1. **Permission to Write (PTW)**
   - Receive permission at committee meeting
   - Submit status report paperwork to the Student Drop Box (Alkek building - GSBS lobby)
   - Defense date must be scheduled within 6 months or PTW expires

2. **Defense Date**
   - 2-3 Months before defense: Submit Completed Defense Date Form to the Student Drop Box (GSBS lobby).
   - 2-3 Months before defense: If student is not a US citizen, contact International Services Office (ISO) to discuss visa arrangements (e.g. OPT).
   - Two weeks before defense: Student should contact program administrator (PA) to make arrangements for generating the public defense flyer and review of signature page.
   - Two weeks before defense: Submit copy of dissertation/thesis signature page to gsbs-graduation@bcm.edu via email for approval.
   - Two weeks before defense: Student should submit dissertation/thesis to thesis advisory committee.

3. **Public Defense**
   - One week before defense: Public notice of thesis defense must be given (e.g. posting of public defense flier, distribution of defense flier via email list serve). This should be coordinated with the program administrator.
   - A copy of the defense flier/notice should be sent (via email) to gsbs-graduation@bcm.edu prior to the defense.
   - Bring Dissertation Defense Results Form including defense rubrics and Dissertation/Thesis Signature page to the defense. Committee signatures are the hardest to secure do not wait to the week of your graduation appointment to obtain signatures, this will delay your ability to complete graduation.

4. **Defense Results**
   - After defense, obtain original signatures from committee members, major advisor and program director on the Dissertation Defense Results form. Ensure that defense rubrics are completed and signed.
   - Ensure the TAC has outlined requirements, if any, for completing/correcting thesis.
   - Submit Defense Results form and completed defense rubrics to GSBS Student Drop Box (GSBS lobby).
   - Once Dissertation Defense Results form has been submitted to the Graduate School, the graduate school will provide (via email) instructions on submitting thesis/dissertation and other required graduation materials.

5. **Planning for Graduation and Beyond**
   - Students have up to 2 months after the defense date to submit their final dissertation and to schedule a graduation appointment; this is also your graduation deadline. The day of the graduation appointment is the last day of active student enrollment.
   - If student is not a US citizen or permanent resident, contact International Services Office to discuss visa arrangements following graduation. International students who have applied for OPT should be aware that the OPT start date cannot be changed.
   - Students wishing to remain at BCM as a postdoctoral fellow or in a staff role should coordinate planned graduation dates with their future hiring department to ensure that their next position is ready immediately following graduation (if desired). Please note that it may take ~60 days or more for a new position to be approved and a graduating student hired (e.g. as a postdoc), so please plan well in advance.
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences  
Overview of Steps Leading to Graduation

- Prior to your graduation appointment, all committee members and program directors must sign the Dissertation/Thesis Signature Page. Proxy signatures are not allowed. Use blue/black ink only.
- The Dean’s signature on the Dissertation/Thesis Signature page will be obtained by GSBS after your graduation appointment.

6. Graduation Appointment
- **Two weeks prior to desired graduation date:**
  - Schedule Graduation Appointment via email to gsbs-graduation@bcm.edu
  - Students on a visa should verify graduation completion date with ISO
- **One week prior to planned graduation date:**
  - Complete and submit (via email) each of the following documents as separate file to gsbs-graduation@bcm.edu (for MS, PhD, and MD/PhD students).
    1. GSBS Program Evaluation
    2. Graduation Exit Questionnaire
    3. Curriculum vitae
    5. Title page
    6. Alumni Clearance Form (email to alumni@bcm.edu)
    7. FERPA Hold Removal (see the Office of the Registrar, only if a directory restriction exist)
  - Complete and submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates (PhD and MD/PhD students, only).
  - Begin collecting signatures on the Clearance form. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with staff in each office that needs to provide a signature (exception: Student Account Services – send email with scanned document before your graduation appointment). Signatures for TMC Library, Student Account Services, and Student Financial Aid can be obtained 5 days prior to your graduation day.
  - All signatures, except Security Office and International Services Office (only students on a visa) must be obtained prior to graduation.

7. Dissertation (Ph.D.) / Thesis (M.S.) Submission = Graduation Day
- Attend scheduled Graduation Appointment.
- Bring the required 4 copies of the Dissertation (PhD)/Thesis (MS). For MSTP students, a minimum of 5 copies of the dissertation are required. If additional copies are desired, these must be brought at the same time. Bring dissertation/thesis copies in a box ready for shipping. The dissertation copies are distributed to the following areas: an original dissertation will be returned to you; a copy to your graduate program; a copy to your major advisor, and a copy to the Texas Medical Center Library. For M.D./Ph.D. the 5th copy is designated for the MSTP Office.
- Bring check/money order payable to Baylor College of Medicine or cash (exact amount) to pay for bindery costs. Bring dissertation/thesis copies in a brown box ready for mailing.
- Verify submission of all graduation forms - Graduation Evaluation, Graduation Questionnaire, CV, Abstract, Alumni Profile, and FERPA Hold Removal form. Verify final transcript (will be provided at appointment).
- Complete and return Graduation Clearance form to the Student Drop Box (GSBS lobby).
- After your graduation appointment, obtain signatures for Security and International Services Office (required for all non-U.S. citizens including U.S. permanent residents). These signatures must be obtained the day of graduation.

**Notes:** The day of Dissertation/Thesis submission is your last day of active student enrollment with BCM. Your email and access to BCM will terminate at the end of the business day unless another BCM position has already been secured. Student health insurance will end the last day of the month in which a student graduates.

01.22.19