

2025 - 2026 Student Handbook

Department of Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences
PhD in Biotechnology Program



UAB // SHP

UAB SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS
DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL AND DIAGNOSTIC SCIENCES
PHD IN BIOTECHNOLOGY
2025-2026 ACADEMIC HANDBOOK



08/15/2025

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INTRODUCTION

DEAN'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Health Professions!

We are one of the six schools comprising the renowned UAB Academic Health Center. We offer more than 30 programs and 40 offerings at the certificate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. And we are home to nearly 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

I encourage you to take advantage of all our vast resources, state-of-the-art facilities and research opportunities during your academic and clinical education. Also, please make the most of your access to the world-class faculty who are here to teach and support your journey.

Our degrees and programs are fully accredited by their respective professional organizations. This means you will be eligible for licensure, national certification or registrations upon graduation. Graduating from the School of Health Professions means you will be well prepared to make a difference in your community.

I look forward to seeing you grow in your respective fields and watching you become the leader we know you can be.



Andrew J. Butler, PhD, FAPTA

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

The UAB School of Health Professions (SHP) is one of the largest academic institutions of its type in the United States. What began in the 1950s as a collection of training programs in various para-professional disciplines has grown into an internationally recognized center of academic and research excellence.

Today, we have five academic departments – Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences, Health Services Administration, Nutrition Sciences, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy – that are housed in four buildings: Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences (WEBB), Learning Resource Center (LRC), the School of Health Professions (SHPB), and the Center for Biophysical Sciences and Engineering (CBSE).

We are proud of many accomplishments including:

- *U.S. News & World Report* ranks all eligible SHP programs in the nation's top 25.
- Research funding is at an all-time high of \$26+ million and growing.
- Nearly 10 of our programs you will only find in Alabama at UAB.
- Our school has never been stronger or better positioned as a national leader in health professions education. And this status will only grow stronger as we continue to welcome students like you.

DISCLAIMER

This Handbook is an overview of general academic regulations specific to SOHP programs at UAB. Although UAB will make its best efforts to abide by this handbook, UAB reserves the right to interpret and apply its procedures and policies, and to deviate from these guidelines, as appropriate in the particular circumstances and in accordance with the mission and goals of the program. UAB also reserves the right to address issues not covered in this handbook and to make changes to the policy without advance notice. Changes become effective at the time the proper authorities determine so and the changes apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. Please refer to our website for the most up-to-date version.

All students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the general University rules and regulations pertaining to graduate study at UAB and the specific academic requirements of their particular degree program. This Handbook is not intended to nor does it contain all policies or regulations applicable to students. Each student is responsible for familiarizing him/herself with the contents of this Handbook. Although the policies contained herein are intended to reflect current rules and policies of the University, users are cautioned that changes or additions may have become effective since the publication of this material. In the event of a conflict, current statements of Board policy contained in the Bylaws, Rules, official minutes, and other pronouncements of the Board or Chancellor, or superseding law, shall prevail.

This Handbook does not constitute a contract and may not be deemed or construed as part of any contract between UAB and any student or student representative.

SECTION 1 – SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

All dates related to registration, payments of tuition and fees, drop/add dates, other administrative requirements, and official school holidays are recorded on the [UAB Academic Calendar](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

The University established a new Academic Integrity Code effective August 23, 2021. This Code, which applies to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students as well as all academic activities, defines academic misconduct and outlines procedures for breaches of the code. Policies are established for resolution of charges of academic misconduct, and these processes are managed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator (AIC). In the School of Health Professions, the AIC is the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs, the office is located in SHPB 660. The full text of the Academic Integrity Code is available at: [Academic Integrity Code](#).

ADVISING

Undergraduate student advising is provided through advisors assigned to each program as well as through the Office of Student Services. Advisor and recruiter contact information can be found on the [Office of Student Services Website](#). Graduate student advising is provided through the SHP graduate programs.

AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors help to spread awareness of the School of Health Professions and its multifaceted undergraduate and graduate programs, serve as liaisons between the department and university-wide student organizations, and serve as a student voice in school and university committees. The SHP Ambassadors help to support the programs within the school that will impact recruitment and retention initiatives. Learn more about the SHP Ambassadors [HERE](#).

ASKIT

AskIT is the technology help desk for faculty, staff, and students. They provide free support via telephone, email, or in-person. You will be asked to supply your BlazerID when you request assistance.

Phone: (205) 996-5555 Email: askit@uab.edu Website: https://uabprod.service-now.com/service_portal

ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is expected in all SHP programs. Specific class, laboratory, or clinical site attendance requirements may be more stringent than university guidelines. Refer to the program requirements in this handbook and in course syllabi for policies. The UAB attendance policy is as follows:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham recognizes that the academic success of individual students is related to their class attendance and participation. Each course instructor is responsible for establishing policies concerning class attendance and make-up opportunities. Any such policies, including points for

attendance and/or participation, penalties for absences, limits on excused absences, total allowable absences, etc., must be specified in the course syllabus provided to students at the beginning of the course term. Such policies are subject to departmental oversight and may not, by their specific prescriptions, negate or circumvent the accommodations provided below for excused absences.

The University regards certain absences as excused and in those instances requires that instructors provide a reasonable accommodation for the student who misses assignments, presentations, examinations, or other academic work of a substantive nature by virtue of these excused absences.

