



# 2025-2026 CATALOG



**MERCER**  
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

MACON | SAVANNAH | COLUMBUS | ATLANTA

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- **Campus Security:** Jeanne Clery Disclosure for Campus Security, campus crime statistics, Campus Sex Crime Prevention Act, and fire safety
- Campus Emergency Procedures
- Drug and Alcohol Policies
- Financial Assistance and Cost of Attendance Information
- **Health and Safety Information:** immunization and missing person's information
- **Institutional Information:** accreditation, characteristics of students, degree programs, degree program improvement plans, disability support services, FERPA information, retention and graduation rates, peer-to-peer file sharing, post-graduate employment information, readmission of veterans, transfer of credit, withdrawal procedures, voter registration, and satisfactory progress standards.

Paper copies of these reports are available upon request. Please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness by mailing inquiries to:

Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Mercer University  
1501 Mercer University Drive  
Macon, GA 31207

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Mercer University is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunities to all qualified students, employees, and applicants, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability, as a matter of University policy and as required by applicable state and federal laws (including Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Sections 503 and 504, ADEA, ADA, E.O. 11246, and Rev. Proc. 75-50). Inquiries concerning this policy may be referred to Mercer's Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Officer, Human Resources, 1501 Mercer University Drive, Macon, Georgia 31207, Telephone (478) 301-2786.



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**Graduate Programs**

Mercer University School of Medicine reserves the right to make changes to this calendar.

**FALL SEMESTER 2025** *Dates may change with notification*

Orientation	TBD by Department
<b>Registration</b>	<b>August 15</b>
First Day of Classes	August 18
Last Day of Drop/Add/Late Register	August 25
<b>Labor Day</b>	<b>September 1</b>
<b>Spring Registration Opens</b>	<b>October 13</b>
Last Day for Course Withdrawal	October 22
<b>Thanksgiving Holiday</b>	<b>November 27-28</b>
Finals	December 1-5
Last Day of Classes	December 5
<b>Grades Due by Noon</b>	<b>December 10</b>

**SPRING SEMESTER 2026**

<b>Registration</b>	<b>January 2</b>
First Day of Classes	January 5
<b>Last Day of Drop/Add/Late Register</b>	<b>January 12</b>
<b>MLK Jr. Holiday</b>	<b>January 19</b>
Application for Spring/Summer Graduation Due	January 31
Last Day for Course Withdrawal	March 11
<b>Summer Registration Opens</b>	<b>March 27</b>
<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>April 3</b>
Finals	April 20-24
Last Day of Classes	April 24
Commencement	May 8
<b>Grades Due by Noon</b>	<b>April 29</b>

**SUMMER SEMESTER 2026**

Registration	May 8
First Day of Classes	May 11
Last Day of Drop/Add/Late Register	May 18
<b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>May 25</b>
Last Day for Course Withdrawal/Resign	June 28
<b>Independence Day Holiday</b>	<b>July 4</b>
<b>Fall Registration Opens</b>	<b>July 6</b>
Finals	July 27-31
Last Day of Classes	July 31
<b>Grades Due by Noon</b>	<b>August 5</b>

**MD Program**

Below are calendars for academic year 2025-2026.

**MD YEAR I - CLASS OF 2029**

<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Orientation	August 11-15, 2025
Start / End Dates / Block 1*	August 18 - December 19, 2025
<b>Christmas Break</b>	<b>December 20, 2025 - January 4, 2026</b>
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Start/End Dates	January 5 - June 5, 2026
Block 2* / IPE	January 5 - May 15, 2026
<b>Spring Break</b>	<b>March 30 - April 3, 2026</b>
POH 600	May 18 - June 5, 2026
<b>Summer Semester 2026</b>	
Summer Break	June 6 - August 9, 2026

**MD YEAR II - CLASS OF 2028**

<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Start / End Dates / Block 3*	August 11 - December 19, 2025
<b>Christmas Break</b>	<b>December 20, 2025 - January 4, 2026</b>
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Start / End Dates	January 5 - May 29, 2026
Block 4*	January 5 - May 8, 2026
MED APS 700	May 11 - May 29, 2025
<b>Summer Semester 2026</b>	
Step 1 Study Break/Test/Vac	May 30 - July 26, 2026



## MD YEAR III - CLASS OF 2027

<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Clerkships**	July 28 - December 19, 2025
<b>Christmas Break</b>	<b>December 20, 2025 - January 4, 2026</b>
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Clerkships**	January 5 - May 29, 2026
<b>Summer Semester 2026</b>	
Session I	June 1 - June 12, 2026
Session II	June 15 - July 10, 2026
<b>Summer Break</b>	<b>July 11 - July 19, 2026</b>

## MD YEAR IV - CLASS OF 2026

<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Electives, Rotations, Selectives, Wellness	July 21 - December 12, 2025
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Electives, Rotations, Selectives, Capstone	December 15, 2025 - May 8, 2026
Commencement	May 8, 2026

**Holidays:** Labor Day, Thanksgiving/Day After, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day

**Legends:** \*Includes MPRA and PHMR

\*\*Students enrolled in Healthcare Systems Course in either fall or spring

## PC-ACT Program

Below are calendars for academic year 2025-2026.

## MD YEAR II - CLASS OF 2027

<b>Summer/Intercession 2025</b>	
ACT I	June 15 - July 24, 2025
Break	July 25 - August 10, 2025
<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Block 3* / IPE / Lon IA	August 11 - December 19, 2025
<b>Christmas Break</b>	<b>December 20, 2025 - January 4, 2026</b>
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Block 4* / Lon IB	January 5 - May 8, 2026
Step 1 Study Break	May 9 - June 14, 2026
<b>Summer/Intercession 2026</b>	
ACT II	June 15 - July 24, 2026

**MD YEAR III - CLASS OF 2026**

<b>Fall Semester 2025</b>	
Clerkships, Electives, Lon 2A	July 28 - December 19, 2025
<b>Christmas Break</b>	<b>December 20, 2025 - January 4, 2026</b>
<b>Spring Semester 2026</b>	
Clerkships, Electives, Lon 2B	January 5 - May 8, 2026
<b>Summer Semester 2026</b>	
Clerkships, Electives	May 11 - June 5, 2026

**Holiday Schedule**

Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM) students are excused from all scheduled activities during MUSM holidays. The holiday period is defined as the 36-hour period beginning at 6:00 p.m. the day before the MUSM holiday and ending at 6:00 a.m. on the morning following the holiday.

Year IV students in the MD program will be required to participate in academic activities during the Christmas break according to the schedule that the student has selected but will not be expected to report to rotations on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or other holidays.



Mercer University is one of America's oldest and most distinctive institutions of higher learning, offering rigorous programs that span the undergraduate liberal arts to doctoral-level degrees. Founded by early 19th century Baptists, Mercer — while no longer formally denominational affiliated — remains committed to an educational environment that embraces the historic Baptist principles of intellectual and religious freedom.

With more than 9,100 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges on campuses in Macon and Atlanta; three medical school campuses in Macon, Savannah, and Columbus; and at two Regional Academic Centers, Mercer is ranked among the top tier of national research universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. Our more than 90,000 alumni are making important contributions to their professions and communities throughout Georgia, the Southeast and the world.

While offering a breadth of programs found at much larger universities, Mercer maintains an intimate, student-focused culture more characteristic of smaller liberal arts colleges. Mercer's uniqueness is found in the way the University integrates five defining components of its mission: Liberal Learning, Professional Knowledge, Discovery, Service to Humankind and Community.

## **University Mission**

Mercer University's mission is to teach, to learn, to create, to discover, to inspire, to empower, and to serve. In fulfilling this mission, the University supports undergraduate, graduate, and professional learning as well as basic research and its application in service to others. As a university committed to excellence and innovation, Mercer challenges members of its community to meet and exceed high standards in their teaching, learning, research, scholarship, and service.

Mercer is an independent university that remains grounded in a tradition that embraces freedom of the mind and spirit, cherishes the equal worth of every individual, and commits to serving the needs of humankind. As a reflection of this heritage:

- We encourage our students to discover and develop fully their unique combination of gifts and talents to become leaders who make a positive difference in the world.
- We seek to inspire members of our community to live virtuous and meaningful lives by using their gifts and talents to serve the needs of humankind as an expression of their love for God and neighbor.
- We seek to enrich the mind and spirit by promoting and facilitating an open and rigorous search for truth and understanding, including an examination of the moral, religious, and ethical questions of this and every age.
- We affirm and respect the dignity and sacred worth of every person and celebrate both our commonalities and our differences.

## **University Goals**

- To offer undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs based upon a strong liberal arts foundation
- To support a highly qualified faculty that is student- and teaching-oriented and is engaged in scholarly research and professional activities
- To foster independent and critical thinking and a continuing interest in learning
- To foster intellectual and spiritual freedom in an environment that encourages tolerance, compassion, understanding, and responsibility



- To offer a variety of intellectual, cultural, recreational, and spiritual activities designed to enlarge capacity for improved judgment and moral, ethical and spiritual growth
- To encourage the enrollment of qualified persons from diverse backgrounds and situations
- To contribute campus resources, in partnership with other institutions and agencies, to improve the educational, social and economic development of the community

## **University-Wide Assessment**

Mercer University conducts a university-wide assessment program to measure student progress toward educational goals, to evaluate academic programs, to improve learning and teaching, and to evaluate institutional effectiveness. Students are active participants in a variety of campus-based assessment activities that focus on attitudes, satisfaction, and academic achievement. It is through student participation in the assessment process that the University can better understand itself and better serve its constituents.

## **Mercer History**

Mercer University was founded in 1833 in Penfield by Georgia Baptists. The school, under the leadership of Baptist minister and spiritual father Adiel Sherwood, was named for Jesse Mercer, a prominent Baptist leader and the first chair of the Mercer Board of Trustees.

Josiah Penfield gave the \$2,500 that prompted the Georgia Baptist Convention to begin plans to open a school. Many Georgia Baptists gave matching funds for Penfield's gift. The school opened under principal Billington Sanders.

Initially a male preparatory school named "Mercer Institute," the school at its founding consisted of a red clay farm and two hewed log cabins, valued at approximately \$1,935. Enrollment for the first term was 39 students. When the school opened, there were considerably fewer and others came over the first few weeks. Tuition was \$35 for the year. Board was provided at \$8 per month, and each student was required to supply his own bedding, candles and furniture.

From its humble beginnings in Penfield, Mercer today is a dynamic and comprehensive center of undergraduate, graduate and professional education. The University has more than 9,000 students; 12 schools and colleges – liberal arts, law, pharmacy, medicine, health professions, business, engineering, education, theology, music, nursing, and professional advancement; campuses in Macon, Atlanta, Savannah and Columbus; two regional academic centers in the state; a university press; five teaching hospitals; an educational partnership with Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex; an engineering research center in Warner Robins; a performing arts center and commercial recording studio in Macon; and a NCAA Division I athletic program.

The institution's reputation for exceptional academics in an engaged learning environment continues to grow. In 2018 the University was reclassified as a doctoral university with high research activity (R2) and is ranked in the top tier of national universities by *U.S. News & World Report* and is a member of the Georgia Research Alliance. Mercer has also earned a Community Engagement classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and is one of only 286 institutions in the country to shelter a chapter of The Phi Beta Kappa Society.

**MERCER IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

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**1833**

- Mercer Institute, the forerunner of Mercer University, is founded by Georgia Baptists in Penfield as a manual labor school for boys.

**1838**

- Mercer's first Board of Trustees is elected and Mercer Institute becomes Mercer University.

**1839**

- First college classes begin.
- Female Seminary is approved by the Mercer Board of Trustees.

**1841**

- First college class is graduated.

**1843**

- Principal college building at Penfield is destroyed by fire.

**Early 1860s**

- Mercer is one of the few colleges in the South and the only one in Georgia to remain open during the War Between the States.

**1870**

- During the April 1870 Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC) meeting, the decision is made to move Mercer away from Penfield. In August, the commission appointed by the GBC to find a new location, votes to approve Macon. In September, President David E. Butler tells Macon Mayor George S. Obear and the City Council that Macon has been chosen and "that the proposition on their part to pay you the sum of \$125,000 ... in bonds of the city of Macon, and a site to cost not over \$25,000 ... was accepted." On October 28, President H.H. Tucker reports that a six-acre site adjoining Tattnall Square has been selected. On November 2, Mayor Obear presents \$125,000 in bonds and the title deed to the land; a written contract has been entered into between the Trustees and the city. The end of the year marks the closing of the school at Penfield and the University's move.

**1871**

- Mercer relocates to Macon.

**1873**

- A law school is organized and classes begin in February 1874. The first classes are held in the courthouse and in law offices.

**1874**

- Construction of the Administration Building is completed at a cost of \$100,000.

**1880**

- The cornerstone of the new chapel building (current-day Willingham) is in place. The chapel is dedicated in 1881, debt-free.

**1892**

- Mercer plays the University of Georgia in Athens in the first college football game in the state of Georgia and one of the first in the Southeast. The game, scheduled for Thanksgiving Day 1891, is postponed until January 1892. Georgia triumphed, 50-0.
- In the fall, Mercer would record its first win in football, beating Georgia Tech, 12-6, in Macon, in the Yellow Jackets' first game ever.

**MERCER IN THE 20TH CENTURY**

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**1903**

- Mercer opens the School of Pharmacy.

**1918**

- The School of Pharmacy closes.
- During World War I, the Mercer Board of Trustees authorized President Rufus W. Weaver to tender to the Secretary of the Navy and the Secretary of War the buildings and equipment of the University that they might be used effectively in service of the nation. The Student Army Training Corps is established at Mercer on October 1, 1918, and continues until the following spring. Following the war, Mercer discontinues systematic military training. Altogether, Mercer's war dead numbers 14.

**1919**

- Mrs. W. E. Jackson is the first woman to receive a degree from Mercer. Mrs. Jackson, who later becomes Mrs. Joseph Seth Weekly, is awarded the LL.B. degree.

**1922**

- WMAZ Radio, with call letters standing for "Watch Mercer Attain Zenith," goes on the air, located in the tower of the chapel building.

**1927**

- Mercer turns the fledgling radio station over to the Macon Junior Chamber of Commerce.

**1939**

- Macon Baptist Pastors Union requests an investigation of the character of teaching in some of Mercer's classrooms. After a 10-hour hearing held in Roberts Chapel on March 30, the Board of Trustees accepts the action of the special committee disposing of the charges.

**1942**

- Mercer sets apart the Law Building and Roberts Hall for use by the War Training Service during World War II.

**1943**

- The Navy V-12 School is established on July 1 and continues until October 1945. Mercer is one of nine institutions in the Southeast selected to give aviation instruction in the Navy War Training Service. During this period, 731 trainees receive basic aviation instruction in the Mercer V-12 program.

**1949**

- Mercer dedicates the restored Mercer Chapel at Penfield with Dr. Louie D. Newton as speaker.

**1957**

- Construction is completed on the George B. Connell Student Center.

**1959**

- The Southern School of Pharmacy in Atlanta merges with Mercer University.

**1963**

- Sam Jerry Oni of Ghana, Africa, becomes the first black student to enter Mercer. On April 18, Mercer Trustees vote to admit qualified students without regard to race, and Mercer becomes one of the few private colleges in the South to do this before being required by the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

**1965**

- Mercer dedicates the Eugene W. Stetson Memorial Library.

**1967**

- Mercer dedicates Knight Hall of Humanities.

**1968**

- The Hugh M. Willet Science Center is dedicated.

**1972**

- Mercer dedicates the new School of Pharmacy building in Atlanta. Atlanta Baptist College merges with Mercer University and becomes known as Mercer University in Atlanta. Today, it is known as the Cecil B. Day Graduate and Professional Campus.

**1973**

- The Law School's centennial is celebrated and Mercer graduate and U.S. Congressman Carl Vinson's 90th birthday is observed.

**1976**

- Mercer acquires the Insurance Company of North America building on Coleman Hill in Macon as the home of the School of Law under a gift-purchase agreement for \$1 million. The property is valued at more than \$4 million.

**1978**

- The former Tattnall Square Baptist Church on the Macon campus is rededicated as Newton Hall in honor of Dr. Louie D. Newton.
- Mercer acquires the Overlook Mansion on Coleman Hill, now known as the Woodruff House.

**1979**

- Mercer dedicates the Law School building with U.S. Attorney General and Mercer alumnus Griffin B. Bell on the program and Chief Justice Warren Burger as guest speaker.

**1980**

- Mercer dedicates the restored Administration Building.
- The inauguration for Mercer's 17th president, Raleigh Kirby Godsey, are held at Macon City Auditorium.
- Mercer dedicates the A.T. Davis Administration Building, College of Arts and Sciences, in Atlanta.
- Mercer dedicates the Sheffield Building, College of Arts and Sciences in Atlanta.

**1981**

- Mercer dedicates the School of Medicine's Education Building in Macon.

**1982**

- Mercer University School of Medicine admits its charter class of students in the fall.

**1983**

- Mercer establishes the School of Business in Atlanta.
- Mercer dedicates the W.G. Lee Alumni House in Macon.
- Mercer dedicates the Monroe F. Swilley Jr. Library in Atlanta.
- The Plunkett-Sewell family commissions a Holtkamp pipe organ, specially designed for Newton Chapel. The 52-rank Tracker instrument is one of the largest organs of its kind on the eastern seaboard, establishing Mercer as a center for organ performance and teaching.

**1984**

- The School of Business is established in Macon.
- The School of Engineering is established in Macon.

**1985**

- The charter class of the School of Engineering begins its studies and construction on a new building for engineering is begun.

**1986**

- Tift College, a Georgia Baptist women's institution in Forsyth, merges with Mercer University.
- The new School of Engineering building opens for classes in the fall and dedicated in October.

**1987**

- University College, formerly the College of Continuing Education, is established, with educational centers located in Macon, Thomaston, Griffin, Eastman and Douglasville.
- Groundbreaking is held for a new 93,750-square-foot library building located on the main campus in Macon.
- The Mercer Engineering Research Center (MERC) is established as an extension of the School of Engineering. MERC provides a broad range of customer-oriented services to commercial and government clients.

**1988**

- The School of Law receives the largest gift in the University's history at that time — \$14 million from George W. Woodruff.

**1989**

- The University's Board of Trustees votes to discontinue undergraduate liberal arts education on the Atlanta campus. The mission of the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta is changed to focus on graduate and professional education.

**1991**

- In April, the University breaks ground on a new education and research center for the School of Pharmacy on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta.

**1992**

- In July, the School of Pharmacy moves from downtown Atlanta to the 300-acre Cecil B. Day Campus in northeast Atlanta.

**1994**

- The Board of Trustees approves plans to establish a School of Education and a School of Theology.

**1995**

- In April, the University's Board of Trustees approves plans to locate the School of Theology on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta.
- On October 1, Mercer enters into a long-term lease with Bibb County for the management and administration of The Grand Opera House in downtown Macon.

**1996**

- Construction is completed on the new 32,000-square-foot School of Theology building on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta. The School's charter class of students is admitted in the fall.

**1997**

- The former Findlay House, located next to the W. G. Lee Alumni House on Coleman Avenue in Macon, is restored and dedicated in May as the Tift College Alumnae House.
- Construction is completed on a 26,557-square-foot academic facility for the Douglas County Regional Academic Center.
- Construction is completed on a new 52,155-square-foot facility for the Mercer Engineering Research Center in Warner Robins.
- The School of Medicine completes construction on a 10,000-square-foot expansion of its research wing.
- The former Stetson Library is rededicated in September as Stetson Hall and converted into office and classroom space for the School of Business and the School of Education.

**1998**

- On December 4, the University breaks ground on a 28,300-square-foot building for the Department of Music of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

**1999**

- The McAfee School of Theology graduates its charter class in May.
- Mercer breaks ground for a Greek Village in Macon and student apartments in Macon and Atlanta.

**MERCER IN THE 21ST CENTURY****2000**

- During a ceremony on April 20, Mercer dedicates the Jack Tarver Memorial Library.
- In August, Mercer opens its new police station and seven new apartment buildings on the Macon campus and two new apartment buildings on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta.
- In September, Mercer dedicates the new 18-building Greek Village.
- Mercer and the Georgia Baptist Convention announce that the 98-year-old Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, located in downtown Atlanta, will merge with Mercer on January 1, 2001.

**2001**

- The School of Education is renamed the Tift College of Education of Mercer University at the April Board of Trustees meeting.

**2002**

- The new College of Nursing building on the Atlanta campus is dedicated during the College's centennial celebration.

**2003**

- Mercer opens the doors to its newest regional academic center in McDonough, providing opportunities for adult learners in Henry County and surrounding areas. The University's programs in Griffin and Covington are merged into the Henry County location.
- The University's 10th academic unit, the College of Continuing and Professional Studies, is established from the former Division of Extended Education.
- Mercer purchases the Georgia Baptist Center, which was previously owned by the Georgia Baptist Convention and is adjacent to the Atlanta campus. It becomes the Atlanta Administration and Conference Center.

**2004**

- The University plays its first basketball games in the new University Center Arena during Homecoming week, January 27–February 1. The remainder of the signature facility on the Macon campus opens March 15. The official dedication of the University Center and the Griffin B. Bell Board Room is held in April, following the Board of Trustees meeting.

**2005**

- The Townsend-McAfee Institute is established to offer graduate programs in church music that prepare musical artists for the ministry. The institute is a collaboration between the Department of Music in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences in Macon and the School of Theology in Atlanta.

**2006**

- After 27 years as president, R. Kirby Godsey steps down from his leadership role to become chancellor, leaving office as the longest-serving president in University history. William D. Underwood, former interim president of Baylor University and noted legal scholar and teacher, becomes the University's 18th president on July 1.
- The Department of Music in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences becomes the Townsend School of Music on July 1. Trustee Carolyn McAfee, widow of James T. McAfee Jr., former chairman of Mercer's Board of Trustees, and her son and daughter-in-law, Tom and Julie McAfee, provided the founding endowment.
- The Robert McDuffie Center for Strings is established on the Macon campus, offering conservatory-quality music training in a comprehensive university setting.
- The 103-year-old School of Pharmacy changes its name to the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences on July 1. The name change reflects additional health science programs, including a new physician assistant program.
- The American Baptist Historical Society, with the largest and most diverse collection of Baptist historical materials and archives in the world, announces it will relocate to Mercer's Atlanta campus. The ABHS consolidated holdings from facilities in Valley Forge, PA, and Rochester, NY.

**2007**

- Three teams of students and faculty inaugurate the Mercer On Mission program over the summer in Kenya, Brazil and Guatemala. The program combines academic credit with service-learning opportunities.
- The School of Medicine, as it celebrates its 25th year, announces it will open a second, four-year doctor of medicine program in Savannah in fall 2008. The program will be based at Memorial University Medical Center, where Mercer has had a clinical relationship since 1996 to provide instruction for part of the school's third- and fourth-year medical students.
- The Mercer Athletic Foundation is established to raise funds for intercollegiate athletics.
- The University completes a new gateway entrance to the Macon campus on Mercer University Drive, near Interstate 75, and a new Hilton Garden Inn opens on that side of campus.
- The building housing the Douglas County Regional Academic Center is dedicated to longtime benefactors Fred and Aileen Borrish.
- The new Science and Engineering Building is dedicated, and the University celebrates the School of Engineering's 22-year partnership with Warner Robins Air Force Base Logistics Center.

**2008**

- Thirty first-year medical students receive their white coats and begin their education as members of the inaugural class in Mercer's new four-year medical program in Savannah.

**2009**

- An announcement is made that a \$10 million mixed-use development on the Macon campus will feature loft-style apartments and retail space for the Mercer bookstore and other businesses that cater to the Mercer community and residents in the College Hill Corridor. Called "The Lofts at Mercer Village," the development is located on Montpelier Avenue and designed to create a vibrant streetscape, enhancing the retail development in Mercer Village.

**2010**

- The University's Board of Trustees on November 19 unanimously approves a plan to resume competition in football in the fall of 2013, after a 72-year absence.

**2011**

- Mercer's first outdoor commencement on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta is held on May 14. More than 6,000 guests witness the largest 2012 ceremony, held on the upper fields of the campus.
- With \$4.6 million in funding from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Mercer announces establishment of the Center for Collaborative Journalism, a partnership between the University's Journalism and Media Studies Department, *The (Macon) Telegraph* and Georgia Public Broadcasting. A few months later the Peyton Anderson Foundation provides a \$1 million grant to name the Center's newsroom for the late *Telegraph* publisher and foundation founder Peyton Anderson.

**2012**

- Mercer joins 24 institutions across the country as a participant in the prestigious Stamps Scholars Program, funded by the Stamps Charitable Foundation Inc. Initially, five entering freshmen will be designated as Stamps Scholars and receive the full cost of attendance, plus a \$16,000 stipend over four years for enrichment activities, such as study abroad or undergraduate research. When the program is fully implemented, 10 members of each Mercer freshman class will be designated as Stamps Scholars.



- The Eula Mae and John Baugh Center for Baptist Leadership is established and endowed with a \$2.5 million grant from the Eula Mae and John Baugh Foundation.
- The University announces in February plans to partner with The Medical Center and St. Francis Hospital to establish a Columbus campus for third- and fourth-year students in the School of Medicine. Columbus joins Macon — where the School was established in 1982 to prepare physicians for rural and medically underserved areas of Georgia — and Savannah in hosting campuses for the medical school.
- A \$1 million gift from Macon cardiologist Dr. Chuck Hawkins and his wife, Kathy, to benefit the Mercer basketball program is recognized later that month as the arena housed within the University Center is renamed "Hawkins Arena."
- The Board of Trustees authorizes establishment of the Mercer Health Sciences Center, a multi-campus academic health center encompassing the School of Medicine, College of Pharmacy and Georgia Baptist College of Nursing, as well as the creation in July 2013 of a new College of Health Professions.
- Phase II of the Lofts at Mercer Village opens. The first floor houses the Center for Collaborative Journalism, and student apartments occupy the top three floors.
- The University dedicates the Emily Parker Myers Admissions and Welcome Center at the corner of Winship Street and Montpelier Drive. The building is named in honor of Myers, who was one of the longest-serving administrators in University history, serving as senior vice president for university advancement and external affairs when she retired in 2008.
- The Board of Trustees, at its November meeting, gives the green light for construction to begin on Cruz Plaza, to transform the appearance of the central part of the Macon campus from the University Center to the Historic Quad and from the Greek Village past Tarver Library. Milton L. Cruz, his wife Aileen, father Juan L. Cruz Rosario, and sister Zoraida Cruz Torres provide the lead gift for the project. An official groundbreaking is held December 11, 2012.
- Former President Jimmy Carter joins the Mercer University Board of Trustees. Carter is believed to be the first former U.S. president in modern times to serve on a university governing board.

## **2013**

- A \$425,000 grant from ArtPlace America was announced to support Mercer's effort to revitalize the former Tattnall Square Presbyterian Church into the Tattnall Square Center for the Arts. The Center serves as a community theater and arts venue, as well as home to the University's Theatre Department.
- The University announces the acceptance of an invitation to join the Southern Conference, affiliating Mercer Athletics with the nation's fifth-oldest NCAA Division I athletic association.
- More than 12,000 fans overflow the Mercer Football Stadium on August 31 to watch the Bears field their first football team in more than 70 years. Mercer proceeds to break the NCAA record for most wins ever by a start-up program, sporting a 10-2 record and finishing unbeaten at home with an unblemished 8-0 campaign.
- The Lofts at Tattnall Square, the third loft-style student apartment building to be constructed under the College Hill Corridor master plan, opens to house the University's growing undergraduate enrollment.
- Former U.S. Congressman, Ambassador to the United Nations, and Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young kicks off Mercer's yearlong commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the institution's integration during a convocation in Willingham Auditorium.

**2014**

- The men's basketball team turns the attention of the entire country — and beyond — to the University when the 14th-seeded Bears beat the third-seeded Duke Blue Devils 78-71 in the second round of the NCAA Tournament.
- The College of Continuing and Professional Studies, established in 2003 and whose roots date back to Tift College's merger with Mercer in the late 1980s, is renamed Penfield College of Mercer University.
- On the strength of its growing research profile, Mercer is admitted as a member of the Georgia Research Alliance, whose mission is to expand research and commercialization capacity in Georgia's universities to launch new companies, create high-value jobs and transform lives.
- Mercer breaks ground on an \$18 million expansion of School of Medicine (MUSM) facilities on its Savannah campus at Memorial University Medical Center. This endeavor includes renovation of the William and Iffath Hoskins Center for Biomedical Research as well as construction of an addition to the Hoskins Center to serve as a medical education and research facility for the University.
- President William D. Underwood uses the opening night of Homecoming weekend to announce a \$400 million capital campaign for the University. "Aspire, The Campaign for Mercer University, seeks to provide financial resources that will empower Mercer, already emerging among the Southeast's elite private research universities, to become an international leader in applying its intellectual capital to better serve the needs of humankind."

**2015**

- Mercer's two-year-old, 10,000-seat stadium, home of Mercer Bears football and lacrosse, is renamed Five Star Stadium in recognition of a multi-million-dollar commitment, the largest-ever for Mercer athletics and one of the largest in the University's history. The financial commitment came from Five Star Automotive Group, owned by Charlie Cantrell and Dick Pope.
- A large multi-million-dollar commitment from a Macon resident and devoted friend of the University establishes the Jo Phelps Fabian Center for Musical Excellence in School of Music. The commitment by Fabian is the largest ever, along with the gift that founded the School of Music, to support the arts at Mercer.
- Mercer Theatre's first performance in the newly completed Tattnall Square Center for the Arts features William Shakespeare's "The Tempest."
- Mercer student, and reigning Miss Georgia, Betty Cantrell is crowned Miss America in Atlantic City, N.J.
- The nation's most prestigious academic honor society — Phi Beta Kappa — approves the granting of a chapter to Mercer during the organization's 44th Triennial Council in Denver. Mercer becomes just the third Georgia research university — joining Emory and the University of Georgia — to shelter a chapter.

**2016**

- The Lofts at Mercer Landing student housing opens on Mercer University Drive in Macon, across from the main entrance to Mercer and linked to campus by a new pedestrian bridge. The building features one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom, fully furnished apartments, as well as offices for Mercer's alumni, advancement, marketing communications, and human resources departments.



## **2017**

- The School of Medicine recognizes the first 25 students to receive inaugural Physicians for Rural Georgia Scholarships, which cover 85 to 100 percent of tuition for up to four years in the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program. The University funded the scholarship program with the entirety of a one-time infusion of \$35 million from the state of Georgia as a result of a settlement agreement offer from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in February 2016. President William D. Underwood announced that current and future recipients of the scholarship will be called Nathan Deal Scholars in recognition of Georgia's 82nd governor, who is a graduate of both the University's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and School of Law.
- Mercer is named a participating institution for the Churchill Scholarship, a prestigious and highly selective award for American students to engage in a year of master's-level study in science, mathematics, and engineering at the University of Cambridge. Mercer joins Emory, Georgia Tech, and the University of Georgia as the only institutions in the state to participate in the scholarship program, and is the only participating institution in the Southern Conference.

## **2018**

- Classes begin January 8 in the newly completed Spearman C. Godsey Science Center. The largest academic facility project in the University's history in terms of cost at \$44 million and size at 143,410 square feet is named in honor of Mercer Chancellor Dr. R. Kirby Godsey's father and in recognition of Dr. Godsey's multi-million-dollar naming gift. The Godsey Science Center includes 60 teaching and research labs, three medium classrooms, four small classrooms and 46 offices.
- Mercer Medicine Plains, a primary care practice and division of the faculty practice of Mercer University School of Medicine, opens on Main Street in Plains, Georgia. Former President Jimmy Carter, a Life Trustee at Mercer, and First Lady Rosalynn Carter were instrumental in the project and attended the grand opening ceremony for the practice in August.
- Mercer is classified as a Doctoral University with High Research Activity (R2) following an adjustment to the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. R2 is the second-highest level of doctoral research universities in the country.

## **2019**

- The McEachern Art Center opens in downtown Macon as the new home of the University's art gallery and student studios.
- Mercer Law School's first-floor courtroom is named the Griffin B. Bell and Frank C. Jones Courtroom in honor of these Mercer alumni. Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States Clarence Thomas delivers the keynote address for the dedication ceremony.
- The Board of Trustees renames Penfield College as the College of Professional Advancement.
- The School of Medicine announces it is expanding the School's two-year Columbus campus to a full four-year campus, and the Board of Trustees approves construction of a new \$32.4 million, 76,000-square-foot facility.
- The School of Medicine announces two additional rural health clinics. Mercer Medicine Peach County opens in Fort Valley and Mercer Medicine Clay County is expected to open in Fort Gaines in 2020.
- Mercer University and Robins Air Force Base announce a partnership that will bring an innovative software development center to downtown Macon. The center will be housed in the ground floor of The Lofts at Capricorn.



- The Board of Trustees approves name changes for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Stetson School of Business. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is renamed the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to reflect the growing significance of the sciences within the University. The Eugene W. Stetson-Hatcher School of Business is renamed the Stetson-Hatcher School of Business to recognize longtime supporter and trustee Robert F. Hatcher.
- The Board of Trustees approves construction of a new 57,000-square-foot Pharmacy and Health Sciences Building on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta.
- Mercer Music at Capricorn celebrates the grand re-opening of the historic Capricorn complex in downtown Macon, which now includes recording studios, a music incubator, a museum, and offices and co-working space.

## **2020**

- Mercer dedicates the Stembridge Center in honor of alumnus, donor and former staff member Willard D. "Bill" Stembridge to centrally locate student success services in Macon.
- In March, Mercer transitions to online classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Mercer opens COVID-19 testing lab on Macon campus.
- Mercer returns to in-person classes for the start of Summer Session 2 with many new protocols in place to curb the spread of COVID-19.
- Mercer breaks ground on a new four-year medical school campus in Columbus.
- Mercer's final fall enrollment surpasses 9,000 students for the first time.
- Mercer Medicine holds a ribbon-cutting for its third rural clinic in Fort Gaines located in Clay County.
- Mercer's endowment at the end of the calendar year surpasses \$400 million for the first time.

## **2021**

- The School of Medicine held a ribbon-cutting in February for its fourth rural primary care clinic, which opened March 1 in Putnam County.
- The Macon-based Phil J. and Alice S. Sheridan Foundation committed \$10 million to endow The Sheridan Center to support the work of Mercer On Mission throughout the globe. The Center maintains a special focus on the University's prosthetics program, which promises to become the largest supplier of high-quality prosthetics to people who could not otherwise afford them throughout the world.
- A five-year, \$300,000 Peyton Anderson Foundation grant brought symphony orchestra back to Macon for the first time since 2017 with the announcement of the Macon-Mercer Symphony Orchestra. The new orchestra, which played its opening concert October 4th at The Grand Opera House, is a collaboration between the world-renowned Robert McDuffie Center for Strings in Mercer University's Townsend School of Music and musicians from the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra.
- Mercer's endowment at the end of the calendar year surpasses \$500 million for the first time.

## **2022**

- The School of Medicine held a ribbon-cutting in April for its fifth rural primary care clinic, which opened April 4 in Harris County.
- The School of Medicine dedicated its new \$50 million campus on the banks of the Chattahoochee River in Columbus.

**2023**

- On March 23, the University held a ground breaking for Roberts Academy, a transitional school for children with dyslexia to be built adjacent to the Macon campus. The school will be constructed, equipped, and endowed through a major gift by Hal and Marjorie Roberts of Lakeland, Florida.
- The School of Medicine held ribbon cuttings for its sixth and seventh rural primary care clinics in Jekyll Island on September 29 and in Taylor County on December 1.

