

**Milestones Agreement Form**  
**Doctor of Philosophy in Health Informatics**  
**School of Biomedical Informatics**  
**University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston**

This form is provided for the purpose of informing students about the academic milestones that they will be expected to reach in order to earn their Ph.D. degree as well as when they are expected to complete these milestones. Students are expected to reach each milestone within the specified time period in order to make satisfactory progress through the program. Students who are not making satisfactory progress may lose funding, be placed on academic probation, or be dismissed from the program.

Academic Advising

By the end of the first semester upon entering the doctoral program in Health Informatics at the School of Biomedical Informatics (SBMI), a student must identify a **primary advisor** who is a full-time SBMI faculty member (or with primary appointment at SBMI). By the end of the first year upon entering the doctoral program a student, with the assistance of the primary advisor, must form an **advisory committee**. The advisory committee must be composed of the student's primary advisor, at least one other SBMI faculty member, and a third faculty member who represents the student's interest or discipline area. Additional committee members may be added as needed. The student's primary advisor will chair the advisory committee. The advisory committee will guide the student in the course of program study.

A student is responsible for arranging to meet with their primary advisor **at least once a semester**. The student must obtain approval from the advisor for their degree plan, and determining their support courses, preceptorship site and objectives, and the dissertation topic. A doctoral student's degree plan must be signed by both the student and the primary advisor, and a copy sent to the Office of Academic Affairs **by the beginning of the second semester** that the student is enrolled in the program. The student and the advisor can revise the degree plan if necessary. When the degree plan changes, the student needs to send a copy of the revised degree plan to the Office of Academic Affairs as soon as possible.

A doctoral student is reviewed annually by the whole SBMI faculty in the Fall semester. The review is based on the following documents:

- The student self performance report that summarizes his/her achievements in the previous year and the plan for the coming year. The student may also submit representative work (e.g., course projects, submitted manuscripts) as part of the submission package.

- The doctoral student report card, prepared by the Office of Academic Affairs, that summarizes the student's academic performance, including the number of Semester Credit Hours (SCHs) taken, and major milestones passed.
- The doctoral student annual advising report, prepared by the primary advisor, that provides advising information about the student.

The student will be provided a written evaluation report based on the annual faculty review, which the student needs to review and sign.

### Milestones

The table below list the major milestones/requirements for all Students in the doctoral program in Health Informatics at SBMI and the respective expected time of achievement.

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Expected Time of Achievement</b>
Selection of the primary advisor	By the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> semester upon entering the program
Signing milestones agreement form	By the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> semester upon entering the program
Developing and submitting the initial degree plan	By the beginning of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester upon entering the program
Formation of the advisory committee	By the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> year upon entering the program
Successful completion of Advance to Candidacy	By the 58 <sup>th</sup> SCH (including taken and transferred)

### Degree Completion Checklist for Students

- ☐ The degree plan updated and followed
- ☐ *Milestones Agreement Form* signed
- ☐ Meet with the advisory committee every semester to discuss progress and plan
- ☐ Complete required coursework
- ☐ Complete the required preceptorship credits and pass the advance to candidacy exam
- ☐ Enroll in required dissertation hours and complete your dissertation
- ☐ Successfully complete the defense of dissertation
- ☐ Submit required documentation to the Office of Academic Affairs for completion and graduation

I have read this form and have had the opportunity to discuss the information contained in it with my primary advisor. I understand the academic milestones that

I am expected to reach in order to successfully complete the doctoral program, as well as the expected timeline for completing these milestones.

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Student's Name

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Student's Signature

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Date

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Primary Advisor's Name

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Primary Advisor's Signature

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Date