Examples include the following:

- Absences due to jury or military duty, provided that official documentation has been provided to the instructor in a timely manner in advance.
- Absences of students registered with Disabilities Services for disabilities eligible for “a reasonable number of disability-related absences” provided students give their instructors notice of a disability-related absence in advance or as soon as possible.
- Absences due to participation in university-sponsored activities when the student is representing the university in an official capacity and as a critical participant, provided that the procedures below have been followed:
 - Before the end of the add/drop period, students must provide their instructor a schedule of anticipated excused absences in or with a letter explaining the nature of the expected absences from the director of the unit or department sponsoring the activity.
 - If a change in the schedule occurs, students are responsible for providing their instructors with advance written notification from the sponsoring unit or department.
- Absences due to other extenuating circumstances that instructors deem excused. Such classification is at the discretion of the instructor and is predicated upon consistent treatment of all students.
- Absences due to religious observances provided that students give faculty written notice prior to the drop/add deadline of the term.

In these instances, instructors must give students the opportunity to complete assignments in a way that corresponds as much as possible to the nature, scope, and format of the original. Options may include making up exams or other assignments, rescheduling student classroom presentations, or arranging for early or late submission of written assignments. The course make-up policy should be included in the syllabus.

BLAZERID / BLAZERNET / EMAIL

BlazerID: All students receive a unique identifier, the BlazerID, established at: www.uab.edu/blazerid.

Your BlazerID is required for accessing BlazerNET and other campus resources. To activate one's BlazerID, select “Activate Accounts.”

BlazerNET is the official portal of the UAB information network and is accessible from any Internet-accessible computer, on- or off-campus. Access BlazerNET from UAB home page www.uab.edu then choose UAB Quicklinks.

Email: uab.edu UAB student email is provided through Microsoft Office 365, a cloud-based system. Students have 50 GB of email space and 25 GB of free file 1 TB storage. The UAB email is the official communication medium for courses, news, information, and announcements. Students should not forward their UAB account to a personal email account. UAB is not responsible for information not received by the student due to the ‘redirecting’ of a UAB account to another email server.

BLAZER EXPRESS

The UAB Blazer Express Transit System provides transportation throughout the UAB campus. With a valid UAB ID badge, students can enjoy fare-free bus transportation. All buses are ADA-accessible and can seat approximately 35 riders. For an updated schedule, route maps, and hours of operation please go to www.uab.edu/blazerexpress/.

BOOKSTORE

There is one bookstore located on the UAB campus, offering a wide variety of products and services to students, including online purchasing and shipping. The bookstore stocks UAB memorabilia and college wear in addition to all required textbooks and course material.

UAB Barnes and Noble Bookstore

Location: 1400 University Blvd, Hill Student Center, Birmingham, AL. 35233

Hours: M – F 8:00am – 5:00pm | Sat 10:00am – 2:00pm | Sun Closed

Telephone: (205) 996-2665 Website: <https://uab.bncollege.com/shop/uab/home>

CAMPUS ONECARD

The UAB OneCard is the official university identification card. It is used for personal identification, for entry to campus events and the recreation center, for library checkout, and for other UAB services. It also serves as a declining balance card for the UAB meal plans and for Blazer Bucks accounts. Additional information is available at www.uab.edu/onecard.

CAMPUS MAP

UAB's campus map can be found at the following: www.uab.edu/map/

CAMPUS SAFETY

Campus safety procedures and resources can be accessed at <https://www.uab.edu/students/home/safety>.

CANVAS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Canvas Learning Management System is the platform used for managing instructional materials online. Canvas course sites are accessed through BlazerNET or at www.uab.edu/elearning/canvas. Students should monitor their course sites routinely for communication from faculty and to manage course assignments.

CATALOG

The UAB Catalog is published annually and includes UAB's courses, policies, and curricula. Students can link to the Undergraduate or Graduate catalog at www.uab.edu/catalog.

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

[Community Standards and Accountability](#) is responsible for upholding the integrity and purpose of the university through the fair and consistent application of policies and procedures to students' behavior to

ensure a community that respects the dignity and right of all persons to reach their highest potential. SARC delivers programs and services in order to promote student safety and success, the pursuit of knowledge, respect for self and others, global citizenship, personal accountability and integrity, and ethical development. More information can be found here: [UAB Student Advocacy, Rights & Conduct](#). The UAB student conduct code may be accessed online: [UAB Student Conduct Code](#).

COUNSELING SERVICES

Student Counseling Services offers no cost, confidential counseling for UAB students related to physical, emotional, social, intellectual, or spiritual concerns. Student Counseling Services is located in the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1714 9th Avenue South (3rd Floor), Birmingham, AL. 35233. For more information, call (205) 934-5816 or <https://www.uab.edu/students/counseling/>.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

Accessible Learning: UAB is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students. If you are a student with a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and you require accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures. Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty, and staff. If you have a disability but have not contacted Disability Support Services, please call (205) 934-4205 or visit [Disability Support Services](#).

If you are a student registered with Disability Support Services, it is your responsibility to contact the course instructor to discuss the accommodations that may be necessary in each course. Students with disabilities must be registered with DSS and provide an accommodation request letter before receiving academic adjustments. Reasonable and timely notification of accommodations for the course is encouraged and provided to the course instructor so that the accommodations can be arranged.

