies if desired, to work toward resolving the situation. The student and/or advisor should document the outcome on a "Report of the Supervisory Committee form" (GSHB Appendix *viii*) and circulate the document to all committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies.

- If after these steps, the student or advisor wishes to dissolve the research relationship they should notify the other party and the Director of Graduate Studies in writing, giving reasons for the dissolution and listing a termination date.
  - The student must turn over all data and notebooks organized in a manner that will allow the advisor to continue the work.

- A student who chooses to move to another laboratory and start a new project will need to establish a new supervisory committee, and prepare and defend a new thesis. If the student is
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unable to identify another laboratory in which to do thesis research, the student may be dismissed from the program.

B. Procedure for Implementing Standards of Academic Performance and Conduct

The following procedures describe the department's implementation of the Standards of Academic Performance and Standards of Academic Conduct described above and in the University's Student Code. Communication between students, the faculty and the DGS must be through email with the appropriate parties cc'd and only using utah.edu email addresses. All students are therefore required to check their University of Utah email account periodically but at least daily, in order to ensure they receive necessary communications from the Program. If requested, documents can also be provided to the student in hard copy. All actions are to be included within the student's file held in the division office.

Purpose

The Division of Medical Laboratory Sciences takes matters of academic misconduct very seriously because absolute trust is required for successful academic research and training, and because integrity and reputation are the currency on which scientists are evaluated and rewarded. Scientific misconduct can seriously harm both education and research, and can ruin careers and institutional reputations. To assure academic integrity, the department has established the following internal procedures that implement the University's Student Code. To ensure that the student has adequate counsel, the DGS may serve as an advisor for the student throughout any misconduct proceedings, although the student has a right to be accompanied by any person as advisor, including legal counsel, who may attend but not directly participate in the proceedings, as described in the Student Code, Policy 6-400.

Informal Resolution

The Student Code and the department encourage informal resolution of minor problems involving academic standards. Students are urged to discuss problems with the involved instructor(s), their advisor, the DGS, and/or the Department Chair. However, with serious violations or cases of multiple instances, a more formal resolution is required. Such cases will be handled by the departmental Graduate Education Committee (GEC).

Standards of Academic Performance
(see Section IV of the University Student Code, Policy 6-400)

Instructor-initiated academic actions

As written in the Student Code (A), faculty members are qualified professionals capable of judging the academic performance of students in their courses. The instructor has the right to assign any final grade (including credit/no credit and pass/fail) that they feel appropriately reflects the student's performance in the course. The student has the right to appeal this grade but only on the grounds that the grade assignment was "arbitrary and capricious" (as defined in the Student Code). Appeals for grade changes must be made in compliance with the Student Code, Policy 6-400.

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Program-initiated academic actions

The DGS will monitor student's progress throughout the year and inform the student, the student's advisor, the GEC, and the Department Chair of perceived failures to meet the department's academic performance standards. These failures may include, but are not limited to: 1) failure to pass all courses (core, elective and remedial) with a grade of B- or better; 2) a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0; and 3) unsatisfactory completion of laboratory rotations or research performance. If it is determined that the student has failed to meet the relevant academic standards of the program, the DGS will inform the student in writing of any academic action which may include probation, loss of financial support or dismissal from the program.

Standards of Academic Conduct
(See also: Section V of the University Student Code)

The department follows the process outlined in University Policy 6-400 to report, evaluate and act upon accusations of academic misconduct. All faculty and students should be familiar with this process.