

# Biomedical Research Education Programs

## MSCR Application Instructions

### Spring 2017



**Applications are due March 6, 2017**

1. **Letter/Personal Statement (2-3 pages):** must address: (a) research and career goals/trajectory with proposed timeline and relevance of CTS/MSCR training for academic and clinical advancement, (b) prior research activities, (c) why the MSCR program is an important component of your training, and (d) what areas of competencies you wish to develop and how they will prepare you to undertake the research you want to do.
2. **Research Proposal (4-5 pages) outline for your MS Thesis research, which will be a springboard for further development for your overall research focus** – this proposal must include:
  - a. Description of a search strategy that will summarize/review the directly relevant literature
  - b. Description of Background, Significance, Innovation, Approach and Impact
  - c. Clearly identified research question(s) with hypotheses and specific aims
  - d. Overview of plans for design of the study, basic study procedures/protocol, data collection and data management strategies (i.e. data formatting for proposed statistical analysis, conforming to HIPAA standards, etc.)
  - e. Proposed plans for data analysis, including justification for your proposed sample size
3. **Your current CV**
4. **Letter of Commitment from Research Mentor:** Should include: a) brief description of Mentor's contribution to the development of the learner's research proposal; b) agreement to serve as a member of the learner's Committee on Studies (thesis committee); and, c) brief description of how the Mentor's research experience and interests align with and will support the completion of the learner's thesis research project.
5. **Mentoring Plan and Agreement:** A very specific mentoring plan should be included and should outline:
  - a. Goals and objectives of advising/mentoring relationship
  - b. Expectations for frequency of contact and type of contact
  - c. Advisor/mentor roles and expectations
  - d. Learner roles and expectations
  - e. Feedback mechanism(s)
  - f. Turnaround time for feedback
6. **Research Mentor's current CV/NIH Biosketch**
7. **Letter of Support from Dean, Department Chair, or Program Director** on department letterhead, addressing the Chair/Dean/Program Director's commitment to:
  - a. A future faculty position for the learner (if applicable)
  - b. 50% release time for the remainder of the learner's UNM tenure
  - c. Other department support for to the learner's research (e.g., research funds, book/supply fees, travel to scientific meetings, etc.), and/or tuition support (i.e., if tuition benefits do not cover all the tuition expense).

**Applicants should review the following information with their *Research Mentor* and any proposed members of their *Committee of Studies* so that each party is clear about the expectations for the program and the function of the Committee of Studies.**

#### **Committee of Studies**

Each MSCR learner will be supported by a Committee of Studies (COS) composed of their Research Mentor, a member of the MSCR Steering Committee (chosen by the learner or appointed by the MSCR Program Director) and at least one additional subject matter expert. The basic role of the COS is to plan with the learner an integrated individual program of study and thesis research project that meets general and specific graduate program requirements. The COS will also provide guidance and feedback to learner progress with regular reviews at structured COS meetings that should occur at least quarterly, but more frequently when necessary. The COS may also establish prerequisites when needed; recommend transfer of credit; approve significant changes in the program of studies and thesis research; recommend changes/additions in the committee makeup; and serve as the Exam Committee for the Thesis Defense.

#### **COS Meeting Format**

For each COS meeting, all committee members are expected to attend. The MSCR learner must present an overview of his/her academic and research (thesis) progress since the last meeting (typically in the form of a PowerPoint slide presentation). After the presentation, the committee members should critically evaluate the Learner's progress, identify potential issues and gaps in the Learners learning/research plan and provide concrete objectives for the learner to work towards. These meetings should last approximately 1 hour and should be scheduled well in advance to accommodate everyone's schedules. COS members must sign a form after each COS meeting stipulating their participation and agreement with all decisions by the COS. Forms must be turned in to the BREP Office and kept in each learner's file.