

**IBMS 7001**  
**Qualifying Examination**  
**Fall 2023**

---

**CLASS DAYS and TIME:** To be determined by course director based on availability of committee members

**CLASSROOM:** TBD for individual student

**COURSE FACULTY:** P. Renee Yew, Ph.D.

**OFFICE LOCATION and HOURS:** By appointment, STRF 261.2

**EMAIL:** yew@uthscsa.edu

**TELEPHONE:** 210-562-4150

---

**READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY - YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR  
ITS CONTENTS.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the Qualifying Examination (QE) is to determine if a student has met programmatic expectations with regard to: i) Acquiring a level of scientific reasoning and a knowledge base in his/her field of study appropriate for a graduate student at the current stage of training; ii) Demonstrating skills of problem-solving and development of experimental strategies designed to test hypotheses associated with a specific scientific problem; and iii) Demonstrating the ability to defend experimental strategies proposed for solving scientific problems. Successful completion of the QE is required for Admission to Candidacy and continuation in the IBMS Ph.D. program.

**Modular Structure:** IBMS 7001 is divided into 7 modules that are overseen by the 7 IBMS Disciplines as follows: IBMS 7001-2BA Biology of Aging; IBMS 7001-3CB Cancer Biology; IBMS 7001-4CGM Cell Biology, Genetics & Molecular Medicine; IBMS 7001-5MIM Molecular Immunology & Microbiology; IBMS 7001-6MBB Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry; IBMS 7001- 7NS Neuroscience; IBMS 7001-8PP Physiology & Pharmacology. Each IBMS Discipline is responsible for providing its students with a detailed description of the examination process, and for ensuring that the programmatic expectations and goals of the QE are met.

**Pre-requisites** – Discipline specific IBMS scientific writing course

**Semester credit hours** – 1.0 SCH

By the end of this course, each student should be able to:

- Revise the proposal based on reviewer critiques, defend the proposal and demonstrate discipline-related knowledge
- Demonstrate scientific reasoning, problem-solving skills and the ability to think on one's feet to answer questions from the QE committee

**Expectations:** The Qualifying Exam (QE) is an H/S/U graded course in the IBMS curriculum (IBMS 7001), is required of all IBMS Ph.D. students, and **must be completed during the Spring semester of a Ph.D. student's second year in the IBMS program.** This timeline may vary slightly for dual-degree students. A student's Discipline Director/Academic Advisor will indicate in which of the IBMS 7001 modules the student should enroll. Failure to complete the QE during the specified semester may result in an Unsatisfactory (U) being posted on the student's transcript and would delay the student's admission to candidacy. Deviation from the expected timeline is possible only if justified and approved by a student's Discipline leadership in consultation with the student's Dissertation Mentor. Therefore, a student who does not complete the QE in the appropriate semester may receive a grade of Incomplete (I) until the exam is completed. Each IBMS discipline may determine the detailed logistics required for the administration of the QE process for its students so as to achieve the goals of the discipline while satisfying the expectations of the IBMS graduate program.

Minimal expectations in the design and administration of the QE include the following: 1) Prior to initiation of the QE, the expectations and process of the exam will be provided to the students. 2) Members of the IBMS Graduate Faculty will be identified and approved by the Discipline leadership who will serve as the QE Committee and who will administer and report outcomes of the examination. 3) A relevant unsolved problem in the biomedical sciences will be identified that is approved by the Discipline QE Committee and will serve as the basis for the examination. The QE question must be based on an idea conceived and developed by the student, and must not duplicate any aims in his/her mentor's active or pending grants. A written declaration from the student may be requested by the examination committee in order to clarify the relationship between the proposed research and that of the student's Dissertation Mentor's research. 4) An hypothesis-driven research proposal will be written by the student that describes experimental strategies for solving the QE problem. 5) An oral defense-of-proposal will examine the student's problem-solving process, and the soundness of the student's experimental design. Student Dissertation Mentors may attend oral defenses, but are considered to be guests and not members of the examining committee; and should only ask questions when invited by the QE committee chair.

## **COURSE ORGANIZATION**

The main teaching modalities used in this course include:

- 1) Preparing a proposal.
- 2) Defending the revised proposal and displaying current stage-related knowledge of key concepts in the discipline.

