

# NEUROSCIENCE, M.S.

## POLICIES

### GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/>) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

### MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

#### PRIOR COURSEWORK

##### Graduate Work from Other Institutions

With program approval credits from former graduate institutions may be allowed to count toward degree. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

##### UW–Madison Undergraduate

With program approval credits from graduate level courses (numbered 300 or above) taken as an undergraduate at UW–Madison may be allowed to count toward degree up to 7 credits. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

##### UW–Madison University Special

With program approval, coursework numbered 300 or above taken as a UW–Madison Special student may be allowed to count toward the degree up to 15 credits. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

#### PROBATION

Failure to pass the preliminary examination before the start of the spring semester of the third year will result in being placed on probation. Two consecutive semesters of enrollment on probation precludes continuation in the program.

#### ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

An advisory committee of five or more tenure-track or tenured faculty members will oversee your graduate education. During the first year, before an advisory committee has been formed and a major professor selected, the First-Year Advisory Committee will serve as your advisor. The First-Year Advisory Committee will help you select courses, laboratory rotations, and your major professor, and they can assist you with other issues that may arise during the first year.

After you have chosen a lab, your major professor will help you in choosing the other members of your advisory committee. Choose this committee carefully, taking time to discuss potential members with faculty and other students. Selection of a major professor and the additional four members of the advisory committee should be completed by the end of March of the first year. **At least five** members of the committee must be tenure-track or tenured professors at UW–Madison. At least three members of the committee should be members of the program. To ensure that advisory committees reflect a broad perspective, at least three different areas of neuroscience or approaches to neuroscience must be represented on

the committee. Examples of different areas include behavior/cognition, development, synaptic transmission/membrane excitability. Examples of different approaches include electrophysiology, genetic/model organisms, biochemistry/pharmacology, human brain imaging, stem cells. The student is responsible for describing how the proposed committee represents at least three areas/approaches. The composition of each student's advisory committee will be reviewed and must be approved by the First-Year Advisory Committee. All changes to the makeup of your advisory committee, must be approved by the First-Year Advisory Committee. N&PP students are required to have at least one member of the N&PP Steering Committee represented on their thesis advisory committee.

In order to have your committee approved you must fill out and turn in the NTP Advisory Committee Approval Form (<https://ntp.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/81/2017/02/NTP-ADVISORY-COMMITTEE-APPROVAL-FORM.doc>) which is found on the NTP website (<https://ntp.neuroscience.wisc.edu/forms/>). After you return the form to the NTP office, the First-Year Advisory Committee will review your proposed committee and approve your committee or make suggestions for additional members to ensure a broad perspective.

The advisory committee will meet with you once each semester before you become a dissertator (during the first four or five academic semesters) and once each year after you become a dissertator to review your progress. At least four members of the committee must be present at each meeting. Your major professor chairs the advisory committee and will write a report (<https://ntp.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/81/2017/10/Advisory-Committee-Report-12.12.14.doc>) that summarizes each meeting. You should review each report and discuss it with your major professor. Every report **must** be signed by you and your major professor and becomes part of your permanent record. The summary reports are used by the steering committee, program faculty, and director to monitor progress. If you believe the report does not describe your progress accurately or is in error in some other respect, you should bring these concerns to the attention of your major professor immediately. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, you should inform the First-Year Advisory Committee, which will assist you in deciding whether to ask for a review by the steering committee. The First-Year Advisory Committee can handle any issues or problems that arise after the first year and are not resolved by your advisory committee. An Advisory Committee Report form (<https://ntp.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/81/2017/10/Advisory-Committee-Report-12.12.14.doc>) is shown in the appendix of the Handbook (<https://ntp.wiscweb.wisc.edu/handbook/>) and can be found on the NTP website (<https://ntp.neuroscience.wisc.edu/forms/>).

Once a committee is formed you are required to have a committee meeting every semester until you become a dissertator. As a dissertator you are required to have one meeting per year until your thesis defense.

For each meeting you have there is a required form you must fill out to find those forms see this link (<https://ntp.neuroscience.wisc.edu/forms/>).

#### CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

Full-time registration is required of all students in the program during the fall and spring semesters. The Graduate School considers full-time registration for students who are not dissertators (please see below) to be 8–15 graduate-level credits (level 300 and above, no audits or pass-fail) during each of the fall and spring semesters. Though the maximum number of credits is 15, we strongly encourage students to enroll for a maximum of 12 credits. In the summer, students in the program who are not dissertators may register for 2 credits during the 8-week summer session, which is not considered full-time registration. If you decide to

register for 2 research credits, you are responsible for knowing about other obligations that may be affected by part-time registration in the summer, such as visa regulations or those of certain funding agencies that may require continuous full-time registration for the calendar year (see Graduate School Academic Guidelines for additional caveats). You are eligible to become a dissertator after you have passed the program's preliminary examination and have met the Graduate School's residency requirements.

## TIME LIMITS

The final dissertation must be completed by the end of the fifth academic year. If the dissertation is not completed by the end of the summer following the sixth academic year, the student's advisory committee must meet with the steering committee to present a written statement explaining why the dissertation has not been completed.

## GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/>)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure>)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/>)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (<https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/>)
- Dean of Students Office (<https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)
- Employee Assistance (<http://www.eao.wisc.edu/>) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (<https://employeeabilities.wisc.edu/>) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (<https://grad.wisc.edu/>) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/>) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (<http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/>) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/>) (for concerns about discrimination)

### Grievance Policy for Graduate Programs in the School of Medicine and Public Health

Any student in a School of Medicine and Public Health graduate program who feels that they have been treated unfairly in regards to educational decisions and/or outcomes or issues specific to the graduate program, including academic standing, progress to degree, professional activities, appropriate advising, and a program's community standards by a faculty member, staff member, postdoc, or student has the right to complain about the treatment and to receive a prompt hearing of the grievance following these grievance procedures. Any student who discusses,

inquiries about, or participates in the grievance procedure may do so openly and shall not be subject to intimidation, discipline, or retaliation because of such activity. Each program's grievance advisor is listed on the "Research" tab of the SMPH intranet (<https://intranet.med.wisc.edu/>).

### Exclusions

This policy does not apply to employment-related issues for Graduate Assistants in TA, PA and/or RA appointments. Graduate Assistants will utilize the Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (<https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/>) (GAPP) grievance process to resolve employment-related issues.

This policy does not apply to instances when a graduate student wishes to report research misconduct. For such reports refer to the UW-Madison Policy for Reporting Research Misconduct for Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Research Associates (<https://research.wisc.edu/kb-article/?id=84924>).

### Requirements for Programs

The School of Medicine and Public Health Office of Basic Research, Biotechnology and Graduate Studies requires that each graduate program designate a grievance advisor, who should be a tenured faculty member, and will request the name of the grievance advisor annually. The program director will serve as the alternate grievance advisor in the event that the grievance advisor is named in the grievance. The program must notify students of the grievance advisor, including posting the grievance advisor's name on the program's Guide page and handbook.

The grievance advisor or program director may be approached for possible grievances of all types. They will spearhead the grievance response process described below for issues specific to the graduate program, including but not limited to academic standing, progress to degree, professional activities, appropriate advising, and a program's community standards. They will ensure students are advised on reporting procedures for other types of possible grievances and are supported throughout the reporting process. Resources (<https://grad.wisc.edu/current-students/#reporting-incidents>) on identifying and reporting other issues have been compiled by the Graduate School.

### Procedures

1. The student is advised to initiate a written record containing dates, times, persons, and description of activities, and to update this record while completing the procedures described below.
2. If the student is comfortable doing so, efforts should be made to resolve complaints informally between individuals before pursuing a formal grievance.
3. Should a satisfactory resolution not be achieved, the student should contact the program's grievance advisor or program director to discuss the complaint. The student may approach the grievance advisor or program director alone or with a UW-Madison faculty or staff member. The grievance advisor or program director should keep a record of contacts with regards to possible grievances. The first attempt is to help the student informally address the complaint prior to pursuing a formal grievance. The student is also encouraged to talk with their faculty advisor regarding concerns or difficulties.
4. If the issue is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the student may submit a formal grievance to the grievance advisor or program director in writing, within 60 calendar days from the date the grievant first became aware of, or should have become

- aware of with the exercise of reasonable diligence, the cause of the grievance. To the fullest extent possible, a grievance shall contain a clear and concise statement of the grievance and indicate the issue(s) involved, the relief sought, the date(s) the incident or violation took place, and any specific policy involved.
5. On receipt of a written grievance, the following steps will occur. The final step must be completed within 30 business days from the date the grievance was received. The program must store documentation of the grievance for seven years. Significant grievances that set a precedent may be stored indefinitely.
    - a. The grievance advisor or program director will convene a faculty committee composed of at least three members to manage the grievance. Any faculty member involved in the grievance or who feels that they cannot be impartial may not participate in the committee. Committee composition should reflect diverse viewpoints within the program.
    - b. The faculty committee, through the grievance advisor or program director, will obtain a written response from the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed. The grievance advisor or program director will inform this person that their response will be shared with the student filing the grievance.
    - c. The grievance advisor or program director will share the response with the student filing the grievance.
    - d. The faculty committee will make a decision regarding the grievance. The committee's review shall be fair, impartial, and timely. The grievance advisor or program director will report on the action taken by the committee in writing to both the student and the person toward whom the grievance was directed.
  6. If either party (the student or the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed) is unsatisfied with the decision of the program's faculty committee, the party may file a written appeal to the SMPH senior associate dean for basic research, biotechnology and graduate studies within 10 business days from the date of notification of the program's faculty committee. The following steps will occur:
    - a. The grievant will be notified in writing, within 5 business days of the written appeal, acknowledging receipt of the formal appeal and establishing a timeline for the review to be completed.
    - b. The senior associate dean or their designee may request additional materials and/or arrange meetings with the grievant and/or others. If meetings occur, the senior associate dean or their designee will meet with both the grievant and the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed.
    - c. The senior associate dean or their designee will assemble an ad hoc committee of faculty from outside of the student's graduate program and ask them to prepare a written recommendation on whether to uphold or reverse the decision of the program on the student's initial grievance. The committee may request additional materials and/or arrange meetings with the grievant and/or others. If meetings occur, the committee will meet with both the grievant and the person or persons toward whom the grievance is directed.
    - d. The senior associate dean or their designee will make a final decision within 20 business days of receipt of the committee's recommendation.
    - e. The SMPH Office of Basic Research, Biotechnology, and Graduate Studies must store documentation of the grievance for seven years. Grievances that set a precedent may be stored indefinitely.
  7. The student may file an appeal of the School of Medicine and Public Health decision with the Graduate School. See the Grievances and Appeals section of the Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (<https://grad.wisc.edu/documents/grievances-and-appeals/>).

### **Time Limits**

Steps in the grievance procedures must be initiated and completed within the designated time periods except when modified by mutual consent. If the student fails to initiate the next step in the grievance procedure within the designated time period, the grievance will be considered resolved by the decision at the last completed step.

### **OTHER**

All admitted students are funded and receive a stipend. The stipend rate is set by the program.