EMERGENCIES

Report suspicious or threatening activity to the UAB Police Department immediately. Law officers are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Also, more than 300 emergency blue light telephones connected directly to the police dispatch are located throughout campus.

UAB Police: Dial 911 *from a campus phone*

or call: (205) 934-3535 | (205) 934-HELP (4357) | (205) 934-4434

Emergencies affecting campus are communicated via the following:

- UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline: (205) 934-2165
- University home web page: www.uab.edu
- Webpage: www.uab.edu/emergency
- Announcements on BlazerNET
- Cell phone messages and SMS text – register for B-ALERT notices via <https://idm.uab.edu/ens/b-alert>

UAB EQUAL EMPLOYMENT/EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:

UAB is an Equal Employment/Equal Educational Opportunity Institution dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), genetic information, age, disability, and veteran's status. As required by Title IX, UAB prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to UAB's Assistant Vice President and Senior Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX notice of nondiscrimination is located at uab.edu/titleix

FERPA TRAINING

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 provides protection for all educational records related to students enrolled in an educational program. Information about your rights and protection of your records is available at the following site: FERPA. If you have questions or concerns about FERPA issues, you may email FERPA@uab.edu. All SHP students are required to complete FERPA Training.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid Counselors are available each day in the One Stop Student Services Office located in the Hill Student Center, 1400 University Blvd. Suite 103, Birmingham, AL 35233. If you have general questions, you can call the Office of Student Financial Aid at (205) 934-8223 or send an email to finaid@uab.edu. For additional financial aid information: [Cost & Aid](#).

FOOD SERVICES

Dining facilities available on campus closest to the SHP buildings include the Commons on the Green – located on the Campus Green, south of 9th Avenue and the Campus Recreation Center. For additional information about meal plans and campus dining facilities: [Student Dining](#).

GRADUATE SCHOOL

The UAB Graduate School offers doctoral programs, post-master's specialist programs, and master's level programs. Graduate programs in SHP are coordinated through the Graduate School and students must adhere to the Graduate School policies and procedures. Graduate School information for current students is available at [Graduate School](#). Policies and Procedures for the Graduate School can be located in the [Graduate School Catalog](#).

GRADUATION

All students must complete an application for degree six months prior to graduating and no later than the deadline in the academic calendar. The University holds commencement every semester. Check the commencement website for the most current information: [UAB Commencement](#).

HEALTH INSURANCE

To ensure that all students have adequate health care coverage, including ongoing primary and specialty care, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) requires all students to have major medical health insurance. Students can provide proof of their own private coverage or be enrolled in the Student

Health Insurance Plan. The plan is a 1-year commercial policy provided by United HealthCare and is re-negotiated annually. This policy is a comprehensive health insurance policy at an affordable cost that is specifically designed to meet the needs of UAB Students. If you are required to have insurance but have sufficient coverage on another plan and wish to opt out of the Student Health Insurance Plan, you are required to submit a waiver to Student Health Services at the beginning of every semester. More information including submitting a waiver can be found at this website: [Student Health Insurance Waivers](#).

HIPAA TRAINING

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) includes significant requirements for protecting individual privacy of health information. All students in the School of Health Professions must complete an online tutorial and be tested on HIPAA regulations at the time of program admission. A BlazerID is required to access the training site, located at [online learning](#). Compliance with the training requirement is monitored monthly.

HONOR SOCIETIES

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for the Alpha Eta Honor Society.

- The UAB Chapter of this Society recognizes students registered in the final term of a baccalaureate or graduate health professions program. Inductees must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 = A) and be in the upper 10% of their program. Nominations are made by program directors in spring and summer terms.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty, and staff at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), first-time entering students, international students and scholars, and students in clinical & non-clinical programs, must provide proof of immunization against certain diseases: [Student Immunizations](#) unless they have an approved medical or religious exemption.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN USE (IRB)

Student researchers must comply with all requirements for protection of human subjects. Detailed information is available on the [IRB website](#).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual property refers to an asset that originated conceptually, such as literary and artistic works, inventions, or other creative works. These assets should be protected and used only as the creator intends. Training materials defining inventor status, patent criteria, and other intellectual property issues are available at: [University Policies on Patents, Copyright, and Intellectual Property](#).

LACTATION CENTERS

The University has provided several lactation centers for students, faculty, and staff across the campus. [Center locations](#). The School of Health Professions' lactation room is in the Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences Building at 1675 University Blvd, Room 219A, Birmingham, AL 35233. Lactating students enrolled in the School of Health Professions have access to the room via their student ID/OneCard. If you cannot access the room, contact the building administrator, Julia Tolbert-Jackson at (205) 934-4133.

LIBRARIES AND LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

UAB's libraries house excellent collections of books, periodicals, microforms, and other media. Students have online remote access to catalogs and online collections. Computers are available for student use during regular hours of operation. [UAB Libraries](#).

SHP Learning Resource Center (LRC)

The School of Health Professions Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides a unique set of enterprise solutions that promote an exciting, intriguing, and innovative learning environment. It provides a state-of-the-art media studio; audio/visual support; and information technology management of public, classroom, and testing labs.

Location: 1714 9th Avenue South (2nd Floor), Birmingham, AL. 35233.

