**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

This program is designed for persons who will become clinical specialists, but who plan careers as clinician scientists. The program allows the MD graduate to concentrate primarily on thesis research in Medical Sciences and to bridge the gap between clinical and basic medical research. In addition, the program offers training in clinical research, which is not otherwise formally offered at this University.

Residents enrolled in the Medical Sciences Program may also register for the Clinician Investigator Program (CIP) concurrently, but there is no requirement to do so.

**ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Students considering this program must pay particular attention to the following requirements:

- All students must have an MD degree from an LCME accredited Medical School and all candidates must meet the admission requirements of the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Candidates must be currently registered in a Canadian Royal College Accredited Residency Program, the Canadian College of Family Physicians or hold positions as clinical fellows at a Canadian teaching hospital.
- The MSGP may accept graduates from foreign medical schools provided that they are landed immigrants (or Canadian citizens) resident in Canada. Such foreign graduates must provide evidence of proficiency in English by satisfactory TOEFL or IELTS score to the level required by the program. Graduates of foreign medical schools may have to undertake supplementary courses at the undergraduate level before enrolling in the graduate program.
- In most cases, candidates will already have an honors bachelor's degree in a basic science discipline, or a bachelor's degree in an appropriate discipline with some evidence of competence in a laboratory or research environment. However, it is recognized that there will be some excellent students whose preparation for their MD may not have followed this route. These candidates will be assessed by the Medical Sciences Program Committee. A decision to recommend acceptance will be based upon their past performance and suitability for graduate research in the medical sciences. Students who are judged acceptable but who have gaps in their knowledge base or relevant laboratory skills may be required to take additional coursework and should recognize that this may extend the time required to complete the program.

Two degree programs are offered:

**MSc**

This Program will normally be for two years, including course work and research. A minimum of one-half course in the area of research interest will be required (with a minimum grade as required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies) as well as attendance and contribution to a weekly Seminar series and Journal Club, and completion of the course on basic and clinical research methodology and ethics which will be taken by all students. A thesis on the research performed will be submitted and defended as outlined under the Guidelines of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. An external thesis examiner (external to Dalhousie University) will be appointed to ensure rigorous standards.

**PHD**

The time taken by the student to complete the Degree will be dependent on the progress and success of the thesis work as judged by the Supervisory Committee. It is expected that this degree will take between three and five years depending on the prior research experience of the candidate and the success of the research project. Course requirements would apply as in the MSc Program, but, in addition, a thesis proposal would be prepared by the student within twelve months of initiation of the Program and presented to the Committee. In addition, within 18 months of initiation of the Program, the student must pass a comprehensive examination, which will have an oral and a written component. A thesis will be required at the completion of research, as stipulated by the Faculty of Graduate Studies. In addition, publications, at least in the state of submission, will be expected.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

At the first meeting of the Supervisory Committee, relevant course work for the student will be identified by the Committee in agreement with the student and the supervisor. There will be a minimum requirement of one-half credit in the basic science discipline most relevant to the research project. However, the Committee may require that additional courses be taken to provide the knowledge base required for the thesis research. In addition, regular contributions to, and attendance at, a Journal Club and a Seminar series, will be a requirement to ensure a firm grounding in experimental methods.
**Funding**
Residents will receive an equivalent salary to their clinical counterparts. The funding for the students enrolled in the program can come from a variety of sources which include outside scholarships from National Funding bodies, such as CIHR; specialty foundations, such as the Heart & Stroke Foundation; local bodies, such as the Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation; or from internal sources, such as departments, divisions, and individual operating grants and contracts held by Faculty of Medicine researchers.

Funding for Graduate Studies in the Medical Sciences Program must be secured through the Clinical Department Head or other source prior to acceptance into this program.

Students in this program are not eligible for funding through the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

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