**2024**

- On April 19, the University dedicated the new Moye Pharmacy and Health Sciences Center on the Cecil B. Day Campus in Atlanta.

**University Presidents**

In the course of its history, Mercer University has had 24 persons serving in the President's Office. Their names and the dates of their administrations are as follows:

Billington McCarty Sanders	1833-1840
Otis Smith	1840-1844
John Leadly Dagg	1844-1854
Nathaniel Macon Crawford	1854-1856
Shelton Palmer Sanford, Acting President	1856-1858
Nathaniel Macon Crawford	1858-1866
Henry Holcomb Tucker	1866-1871
Archibald John Battle	1872-1889
Gustavus Alonzo Nunnally	1889-1893
John Edgerton Willet, Acting President	1893-1893
James Burton Gambrell	1893-1896
Pinckney Daniel Pollock	1896-1903
William Heard Kilpatrick, Acting President	1903-1905
Charles Lee Smith	1905-1906
Samuel Young Jameson	1906-1913
James Freeman Sellers, Acting President	1913-1914
William Lowndes Pickard	1914-1918
Rufus Washington Weaver	1918-1927
Andrew Phillip Montague, Acting President	1927-1928
Spright Dowell	1928-1953
George Boyce Connell	1953-1959
Spright Dowell, Interim President	1959-1960
Rufus Carrollton Harris	1960-1979
Raleigh Kirby Godsey	1979-2006
William D. Underwood	2006-present



## **Mercer University Profile**

Mercer University is one of America's oldest and most distinctive institutions of higher learning, offering rigorous programs that span the undergraduate liberal arts to doctoral-level degrees. Founded by early 19th century Baptists, Mercer — while no longer formally denominational affiliated — remains committed to an educational environment that embraces the historic Baptist principles of intellectual and religious freedom.

With more than 9,100 students enrolled in 12 schools and colleges, on major campuses in Macon and Atlanta; medical school campuses in Macon, Savannah, and Columbus; and at Regional Academic Centers in Henry and Douglas counties, Mercer is ranked among the top tier of national research universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. Our more than 90,000 alumni are making important contributions to their professions and communities throughout Georgia, the Southeast and the world.

While offering a breadth of programs found at much larger universities, Mercer maintains an intimate, student-focused culture more characteristic of smaller liberal arts colleges. Mercer's uniqueness is found in the way the University integrates five defining components of its mission: Liberal Learning, Professional Knowledge, Discovery, Service to Humankind and Community.

## **Academic Divisions**

### **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

**MACON** - The oldest and largest of the University's divisions, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is Mercer's academic cornerstone. The College offers baccalaureate programs in the humanities, fine arts, natural sciences, social sciences, mathematics, and computer science, along with a variety of interdisciplinary options. Offering a multitude of pre-professional programs in health, law, and theology, the College also provides students a strong liberal arts foundation. The core curriculum blends practical skills, such as critical thinking, clear writing, and effective communication, along with a deep engagement with the diversity and richness of the peoples, faiths, cultures, and natural processes in the world. The College's Great Books Program, which provides students the opportunity for focused study of classic writers and thinkers of the Western world, is recognized among the 25 Best Great Books Programs by *Best College Reviews*. The Integrative Program combines traditional disciplinary course requirements with three multidisciplinary integrative courses, which require students to wrestle with challenging questions from multiple perspectives and prepare them to make meaningful contributions in a complicated and deeply interconnected world. Students in the College take advantage of a variety of study-abroad opportunities, both through faculty-led programs and those organized through the Mercer On Mission program. Mercer has been frequently recognized by *U.S. News & World Report* for "Best Undergraduate Teaching" and is listed among the "Best Undergraduate Computer Science Programs". In 2015, Mercer was awarded a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's most prestigious academic honor society.

### **School of Law**

**MACON** - Founded in 1873, Mercer University's School of Law is one of the oldest law schools in the United States and the first in the state of Georgia accredited by the American Bar Association. Mercer Law School is committed to preparing students for high-quality, general practice in a supportive and professional learning environment. Mercer Law School is a two-time recipient of the prestigious ABA Gambrell Professionalism Award for excellence and innovation in ethics and professionalism throughout the curriculum. With an enrollment of approximately 380 students, Mercer Law continues to be recognized for preparing students for practice through its award-winning programs in legal writing, advocacy, experiential education, and emphasis on ethics and professionalism.



## **School of Business**

**MACON, ATLANTA, HENRY COUNTY, AND ONLINE** - Established in 1984, Mercer's Stetson-Hatcher School of Business is named for Eugene W. Stetson, a 1901 Mercer graduate and business pioneer who leveraged the first major buyout in corporate history, and his grandson Robert F. (Bob) Hatcher, a Macon businessman, longtime supporter, Life Trustee, and former board chair for the University. Over the past 80 years, Mercer has granted more than 12,000 business degrees, and many of its graduates hold senior leadership positions in companies around the world. Mercer's business school delivers career-focused business education in order to develop innovative leaders who are responsible global citizens.

Stetson-Hatcher School of Business is an accredited member of AACSB International — The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business — which places it among the top 5% of business schools worldwide. Mercer's business school has been recognized as one of the "Best Business Schools" in the United States by both The Princeton Review and *U.S. News & World Report*. Mercer is listed as one of the "Best Undergraduate Business Programs" by *U.S. News & World Report*, and it has been recognized among MBA Programs Where Grads Make More Money Than They Owe.

The Evening MBA is included among the top 200 MBA programs in the country, and the Online MBA has been ranked among the top 100 Online MBA programs nationwide by *U.S. News & World Report*.

## **School of Engineering**

**MACON AND ONLINE** - Mercer's innovative and academically challenging engineering and engineering-related programs provide students with a comprehensive education, featuring a solid foundation in mathematics and sciences, a core engineering curriculum, a range of courses in engineering specialties and a strong emphasis on communication technologies. The School of Engineering marked its 35th anniversary in 2020, and its undergraduate program is ranked among the top programs in the nation by *U.S. News & World Report*. Known for its breadth of instruction in its undergraduate program and its 4+1 integrated bachelor's and master's degree programs, Mercer combines technical education with hands-on laboratory experience, research and real-world problem-solving. The School has produced 12 Goldwater Scholars in the last six years – including an unprecedented three recipients in three consecutive years for 2019, 2020 and 2021 – and eleven Department of Defense SMART Scholars in the last eight years.

## **College of Education**

**MACON, ATLANTA, DOUGLAS COUNTY, HENRY COUNTY, AND ONLINE** - Mercer's Tift College of Education prepares more professional educators than any other private institution in Georgia. It offers baccalaureate and graduate degrees for teacher education, including initial certification and teacher advancement, and educational leadership. The College of Education offers programs approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. Guided by the conceptual framework of "The Transforming Educator," the College supports those who aspire to grow professionally throughout their careers, while also seeking to transform the lives of students. In addition, the College offers some blended baccalaureate programs and fully online and blended graduate-level programs.

## **School of Theology**

**ATLANTA AND ONLINE** - Established in 1996, Mercer's James and Carolyn McAfee School of Theology brings Jesse Mercer's founding vision of providing students with a classical and theological education full circle as it prepares students for ministry in the church and beyond. The School of Theology shares Jesse Mercer's concern that churches have pastor leaders who understand Scripture and can clearly articulate their Christian beliefs. The mission is to prepare ministers who will inspire the Church and the world to imagine, discover, and create God's future. The School offers master's and doctoral degrees, along with several ministry concentrations. The innovative fully-integrated curriculum is taught by nationally recognized scholars who are committed Christians. Along with a network of partner churches, the School of Theology is affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.



## **College of Professional Advancement**

**MACON, ATLANTA, DOUGLAS COUNTY, HENRY COUNTY, AND ONLINE** - Mercer University's College of Professional Advancement is committed to offering undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, along with lifelong learning opportunities, for adults who seek leadership roles in their community and beyond, professional transition and advancement, and lives that have meaning and purpose. Educational programs support the needs of high-growth and high-demand employment sectors and provide students with a distinctive, multidisciplinary curriculum that integrates theory and practice. Areas of study include counseling, communication, health care, human services, humanities, leadership and administration, public safety, psychology, science and technology, and informatics, along with a variety of interdisciplinary and self-designed options. The College also offers pre-professional coursework that prepares students for nursing and pharmacy schools.

## **School of Music**

**MACON** - Mercer's Townsend School of Music is nationally recognized for its artist faculty, award-winning students, wide range of performance ensembles, and state-of-the-art facilities. The School of Music offers a thorough and rigorous curriculum, providing a conservatory-quality music education within a university environment. Students benefit from small class sizes and individual instruction from faculty who regularly perform on campus and at major national and international venues. Specialized music programs include the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings and the Townsend-McAfee Institute for Graduate Church Music.

## **Mercer Health Sciences Center**

The Mercer Health Sciences Center, a multi-campus academic health center, encompasses the School of Medicine, College of Pharmacy, College of Nursing and College of Health Professions. The Health Sciences Center enrolls more than 2,000 students, employs 450 full-time faculty and staff and annually graduates more than 750 physicians, nurses, and nurse educators, as well as family nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, physician assistants, pharmacists, physical therapists, family therapists, athletic trainers, clinical psychologists, public health professionals, and biomedical scientists.

## **School of Medicine**

**MACON, SAVANNAH, AND COLUMBUS** - Mercer's School of Medicine was established in 1982 to educate physicians and health professionals to meet the primary care and healthcare needs of rural, medically underserved areas of Georgia through education, service, research, and collaboration. Today, a majority of graduates practice in the state of Georgia, and Mercer is a leader in the nation for those who are practicing in rural or medically underserved areas. The School's educational environment was the first to be founded on a patient-based learning philosophy that is case-driven and provides early patient care experiences. This innovative, hands-on approach results in better long-term retention of content and prepares students for a variety of clinical challenges. With locations in Macon, Savannah, and Columbus, Mercer University School of Medicine offers a campus environment for every type of student. Macon is the School's administrative campus. The Savannah campus was established in 2008 and is located adjacent to Memorial University Medical Center. Columbus began as a clinical campus in 2012 and welcomed the first four-year M.D. class to a temporary space in the fall of 2021. Construction of a new facility was completed in late 2021 and opened in January 2022. All three campuses are closely integrated and function as one unit.

**College of Pharmacy**

**ATLANTA** - The College of Pharmacy advances health through innovations in teaching, research, patient-centered care and service. Mercer is ranked the No. 1 private pharmacy school in the Southeast by *U.S. News & World Report*. The College has an enrollment of more than 400 students and, with a distinguished faculty of scientists and clinicians, houses several research centers. The College's motto, "A Tradition of Excellence, A Legacy of Caring," frames its philosophy of providing excellent academic programs in an environment where every student matters and every person counts. In January 2024, classes began in the newly completed Moye Pharmacy and Health Sciences Center.

**College of Nursing**

**ATLANTA** - Mercer's nationally recognized Georgia Baptist College of Nursing is the longest established nursing program in Georgia. With a rich history dating back to 1902 and more than 9,000 alumni, the College is grounded in the heritage of excellence in nursing education. The College strives to advance the nursing workforce through multiple degree options, and faculty are dedicated to the development of professional nurses committed to scholarship, leadership, practice, research, and service within a culture of academic excellence.

**College of Health Professions**

**MACON AND ATLANTA** - The College of Health Professions is composed of six disciplines: physical therapy, physician assistant studies, public health, clinical psychology, athletic training, and kinesiology. In addition to its degree offerings, the College offers post-professional residencies and fellowships and operates an onsite physical therapy clinic. With an overall enrollment of more than 700 students, the College seeks to improve the health and quality of life of individuals and society through excellence in teaching, research, and service.

**Mercer University Libraries**

The Mercer University Libraries seek to embody a patron-driven philosophy by practicing excellent customer service, making available learning-centered gateways of information resources, by offering robust collections in support of the academic mission of the Mercer University community, and by utilizing patron-driven materials acquisition models. The libraries provide a wide range of print materials and cloud-based resources such as eBooks, eJournals, streaming media, research guides, and how-to videos.

In addition, the libraries participate in the campus academic enterprise through virtual reference services, group information literacy sessions, one-on-one reference tutorials, and the availability of cloud-based reference tools designed for 24/7 access to online tutorials and electronic resources.

The various library facilities contain multiple learning environments designed for mixed study scenarios, including comfortable spaces for group gatherings, quiet areas for individual work, and private group study rooms for collaborative projects. The Swilley and Tarver libraries offer Bear card-accessible 24/7 spaces.

**THE MERCER UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES INCLUDE:**

- Jack Tarver Library, Macon
- Monroe F. Swilley, Jr., Graduate and Professional Library, Atlanta
- Regional Academic Center Library Services supporting programs in Henry County and Douglas County

**SPECIALIZED LIBRARIES AT MERCER**

- Skelton Medical Library serving students on the Macon and Columbus campuses
- Skelton Library in Savannah serving the School of Medicine on the Savannah campus and the Memorial University Medical Center
- Furman Smith Law Library in the School of Law, Macon

**Mercer Medicine**

Mercer Medicine is a multi-specialty group of more than 30 primary care providers and specialists who work to guide patients through their health journey and create strong, long-term relationships. A wide variety of outpatient services are offered in multiple locations throughout middle and south Georgia including Macon, Clay County, Harris County, Plains, Putnam County, Jekyll Island, and Taylor County. As a subsidiary of Mercer University School of Medicine, Mercer Medicine is staffed by experienced healthcare providers who are leading the way in medical education, technology, and research.

**Mercer Engineering Research Center**

Mercer Engineering Research Center (MERC) is the nonprofit applied research operating unit of Mercer University. Located in Warner Robins, MERC was established in 1987 to provide engineering and scientific services, research, and specialized technical expertise to Robins Air Force Base, other Department of Defense entities, and commercial customers. MERC's core competencies include electrical engineering, electronic warfare, test and evaluation, embedded software, custom software development, cybersecurity, computational fluid dynamics, human factors and biomechanics, finite element analysis, structural integrity, mechanical testing, non-destructive inspection, reverse engineering, and prototyping.

MERC employs interns who work closely with MERC engineers and scientists in a broad range of areas supporting the execution of contracts. This opportunity allows students to obtain hands-on experience, adding depth to their education while gaining a better understanding of expertise provided to customers in solving real-world problems.

**Mercer University Press**

Mercer University Press has published more than 1,700 books since its establishment in 1979. It publishes approximately 30 to 35 new books each year in the areas of religion, philosophy, literary criticism, Southern history, regional studies, and creative writing. The Press holds membership in the Association of University Presses.

**UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS**

Mercer University is the only NCAA Division I private institution in Georgia and competes in the historic Southern Conference (SoCon). In the 2022-2023 academic year, Mercer student-athletes achieved an overall GPA of 3.38. The University has won the Southern Conference's Barrett-Bonner Award for academic achievement every year since joining the conference in 2014. Mercer's 18 intercollegiate teams include men's baseball, basketball, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, and tennis; and women's basketball, cross country, golf, lacrosse, soccer, softball, tennis, beach volleyball, track, and volleyball. Other members of the Southern Conference include: the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, East Tennessee State University, Furman University, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Samford University, The Citadel, Virginia Military Institute, Western Carolina University, and Wofford College.

**Accreditation**

In 1837, by Act of the General Assembly of the State of Georgia, the Executive committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention was given the power "to establish and endow a collegiate institution, to be known by the name of Mercer University."



Mercer University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, masters, educational specialist, and doctorate degrees. Mercer University may also offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Mercer University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website at [www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org).

The **Stetson-Hatcher School of Business** is accredited by AACSB International — the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, 777 South Harbour Island Boulevard, Suite 750, Tampa, FL 33602; (813) 769-6500; [www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu).

In the **College of Professional Advancement of Mercer University, the Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, the Master of Science in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling, the Master of Science in School Counseling, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Counselor Education and Supervision** are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP), 500 Montgomery Street, Suite 350, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 535-5990; [www.cacrep.org](http://www.cacrep.org). The Master of Science in School Counseling is also approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 200 Piedmont Avenue, Suite 1702, Atlanta, GA 30334-9032; [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

In the **College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science** is accredited by the Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET, [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org). The baccalaureate chemistry program is approved by the American Chemical Society, 1155 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (800) 227-5558; [www.acs.org](http://www.acs.org).

Mercer University's professional education initial certification programs are approved by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 200 Piedmont Avenue, Suite 1702, Atlanta, GA 30334-9032; [www.gapsc.com](http://www.gapsc.com).

In the **School of Engineering, the Bachelor of Science in Engineering** degree program is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, [www.abet.org](http://www.abet.org).

The **College of Health Professions** houses six accredited programs. The **Physician Assistant program** is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA), 12000 Findley Road, Suite 275, Johns Creek, GA 30097; (770) 476-1224; [www.arc-pa.org](http://www.arc-pa.org). The **Doctor of Public Health, Master of Public Health and the Bachelor of Science in Public Health** programs are accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health, 1010 Wayne Avenue, Suite 220, Silver Spring, MD 20910; (202) 789-1050; [cehp.org](http://cehp.org). The **Doctor of Physical Therapy** program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305-3085; (703) 706-3245; email: [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org); website: [www.capteonline.org](http://www.capteonline.org). The **Doctor of Psychology** program is accredited, on contingency, by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. This program will have this accreditation status until July 22, 2023. Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation: Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association; 750 1st Street NE, Washington, DC 20002; (202) 336-5979; email: [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org); [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation). The **Master of Athletic Training** program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE), 6850 Austin Center Blvd, Suite 100, Austin, TX 78731-3184; (512) 733-9700.



The **Juris Doctor (J.D.)** program in the **School of Law** is accredited by the Council of the American Bar Association Section of Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar, 312 North Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60654; (312) 988-6738; [www.americanbar.org/legaled](http://www.americanbar.org/legaled).

The **School of Medicine** houses two accredited programs. The **Doctor of Medicine** is accredited by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). LCME ([www.lcme.org](http://www.lcme.org)) is jointly sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges (655 K Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20001-2399; Phone: 202-828-0400) and the American Medical Association (330 North Wabash Avenue, Suite 39300, Chicago, IL 60611-5885; Phone: 312-464-4933). The **Master of Family Therapy** program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) located at 112 South Alfred Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3061; 703-253-0473 ([www.coamfte.org](http://www.coamfte.org)).

The baccalaureate and master's music programs of the **School of Music** are accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music, 11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 21, Reston, VA 20190; (703) 437-0700; [nasm.arts-accredit.org](http://nasm.arts-accredit.org).

The **Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, the Master of Science in Nursing program, and the Doctor of Nursing Practice** program at Mercer University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001; (202) 887-6791 ([www.ccneaccreditation.org](http://www.ccneaccreditation.org)). The Georgia Baptist College of Nursing maintains full approval from the Georgia Board of Nursing (237 Coliseum Drive, Macon, Georgia, 31217-3858; Phone: 478- 207-1640) to offer the pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing program.

The **Doctor of Pharmacy** program in the College of Pharmacy is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, 190 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 2850, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 664-3575; fax (866) 228-2631; website: [www.acpe-accredit.org](http://www.acpe-accredit.org).

The **Master of Arts in Christian Ministry, the Master of Theological Studies, the Master of Divinity, and the Doctor of Ministry** programs in the **School of Theology** are accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools, 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275; (412) 788-6505; [www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu).

The **English Language Institute** is accredited by the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation for the period August 2020 through August 2025 and agrees to uphold the CEA Standards for English Language Programs and Institutions. CEA is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency for English language programs and institutions in the U.S. For further information about this accreditation, please contact CEA, 1001 N. Fairfax Street, Suite 630, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 665-3400; [www.cea-accredit.org](http://www.cea-accredit.org).



## Message from the School of Medicine Dean

**JEAN SUMNER, M.D., F.A.C.P**



The mission of Mercer University School of Medicine is to educate Georgia students who will become well-trained, excellent health care professionals who will practice in rural medically underserved areas of this state. Our goal is to provide Georgians who live in these communities access to care delivered with skill, caring and the highest level of integrity.

I am honored to serve as the Dean of the School of Medicine and lead an incredibly talented faculty who are focused on providing a superior educational experience to our students. I am especially proud of our students, who are committed to serving in their home state.

Mercer University School of Medicine graduated its first class of physicians in 1986. Since that time, Mercer doctors and

other health care professionals have improved access and quality of care across Georgia, but particularly in areas of greatest need. Our faculty and students have demonstrated sustained dedication in their pursuit of scholarly work and community service activities that make a difference in Georgia and around the world.

In addition to the M.D. program, Mercer University School of Medicine offers graduate degree programs in Pre-clinical Sciences, and Family Therapy; as well as PhD programs in Biomedical Sciences and Rural Health Sciences. These graduates add to quality of care and health care access across Georgia.

The full 4-year M.D. program is offered on the Macon, Savannah and Columbus campuses. We also have a 2-year clinical campus in Valdosta for clinical education. We offer exceptional clinical rotations through strong partnerships with regional health care institutions, organizations and individuals. These rotations provide opportunities to develop a broad, deep knowledge of health issues facing patients as well as the development of strong clinical skills and interdisciplinary teamwork.

Our students have the opportunity to learn in institutions such as Memorial Health University Medical Center, Savannah; Piedmont Columbus Regional Health, Columbus; St. Francis Emory Hospital, Columbus; Atrium Health Navicent Medical Center, Macon; Piedmont Coliseum Medical Center in Macon;

South Georgia Medical Center, Valdosta; Tanner Medical Center, Carrollton and Villa Rica, and other great locations across this state. In addition, we have multiple partners cross the state where our students see outstanding rural medical practice.

We also have a rich network of dedicated community physician preceptors throughout the state that teach our students. Through these exceptional opportunities, our students acquire a broad range of experiences and develop the skills and judgment needed to serve their patients and communities.

Mercer medical students learn using a unique problem-based, faculty-guided curriculum. As part of small group and team-based learning experiences, students use clinical cases to learn and understand basic sciences, which form the foundation of medical practice. Early in the curriculum, students participate in rural and community-based care, which recurs throughout the four years. This curriculum is consistent and robust across all campuses.



Many scholarship opportunities are available. We value students who have a strong interest and commitment to rural health and primary care. The Nathan Deal Scholars Program, the Primary Care Accelerated Track Program, and the Children's Rural Pediatric Scholarship are designed to support students with these attributes. Both programs allow students to complete medical school with little or no debt.

I was among the first class of physicians to graduate from Mercer School of Medicine and spent my years in practice in a small, rural county. In my opinion, there is no more meaningful, challenging or rewarding work.

Changing health care in Georgia by becoming a physician or health care professional and serving in areas of need requires the best and brightest—those with courage, exceptional intellect and a servant's heart. This opportunity exists at Mercer University School of Medicine for students who want to make a difference.

Jean R. Sumner, M.D., F.A.C.P.

Dean of Mercer University School of Medicine



## **Doctor of Medicine Admission Requirements**

The overarching goal of the admissions process is to identify, attract and enroll well-qualified students who are likely to graduate into caring and well-rounded physicians, who are committed to serving the primary healthcare needs of rural, medically underserved areas in Georgia.

Applications to the MD program are invited for the 2025-26 Admissions Cycle from those that meet all of the following eligibility criteria:

1. The applicant must be a US Citizen or US Permanent Resident.
2. The applicant must have established domicile in the state of Georgia on or before August 15, 2025 and maintain domicile for 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the first day of classes of the school term for which he or she is applying.  
Applicants who have established or reestablished domicile in the state of Georgia as late as August 15, 2025 will not be eligible to apply as an Early Decision Program Applicant, since the Early Decision Primary American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) Application Deadline is August 1, 2025. An applicant who is not able to claim Georgia as his/her State of Legal Residence will not be allowed to designate MUSM as a recipient of their Primary American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) Application.
3. Applicants should have obtained an undergraduate bachelor's degree (e.g., BS or BA) or a more advanced degree with a minimum of 90 credit hours of coursework or be graduating with an undergraduate or a more advanced degree by June of the intended year of matriculation. The Admissions Committee reserves the right to stipulate that eventual acceptance of an applicant into the program is contingent upon documentation that the applicant has obtained the undergraduate or advanced degree program he/she is enrolled in at the time of application. An applicant **must** complete a graduate degree before matriculation if s/he is enrolled in a degree program when the application is submitted.
4. The applicant has taken the ('2015 MCAT' or 'New MCAT') Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) at least once on or after April 1, 2022 and has obtained a percentile rank of at least 25 (a score of 493 in the current cycle).

The School of Medicine receives approximately 1,200 primary AMCAS applications per year to its MD program. The estimated number of new matriculants beginning with the 2025-2026 academic year is 180.

## **REQUIRED PREMEDICAL COURSEWORK AND COMPETENCIES**

One-year laboratory courses in general biology, general or inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, and general physics from an accredited institution are required. Offers of acceptance are contingent upon receipt of official transcripts of all post-secondary coursework including the fulfillment of required premedical courses by June 30 of the intended year of matriculation. Other courses that are not required but strongly encouraged include introductory or upper level courses in biochemistry, mathematics, cell biology, immunology, genetics, molecular biology, behavioral science and humanities.

Primary American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) applications (that have been annotated as verified by the American Medical College Application Service) from eligible applicants are screened by MUSM Office of Admissions, and invitations to complete a secondary application are sent to applicants who meet the criteria specified below. For the 2025-26 cycle, an invitation to submit a Secondary Application is sent to otherwise eligible applicants (as defined above) who meet criteria 1-3 or 4 below:



1. Has taken the MCAT at least once on or after April 1, 2022.
2. Highest MCAT Percentile Rank\* of at least 25
3. (Highest MCAT Percentile Rank) x (Cumulative Undergraduate BCPM-GPA\*) is > 93
4. For applicants with an earned graduate degree, an invitation to submit a Secondary Application is also sent if the average MCAT percentile rank is 25 or greater, regardless of Cumulative Undergraduate BCPM-GPA.

An invitation to submit a Secondary Application (and its completion) is a pre-requisite for further consideration of an applicant.

\*Cumulative Undergraduate BCPM-GPA refers to the Cumulative Undergraduate BCPM-GPA reported on completed Primary American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) Application verified by AMCAS. This includes BCPM grades from post-baccalaureate coursework. To check whether any of the courses you consider BCPM are or are not accepted by AMCAS, please see guidelines on this topic [here](#).

Applicants who document through their Primary AMCAS Application that they meet our eligibility requirements will be invited by the MUSM Admissions Office through e-mail to submit a Secondary (Supplemental) Application online and to submit a Complete Application (see What constitutes a Complete Application below). These applicants will receive further consideration if these are submitted by the applicable deadline. The criteria for invitation of Secondary Applications are identical regardless of whether one applies for Early Decision Program or Regular Pool. *An invitation to submit the Secondary Application is essential for further consideration. An invitation to submit a Secondary Application does not constitute a guarantee of an invitation to interview. It does not imply that the Committee considers an applicant meeting the above criteria to be academically or otherwise qualified for admission. Further holistic screening of academic qualifications, experiences, and attributes is completed before an interview invitation is considered.*

## SCREENING APPLICANTS

Details about the screening process can be found on our [website](#).

## COMPONENTS OF A COMPLETE MD APPLICATION

For an application packet to be considered complete and eligible for further screening by the Admissions Committee, the following materials must be received by MUSM Admissions Office by the appropriate deadline. As noted above, an applicant must first meet current qualifications to be invited to submit a secondary application.

1. Complete Secondary Application online through the link that was sent in the email invitation from the Admissions Office inviting you to submit a Secondary Application.
2. Pay a non-refundable fee of \$90 (US dollars only) to process the secondary application. This fee is waived for applicants who have a valid Fee Assistance Program waiver from AMCAS.
3. Upload a scanned copy of a notarized declaration of domicile in the state of Georgia through the same web-link referred to in number one of this section.
4. Upload a photocopy of a state issued photo identification document through the same web-link referred to in number one of this section.
5. Submit at least three (3) letters of recommendation (by individual letter writers) or one (1) Committee letter submitted through AMCAS.



Completed applications are subject to further screening by the Committee before a decision to invite an applicant for interview is made. An invitation to submit Secondary Applications does not guarantee an invitation to interview. An applicant's experiences, attributes and academic metrics are all considered by the Admissions Committee, and the Committee looks for evidence of sustained previous and prospective commitment to the mission of MUSM in its applicants.

The School of Medicine participates in the Early Decision Program as defined by the AAMC ([aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/edp](https://aamc.org/students/applying/requirements/edp)). For those applying through the EDP, Primary AMCAS Application & Transcripts must be submitted to AMCAS by August 1, 2025. Please note that our Early Decision Program is intended for applicants who are committed to our mission to prepare primary care physicians who will practice in rural Georgia.

MUSM Admissions Office must receive an applicant's GPA and official MCAT score on a Verified Primary AMCAS application by 5:00 pm ET on August 30, 2025 for a Secondary Application invitation for the Early Decision Program to be considered.

'Regular Pool' Applications can be submitted to MUSM as soon as AMCAS allows. The deadline for submitting Primary AMCAS Application for Regular Pool so that it is forwarded by AMCAS to Mercer University School of Medicine is November 1, 2025. The deadline for submitting transcripts to AMCAS for Regular Pool so that it is verified by AMCAS for Mercer University School of Medicine is November 15, 2025. Eligibility criteria for applying and criteria for invitation of Secondary Applications are identical regardless of whether one applies for Early Decision Program or Regular Pool.

Special Note with regard to 'Latest MCAT score considered' in the 2025-2026 admissions cycle, or 2026 Application Year: AMCAS allows submission of primary applications even before an applicant's MCAT scores, official transcripts are submitted to AMCAS. AMCAS notes that it takes about six (6) weeks to verify an application. MUSM Admissions Office screens only applications that have been verified by AMCAS. Since GPA and MCAT scores are used to screen applicants prior to inviting a Secondary (Supplemental) application, MUSM Admissions Office must receive an applicant's GPA and official MCAT score on the primary AMCAS application by August 30, 2025 (5pm ET) for the Early Decision Program, and December 12, 2025 (5 pm ET) for applicants to the Regular Pool. Applicants need to be aware of all of these factors, and plan to submit their applications to MUSM on time to maximize chances of full consideration of their application. We currently do not anticipate any disruptions in the MCAT cycle for the 2025-2026 Admission Cycle. Details can be found on the Admissions website at [MUSM Admissions](#).

The Admissions Committee uses a 'rolling admissions process' — once the Office of Admissions receives a Secondary Application complete in all aspects, the application is subject to further screening by the Office of Admissions, and the applicant may be invited to an interview. The number of interview spots is limited to approximately 400 per cycle (Early Decision Program, Regular Pool, and Early Assurance Programs combined).

Each applicant who is interviewed will have one 45-minute interview with two interviewers. During the 2025-2026 admission cycle, interviews will be virtual using Zoom. Instructions will be included in the interview invitation. One of the interviewers will be an Admissions Committee member who may be a basic science or clinical faculty member or a senior (fourth-year) medical student. Both interviewers have access to the Primary Application, the Secondary Application, and Letters of Evaluation before they interview the applicant and through the rest of that application year.



At the level of the interview applicants are assessed and graded in each of the following categories 1) rootedness in Georgia; service/work experiences consistent with the mission of MUSM; 2) academics; 3) personal attributes. Each interviewer submits his/her comments for consideration by the Admissions Committee. Each Admissions Committee member has access to these comments as well as each applicant's primary and secondary application, letters of recommendation, and Georgia Residency documentation.

Applicants who have any concerns with the fairness of one or more interview encounters they experienced are encouraged to bring it to the attention of the Office of Admissions before the end of their interview day. The Admissions Deans and Admissions Office treat this feedback in confidence, in that this is not shared with the admissions committee, and use it to address any concerns applicants may have.

The deadline for completing and submitting all components of the Secondary Application for Regular Pool Applicants is 5:00 pm ET, January 10, 2026. When applications are complete, applicants will receive an email acknowledgment from the Admissions Office that their file is complete and eligible for review by the Admissions Committee. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Acceptance notifications to candidates are sent no earlier than September 26, and acceptances are extended until the incoming class if full. Offers of acceptance are made subject to the following standard contingencies and they may be subject to additional contingencies as appropriate.

1. The applicant providing documentation that he/she is a US Citizen or US Permanent Resident.
2. The applicant providing documentation that he/she is a US Permanent Resident.
3. The applicant providing documentation of domicile in the state of Georgia at least 12 months prior to the start of classes.
4. The applicant documenting with official transcripts the completion of premedical requirements required for matriculation in the M.D. program at MUSM, and documentation of completion of an undergraduate degree or a more advanced degree with 90 or more credit hours of coursework from an accredited college or institution in the United States. MUSM Admissions Office should receive official and final transcripts including the note that an undergraduate degree or a more advanced degree has been awarded, and all post-secondary coursework you have undertaken directly from the respective institution(s) by June 30, 2026. Data in transcripts should be consistent with that reported in your Primary AMCAS Application verified by AMCAS for the 2026 AMCAS Application Year.
5. Receipt by the School of Medicine of an acceptable Criminal Background Check facilitated by the Association of American Medical Colleges.
6. The applicant meeting the [Technical Standards for Admission](#) to the MD Program.

As a school participating in the AMCAS for considering applications to its MD program, Mercer University School of Medicine admissions process adheres to the most updated version of the Application and Acceptance Protocols stipulated by the Association of American Medical Colleges [AAMC Application Protocols](#).

The School's Admissions Committee considers requests for deferral of matriculation of acceptees for one (1) year on a case-by-case basis if requests are made by May 15 of the expected year of matriculation. Requests should be made in writing to the Admissions Office at [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu).



## CAMPUS ASSIGNMENT

The full four-year MD program is available on the Macon, Savannah, and the Columbus Campuses. At the time an offer of acceptance is made, candidates are asked to rank and justify their campus preferences, and campus preferences are processed as soon as candidates return their signed acceptance letter with a \$100 deposit. The Admissions Office is unable to guarantee that site preferences will be honored.

Criteria for selection are reviewed by the Admissions Committee on an annual basis and any revisions will be published on the admissions pages of MUSM's website. Admissions Requirements are also published in Medical Schools Admissions Requirements (MSAR) ® and updated annually. Applicants are advised to consult the Mercer University School of Medicine [admissions website](#) for detailed and up-to-date information on the application and admissions process. Contact the Admissions Office using the information on the next page if there are any problems.

## Alternate Path to Admissions

### MERCER MEDICAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Through a partnership with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Mercer University, the School of Medicine offers the Mercer Medical Scholars Program (previously known as the Special Consideration Program) for its Doctor of Medicine degree. Up to 30 incoming freshmen are selected each year for this special program. To be eligible to receive an invitation to apply, candidates must be U.S. citizens or permanent U.S. residents and legal residents of Georgia at the time of application. An official offer of acceptance to Mercer University undergraduate must be received. High school students will be invited to apply in the fall of their senior year in order to be eligible for admission. Additional eligibility criteria and details on applying can be found on the School's

[Special Consideration Program](#) web page.

### EARLY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

The School of Medicine offers a linkage program for admitting applicants to the MD program through a partnership with Agnes Scott College. Details can be found on the [Early Assurance Program](#) web page.

### YEAR III MD PROGRAM TRANSFERS

**Mercer University does not accept transfer applications.**

### ADMISSIONS OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

**URL:** <https://medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/>

**E-mail:** musmadmissions@mercer.edu

**Phone:** 478-301-5425/2524

**Mailing Address:** [Contact Name]  
Mercer University  
School of Medicine Admissions Office  
1501 Mercer University Drive  
Macon, GA 31207-0001

**Physical Address:** 1550 College Street  
Macon, GA 31207-0001



## **MD Program at Mercer University School of Medicine Technical Standards**

The MD degree is a broad undifferentiated degree attesting to general knowledge in medicine and the basic skills required for the practice of medicine. Essential abilities and characteristics required for completion of the MD degree consist of certain minimum physical and cognitive abilities and sufficient mental and emotional stability to assure that candidates for admission, promotion, and graduation are able to complete the entire course of study and participate fully in all aspects of medical training. The School of Medicine intends for its graduates to become competent and compassionate physicians who are capable of entering residency training (graduate medical education) and meeting all requirements for medical licensure.