Phone: (205) 934-5146

Email: shplrc@uab.edu

Lister Hill Library of the Health Sciences

This is the largest biomedical library in Alabama, and one of the largest in the south. Located across the crosswalk from the School, the LHL has extension libraries in University Hospital and The Kirklin Clinic. Dedicated librarians hold "office hours" in the Learning Resource Center weekly.

Location: 1700 University Blvd. Birmingham, AL. 35233

Website: <https://library.uab.edu/locations/lister-hill>

Phone: (205) 975-4821

Mervyn H. Sterne Library

A collection of more than one million items supporting teaching and research in the arts and humanities, business, education, engineering, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences.

Location: 917 13th Street South, Birmingham, AL. 35233

Website: <https://library.uab.edu/locations/sterne>

Phone: (205) 934-6364 (Reference) | (205) 934-4338 (User Services)

UAB STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The Student Conduct Code promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, rights, and responsibilities expected of students consistent with the core missions of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This Code describes the standards of behavior for all students, and it outlines students' rights, responsibilities, and the campus processes for adjudicating alleged violations. Behavior that violates UAB standards of conduct listed within the Student Conduct Code and elsewhere will be subject to disciplinary action through the appropriate conduct process. Whether it is determined that an

individual or group is responsible for the violation(s), either by direct involvement or by condoning, encouraging, or covering up the violation, appropriate response will occur with respect to the individual(s) and/or group involved.

[Undergraduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

[Graduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

ONE STOP STUDENT SERVICES

The mission of the One Stop is to provide a single point of professional integrated service to students. The One Stop serves students who need assistance with academic records, financial aid, registration, student accounting, ONE card, and other related topics. One Stop is located in the Hill Student Center, 1400 University Blvd. Suite 103, Birmingham, AL 35233. You may contact the [One Stop](#) office by phone or email at (205) 934-4300; (855) UAB-1STP [(855) 822-1787]; onestop@uab.edu.

PARKING

Student vehicles must be registered with UAB Parking and Transportation Services, located at 608 8th Street South, Birmingham AL. 35294. The office is open Monday – Friday from 7:30am – 5:00pm. Parking is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking fees are established by location, payable by semester or year, and are billed to the student's account. For additional information: [UAB Student Parking](#).

PLAGIARISM AND TURNITIN

Plagiarism is academic misconduct that will result in a grade of zero and may result in dismissal from the School of Health Professions and UAB (see Academic Integrity Policy). All papers submitted for grading in any SHP program may be reviewed using the online plagiarism monitoring software. Please note that all documents submitted to [Turnitin.com](#) are added to their database of papers that is used to screen future assignments for plagiarism.

RECREATION CENTER

The [Campus Recreation Center](#), located at 1501 University Blvd, Birmingham, AL 35233, is open to faculty, staff, students, and their families. A valid student identification card or membership card is required for access. Facilities include basketball courts, racquetball courts, weight rooms, swimming pools, exercise rooms, and indoor track.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS AWARDS

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for the following awards.

- Alfred W. Sangster Award for Outstanding International Student – This award is presented annually to an international student in recognition of their academic and non-academic achievements.
- Cecile Clardy Satterfield Award for Humanism in Health Care – This award is made annually to recognize one outstanding student for humanitarianism, professionalism, and commitment to health care.

- Charles Brooks Award for Creativity – This award is made annually in recognition of creative accomplishments such as written publications or artistic contributions which complemented the student’s academic activities.
- Dean’s Leadership and Service Award – Presented to a maximum of three outstanding SHP students annually, this award recognizes leadership to the School, UAB, and the community.

A call for nominations will be sent to program directors each year. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for awards available to students in individual programs.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS

SHP has several scholarship opportunities for students enrolled in SHP programs. The Scholarship Committee, comprised of faculty from each department, reviews and selects awardees. Please go to [this website](#) for a list of scholarships and instructions for application.

Application announcements are made by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Many programs in SHP also have scholarships available to currently enrolled students in those programs. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for more information.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SHARED VALUES

Collaboration | Compassion & Caring | Excellence & Achievement | Integrity | Respect | Service | Social Responsibility | Stewardship

The School of Health Professions is a tight-knit community that is connected from students to staff to faculty to alumni. We are dedicated to serving all from campus to community and beyond. And we are a knowledge-driven mass that is committed to classrooms, laboratories, clinics and more.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can serve as useful communication tools. However, health professions students should use the forums judiciously. For more information: [UAB Social Media Guidelines](#). The school’s official sites are the following:

- X: https://x.com/uab_shp
- Facebook: <https://facebook.com/uabshp>
- YouTube: <https://youtube.com/uabshp>
- Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/uabshp>
- LinkedIn: [UAB SHP LinkedIn](#)
- Instagram: https://instagram.com/uab_shp
http://instagram.com/uab_shp

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The University provides prevention, counseling, and treatment services to students through Student Health Services (SHS) located at 1714 9th Avenue South (3rd Floor), Birmingham, AL. 35233. The clinic is open from 8:00am – 5:00pm Monday – Thursday; 9:00am – 5:00pm Friday. They are closed for lunch

between 12:00pm – 1:00 pm weekdays. For more information: [Student Health Services](#). Appointments may be scheduled by calling (205) 934-3580.

