Instructions for Submitting your CE/Thesis/Dissertation Proposal

All student CE, Thesis, and Dissertation proposals must be submitted to the UTSPH Office of Academic Affairs and Student Service for review and approval by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services. Your project may also require IRB review by the UT Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) and/or other UTHealth institutional review committees, such as the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC). For help determining which institutional reviews are necessary for your project, please refer to the Research Compliance Guide.

Proposal Submission deadlines must be met the semester before you intend to graduate. Deadlines can be found here and on the Planning to Graduate page.

After your CE/Thesis/Dissertation committee members have approved your written proposal, and signed the student proposal cover sheet and other required forms, you may submit your proposal to the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services via electronically and to CPHS (if applicable) via the online application system, IRIS (see below). Proposals may be submitted to both offices concurrently. More information on the proposal process can be found in the CE/Thesis/Dissertation Guides.

Note: Doctoral Students must complete the oral defense of the proposal BEFORE submitting their written proposal for approval. The Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Defense Form IV is available at: https://sph.uth.edu/current-students/student-forms/

Submit your proposal to the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services via electronically (both electronic and handwritten signatures are accepted):

1) ALL STUDENTS: Send an electronic copy of your proposal along with the following completed and signed proposal forms to SPHStudentResearch@uth.tmc.edu (both electronic and handwritten signatures are accepted)
   
   - Student Proposal Cover Sheet
   - Authorship, Publication Plan & Data Ownership
   - Institutional Approvals Document
   - CITI training certificate
   - Data Handling Procedures (for use of existing data)

   * Please indicate “Not Applicable (N/A)” on this form if you will not be using existing data
2) Include the below items in your proposal submission if they are applicable to you:
   - Letter of Permission from owner of data/samples (if data are not publicly available) * Example and instructions can be found here: https://sph.uth.edu/research/student-research/#tab-3
   - Copy of IRB or other institutional review letter(s) (if applicable), which may include:
     a) Copy of parent study’s IRB approval letter;
     b) Copy of letter from UT CPHS showing the student has been added to a UTHealth Faculty member’s study; and/or
     c) UT CPHS Approval/Exemption letter in the student’s own name

3) ALL STUDENTS: Attach the signed forms and required documentation to the front of your proposal and submit electronically to SPHStudentResearch@uth.tmc.edu (both electronic and handwritten signatures are accepted)
   - Your proposal

Questions regarding procedures or forms should be addressed to Brooke Burns at 713-500-9072 or Brooke.Burns@uth.tmc.edu
If applicable, submit your proposal to UT CPHS (IRB) in iRIS:

Projects requiring IRB approval from the UT Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) are submitted in the iRIS online system. See the Research Compliance Guide to determine if your proposal requires submission in iRIS, or contact CPHS at (713) 500-7943, or Brooke Burns at Brooke.Burns@uth.tmc.edu or 713-500-9072.

1. Log in to iRIS with your UT username and ID.

2. Click on “Add a New Study.” If you cannot see “Add a New Study,” you might need to click on the “Compatibility view” button on your browser (located to the right of the URL).

3. When completing your application:
   a) Add an SPH “Department” to question #2 (typically, this should be your Department or campus)
   b) List your name as PI/student
   c) List one SPH committee member as “Faculty Advisor” (only list them here, not as “Co-Investigator”)
   d) Add Brooke Burns as an additional “Study Contact” (this action will forward a copy of your IRB approval letter to the Office of Research)
   e) “Department” signature person in iRIS is NOT required for CE/Thesis/Dissertation proposals. If your application is for an independent research study (i.e., not for a CE/Thesis/Dissertation), then you should add a Department Chair for signature.

4. After the application questions have been answered, you must attach your proposal and other items to the iRIS submission packet (most of them under “Study Documents”). Your iRIS submission should include the following attachments:
   - Student Proposal Cover Sheet (Cover sheet must be signed by committee members)
   - CITI training certificate
   - Authorship, Publication Plan & Data Ownership
   - Data Handling Procedures
   - Your proposal (referred to as “protocol” in iRIS)
   - Letter of Permission from owner of data (if applicable)
   - Copy of outside IRB approval letter (if applicable)
   - Your CV or resume
   - Survey instruments (if you are doing Primary data collection); Letters of Information/Consent Forms (for Primary data collection. Make sure to attach in the “Informed Consent” section of the submission); Letters of Support; Recruitment materials (if applicable); Grant application (if applicable).

5. When completed, “Send” the submission through iRIS, making sure to apply your electronic signature (username and password), and Route the submission to your Faculty Advisor for his/her signature.

For technical assistance, call the iRIS Helpline at 713-500-7960.

- Allow approximately 3 weeks for Exempt or Expedited review; allow approximately 4 weeks or more for Subcommittee/full review.
- You MUST be able to access your UT email account to receive notifications and approval through iRIS.
  For assistance contact the UTHSC Helpdesk at 713-500-4848.
• Stipulations must be addressed to the CPHS within the iRIS system.
• After the IRB approves your study, you will receive an approval letter from the SPH Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs and Student Services, provided your proposal has also been submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services and approved by the Assistant Dean (see above).
• Changes to your study must be submitted to CPHS via a Change Request/Amendment form in iRIS, and a copy of the changes as well as the letter of approval of changes must be forwarded to the Office of Research for our files.
• Expedited review and Subcommittee review studies are required to submit a Continuing Review form annually in iRIS.
• At the completion of your study, you must close the study by submitting a “Study Closure Report” in iRIS.

SPH approval letters will be sent via email attachment to the student, your SPH committee members, the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Services, and the Regional Campus support person (if applicable).

Questions regarding submission procedures or forms should be addressed to

CITI training course

ALL STUDENTS undertaking a CE/thesis/dissertation must complete the CITI training course. Access the CITI training course at: https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp

1. Under “Create an Account,” click on “Register.”
2. Select “University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston” as your institution.
3. “Employee ID number” is not necessary (where asked for this number, please use any number).
4. Complete ONE of the basic courses in Protection of Human Subjects: Choose either Group 1: Biomedical Researcher and Key Personnel, or Group 2: Social and Behavioral Researchers and Key Personnel, Basic course.
5. When you have completed the training, you may print or save your certificate of completion. Certificates may be accessed at any time by logging back in to CITI.
6. Students who have already completed CITI training through another institution can log in to CITI and then add another affiliation with University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. The CITI program will display which modules have already been completed, and which additional CITI modules may be needed for the UT training certificate.
7. Certificates are valid for three years, and can be renewed by taking a Refresher course through CITI.