**The avowed intention of an individual student to practice only a narrow part of clinical medicine, or to pursue a non-clinical career, does not alter the requirement that all medical students take and achieve competence in the full curriculum required by the faculty.** Graduates of medical school must have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. Since the treatment of patients is an essential part of the educational program, Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM) must act to protect the health and safety of patients.

The Admissions Committee of Mercer University School of Medicine acknowledges Section 504 of the 1973 Vocational Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and asserts that the ability to meet certain essential technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations must be present in the prospective candidates. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary; however, applicants who want to request accommodations during the admissions process should contact the Mercer University School of Medicine Office of Student Affairs.

All students must review the Technical Standards at the time of admission and at the beginning of the clinical years. The Technical Standard Student Review Acknowledgment form must be completed and submitted to the Office of Student Affairs.

A candidate for the M.D. degree must have aptitude, abilities, and skills in five areas: Observation; Communication; Motor; Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative; and Behavioral/Social. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner.

### **TECHNICAL STANDARDS**

*UPDATED AY 2021-2022*

#### **Observation**

Candidates must be able to obtain information, and actively participate in, demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences. Such experiments include, but are not limited to the dissection of cadavers, examination of specimens in laboratory settings, and the microscopic examination of specimens. Candidates must be able to accurately attain information from patients and evaluate findings. They must be able to perform a complete physical examination in order to assimilate findings based on this information and to cultivate an appropriate diagnostic and treatment plan. These skills require the use of vision, hearing, and touch or the functional equivalent.

#### **Communication**

Candidates must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, and efficiently with patients, their families, health care professionals, colleagues, faculty, and staff. Candidates must be able to acquire the patient's medical history in a timely manner, interpret non-verbal information, and establish a therapeutic rapport with patients. Candidates are also required to record information accurately and clearly; and communicate efficiently in English with other health care professionals.

**Motor- Function**

Candidates, after appropriate training, must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostics maneuvers. Candidates are required to respond to clinical situations in a timely and efficient manner while providing general and emergency care. These activities require some physical mobility, coordination of both gross and fine motor neuromuscular functions, and balance and equilibrium.

**Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities**

Candidates must be able to assimilate detailed and complex information presented in both didactic and clinical coursework. The candidate must be able to learn through a variety of methods including, but not limited to, classroom instruction, small group, problem-based learning groups, team and collaborative activities, individual study, preparation and presentation of reports simulations, and through the use of technology. Candidates are expected to possess the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes**

Candidates must exhibit the emotional stability required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, which includes, but is not limited to, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients. Candidates are expected to exhibit integrity, honesty, professionalism, compassion, and display a spirit of cooperation and teamwork. The candidate is expected to understand the legal and ethical aspects of the practice of medicine and function within the law and ethical standards of the medical profession. Candidates must interact with patients and their families, health care professionals, colleagues, faculty, and staff in a courteous, professional, and respectful manner. The candidate accepts responsibility for learning and exercising good judgment. Candidates are expected to contribute to collaborative, constructive learning environments; accept constructive feedback from others; and take personal responsibility for making appropriate positive changes. Candidates must possess the physical and emotional endurance to tolerate physically demanding workloads and function in a competent and professional manner in high stress, fast paced situations, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and manage the uncertainty intrinsic in the care of patients and the health care system.

**Technical Standards Student Review Acknowledgment**

The goal of the ACCESS and Accommodations Office is to improve the accessibility of Mercer University Programs, Services and Facilities for persons with disabilities and ensure institutional compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAAA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504).

The School has established Technical Standards for the MD Program to ensure that all students can meet the requirements of the school's curriculum and graduate as skilled and effective practitioners of medicine with or without reasonable accommodations.

Each student is required to review the Technical Standards at the time of admission and prior to the preclinical years and to certify their ability to meet those standards with or without reasonable accommodations. Recently admitted students will complete this form prior to Freshman Orientation and apply for accommodations at [access.mercer.edu](http://access.mercer.edu) if accommodations are needed. Continuing students will be alerted to complete this form prior to the start of the preclinical years. All students may apply for accommodations at any time during the academic year.



Mercer University makes every effort to keep the costs of education at a reasonable level and to help qualified students to finance a Mercer education. Many types of financial assistance are available. The Bursar's Office is eager to help students in their financial planning to meet the costs of education.

### SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Doctor of Medicine:

<i>Per Year</i>	\$44,864
<i>Per Semester</i>	\$22,432

Doctor of Medicine - Accelerated Program

<i>Per Year</i>	\$53,492
<i>Per Semester</i>	\$26,746

Master of Family Therapy (MSR/MFT):

Master of Preclinical Science:

Master of Biomedical Science:

Rural Health Sciences PhD:

### MISCELLANEOUS FEES

Facilities and Technology Fee:

<i>Graduate and Prof. students enrolled in 9 hours or more</i>	\$150/semester
<i>Graduate and Prof. students enrolled in 8 hours or less</i>	\$17/credit hr

Health Insurance Premium:

Contact Bursar Office for Current Rates

Late Fee Payment (assessed monthly):

\$50

Online Payment Plan Enrollment Fee:

\$40-50/semester

Practicum Fee (MFT 702, MFT 703, MFT 704):

\$50

Software Fee:

Contact department for current rate

### TRANSCRIPT FEES

Transcripts are usually processed within 24-hours except during peak times.

Electronic (Parchment):	\$3.25
Electronic (Parchment - Rush):	\$28.25

Returned Check: \$50 or 1% of the face value of the check, whichever is greater

Obligation and fee for returned checks must be paid by cashier's check or money order. After two returned checks, students are on a "debit or credit card only" basis with the University.

*Please note that the above-listed tuition rates and miscellaneous fees are for the 2025-2026 academic year and are subject to change without prior notice.*

**Students cross-registering for courses outside their college/school of enrollment will continue to pay the tuition rate of their home college/school for those courses.**



### Billing and Fee Payment

Electronic tuition statements are accessible through the Pay and Manage My Account link located in [MyMercer](#). Notification emails are sent to the student's official Mercer email address when new statements are posted. **Tuition is always due by the first day of the semester.**

Only those students who register for a given semester during early registration will be billed for the semester in advance. Accounts may later be adjusted and rebilled based on changes in class schedules and financial aid awards. Students who are not early registered and billed prior to the beginning of the semester must be prepared to pay tuition and fees at the time they register. **A \$50 fee per month will be charged for late payments.**

If a student is registered for a particular semester but elects not to attend, the student must officially notify the Registrar. **Non-attendance does not cancel charges and the student will be held financially accountable.** Students will be charged tuition and fees for all attempted hours, regardless of completion. In order to obtain a refund of 100% tuition and fees, the student must drop their courses during the drop/add period of the given semester. Please see "Refund Policy" for further details.

PLEASE NOTE: If payment arrangements have not been made by the first day of the term, the student's registration is subject to cancellation. The University reserves the right to deny access to, or use of, University facilities to any student with an outstanding balance.

**Official correspondence, notices, and bills from the Bursar Office will be sent to the student's official Mercer designated email address.**

### COURSE FEE

Additional fees may be assessed for special course requirements.

### MISCELLANEOUS FEES

Fees or fines may be imposed for dorm or property damage, library fines, honor code violations, and campus safety violations.

### Statement of Student Responsibility

Prior to registering, students are required to read and acknowledge the Statement of Student Responsibilities indicating their understanding of their academic and financial obligations associated with enrollment at Mercer University. This document is available in the [MyMercer](#) portal and must be completed prior to each registration period.

The registration of a student signifies the assumption of definite financial obligations between himself or herself and the University.

### Payment Methods

Tuition, special fees, housing, and other assessments may be paid by check or money order (made payable to Mercer University,) or via e-check or credit card payment made online through the student's [MyMercer](#) Portal. Students paying by credit card will be assessed a convenience fee by the credit card processor. E-check payments are free.

Students will be notified of their anticipated amounts of financial aid by way of award notifications or letters from the Office of Student Financial Planning. Students with balances not covered by financial aid must enroll in a payment plan or have their balance paid in full by the first day of class.



### PAYMENT PLANS

In an ongoing effort to assist our students and their families with budgeting educational expenses, Mercer offers a monthly payment plan that allows a student to pay tuition in monthly installments throughout the semester. For more information please visit our website at [bursar.mercer.edu](http://bursar.mercer.edu).

By enrolling in a Nelnet payment plan, students enter into a formal Payment Plan Agreement to pay for their tuition and fees and agree to abide by all associated Terms and Conditions, including the requirement to ensure that all scheduled payments are successfully processed.

Nelnet will notify the student of any failed payment and, when applicable, the date of a scheduled reattempt. If a payment is returned due to **inaccurate account information**, the student will have **five (5) calendar days** to update their payment details. Failure to do so will result in **termination** of the Payment Plan Agreement.

Please note, in the event of a terminated payment plan students will be subject to our Debt Collection Policy. For additional information, please refer to the Debts section of the Catalog.

Current Semester Payment Plan are terminated for the following reasons:

- If the **initial down payment** fails, the Payment Plan Agreement will be **automatically terminated**.
- For **scheduled monthly payments**, if a payment fails, a **second attempt** will be made by Nelnet. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, the Agreement will be **terminated**.
- If the **final scheduled payment** fails, **no reattempt** will be made, and the Agreement will be **immediately terminated**

### EMPLOYER TUITION ASSISTANCE DEFERRAL PROGRAM

Students who receive company reimbursement may be eligible to participate in our Employer Tuition Assistance Deferral Program. More information concerning this payment program may be obtained by visiting our website at [bursar.mercer.edu](http://bursar.mercer.edu).

Payment of tuition and fees is the responsibility of the student, regardless of sponsorship by his or her employer. To avoid late fees and being placed on a registration hold, payment arrangements should be made by the first day of class each semester.

### SPONSOR BILLING

Special billing arrangements involving Corporate entities must be submitted to the Office of the Bursar. Approved billing authorization, financial guarantee, or voucher must be received by the first day of class for the current term. Sponsor Billing Authorizations should be uploaded through your [MyMercer](#) Student Portal. In the event the sponsor does not pay, the student is responsible for the unpaid balance on the account. Students utilizing Sponsor Billing must resolve all outstanding balances no later than 30 days from the last day of class.

### INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS

Mercer University has partnered with Flywire to provide international students with an easy and secure method to make international payments for tuition, campus housing, meals, and other mandatory fees. With Flywire you can track your payments from start to finish, make payments in more than 150 currencies, online, and from banks worldwide.

To ensure that your student's account is properly credited in a timely and expedient fashion, please visit [mercer.flywire.com](http://mercer.flywire.com) to initiate your payment.



### INFORMATION FOR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS AND OTHER ELIGIBLE FOR U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (DOD) OR VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) EDUCATION BENEFITS

Your service's education center must approve your military tuition assistance before you enroll in a course. Individuals who contemplate enrollment and who are eligible for financial assistance through the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should contact the School Certifying Official in the Office of the Registrar at (478) 301-5137.

#### **Military Tuition Assistance (TA) Application Process**

Each military branch has its own TA application form and procedures. To find out how to get started, visit your local education center or go online to your military branch's virtual education center. Military Tuition Assistance forms should be uploaded through your [MyMercer](#) Student Portal.

#### **VA Benefits**

Individuals who are eligible to receive financial assistance through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs should contact the University's Office of the Registrar in the School of Medicine regarding VA certification. Students MUST notify the certifying official in the Registrar's office if they:

- Used all of their Veteran Educational Benefits
- Changed course load or Program of Study
- Withdraw from classes (after start of term)
- Terminate Enrollment (before start of term)

Students wishing to use their VA Education benefits must submit a VA Funding Intent Form **EACH SEMESTER**. By completing the form the student is authorizing Mercer University to certify their education benefits for the semester. Mercer is unable to authorize students education benefits without this form.

***Students who receive VA benefits must make appropriate payment arrangements with the Office of the Bursar no later than the first day of class each semester to ensure that their tuition and fees will be paid in full.***

Students receiving tuition assistance paid directly to the University will have their total tuition and fees submitted to VA for payment based on their eligibility percentage, minus any tuition-based scholarships awarded for the term. Housing fees, meal plan fees, and miscellaneous fees (parking tickets, housing fines, etc.) are not eligible to be paid by VA and are the responsibility of the student.

***Students who have less than 100% entitlement or receive VA tuition assistance paid directly to the student are responsible for paying any outstanding balance no later than the first day of class of the semester. If students are unable to pay the balance in full they are encouraged to enroll in the Monthly Payment Plan to avoid holds and late fees on their tuition account.***

#### **POST-9/11 GI-BILL®**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides a maximum amount of benefit per academic year (August 1 –July 31), based on the entitlement percentage of the student. Students are responsible for paying any remaining balance on their tuition account if:

1. The maximum has been paid by VA for the academic year,
2. The student has exhausted lifetime benefits, or
3. The end of the entitlement period is reached.



The Mercer VA Certifying Official in the Office of the Registrar must be immediately informed by the student regarding schedule changes. VA benefits will be reduced if a student withdraws from a class or changes his/her enrollment status. In the event of a VA overpayment, Mercer is required to return funds to the Veteran's Administration, as a result the student will be immediately responsible for repayment to the University.

Veterans Services at Mercer University is not a division of or directly affiliated with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

Students with questions about their eligibility for benefits and payments, should contact the Department of Veterans Affairs 1-888-GIBILL-1 (1-888-442-4551) or visit

[www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school\\_resources.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_resources.asp).

### Student Health Insurance

All students with the exception of students enrolled in Distance Learning Programs are required to carry health insurance regardless of enrolled credit hours. Each semester, an insurance premium is assessed at the time of registration.

Students who do not wish to purchase the school policy must provide proof of coverage by completing an online insurance waiver at the CORE Management website by the published deadline. Once coverage is verified, the premium charge will be credited to the student ledger. **If the waiver is not entered each semester by the published deadline, the student will be held responsible for payment of the non-refundable insurance premium. No exceptions are made to this deadline.**

### Book Funds

Students may use excess financial aid funds to purchase books, Mercer Offers two ways students are able to receive those funds.

### BEAR CARD TRANSFERS

Students may transfer excess financial aid funds, or out-of-pocket payments, to their Mercer University Bear Card, for use in the bookstore, vending machines, as well as other on- and off-campus locations.\* In order to have excess financial aid transferred to your BearCard, a completed BearCard transfer request form must be submitted to the Bursar's Office prior to the disbursement of your financial aid. Requests for BearCard transfers must be submitted through the student [MyMercer](#) Portal. Requests for BearCard transfers must be submitted through the student [MyMercer](#) Portal.

Approved BearCard request forms will be processed no later than one week prior to the first day of class each semester. When excess financial aid credits are used, the amount of the BearCard transfer cannot exceed \$600 per term. Students who need additional funding for required texts must submit supporting documentation. There is no dollar limit on BearCard transfers for out-of-pocket payments.

All funds transferred to the BearCard are non-refundable except upon graduation or withdrawal from Mercer University. BearCard funds cannot be withdrawn through a bank ATM. In the event a student loses financial aid eligibility, the student will be liable for all balances due to the University and excess BearCard funds may be rescinded and reapplied to your student account.

**TITLE IV BOOK ADVANCES**

Title IV regulations require that Mercer University provide our students with the ability to purchase books no later than the seventh day of the semester. As a result, Mercer offers our students the option to receive a book advance up to a maximum of \$600 per semester. Title IV book advances can be processed in the form of a BearCard transfer or the student's refund method chosen in Nelnet. In order to qualify for a book advance, those students receiving Title IV aid must meet the following criteria:

- Title IV aid (only) must create a credit over and above the cost of tuition and fees, housing and meals
- All financial aid documentation must be completed, and aid must be eligible to be disbursed, no later than ten (10) days before the start of the term
- Students must be enrolled at least half-time in a credit program
- The amount of the advance cannot exceed the amount of the student's credit, or \$600 per term, without supporting documentation to show why additional funds are necessary
- Undergraduate students must opt out of the Bear Book Bundle and Material Fee

Deadlines for requests vary each semester and can be found on the Book Advance page on the Bursar's website. Students who do not meet the above eligibility requirements may still request a BearCard transfer to use at the University bookstore.

**Debts**

**Students must settle all outstanding balances with the University before they can register for future semesters or receive a diploma.**

The Bursar's Office is authorized to apply available financial aid—including scholarships, loans, state grants, or other aid—to a student's outstanding balance unless regulations prohibit such use. Students with outstanding balances may be subject to late penalties and interest charges.

**PAST DUE SEMESTER PAYMENT PLANS**

Mercer offers a past due payment plan during a limited window at the end of each semester for students with outstanding balances who are unable to pay in full. This plan allows students to avoid interest charges, collection fees, and credit bureau reporting if they remain current on the agreed-upon payments. It is important to note that students on this payment plan are unable to register for future terms and any courses registered for will be dropped.

Nelnet will notify the student of any failed payment and, when applicable, the date of a scheduled reattempt. If a payment is returned due to inaccurate account information, the student will have five (5) calendar days to update their payment details. Failure to do so will result in termination of the Payment Plan Agreement.

If any payment fails, the Payment Plan Agreement will be immediately terminated, and the account will be referred to the University's internal collections department.



## COLLECTIONS AND CREDIT BUREAU REPORTING

Failure to pay any sums due to Mercer University may result in the submission of the student's account to Mercer University's Internal Collection Department. If such action is required, the student will be liable to pay a late fee of \$5.00 for each thirty (30) days that the payment is past due and interest will accrue monthly at the rate of up to 9% for the life of the balance. In the event the student account is submitted to an outside collection agency, the student will be liable for the fees of any collection agency, which may be based on a percentage at the maximum of 33.3% of the debt, and all costs and expenses, including reasonable attorney's fees, Mercer University incurs in such collection efforts. Any account placed with collections may be reported to the Credit Bureau and NSLDS.

## Non-Refundable Acceptance and Tuition Deposits

Upon acceptance to Mercer University, a college/program may require a non-refundable tuition deposit to reserve a seat. Deposits will be forfeited upon cancellation of enrollment; refunds are not permitted. Specific deposit requirements may be obtained from your program Admissions Office.

Information regarding refunds for refundable fees and tuition are outlined within the University Tuition Refund Policy

## Tuition Refund Policy

Mercer University will maintain a fair and equitable refund policy by adherence to the Institutional Refund Policy in all programs, in all schools, and on all campuses. This policy is subject to change if there are future changes to the Federal Return Policy or other federal, state, accrediting agency, or institutional policy with which it may conflict.

The criteria for the Mercer Institutional Refund Policy are based upon federal mandates established by the Federal Return Policy, which took effect on all Mercer campuses on August 15, 2000, replacing all existing refund policies throughout the University. The policy applies whether or not Title IV awards are involved.

Tuition, fees, and any other educational charges will not be refunded if the operation of the University is suspended at any time as a result of an act of God, strike, riot, disruption, or for any reason beyond the control of the University.

Questions regarding refund procedures and amounts should be directed to the Office of the Bursar, 1501 Mercer University Drive, Macon, GA 31207 (Telephone: 478-301-1111.)

Refunds will be calculated based on enrollment of either semester-based programs or session-based programs, as defined below:

- **Semester-Based Programs:** Class enrollment spans the entire semester. Classes typically run 16-weeks.
- **Session - (or module) Based Program:** Enrolled in one or more courses that do not span the entire semester. Typically, there are two 8-week sessions within the semester.

*\*Special requirements for session-based program refunds will be noted throughout this policy by an asterisk.*

**PLEASE NOTE:** The last date for a tuition refund **MAY NOT** correspond with the last day to withdraw for the term. Please contact the Bursar's Office for the last day to withdraw for a tuition adjustment.



### **ELIGIBILITY FOR REFUND OF TUITION, FEES AND OTHER INSTITUTIONAL CHARGES:**

A student is not eligible for any refund if the student:

1. Fails to formally withdraw.
2. Is suspended for disciplinary reasons.
3. Withdraws when a disciplinary action or honor code violation is pending.
4. Withdraws from a class or classes while currently enrolled in other classes for the semester.
5. \*Provides written confirmation that they will return for a future session in the same semester.

### **OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL WITHDRAWALS**

#### **Officially Withdrawing:**

1. To officially withdraw from the semester, a student must drop or withdraw from all courses for the term, or be administratively dismissed from the term.
2. Students contemplating dropping or withdrawing from courses are urged to first consult their student financial aid counselor for information regarding the impact of this action on their financial aid award.
3. To officially withdraw, the student must submit the online withdrawal form in their [MyMercer](#) student portal, upon submission the completed form will be submitted to the Registrar's Office for finalization. The completed form must be submitted to the Registrar's Office before withdrawal can be finalized.
4. Refund calculations will be based upon the date the student officially notifies the Registrar's Office in writing or in person of his/her intent to withdraw.
5. Per federal regulations, a calculation for the return of federal funds (to the source of funding) will be completed within 30 days of the student "officially withdrawing."
6. Any balance or overpayment created due to financial aid disbursements being returned to their original source of funding per the withdrawal calculation will become immediately due and payable, by the student, to the University and in some cases to the U.S. Dept. of Ed.
7. Once all calculations are completed, the Bursar's Office will invoice the student for any outstanding balance.
8. \*Session-Based students who officially withdraw from Session I and are also enrolled in Session II must provide written notification they plan to attend Session II classes. Without this written documentation, the student will be dropped from the Session II classes and a Term Withdrawal Calculation will be completed.
9. \*\*Session-Based students who drop Session II courses while still attending Session I are not considered withdrawals. Students who drop/withdraw from session II courses after successfully completing at least 49% of the semester or successfully completing courses equal to half-time enrollment are not considered withdrawals. Successful completion is defined as earning credit with a passing grade (D or higher). If the student is Pell eligible or receiving the Georgia Tuition Equalization Grant, a downward enrollment calculation is necessary for any course in which the student didn't begin attendance.



### **Unofficially Withdrawing:**

1. Non-attendance or ceasing to attend a course(s) does not constitute an official schedule change, course withdrawal, or term withdrawal
2. Failure to "officially withdraw" will result in academic penalties and may affect the student's Satisfactory Progress rating.
3. Students failing to officially withdraw will be held financially accountable for tuition, fees, and stipends issued to them for the term
4. If a student ceases attendance without notifying the University, a Federal statutory provision allows the University to use the midpoint of the payment period as the withdrawal date for calculating the return of financial aid funds. Otherwise, the University may use the student's last verifiable day of an academically related activity.
5. Per federal regulations, a withdrawal date will be determined within 30 calendar days from the end of the semester for those students who ceased attendance without "officially withdrawing" from the University and those students who are determined not to have earned any credit for the semester.
6. Any balance or overpayment created due to financial aid disbursements being returned to their original source of funding per the withdrawal calculation will become immediately due and payable, by the student, to the University and in some cases to the U.S. Dept. of Education.
7. Once all calculations are completed, the Bursar's Office will invoice the student for any outstanding balance.

### **REFUND OF NON-TUITION CHARGES**

1. If a student withdraws before the first day of classes for the term, housing and/or meals will be charged based on usage up until that point in time.
2. If a student withdraws prior to the beginning of the semester or during the official drop/add period, lab fees, facility/technology fees, books and material fees, and insurance premiums will be refunded.
3. If a student withdraws after the end of the official drop/add period, housing and meal plan refunds will be calculated by Residence Life and Auxiliary Services respectively, based on usage.
4. Pre-enrollment deposits and dormitory or housing deposits are non-refundable.
5. Insurance Premiums are non-refundable after waiver deadline.
6. Additional charges for housing and meals will be assessed on a prorated basis from the date of withdrawal until the student vacates the room and returns his/her key and keycard.
7. Additional book and material fees may be assessed for items not returned by the return deadline for students participating in the Bear Book Bundle Program.

**WITHDRAWAL REFUND CALCULATIONS**

The federal government requires the Office of Financial Planning to calculate how much Title IV aid a student has earned. Federal regulations state that a student earns Title IV aid based on the period of time he/she remains enrolled for a particular term.

A student who has completed more than 60% of the enrollment period is considered to have earned 100% of the Title IV aid awarded; no return of Title IV aid is required.

$$\frac{\text{ENROLLED DAYS}}{\text{DAYS IN ENROLLMENT PERIOD}} = \text{\% OF TITLE IV EARNED BY STUDENT}$$

Per federal regulations, any federal funds not earned by the student must be returned to the Title IV program in the following order:

- Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan
- Subsidized Federal Direct Loan
- Federal Direct Plus Loan
- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Other Title IV Aid Programs

Non-Title IV financial aid funds will be returned in the following order:

- Mercer institutionally-funded loans
- Mercer endowment-funded loans
- Mercer institutionally-funded grants/scholarships
- Mercer endowment-funded grants/scholarships
- Other loans
- State loans
- State grants/scholarships
- Other scholarships
- Student/parent payments

**Semester-Based Federal Return Calculation Example**

The following scenarios illustrate how Federal Return calculations are performed for semester-based programs:

**Scenario #1:**

First day of class:	August 20
Last day of exams:	December 14
Holidays:	November 27- December 1 (Thanksgiving)

**Number of calendar days in this enrollment period = 112 days**

A Macon undergraduate student completes and submits a term withdrawal form in the Registrar's office on October 17.

**Total number of days student is enrolled = 59 days**

$$\frac{59 \text{ DAYS}}{112 \text{ DAYS}} = 52.7\% \text{ CHARGES/AID EARNED BY STUDENT}$$

	<b>Charges</b>	<b>Amount Retained</b>	<b>Amount Refunded</b>
Tuition	\$21,635	\$10,233.36	\$11,401.65
Fees	\$150.00	\$70.95	\$79.05
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,785</b>	<b>\$10,304.31</b>	<b>\$11,480.70</b>

Changes in the calculations below

**Financial Aid Refund Calculation**

<b>Total Title IV Aid to be Returned</b>		
\$5,530 x 47.3%	=	\$2,615.69
<b>Total Non-Title IV Aid to be Returned</b>		
\$11,149 - 2,616	=	\$8,533.00



<b>Title IV Aid</b>		<b>Disbursed</b>	<b>Amount Retained</b>	<b>Amount Refunded</b>
Direct Subsidized Loan		\$1,732.00	\$0.00	\$1,732.00
Federal Pell Grant		\$3,798.00	\$2,914.00	\$884.00
<b>Total Title IV Aid</b>		<b>\$5,530.00</b>	<b>\$2,914.00</b>	<b>\$2,616.00</b>
<b>Non-Title IV Aid</b>		<b>Disbursed</b>	<b>Amount Retained</b>	<b>Amount Refunded</b>
Mercer Scholarship		\$10,000.00	\$1,135.00	\$0.00
GA Tuition Equalization Grant		\$550.00	\$550.00	\$0.00
HOPE Scholarship		\$2,496.00	\$2,496.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Non-Title IV Aid</b>		<b>\$13,046.00</b>	<b>\$4,181.00</b>	<b>\$8,865.00</b>
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL AID</b>		<b>\$18,576.00</b>	<b>\$7,095.00</b>	<b>\$11,481.00</b>

### SESSION-BASED FEDERAL RETURN CALCULATION

	<b>First Day of Session</b>	<b>Last Day of Session</b>	<b>Total # of days in Enrollment Period</b>
<b>Session 1</b>	January 6 <sup>th</sup>	March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	57
<b>Session 2</b>	March 7 <sup>th</sup>	May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	58
<b>Session 3</b>	January 6 <sup>th</sup>	May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	118

A student is enrolled in 4 classes for the Spring term. Two of the classes begin on January 6<sup>th</sup> and two of the classes begin on March 7<sup>th</sup> for a total of 12 hours. The student is enrolled in both sessions. The student begins both session 1 courses on January 6<sup>th</sup>. On January 22<sup>nd</sup> the student withdraws from both session 1 courses and drops both session 2 courses on the same day.

**Total number of days student is enrolled = 17 days**

$$\frac{\text{ENROLLED DAYS}}{\text{DAYS IN ENROLLMENT PERIOD}} = \frac{17 \text{ DAYS}}{118 \text{ DAYS}} = \frac{14.4\%}{\text{ % CHARGES/AID EARNED BY STUDENT}}$$

<b>Charges</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Amount Retained</b>	<b>Amount Refunded</b>
Tuition	\$3,366.00	\$3,366.00	\$969.41	\$5,762.59
Fees	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$21.60	\$128.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,441.00</b>	<b>\$3,441.00</b>	<b>\$991.01</b>	<b>\$5,890.99</b>

**Financial Aid Refund Calculation**

<b>Total Title IV Aid Earned</b>		
\$6,185 x 14.4%	=	\$890.64
<b>Total Non-Title IV Aid Unearned</b>		
\$6,185-890.64	=	\$5,294.46

Total Title IV aid to be returned by the Institution = Lesser of Unearned Title IV aid vs. Unearned Charges returned by the Institution.

**Mercer to return \$4,340 in Title IV aid.**

<b>Title IV Aid</b>	<b>Disbursed</b>	<b>Amount Retained</b>	<b>Amount Refunded</b>
Direct Unsubsidized Loan	\$3,364.00	\$0.00	\$3,464.00
Direct Subsidized Loan	\$2,721.00	\$891.00	\$1,830.00
<b>Total Title IV aid</b>	<b>\$6,185.00</b>	<b>\$891.00</b>	<b>\$5,294.00</b>

**The amount of Title IV aid required to be returned by the student = Total Unearned Title IV aid - Amount of Title IV aid returned by the Institution**

**Title IV aid to be returned by the student is \$5,294.00 - \$5,294.00 = \$0.00**

**REFUNDS AND STIPENDS**

Refundable credit balances are processed on a regular basis by the Office of the Bursar. Refunds are issued to the student through their Student Choice Refund Method according to the following schedule:

- First, via Credit Card. If a payment of a balance or deposit was made via credit card, and there is a subsequent credit on the student account, a refund will be processed by reversing the charge to the originating credit card used, up to the maximum payment received by credit card.
- Second, via Student Choice Refund Method. Any excess credit beyond the credit card's maximum payment will be refunded according to the student's preferred method.

Student can select their preferred refund method via their [MyMercer](#) student portal. Student Choice Refunds are issued either by Direct Deposit or Paper check. Paper checks serve as the default refund method and are sent to the address listed on the student's Master file. It is the responsibility of each student to ensure their address is up-to-date to prevent delays in receiving their refund check.

Please note, if a credit balance is created by a Parent PLUS Loan, the refund will be mailed via a paper check to the borrower of the loan.



### INTERNATIONAL REFUNDS

International students are permitted to transfer funds up to the value of one academic year's tuition and fees for their respective program. Any surplus amounts received beyond the billed tuition and fees will be returned to the original funding source by Mercer University upon the student's graduation or withdrawal from the institution. Any banking fees incurred during the return process will be deducted from the surplus funds before their return.

Please note, the university does not offer banking services and will not issue excess International Payments to the student as a stipend for expenses outside of the tuition bill. If a student requires additional funds for their educational expenses, the university encourages individuals to wire those funds directly into the students U.S. Bank Account.

### UNCASHED CHECK POLICY

If a school attempts to disburse the credit balance from federal funds by check and the check is not cashed, the Bursar's Office will return the funds to the U.S. Department of Education no later than 240 days after the date the check was issued. If a Direct Deposit of federal funds is rejected or a check returned to the school, the Bursar's Office may make another attempt to disburse the funds or the funds must be returned to the U.S. Department of Education no later than 45 days after the rejection date. The Bursar's Office will reattempt contact for five (5) years for any refunds that are rejected or returned and are generated by non-federal funds. After this time frame, refunds will be escheated to the State.

### RETROACTIVE ENROLLMENT AND REFUND APPEALS

The Retroactive Enrollment and Refund Appeal Committee was established to consider refund and/or retroactive withdrawal appeals from students who believe their extraordinary circumstances entitle them to additional consideration outside the University's Official Refund Policy. Student appeals must be submitted through their [MyMercer](#) portal by the beginning of the semester following the one in dispute. The committee meets each semester and responds in writing. This is the student's final venue of appeal.

### General Information

**Books:** Books and other supplies are available at the Mercer Bookstore. The cost of books varies with the courses of study and course load.

**Student Identification:** All Mercer students are required to have a valid student identification card. A validated I.D. is required for check cashing, dining hall, and library privileges.

**Fire, theft, and damage to personal property:** The University assumes no responsibility for damages or loss of personal property due to fire, theft, or other causes.



The policies below provide a general overview of the School's financial aid policies. To learn more or to contact the Financial Planning Office with any additional questions, students can visit the Office of Student Financial Planning website at [medicine.mercer.edu/student-affairs-and-services/financial-planning/](http://medicine.mercer.edu/student-affairs-and-services/financial-planning/).

- An applicant for financial assistance must be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen.
- An applicant for financial assistance must be fully admitted as an eligible degree-seeking student to the University before financial assistance can be awarded. Students enrolled in Post Master Certificate Programs are not eligible for federal Title IV financial assistance.
- In most instances, financial assistance is granted only to students who enroll at least half time.
- Students receiving financial assistance from sources other than Mercer University are required to advise the Office of Financial Planning of this fact. A written statement that identifies the sponsor(s) and the amount of the award is required. Some adjustment of the original financial aid award may be necessary.
- Financial aid awards will be automatically credited to qualified students' accounts near the beginning of the payment period, provided that all necessary paperwork is complete.
- Students must be officially enrolled and attending class at the end of the term's drop/add period in order to receive financial aid for a class. Since financial aid is based on enrollment, enrollment changes may affect student financial aid award(s).
- Students who fail to earn a passing grade in all of their classes for a semester may be considered, for financial aid purposes, to have unofficially withdrawn from the University. If the institution cannot document that the student earned at least one grade during the semester, federal and state financial aid funds will be returned to the original source of funds in accordance with the Federal Return Policy.
- No financial aid will be disbursed while a student is in verification. Verification is the process in which the Federal Processor requires schools to verify the accuracy of information reported by students on the FAFSA. If a FAFSA is selected for verification by the Federal Processor, you will be notified by the Financial Planning Office and asked to furnish supporting documentation.
- The fact that a student receives an award one year, in no way automatically renews the application for subsequent years. Applicants are reminded to re-apply for financial aid annually.
- To be considered for financial aid, students must not be in default or owe a refund on federal or state funds.
- Students must make progress towards the completion of their courses of study, according to the "Satisfactory Academic Progress Standards" in order to retain financial aid eligibility.
- Recipients of financial assistance who become subject to disciplinary probation may forfeit financial aid during the period of probation.
- This institution complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 and does not discriminate against the handicapped or on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

### **Leave of Absence**

Students may be granted a Leave of Absence (LOA) by the University for various reasons. These LOAs do not meet the conditions of the Title IV regulations for an "approved" leave of absence and therefore may be treated as a withdrawal for Title IV purposes. If the LOA is treated as a withdrawal, the student is not eligible for in-school deferment of student loans.



## **Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid**

### **FINANCIAL AID POLICY**

#### **1. Purpose**

This policy defines Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) for all Mercer University School of Medicine matriculated students including those in the following programs:

1. Master of Family Therapy
2. Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences
3. PhD in Biomedical Sciences
4. PhD in Rural Health Sciences
5. Doctor of Medicine
6. Doctor of Medicine, ACT programs

#### **2. Accountability**

Under the Dean and with the assistance of the offices of Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and the Registrar, the Student Assessment and Promotion Committee (SAPC) and/or the Graduate Program Directors are charged with the responsibility for reviewing the satisfactory academic progress of all students matriculated at the Mercer University School of Medicine.