TITLE IX

In accordance with Title IX, the University of Alabama at Birmingham does not discriminate on the basis of gender in any of its programs or services. The University is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on gender and expects individuals who live, work, teach, and study within this community to contribute positively to the environment and to refrain from behaviors that threaten the freedom or respect that every member of our community deserves. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources, and supports, please visit the UAB Title IX webpage: <https://www.uab.edu/titleix/>.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and fees for the University are published annually under the “Students” tab of the UAB website. They may be paid through BlazerNET. SHP programs have specific fees attached to programs, courses, and/ or laboratories. For more information: [Tuition & Fees](#).

Payment deadlines for each semester are published on the official academic calendar. Please note that failure to meet payment deadlines can result in being administratively withdrawn from courses.

WEATHER

Severe weather situations that may affect the safety of students, faculty, and staff are communicated through the same channels as other emergencies. For more information: [Emergency Management](#).

Other information sources include:

- [B-ALERT System](#) (contact information must be setup and current)
- UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline: (205) 934-2165

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE / PROGRAM

Withdrawal from a course or from your program is an official process and should be discussed with your academic advisor and / or program director. Most programs in the School of Health Professions are full-time and the curricula specifically sequenced. Withdrawal from a course may risk you having to wait to register for the class again. Withdrawals are made through the UAB registration system via the Student Resources tab in BlazerNET. Notice of program withdrawal should be given in writing to the program director. For more information: [UAB Add/Drop and Withdrawal Policy](#) including a medical withdrawal policy.

SECTION 2 – SHP AND UAB POLICIES

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS POLICIES

DISMISSAL OF STUDENT FOR FAILURE TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[Dismissal of Student and Appeal Process](#)

EMERGENCY PLAN – SHPB/LRC/WEBB

[SHPB/LRC/WEBB Emergency Plan](#)

BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG SCREEN POLICY

Students in SHP programs are required to undergo a background check and drug screen using the school's approved vendor, [CastleBranch](#), at the time of program admission, and again, prior to placement in a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.). Additional checks/screens may be required by the individual sites therefore, students should work with the program to ensure compliance requirements are met. Instructions for requesting the background check and drug screens are provided to students by their programs. Students enrolled in SHP undergraduate programs will complete a learning module in the campus learning management system by the first semester of enrollment.

The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs is responsible for ensuring student compliance throughout the program. Students found to be non-compliant will not be allowed to matriculate in the program (orientation, attend class, fieldwork placement, etc.) until all requirements are met. Program Directors, Fieldwork Coordinators, and students will be notified of non-compliance and a hold will be placed on the students' account.

- Fees for these screenings will be the responsibility of the student.
- The rules and regulations governing individual fieldwork placement sites may include additional provisions and/or more stringent guidelines which supersede this policy. Fees for these screenings are the responsibility of the student.
- Should your criminal background check contain issues, or if you fail a drug screen that may prevent you from receiving or sitting for board certification/licensure, a representative from the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will contact you. Depending upon the outcome, students will have a registration hold placed on their account until in compliance and this may result in being dismissed from the program. See program's guidelines regarding specific consequences.

Programs requiring a criminal background check and drug screening by the end of the first semester of enrollment and again, prior to fieldwork placement (if applicable in the program requirements), are the following:

Administration Health Services, PhD
Biomedical Sciences to Biotechnology Fast Track
Biomedical Sciences to Clinical Laboratory Science Fast Track
Biomedical Sciences to Health Physics Fast Track
Biomedical Sciences to Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences Fast Track

Biomedical and Health Sciences, MS
 Biotechnology, MS
 Biotechnology, PhD
 Dietitian Education Program, Graduate Certificate
 Genetic Counseling, MS
 Health Administration (Residential), MSHA
 Health Care Management to Healthcare Quality and Safety Fast Track
 Health Care Management to Health Informatics Fast Track
 Health Care Management to Occupational Therapy Doctorate Fast Track
 Health Physics, MS
 Medical Laboratory Science, MS
 Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences, MS
 Nutrition Sciences, MS

- Dietetic Internship Clinical Track
- Dietitian Education Program
- Research Track

 Nutrition Sciences, PhD
 Occupational Therapy, OTD – (entry level)
 Physical Therapy, DPT
 Physician Associate Studies, MSPAS
 Rehabilitation Science, PhD

The following students enrolled in SHP undergraduate programs will complete a learning module in the campus learning management system by the first semester of enrollment. If a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.) is required, students must complete criminal background checks and drug screens prior to the first day of the semester of a fieldwork placement.

Health Care Management, BS
 Biomedical Sciences, BS
 Biobehavioral Nutrition and Wellness, BS
 Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Science, BS

Programs waived from the Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening requirements are the following: *

Applied Mixed Methods Research, Graduate Certificate
 Biotechnology Regulatory Affairs, Graduate Certificate
 Clinical Informatics, Graduate Certificate
 Health Administration (International and Executive tracks), MSHA
 Health Informatics, MSHI
 Healthcare Finance Management, Graduate Certificate
 Healthcare Leadership, DSc
 Healthcare Leadership, Graduate Certificate
 Healthcare Quality and Safety, MS
 Healthcare Quality and Safety, Graduate Certificate
 Health Services Research, MS
 Healthcare Simulation, MS

Healthcare Simulation, Graduate Certificate

Nutrition for Community Health, Graduate Certificate

Nutrition Sciences, MS

- Clinical Track-Prior Learning

- Lifestyle Management and Disease Prevention Track

Low Vision Rehabilitation, Graduate Certificate

Multi-Tiered Approach to Trauma, Graduate Certificate

Occupational Therapy Doctorate (Post Professional)

Physical Therapy Residencies (Neurologic, Orthopedic)

Primary Care Physical Therapy for Underserved Populations, Graduate Certificate

*Students enrolled in exempt programs who participate in a course(s) incorporating community, corporate or other high impact, out-of-classroom activities such as service learning, capstone projects or other hands-on learning experiences, may be required by placement sites to submit background check and drug screening results. Students are responsible for the fees associated with such screening.



STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

About CastleBranch.com

CastleBranch is a secure platform that allows you to order your background check & drug test online. Once you have placed your order, you may use your login to access additional features of CastleBranch, including document storage, portfolio builders and reference tools. CastleBranch also allows you to upload any additional documents required by your school.

Order Summary

Required Personal Information

- o In addition to entering your full name and date of birth, you will be asked for your Social Security Number, current address, phone number, and e-mail address.

Drug Test (LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics)

- o Within 24-48 hours after you place your order, the electronic chain of custody form e-chain will be placed directly into your CastleBranch account. This e-chain will explain where you need to go to complete your drug test.

Payment Information

- o At the end of the online order process, you will be prompted to enter your Visa or MasterCard information. Money orders are also accepted, but will result in a \$10 fee and additional turn-around-time.

Place Your Order

Go to: www.castlebranch.com and enter package code:

AH01 - Background Check and Drug Test

You will be required to enter your program under "Student Information" classification

You will then be directed to set up your CastleBranch profile account.

View Your Results

Your results will be posted directly to your CastleBranch profile account. You will be notified if there is any missing information needed in order to process your order. Although 95% of background check results are completed within 3-5 business days, some results may take longer. Your order will show as "In Process" until it has been completed in its entirety. Your school's administrator can also securely view your results online with their unique username and password. If you have any additional questions, please contact the Service Desk at 888.723.4263 x 7196 or visit the website to submit your question at: <https://www.castlebranch.com/contact-us>.

UAB POLICIES

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[GRADUATE](#)

[UNDERGRADUATE](#)

HEALTH

[IMMUNIZATIONS](#)

[NEEDLE STICKS AND EXPOSURES](#)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

[EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT](#)

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[CAMPUS SAFETY](#)

[FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS](#)

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

[ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE](#)

[ETHICAL STANDARDS IN RESEARCH AND OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES](#)

[PATENT](#)

SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE

[ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, USE AND CONSUMPTION](#)

[DRUG FREE CAMPUS](#)

[NON-SMOKING](#)

TECHNOLOGY

[TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES](#)

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

[UAB COMPLAINT POLICY](#)

SECTION 3 – PHD BIOTECHNOLOGY PROGRAM INFORMATION

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Welcome to the UAB Biotechnology PhD Program. Biotechnology is an industry based on biology that harnesses cellular and molecular processes to create novel technologies and products that will positively impact the quality of our lives and the health of our planet. The Biotechnology program at UAB provides students with the training necessary to be part of the industry's specialized workforce. PhD Students will develop a strong knowledge base in science, technology, research, commercialization and biotechnology industry-specific business development and entrepreneurial skills.

Upon completion of the program, graduates will have earned their PhD and be prepared for leadership roles in the biotechnology industry including management, research and development, regulatory affairs and equipped with skills in business, marketing and commercialization of biotechnology products and technologies. The biotechnology industry will continue to be a key economic engine for the United States with strong job growth. At UAB, we are proud to offer students the specialized training needed for the continued support and growth of the biotechnology industry in the United States.

The UAB web pages, or links, are included for some of the sections of this handbook, and you are encouraged to review the links for information you may need. The UAB and School of Health Professions (SHP) pages have search engines to allow you to input keywords and find information. Also, the campus directory and calendars are located on the main UAB page: www.uab.edu. Refer to the UAB graduate school webpage: <https://www.uab.edu/graduate/> or the CDS Biotechnology webpage: <https://www.uab.edu/shp/cds/biotechnology>

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The **PhD in Biotechnology** effectively combines biological and scientific knowledge and concepts with the legal, regulatory, marketing, and financial aspects of the life sciences industry.

Students will have the option of working on their own idea for a product/technology or working on projects identified through the [UAB Bill L. Harbert Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship \(HIIE\)](#) and/or through our partnership with [Southern Research \(SR\)](#).

Program Benefits

- Graduates will be highly competitive for a variety of jobs in the life sciences industry.
- Develop knowledge on how to seek patent applications, pursue licensing or commercialization strategies as part of dissertation work, and understand components to launch a biotechnology company.
- Blends traditional scholarly research and pedagogy with practicum-based learning, providing unique, and highly marketable skillsets.

FACULTY & STAFF

Our faculty create a culture of innovation and collaboration that embraces social responsibility and entrepreneurial principles. UAB faculty are teachers, scholars, researchers, clinicians and entrepreneurs who earn the highest honors in their fields, lead professional societies and provide exceptional mentoring and training.

