

# **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE M.S. QUALIFYING EXAMINATION**

## **M.S. Program in Biomedical Sciences**

The purpose of the M.S. Qualifying Examination (QE) is to assess the student's knowledge of their proposed research project and stimulate the student to think about alternative approaches and/or potential pitfalls. The student is expected to present the hypothesis, specific aims that test the hypothesis, and outline experimental approaches to address the specific aims. The QE serves to test the scientific acumen of the graduate student and to ensure that the proposed project can be completed within 1 to 2 years.

Prior to scheduling of the QE, the Advisory Committee section of the GRAD form and Plan of Study form must be approved and on file in the College of Graduate Studies. These documents should be completed within two weeks after the student joins a faculty mentor's lab.

The first Graduate Advisory Committee meeting should occur within the Spring semester of the student's first year, but certainly no later than early Summer semester of the first year. At this meeting,

A COMLS Graduate Faculty Representative (Associate or Full Professor) must be appointed to attend the oral portion of the QE. The student must first identify the Faculty Representative and submit the faculty's name to the Associate Dean of COMLS Graduate Programs for approval at least 2 weeks before the oral portion of the QE. The Representative and the oral examination Committee Chair should ensure that the student is treated fairly during the oral exam. In addition, the Representative should ensure that the student's mentor and/or committee members do not answer questions for the student.

The student is not allowed to bring texts, papers, or other materials to the exam. The student is allowed to bring blank paper to the QE to write notes about committee questions, etc. Following (or during) the presentation, the student will be questioned by the committee members. The questions may be directed towards the oral presentation, the written description of the project, and/or probe the breadth and depth of basic knowledge and critical thinking skills of the student.

The student may arrange to have coffee, tea or water for committee members during the exam, but food cannot be brought to the exam by the student who is undergoing t