#### **3. Applicability**

This policy shall apply to all students who matriculate at Mercer University School of Medicine.

#### **4. Policy**

Sound academic principles require that students be required to maintain standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress. The following standards apply to all matriculating full-time or less than full-time students, regardless of their receipt of financial aid funds. The standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress measure a student's performance by qualitative measures (grade point average), quantitative measures (pace of completion) and maximum time allowance.

#### **5. Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

##### ***a. Satisfactory Academic Progress Checkpoints***

- Satisfactory Academic Progress is the appropriate completion of degree requirements, according to published increments, that lead to degree completion with known completion limits.
- Student's academic progress will be reviewed on an annual basis, at the end of each academic year (end of the Summer term, or end of Spring term if there is no Summer term offered in the program), with the exception of students enrolled in the Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences program who will be reviewed at the end of each semester.

**b. Maximum Time Allowance**

- Maximum time frame is defined by the School as the maximum number of years and/or credits a student may attempt MUSM courses in the pursuit of a degree. The measurement is cumulative, including all periods with or without Title IV assistance and all credit hours attempted in the student's degree program. Maximum time allowance will be evaluated to determine whether each student can complete the program without exceeding the maximum time frame allowed for that degree program. A student will not be making Satisfactory Academic Progress at the evaluation point where it is determined he or she will exceed the maximum time frame prior to graduation, not just at the evaluation point in which the maximum time frame is actually reached/exceeded.
- Each student will be evaluated to determine if he/she has made adequate progress toward his/her degree according to the table found below.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Maximum Time From Matriculation to Graduation*</b>
Master of Family Therapy	6 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.
Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences	2 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.
PhD in Biomedical Sciences	8 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.
PhD in Rural Health Sciences	6 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.
Doctor of Medicine	6 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.
Doctor of Medicine, ACT Programs	5 Years or 150% of the published credit length of the program, whichever occurs first.

- The maximum number of years spent is the time between initial enrollment in the Program and degree requirement completion. Time spent in a Leave of Absence or Independent Study, or terms not enrolled will be included in the total time in the program.
- 150% of the published credit length of the program includes all attempted credits in the program, including credits for repeat courses and withdrawn courses, in addition to all accepted transfer credits.

**c. Completion Rate (Quantitative Measure)**

- As a part of the Satisfactory Academic Progress assessment, each student's Completion Rate will be evaluated by dividing the cumulative number of hours earned (successfully completed) in the degree program by the cumulative number of hours attempted in the degree program. In order to achieve satisfactory academic progress, a student must maintain the cumulative completion percentage in accordance with the chart below. Completion percentages ending in .5 or higher will be rounded up to the nearest whole percentage (e.g. 66.5% will be rounded up to 67%).



Program	Cumulative Completion Rate Percentage
Master of Family Therapy	67%
Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences	67%
PhD in Biomedical Sciences	67%
PhD in Rural Health Sciences	67%
Doctor of Medicine	
Year 1 and 2 Checkpoints	50%
Year 3 Checkpoint	60%
Year 4, 5, and 6 Checkpoints	67%
Doctor of Medicine, ACT Programs (All Checkpoints)	67%

- Courses with Incomplete, In Progress or Absent from Final grades will count as hours attempted only, until the course is completed. A passing grade will count as hours earned and attempted; a failing grade will remain as hours attempted only. Final grades received in the middle of a term will be included in the next checkpoint review.
- Withdrawal courses will count as hours attempted only.
- Repeat courses, as well as the initial courses, are included in the cumulative completion rate percentage calculation.
- Remedial coursework is included in the cumulative completion rate percentage calculation.
- Transfer hours accepted into a student's program will count as both hours attempted and hours earned. Transfer hours received in the middle of a term will be included in the next checkpoint review.

***d. Grade Point Average Requirements (Qualitative Measure)***

- MUSM students will be evaluated to determine if they have achieved qualitative levels of academic progress. GPA requirements for each program are noted in the table below. Note that most graduate classes are graded on a 4.0 scale and MD classes are graded as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory.



Program	Requirements
Master of Family Therapy	Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and have no more than two final grades of "C" or "C+" and no final grade less than "C".
Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences	Students must achieve a minimum 2.5 GPA after their first semester of enrollment and subsequently maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. All final course grades must be "C" or above.
PhD in Biomedical Sciences	Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and have no more than two final grades of "C" and no final grade less than "C".
PhD in Rural Health Sciences	Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 and have no more than one final grade of "C" and no final grade less than "C".
Doctor of Medicine	Students enrolled in the Year 1 curriculum must receive a "Satisfactory" in PBL Blocks 1 and 2, <b>AND</b> be allowed to proceed into the Year 2 curriculum by the SAPC upon completion of all Year 1 academic requirements.
Doctor of Medicine, ACT Programs	Students enrolled in the Year 2 curriculum must receive a "Satisfactory" in PBL Blocks 3 and 4, <b>AND</b> be allowed to proceed into the Year 3 curriculum by the SAPC upon completion of all Year 2 academic requirements.
	Students enrolled in the Year 3 curriculum must receive a "Satisfactory" in at least 67% of the core clerkships attempted <b>AND</b> be allowed to proceed into the Year 4 curriculum by the SAPC upon completion of all Year 3 academic requirements.
	Students enrolled in the Year 4 curriculum must receive a "Satisfactory" in at least 85% of the Year 4 coursework attempted.
	<b>NOTE:</b> All Doctor of Medicine students must pass the USMLE exams in accordance with the guidelines published by Academic Affairs. Students who are not allowed to enroll in classes due to USMLE exam failure or failure to take a USMLE exam, will not be considered as maintaining Satisfactory Academic Progress.
	Percentages ending in .5 or higher will be rounded up to the nearest whole percentage.

- Grades of Withdrawal, Incomplete, In Progress, Absent from Final, Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory are not included in GPA calculation. Final grades received in the middle of a term will be included in the next checkpoint review.
- Repeat course grades are included in the qualitative requirements calculation, the original grade is not included.
- Remedial coursework is included in the qualitative requirements calculation.
- Transfer credits are not included in the qualitative requirements calculation.

**e. Notification of Lack of Satisfactory Progress**

- Following the annual evaluation, or semester evaluations for the MSPS program, notification will be transmitted from the Office of Student Financial Planning to all students who have not met the standards for SAP. The notification shall indicate the nature of the deficiency and any consequences that have resulted, or may result, including financial aid ineligibility. A student who has lost eligibility for financial aid does not automatically regain eligibility simply by paying for tuition and satisfactorily completing the coursework, nor by sitting out for a semester.

***f. Financial Aid Warning Status***

- There are currently no programs in the School of Medicine whose students qualify for financial aid warning status.

***g. Financial Aid Ineligibility Status***

- When the satisfactory academic progress review reveals that a student does not meet the quantitative measures, the qualitative measures and/or maximum time frame schedule, then that student becomes ineligible to receive Federal financial aid for future semesters, until all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are met.

***h. Appeal for Reinstatement of Financial Aid Eligibility***

- Students who wish to appeal for reinstatement of financial aid eligibility should submit a written appeal to the Office of Student Financial Planning. Exceptional circumstances warranting an appeal and possible exception include, but are not limited to, circumstances such as the death of a relative and injury or illness of the student.
- An appeal form must include an explanation regarding why satisfactory academic progress was not maintained and what circumstances have changed that will allow satisfactory academic progress at the next evaluation checkpoint. The appeal must be submitted prior to the last class day of the term in which the student is seeking financial aid funding. Appeal decisions are made by the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, which consists of the Director and Associate Directors of Financial Planning. All appeal decisions are final.

***i. Financial Aid Probation***

- Financial Aid Probation is awarded to a student if the Appeal has been approved. While on financial aid probation status, the student is eligible to receive financial aid funding for one semester.
- The student's Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed at the end of the financial aid probationary semester. If the student is compliant with all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards at the end of the probationary semester, they will regain Federal financial aid eligibility for future semesters. If the student is not compliant with all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards at the end of the probationary semester, they will become ineligible to receive Federal financial aid until all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are met. The student will have the option to appeal again – updated information is expected in subsequent appeals.

***j. Academic Plan***

- An Academic Plan is created for a student who will not be able to mathematically regain Satisfactory Academic Progress standards within one semester while on financial aid probation. The Academic Plan will include benchmarks that the student must meet for each successive semester to ensure that Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are met by a specific point in time.
- Students are eligible to receive Federal financial aid while on an Academic Plan. Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed at the end of each semester included in the Academic Plan. If the student met all benchmarks included in the Academic Plan they will regain Federal financial aid eligibility for the next semester included in the Academic Plan. If the student is compliant with all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards, they will regain Federal financial aid eligibility for future semesters. If the student is not compliant with all benchmarks included in the Academic Plan, they will become ineligible to receive Federal financial aid until all Satisfactory Academic Progress standards are met. The student will have the option to appeal again – updated information is expected in subsequent appeals.

***k. Dismissal or Withdrawal***

- Students who are dismissed or who have voluntarily withdrawn from the School are not making satisfactory academic progress and are not eligible to receive financial aid.

***l. Documentation***

- Documentation of decisions concerning financial aid probation and/or academic plan, appeal or re-establishment of satisfactory academic progress shall be transmitted to the student and will be maintained in the student file in accordance with the MUSM record retention requirements.

***m. Dissemination***

- This policy shall be published in the same manner as other academic policies of the School including online publication.

***n. Standards for Satisfactory Academic Progress Established Upon Matriculation***

- Standards for Satisfactory Academic are applicable for the duration of the student's continuous matriculation in the same program unless any changes in the standards are made. These changes will be posted.

## **Funding Sources**

Mercer University's financial aid programs are administered in conjunction with a federally established policy and philosophy of financial aid for education. The basis of this policy is the belief that the costs of education should be the primary responsibility of the student and/or the student's family. Financial aid is available to students in the form of scholarships and loans to reduce the difference between the cost of an education and expected family contributions. In order for a student to be considered for every type of assistance available (i.e., Federal, State, and University sources), a Free Application For Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be submitted each year. Students may complete the FAFSA online at [studentaid.gov/fafsa](https://studentaid.gov/fafsa).

## **INSTITUTIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS**

All University administered scholarships are highly competitive and, despite the generosity of University friends and alumni, there are not enough funds to provide scholarship aid to all qualified students.

## **ENDOWED AND EXPENDABLE SCHOLARSHIPS**

Endowed and expendable scholarships are awarded to students based on financial need and specific criteria established by the donor of each scholarship. All students who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will automatically be reviewed for all endowed and expendable scholarships as long as funds remain available. No separate application is required. Priority will be given to qualified applicants who submit a FAFSA by the appropriate priority deadline.

- Halstead Tindal Anderson Memorial Scholarship
- T.E. Bloodworth Scholarship
- Dr. Egbert C. and Susie P. Bridges Scholarship
- T. & V. Broome Scholarship
- David B. Byck, M.D. Memorial Scholarship
- Carroll/Haralson Co. Medical Student Scholarship
- Cherokee Brick & Tile Scholarship
- Mallie Adkin Clark Scholarship
- Robert P. Lufburrow Memorial Scholarship
- T. Raleigh & Gail H. Mann Scholarship
- MFT Cornett Expendable Scholarship
- Navada Wayne Mitchell Memorial Scholarship
- MUSM Class of 2002 Scholarship
- MUSM Class of 2003 Scholarship
- MUSM Class of 2005 Scholarship
- Medical Education Endowed Scholarship



- Layth Saymeh & Maha Dawood Future Physician Scholarship
- John Eustace and Leila Denmark Scholarship
- Charles M. Farrar, Jr and Elizabeth M. Farrar Memorial Scholarship
- Janie Fountain New & Lucile Fountain Holliman Scholarship
- Mary E. Fountain Medical Scholarship
- Jeanette and A.F. Gibbs Memorial Scholarship
- Dr. Howard Glover, Jr Scholarship
- Dr. R.B. & Dr. H. Goldin Memorial Scholarship
- Dr. Godsey Endowed Scholarship
- R. Kirby Godsey Scholarship
- Frank B. & Dorothy H. Graham Scholarship
- Marshall T. Hahn Scholarship
- Marion Campbell Hatcher Scholarship
- Dr. W. Derrell Hazelhurst Scholarship
- John Hudson Scholarship
- Mary Johnson & Dr. Paul C. Tucker, Jr. Scholarship
- Charles H. Jones Scholarship
- S. Gus Jones Scholarship
- Judy Jones Scholarship
- K. Wayne & Patty Jones Scholarship
- Edward C. Klatt, M.D. Endowed Scholarship
- David and Jane LaGuardia Scholarship
- Law Walker Family Scholarship
- Doris Lawrence Scholarship
- Vincent & Constance Lindyberg Scholarship
- W. Earl Lewis Scholarship
- Medley-Campbell Endowed Scholarship in Medicine
- MUSM Endowed General Scholarship
- MUSM Mission Fulfillment Scholarship
- MUSM Unrestricted Scholarship
- Daniel E. & Muriel H. Nathan Scholarship
- Luther W. New Scholarship
- Ralph G. Newton, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
- Ralph G. Newton, Sr. Memorial Scholarship
- Claude L. & Kay R. Pennington Scholarship
- Frank C. Pinkston Scholarship
- Mamie Eugenia Porter Scholarship
- Jack Hanson Powell, Jr., & Jane Bell Powell Scholarship
- Jamie Bell Powell Memorial Scholarship
- Joseph H. Ray Scholarship
- Marion D. & Madge P. Reed Scholarship
- J. S. Robinson Scholarship
- J. Roy Rowland Scholarship
- Ruth Resseau Scholarship
- Shurden Family Scholarship
- Dean Dubose Smith Scholarship
- Helen Stinson Smith Scholarship
- Honorable Richard H. and Clara W. Smith Scholarship
- Manuel M. & Martha F. Solis Memorial Scholarship
- John & Bonnie Stepan Expendable Scholarship
- Margaret M. Sumner Memorial Scholarship
- Carolyn Thorpe Volpe Scholarship
- James H. Whaley Scholarship
- Luther H. Wolff, III Scholarship
- Troy & Gloria Woods Scholarship

## **Nathan Deal Scholarship**

The Nathan Deal Scholarship covers 85 to 100% of MUSM tuition for a maximum of four (4) academic years. Upon completion of residency, four (4) years of continuous full-time primary care medical practice in a medically underserved rural Georgia county is required. The medical practice must accept Medicaid patients. Students must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in the 4-year MD program and be a Georgia resident with strong ties to rural Georgia. Additional information and applications are available online at [medicine.mercer.edu/academics/doctor-of-medicine/special-programs/](http://medicine.mercer.edu/academics/doctor-of-medicine/special-programs/).



### **Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Rural Pediatric Scholarship**

The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Rural Pediatric Scholarship covers 100% of MUSM tuition and fees for a maximum of four (4) academic years. Upon completion of residency, the scholar is required to practice general pediatrics full-time in an approved medically underserved rural Georgia county for four (4) continuous years. The medical practice must accept Medicaid patients. Students must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in the 4-year MD program and be a Georgia resident with strong ties to rural Georgia. Additional information and applications are available online at [medicine.mercer.edu/academics/doctor-of-medicine/special-programs/](http://medicine.mercer.edu/academics/doctor-of-medicine/special-programs/)

### **Primary Care Mission Scholarship**

The Primary Care Mission Scholarship covers 100% MUSM tuition and fees for the final two years of medical school for all students enrolled in the 3 Year Accelerated Track Program. Upon completion of residency, 3 years of Family Medicine, General Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or Psychiatry practice in a medically underserved rural Georgia county is required. The medical practice must accept Medicaid patients. Students apply for the 3 Year Accelerated Track Program during their first year of medical school.

### **Mission Enhancement Scholarship**

The Mission Enhancement Scholarship is awarded by the Mission Enhancement Scholarship committee to entering students based on demographic and socio-economic information, admissions rankings, and mission potential. Additional information can be obtained from the Department Chair.

### **Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Marriage and Family Therapy Scholarship**

The Children's Healthcare of Atlanta Marriage and Family Therapy Scholarship covers 100% of MUSM MFT tuition and fees for a maximum of two (2) academic years or 48 credit hours. Upon completion of the MFT degree program and additional autism training, the scholar must reside and practice Marriage and Family therapy full-time for two continuous years in an approved medically underserved rural Georgia county. Additional information and applications are available online at [medicine.mercer.edu/student-services/financial-aid](http://medicine.mercer.edu/student-services/financial-aid).

### **Rural Health Sciences PhD Scholarship**

The Rural Health PhD Scholarship covers 100% tuition and fees for students enrolled in the PhD in Rural Health Sciences program who have been awarded a paid research assistantship. Additional information can be obtained from the Department Chair.

### **Biomedical Sciences PhD Scholarship**

The Biomedical Sciences PhD Scholarship covers 100% tuition for students enrolled in the PhD in Biomedical Sciences program. A paid assistantship is also offered to all students.

## **STATE LOAN FUNDS**

### **Georgia Behavioral Health Professions Service Cancelable Loan**

The Behavioral Health Professions Service Cancelable Loan Program is offered by the State of Georgia to help Georgia residents obtain a behavioral health advanced degree. In exchange for up to \$20,000 per academic year, recipients agree to work full-time in Georgia as a licensed Marriage and Family therapist or Psychiatrist providing behavioral health services to Georgia residents. Recipients must complete 12 months of qualifying employment in return for 1 year of loan cancellation. The application cycle opens in early Summer and remains open until funding is exhausted.



Award information and application procedures are located online at [www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/loans/behavioral-health-professions-scl/](http://www.gafutures.org/hope-state-aid-programs/loans/behavioral-health-professions-scl/) .

### FEDERAL LOAN FUNDS

#### **Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans**

Students who attend school at least half time may be eligible to receive Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans. Completion of the FAFSA serves as application for the unsubsidized loan. The maximum annual loan limits that students may be eligible to borrow are: \$42,722 for MD Year I, II, IV students, \$47,167 for MD Year III students, and \$20,500 for graduate students. The aggregate limit (undergraduate and graduate study combined) is \$224,000 for MD students and \$138,500 for graduate students. Interest accrues from the date of disbursement; however, repayment is not required until six months following withdrawal or graduation from school. The lender deducts a 1.057% processing fee before the funds are disbursed. The interest rate is fixed at 7.94% for the 2025-2026 school year. All borrowers are required to complete graduate entrance counseling and a promissory note before the first disbursement of their loan can be made.

#### **Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loans**

Students who attend school at least half-time may be eligible to receive Federal Direct Graduate PLUS loans. Completion of the FAFSA serves as application for the Graduate PLUS loan. Unlike the unsubsidized loan, eligibility for the Grad PLUS loan is based on the student's credit history. If there is anything adverse on the credit report, a co-signer may be required. The annual amount a student may borrow is equal to the cost of attendance minus all other financial aid that the student is receiving. Interest accrues from the date of disbursement; however, repayment is not required until six months following withdrawal or graduation from school. The lender deducts a 4.228% processing fee before the funds are disbursed. The interest rate is fixed at 8.94% for the 2025-2026 school year. All borrowers are required to complete graduate Entrance Counseling and a promissory note before the first disbursement of their loan can be made.

#### **Primary Care Loan**

A very limited number of 5% Primary Care Loans are available to students who have financial need and agree to complete a primary care residency training program and practice primary health care for either 10 years or through the date on which the loan is repaid in full, whichever occurs first. Primary Care is defined as family medicine, general internal medicine, pediatrics, or preventive medicine.

### INSTITUTIONAL LOAN FUNDS

A limited number and amount of institutional loan funds are administered through the University. These funds are awarded on a restricted basis.

- Hazel Anderson Revolving Loan
- Central Georgia Loan Fund
- MUSM Mission Compliance Loan
- MUSM Revolving Student Loan
- Porter Foundation Revolving Student Loan



## **Academic Integrity**

Mercer University strives to be a Community of Respect that includes respect for academic integrity. Students operate under an honor system and will exhibit the values of honesty, trustworthiness, and fairness regarding all academic matters. Students, faculty, and staff are expected to report any violations in the forms of, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty to the honor council appropriate for their campus and program.

Procedures related to Honor Systems and Academic Integrity are outlined in the specific handbooks for each campus and can be found on the Provost website at [provost.mercer.edu/handbooks](http://provost.mercer.edu/handbooks).

## **The Honor System**

Academic integrity is maintained through an honor system. The Graduate Honor System is governed by policies established by the University Graduate Council. It draws upon the traditions of integrity and academic freedom — a freedom within the academic community which is based on a trust between students and faculty. The Honor System imposes upon each student the responsibility for his or her own honest behavior and assumes that each student will report any violations of the Honor Code.

The Graduate Honor System is administered by an honor committee composed of five members of the graduate faculty who are responsible for decisions regarding alleged violations. The committee's decisions are binding on the student involved but may be appealed to the chief academic officer of the University.

## **Degree Programs**

The School of Medicine offers the following degree programs. For specific information on the degrees offered and their requirements, see the individual degree listing.

1. Doctor of Medicine
2. Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences
3. Master of Family Therapy
4. Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences
5. Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Health Sciences

## **Mercer Credit Hour Policy**

Mercer University adheres to the Carnegie unit for contact time: 750 minutes of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of 1500 minutes of out-of-class student work for each credit awarded. Mercer defines a class hour as 50 minutes each week during a 15-week semester. This basic metric is adjusted proportionately to reflect modified academic calendars. The expectation of contact time inside the classroom and student effort outside the classroom is the same in all formats of a course, whether it is fully online, a hybrid of face-to-face contact with some content delivered by electronic means, or one delivered in lecture or seminar format. The proportions of direct faculty instruction and out-of-class student work may vary for credit bearing educational activities, such as laboratory, practicum, clinical, internship, field experience, and cooperative education courses, but a minimum of 2,250 minutes, total, of direct faculty instruction and out-of-class student work is required for each credit hour.



## Course Numbers

### GRADUATE LEVEL COURSES IN THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE BY PROGRAMS

#### **Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences**

600 Level: Numbering system for graduate courses in the MSPCS program is the prefix BMS.

#### **Master of Family Therapy**

600 Level: Core and Elective courses

700 Level: Practicum Sequence courses

#### **PhD in Biomedical Sciences**

600 Level: Core and Elective courses

700 Level: Research courses.

800 Level: Teaching Practicum/Thesis

#### **PhD in Rural Health Sciences**

800 Level: Numbering system for the PhD Program is the prefix RRL.

## Grading System and Quality Points

Cumulative grade point averages are computed using a quality point system. The interpretation of the letter grades and their quality point values is as follows:

GRADE	INTERPRETATION	QUALITY POINTS PER CREDIT HOUR
A	Excellent	4.0
B+	Good	3.5
B	Good	3.0
C+	Average	2.5
C	Average	2.0
F	Failure	0
FQ	Failure-Quit Attending/Never Attended	0
S	Satisfactory	*
U	Unsatisfactory	*
ABX	Absent from final examination	*
IC	Incomplete	*
IP	In Progress (Continuing)	*
AU	Audit	*
W	Withdrawal	*
Z	Grade Not Reported	*

\*These grades are not calculated in the GPA.



## **Academic Load**

An academic load for M.D. students to be considered full-time is 12 semester hours for the fall and spring terms and 6 semester hours for the summer term.

## **Registration**

Registration is required for admission to any class. Students are not allowed to attend class if they are not officially registered by the first day of class.

## **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Grade**

Some courses are offered only on the basis of satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading; this grading option is stated in course descriptions. Hours earned with a satisfactory grade will be added to the total required for graduation, but will not affect the cumulative grade point average; an unsatisfactory grade will result in no hours earned and in no penalty to the cumulative grade point average.

The satisfactory grade requires a standard of achievement equivalent to that which is usually awarded the grade of C or better.

## **ABX and Incomplete (IC)**

The grade of ABX denotes that the student was absent from the scheduled final examination because of sickness or another valid and compelling reason that is satisfactory to the professor. A makeup exam must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the ABX was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of IC (incomplete) indicates that a small part of the semester's work remains incomplete because of illness or reasons satisfactory to the professor. All course work must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IC was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified the grade automatically converts to an F.

## **In Progress (IP)**

The IP (in progress) grade is awarded only in graduate practicum or research courses, which may extend beyond the end of the semester. A student is expected to finish "in progress" work based on the timetable established by the professor issuing the IP grade, and, at the latest, by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IP was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the specified time, the grade automatically converts to an F.

## **Schedule Changes, Course Withdrawal and Term Withdrawal/Resignation**

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Course changes may be made on or before the dates specified in the calendar for the graduate programs. Students wishing to change courses prior to the beginning of classes must use the on-line registration system or completing and returning a Schedule Change Form or by contacting the Registrar's Office.



## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

Students may withdraw from a course with a grade of W after the drop/add period and on or before the last day for withdrawals, as shown in the current calendar. A student who withdraws after the deadline will receive an F, except in extreme personal circumstances and with appropriate documentation. To be officially withdrawn from a course, students must request withdrawal by completing the Online Course Withdrawal Form via their [MyMercer](#) account (graduate students only), or complete and return a paper withdrawal form to the Registrar's Office. MD students are to follow the stated guidelines as documented in their student handbook. Please note that the Office of the Registrar is the designated office for withdrawals.

Students should read the financial information section of the catalog and contact the Financial Planning Office before officially withdrawing from a course. Financial aid could be reduced upon withdrawal.

## **TERM WITHDRAWAL/RESIGNATION**

Term withdrawal (resignation) occurs when a student officially withdraws from all courses in which s/he is enrolled at any time after the end of the drop/add deadline for a given semester. Please note that a student must withdraw from all courses for the semester in order to complete a term withdrawal. The effective date of withdrawal is the date the form is received by the Office of the Registrar. Grades of W will be awarded for all of a student's courses when s/he officially withdraws before the published withdrawal deadlines for the semester. In order to receive grades of W, a student must complete the Term Withdrawal Form and submit it to the Office of the Registrar by the announced deadline. A student who withdraws after the deadline must complete the form for official withdrawal, but grades of F will be recorded for his/her classes.

In extreme personal circumstances and with appropriate documentation, a student may appeal to the dean to have grades of W awarded when officially withdrawing after the deadline.

Non-attendance or ceasing to attend a course(s) does not constitute an official schedule change, course withdrawal, or term withdrawal. Failure to officially withdraw will result in academic and financial penalties.

A student who withdraws from a course or from the University when a disciplinary action or honor code violation is pending is not necessarily exempt from a sanction and the final outcome may disqualify the student from receiving a refund.

Information on Mercer's refund policies can be found in the "Financial Information" section of this catalog.

## **Application for Degree**

A student who expects to qualify for a degree must apply for the degree through the Office of the Registrar by the date specified in the calendar.

## **Thesis and Dissertation Requirements**

Some degree programs require that each degree candidate write a thesis as part of the degree program. A dissertation is required of all candidates for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Students who are writing a thesis or dissertation should obtain, from their graduate directors, a copy of the regulations for preparing and submitting a thesis or dissertation. These regulations should be followed carefully in preparing the manuscript. After approval by the appropriate committee within the school, a thesis or dissertation should be submitted to the Provost of the University, accompanied by a receipt indicating payment of all applicable graduation and thesis/dissertation fees.



## **Participation in Commencement Ceremonies**

Only those students who are in a position to complete all requirements for graduation by the end of the spring semester may participate in the commencement ceremony for that academic year.

Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent conferral of the degree. Degrees are awarded at the end of the terms in which all requirements are met.

## **Awarding of Degrees**

The University awards degrees at the end of each semester. Diplomas will be released to students and transcripts annotated upon the certification of completion of all degree requirements. Please note that in some master level programs, degrees are not ordered until after all degree requirements are met. A commencement ceremony is held in May of each year.

Diplomas for Doctor of Medicine degrees must be picked up in person. No replacement diplomas are ordered unless the original document was lost or destroyed.

## **Student Records (Transcripts)**

A student may obtain a copy of his/her academic record (transcript) by sending a written request to:

Mercer University School of Medicine  
Office of the Registrar,  
1501 Mercer University Drive  
Macon, Georgia 31207

Telephone or e-mail requests will not be honored.

The University does not provide copies of official transcripts received from other schools or institutions.

## **Name Change**

Name changes are processed in the Office of the Registrar by completing an Address-Name Change form. You will need to submit at least one legal/government issued document to support the name change. Acceptable documents include:

- Driver's License
- Marriage License
- Divorce Decree
- Passport (must be recent)

When ordering diplomas, the name that is currently listed in the Student Information System will be the name listed on the diploma.

**Post-graduation:** Name change requests made after a student has graduated will not be honored. The name on the diploma at the time of graduation will remain the official name of record to avoid confusion of identities in completing medical education verification request.

**FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students at Mercer University certain rights with respect to their education records. Education records are those records that are directly related to a student and maintained by Mercer University or an agency acting on behalf of Mercer University. Under FERPA, students' rights include: :

1. The right to inspect and review a student's education records.
  - The student will submit a written request to the Registrar.
  - The Registrar has 45 days to respond from the date the request is received.
  - If the Registrar does not maintain the record, the student shall be advised of the correct official at the University to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate.
  - The student will submit a written request to the Registrar, identifying the incorrect information and specifying why it is inaccurate.
  - If the University decides not to amend the record as requested, the student will be notified of the decision and advised of the right to a hearing regarding the request.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education record, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A "school official" is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions

- School officials with legitimate educational interest;
- Other schools to which a student is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.



4. The right of a currently enrolled student to request that "directory information" not be released by Mercer University.

The University, at its discretion and without the written consent of the student may release "directory information" which includes the following items: student name, academic program, dates of attendance, degrees, and honors received, most recent previous institution attended, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, and photographs or video images.

### **HEALTH OR SAFETY EXCEPTION**

FERPA has always had an exception for non-consensual disclosure of education records in health or safety emergencies. New regulations issued by the Department of Education (ED) in December, 2008, created three new provisions concerning this exception.

- First, a student's parents may always be notified in an emergency involving a student where disclosure of otherwise protected information is necessary to protect the student or others. Even if parents are not immediately able to act on the information, the regulations make clear that they may, nevertheless, be informed.
- Second, the rules clarify that in the event of a health or safety emergency, a university may release information to any person whose knowledge of the information, in the institution's reasonable judgment, is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
- Third, a university is explicitly required, when it utilizes this exception, to create a record of what it considered the health or safety emergency to consist of and to whom information was disclosed in response to the emergency.

### **DISCIPLINARY RECORDS**

While student disciplinary records are protected as education records under FERPA, there are certain circumstances in which disciplinary records may be disclosed without the student's consent.

### **EXCLUDED RECORDS**

Certain records are not "education records" under FERPA, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. § 99.3, the Federal regulations that govern FERPA. Education records do not include:

1. Records that are kept in the sole possession of the maker, are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record;
2. Records of the law enforcement unit of an educational agency or institution, subject to the provisions of 34 C.F.R. § 99.8;

3.(i) Records relating to an individual who is employed by an educational agency or institution that:

- a. Are made and maintained in the normal course of business;
- b. Relate exclusively to the individual in that individual's capacity as an employee; and
- c. Are not available for use for any other purpose.

(ii) Records relating to an individual in attendance at the agency or institution who is employed as a result of his or her status as a student are education records and not excepted under paragraph (b)(3) (i) of this definition;



4. Records on a student who is 18 years of age or older, or is attending an institution of postsecondary institution that are:
  - (i) Made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity
  - (ii) Made, maintained or used only in connection with treatment of the student; and
  - (iii) Disclosed only to individuals providing the treatment.
5. Records created or received by an educational agency or institution after an individual is no longer a student in attendance and that are not directly related to the individual's attendance as a student.
6. Grades on peer-graded papers before they are collected and recorded by a teacher.

### THE SOLOMON AMENDMENT

The Solomon Amendment is a federal law that allows military recruiters to access selected address, biographical, and academic program information on students aged 17 and older who have not filed any FERPA restrictions.

The Department of Education has determined the Solomon Amendment supersedes most elements of FERPA. Mercer University is therefore obligated to release student recruiting information, which may or may not match our FERPA directory information list. However, if the student has submitted a request to the Office of the Registrar through the [MyMercer](#) portal to restrict the release of their Directory Information, then no information from the student's education record will be released under the Solomon Amendment. Please visit the FERPA website [studentprivacy.ed.gov/](http://studentprivacy.ed.gov/) about directory information.

What information are military recruiters entitled to under the Solomon Amendment?

1. Name
2. Address
3. Telephone
4. Mercer University Email address
5. Age
6. Native, Naturalized or Permanent Resident of the US
7. Level of education, or class standing
8. Academic major

Procedure for releasing information to military recruiter:

1. Under the Solomon amendment, information will be released for military recruitment purposes only. The military recruiters may request student recruitment information **once each term** for each of the 12 eligible units within the five branches of the service:
  - **Army:** Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard
  - **Navy:** Navy, Navy Reserve
  - **Marine Corps:** Marine Corps, Marine Corps Reserve
  - **Air Force:** Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air Force National Guard
  - **Coast Guard:** Coast Guard, Coast Guard Reserve
2. The request should be submitted in writing, clearly identifying the unit of service requesting the student recruitment information.



3. The request should specify whether the information needed is for the current or previous semester.

The Office of the Registrar will work with the requestor to ensure the security of the data and privacy of Mercer University students.

Questions regarding the release of this information should be directed to [registrar@mercer.edu](mailto:registrar@mercer.edu).

## **VA Benefits**

### **MILITARY ALLIANCE**

You value service over self. So do we. Mercer's commitment to our active duty military, veterans, and their families has earned us a federal designation as a "Principles of Excellence" institution. And it's why we've been named a Military Friendly School and Georgia's First Purple Heart University.

### **ACTIVE MILITARY AND VETERAN EDUCATION BENEFITS**

- Post-9/11 "Forever" GI Bill® (Chapter 33 Benefits)
- Transfer of Post-9/11 GI Bill® Benefits to Dependents (TEB)
- Monthly Housing Allowance (MHA)
- Montgomery GI Bill® (Chapter 30)
- Fry Scholarship (Chapter 33)
- Survivors' and Dependent's Educational Assistance (Chapter 35)

### **GETTING STARTED WITH VA BENEFITS**

Complete the Veterans Online Application (VONAPP) (VA Form 22-1990) at [benefits.va.gov](http://benefits.va.gov) for education and training benefits. The VA Regional Processing Office will process your application and determine eligibility.

- If you are a transfer student, use VA Form 22-1995.
- If you are a survivor or dependent of a veteran, use VA Form-5490.

School Certifying Officials within the School of Medicine will submit enrollment certifications through VA once to the Department of Veterans Affairs each semester that the student is eligible for benefits.



## **Educational Methodology**

### **ORGANIZATION**

All four years, including preclinical, clerkship, and post-clerkship phases of the MD curriculum are taught at our Macon, Columbus, and Savannah campuses. The clerkship and post-clerkship phases (Years III and IV) of the MD Program curriculum are also offered at the Valdosta campus. The curriculum has been organized and designed to support the Mission of the School to train physicians to meet the health care needs of rural, underserved areas of Georgia. The curriculum is patient-centered, providing early application of medical and clinical knowledge in a variety of classroom and clinical venues. The Program fosters the development of self-directed, life-long learning skills. The curricular objectives and student assessment tools are identical across campuses.

### **M.D. COMPETENCIES AND PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The following list of competencies serves as the institutional learning objectives for the M.D. degree program at Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM). These competencies are organized around the competency domain framework of the *AAMC (Association of American Medical Colleges), American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), and Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)*, and reflect the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes expected of MUSM graduates.