Current Listing: <https://www.uab.edu/shp/cds/biotechnology-phd/faculty-and-staff>

PHD IN BIOTECHNOLOGY CLASSROOMS

School of Health Professions Building

The PhD in Biotechnology Program is one of many programs offered by the Department of Clinical & Diagnostic Sciences (CDS) located in the School of Health Professions (SHP).

Center for Biophysical Sciences & Engineering Building

Classes may also be offered in the Center for Biophysical Sciences (CBSE). Additionally, most faculty offices are located on the second floor of CBSE. Within CBSE, students can find the following:

- Program Director's Office: Located on the second floor of CBSE (room 205 and 206).
- Biotechnology Faculty: Located in various offices on the second floor of CBSE.
- Classrooms: Located on the first and second floors of CBSE.
- Break/Study room: Located on the second floor of the CBSE.
- Biotechnology Research Labs: Located on the second floor of CBSE.

All Biotechnology students should have One Card access to SHPB and CBSE. Please alert Sharney Logan, Program Manager II for the PhD students via email if you do not have access to one or both of the facilities. Students are expected to treat all university, department, and program facilities with respect.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The PhD program in Biotechnology offers a completely new approach to doctoral learning, blending traditional scholarly research and pedagogy with practicum-based learning that ultimately will provide graduate students with unique and highly marketable skillsets. Specifically, core training in the program will span from scientific discovery to the collection of proof-of-concept data, issues with the development of intellectual property, and the analysis of market opportunities and business plans for a novel product. In addition to scientific discovery capability, the biotechnology doctoral students will be prepared with the knowledge and skills needed to successfully conduct and evaluate research within the setting of a biotechnology company coupled with knowledge of biotechnology economics, regulatory affairs, and the business skills to advance a biotechnology product and company forward. Upon graduation, the students will be prepared for a career in the biotechnology industry.

CURRICULUM

The PhD curriculum is outlined below. Students must complete all classes to graduate from their respective program. UAB's Academic Calendar can be located: [Current Academic Calendar - Students - Academics \(uab.edu\)](https://uab.edu/academic-calendar)

Curriculum Requirements

- Credit hours required in program core courses: 24
- Credit hours in additional required courses: 30
 - *(9 of these 30 hours are elective or certificate courses)
- Credit hours in required research courses: 24
- **Total credit hours required for completion: 78**

To see the official course list for the PhD in Biotechnology program, [please visit the UAB Graduate Catalog.](#)

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM INFORMATION AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Specific details for each of the following sections will be outlined in the “Guidelines for Biotechnology Students/Candidates” manual provided by the program director. These guidelines detail specifics for the selection of projects and committees, committee meetings, qualifying exam, admission to candidacy and completion of dissertation research and defense information.

Research Project Selection

Students have the option of identifying their own research project or working on projects identified through the UAB Bill L. Harbert Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (IIE) and/or through our partnership with Southern Research (SR). The students will rotate through 1-2 labs in their first year and select their mentor and research project.

Committee Formation

Students working with their selected mentor and the program director will establish their committee. Per UAB graduate school policy, there is a minimum of five members for doctoral students. All members of the committee must have graduate faculty status as per the graduate school policy. The students must hold one committee meeting before admission to candidacy via the qualifying exam.

Qualifying Exam

Typically, in year two students will be expected to pass a qualifying exam before they can transition to dissertation work. This examination will be comprised of a written and oral component. The written portion must be completed and passed prior to scheduling of the oral component as described further in the guidelines.

Admission to Candidacy

Requirements:

1. Completion of all required course work and non-dissertation research
2. A student's committee should be formed and meet once prior to candidacy.
3. Satisfactory Completion of Written Qualifying Exam
4. Satisfactory Completion of Oral Qualifying Exam

Once these milestones are achieved, the student's committee will verify advancement to candidacy by signing the official Graduate School form. The student also completes the application form for Admission to Candidacy. In order to register for dissertation research credits for the subsequent term, the Candidacy forms must be submitted and approved by the dates posted on the Graduate School website. <https://www.uab.edu/graduate/students/current-students/theses-dissertations/application-for-admission-to-candidacy>. Students will not be able to register for dissertation research hours until they have been admitted to candidacy. <https://www.uab.edu/graduate/students/current-students/theses-dissertations/candidacy-deadlines>

It is the student's responsibility to notify the program administrator when the official admission to candidacy notification is received from the Graduate School. Students must acquire a minimum of 12 semester hours of 799 dissertation research and complete the appropriate research-based coursework before being eligible to defend their thesis.

Dissertation Research

The dissertation is a final certification in the student's level of understanding of their research area as well as the ability to critically evaluate scientific and business concepts and develop rationale arguments supporting their positions. Peer-review publications are confirmations of a student's ability to articulate the research in the public domain contributing knowledge to their respective field. The Biotechnology program requires that each student publish at least one "first-author" original research paper during their training. This is the minimum requirement.

The dissertation is expected to be of high-quality, excel technically, and meet proper standards for structure, grammar, and writing style. Each committee member is expected to read the dissertation prior to oral defense of the dissertation; thus, the student must deliver the written dissertation to each committee member at least 14 days prior to the oral defense. Failure to meet the deadline may result in rescheduling the oral defense. The committee may have suggested edits and corrections. It is the responsibility of the student to incorporate these changes. The UAB graduate school provides a number of helpful resources for preparing the written dissertation:

<https://www.uab.edu/graduate/students/current-students/theses-dissertations/resources>

Defense

The defense represents the culmination of your research and time in the PhD program. Students will schedule a private defense with their committee members and a public defense. At the beginning of the student's final semester, they must complete an Application for Graduate Degree / Certificate first.

