

MD-PHD, COMBINED DEGREE

MD - PhD, Combined Degree Program

From its inception, the physician-scientist has been central to our mission at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Indeed, the Hopkins tri-embell represents the three core values of the institution: teaching, patient care, and research.

The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine offers a variety of opportunities for the training of medical scientists, including a combined curriculum leading to both MD and PhD degrees. This enables students to obtain intensive training in specialized areas of biomedical research in addition to top-flight medical training to ultimately pursue careers in which medical training and care informs research. The traditional diversity and flexibility of the educational opportunities at Johns Hopkins permit the design of individualized programs to meet the needs of students with a variety of interests, educational backgrounds, and career goals.

To accomplish our training goals, we weave research and medical training together over an approximate 8 year time to degree. We ensure that students are exposed to the intersection of both worlds early in their training, as well as given the professional and career development advice they need to succeed.

In a word, the MD-PhD curriculum at Johns Hopkins is flexible. Most students decide to complete the first two years of medical school before they begin graduate school and finish the last two years of their medical training after completing their thesis work (see the Timeline below). Students can also pursue the PhD prior to beginning the medical school curriculum. Lastly, students who want more first-hand experience in clinical medicine before beginning graduate work can elect to complete three years of medical school, followed by their graduate training, and then the last year of medical school. This can give them a better appreciation of the potential clinical relevance of their research. In making a choice, trainees consult extensively with the Program Director, the Dean of Students, members of the MD-PhD Committee, prospective research mentors, and their faculty advisors. Students in the MD-PhD Program are automatically accepted to the PhD programs in the School of Medicine and 11 graduate programs in the Bloomberg School of Public Health or the School of Arts and Sciences on the Homewood Campus. As a result, graduate program decisions are based on student interests, coursework, and PhD program research mentors. Formal graduate programs in the School of Medicine encompass the following areas: Biochemistry, Cellular, and Molecular Biology; Biological Chemistry; Biomedical Engineering; Molecular Biophysics; Functional Anatomy and Human Evolutionary Studies; Cell Biology; Cellular and Molecular Medicine; History of Medicine; Human Genetics; Immunology; Neuroscience; Pathobiology; Pharmacology and Molecular Sciences, and Cellular and Molecular Physiology. Johns Hopkins interdisciplinary organizational structure means each faculty member may be affiliated with several clinical departments, research sections, and graduate programs. The MD-PhD Committee is responsible for program oversight and admissions.

The MD-PhD Program also sponsors special seminars and lectures, and maintains a dedicated library, the Paul Talalay MD-PhD Library, as a gathering place to promote close connections between students and to enrich the educational opportunities of all MD-PhD students. Efforts are made to acquaint MD-PhD candidates with the major advances, concepts, and cutting-edge techniques in contemporary medicine and biomedical sciences. We also create an environment that promotes collegiality and

a more intimate personal contact with successful medical scientists in this institution.

Admission Procedures. Individuals who wish to apply for admission to the combined MD-PhD Program of the School of Medicine must submit an application through AMCAS in which they will indicate the MD-PhD Program. Once the AMCAS application has been verified and submitted to Hopkins, the applicant will receive an invitation to complete the Hopkins Secondary Application. Here the applicant will submit the additional materials required for the combined degree. Johns Hopkins does not allow applicants to apply to both the traditional MD program and the combined program during the same cycle.

All combined-degree applications are reviewed by a subcommittee of the MD-PhD Committee (<http://mdphd.johnshopkins.edu/md-phd-committee/>), which is comprised of faculty from the basic sciences and clinical arena, as well as faculty from the Bloomberg School of Public Health. A separate Graduate School application is not necessary. The MD-PhD Committee determines whether or not an interview is indicated.

In general, the committee is looking for students with a passion for research and commitment to medicine. This assessment is based on the applicant's research experience, letters of recommendation, academic performance and extracurricular activities. The Committee considers standardized test scores only in the context of the applicant's other credentials. If an interview is granted, the applicant is notified by the MD-PhD Office and after the applicant accepts, the process for scheduling an interview begins. Interview visits generally occur over two days. Applicants are interviewed by members of the MD-PhD Committee and other faculty members who share their research interests. Applicants have many opportunities to engage with current students through the interview process.

Approximately 12 MD-PhD students matriculate each year. Students who matriculate to the traditional MD Program but have a clearly demonstrated interest and experience in scientific research are eligible to apply to the combined MD-PhD Program. These students may apply for admission during the fall of their first or second year of medical school.

These qualified applicants are evaluated and placed in the pool for the current application cycle and will be considered for MSTP funding.

All eligible applicants who are admitted to the MD-PhD Program are funded, either through philanthropic support or through the NIH Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP) Award. The MD-PhD program provides full tuition, stipend, and medical and dental insurance for students. The program does accept applications from international applicants.

Graduates of The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine MD-PhD Program have gone on to become leaders in many areas of academic medicine. Advice on the scope and opportunities offered by the MD-PhD Program may be obtained from the Director or Administrative Director.