The student graduating with a Doctor of Medicine degree from MUSM will be prepared for entry into the profession of medicine. Demonstration of the following competencies will provide evidence of readiness to enter residency training:

#### **I. Patient Care and Procedural Skills**

MUSM graduates must be able to demonstrate compassionate, effective, holistic, evidence-informed, equitable, and patient-centered care. Graduates should be able to:

1. Demonstrate compassion when interacting with patients and their families, treating them with respect and dignity.
2. Demonstrate consideration of patient's privacy, health records, culture, and psychological needs.
3. Obtain an appropriate medical history accurately, efficiently, and respectfully.
4. Perform an appropriate physical examination accurately, efficiently, and respectfully.
5. Generate and prioritize differential diagnoses and formulate a diagnostic strategy for common complaints.
6. Identify the extent of medical evaluation needed, appropriate to the patient presentation.
7. Perform bedside procedures from a core skills list defined by the faculty.
8. Interpret results of common diagnostic studies.
9. Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.
10. Document patient information accurately, efficiently, and respectfully.
11. Develop patient management plans for common medical problems.
12. Identify circumstances that require relieving pain and suffering in patients and demonstrate knowledge of appropriate means to relieve pain and suffering.
13. Identify life-threatening emergencies and apply appropriate initial intervention.



14. Demonstrate effective patient education/counseling skills.
15. Apply emerging information of patients' biologic, genetic, and population-level risks to support prevention and treatment decision.

## **II. Medical Knowledge**

MUSM graduates must apply and integrate foundational knowledge to improve health care for patients and populations. Graduates should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an investigatory and analytic thinking method that approaches clinical problems in a logical, efficient, and evidence-based manner.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the normal structure and function of the body and of each of its major organ systems, across the life span.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the mechanisms important in maintaining homeostasis.
4. Identify general mechanisms of disease-causing illness.
5. Identify the altered structure and function (pathology and pathophysiology) of the body and its major organ systems resulting from disease.
6. Utilize evidence-based scientific knowledge in diagnosing patient conditions and diseases.
7. Identify the role of non-biological determinants of health and illness including socioeconomic, environmental, familial, cultural, and psychosocial to inform therapeutic decision-making.
8. Apply knowledge of the epidemiology of common diseases within a defined population for approaches useful in reducing the incidence and prevalence of those diseases.
9. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of conventional and non-conventional therapeutics and therapeutic decision-making.
10. Demonstrate knowledge of the principles of bioethics.
11. Identify the natural history, clinical presentation, diagnostic findings, treatment, management strategies, prevention, and prognosis for common medical problems.
12. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of health promotion and wellness

## **III. Practice-based learning and improvement**

MUSM graduates must be able to integrate feedback, evidence, and reflection to adapt behavior, foster improvement, and cultivate life-long learning. Graduates should be able to:

1. Reflect upon clinical experiences and apply scientific information to systematically improve patient care and the workplace environment.
2. Locate, appraise, assimilate, and apply evidence from peer-reviewed, evidence-based medical and public health literature for care of patients and populations.
3. Apply the knowledge of scientific study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies.
4. Use technology to efficiently access and manage medical information and to provide timely and effective care.
5. Practice self-directed learning and progressive professional development.
6. Apply knowledge of patient safety issues and quality improvement methods to improve medical care and population health.

**IV. Interpersonal and communication skills**

MUSM graduates must be able to effectively communicate and interact with patients, caregivers, and the health care team to contribute to high-quality, patient-centered care. Graduates should be able to:

1. Create and sustain appropriate therapeutic relationships with patients.
2. Demonstrate effective patient education/counseling skills.
3. Demonstrate effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills.
4. Demonstrate effective use of communication technologies and modalities.
5. Work effectively within an interprofessional health care team as a member and leader.
6. Apply the ethical principle of patient autonomy by eliciting patient preference and incorporating it into the health care plan.
7. Teach, present, and model knowledge, skills, and attitudes effectively to peers and to members of an interprofessional health care team.

**V. Professionalism**

MUSM graduates must demonstrate integrity, respect, and ethical reasoning, and promote inclusion of differences in all interactions to improve health care for patients, communities, and populations.

Graduates should be able to:

1. Demonstrate respect (tolerance), compassion, altruism, and integrity when interacting with peers, staff, faculty, and patients.
2. Demonstrate reliability by being present, on time and prepared for all educational, administrative, and patient care activities.
3. Maintain confidentiality and proper professional boundaries (physical, sexual, financial, emotional, social, and electronic) with patients, peers, faculty, other members of the health care team and the public at large.
4. Apply ethical principles to be truthful about medical data, appropriately deal with medical errors, and convey information honestly and tactfully to patients, peers, faculty, and staff.
5. Promote the physical and mental wellness of patients and their families, and members of the health care team, and recognize and avoid impairment.
6. Recognize limitations and continually assess one's own level of competency.
7. Recognize and manage situations that present a potential conflict of interest, including balancing obligations to patients with one's self interest and the interest of the health care system.
8. Produce and maintain clear, accurate, and timely patient documentation.

**VI. Systems-based practice**

MUSM graduates must apply knowledge of the larger context of health, including its social and structural determinants, and of systems and resources within and outside of health care, to optimize high-quality care for patients, communities, and populations. Graduates should be able to:

1. Outline the organization and financing of the U.S. health care system and the effects of both on access, utilization, and quality of care for individuals and populations, especially in the context of rural and underserved populations of Georgia.
2. Compare and contrast types of medical practice and healthcare delivery systems, including methods of controlling health care costs, allocating resources and maintaining quality of care.



3. Identify the ethical implications of health care resource allocation and emerging technologies on population health.
4. Describe ways to practice medicine as a community-responsive physician who can engage the community, contribute to the reduction of health disparities, and advocate for quality patient care, especially in rural and underserved populations.
5. Demonstrate ability to assist patients as they navigate through available medical and non-medical community resources.
6. Demonstrate the ability to help the patient and family navigate through end-of-life issues.
7. Demonstrate the ability to assess the health status of populations, identify community assets and resources, and recommend community-based strategies to improve the health of individuals and populations.
8. Describe the public health responsibilities of the physician including disease surveillance, reporting adverse events, emergency preparedness, and prevention of chronic conditions.

These six Medical Student Competencies were first adopted in August 2005, updated in May 2012, updated in August 2019, and updated in February 2025 to align with the Foundational Competencies for UME (AAMC, AACOM, ACGME).

## YEAR I AND YEAR II

## Preclinical Phase of the Curriculum

The Patient-Based Learning (PBL) Curriculum progresses over the first four semesters of the MD Program. Each semester includes a course for basic sciences (PBL Blocks), a Medical Practice course, and a Population Health for Medical Research (PHMR) course. The Year I spring semester includes the Population Health 600 rotation (POH 600). The Year II spring semester includes the Emergency Medical Responders course (EMR 600) and the Application of Preclinical Science 700/701 course (APS 700/701).

Throughout the Patient-Based Learning Curriculum there are interprofessional education and simulation-based clinical skills activities.

## The Four Year MUSM Curriculum

July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June		
Year 1	Core	Foundations of Medicine (FOM 600) Block 1: Biochem/Development/Cancer/Host Defense/Microbiology/Ethics Population Health Medical Research 1 (PHMR 600) Medical Practice 1 (MPRA 600)				Organ Systems 1 (ORG 610) Block 2: Neuroscience/Behavior/Dermatology/MSK Population Health Medical Research 2 (PHMR 601) Medical Practice 2 (MPRA 601)				Population Health 1 (POH 601) Population Health Medical Research 3 (PHMR 602)			
		Organ Systems 2 (ORG 700) Block 3: Cardiology/Pulmonology/Endo Population Health Medical Research 3 (PHMR 700) Medical Practice 3 (MPRA 700)				Organ Systems 3 (ORG 710) Block 4: GI/Hematology/Radiology/Reproduction Population Health Medical Research 4 (PHMR 701) Medical Practice 4 (MPRA 701) Emergency Medical Responders (EMR 600)				Application of Preclinical Sciences (APS 700/701) Step 1 Prep			
Year 2	Electives	Internal Medicine Clerkship			Obstetrics and Gynecology Clerkship		Psychiatry Clerkship		Surgery Clerkship				
		Sub-Internship			Population Health Visit (POH 900)		Required Elective		Pediatrics Clerkship				
Year 3	Electives	Discretionary Time (8 Weeks)					Electives (20 Weeks)				Patient Care Experience		
Year 4	Electives										MPOH Tutoring		



## **1. PBL Blocks**

The goal of PBL Blocks is to promote medical knowledge, professionalism, communication, and interpersonal competencies. Medical students acquire medical knowledge thorough the integrated study of the traditional disciplines of anatomy, behavioral science, biochemistry, cell biology, histology, immunology, microbiology, neuroscience, pathology, pharmacology, and physiology. The Foundations of Medicine block includes introductory material supporting general mechanisms of disease, introduction to medical practice history and physical examination, and gross anatomy. Organ systems blocks introduce students to normal structures and functions of the human organs as well as the diagnoses, pathophysiology, and treatment of disorders. PBL blocks also include a knowledge component of medical practice and medical ethics. Medical students acquire experience in the areas of professionalism, communication, and interpersonal skills through peer-to-peer interactions that occur in small and large group sessions. The PBL curriculum is divided into the following four blocks:

### **PBL Block 1 – (MED FOM 600, Foundations of Medical Science)**

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Module 1 (4 weeks): Upper Limb Anatomy, Biochemistry, Histology, and Cell Biology

Module 2 (4 weeks): Lower Limb Anatomy, Embryology, Genetics, and Cancer Biology

Module 3 (5 weeks): Thorax and Abdomen Anatomy, Immunology, Bacteriology, and Parasitology

Module 4 (4 weeks): Pelvis Anatomy, Nutrition, Immunology, Ethics, Virology, and Mycology

### **PBL Block 2 – (MED ORG 610, Organ Systems 1)**

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Module 1 (6 weeks): Nervous System and Special Senses/ Neuroscience

Module 2 (6 weeks): Behavioral Health/ Brain and Behavior, Family Systems

Module 3 (5 Weeks): Skin and Subcutaneous Tissue/Dermatology, Musculoskeletal System

### **PBL Block 3 – (MED ORG 700, Organ Systems 2)**

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Module 1 (6 weeks): Cardiovascular

Module 2 (5 weeks): Pulmonology

Module 3 (6 weeks): Renal

### **PBL Block 4 – (MED ORG 710, Organ Systems 3)**

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Module 1 (5 weeks): Gastroenterology

Module 2 (4 weeks): Hematology

Module 3 (4 weeks): Endocrinology

Module 4 (4 weeks): Reproduction

## **2. Population Health & Medical Research Courses and Population Health Rotations**

PHMR is an intentional progression designed to provide students the skills necessary both to execute a high-quality Population Health project during population health rotations and to engage in extracurricular research with a faculty mentor. The courses identify the needs of rural and other underserved communities and develop students' skills for addressing those needs. Each PHMR course is offered concurrently with the basic science blocks and meets longitudinally during the semesters.



- **PHMR 1 (MED PHMR 600)** provides the necessary context in rural health and population health principles, including specific training in conducting community needs assessments. At the end of PHMR 1, students will have learned the skills necessary to identify an area of need within a community and understand the dynamics influencing that need.
- **PHMR 2 (MED PHMR 601)** provides instruction in research ethics, design, and methodology. At the end of PHMR 2, students will have learned the skills necessary to design a research project to investigate a specific hypothesis or answer a specific research question.
- **Population Health Rotation 1 (MED POH 600)** provides the opportunity to experience the practice of medicine in a rural medically underserved community. This 3-week rotation occurs at the conclusion of Year I, after completion of MED PHMR 600 and 601. Students prioritize community-centered population health needs using valid research and epidemiological methods and data resources. They become immersed in the professional and community responsibilities of a physician working within a rural medically underserved area, and they identify linkages between families and their patients' overall health and well-being. They develop the initial structure for a population health initiative that will be completed in Year IV of their medical education.
- **PHMR 3 (MED PHMR 700)** teaches students how they, as future physicians, will interact with a complex healthcare system, and provides professional development in the business of medicine. Topics covered include, grant-writing, navigating health insurance, economic development, leadership, and dissemination of research findings. At the end of PHMR 3, students will have learned the skills necessary to effectively translate the research skills covered in previous courses into their future careers as community-responsive physicians.
- **PHMR 4 (MED PHMR 701)** covers epidemiologic and biostatistical principles, including hands-on opportunities to work with simulated research findings. At the end of PHMR 4 students will have learned the skills necessary to analyze and interpret research findings, and evaluate the impact of a research study.

### **3. Medical Practice (MP) Courses**

The goal of Medical Practice is to train students to deliver compassionate, appropriate, and effective care to patients. The medical practice curriculum is designed to develop and refine the clinical interview, physical examination, and documentation skills, all of which are fundamental to the sound practice of medicine. In addition, the medical practice curriculum promotes medical ethics, professionalism, communication and interpersonal skills. Medical Practice is comprised of four courses:

- **MP 1 (MED MPRA 600, Basic History and Physical Exam)** introduces medical students to the skills of patient care. This course promotes the practices of history taking (history of present illness, past medical history & family history) and performing a complete physical exam (vital signs, eye exam, HEENT exam, cardiovascular exam, pulmonology exam, and gastrointestinal exam). MP 1 trains students to document a detailed, clinical note. Emphases are on completeness of the exam and thoroughness of the note.
- **MP 2 (MED MPRA 601, Basic Clinical Exams-Organ Systems 1)** reinforces the history and physical exam skills learned in MP 1 while introducing complete neurological and musculoskeletal exams. Continued emphases are on performing a comprehensive exam and documenting a thorough note.
- **MP 3 (MED MPRA 700, Focused Clinical Exams-Organ Systems 2)** advances the clinical skills required to perform cardiovascular and pulmonology exams. This course connects cardiac and pulmonary sounds with specific pathological findings. Emphases are on obtaining a focused history, completing a focused physical examination, and utilizing appropriate clinical reasoning.



- **MP 4 (MED MPRA 701, Focused Clinical Exams-Organ Systems 3)** advances clinical skills with respect to the gastrointestinal system and introduces the physical exams of the genitourinary system. Delivering bad news is covered in this course. Emphases are on obtaining a focused history, completing a focused physical examination, and utilizing appropriate clinical reasoning.

#### **4. Emergency Medical Responders (MED EMR 600)**

The Emergency Medical Responders course teaches students how to identify and respond to emergent and critical medical events including respiratory failure, ventricular fibrillation, pulseless electrical activity, asystole, pulseless ventricular tachycardia, acute myocardial infarction, bradycardia, tachycardia, and stroke. In the simulation lab, students practice procedures including intubation and defibrillation and consider reversible causes which may be contributing to the medical events. This course culminates with the Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Megacode exam. Successful completion of the non-course credit, team-based simulation sessions in the first, second, and third semesters of the MD Program is the pre-requisite for enrollment in the MED EMR 600 course.

#### **5. Application of Preclinical Science (MED APS 700/701)**

The three-week Application of Preclinical Science course emphasizes consolidation and integration of the preclinical science knowledge obtained in previous courses as students prepare to transition to the clerkship phase of the curriculum. In addition to the application of preclinical science knowledge to clinical scenarios, this course reinforces effective study skills and test-taking strategies needed for success in the clerkship phase. Activities include participation in asynchronous didactic sessions, study plan development and coaching, and completion of clinical scenario questions. APS 700 is required of students who have successfully completed PBL Blocks 1-4. APS 701, which provides a more intensive and prescribed structure, is required of students who have met borderline levels of achievement or failed PBL Block 3 or 4.

### **YEAR III**

The 48-week Year III program includes six core clerkships, the Healthcare Systems course, the Medical Practice Reasoning Assessment (MPRA) Clinical Years and Telehealth Experience, and a patient care experience. The clerkships are:

- Internal Medicine (10 weeks)
- Surgery (7 weeks)
- Psychiatry (5 weeks)
- Pediatrics (7 weeks)
- Family Medicine (7 weeks)
- Obstetrics and Gynecology (5 weeks).

The clerkships include a blend of ambulatory and hospital-based patient care to provide the students with a comprehensive clinical experience necessary for a general medical education. The primary clinical sites include Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center and Piedmont Macon in Macon, HCA Memorial University Medical Center in Savannah, Piedmont Columbus Regional Medical Center and St. Francis Hospital in Columbus, and South Georgia Medical Center in Valdosta with other sites throughout the state. Integrated within the clerkships, there are seminars in radiology and ethics.

The week-long Healthcare Systems Course (MED MED 800) is designed to augment the clinical education provided during clerkships by addressing the following topics: clinical reasoning, the US healthcare system, patient safety, quality improvement, teamwork, leadership, and communication in healthcare, and the economics and management of chronic disease. The content is delivered through a combination of pre-session assignments, large group interactive sessions, and small group discussion.



Year III concludes with a 6-week summer term composed of the 2-week MPRA Clinical Years and Telehealth Experience and a 4-week patient care experience. During the MPRA Clinical Years and Telehealth Experience (MED MPRA 810), students will participate in both synchronous and asynchronous activities aimed at polishing history taking, physical examination, clinical reasoning, presentation, communication, and telehealth skills and will participate in the MPRA event during which the student performs a series of standardized patient encounters and receives feedback on presentation skills, approach to clinical reasoning, and documentation from clinical faculty. This is very similar to the experience of a clinical resident working under the supervision of an attending physician. Performance of each student will be reviewed and remediation, if appropriate, will be determined by the Director(s) of the MPRA Clinical Years and Telehealth Experience course.

Finally, a student must complete a patient care experience in post-clerkship Year III. Patient care experiences include sub-internships, required electives, and electives. This patient care experience serves as an opportunity for students to explore potential career paths and network with residency programs at Mercer-affiliated clinical sites in Georgia.

## **YEAR IV**

The Year IV program is intended to allow students to round out their clinical training experience while exploring different specialties as career options. The Year IV program begins with a 1-week wellness course (MED MED WEL). The Year IV program includes three required 4-week experiences; one in Population Health (POH 900), one 4-week required elective in Critical Care, Emergency Medicine, or Geriatric/Palliative Medicine, and a 4-week Sub-Internship. The Sub-Internship and Required Elective requirements may be achieved at a non-MUSM teaching facility if the away rotation meets the requirements of the equivalent MUSM course. Students are required to complete a minimum of 20 weeks of elective courses for credit. Students must complete a minimum of 12 weeks of elective courses that have significant patient contact/ patient care responsibilities (PCR) of which at least four (4) must be MUSM-sponsored electives with PCR. No more than 12 weeks in one sub-specialty will be credited towards the 20 weeks of elective time needed for graduation. If a student has completed the required elective or sub-internship Year III, the student may select an additional 4-week PCR elective in lieu of repeating these requirements in Year IV.

Unscheduled time (8 weeks of discretionary time) is provided for residency interviews, vacation and personal time.

In addition, there is a Medical Ethics paper required of senior students. The senior year is completed after the successful completion of a one credit hour Capstone course designed to prepare the senior student for their entry into their Internship Year. A comparable 1-week clinical skills boot camp course can substitute for the Capstone course.

## **USMLE STEP 1 PASS REQUIRED TO ENTER YEAR III**

To be eligible to take the USMLE Step 1 exam, a student must satisfactorily complete all requirements of Year II including the Application of Preclinical Sciences (APS) 700 or 701 course. (ACT students are exempt from this requirement.)

A student must pass USMLE Step 1 to begin Year III courses. (ACT students are exempt from this requirement. The timing of ACT students' Step 1 exam is defined by the Office of Academic Affairs.) Any student who does not attempt the USMLE Step 1 exam prior to the end of the first-Year III term after becoming eligible to take Step 1 will be dismissed from the MD Program at Mercer University School of Medicine. Any student who does not pass the USMLE Step 1 exam prior to the end of the second

Year III term after becoming eligible to take Step 1 will be dismissed from the MD Program at Mercer University School of Medicine.



## **USMLE STEP 2**

MUSM students are required to achieve a passing score, as defined by the USMLE, on the USMLE Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) examination as a requirement for successful completion of the curriculum, and thus to be eligible for graduation. USMLE Step 2 CK can be taken after receiving satisfactory or higher grades in all six core clerkships in Year III. Accelerated track students are exempt from the Step 2 CK eligibility criteria and will take the Step 2 CK exam at a time defined by the Office of Academic Affairs.

A student is eligible to take the USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) exam after receiving Satisfactory or higher grades in at least five (5) of six (6) core clerkships which must include the internal medicine clerkship. A student may not take the USMLE Step 2 CK exam while enrolled in a core clerkship. A student is not eligible to take the USMLE Step 2 CK exam if any attempted clerkship has a grade of incomplete or unsatisfactory until the clerkship is satisfactorily completed.

*Approved by CDSC on September 8, 2025; approved by CIC on September 18, 2025.*

## **PC-ACT PROGRAM**

MUSM M.D. students can apply to one of three primary care, accelerated track (PC-ACT) core specialties: family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics. Once accepted into the program, the PC-ACT students complete their M.D. degree in three years. Medical students enrolled in this track must complete the same courses during their first and second year as their 4-year M.D. degree counterparts.

This includes passing the USMLE step 1 exam. In addition, the PC-ACT students must complete the specialty-specific ACT-1, ACT-2, ACT Clinical Experiences #1, and ACT Clinical Experiences #2 courses. The specialty specific ACT-2 course counts as an entire clerkship (pediatrics and family medicine) or part of a clerkship (internal medicine). During the clerkship phase, the PC-ACT students must complete the remainder of the clerkships. Some of the clerkships are truncated in time but preserved with respect to required clinical encounters and learning objectives. Family Medicine PC-ACT students are required to take a family medicine sub-internship and the transition to residency course. Internal Medicine PC-ACT students are required to complete two weeks of emergency medicine, two weeks of critical care, and a 4-week internal medicine sub-internship. Pediatric PC-ACT students are required to complete 2-weeks in critical care, a 4-week pediatric sub-internship, and a 2-week transition to residency course. All PC-ACT students must pass the USMLE step 2 CK.

## **RCN-ACT PROGRAM**

MUSM M.D. students can apply to the Rural Critical Need Accelerated Track in psychiatry. Once accepted into the program, the RCN-ACT students complete their M.D. degree in three years. Medical students enrolled in this track must complete the same courses during their first and second year as their 4-year M.D. degree counterparts. This includes passing the USMLE step 1 exam. In addition, the RCN-ACT students must complete the specialty-specific ACT-1, ACT-2, ACT Clinical Experiences #1, and ACT Clinical Experiences #2 courses. The specialty specific ACT-2 course counts as an entire psychiatry clerkship. During the clerkship phase, the RCN-ACT students must complete the remainder of the clerkships. Some of the clerkships are truncated in time but preserved with respect to required clinical encounters and learning objectives. In addition to the psychiatry clerkship, Psychiatry RCN-ACT students are required to complete elective coursework in addiction medicine and emergency medicine as well as the Transition to Residency course. All PC-ACT students must pass the USMLE step 2 CK.

**RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY**

At Mercer University School of Medicine, there are active research programs in basic medical sciences, clinical sciences, population health, and medical education. Most of these programs are supported with external grants from federal and private sources. The Macon, Columbus, and Savannah campuses are equipped with modern research laboratories to accommodate faculty research. Each campus also has a Medical Library that provides the faculty, staff and students with a variety of resources and services to meet their research needs. Clinical research opportunities are available to students through Mercer University School of Medicine's clinical affiliates. Students have numerous opportunities to participate in research during their time at MUSM. Many students are able to complete a 6-week research experience at MUSM as part of our Summer Scholars program. Students may also participate in ongoing research projects during any non-curricular time or as an elective.

**Curriculum****YEAR I**

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
Foundations of Medicine-Block 1 (Biochemistry/Cell Biology, Genetics & Embryology, Cancer & Host Defense)	MED FOM 600	17
Population Health & Medical Research 1	MED PHMR 600	1
Medical Practice 1	MED MPRA 600	1
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
Organ Systems-Block 2 (Neurology, Behavior, MS, Dermatology)	MED ORG 610	18
Population Health & Medical Research 2	MED PHMR 601	1
Medical Practice 2	MED MPRA 601	1
Population Health	MED POH 600	3

**YEAR II**

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
Organ Systems-Block 3 (Cardio, Pulmonology, Renal)	MED ORG 700	18
Population Health & Medical Research 3	MED PHMR 700	1
Medical Practice 3	MED MPRA 700	1
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
Organ Systems-Block 4 (GI, Reproduction, Endocrinology, Hematology/Oncology)	MED ORG 710	18
Population Health & Medical Research 4	MED PHMR 701	1
Emergency Medical Responders	MED EMR 600	1
Medical Practice 4	MED MPRA 701	1
Application of Preclinical Science	MED APS 700/MED APS 701	3

**YEAR III****48 Total Hours**

Fall Semester:	21 Semester Hours
Spring Semester:	21 Semester Hours
Post-Clerkship 6-week Intersession:	6 Semester Hours

<b>Semester A*</b>		
Surgery	MED CLK 820	7 weeks/ 7 semester hours
Family Medicine	MED CLK 821	7 weeks/ 7 semester hours
Pediatrics	MED CLK 822	7 weeks/ 7 semester hours
<b>Semester B*</b>		
Psychiatry	MED CLK 823	5 weeks/ 5 semester hours
Obstetrics & Gynecology	MED CLK 824	5 weeks/ 5 semester hours
Internal Medicine	MED CLK 825	10 weeks/ 10 semester hours
Healthcare Systems	MED MED 800	1 week/ 1 semester hour

*\*Semester A and B can be taken in either order.*

<b>Post-Clerkship 6-Week Intersession</b>		
MPRA Clinical Years and Telehealth Experience	MED MPRA 810	2 weeks/ 2 semester hours
Patient Care Experience	**	4 weeks/ 4 semester hours

*\*\*Choice of sub-internship, required elective, or patient care elective.*

**YEAR IV**

<b>35 Total Hours</b>		
Wellness	MED MED WEL	1 week/1 semester hour
Bioethics II	BIE 900	1 semester hour
Capstone	MED 999	1 week/1 semester hour
Population Health	POH 900	4 weeks/4 semester hours
Required Elective	4 weeks/4 semester hours	
Sub-Internship	4 weeks/4 semester hours	
Electives	20 weeks/20 semester hours	



To satisfy the Year IV requirements, students may select from a variety of sub-internship, required elective, and electives courses available in the Mercer University School of Medicine Senior Catalog as well as courses offered by other medical schools and clinical sites external to Mercer University School of Medicine which may be referred to as away, visiting student, or audition rotations. These away, visiting student, or audition rotations are subject to the approval of the Year IV Director and Year IV Sub-Committee of Mercer University School of Medicine's Curriculum and Instruction Committee. The required elective is to be selected from critical care, emergency medicine, and geriatrics/palliative care courses offered in the Senior Catalog. Additionally, students must complete twenty weeks of electives, of which at least twelve weeks must be described as patient care majority (PCR) indicating that at least fifty percent of course time is spent in direct care of patients. Additional sub-internship courses may be taken for PCR elective credit after the four-week sub-internship requirement has been fulfilled. Students desiring course opportunities not available in the Senior Catalog may propose Student Generated Electives (SGE) which must be approved by the sponsoring faculty, Year IV Director, and Year IV Sub-Committee of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee. Refer to the Senior Catalog for additional details of the Year IV course requirements and policies.

### **STUDENT EVALUATION AND REGULATIONS**

Student evaluation in Years I and II (preclinical phase), Year III (excluding the core clerkships), and Year IV (post-clerkship phase) of the curriculum is reported as satisfactory/unsatisfactory on the transcript. Student evaluation in the Year III core clerkships in Internal Medicine, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Psychiatry, Family Medicine, Pediatrics, and Surgery is reported as honors/high pass/satisfactory/unsatisfactory on the transcript. In all phases of the curriculum, student evaluation is based upon mastery of the MD Program Objectives. In general, students are evaluated in the areas of patient care and procedural skills, medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement, and systems-based practice. In the area of knowledge and the ability to apply it, the scope and depth are evaluated by use of both written and oral examinations. Skills and behaviors are evaluated by faculty in all courses. Formative evaluations are provided in all courses that are four (4) weeks in length or longer. Students must achieve a satisfactory or higher grade in all required courses in order to be eligible for graduation.

### **EXTERNAL EVALUATION**

All students must successfully complete Step 1 and Step 2 CK (Clinical Knowledge) of the United States Medical Licensing Examination. Passage of Step 1 is a requirement for promotion to Year III. Step 2 CK must be passed prior to graduation. For each examination, the examining agency defines the passing level.

### **RESIDENCY MATCH**

Residency match begins with individualized career counseling which is offered through a comprehensive career counseling program designed to ensure that students are successfully advancing on the path to residency. The program is designed, implemented, and overseen by the Office of Student Affairs and is based on the AAMC Careers in Medicine program. It is a multifaceted program which includes both Individual Career Counseling and Academic Advising Sessions with the student's Dean of Student Affairs, and group sessions held each semester of years I, II, and III during Bears Prepare Sessions to help ensure that students choose a career that is best suited for them and their life goals.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Students are expected to interact ethically and honestly with one another, all members of the MUSM community, and their patients, and they are required to adhere to standards of conduct generally applicable to medical professionals. Appraisal of such standards is continuous and a part of a student's academic and overall evaluation. Professional conduct is monitored and may be reported to the Student Professionalism Committee.

**DISMISSAL**

The faculty, through its committees, may recommend that a student be dismissed for failing to maintain academic or professional standards or for acts of turpitude. Students who are dismissed have the right to appeal to the Student Appraisal and Promotions Committee (SAPC) and to the Dean of the School of Medicine, and then to the Provost of Mercer University, in that sequence.

**Class Attendance**

Regular attendance and participation in all required-curricular sessions and examinations is mandatory. Excused absences for illness and emergencies must be approved by the Office of Academic Affairs. Year I-IV attendance policies are available in the respective manuals.



## **Educational Methodology**

### **ORGANIZATION**

This program allows for students interested in a career in Family Medicine, general Internal Medicine or Pediatrics the opportunity to complete their medical school coursework in an accelerated three year program of study. The PC-ACT curriculum builds upon the strengths of the MUSM problem-based curriculum with clinical experiences and community medicine activities built into the preclinical curriculum and reinforced through continued longitudinal clinical experiences at the ACT site, clerkships, sub-internships, and elective experiences. The educational objectives for this program are comparable to those for the four-year MD program. The curriculum is designed to meet the same objectives as the four-year MD program but is compressed into 134 weeks of instructional time. The program offers more educational contact opportunities between students and the respective residency faculty in the chosen specialty at their assigned site. The Family Medicine and Internal Medicine Accelerated Tracks are offered in Savannah, Macon, and Columbus. The Pediatric Accelerated Track is offered in Savannah and Macon. The plan for Student graduates of the PC-ACT Program at Mercer is to complete their residency training at their chosen host residency ACT site.

### **ADMISSION REQUIREMENT**

Students may apply for admission in this program after successful completion of their first-year FALL semester. Students must demonstrate a commitment to medically underserved rural areas of Georgia and a to enter a career in family medicine, general internal medicine or pediatrics. Since this is an accelerated three-year curriculum, demonstrated evidence of academic excellence is a requirement for acceptance. Only students who meet the following criteria will be considered for the program:

- A firm commitment to primary care
- A commitment to medically underserved rural Georgia
- Maturity necessary to be successful in an accelerated three year program
- A strong academic record

Once accepted, a student may remain in the program as long as they remain satisfactory in all educational programs. A student who becomes unsatisfactory in any program will be returned to the four-year MD program. Any PC-ACT program student who does not receive a passing final clerkship NBME shelf exam score or a passing Step 1 score on the first attempt must return to the four-year MD program. A student may opt to return to the four-year MD program at any time.

### **YEAR I AND YEAR II**

Years I and II cover 80 weeks of scheduled educational activities during which students are involved in the PBL curriculum. The curriculum addresses the foundational elements found in biomedical sciences and includes fundamentals of clinical medicine, population health, evidence-based medicine, medical humanities, and medical ethics. The curriculum is fully integrated across disciplines and topics, facilitating deeper understanding and life-long learning. The PBL curriculum in the Accelerated Track is identical with that described for the 4-year MD program.

At the beginning of the second year, students will participate in a six-week combined Family Medicine/Community Medicine IM/Com Med or Peds/Com Med rotation unique to its track. This rotation will be under the supervision of specialty specific faculty members and will include several innovative curricular activities that will ensure that students are prepared appropriately for their accelerated experiences.



During Year II, there is a longitudinal curriculum for the students, which includes attending 18 half-day continuity clinic experiences at their PC-ACT site. This experience allows students increased exposure to clinical medicine and ongoing mentoring by their future faculty and residents.

## **Curriculum**

### **YEAR I (Revised 7/2025)**

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
Foundations of Medicine - Block 1 (Biochemistry/Cell Biology, Genetics & Embryology, Cancer & Host Defense)	MED FOM 600	17
Population Health & Medical Research	MED PHMR 600	1
Medical Practice	MED MPRA 600	1
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
Organ Systems - Block 2 (Neurology, Behavior, MS, Dermatology)	MED ORG 610	18
Population Health & Medical Research	MED PHMR 601	1
Medical Practice	MED MPRA 601	1
Population Health	MED POH 600	3
<b>Summer Semester</b>		
ACT 1	MED ACT 600	6
Population Health	MED ACT POH	1

### **YEAR II**

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
Organ Systems - Block 3 (Cardio, Pulmonology, Renal)	MED ORG 700	18
Population Health & Medical Research	MED PHMR 700	1
Medical Practice	MED MPRA 700	1
ACT Longitudinal Rotation	MED LON 701	1
<b>Spring Semester</b>		
Organ Systems - Block 4 (GI, Reproduction, Endocrinology, Hematology/Oncology)	MED ORG 710	18
Population Health & Medical Research	MED PHMR 701	1
Medical Practice	MED MPRA 701	1
ACT Longitudinal Rotation	MED LON 702	1
Emergency Medical Response	MED EMR 600	1
<b>Summer Semester</b>		
ACT 2	MED ACT 700	6

**YEAR III**

<b>Family Medicine - 49 weeks</b>		
CLK 821/ACT 700	Family Medicine	6 weeks
CLK 815	Internal Medicine	8 weeks
CLK 820	Surgery	7 weeks
CLK 822	Pediatrics	7 weeks
CLK 824	Obstetrics & Gynecology	5 weeks
CLK 823	Psychiatry	5 weeks
MED ACT REA	Reading in Primary Care for ACT	2 weeks
MED FAM SUB	Family Medical Sub I	4 weeks
MED MED RES	Transition to Residency	3 weeks
MED LON 801	ACT Longitudinal Rotation	Fall
MED LON 802	ACT Longitudinal Rotation	Spring
MED ACT SPE	ACT Research Elective	1 week
MED ACT WEL	ACT Wellness Elective	1 week
<b>Internal Medicine - 49 weeks</b>		
CLK 815/ACT 700	Internal Medicine – Block A	6 weeks
CLK 824	Obstetrics & Gynecology	5 weeks
CLK 914	ER Selective	2 weeks
CLK 822	Pediatrics	7 weeks
CLK 820	Surgery	7 weeks
CLK 815	Internal Medicine – Block B	4 weeks
MED ACT READ	Reading in Primary Care for ACT	2 weeks
CLK 823	Psychiatry	4 weeks
INM ICC	ICU Elective	2 weeks
CLK 821	Family Medicine	4 weeks
MED INM SUB	Internal Medicine Sub I	4 weeks
MED LON 801	Longitudinal Rotation	Fall
MED LON 802	Longitudinal Rotation	Spring
MED ACT SPE	ACT Research Elective	1 week
MED ACT WEL	ACT Wellness Elective	1 week

**YEAR III cont.**

<b>Pediatrics - 49 weeks</b>		
CLK 812 / 700 Pediatrics	Pediatrics	6 weeks
CLK 811	Family Medicine	6 weeks
MED PED EME	PED ICU	2 weeks
CLK 815	Internal Medicine	8 weeks
CLK 810	Surgery	7 weeks
CLK 814	Obstetrics & Gynecology	5 weeks
MED ACT READ	Reading in Primary Care for ACT	2 weeks
MED PED SUB	Pediatric Sub I	4 weeks
CLK 813	Psychiatry	5 weeks
MED MED RES	Transition to Residency	2 weeks
MED LON 801	ACT Longitudinal Rotation	Fall
MED LON 802	ACT Longitudinal Rotation	Spring
MED ACT SPE	ACT Research Elective	1 week
MED ACT WEL	ACT Wellness Elective	1 week



Mercer University is committed to proving graduate degree programs. Within the School of Medicine, the following graduate degree programs are offered:

1. Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences (Macon and Savannah Campuses)
2. Master of Family Therapy (Macon and Atlanta)
3. PhD in Biomedical Sciences (Macon, Savannah, and Columbus Campuses)
4. PhD in Rural Health Sciences (Macon)

## **ADMISSION TO GRADUATE STUDY**

All persons who wish to enter one of the graduate programs at Mercer University School of Medicine must submit a formal application to the Admission's Office adhering to all admission requirements of the individual program. Certain basic qualifications must be met for admission to graduate programs. All programs require that students hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a specified minimum undergraduate grade point average. Graduate admissions tests appropriate to the particular academic program are required. Specific requirements for each graduate program are given with the description of that program.