**Materials** – A proposal developed by the student without help from the mentor or other lab personnel

**Computer Access** – Personal laptop

**Reading Assignments** – Describe and list any reading assignments with bibliographic information

## **ATTENDANCE**

Must be present for the QE

## **TEXTBOOKS**

**Required:** N/A

**Recommended:** N/A

## GRADING POLICIES AND EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

Following the oral defense of the proposal, and based on clear criteria set by the discipline to satisfy the expectations of the discipline and the IBMS graduate program, the QE faculty committee will discuss the outcome and determine if Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory is to be recommended to the student's Discipline Director. This grade, posted for the IBMS 7001 course, should represent the consensus of the examination committee. In addition, **the COGS-approved QE reporting form should be submitted** by the chair of the QE committee to the Discipline leadership indicating any recommendations that may be required to enhance the academic progress of the student. The Discipline Director is responsible for ensuring that the report is filed with the Assistant Director of the IBMS Graduate Program. Successful completion of the QE is required for Admission to Candidacy and continuation in the IBMS Ph.D. program.

- In the event that a student passes the QE, a grade of Satisfactory (S) or a grade of Honors (H) will be posted for IBMS 7001 by the student's discipline director on the Registrar's grade site.
- In the event that a student fails the QE, a grade of Unsatisfactory (U) may be posted for IBMS 7001. Alternatively, a grade of Incomplete (I) may be posted, and a **maximum of one remediation examination** will be allowed (timing and logistics provided by discipline leadership, but generally within 60 days of the original exam). If a student successfully passes the second attempt, the grade of "I" will be changed to Satisfactory (S). If a student does not successfully remediate, a grade of Unsatisfactory (U) will be posted for IBMS 7001. The report from the QE committee to the Discipline leadership should include a recommendation regarding whether the student should be considered for dismissal from the program by the Dean of the GSBS, or that a transfer into a Master's level degree track should be considered.

## REQUESTS FOR ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABILITIES

In accordance with policy 4.2.3, **Request for Accommodation Under the ADA and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA)**, any student requesting accommodation must submit the appropriate request for accommodation under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA, form 100). to his/her appropriate Associate Dean of their School and a copy to the ADA Coordinator. Additional information may be obtained at <http://uthscsa.edu/eeo/request.asp>.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline as prescribed by the UT System Rules and Regulations of the Board of Regents. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, signing attendance sheets for another student, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such an act. Additional information may be obtained at <http://catalog.uthscsa.edu/generalinformation/generalacademicpolicies/academicdishonestypolicy/>

The values and ethics of the GSBS and UT Health San Antonio are based upon honesty, integrity, and mutual respect between all students, staff, and faculty. These values and ethics are applied to all endeavors that are related to activities performed by all members of the GSBS community. This includes any assignments, presentations, projects, and/or exams completed in this course. All students commit to not receiving or giving any aid on the completion of their work in this course including the use of Artificial Intelligence text generators such as ChatGPT. If you are unsure how this might pertain to this course, please contact the course director before submission of any assigned work.

## TITLE IX AT UTHSCSA

### Title IX Defined:

Title of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal law that prohibits sex discrimination in education. It reads "no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

**University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio's Commitment:**

University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio (UTHSCSA) is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct based on gender. As required by Title IX, UTHSCSA does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs and activities, and it encourages any student, faculty, or staff member who thinks that he or she has been subjected to sex discrimination, sexual harassment (including sexual violence) or sexual misconduct to immediately report the incident to the Title IX Director.

In an emergency, victims of sexual abuse should call 911. For non-emergencies, they may contact UPD at 210-567-2800. Additional information may be obtained at <http://students.uthscsa.edu/titleix/>

**EMAIL POLICY**

Student may not contact any member of the QE committee directly. All correspondence should be addressed to the QE course director. Timely responses to deadlines and calendar invites are a requirement.

**USE OF RECORDING DEVICES**

Only permitted with the permission of the QE course director and committee.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones and all other electronic devices should be switched off during the QE. A personal laptop computer will be allowed only for the purpose of the presentation and should be shut down at the request of the course director.

**TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**  
**COURSE SUBJECT and COURSE NUMBER**  
**COURSE TITLE**  
**SEMESTER and YEAR**

---

| WEEK    | DATE | TOPIC | Assignment | Instructor<br>and<br>Modality |
|---------|------|-------|------------|-------------------------------|
| Week 1  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 2  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 3  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 4  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 5  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 6  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 7  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 8  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 9  |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 10 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 11 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 12 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 13 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 14 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 15 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 16 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |
| Week 17 |      |       |            |                               |
|         |      |       |            |                               |