Graduate Education in Medical Sciences

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Graduate Education in Medical Sciences
College of Medicine (MC 784)
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Administration:
Co-Directors: William Hendrickson and John O’Bryan
Program Administrator: Mia Johnson

Program Codes:
20FS5375NONE

The GEMS Program offers students integrated training in the biomedical sciences. PhD programs include the areas of Anatomy, Biochemistry, Biophysics, Cell and Molecular Biology, Genetics, Immunology, Microbiology, Neurosciences, Pathology, Pharmacology, and Physiology. Students have the flexibility to choose a mentor from among more than 150 funded research faculty in all departments and PhD programs of the College of Medicine. Areas of research excellence within the broader disciplines include stem cell biology; cancer; development; gene regulation; host-pathogen biology; lung biology; molecular and integrated cardiac and vascular biology; proteomics, genomics, and bioinformatics; reproductive biology; signal transduction and virology.

Admission Requirements

Students apply using the GEMS PhD program code (20FS8060PHD) and list in order of preference up to three of the participating departments as areas of interest. Participating departments are the following:

- Anatomy and Cell Biology 20FS1024PHD
- Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics 20FS4050PHD
- Microbiology and Immunology 20FS1468PHD
- Pathology 20FS1548PHD
- Pharmacology 20FS1564PHD
- Physiology and Biophysics 20FS1584PHD

Specific requirements are listed under each of these graduate programs.

In general, students should have the following:

- **Baccalaureate Field** No restrictions. However, applicants must have a satisfactory record of courses in biology, inorganic and organic chemistry, and at least one year of physics and of mathematics.
- **Grade Point Average** At least 2.75/4.00 for the final 60 semester hours of undergraduate study. Preference is given to applicants with a GPA greater than 3.00/4.00.
- **Tests Required** GRE General. This test should be taken prior to submission of the formal application. Preference is given to applicants with a combined verbal and quantitative score above 1200 and an analytical writing score above 4.0. GRE Revised: Preference is given to applicants with a combined verbal and quantitative score above 308.

- **Minimum English Competency Test Score**
  - TOEFL The TOEFL score cannot be more than two years old. UIC’s Institutional Code is 1851. 550 (paper-based); 80, with subscores of Reading 19, Listening 17, Speaking 20, and Writing 21 (IBT Internet-based), OR
  - IELTS 6.5, with subscores of 6.0 for all four subscores. OR,
  - PTE-Academic 54, with subscores of Reading 51, Listening 47, Speaking 53, and Writing 56.

- **Letters of Recommendation** Required.
- **Personal Statement** Required.
- **Other Requirements** Preference is given to applicants with a documented record of research accomplishments.

**Degree Requirements**

GEMS students, during their first semester of study, engage in a core curriculum that focuses on the fundamentals of biochemistry, cell biology, molecular biology, and physiology. Beginning with the second semester, students choose from a variety of courses with the goal of concentrating more on their chosen area of interest.

During the first year, students additionally engage in 3 or 4 laboratory rotations of 10 weeks each. The students select from among the GEMS faculty potential mentors for their thesis research. At the end of the first year, students select their mentor and department from within the College of Medicine. The PhD is granted by the degree-granting program that the student selects.

- **Minimum Semester Hours Required** 96 from the baccalaureate.
- **Course Work**

**Required Courses**

Students must take or show proficiency in three of the following four core courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 500</td>
<td>Physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 501</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 502</td>
<td>Molecular Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 503</td>
<td>Cell Biology</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Students must take or show proficiency in the following research methods courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 504</td>
<td>Research Methods I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GCLS 505</td>
<td>Research Methods II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Select 500-level courses as specified by chosen PhD program

- **Preliminary Examination** During the second year of graduate study, students must pass a preliminary examination in a format specified by their chosen department.
- **Dissertation** Required. Students must earn at least 52 hours in Research in their department (599).
- **Other Requirements** Journal clubs and research seminars as specified by the student’s chosen department.
Courses