## **GRADUATE LEVEL COURSES**

### **Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences**

600 Level: Numbering system for graduate courses in the MSPCS program is the prefix BMS.

### **Master of Family Therapy**

600 Level: Core and Elective courses

700 Level: Practicum Sequence courses

### **PhD in Biomedical Science**

600 Level: Core and Elective courses

700 Level: Research courses

800 Level: Teaching Practicum/Thesis

### **PhD in Rural Health Sciences**

800 Level: Numbering system for the PhD Program is the prefix RRL.

## **GRADUATE HONOR SYSTEM**

Academic integrity is maintained through an honor system. The Graduate Honor System is governed by policies established by the University Graduate Council. It draws upon the traditions of integrity and academic freedom — a freedom within the academic community which is based on a trust between students and faculty. The Honor System imposes upon each student the responsibility for his or her own honest behavior and assumes that each student will report any violations of the Honor Code.

The Graduate Honor System is administered by an honor committee composed of five members of the graduate faculty who are responsible for decisions regarding alleged violations. The committee's decisions are binding on the student involved but may be appealed to the chief academic officer of the University.

Students are to uphold the Mercer University Honor Code and will be held accountable for violations of the Honor Code in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Graduate Honor System. The Honor Code and Graduate Honor System can be found in the MUSM Student Handbook at: [provost.mercer.edu/handbooks/studenthandbook.cfm](http://provost.mercer.edu/handbooks/studenthandbook.cfm).

**GRADING SYSTEM**

Degree-seeking students enrolled in graduate courses will receive letter grades for all graduate work. Grades within a course will be assigned on a 100-point scale and the final grade will be converted to a letter grade. The final course letter grades will then be converted to a 4-point scale for determining the overall GPA for the Program.

LETTER	0-100	QUALITY POINTS PER CREDIT HOUR
A	90-100	4.0
B+	86-89	3.5
B	80-85	3.0
C+	76-79	2.5
C	70-75	2.0
F	Below 65	0

The following grading marks may be used when students do not complete courses within the curriculum, do not perform required activities in courses, or do not take courses for a letter grade.

GRADE	INTERPRETATION
ABX	Excused absence from exam
IC	Incomplete
IP	In Progress
W	Withdrawal
Z	Grade Not Reported

A grade of IP is awarded only in a graduate practicum or in research project courses, which may extend beyond the end of a semester. A student is expected to finish "in progress" work based on the timetable established by the professor issuing the IP grade, and, at the latest, by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IP was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of ABX denotes that a student was absent from an examination because of an illness or another valid and compelling reason deemed satisfactory by the professor. A makeup exam must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the ABX was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of IC indicates that a relatively small part of the semester's course work remains incomplete because of a student's sickness or reasons satisfactory to the professor. The work must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IC was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of W (withdrawal) indicates that a student officially withdrew from a course on or before the last day for course withdrawals as designated in the current academic calendar. Withdrawals are not used when computing grade point averages.



**Manish Mishra, Program Director Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences;  
Associate Professor of Biomedical Sciences**

## **Program Description**

The Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences (MSPCS) Program is a 32-week curriculum composed of 31 credit hours of biomedical sciences that are foundational to the practice of clinical medicine and the development of biomedical research. The MSPCS prepares its graduates for careers in science teaching, academic laboratory research, publishing or policy-making and for the pursuit of advanced research degrees in biomedical sciences or professional degrees in healthcare. The MSPCS competencies for its graduates are their ability to demonstrate an understanding of fundamental scientific knowledge that is the basis for medicine and research and to display critical thinking skills in the application of that knowledge. These outcomes will be achieved through studies in seven (7) courses covering topics in anatomy, biochemistry, molecular and cellular biology, embryology, genetics, histology, immunology, microbiology, physiology, and virology. The Program culminates for each student with a 'capstone' experience that exercises the student's critical thinking about and communication of biomedical sciences, which are skills necessary in advanced graduate-level studies and in scientific research, writing, or education careers.

## **Admissions Information**

The Dean's Office and the Registrar for Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM) require the materials listed below in order to complete an application for the Master of Sciences in Preclinical Sciences (MSPCS) Program of MUSM:

The current admissions requirements and instructions are available at [medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/preclinical-sciences-ms](http://medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/preclinical-sciences-ms).

- The MSPCS Program admits for fall enrollment annually.
- You will complete and submit your primary application online through the MUSM electronic application system. You will visit this Application Portal throughout your application process to track your progress.
- Complete and submit all application materials and fees in the manner required.
- All required materials (i.e. transcripts, test scores, personal essay, letters of recommendation) must be received for an application file to be considered complete and eligible for review by the MSPCS Admissions Committee. Each applicant will be notified by email when the application file is complete. **Only complete** application files will be reviewed.
- The MSPCS Admissions Committee will evaluate each applicant holistically based on his/her academic record, test scores, personal qualities and personal goals. During the application review, applicants may be contacted for a phone interview, or asked to provide additional information.
- Complete applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. The rolling review process may continue until the application cycle ends. Applicants will be notified of admissions decisions by email and on their portal.
- Accepted applicants are required to submit a \$50 non-refundable deposit to Mercer University School of Medicine to hold their spot in the program. The fee will be applied to tuition upon enrollment. If an applicant submits a deposit and decides not to enroll in the fall, the deposit will be forfeited. All deposits must be submitted according to the deadline stated in the applicant's acceptance email.

Online application submission deadlines are midnight on June 15<sup>th</sup> for domestic applicants and midnight on May 1<sup>st</sup> for international applicants. The Mercer MSPCS Program only admits once each year for fall enrollment.



Required test scores may include: Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), or Dental Admissions Test (DAT) taken within the last two calendar years.

Applicants already holding a Master's degree or higher are exempt from submitting the above tests scores; however, a graduate degree transcript must be submitted through the application portal as part of the required application materials. For MCAT and DAT scores, testing dates should be scheduled so that scores are available and can be submitted by any deadlines.

At least two letters of reference from college professors or other individuals who have taught or have supervised the work of the applicant. Academic letters are preferred. More than two letters may be submitted. Letters should be submitted by the letter writer through the [\*\*MSPCS electronic application\*\*](#) system, found on the [\*\*MSPCS Admissions Requirement\*\*](#) webpage.

## **ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

All required materials above must be received for an application file to be considered complete and eligible for review by the MSPCS Admissions Committee. All applications must be complete by June 15<sup>th</sup>. Each applicant will be notified by email when his/her application file is complete. Only complete application files will be reviewed.

Applicants may be contacted for a phone interview with a member of the MSPCS Program Admissions Committee. The MSPCS Admissions Committee will evaluate each applicant holistically based on his or her academic record, test scores, essay qualities, and personal goals.

Applicants will be notified of their application status by email. Complete applications are reviewed on a rolling basis. A decision may take four to six weeks after an applicant receives the notice that their application is complete.

Accepted applicants will be required to submit a \$50 non-refundable deposit to hold their spot in the Program. The fee will be applied to their tuition upon enrollment. If an applicant submits a deposit, then decides not to enroll in the fall, the deposit will be forfeited. All deposits must be submitted according to the deadline stated in the applicant's acceptance email.

## **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE MSPCS PROGRAM**

1. B.S., B.A., from a regionally accredited institution. The undergraduate degree and required coursework must be completed by August 15TH, before fall enrollment in the MSPCS Program.
2. Degree work must include **one-year of coursework** with the corresponding laboratories for the following subjects:
  - General Biology
  - General or Inorganic Chemistry
  - Organic Chemistry
  - Physics

*A semester of Biochemistry with lab may be taken instead of a second semester of Organic Chemistry. AP credit may be used in place of one semester of the physics requirement. If AP credit was received for one or more of the other courses listed above, one year of advanced courses with lab in the same discipline must be completed. All required courses must have the corresponding lab hours.*



3. Cumulative undergraduate GPA of 2.8 on a 4.0 scale.
4. Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), Dental Admissions Test (DAT) exam scores taken within the previous two calendar years. Official scores must be submitted by the application deadline. Scores at or above the following values are preferred: GRE - 300 (with 148 or above on components), MCAT – 494, and DAT – 19 (Academic Average). Applicants with a Master's degree or higher are exempt from submitting test scores, but these applicants **MUST** submit an official transcript for their graduate work.
5. International students should refer to the International Application section of the page for further requirements.

### **APPLICATION CHECKLIST AND SUBMISSION DETAILS**

The following materials are required in order to complete an application for the Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences (MSPCS) program at Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM):

- **Application:** an online application for the MSPCS Program completed and submitted through the [\*\*electronic application system\*\*](#). Create an account. Once the application cycle opens, select the Mercer University MSPCS program and appropriate Entry Term.
- **Application Fee:** A non-refundable application fee of \$50.00 for domestic applicants and \$150.00 for international applicants is due when your application is submitted.
- **Personal Essay:** As part of the application, you will upload an essay of approximately 750 words discussing your educational goals related to the MSPCS program, your career goals utilizing the degree, and a summary of experience related to career goals (e.g. shadowing health professionals, employment in a healthcare setting, volunteering related to the profession). You should also mention whether you held a job or other extracurricular responsibilities during your undergraduate career. You may also address any circumstances that contributed to poor academic performance or to multiple withdrawals on your transcript.
- **Resume/CV:** As part of your application, you will upload a resume/cv.
- **Official Transcripts:** Submit official transcripts directly from the college and university for all college level work completed to earn a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university, even if that work was transferred into another institution and shows on another transcript. You also must submit transcripts for post baccalaureate coursework taken to meet the requirements for admission and transcripts for all graduate or professional degree coursework that you have completed.
  - Official transcripts should be submitted electronically directly from the institution to [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) or by mail to:  
**MUSM Admissions**  
**Mercer University School of Medicine**  
**1501 Mercer University Drive**  
**Macon, GA 31207.**
  - Former and current Mercer University students do not need to request a Mercer University transcript but will need to submit all other transcripts.
  - International applicants should refer to the International Applicant section of the page for further instructions.



- **Official Test Scores:** Submit test scores from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), Medical College Admissions test (MCAT), or Dental Admissions Test (DAT) taken within the previous two calendar year. *Applicants already holding a master's degree or higher are exempt from submitting the above test scores; however, a graduate degree transcript **must** be submitted as a part of the required application materials.*
  - Enter all tests to be submitted on your application. If you have scheduled but not yet taken your exam, please enter your scheduled test date.
  - Testing dates should be scheduled so that official scores can be received by MUSM prior to the application deadline.
  - Details for submission of each type of exam are as follows:
    - GRE: submit official test scores to MUSM through ETS using the institutional code 5409 and department code 0000. Also upload a copy of your Test Taker Score Report in your application.
    - MCAT: upload a pdf copy of a complete MCAT Score Report downloaded from the applicant's testing service online account.
    - DAT: upload a pdf copy of a complete DAT Score Report downloaded from the applicant's testing service online account.
  - International applicants should refer to the International Applicant section of the page for further instructions.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** At least two letters of reference from college professors or other individuals who have taught or have supervised the work of the applicant. These letters should be submitted by the letter writers through the application system or by email to: [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu).
  - If you have previously applied to Mercer University School of Medicine's MD program and would like to transfer your LOR to your MSPCS application, please email [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) to make this request

## INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

- Applicants applying as an international student should contact Mercer University's [International Student Services](#).
- Applicants who completed all or part of their education abroad are required to have their foreign educational credentials evaluated by an independent evaluation service such as [World Education Services](#) or [Educational Credential Evaluators](#). A Course-by-Course and Grade Point Average Equivalent Evaluation is required for admission
  - Official reports should be submitted electronically directly from the evaluation service to [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) or by mail to:  
**MUSM Admissions**  
**Mercer University School of Medicine**  
**1501 Mercer University Drive**  
**Macon, GA 31207.**
- International students must also submit scores from one of the following
  - TOEFL examination. The University's minimum proficiency level is a score of 20 on each section of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum composite TOEFL score is 80 (Internet-Based TOEFL), 213 (Computer-Based TOEFL) or 550 (Paper-Based TOEFL).
    - An IELTS score of 6.5 English proficiency
    - A Duolingo score of 115.



- Applicants must meet all other specific eligibility requirements and expectations as defined by the program and department.

For more information about the Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences program at Mercer University School of Medicine, call 478-301-5423 or email [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) to speak with the Admissions Department.

### **MERCER UNIVERSITY COVID-19 POLICY FOR HEALTH SCIENCE PROGRAMS**

In compliance with Mercer University's immunization policy, all School of Medicine students must have a COVID-19 vaccine or an approved exemption upon enrollment.

### **Grading System**

Degree-seeking students enrolled in graduate courses will receive letter grades for all graduate work. Grades within a course will be assigned on a 100-point scale and the final grade will be converted to a letter grade. The final course letter grades will then be converted to a 4-point scale for determining the overall GPA for the Program. See above Academic Information: Grading System and Quality Points for grade designations and interpretations.

### **Course Requirements**

Students must purchase access to a version (print or electronic) of the textbook for each course. Additionally, the examination process for all courses in the MSPCS Program requires that students have access to a laptop computer. Students are required to provide their own laptop computer as part of the materials required for each course in the Program. The computer must meet the specifications needed to run ExamSoft Examplify software. The latest minimum system requirements may be found through links available on the Mercer ExamSoft login page. Students should refer to these requirements when considering an operating system upgrade or the purchase of a new computer. Students are required to download and install Examplify and to install upgrades of the Examplify software, as they are released by ExamSoft. Students should contact ExamSoft support for problems with installing or running the software on their computers. Instructions for Examplify download and installation will be provided through an email from ExamSoft when student Examplify accounts are created. Tablets and iPads cannot be used for examinations.

Mercer ExamSoft login: [ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/mercemed](http://ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/mercemed)

### **MSPCS Linkage Program**

As part of Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM), students accepted to our Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences (MSPCS) program and interested in attending the Doctor of Medicine (MD) program offered by MUSM can take advantage of the MSPCS linkage agreement. The Linkage Agreement allows eligible students enrolled in the MSPCS program to have an MD interview opportunity. **This does not guarantee acceptance into the MD program.**

### **REQUIREMENTS**

MSPCS students interested in the Linkage Program must attend a mandatory information session. Details will be emailed during the Fall semester of your MSPCS program. Interested MSPCS students must meet all general [MUSM Eligibility Criteria](#) for admission to the MD program, including [residency requirements](#). Please note, this is the minimum requirement to establish legal residency to be eligible to apply.



Established residency alone does not demonstrate a commitment to the School's mission to meet the primary care and health care needs of rural and underserved areas of Georgia. Successful applicants will generally have significant roots (e.g., residential, family, personal, professional) in Georgia.

In order to be offered an interview with MUSM's admissions committee, MSPCS students must complete their first semester with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. The interview will be for matriculation to MUSM's MD program for the following fall semester.

**If accepted into the MD program after the first semester of the MSPCS program, the MSPCS student must successfully complete and graduate from the MSPCS program in order to matriculate into the MD program.**

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The MSPCS student should apply to the MD program through the application process outlined on the [MUSM admissions webpage](#). When applying, MSPCS students must apply through the "Regular Pool" admissions process. *Any Early Decision applicants would not have grades from the MSPCS program before the Early Decision deadlines.*

The MSPCS student must complete all components/requirements of the MD application within the [Regular Pool application deadlines](#).

## **Academic Information**

### **ENROLLMENT**

Full-time enrollment in the Program is fifteen (15) semester hours of BMS courses in the fall and sixteen (16) semester hours of BMS courses in the spring. No part-time enrollment will be considered. Matriculating students are expected to enroll for the full-time academic load. The BMS courses listed below are available only to MS degree-seeking students matriculating in the MSPCS and MS in Biomedical Sciences Programs.

### **SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

Academic performance will be monitored within courses during each semester for student academic advisement (see Academic Performance Standards below). Also, refer to the section Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid in the Financial Aid Section of this Catalog.

### **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

The Program Director will assign a faculty member to serve as an academic advisor to each enrolled student. Each student must meet with his/her advisor by the end of the second week of the fall semester. The academic advisor will have access to the student's academic records and will provide academic and career guidance to the student throughout the Program. The advisor may consult with course directors and the Program Director to discuss issues affecting a student's academic performance and to offer recommendations to the student about study skills. The academic status of the student is based on the academic performance standards as outlined below. Academic advisors keep the academic information of the student and any personal information shared by the student in confidence. An academic advisor may recommend additional personal and academic support for students (refer to the Mercer University and



MUSM Student Handbooks for support resources). If a student's academic advisor feels that the student is under duress, the academic advisor will consult the Program Director, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs, and/or Mercer Counseling and Psychological Services for guidance in the best interest of the student. Any faculty member will directly contact the Mercer Campus Police, if a student appears to pose an immediate threat to himself/herself or the University community.

### **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

A student seeking the MS degree should complete all Program requirements within the two-semester academic calendar of the Program as a full-time student. The maximum amount of time between initial enrollment in the Program and completion of degree requirements is four consecutive fall and spring semesters. Students should meet with the Program Director and make timely decisions about enrollment, if circumstances outside of the academic program are affecting their academic performance. Students who fail to meet the academic standards for the fall semester, for the MS degree, or for repeating courses (see below) will not be approved for additional time in the MSPCS Program.

The academic status of the student is determined by academic performance in terms of course grades and cumulative grade point average (GPA). A student is in good academic standing within a course as long as his or her examination scores remain at a letter grade of "C" or above. When a student receives an examination grade of below "C" in a course, he/she must meet with the course director to discuss his/her academic progress and a plan to improve his/her performance in the course. Course directors report all student exam scores to the Program Director. Notifications of changes in academic status will be issued to students by email from the Program Director. Final course grades below "C" do not count toward the Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences degree and will result in dismissal from the MSPCS Program.

In addition to the course grade requirement, a student must also achieve a fall semester GPA of 2.5 or above to remain enrolled in the MSPCS Program. A student failing to achieve a GPA of at least 2.5 for the fall semester will be dismissed and will not be eligible to take additional classes in the Program. A student who is dismissed from the Program for academic reasons will not be considered for re-admission to the Program as an applicant.

### **SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC STANDARDS**

Academic Caution	Below "C" in one exam	Fall GPA = 2.8 - 3.0
Academic Warning	Two or more "C" in one or more subject exams	Fall GPA = 2.5 - 2.8
Academic Exclusion	Any course grade below "C" <b>OR</b>	Fall GPA < 2.5
No Graduation		Final GPA < 3.0
Graduation		Final GPA > 3.0
Repeat of courses (Max of 2)	GPA > 3.0 in Fall or Spring <b>AND</b>	Final GPA > 2.76 <b>AND</b> <3.0

### **ACADEMIC CAUTION**

A student will be notified by email that he/she has been placed on 'academic caution' following his/her first examination grade below "C" in a course. Within one week of the email notification, the student must schedule a meeting with the course director to discuss his/her performance in the course. The student remains under 'academic caution' until he/she completes all semester courses with a final grade of "C" or above.



A student with a fall semester GPA of 2.81 – 3.0 is considered to be in jeopardy of not meeting the GPA requirement for the MS degree, because he/she must obtain a 3.0 - 3.19, accordingly, as a spring semester GPA. A student with a fall semester GPA of 2.81 – 3.0 will be notified that he/she has been placed under 'academic caution' and must meet with the Program Director during the first week of the spring semester. The student will remain under 'academic caution' until the completion of the Program unless subsequent poor academic performance results in 'academic warning'.

### **ACADEMIC WARNING**

A student will be notified by email that he/she has been placed on 'academic warning' following his/her second examination grade of below "C" during a semester. The two deficient exam grades may be in the same course or in different courses. Within one week of the email notification, the student must schedule meetings with the course director and the Program Director. The student remains under 'academic warning' until he/she completes all semester courses with a final grade of "C" or above.

A student with a fall semester GPA of 2.50 – 2.8 is considered to be in jeopardy of not meeting the GPA requirement for the MS degree, because he/she must obtain a 3.2 - 3.5, accordingly, as a spring semester GPA. A student with a fall semester GPA of 2.50 – 2.8 will be notified that he/she has been placed under 'academic warning' and must meet with the Program Director during the first week of the spring semester. The student will remain under 'academic warning' until completion of the Program coursework. A student under 'academic caution' for a fall semester GPA of 2.81 – 3.0 will be placed on 'academic warning' following his/her first examination grade below "C" in a spring semester course.

### **ACADEMIC EXCLUSION**

A student is under 'academic exclusion' when he or she fails to meet the minimum academic requirements for the degree. A student who receives a final course grade below "C" or a fall GPA below 2.5 becomes academically ineligible to achieve the Master of Science in Preclinical Sciences degree due to failure to meet the minimum academic requirements for the degree. The student will be notified by email that he/she has been placed on 'academic exclusion' and has been dismissed from the Program. The student cannot re-enroll in the Program or continue to attend classes in the Program.

A student who fails to achieve the final minimum GPA of 3.0 after the completion of all MSPCS courses is ineligible for the MS degree and cannot participate in commencement exercises.

### **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The MS degree requirements are the completion of all required course work with a minimum, cumulative GPA of 3.0 and with all final course grades of "C" or above. Both academic performance requirements must be met for successful completion of the degree program and awarding of the MS degree.

Clearance for graduation must be granted by the Office of the Registrar.

### **DEGREE APPLICATION AND AUDIT FOR MAY GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT**

At the beginning of the spring semester, MSPCS students must submit an Application for Graduation to the MUSM Registrar for verification of academic standing and eligibility for participation in commencement. The deadline for submission is January 31st.

**FINAL CHECK/RECOMMENDATION FOR MAY GRADUATION**

The Office of the Registrar in the School of Medicine will check final grade point averages and spring semester final course grades to verify graduation eligibility for MSPCS students according to the degree requirements as defined below. Those meeting the degree requirements will be cleared for graduation. The Program Director will notify students, who failed to meet the requirements that they cannot participate in commencement.

**PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**

Only students who have completed all Program requirements in good academic standing by the end of spring semester will be eligible to participate in commencement. Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent the conferral of a degree. Students may participate in only one ceremony for each degree sought.

**Students who have been dismissed are not eligible to participate in commencement.**

**DIPLOMAS**

Diplomas are not distributed during commencement. Diplomas are ordered by the Office of the Registrar in the School of Medicine after all MSPCS degree requirements are met. Diplomas are mailed to the address provided on the Application for Graduation. Graduates should contact the Office of the Registrar with questions about their diploma.

**Curriculum****MSPCS DEGREE**

31 Semester Hours

<b>Fall Semester - 15 hours</b>		
BMS 610	Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics	5
BMS 612	Molecular Cell Biology	5
BMS 622	Microbial Pathogenesis	5
<b>Spring Semester - 16 hours</b>		
BMS 611	Human Immunity	5
BMS 620	Human Physiology	5
BMS 621	Human Development	5
<i>Required Elective (select one of the following):</i>		
BMS 623	Preclinical Sciences Capstone	1
BMS 624	Biomedical Sciences in Rural Health Research	1



## Course Descriptions

**BMS 610. Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics (5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in biochemistry and molecular genetics is for students to understand the chemical and biomolecular composition of the human body, the importance of buffering and solute concentrations in physiological function, the metabolic processes that provide energy to sustain tissue viability, the structure and dynamics of genetic material, the regulation of gene expression, and the principles of genetic inheritance. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the biochemistry and genetics research literature. (Every fall)

**BMS 611. Human Immunity (5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in the human immune system is for students to understand the development and organization of the human immune system, the genetic and molecular mechanisms of immunity, the role of inflammation in immunity, the initiation and detection of immune responses, and the use of vaccines to support human immunity. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the immunology research literature. (Every spring)

**BMS 612. Molecular Cell Biology (5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in molecular cellular biology is for students to understand the fundamental structure of human cells, the function of intracellular organelles, the dynamics of organelles in different cell types, the cellular interactions within tissues to support tissue function, and the biomolecular interactions required for cellular function. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the molecular biology and cell biology research literature. (Every fall)

**BMS 620. Human Physiology (5 hours)****Prerequisites: BMS 610, 622, and 612**

The goal for the instruction in human physiology is for students to develop an understanding of the function of the human body, building upon their prior knowledge of human biology, physics, chemistry, and mathematics. This course deals with body fluid compartments and body systems organization and function with special emphasis on the nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, and urinary systems. Students will examine the concepts of homeostasis and regulatory mechanisms as they are applied in the various body functions. The learning goal will be achieved through a combination of interactive lectures, group discussions, problem-solving exercises, and medical case-based activities. (Every spring)

**BMS 621. Human Development (5 hours)****Prerequisites: BMS 610, 612**

The goal for the instruction in human development is for students to understand the process of human development, the determinants of embryonic development, the differentiation and organization of cells into functional tissues and organs, the maternal contribution to embryonic and fetal development, the environmental and physiological risks to human development, and the basic functional anatomy of the human body. This learning goal will be achieved by students through classroom discussion, interaction with animated programs depicting developmental processes, histological analysis of human tissues, and interaction with animated programs and with plastinated models of human anatomy. (Every spring)

**BMS 622. Microbial Pathogenesis****(5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in microbial pathogenesis is for students to understand the structural and genetic differences between human cells, bacteria, fungi, parasites and viruses, the variations in structure among members of pathogenic species, the metabolic and genetic properties of microbes that facilitate their adaptation to different environments, the commensal relationship between humans and microbes, the mechanisms of microbial and viral pathogenesis, and the basic laboratory culture conditions and tests for human microbial pathogens. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem solving in the classroom and discussion of medical cases and research literature that illustrate clinical application of microbiology principles. (Every fall)

**BMS 623. Preclinical Sciences Capstone****(1 hour)**

*Prerequisites: BMS 610, 612, 622*

The goal for the course is for students to apply their scientific knowledge in critical thinking through composition and oral presentation. Students will select a topic in biotechnology or scientific research, review current literature, and author a dissertation that surveys the current knowledge of the topic and expounds on questions that could lead to scientific advancement and medical application of the research. The instructional time will provide students with information on how to format their composition, how to search the scientific literature and databases, how to analyze scientific papers, and how to properly cite resources in their compositions. Independent work is expected. Students in the course will be expected to prepare an oral presentation to be delivered during the latter half of the course. Oral presentations and compositions will be evaluated by a panel of faculty and peers who will utilize a rubric to determine student achievement of the course objective and the program competencies. (Every spring)

**BMS 624. Biomedical Sciences in Rural Health Research****(1 hour)**

*Prerequisites: Instructor permission for enrollment, BMS 610, 612, 622*

The goal of the course is for students to participate in community-based research in rural communities and apply biomedical sciences concepts toward understanding the cause of disease or the delivery of effective health care in rural areas. Students will learn methodology for collecting and analyzing research data on rural health conditions and will engage in data analysis. Independent work is expected. Students in the course will be expected to prepare a composition and an oral presentation to be delivered during the latter half of the course. Oral presentations and compositions will be evaluated by a panel of faculty and peers who will utilize a rubric to determine student achievement of the course objective and the program competencies. The instructional time will provide students with information on how to perform rural health research, search scientific literature and rural health databases, properly cite resources, and interpret epidemiological and statistical data. (Every spring)





**Adam Albrite, Ph.D., Director for Master of Family Therapy Program; Associate Professor**

## **Program Description**

The Master of Family Therapy degree program provides rigorous preparation for a career in the family therapy profession. This program of study satisfies the educational requirements for licensure in Georgia and other states as a marriage and family therapist and leads to membership as a clinical fellow in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. The Family Therapy Program also provides the necessary coursework and clinical training beyond the master's degree for students with a qualifying graduate degree who seek to satisfy the requirements for licensure in Georgia as a marriage and family therapist. Students have the option to apply for admission to the Macon or Atlanta campuses (campus location will be announced in the admission letter and cannot be changed without program director approval).

The Mercer University School of Medicine Masters of Family Therapy (MFT) program mission is to transform MFT and medical students into competent, compassionate and ethical professionals who work collaboratively to meet the needs of individuals, couples, families and communities, including the rural and underserved. Emphasizing interactive and case-based teaching strategies, our student-centered faculty provides a conceptual and practical foundation that equips graduates to be discerning consumers and innovative producers of knowledge across a variety of medical and other clinical settings, as well as academic institutions. This foundation prepares clinicians to articulate and utilize a wide variety of philosophical perspectives, theoretical orientations, and clinical modalities, all with sensitivity and responsiveness to diverse contextual factors that affect therapist and client systems, as well as institutions and communities in which they participate. Through scholarship and clinical outreach, students and faculty work closely to have local, regional, national, and global impact.

## **Admissions Information**

Note: Admission into the MFT program does not guarantee completion of the Master of Family Therapy degree program. The Master of Family Therapy program is a professional program in which suitability and competency in the practice of marital and family therapy is continually assessed through the academic coursework and the clinical practicum experience. It is the responsibility of the clinical faculty, along with the program director, to assess each student's progress in all program areas. If, in the judgment of the clinical faculty, a student is not making satisfactory progress, the student may be placed on remediation status and one or a combination of the following stipulations may be required:

1. Additional clinical practica and supervision
2. Personal individual and/or family psychotherapy
3. Counseling out of the program into a more suitable course of study
4. Expulsion from the program

Students selecting the Master of Family Therapy must undergo a faculty review and assessment after completing twelve semester hours of academic work and/or one semester of clinical practicum.

This review, by the program director and the clinical faculty, is for the purpose of assessing the student's clinical work and suitability for continuation in the Master of Family Therapy program.



## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants are required to meet the following admission requirements:

1. A completed graduate application form to Mercer University School of Medicine for the Master of Family Therapy program and a non-refundable fee of \$50. Apply on the [Master of Family Therapy Admissions](#) webpage. Official transcripts, sent directly from the college or university, for all college level work completed to earn a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. If applicable, official transcripts are required for any courses or degrees completed beyond the undergraduate degree (i.e. masters and/or doctoral coursework).
2. Three letters of recommendation that speak to the applicants' academic aptitude and potential as a marriage and family therapist. Two of the three must be from either current or previous college professors, supervisors, and/or employers. The third may be a college professor, supervisor, employer or friend.
3. A three-page (750 words), double-spaced, typewritten essay on the subject of the student's educational, career, and life goals.
4. An evaluative interview with the program faculty is required prior to acceptance.
5. An overall undergraduate grade point average of 2.50 or better, based on a 4.0 system, is required.
6. GRE Scores (optional): Applicants can choose to submit GRE scores. Official test results should be submitted to the university through ETS using the institutional code 5409 and department code 0000.
7. Scholarship Essay (optional): A 750-1000 word essay describing a personal hardship or significant life event. Further instructions in the application.

## INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

- Applicants applying as an international student should contact Mercer University's [International Student Services](#).
- Applicants who completed all or part of their education abroad are required to have their foreign educational credentials evaluated by an independent evaluation service such as [World Education Services](#) or [Educational Credential Evaluators](#). A Course-by-Course and Grade Point Average Equivalent Evaluation is required for admission
  - Official reports should be submitted electronically directly from the evaluation service to [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) or by mail to:  
**MUSM Admissions**  
**Mercer University School of Medicine**  
**1501 Mercer University Drive**  
**Macon, GA 31207.**
- International students must also submit scores from one of the following
  - TOEFL examination. The University's minimum proficiency level is a score of 20 on each section of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum composite TOEFL score is 80 (Internet-Based TOEFL), 213 (Computer-Based TOEFL) or 550 (Paper-Based TOEFL).
    - Duolingo score of 115.
- Applicants must meet all other specific eligibility requirements and expectations as defined by the program and department.



## Non-Degree Seeking Students

### NON-DEGREE POLICY

Applicants from a regionally accredited institution who wish to take courses may apply as non-degree seeking students. These students are not pursuing a degree from the university but may already hold a degree and seek additional coursework for professional development, personal enrichment, or specific educational goals.

Non-degree seeking applicants must specify on their application their intent to apply as a non-degree seeking student and must adhere to the usual admissions procedure mandated by the Master of Family Therapy Program. The same academic rules and regulations that apply to degree-seeking students also apply to non-degree-seeking candidates. These include grading and retention requirements, application deadlines, fees, and policies on drop/add and withdrawal.

Applicants will not be considered for non-degree enrollment if they have been rejected as degree-seeking students or if they missed the application deadline for degree-seeking status.

### APPLICATION DEADLINES

The application deadlines for fall admissions are January 31 (early admission) and June 1. The application deadline for spring admission (contingent on space available) is November 1. Additional information is available on the [MFT Admission page](#).

See below for important application deadlines:

<b>Fall 2025 Entry (Macon, Atlanta, and Savannah Campus)</b>	
December 1, 2024	Application Opens for Fall 2025 Early Admissions
January 31, 2025	Application and Supporting Document Deadline for Early Admission*
February 1, 2025	Application Opens for Fall 2025 Regular Admissions
May 1, 2025	International Student Application and Materials Deadline
June 5, 2025	Admission Application Closes
June 19, 2025	All supporting Materials Due
<b>Spring 2026 Entry (Contingent on space available)</b>	
September 16, 2025	Application Opens for Spring 2026 Admission
November 22, 2025	Admission Application Closes
November 22, 2025	All Supporting Materials Due



## **Academic Information**

The MFT program is a year-round program with classes held in the Fall (16 weeks), Spring (16 weeks), and Summer (12 weeks) semesters. A clinical practicum also continues year-round (50 weeks). Each course is offered once per year. Students can complete the program in a minimum of two years, but must complete within six years.

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The advisor will assist students in devising strategies to meet career objectives, recommending resolutions to academic problems, and completing professional development and portfolio requirements. The advisor is to meet with the student to establish a written program of study outlining the course sequence that best fits with the student's capabilities and circumstances. The advisor is also to meet with the student each semester to ensure progress toward graduation requirements including completion of professional development and portfolio requirements.

## **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

A student seeking the Master of Family Therapy degree must complete all program requirements within six years from the start of the program in MUSM. The time requirements begin when a student formally enrolls in their first graduate course in MUSM. A graduate student not enrolled in a course(s) for two consecutive semesters will be withdrawn from the graduate program.