When they are ready to defend, students need to request the defense approval form. The Graduate School will also list the student's defense information on the graduate school's presentation calendar using the information provided in the request. Before public defense the dissertation is submitted according to the graduate school requirements.

Students must adhere to the graduate school policies and deadlines with the appropriate approval forms, scheduling dates and submissions of their final dissertations, etc. This includes completing the UAB Publication Agreement, the Survey of Earned Doctorates, and the Graduate School Exit Survey

Please see graduate school forms website page:

<https://www.uab.edu/graduate/students/current-students/academic-policies-progress/forms>

THE UAB GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES and PROCEDURES

The Biotechnology PhD Program follows all of the Graduate School Catalog policies and procedures pertaining to academic performance, degree progress, academic and non-academic conduct, and student responsibilities. UAB graduate students are expected to be familiar with these policies and to abide by them. Failure to do so may impede a student's progress or may result in disciplinary action and, in some cases, dismissal. In addition to Graduate School policies, students are responsible for knowing and abiding by all UAB Policies and Procedures which can be located in the UAB Policies and Procedures Library [here](#).

Graduate School Professional Development Program

Through its Professional Development Program, the Graduate School offers courses, workshops, and seminars designed to help graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and other academic professionals develop communication and other career-enhancing skills. Current offerings include credit-bearing courses and workshops, as well as free seminars, in writing, funding, presentations, and teaching at the college level. More information and schedules are available at the Professional Development Program's Web site (<https://www.uab.edu/gbs/home/student-resources/professional-development>).

Graduate School Deadlines

All Graduate School deadlines, as indicated on the calendar or in explanation of policies and procedures, unless otherwise stated, are final by **5:00 p.m.** on the date specified, by which time all transactions must be completed and documents received in the Graduate School. Transactions and documents requiring the action or approval of graduate advisors, committee members, instructors, department chairs, academic deans, or others prior to receipt by the Graduate School should be initiated by the appropriate person (student, instructor, graduate advisor, or other) sufficiently in advance of the Graduate School deadline for the required actions to be taken and approvals made or declined before the deadline.

Please refer to the UAB Graduate Programs website for more information

<https://catalog.uab.edu/graduate/>

EXPECTED STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students are expected to demonstrate responsibility for their professional education, as well as mature professional behavior during their time in the PhD program. Acceptable behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Integrity in all program requirements - as defined in the Academic Code of Conduct
- Dependability in program requirements.
- Responsibility for their own actions in all courses and throughout their research and time in the PhD program.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

GRADES

Final grades and credits for each student are recorded and preserved as a permanent record at UAB.

The grade of A indicates superior performance, B indicates adequate performance, and C indicates performance only minimally adequate for a graduate student. Any graduate student completing a course at the 500 level or above with a performance below the C level will receive a grade of F; the Graduate School does not use the grade of D.

GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

For a student to maintain good academic standing in the Graduate School, they must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (B average) and an overall satisfactory performance on pass/not pass courses, as well as not be on probation for an academic integrity violation. Satisfactory performance on pass/not pass courses is defined as earning at least as many hours of P as of NP grades.

For complete policy outlines in graduate school handbook:

[Academic Progress < Catalog | The University of Alabama at Birmingham](#)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

Academic conduct generally concerns the behaviors and actions of students in the teaching/learning environment, whether on campus or at another location sponsoring a learning activity. When behaviors and actions of students are deemed unethical or inappropriate, the term academic misconduct may be applied. Examples of Academic Misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, facilitating cheating, fabrication, misrepresentation, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, fabrication of data, falsification and misrepresentation of information, etc. A student's failure to meet technical standards shall also be handled as Academic Misconduct under this Policy. The PhD program in Biotechnology follows and strictly abides by the UAB policies regarding Academic Misconduct as outlined by the UAB Academic Integrity Code.

The policy can be reviewed in full using the following website: [Academic Progress < Catalog | The University of Alabama at Birmingham \(uab.edu\)](#)

GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES

Information on Graduate School Policies and Procedures may be found online at:

<http://www.uab.edu/graduate/graduate-catalog/72-policies-and-procedures>

Graduate School policies and procedures are developed to ensure that high standards for PhD level study are maintained at UAB. These policies and procedures are the joint responsibility of the Graduate Council and the Graduate School Dean. The Graduate Council, through consultation with the dean, is responsible for developing academic requirements and describing these requirements through appropriate policies. The dean, through consultation with the Graduate Council or the Advisory Committee of the Graduate Council, is responsible for developing procedures that effectively enforce academic requirements and implement policies.

For all other information go to the Graduate School Student Information webpage for information on Academic Policies and Progress, Registration, Financial, Commencement, other Academic Programs and Career Development.

<https://www.uab.edu/graduate/students/current-students>

APPLICATION FOR DEGREE & CERTIFICATE

Additional information is available at the [Graduate School website](#).

GRADUATE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

For more information on Graduate School policies refer to the UAB Graduate school handbook:

<http://catalog.uab.edu/student-handbook/>