

## DEPARTMENT OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

These guidelines are in addition to those prescribed by the University Graduate Office (copies are available from the BMS department office). Note that failure to comply with University and Department guidelines can result in delays in acceptance of the dissertation. If the student and mentor feel that deviations from the recommendations below are necessary, then a written explanation should be submitted to the Dissertation and Academic Committees for approval prior to writing the thesis.

### **FORMAT**

- In addition to chapters describing each sub-project, as required, the thesis should include an introductory chapter and a concluding chapter.
- The introduction should provide a rigorous review of the background that is directly relevant to the problem under investigation and be sufficiently detailed that the reader can appreciate the significance of the thesis research.
- If appropriate, the second chapter should be devoted to general Materials and Methods that are used throughout the thesis. Methodology that is specific to a particular chapter should be presented within that chapter.
- The concluding chapter should provide a unifying discussion of the findings presented in the previous chapters. It should not merely summarize the main findings, or repeat the discussion presented in the previous chapters. Rather, this chapter should contain discussion of further studies that could be done to advance understanding of the problem(s) that were investigated, as well as speculative interpretations of the results obtained in light of previous work and the future of the field.
- Figures and Tables should be placed on separate pages, and inserted near the text referring to them (do not collate them at the ends of the chapters). Figure legends may be placed on the same page as the figures, or on the preceding pages.
- A comprehensive bibliography, alphabetized according to authors, should be placed at the end of the thesis. The format used for the bibliography should include the complete titles of the papers cited. In the text, it is recommended that references be cited by author and publication date (e.g. Smith and Jones, 1999), but whatever citation format is chosen, it should be used uniformly throughout the thesis.

### **INCORPORATION OF MANUSCRIPTS (PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED) INTO THE THESIS**

- Manuscripts for which the student and mentor are the sole authors will require minimal reformatting to be used as chapters of the dissertation.
- The Introduction, Materials and Methods, and Discussion sections may need to be edited so as to be in concordance with the introductory and concluding chapters of the thesis and to avoid duplication; the bibliography should be removed and merged with the one at the end of the thesis.
- Manuscripts that contain additional authors besides the student and mentor will usually require more extensive reformatting to clarify what work was actually performed by the student from that contributed by co-authors. It is required that all text appearing in the thesis be authored personally by the student (with guidance from the mentor), unless explicitly indicated otherwise (e.g. by quotation marks and proper attribution). It is strongly recommended that if a section of the paper involves experiments carried out without the involvement of the student, then it should be moved to the Discussion, unless this would distract from the logical flow of the chapter. Experiments that were not conducted by the student must be clearly indicated in the text as well as in the figure and table legends. It is essential that the student make clear what his/her role was in work that involved collaborations or assistance from other scientists (including technicians, postdoctoral fellows, and other students). An Acknowledgments section detailing the roles played by other individuals should be placed at the beginning of any chapter involving collaborative work. Published work in which the student played a minor role, or for which the topic is unrelated or weakly related to the theme of the thesis, should not be included as a chapter.

### **SUBMISSION OF THESIS TO DISSERTATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- The completed thesis must be submitted to the committee at least three weeks before the oral defense. A shorter interval is permissible only if all committee members agree. It is the student's responsibility to arrange a date for the defense that is acceptable to the committee members, and to adhere to the three-week interval.
- Reprints of published papers and manuscripts of papers accepted for publication should be included as appendices to the thesis.