Requirements for graduation from the MFT program: In addition to meeting the 3.0 GPA requirements for graduation, master's students may have no more than two grades of C and/or C+. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is one of the requirements in graduate work. Grades below a C do not count toward the degree. Students not meeting the minimum academic standard will be placed on academic warning, academic probation, or academic exclusion, as defined below. A student may repeat only one course to improve a letter grade of C or C+.

## **ACADEMIC WARNING**

The student will be placed on academic warning upon receiving a first grade of C or C+.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION**

The student will be placed on academic probation upon receiving a second grade of C or C+.

## **ACADEMIC EXCLUSION**

***A master's student will be permanently excluded from the program upon receiving a third letter grade of C or C+.***

The academic record of these students will reflect academic exclusion, unless the student is able to avail themselves of the one opportunity provided to repeat one course in which they received a letter grade of C or C+. If a student is successful in improving the letter grade in the repeated course to a B or higher, then the student will be placed back on academic probation. Should a letter grade of C+ or lower be awarded in any course thereafter, the student will be permanently excluded from the program.

Master's students receiving a letter grade of F will be permanently excluded from the program. Students are not permitted the retake option in a course in which they earn a letter grade of F.



## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend all classes each semester. Since classes meet only once per week, to miss one class is the equivalent of being out of school for a week. However, should absences occur, the following provisions will be followed:

- **For each absence:** The student must submit an outline of the readings and class material for the class missed. This should be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the next class attended.
- **Two absences:** In addition to the outline, the student must write a paper on the topic missed; the instructor must approve the length and content of the paper.
- **Three absences:** In addition to the outline and the paper, the student will experience an automatic grade reduction by one letter grade.
- **Four absences:** In addition to the outline and the paper, the student will not be awarded a grade of higher than a C.
- **Five absences:** The student will automatically be awarded a grade of F.

## COURSE SEQUENCE

The logical structure and sequence of the MFT Program curriculum represents a flow from broad context to specificity, from introductions of foundational theories and frameworks of family systems and human development to increasingly more specialized and sophisticated theory-to-practice linkages and skill development. As such, the course sequence is predetermined and courses are only taught once each year (with the exception of practicum, that is offered every semester).

## COURSE SYLLABI

MFT students are provided a course syllabus at the beginning of each course. The syllabus is to outline the required texts, expectations of the course, required papers and projects, exams, grading rubrics, and all other expectations of the course, including attendance and grading. The professor(s) of the course will assign the student a grade in the course, based upon the student's performance, as outlined in the syllabus.

## CRITERIA FOR ACCEPTING COURSES AS TRANSFER CREDIT

Credit for graduate transfer courses completed at another institution may be awarded under the following conditions:

1. the courses were taken in person at a graduate-degree-granting institution accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education;
2. the courses were graduate level courses, applicable to a graduate degree;
3. grades of at least B were received in the courses;
4. the courses were completed within the five years prior to enrolling in graduate studies at Mercer;
5. the courses have not been applied for credit to a degree previously earned degree;
6. other restrictions as set by the graduate faculty.

The number of hours accepted as transfer credits is two courses (maximum of six semester hours).



A written request for consideration of transfer credit should be submitted to the program director by the student within six months of initial enrollment. The request must indicate the specific course(s) for which transfer credit is sought and must include a copy of the other institution's catalog, a copy of the course syllabus that includes the dates the course was taken, and an official transcript.

## **ENROLLMENT**

Full-time enrollment is 6 semester hours. The academic year begins with the fall semester (16 weeks) and spring semester (16 weeks) and ends with summer semester (12 weeks). Practicum will continue year-round (50 weeks). A student must fulfill the educational requirements in effect during the academic year in which that student entered the program at MUSM unless they are not enrolled for two or more consecutive semesters. If a student is not enrolled for two or more semesters including summer, the student must fulfill the educational requirements in effect at the time of re-enrollment. Part-time enrollment will not be considered. Matriculating students are expected to enroll for the full-time academic load.

Full-time enrollment is required for Financial Aid eligibility.

## **EVALUATION OF MFT PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE**

Each semester an MFT student is engaged in a practicum, they are required to complete evaluations of the practicum site and practicum supervisor. The practicum student is also required to complete an agency evaluation form each semester for each site at which the student is engaged in a practicum experience.

## **EVALUATION OF PROGRAM**

Once each year, all students, faculty, staff, and communities of interest are asked to complete the Annual Program Survey addressing topics including the program mission, student support services, fiscal and physical resources, program publications, program curriculum and content, clinical training, faculty, administration, and technological resources.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Letter grades are reported and recorded for all courses in which a student is enrolled except the Professional Development Seminar Series (PDSS). Grades of "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory" are reported and recorded for the PDSS. Letter grades used in the MFT program are as follows:

<b>LETTER</b>	<b>0-100</b>	<b>QUALITY POINTS</b>
		<b>PER CREDIT HOUR</b>
A	90-100	4.0
B+	86-89	3.5
B	80-85	3.0
C+	76-79	2.5
C	70-75	2.0
F	Below 65	0
S	Satisfactory	*
U	Unsatisfactory	*



The following grading marks may be used when students do not complete courses within the curriculum, do not perform required activities in courses, or do not take courses for a letter grade.

GRADE	INTERPRETATION
ABX	Excused absence from exam
IC	Incomplete
IP	In Progress
W	Withdrawal
Z	Grade Not Reported

A grade of IP is awarded only in a graduate practicum or in research project courses, which may extend beyond the end of a semester. A student is expected to finish "in progress" work based on the timetable established by the professor issuing the IP grade, and, at the latest, by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IP was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of ABX denotes that a student was absent from an examination because of an illness or another valid and compelling reason deemed satisfactory by the professor. A makeup exam must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the ABX was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of IC Indicates that a relatively small part of the semester's course work remains incomplete because of a student's sickness or reasons satisfactory to the professor. The work must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IC was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of W (withdrawal) indicates that a student officially withdrew from a course on or before the last day for course withdrawals as designated in the current academic calendar. Withdrawals are not used when computing grade point averages.

## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Successful completion of all academic course work with a minimum of 3.0 GPA. The student may have no more than two letter grades of "C+" or "C". Mercer University does not award a grade of "D." A letter grade of "F" may not be included in course work used for the MFT Program.

Successful completion of a one-year practicum experience (nine semester hours) in which the student must accrue 500 hours of direct clinical experience, 100 hours of which must be with couples and/or families. A student must have taken additional practicum as needed in order to accrue the 500 hours of direct clinical experience and/or the 100 hours of contact with couples and/or families

Accrual of a minimum of 100 hours of clinical supervision of which include:

- A minimum of 50 hours of individual supervision.
- A minimum of 50 hours of supervision must be conducted with raw data (live, video, or audio).
- Successful completion of the professional development portfolio.
- Successful completion of a clinical presentation to program faculty. Students must score the equivalent of 70% in order to pass.

**DEGREE APPLICATION AND AUDIT FOR MAY GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT**

At the beginning of the spring semester students must submit an Application for Graduation to the MUSM Registrar for verification of academic standing and eligibility for participation in commencement.

The deadline for submission is January 31st.

**PRACTICUM EXPERIENCE**

MFT students spend a minimum of three consecutive semesters (approximately 50 weeks) in the Mercer Family Therapy Center and an appropriate community placement site conducting marriage and family therapy under supervision.

The practicum may begin during the first or second year of training, depending upon the previous clinical experience of the student, and continues for one full year, ending when the student has accumulated 500 hours of direct clinical experience. Therapy students average 20 hours a week in the practicum placements, providing an average of 10 to 12 hours of direct client contact as a therapist or co-therapist and participating in other activities deemed appropriate by the program and/or agency. Students receive supervision at the program's Family Therapy Center to facilitate live supervision by faculty supervisors.

In the beginning of a practicum placement, inexperienced therapy students may be able to see only three or four clients a week, for whom they function as a co-therapist, along with an experienced agency therapist. With experience, and by the second semester of a practicum, a student will be the primary therapist for an average caseload of ten (10) clients per week. This will enable the student to provide a total of 500 hours of direct service to clients in the course of his or her practicum.

While they are being trained as a marriage and family therapist, emphasis is placed on working with couples and families present in sessions. However, the student has the skills to work with individuals and groups (from a systemic relational perspective) as well.

A faculty supervisor will provide a minimum of 100 hours of clinical supervision, including 50 hours of group supervision and a minimum of 50 hours of individual supervision. At least 50% of supervision hours must be supervision by review of raw data, which includes live supervision review of audio and video recordings. The 100 hours of clinical supervision occurs at the program's Family Therapy Center on a weekly basis during the entire practicum experience. Students in a practicum are required to engage in clinical supervision during the hours offered on each program campus.

**SURVEYS OF ALUMNI**

Mercer MFT alumni contact records are maintained and updated on an annual basis. Graduates and students are invited to attend the Armour Family Lecture Series to provide an educational, networking opportunity for students, alumni, and marriage and family professionals. Alumni are also asked to complete the Mercer MFT Alumni Questionnaire each year that requests information on professional employment status, credentialing status, preparedness to function in the workplace and graduate satisfaction with their educational experience in the MFT Program.



## Curriculum

### **MFT DEGREE REQUIRED COURSES (48 Semester Hours)**

<b>Professional Development Seminar Series</b>		
MFT 601	Professional Development Seminar I	0
MFT 602	Professional Development Seminar II	0
MFT 603	Professional Development Seminar III	0
MFT 604	Professional Development Seminar IV	0
MFT 605	Professional Development Seminar V	0
MFT 606	Professional Development Seminar VI	0
<b>Core Requirement - 36 hours</b>		
MFT 610	Foundations of Family Studies	3
MFT 615	Human Development	3
MFT 620	Diversity and Social Justice	3
MFT 625	Theories of Family Therapy	3
MFT 630	Assessment and Diagnosis in Family Therapy	3
MFT 635	Foundational Skills in Practicum	3
MFT 640	Clinical Treatment with Children, Adolescents, and Families	3
MFT 645	Addiction in Family Systems	3
MFT 650	Ethical, Legal, and Professional Practice in Family Therapy	3
MFT 655	Couples Therapy	3
MFT 660	Clinical Family Therapy Research Methods	3
MFT 665	Human Sexuality	3
<b>Electives - 3 hours</b>		
MFT 680	Special Topics in Marriage and Family Therapy	3
MFT 681	Grief and Loss Across the Lifespan	3
MFT 682	Play Therapy	3
MFT 683	Group Therapy	3
MFT 690	Foundations in Integrated Behavioral Health and Medical Family Therapy	3



<b>Practicum Sequence - 9 hours (minimum)</b>		
MFT 702	Practicum II	3
MFT 703	Practicum III	3
MFT 704	Practicum IV	3
MFT 705	Practicum V	3
MFT 706	Practicum VI	3
MFT 707	Practicum VII	3
MFT 708	Practicum VIII	3
MFT 709	Practicum IX	3
MFT 710	Practicum X	3
MFT 711	Practicum XI	3
MFT 712	Practicum XII	3

## **Course Descriptions**

### **MFT 610. Foundations of Family Studies** **(3 hours)**

This course introduces students to the field of family studies and provides a foundational understanding of family functioning and the family life cycle within a multicultural context. Students will explore the specific theoretical and philosophical frameworks of general systems theory and cybernetics. (Fall semester, year one)

### **MFT 615. Human Development** **(3 hours)**

This course surveys human development across the lifespan of the individual, from birth to death, with emphasis on the clinical relevance for family therapists. The course examines the biopsychosocial/spiritual theoretical underpinnings of human development. Students are introduced to various theories of human development and exposed to the diversity of the global human experience. (Fall semester, year one)

### **MFT 620. Diversity and Social Justice** **(3 hours)**

The purpose of this course is to explore various topics of diversity and social justice in human development and lived experiences within family organization, structure, and values. Diversity concepts such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, family system, religion/spirituality, and geographic location will be explored as they relate to students individually and collectively. Students will discover how issues of power/privilege and oppression influence their lives. (Fall semester, year one)

### **MFT 625. Theories of Family Therapy** **(3 hours)**

This course is a detailed examination of the major modern and post-modern theories of family therapy and their application to families, couples, and individuals. The course introduces students to both the theoretical framework and therapeutic practices that inform the field of family therapy. Students are invited to examine and reflect upon the assumptions underlying various family therapy approaches and how they are applied to diverse populations of clients. Current evidence-based practices and empirical research are explored. (Spring semester, year one)

**MFT 630. Assessment and Diagnosis in Family Therapy (3 hours)**

This course is a detailed examination of psychopathology within the family system. With a focus on the major psychiatric disorders, as defined in the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), the function of assessment and diagnosis will be introduced. Assessment and diagnosis of families, couples, and individuals will be introduced. Students learn psychopharmacological interventions often used in conjunction with psychotherapy. (Spring semester, year one)

**MFT 635. Foundational Skills in Practicum (3 hours)**

*Pre-requisite: MFT 625, 630.*

This course prepares students for clinical work with families, couples, and individuals in various settings with diverse populations. Students receive training in basic systemic clinical skills as well as policies, procedures, and administrative responsibilities of seeing clients in the Mercer Family Therapy Center (MFTC). (Summer semester, year one)

**MFT 640. Clinical Treatment with Children, Adolescents, and Families (3 hours)**

*Pre-requisite: MFT 625.*

This course is a review of contemporary theoretical and empirically supported relational/systemic treatments for children, adolescents, and families. An ecological family-centered approach is used as a core perspective in the course. Students learn how certain models and interventions are appropriate for specific presenting problems. Underlying the entire course will be a focus upon building awareness and responsiveness to influences of diversity and contextual factors in working with a variety of family constellations and presenting problems. (Summer semester, year one)

**MFT 645. Addiction in Family Systems (3 hours)**

This course examines the etiology, development, and progression of chemical and behavioral addictions in families. Systemic conceptualization and treatment implications are discussed within a multicultural context. (Summer semester, year one)

**MFT 650. Ethical, Legal, and Professional Practice in Family Therapy (3 hours)**

This course introduces the ethical, legal, and professional dimensions of family therapy practice.

Specifically, the AAMFT Code of Ethics, GA/Federal law, and acceptable professional standards are emphasized. These rules and regulations are considered and integrated within multiple perspectives of ethical decision making, along with self-of-the-therapist factors, students will use in practice.

(Fall semester, year two)

**MFT 655. Couples Therapy (3 hours)**

*Pre-requisite: MFT 625.*

The purpose of this course is to learn how to work with couples and romantic relational systems in a therapeutic context. Students learn about evidence-based models, interventions, and special issues related to romantic dyad+ therapy. These components of couple therapy are addressed within a multicultural context. (Fall semester, year two)

**MFT 660. Clinical Family Therapy Research Methods (3 hours)**

This course prepares students to design, critique, and apply research and published literature in clinical practice. Students are provided the skills needed to select and integrate current literature into their theory of therapy and clinical skill set. A working knowledge of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research methodologies is taught. Students develop the skills necessary to evidence efficacy in clinical treatment. (Spring semester, year two)

**MFT 665. Human Sexuality****(3 hours)**

This course is a detailed examination of sexuality as it pertains to human development. It provides students with information about human sexuality across the lifespan including sexual difficulties, diversity, and identity. Models of sex therapy are also presented. (Summer semester, year two)

**MFT 680. Special Topics in Marriage and Family Therapy****(3 hours)**

Occasionally, as needed.

**MFT 681. Grief and Loss Across the Lifespan****(3 hours)**

This course will investigate the concepts of grief, loss, and trauma as they intersect with family therapy across multiple contexts and diverse populations. Students are encouraged to explore self-of-the-therapist factors as they relate to their clinical practice and their own experiences of trauma and loss. (Occasionally, spring)

**MFT 682. Play Therapy****(3 hours)**

This course is designed as a brief introduction to play therapy. This is a content and experiential based course designed to help you gain the rudimentary knowledge and skills for conducting play therapy. During the course, students will examine the rationale behind the use of play therapy, the various theoretical approaches to play therapy, and the techniques used for effective play therapy. The course will focus primarily on child-centered play therapy and family play therapy. This course will provide a foundation of knowledge and skills in play therapy that can be expanded with further training and education. (Occasionally, spring)

**MFT 683. Group Therapy****(3 hours)**

Students in this course will gain knowledge of the theory and practice of developing and running group psychotherapies. All types of group processes will be examined, including structured and unstructured, and topic specific modalities. Strategies for maintaining a systemic perspective will be emphasized, along with a focus on diversity and experience. Experiential learning activities and implementation-based projects will be a primary evaluation method. (Once a year, spring)

**MFT 690. Foundations in Integrated Behavioral Health and Medical Family Therapy** **(3 hours)**

This course examines the topics of health, illness, disease and disabilities as it pertains to individuals, couples, families, family therapy, and health care. Mechanisms of change from a systemic, cultural, and biopsychosocial perspective are used as a platform to discuss the social determinants of health. Students examine the mind/body dualism of western society and how this philosophy impacts our understanding of health and illness. Additionally, the course focuses on the intersection between integrated behavioral health and primary care. Interactional dynamics between medical family therapists, health care practitioners and patients are examined, including issues of collaboration and effective integrated care. This class will be relevant to both practitioners and researchers. (Once a year, spring)

**MFT PRACTICUM SEQUENCE****(THREE SEMESTERS MINIMUM)****MFT 702. Practicum II****(3 hours)**

*Prerequisites: MFT 635; Co-requisite: MFT 650*

This course is designed to enable the student to begin applying marriage and family therapy theory, core competencies and best practices to their own cases in therapy settings (both their community placements sites and at the Mercer Family Therapy Center). Students will begin analyzing their own clinical work through supervision and peer consultation and will grow in their ability to articulate and apply systemic principles in their own clinical work. (Every fall) (Practicum fee)

**MFT 703. Practicum III****(3 hours)****Prerequisite: MFT 702**

During this course, students will expand on the clinical experience they gained in Practicum II.

Throughout the course students will continue to analyze their own clinical work, but will also begin to formulate their own theory of change and theory of therapy. Students will become more proficient at incorporating MFT theory and knowledge to support well-developed case conceptualizations consistent with their own theory of change. (Every spring) (Practicum fee)

**MFT 704. Practicum IV****(3 hours)****Prerequisite: MFT 703**

In this course students will exhibit proficiency in conducting effective therapy sessions. Students will appropriately articulate and demonstrate their own theory of change/therapy in sessions. Students will be able to evaluate the strengths and contraindications of their individual therapeutic approaches.

Students will also effectively demonstrate therapeutic best practices in their work and in supervision. (Every summer) (Practicum fee)

**MFT 705-707. Practicum V/VI/VII****(3 hours)****Prerequisite: MFT 704**

This course sequence is a continuation of practicum for students who have not completed the graduation requirements (i.e. 500 direct clinical experience and/or 100 supervision hours) during the traditional practicum courses (Practicum 702-704). In this course students will continue to demonstrate proficiency of all skills from previous practicum courses, and will continue to demonstrate strong clinical conceptualization skills.

**MFT 708-712. Practicum VIII/IX/X/XI/XII****(3 hours)****Prerequisite: MFT 707**

This course sequence is a continuation of practicum for students who have not completed the graduation requirements (i.e. 500 direct clinical experience and/or 100 supervision hours) during the traditional practicum courses (Practicum 702-704). In this course students will continue to demonstrate proficiency of all skills from previous practicum courses, and will continue to demonstrate strong clinical conceptualization skills

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR SERIES**

This professional development seminar introduces students to topics and issues that will enhance students' personal and professional development as future family therapists. Meetings occur through each of the six semesters of the students' academic program of study. This series will culminate in the preparation and presentation of a professional development portfolio (PDP), which is a graduation requirement.

**PORTFOLIO**

The Professional Development Portfolio (PDP) is designed to provide a thoughtful and summative comprehensive project that a student completes throughout their program of study. As a requirement of graduation, all students who wish to obtain a Master of Family Therapy degree must complete the PDP and receive a passing endorsement via oral exam and faculty review.

The portfolio is a continual project that has been completed throughout the length of the program for the student. Many components of the portfolio are accomplished intermittently throughout the program in various courses and as a part of professional development outside of course content. The portfolio should be completed and submitted electronically by the presentation date – set near the end of the final semester of enrollment.





*Christy Bridges, Program Director; Professor of Histology*

## **Program Description**

Mercer's Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences Program is designed to provide high-quality training to prepare graduates for a successful career in biomedical research, whether in academia, a biotech company, hospital, or laboratory.

Following successful completion of all coursework, passing of comprehensive examinations, and the successful defense of a dissertation, students will be awarded the degree of PhD in Biomedical Sciences.

## **Admissions Information**

The current admissions requirements and instructions are available at [medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/](http://medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/)

## **Academic Information**

### **REGISTRATION**

Official course enrollment requires the student read and acknowledge the Student Statement of Responsibility indicating their understanding of their academic and financial obligations associated with enrollment at Mercer University. Students are required to register for courses at the time prescribed in the MUSM calendar or in compliance with official notices issued by the Office of the Registrar at the School of Medicine. Students are required to submit a notarized Intent to Enroll Form within 14 days of the date of their acceptance letter. In order to secure a spot in the program.

Registration commits a student to the courses for which they are registered and the corresponding fees and charges incurred. A registered student who is unable to attend classes must notify the Registrar of the School of Medicine in writing prior to the first day of class.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must purchase access to a version (print or electronic) of any textbook(s) or other required materials for each course. Additionally, students are required to provide their own laptop computer as part of the materials required for each course in the Program. The computer must meet the specifications needed to run the Microsoft Office suite and statistical software (SPSS) required throughout the program. Students should consult with Program leadership when considering the purchase of a new computer.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Full-time enrollment is 6 semester hours. No part-time enrollment will be considered. Matriculating students are expected to enroll for the full-time academic load.

Students in the Biomedical Sciences PhD program who are in good academic standing will benefit from a scholarship that covers 100% of annual tuition for five years of the program.

### **DEFERMENT**

Requests to defer admission by one year are made on a case-by-case basis and should be made in writing outlining the circumstances to [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) no later than June 30, 2026. Approval of a request is not guaranteed.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

Academic performance will be monitored within courses during each semester for student academic advisement (see Academic Advising). For satisfactory academic performance in progress toward the degree, a student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. This is the 'minimum satisfactory academic performance', and a student at this level of performance will be placed on academic warning.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE FOR FINANCIAL AID**

Please refer to the MUSM Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Policy in the Financial Aid Section of this catalog.

**Academic Standards and Advising**

The Program Director will serve as the faculty advisor to each student upon enrollment in the PhD Program. After the student forms a dissertation committee, the committee chair will become the student's research advisor and will direct the student's research along with at least two other committee members. The dissertation committee will meet with the student regularly to monitor their academic progress. The faculty advisor will have access to advisee academic records, will provide academic guidance for the student throughout the Program, and will consult with Course Instructors as needed to address the academic status of the student and counsel the student regarding academic performance. The academic status of the student is based on the academic performance standards as outlined below. Academic advisors are to keep the academic information of the student in confidence.

**Academic Performance Standards**

The academic status of the student is determined by his or her academic performance. A student is in good academic standing as long as his or her examination scores within courses remain at a letter grade of "C" or above, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. When a student receives an examination grade of below "C" in a course, he/she must meet with the course director to discuss his/her academic progress and a plan to improve his/her performance in the course. At this point, a student is under 'academic caution'. A second examination score below "C" in the same course requires that the student meet with both the course director and his/her faculty advisor. At this point, a student is under 'academic warning'. Course directors will report all students with exam scores below "C" on each exam to the Program Director. Notifications of academic status will be issued to the students by the Program Director.

A minimum, cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required for graduation from the PHD Program. *Any student who receives a final course grade below a "C" will be dismissed from the Program. Any student receiving 2 or more "C" final course grades may be dismissed from the Program.* Academic dismissal precludes reapplication to the Program and generally to all other graduate Programs.

**DEGREE**

A student seeking the PhD degree should complete all program requirements within the academic calendar of the Program as a full-time student. The maximum amount of time between initial enrollment in the Program and degree requirement completion is 6 years.

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Completion of all required course work with a minimum, cumulative GPA of 3.0 and with no more than one grade of "C" as well as successful passing of the dissertation defense and archiving of the dissertation per University requirements are required for conferral of the degree. Clearance for graduation must be granted by the Office of the Registrar. Deadlines for submission of dissertations can be found at [provost.mercer.edu/resources/theses/theses.cfm](http://provost.mercer.edu/resources/theses/theses.cfm).

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES**

Students who do not make progress in their research programs can transition from the Ph.D. program to receive a terminal MS degree. Students must have 98 credits and a GPA of 3.0 or higher to graduate with an MS degree. They are still required to write a thesis and provide an oral defense

**DEGREE APPLICATION**

Applications for graduation are processed through the Office of the Registrar in the School of Medicine.

**DEGREE AUDIT FOR MAY GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT**

By January of the spring semester, the student will apply for graduation to the Office of the Registrar to be potentially eligible to participate in commencement. The degree auditing process is initiated from these applications and is a joint responsibility of the Registrar's Office and the program administration to ensure that students stay on track for successful completion of the degree program.

**FINAL CHECK/RECOMMENDATION FOR MAY GRADUATION**

The Registrar's Office will check final grade point averages and spring semester final course grades and will clear for graduation those students who meet the degree requirements as defined below.

The Registrar's Office will notify students who failed to meet the requirements that they are no longer eligible for the degree and cannot participate in commencement. Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent conferral of the degree. Degrees are awarded at the ends of terms in which all degree requirements are met. Students may participate in only one ceremony for each degree sought.

**PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**

Only students who have completed all Program requirements in good academic standing by the end of spring semester will be eligible to participate in commencement.

**DIPLOMAS**

Diplomas are not distributed during commencement and will be available only in the Registrar's Office. Diplomas are ordered after all degree requirements are met. Graduates will be notified when their diploma is available.



## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Although it is recognized that absences will sometimes be necessary, students are expected to attend classes. Course Directors will state specific attendance requirements in the syllabi for the courses. It is the responsibility of students to be cognizant of their own record of absences and to consult the Course Directors and instructors regarding work missed. The decision to permit students to make up work rests with the Course Director. Absences will negatively impact grades based on participation during in-class activities, such as group work and laboratory exercises, since this work cannot be performed, as designed, outside of the context of the classroom. The Course Director has the right to assign a grade of F for any attendance and participation portion of the course grade when a student habitually violates the attendance policy specified in the course syllabus.

Students are expected to attend every lecture and **to be on time**. A sign in sheet will be available as you enter the class. Streaming services will be used to monitor attendance in live online classes.

## **PROGRAM COMMUNICATION**

Students will receive notifications, instructions, and assignments through their Mercer email accounts and the Canvas learning management system. Students are responsible for checking their Mercer email daily and immediately reporting problems with access to their Mercer account or to Canvas, unless

Mercer Information Technology has previously notified all Mercer users of limited access to these systems. Students are expected to obtain information and to complete assignments posted on Blackboard in a timely manner, as instructed by the Program faculty or staff. Problems with Canvas or email should be addressed to [Helpdesk@mercer.edu](mailto:Helpdesk@mercer.edu). Course directors and instructors will provide details regarding communication for their courses in their course syllabi. **All email correspondence regarding this program must be sent from the student's Mercer email account. Please use a pertinent subject line (i.e., your name – subject). Emails without subject lines may not be read.**

## **PROGRAM COURSE EXAMINATION POLICIES**

The Program Director will communicate all policies regarding examination procedures during the fall program orientation and will notify students about changes in these policies through their Mercer email accounts. Students are expected to adhere to these policies for all examinations administered in the program.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Degree-seeking students enrolled in graduate courses will receive letter grades for all graduate work. Grades within a course will be assigned on a 100-point scale and the final grade will be converted to a letter grade. The final course letter grades will then be converted to a 4-point scale for determining the overall GPA for the Program.



LETTER	0-100	QUALITY POINTS PER CREDIT HOUR
A	90-100	4.0
B+	86-89	3.5
B	80-85	3.0
C+	76-79	2.5
C	70-75	2.0
F	Below 65	0
S	Satisfactory	*
U	Unsatisfactory	*

\* These grades are not calculated in the GPA.

The following grading marks may be used when students do not complete courses within the curriculum, do not perform required activities in courses, or do not take courses for a letter grade.

GRADE	INTERPRETATION
ABX	Excused absence from exam
IC	Incomplete
IP	In Progress
W	Withdrawal
Z	Grade Not Reported

A grade of IP is awarded only in a graduate practicum or in research project courses, which may extend beyond the end of a semester. A student is expected to finish "in progress" work based on the timetable established by the professor issuing the IP grade, and, at the latest, by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IP was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of ABX denotes that a student was absent from an examination because of an illness or another valid and compelling reason deemed satisfactory by the professor. A makeup exam must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the ABX was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of IC indicates that a relatively small part of the semester's course work remains incomplete because of a student's sickness or reasons satisfactory to the professor. The work must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IC was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of W (withdrawal) indicates that a student officially withdrew from a course on or before the last day for course withdrawals as designated in the current academic calendar. Withdrawals are not used when computing grade point averages.



## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

To make an official withdrawal from a course, a student should log into their MyMercer account and complete the Online Withdrawal form. It is located under External Links. If the student elects to discontinue class attendance and does not complete an official Course Withdrawal Form within the time limits described, a grade of F (failure) will be recorded on the student's official record. A grade of W may not be awarded if a student does not complete the official Course Withdrawal Form on or before the date designated for each semester in the current academic calendar.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Students who do not enroll for three consecutive semesters are subject to all program policies, guidelines, and requirements in place at the time of re-enrollment. To graduate from the program, students must obtain a minimum GPA of 3.0, pass comprehensive examinations, and successfully defend their dissertation within 6 years of their initial matriculation.

## **COURSE GRADES AND FACULTY EVALUATIONS**

Students are expected to provide feedback to the School of Medicine regarding their experience in the PhD program courses, including the evaluation of faculty, textbooks, and class assignments and activities. Anonymous feedback will be gathered from students in the form of surveys conducted through Canvas after the final examination for each course. Canvas will record whether a student has completed a survey, but it does not link the student's identity to survey answers. Students who complete the surveys may be able to view course grade information as soon as possible, whereas those not participating in a survey may be required to wait until grades are posted by the Registrar. Student responses to surveys are essential in improving and maintaining the quality of education.

## **Special Academic Circumstances**

### **TERM WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

An official withdrawal occurs only if a student completes the withdrawal process on or before the withdrawal deadline date for the semester (Academic Year Calendar at end of document). A student cannot be registered for a partial course load in the PhD Program. A withdrawal is for all semester courses. To complete an official withdrawal, a student must meet with the PhD Program Director to discuss the withdrawal, and then he/she/they must complete the Online Withdrawal Form through his/ her/their MyMercer account. If the student elects to discontinue class attendance and does not complete the withdrawal process by the deadline, a grade of F will be recorded for each course and the student will be ineligible for re-enrollment in the PhD Program. A student cannot attend classes after his/her/their official withdrawal.

### **STUDENT APPEALS PROCESS: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Students with grievances should follow the procedures for Academic or Nonacademic Grievances, as described in the respective sections of the MUSM Student Handbook.



## **ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS**

Mercer University is committed to making all of its programs, services, and activities fully accessible to all students. Students requesting accommodations for a diagnosed physical, medical (chronic health condition), psychological or learning disability, and temporary injuries must first self-identify by applying for accommodations with the Office of Access and Accommodation. Student requests are reviewed on an individual case-by-case basis after the submission of application, documentation and completion of an interview in the order received. Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive in nature. The Office of Access and Accommodation for students also offers voter registration information and assistance.

### **HOW TO APPLY FOR ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students requesting accommodations must complete the verification process as outlined:

#### Verification Process

1. Students disclose a disability by completing the online application requesting accommodations found at [access.mercer.edu/students/new/](http://access.mercer.edu/students/new/).
2. Students submit documentation from a qualified provider to assist in gathering documentation you may download our disability verification form and have your treating professional complete. Healthcare providers must note specifically what accommodations are needed for both the classroom and the clinical environment.
3. Meet with the director/coordinator for MUSM (MD students) or the University (graduate students) to discuss experiences, needs, and requested accommodations.
4. Following the review of all information meet with director/coordinator to discuss approval of accommodations (accepting accommodations and acknowledging policies and procedures), how the accommodations work, and the process to implement in the learning environment and the testing environment.

Meetings with the director may be in-person or virtual via Zoom. Each semester approved students must request their approved accommodations by logging into “Accommodate” and completing a semester request for accommodation forms. Student must meet with faculty/coordinators following the delivery of the accommodation form to discuss the implementation of the accommodations.

### **CHANGE OF ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS**

At any time, students may request a change of accommodations by logging into their “Accommodate” account and submit a new accommodation request. Students will identify the requested accommodation and provide a description of the need related to their disability. Following the submitted request the Office of Access will review the request and documentation on file. Please know that additional discussions with the student may be requested as well as additional documentation and accommodations are not provided retroactively.

Please know that depending on the time of year requests may take longer to review due to the volume of students applying. Students should contact the Access Office as early as possible (ideally just after acceptance) to begin that process.

**APPEAL OF ACCOMMODATION DECISION**

Students can appeal the decision of accommodations from the Office of Access through an appeal to the Dean of Student Affairs. An appeal should be submitted in writing and include requested accommodation and description of the need as it relates to the student's disability.

**Curriculum****YEAR 1**

<b>Fall Semester - 15 hours</b>		
BMS 610	Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics	5
BMS 612	Molecular Cell Biology	5
BMS 622	Microbial Pathogenesis	5
<b>Spring Semester - 12 hours</b>		
BMS 620	Human Physiology	5
	Elective*	5
BMS 711	Research Seminar	1
BMS 725	Introduction to Faculty Research	1
<b>Summer Semester - 14 hours</b>		
<b>Comprehensive Exam: Exam covering Biomedical concepts taught in the first two semesters.</b>		
BMS 714	Responsible Conduct of Research	1
BMS 737	Pedagogical Methods in Health Sciences	3
BMS 738	Introduction to Research	10

*\*Choose elective from the following:*

BMS 621 - Human Development

- BMS 611 - Human Immunity
- BMS 626 - Biomedical Engineering
- BMS 728 - Neuroscience

**YEAR 2**

<b>Fall Semester - 16 hours</b>		
BMS 800	Independent Research I	10
BMS 801	Research Seminar	1
RRL 823	Interdisciplinary Research Methods	2
<b>Spring Semester - 16 hours</b>		
	Elective*	5
BMS 802	Independent Research II	10
BMS 803	Research Seminar	1
<b>Summer Semester - 14 hours</b>		
<b>Proposal Due</b>		
<b>Qualifying Exam: Oral exam related to research from committee</b>		
BMS 804	Doctoral Research I	12
BMS 805	Research Seminar	1
BMS 840	Scientific Communications	1

\*Choose elective from the following:

- BMS 621 - Human Development
- BMS 611 - Human Immunity
- BMS 626 - Biomedical Engineering
- BMS 728 - Neuroscience

**YEAR 3**

<b>Fall Semester - 14 hours</b>		
BMS 806	Doctoral Research II	10
BMS 807	Research Seminar	1
RRL 845	Teaching Practicum I	3
<b>Spring Semester - 14 hours</b>		
BMS 808	Doctoral Research III	10
BMS 809	Research Seminar	1
BMS 846	Teaching Practicum II	3
<b>Summer Semester - 13 hours</b>		
BMS 810	Doctoral Research IV	12
BMS 811	Research Seminar	1

**YEAR 4**

<b>Fall Semester - 16 hours</b>		
BMS 812	Doctoral Research V	10
BMS 813	Research Seminar	1
BMS 847	MD Teaching Practicum	5
<b>Spring Semester - 16 hours</b>		
BMS 814	Doctoral Research VI	10
BMS 815	Research Seminar	1
BMS 848	MS Teaching Practicum	5
<b>Summer Semester - 13 hours</b>		
BMS 816	Doctoral Research VII	12
BMS 817	Research Seminar	1

**YEAR 5**

<b>Fall Semester - 14 hours</b>		
BMS 818	Doctoral Research VIII	12
BMS 819	Research Seminar	1
BMS 849	Teaching Practicum III (optional)	3
<b>Spring Semester - 14 hours</b>		
BMS 820	Doctoral Research IX	12
BMS 821	Research Seminar	1
BMS 822	Thesis Preparation/Dissertation	1

**YEAR 6**

<b>If needed - No Stipend for Year 6</b>		
<b>Requires Approval from Thesis Advisor and Committee at beginning of Spring Semester - Year 5 (January)</b>		
BMS 824	Doctoral Research X	12
BMS 826	Doctoral Research XI	12
BMS 827	Doctoral Research XII	12



## **Course Descriptions**

### **BMS 610. Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics (5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in biochemistry and molecular genetics is for students to understand the chemical and biomolecular composition of the human body, the importance of buffering and solute concentrations in physiological function, the metabolic processes that provide energy to sustain tissue viability, the structure and dynamics of genetic material, the regulation of gene expression, and the principles of genetic inheritance. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem-solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the biochemistry and genetics research literature.