GCLS 500. Physiology. 3 hours.
Lectures in human physiology. Emphasis is on an integrated approach to systems physiology. Course Information: Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the College of Medicine or Pharmacy or Applied Health Sciences or in the Departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences, or consent of the instructor. Prerequisite(s): Mathematics, undergraduate physics, organic chemistry, or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 501. Biochemistry. 3 hours.
Fundamental properties of biomacromolecules, the thermodynamics underlying basic biochemical processes and the properties of enzymes, including the kinetics of operation, and regulation, illustrated with important examples. Course Information: Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor. Prerequisite(s): Mathematics, undergraduate physics, organic chemistry, or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 502. Molecular Biology. 3 hours.
Core molecular biology course covering basic principles of gene expression, genome replication and molecular interactions important to biological processes in prokaryotes and eukaryotes. Course Information: Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 503. Cell Biology. 3 hours.
Advanced course on fundamental aspects of cell biology; basic concepts will be integrated with key examples which span gene, protein, cell, and tissue function. Course Information: Credit is not given for GCLS 503 if the student has credit in BCHE 561 or ANAT 585 or MIM 585 or PHYB 585. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, or Applied Health or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 504. Research Methods I. 1-2 hours.
Lectures, demonstrations, and discussions concerned with principles and practical aspects of modern quantitative biochemical, molecular biological, physiological and biophysical methodology such as separation techniques and studies of biomembranes. Course Information: May be repeated. Students may register for more than one section per term. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 505. Research Methods II. 1-3 hours.
Lectures, demonstrations, and discussions concerned with principles and practical aspects of modern quantitative biochemical, molecular biological, physiological and biophysical methodology such as bioimaging and biochemical analysis. Course Information: May be repeated. Students may register for more than one section per term. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 506. GEMS Research Rotation. 2-5 hours.
Research rotation course in which first year students from the GEMS program will undertake research projects in laboratories affiliated with this program. Course Information: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grading only. May be repeated. Animals used in instruction. Prerequisite(s): Open only to Ph.D. degree students.

GCLS 510. Integrative Biology. 3 hours.
Advanced level, intensive course addressing fundamental topics of developmental biology, immunology, and cancer biology, with concentration on thematic issues that integrate these subjects. Course Information: Prerequisite(s): GCLS 501 and GCLS 502 and GCLS 503; or demonstrated proficiency of the material covered in these courses. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 511. Molecular Genetics. 3 hours.
Core molecular genetics course covering classical and molecular principles of microbial and Mendelian genetics. Systems covered include bacteria, bacteriophage, animal viruses, yeast, Drosophila, mouse, and human. Course Information: Prerequisite(s): GCLS 501 and GCLS 502 and GCLS 503; or demonstrated proficiency of the material covered in these courses. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 512. Pathobiology of Cancer. 3 hours.
Introduction to principles of carcinogenesis, tumor biology, and oncology, including cancer epidemiology, molecular-cellular basis of cancer, tumor progression, invasion and metastasis, and prevention, detection, diagnosis, and therapy of cancer. Course Information: Same as PATH 511. Prerequisite(s): Consent of the instructor. Recommended background: Basic knowledge of molecular and cell biology is highly recommended.

GCLS 515. Receptor Pharmacology and Cell Signaling. 3 hours.
Advanced course on cell-surface and nuclear receptors and mechanisms of signaling through receptors. Provides an overview of receptor theory, hands-on data analysis and lectures and discussions on various signaling mechanisms. Course Information: Credit is not given for GCLS 515 if the student has credit in PCOL 505 or PHYB 505. Prerequisite(s): GCLS 501 or approval of the department. Restricted to students enrolled in a graduate program offered through the Colleges of Medicine or Pharmacy or the departments of Bioengineering or Biological Sciences or consent of the instructor.

GCLS 594. Special Topics in Life Sciences. 1-4 hours.
Systematic study of advanced selected topics in life sciences from an interdisciplinary approach. Course Information: May be repeated. Students may register in more than one section per term. Prerequisite(s): Consent of the instructor.