### **BMS 611. Human Immunity (5 hours)**

*Prerequisites: BMS 610, 622, 612*

The goal for the instruction in the human immune system is for students to understand the development and organization of the human immune system, the genetic and molecular mechanisms of immunity, the role of inflammation in immunity, the initiation and detection of immune responses, and the use of vaccines to support human immunity. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem-solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the immunology research literature.

### **BMS 612. Molecular Cell Biology (5 hours)**

The goal for the instruction in molecular cellular biology is for students to understand the fundamental structure of human cells, the function of intracellular organelles, the dynamics of organelles in different cell types, the cellular interactions within tissues to support tissue function, and the biomolecular interactions required for cellular function. This learning goal will be achieved by students through a combination of interactive lectures, problem-solving in the classroom, discussion of medical case scenarios, and analysis of the molecular biology and cell biology research literature.

### **BMS 620. Human Physiology (5 hours)**

*Prerequisites: BMS 610, 611, and 612*

The goal for the instruction in human physiology is for students to develop an understanding of the function of the human body, building upon their prior knowledge of human biology, physics, chemistry and mathematics. This course deals with body fluid compartments and body systems organization and function, with special emphasis on the nervous, cardiovascular, respiratory, and urinary systems. Students will examine the concepts of homeostasis and regulatory mechanisms as they are applied in the various body functions. The learning goal will be achieved through a combination of interactive lectures, group discussions, problem-solving exercises, and medical case-based activities.

### **BMS 621. Human Development (5 hours)**

*Prerequisites: BMS 610, 611, and 612*

The goal for the instruction in human development is for students to understand the process of human development, the determinants of embryonic development, the differentiation and organization of cells into functional tissues and organs, the maternal contribution to embryonic and fetal development, the environmental and physiological risks to human development, and the basic functional anatomy of the human body. This learning goal will be achieved by students through classroom discussion, interaction with animated programs depicting developmental processes, histological analysis of human tissues, and observation of human cadavers and plastinated models of human tissues.

**BMS 622. Microbial Pathogenesis****(5 hours)****Prerequisites: BMS 610, 612 and 622**

The goal for the instruction in microbial pathogenesis is for students to understand the structural and genetic differences between human cells, bacteria, fungi, parasites and viruses, the variations in structure among members of pathogenic species, the metabolic and genetic properties of microbes that facilitate their adaptation to different environments, the commensal relationship between humans and microbes, the mechanisms of microbial and viral pathogenesis, and the basic laboratory culture conditions and tests for human microbial pathogens. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem-solving in the classroom and discussion of medical cases and research literature that illustrate clinical application of microbiology principles.

**BMS 626. Biomolecular Engineering****(5 hours)****Prerequisites: BMS 610, 612 and 622**

The goal for the instruction in bimolecular engineering is for students to understand the principles and techniques resulting in directed biological alteration at the molecular and cellular scale. This course introduces students to bioengineering methodology spanning advanced recombinant DNA technology and delivery methodology, protein engineering leading to altered structure and function (proteomics), genetic and genomic editing (genomics), bioimaging, biosensing, chip technology, and cell-based assay systems. Students will examine bimolecular engineering concepts as they relate to medical and commercial applications in health care, biomedical, pharmaceutical, biomaterials, and other biotechnology related industries. This learning will be achieved by students through classroom and group discussion of relevant research literature and student presentations that illustrate concepts in biomolecular engineering.

**BMS 711. Research Seminar****(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Also, BMS 801, BMS 803, BMS 805, BMS 807, BMS 809, BMS 811, BMS 813, BMS 815, BMS 817, BMS 819, BMS 821

**BMS 714. Responsible Conduct of Research****(1 hour)**

The goal of this course is to examine ethical issues related to scientific research. Students will be introduced to ethical issues related to data management and analysis, collaborations, publications and authorship roles, conflicts of interest, and human and animal research.

**BMS 725. Introduction to Faculty Research****(1 hour)**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to research methods and topics studied by faculty in the Department of Biomedical Sciences. Research faculty will give informational talks related to their specific research projects.

**BMS 728. Neuroscience****(5 hours)****Prerequisites: BMS 610, 612 and 622**

The goal for the instruction in neuroscience is to examine the anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology of the central and peripheral divisions of the nervous system. This course introduces students to neuronal function, synaptic transmission, sensory processing, movement, sleep and wakefulness, hunger, thirst, caloric and body fluid homeostasis, recovery of function after brain damage, and various neurological and psychiatric disorders. This learning goal will be achieved by students through problem-solving in the classroom and discussion of medical cases and research literature that illustrate clinical application of neuroscience principles.

**BMS 737. Pedagogical Methods in Health Sciences****(3 hours)**

The goal for this course is to educate members of the health professions in an interdisciplinary and interactive way to obtain, expand, and improve their teaching skills. The skills learned in this course can be applied within varied professional contexts and with a variety of learners.)

**BMS 738. Introduction to Research****(10 hours)**

In this course, students will learn basic laboratory methods and explore laboratory research projects. This course will include a "Laboratory Boot Camp," which is a two-week session with hands-on, interactive laboratory exercises designed to teach basic laboratory methods. Following the Boot Camp, students will complete two, three-week laboratory rotations where they will work in a laboratory of their choice. Students will choose a research mentor and spend the final eight weeks of the semester in the laboratory as they begin their research project.

**BMS 800. Independent Research I****(10 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 738.

**BMS 801. Research Seminar****(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 711.

**BMS 802. Independent Research II****(10 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 800.

**BMS 803. Research Seminar****(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 801.

**BMS 804. Doctoral Research I** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 802.

**BMS 805. Research Seminar** (1 hour)

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 831.

**BMS 806. Doctoral Research II** (10 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 804.

**BMS 807. Research Seminar** (1 hour)

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 805.

**BMS 808. Doctoral Research III** (10 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 806.

**BMS 809. Research Seminar** (1 hour)

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 807.

**BMS 810. Doctoral Research IV** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 808.

**BMS 811. Research Seminar** (1 hour)

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 809.

**BMS 812. Doctoral Research V** **(12 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 810.

**BMS 813. Research Seminar** **(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 811.

**BMS 814. Doctoral Research VI** **(10 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 812.

**BMS 815. Research Seminar** **(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Science Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 813.

**BMS 816. Doctoral Research VII** **(12 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 814.

**BMS 817. Research Seminar** **(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 815.

**BMS 818. Doctoral Research VIII** **(12 hours)**

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 816.

**BMS 819. Research Seminar** **(1 hour)**

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 817.

**BMS 820. Doctoral Research IX** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 818.

**BMS 821. Research Seminar** (1 hour)

In this course students will participate in a research seminar series, during which they will attend presentations by MUSM faculty and visiting speakers. This course includes required, regular attendance at the Department of Biomedical Sciences Seminar Program, delivered between the Macon, Savannah, and Columbus campuses by real-time video connection. Students will become broadly familiar with scientific approaches and various research topics. Students will also present their thesis research to an audience consisting of faculty and students. The objective of this course is to prepare students to become competent scientific communicators. Continuation of BMS 819.

**BMS 822. Dissertation** (1 hour)

Preparation of dissertation and defense.

**BMS 824. Doctoral Research X** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 820

**BMS 826. Doctoral Research XI** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 824

**BMS 827. Doctoral Research XII** (12 hours)

Dissertation research. Continuation of BMS 826

**BMS 840. Scientific Communications** (1 hour)

This course focuses on writing and presentation skills needed for a career in biomedical sciences. It provides basic instruction in writing abstracts, curriculum vitae, and grant applications. Students will also learn to organize and give scientific presentations. The basic aspects of teaching skills needed for education of undergraduate, graduate, and professional students will also be covered.

**BMS 846. Teaching Practicum II** (3 hours)

*Prerequisites: BMS 737*

The goal of this course is for students to gain teaching experience in a degree program. Students may choose to serve as a teaching assistant as part of the MS, MD, or undergraduate curriculum. Student responsibilities may include lecturing, managing team-based learning activities, setting up laboratory exercises, and/or facilitating small group discussions.

**BMS 847. MD Teaching Practicum** (5 hours)

*Prerequisites: BMS 737*

The goal of this course is for students to gain teaching experience in the MD degree program. Student responsibilities may include lecturing, managing team-based learning activities, and/or facilitating small group discussions.

**BMS 848. MS Teaching Practicum** (5 hours)

The goal of this course is for students to gain teaching experience in the MS degree program. Student responsibilities may include lecturing, managing team-based learning activities, and/or facilitating small group discussions. Prerequisite: BMS 737

**BMS 849. Teaching Practicum III (optional)****(3 hours)***Prerequisites: BMS 737, 845, 846, and 847*

The goal of this course is for students to gain teaching experience in a degree program. Students may choose to serve as a teaching assistant as part of the MS, MD, or undergraduate curriculum.

Student responsibilities may include lecturing, managing team-based learning activities, setting up laboratory exercises, and/or facilitating small group discussions.



*Anne Montgomery, Program Director for Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Health Sciences;  
Associate Professor.*

## **Program Description**

The Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Health Sciences (PhD in Rural Health Sciences) Program at Mercer University School of Medicine is a three-year, research-based doctoral program housed within the Department of Community Medicine. The program consists of 64 credit hours in interdisciplinary rural health sciences, including classroom instruction, field experiences, and dissertation research. The PhD Program prepares graduates for research careers focused on improving the health of rural areas using multidisciplinary methods. Following successful completion of all coursework, passing of comprehensive examinations, and the successful defense of a dissertation, students will be awarded the degree of PhD in Rural Health Sciences.

## **Admissions Information**

The current admissions requirements and instructions are available at:  
[medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/rural-health-sciences-phd](http://medicine.mercer.edu/admissions/rural-health-sciences-phd)

## **Academic Information**

### **REGISTRATION**

Official course enrollment requires the student read and acknowledge the Student Statement of Responsibility indicating their understanding of their academic and financial obligations associated with enrollment at Mercer University. Students are required to register for courses at the time prescribed in the MUSM calendar or in compliance with official notices issued by the Office of the Registrar at the School of Medicine. Students are required to submit a notarized Intent to Enroll Form within 14 days of the date of their acceptance letter. In order to secure a spot in the program.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students must purchase access to a version (print or electronic) of any textbook(s) or other required materials for each course. Additionally, students are required to provide their own laptop computer as part of the materials required for each course in the Program. The computer must meet the specifications needed to run the Microsoft Office suite and statistical software (SPSS) required throughout the program. Students should consult with Program leadership when considering the purchase of a new computer.

### **ENROLLMENT**

Full-time enrollment is six (6) semester hours per semester; however, enrollment of ten (10) credit hours per fall and spring semester in the first two years is expected. Part-time enrollment is three (3) semester hours per semester.

PhD Program students in good standing could be eligible for tuition abatement for up to 64 hours of tuition (covering all required core classes as well as up to 18 hours of dissertation). These students need to go through an external review process via the Georgia Rural Health Innovation Center or the Center for Rural Health and Health Disparities for a Graduate Research Assistantship. This Assistantship comes with a compensation of up to \$25,000 per year. The School of Medicine may decide on providing tuition abatement using their own external review process.

**DEFERMENT**

Requests to defer admission by one year are made on a case-by-case basis and should be made in writing outlining the circumstances to [musmadmissions@mercer.edu](mailto:musmadmissions@mercer.edu) no later than the last day of June of the year of initial application. Approval of a request is not guaranteed.

**WITHDRAWAL**

Students who do not enroll for three consecutive semesters are subject to all program policies, guidelines, and requirements in place at the time of re-enrollment. To graduate from the program, students must complete all required coursework with a grade of B or higher, pass all sections of the comprehensive examinations, and successfully defend their dissertation within 7 years of their initial matriculation.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

Academic performance will be monitored within courses during each semester for student academic advisement (see Academic Advising). For satisfactory academic performance in progress toward the degree, a student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0. This is the 'minimum satisfactory academic performance', and a student below this level of performance will be placed on academic warning (see definition below).

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS FOR FINANCIAL AID**

Please refer to the MUSM Satisfactory Academic Progress for Financial Aid Policy in the Financial Aid Section of this catalog.

**ACADEMIC ADVISING**

The Program Director will serve as the faculty advisor to each student upon enrollment in the PhD Program. After the student forms a dissertation committee, the committee chair will become the student's research advisor and will direct the student's research along with at least two other committee members.

The dissertation committee will meet with the student regularly to monitor their academic progress.

The faculty advisor will have access to advisee academic records, will provide academic guidance for the student throughout the Program, and will consult with Course Instructors as needed to address the academic status of the student and counsel the student regarding academic performance. The academic status of the student is based on the academic performance standards as outlined below.

Academic advisors are to keep the academic information of the student in confidence.

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The academic status of the student is determined by their academic performance. A student is in good academic standing as long as their cumulative grade point average is at least 3.0 (B). A final course grade of "C" requires that the student meet with both the Course Instructor and the Program Director. Students who receive a grade of C or lower in a course may retake that course one time. Students are allowed to retake up to two courses. No more than one grade of C may be applied toward the degree. A student will be permanently dismissed from the program with a letter grade of F in a course. Notifications of academic status will be issued to the students by the Program Director. A minimum, cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is required for graduation from the Program.



## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS**

Comprehensive exams are a requirement for continuation in the PhD in Rural Health Sciences. These exams assess the student's mastery of core concepts from required coursework and readiness to begin the dissertation phase. Students must have successfully completed all required coursework in the PhD program prior to partaking in the comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exams are offered once annually, typically between mid- and late May. The timing may be different for part-time enrolled students.

The comprehensive exam consists of two in-person components administered by designated faculty, and a take-home component consisting of 4 - 5 extensive essay questions, which generally includes sub-questions. The take-home exam must be submitted through the Canvas portal by the assigned deadline. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that their submission is timely, complete, and correctly uploaded. Submission by email to the program director may be used as a backup, but does not replace the official requirement to submit via Canvas.

Each section is graded pass/fail. Students must pass all sections to pass the comprehensive exam requirement. Exams are graded by the faculty member who authored each section or by a designated faculty member. Students may not request alternate graders.

Students who fail any section have an opportunity to remediate that section during the two weeks following the initial exam period; the designated faculty member may set the deadline as they see fit with a minimum of 24 hours. Students are encouraged to check their emails regularly after comprehensive exam week, and can ask the program director for updates on which sections they have passed.

If the student does not pass the remediation, they cannot proceed in the program nor start dissertation credits. Students may request a one-time deferral of the comprehensive exam due to a documented emergency or extenuating circumstance, pending approval by the Program Director. Approved deferrals allow students to sit for the next available offering of the exam; exceptions of timing may be approved by the Program Director. Students may only defer once.

Students may file an appeal regarding exam outcomes through the School of Medicine's standard appeal process.

## **ACADEMIC PROBATION AND DISMISSAL**

Students falling below a cumulative 3.00 GPA will be placed on academic probation. Students will be permitted to continue in the program for one semester (the semester immediately following their placement on academic probation) while on probation. Some restrictions may be put in place by the program director after discussion with the student, such as not being able to take a class that builds upon the failed class, or reduction in amount of credits for the next semester. Failure to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00 at the end of that semester will result in the student being dismissed from the program. A student may only be on academic probation one time. Academic dismissal precludes reapplication to the Program.

## **DEGREE**

A student seeking the PhD degree should complete all Program requirements within the academic calendar of the Program as a full-time student. The maximum amount of time between initial enrollment in the Program and degree requirement completion is six academic years.



## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Completion of all required course work with a minimum, cumulative GPA of 3.0 and with no more than one grade of "C" as well as successful passing of all sections of the comprehensive exams and dissertation defense and archiving of the dissertation per University requirements are required for conferral of the degree. Clearance for graduation must be granted by the Office of the Registrar. Deadlines for submission of dissertations can be found at <https://provost.mercer.edu/resources/theses/theses.cfm>.

## **DEGREE APPLICATION AND AUDIT FOR MAY GRADUATION/COMMENCEMENT**

At the beginning of the spring semester, eligible students must submit an Application for Graduation to the MUSM Registrar for verification of academic standing and eligibility for participation in commencement. The deadline for submission is January 31st.

## **FINAL CHECK/RECOMMENDATION FOR MAY GRADUATION**

The Registrar's Office will check final grade point averages and spring semester final course grades and will clear for graduation those students who meet the degree requirements as defined below. The Registrar's Office will notify students who failed to meet the requirements that they are no longer eligible for the degree and cannot participate in commencement.

## **PARTICIPATION IN COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES**

Only students who have completed all Program requirements in good academic standing by the end of spring semester will be eligible to participate in commencement. Students who have completed all course work, passed comprehensive exam, and successfully defended their dissertation but are awaiting final depositing of their dissertation with the University may be allowed to participate in spring commencement ceremonies upon approval of the program director and the dean of the school. Participation in the graduation ceremony does not necessarily represent conferral of the degree. Degrees are awarded at the ends of terms in which all degree requirements are met.

## **DIPLOMAS**

Diplomas are not distributed during commencement. They are available only in the Registrar's Office. Diplomas are ordered after all degree requirements are met. Graduates will be notified when their diploma is available.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE**

Although it is recognized that absences will sometimes be necessary, students are expected to attend classes. Course Instructors will state specific attendance requirements in the syllabi for the courses. It is the responsibility of students to be cognizant of their own record of absences and to consult the Course Instructors regarding work missed. The decision to permit students to make up work rests with the Course Instructor. Absences will negatively impact grades based on participation during in-class activities, such as group work and discussion-based seminar courses, since this work cannot be performed, as designed, outside of the context of the classroom. *The Course Instructor has the right to assign a grade of F for any attendance and participation portion of the course grade when a student habitually violates the attendance policy specified in the course syllabus.*



## **PROGRAM COMMUNICATION**

Students will receive notifications, instructions, and assignments through their Mercer email accounts and the Canvas learning management system. Students are responsible for checking their Mercer email daily and immediately reporting problems with access to their Mercer account or to Canvas, unless Mercer Information Technology has previously notified all Mercer users of limited access to these systems. Students are expected to obtain information and to complete assignments posted on Canvas in a timely manner, as instructed by the Program faculty or staff. Problems with Canvas or email should be addressed to [helpdesk@mercer.edu](mailto:helpdesk@mercer.edu). Course Instructors will provide details regarding communication for their courses in their course syllabi.

## **PROGRAM COURSE EXAMINATION POLICIES**

Course examination policies are set by the Course Instructors and students are expected to adhere to these policies as laid out in the respective course syllabus. Students are expected to adhere to policies for all examinations administered in the program.

## **Grading System**

Degree-seeking students enrolled in graduate courses will receive letter grades for all graduate work. Grades within a course will be assigned on a 100-point scale and the final grade will be converted to a letter grade. The final course letter grades will then be converted to a 4-point scale for determining the overall GPA for the Program.

LETTER	0-100	QUALITY POINTS PER CREDIT HOUR
A	90-100	4.0
B+	86-89	3.5
B	80-85	3.0
C+	76-79	2.5
C	70-75	2.0
F	Below 65	0
S	Satisfactory	*
U	Unsatisfactory	*

The following grading marks may be used when students do not complete courses within the curriculum, do not perform required activities in courses, or do not take courses for a letter grade.

### **GRADE INTERPRETATION**

ABX Excused absence from exam

IC Incomplete

IP In Progress

W Withdrawal

Z Grade Not Reported



A grade of IP is awarded only in a graduate practicum or in dissertation courses, which may extend beyond the end of a semester. A student is expected to finish "in progress" work based on the timetable established by the professor issuing the IP grade. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of ABX denotes that a student was absent from an examination because of an illness or another valid and compelling reason deemed satisfactory by the professor. A makeup exam must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the ABX was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of IC Indicates that a relatively small part of the semester's course work remains incomplete because of a student's sickness or reasons satisfactory to the professor. The work must be completed by the course withdrawal deadline of the semester after the IC was earned. If the student does not complete the required work within the time specified, the grade automatically converts to an F.

The grade of W (withdrawal) indicates that a student officially withdrew from a course on or before the last day for course withdrawals as designated in the current academic calendar. Withdrawals are not used when computing grade point averages.

### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

Students should not withdraw from a course prior to meeting with the Program Director, as courses are intended to be taken in sequence and on schedule. To make an official withdrawal from a course, a student should log into their MyMercer account and complete the Online Withdrawal form. It is located under External Links. If the student elects to discontinue class attendance and does not complete an official Course Withdrawal Form within the time limits described, a grade of F (failure) will be recorded on the student's official record. A grade of W may not be awarded if a student does not complete the official Course Withdrawal Form on or before the date designated for each semester in the current academic calendar. Please note that withdrawal from a course may result in a delay in the completion of the program.

### **COURSE GRADES AND FACULTY EVALUATIONS**

Students are expected to provide feedback to the School of Medicine regarding their experience in the PhD program courses, including the evaluation of Course Instructors, of textbooks, and of class assignments and activities. Anonymous feedback will be gathered from students in the form of surveys conducted through One45 after the final examination for each course. One45 will record whether a student has completed a survey, but it does not link the student's identity to survey answers. Students who complete the surveys may be able to view course grade information as soon as possible, whereas those not participating in a survey may be required to wait until grades are posted by the Registrar. Student responses to surveys are essential in improving and maintaining the quality of the PhD program's education.

### **Student Appeals Process: Grievance Procedures**

Students with grievances should follow the procedures for Academic or Nonacademic Grievances, as described in the respective sections of the MUSM Student Handbook and the University Student Handbook.



## Curriculum

### PH.D. DEGREE (64 Semester Hours)

#### YEAR 1 - 26 hours

<b>Fall Semester - 10 hours</b>		
RRL 811	Foundations of Rural Health	3
RRL 812	Behavior Change Theory and Practice	3
RRL 813	Interdisciplinary Research Methods 1	3
RRL 814	Rural Population Health Seminar	1
<b>Spring Semester - 10 hours</b>		
RRL 821	Rural Community Engagement	3
RRL 822	Rural Health Equity	3
RRL 823	Interdisciplinary Research Methods 2	3
RRL 824	Rural Clinical Science Seminar	1
<b>Summer Semester - 6 hours</b>		
RRL 831	Applied Rural Health Practicum	6

#### YEAR 2 - 26 hours

<b>Fall Semester - 10 hours</b>		
RRL 841	Health Communication and Health Literacy	3
RRL 842	Grant Writing and Grant Management	3
RRL 843	Rural Policy and Economic Development	3
RRL 844	Rural Translational Science Seminar	1
<b>Spring Semester - 10 hours</b>		
RRL 851	Multilevel Interventions	3
RRL Elective	RRL 825,826, 852, or 899	3
RRL Elective	RRL 825,826, 852, or 899	3
RRL 854	Pre-Dissertation Seminar	1
<b>Summer Semester - 6 hours</b>		
RRL 861	Dissertation	6

#### YEAR 3 - 12 hours

<b>Fall Semester - 6 hours</b>		
RRL 861	Dissertation	6
<b>Spring Semester - 6 hours</b>		
RRL 861	Dissertation	6

**YEAR 4**

<b>Only if needed</b>		
RRL 862	Dissertation	as needed

**Course Descriptions****RRL 811. Foundations of Rural Health (3 credit hours)**

This course introduces students to the unique dynamics of health within rural communities. Topics include rural culture, rural health needs, rural-specific determinants of health, and rural healthcare systems. (Fall semester, year one)

**RRL 812. Behavior Change Theory and Practice (3 credit hours)**

This course introduces students to the major theories of health behavior and behavior change, including practical applications of those theories in developing rural-focused programs and interventions. Topics include the Transtheoretical Model, the Health Belief Model, Social Norms Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, Theory of Reasoned Action/Theory of Planned Behavior, and their application to program development. (Fall semester, year one)

**RRL 813. Interdisciplinary Research Methods 1 (3 credit hours)**

This course begins a two-course series on the interdisciplinary research methods necessary to effectively conduct research and evaluation studies within rural communities. The course draws primarily from the fields of psychology, sociology, epidemiology, and biostatistics. Topics include research ethics, internal and external validity, confounding, hypotheses and research questions, and quantitative study design, including levels of measurement; conceptualization and operationalization; correlation and causation, p-values, error, and bias; moderation and mediation; parametric vs. non-parametric, descriptive and inferential statistics; data entry, coding, and cleaning; levels of prevention/intervention; measures of disease burden and risk; and diagnostic/screening characteristics. (Fall semester, year one)

**RRL 814. Rural Population Health Seminar (1 credit hour)**

This course allows students to apply their knowledge in developing and critiquing initiatives designed to improve rural population health. (Fall semester, year one)

**RRL 821. Rural Community Engagement (3 credit hours)**

This course focuses on techniques and approaches to engage with communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health initiatives. Specific topics include participatory action research, community-based participatory research, coalition-building, collective impact, consensus-building, facilitation skills, program planning, logic models, and community health assessment techniques (e.g., asset maps). (Spring semester, year one)

**RRL 822. Rural Health Equity (3 credit hours)**

This course focuses on the ways in which rural communities are affected by health disparities, and ways in which rural health equity can be achieved. Focus is given to the unique needs of subpopulations within rural communities (e.g., racial/ethnic minority, LGBTQ+, persons with disabilities). Specific topics include rural-specific examination of diversity, health disparities, social determinants of health, discrimination, and intersectionality. (Spring semester, year one)

**RRL 823. Interdisciplinary Research Methods 2** **(3 credit hours)**

This second course in the series continues training in specific approaches used to improve health in communities. Topics include sampling, survey design and scaling, evaluation designs/frameworks, qualitative interviewing, key informant interviews, focus groups, town halls, mixed methodology, qualitative data analysis, and the construction of theoretical models. (Spring semester, year one)

**RRL 824. Rural Clinical Science Seminar** **(1 credit hour)**

This course allows students to apply their growing rural health knowledge in developing and critiquing initiatives designed to improve clinical outcomes in rural areas. Students participate in weekly discussions centered on emerging rural clinical health findings, learning to critique and make recommendations regarding clinical studies. (Spring semester, year one)

**RRL 825. Comparative Rural Development (elective)** **(3 credit hours)****Applied Rural Health Practicum**

This class focuses on understanding the diversity and changes in rural communities worldwide over the past several decades, where the vast majority of the world's land and water is located, most food and fiber is produced, and energy and other natural resources are extracted. We will examine various community capitals – natural, human, cultural, political, social, financial, and built – that contribute to environmental, social, and economic health in these areas. There will be an emphasis on rural health care, the financialization of the rural economy, changing demographics, and the impacts of the implementation of local and national policies on rural development across the globe over the past several decades. (Spring semester, year two)

**RRL 826. Rural Health Grand Challenges (elective)** **(3 credit hours)**

Rural Georgia communities face many challenges in achieving and maintaining health due to complex social, geographic, and economic factors. These grand challenges concern physician and health workforce shortages, health literacy, healthcare availability and access, aging populations, maternal and child health, and substance abuse among others. This course examines several such grand challenges and possible ways to address them with innovative thinking, collaborative strategies, and interdisciplinary resources. (Spring semester, year two)

**RRL 831. Applied Rural Health Practicum** **(6 credit hours)**

This course allows students to apply their knowledge of rural health in a real-world, rural setting. Students complete a focused project as part of the practicum, including either a research project or evaluation. (Summer semester, year one)

**RRL 841. Health Communication and Health Literacy** **(3 credit hours)**

This course focuses on effective health communication strategies for diverse populations, as well as the role and importance of health literacy considerations in population health initiatives. Topics include the different types of literacy (i.e., visual, computer, information, and numerical); selecting key information to disseminate in a communication campaign; development and dissemination of effective print media (e.g., resource books, infographics); development and dissemination of effective digital media (e.g., website, digital campaigns); and the core elements of effective health communication (e.g., accuracy, consistency, timeliness, reach). (Fall semester, year two)

**RRL 842. Grant Writing and Grants Management (3 credit hours)**

This course focuses on identifying, developing, applying for, and managing the execution of grant funded projects. Topics include locating public and private sources of funding, creating competitive grant applications, designing grant-supported initiatives, creating budgets and staffing plans, different strategies for research and outreach/programmatic grants, and ways to enhance program sustainability. Specific focus is also given to standard federal grant restrictions and requirements (i.e., "uniform guidance"). (Fall semester, year two)

**RRL 843. Rural Policy and Economic Development (3 credit hours)**

This course provides a working knowledge of rural health policy at the local, state, and national level, including current policies affecting rural health and approaches to effect policy change within rural communities. Focus is also given to the unique economic climate of rural communities and the ways in which it may impact health efforts. (Fall semester, year two)

**RRL 844. Rural Translational Science Seminar (1 credit hour)**

This course allows students to apply their knowledge in developing and critiquing translational science initiatives designed to improve health in rural areas. (Fall semester, year two)

**RRL 851. Multilevel Interventions (3 credit hours)**

This course prepares students to develop, implement, and evaluate interventions that act at multiple levels within rural communities (e.g., at more than one level of the Social Ecological Model). Topics include social ecological theory, systems change, existing multilevel intervention models, design of new multilevel interventions, and the complexities of implementing and evaluating multilevel interventions within a rural context. (Spring semester, year two)

**RRL 852. Leadership, Management, and Teamwork (elective) (3 credit hours)**

This course provides an overview of leadership, management, and teamwork principles to provide the skills necessary to serve as a leader and change agent within rural communities. Topics include strategic planning, leadership theories, management styles, hiring strategies, project management, basic accounting principles, systems thinking, operations management, team-building, and partnership maintenance. (Spring semester, year two)

**RRL 854. Pre-Dissertation Seminar (1 credit hour)**

This course allows students to complete the planning process for their dissertation in a peer-supported/peer-reviewed workshop-style environment. (Spring semester, year two)

**RRL 861. Dissertation Credits (min. 18 credit hours)**

Provides students the opportunity to complete their dissertations. (Summer semester, year two; fall and spring semesters, year three)

**RRL 862. Dissertation Credits (1-6 credit hours)**

Provides students the opportunity to complete their dissertations. (As needed Summer semester, years three and four; fall and spring semesters, years four and five)

**RRL 899. Special Topics in Rural Health (elective) (3 credit hours)**

This course allows for the in-depth exploration of a rotating topic with direct application to the improvement of health in rural communities. (Spring semester, year two)



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<b>Designation</b>	<b>Service Dates</b>
<b>Boyd, Carl (M.D.)</b> , Professor & Chair Emeritus of Surgery	1987-2001
<b>Donner, Robert S. (M.D.)</b> , Professor & Chair Emeritus of Pathology	1981-2017
<b>Ellis, Keith (M.D.)</b> , Professor Emeritus of Family Medicine	1999-2015
<b>Rudolph, Raymond (M.D.)</b> , Associate Professor Emeritus of Surgery	1992-2015
<b>Wessinger, William (M.D.)</b> , Professor Emeritus of Surgery	2000-2015



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Lora Denton, M.D.

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John Floyd, M.D.

Pace Halter

Ken Jones, M.D.

Kristen Kahrmann, M.D.

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Jack Powell, M.D.

Miller Robinson

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Lorraine Sumner, M.D.

Oliver Whipple, M.D.

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**Indee Williams**

Faculty Affairs Coordinator

**Student Engagement and Mission  
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Senior Director of Student Engagement and Mission  
Compliance

**LaQuanta Hamilton**

Director of Student Engagement and Mission  
Compliance - Columbus

**E. Terri Walker, MPA**

Director of Special Programs;  
Director of Student Engagement and Mission  
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**Vanessa Wallace-Lonon**

Director of Student Engagement and Mission  
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**Matthew R. Astin, M.D.**

Medical Director for The Master of Athletic Training

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**LaQuanta Hamilton**

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**Denise Fraser**

Assistant Registrar

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**Carolann Curry, M.L.I.S., A.H.I.P.**

Reference and Document Delivery Librarian; Outreach Coordinator

**Anna E. Dunson**

Assistant Director of Medical Library Sciences - Columbus

**Anna Krampl, M.S.L.S, A.H.I.P.**

Reference Librarian; Head of Access Services

**Richard Gilbert Marcum**

MUSM Archivist & Skelton Medical Library Access Services Manager

**Vanessa Wallace-Lonon**

Library Assistant IV; Director of Student Engagement and Mission Compliance - Savannah

**School of Medicine Faculty****Maryam Abdelghani, M.D., (2017)**

Associate Professor of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education. M.D., Temple University School of Medicine, B. S., University of Pittsburgh

**Mohammed A. S. Abdelsaid, Ph.D. (2016)**

Director of Animal Care Facility and Associate Professor of Biomedical Sciences. Ph.D., University of Georgia, M.S., Azhar University School of Pharmacy

**Hannah Abualadas, Ph.D. (2024)**

Assistant Professor of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education. MS, Tulane University, MBBS, University of Jordan.

**Yahya Acar, M.D. (2023)**

Yahya Acar (2023) Director of Medical Simulation and Assistant Professor of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education. MD, University of Health Sciences Gulhane Faculty of Medicine.

**Adam Albrite, Ph.D. (2021)**

Director MFT Program and Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. PhD, University of Louisiana at Monroe, MS, Valdosta State University, BA, Valdosta State University.

**S. Marshall Angle Jr, Ph.D. (2014)**

Associate Dean for Evaluation and Assessment and Associate Professor of Community Medicine. PhD, University of South Carolina, MEd, University of West Georgia, BA, Mercer University

**Caroline E. Anglim, Ph.D. (2022)**

Assistant Professor of Bioethics and Medical Humanities. PhD, University of Chicago, BA, Maryville College.

**Sorita Ann, Ph.D. (2024)**

Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. PhD, University of Georgia.

**Manisha Arora, Ph.D. (2022)**

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**Karin Baker, M.D. (2024)**

Associate Professor of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education. MD, Medical College of Georgia.

**Jennifer L. Barkin, Ph.D. (2012)**

Vice Chair of Community Medicine, Director of Community Medicine Research, and Professor of Community Medicine. PhD, University of Pittsburgh, MS, University of Pittsburgh, BS, Carnegie Mellon University.



**Lisa Bauman, M.D. (2020)** Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for Academic Achievement, Senior Director of Applied Clinical Sciences Curriculum, and Professor of Pathology and Clinical Sciences Education. MD, Indiana University School of Medicine, BS, St. Mary's College.

**James David Baxter, M.D. (2017)** Senior Associate Dean, Savannah campus, Clerkship Director, and Professor of Internal Medicine. MD, Medical College of Georgia, BS, Georgia State University.

**Stephanie Beavers, M.D. (2019)** Vice Dean of Academics and Administration, Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Education, and Associate Professor of Internal Medicine. MD, Mercer University School of Medicine School of Medicine, BS, University of Georgia.

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