

BASIC SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES SELECTIVES (BSHS)

BSHS Director: Victor E. Reyes, PhD
BSHS Committee: Amjad Hossain, PhD, MS
Ayezel Munoz Gonzalez, MD
Akila Muthukumar, MD
Juan P. Olano, MD
Sadaf Milani, PhD, MPH, CPH
Karen Szauter, MD, FACP
BSHS Coordinator: Alexis Cermenio

GENERAL INFORMATION

Basic Science and Humanities Selectives (BSHS) are 4-week modules designed to promote and encourage life-long learning of basic sciences, social sciences, or humanities among our senior medical students. Successful completion of at least one BSHS course is a requirement for graduation.

Students can select to enroll in an existing selective from the list found [HERE](#). Alternatively, students can create a new selective proposal which fits into their interests, as long as the CRITERIA are satisfied. Upon submission, new selective proposals will be reviewed and approved by the BSHS committee prior to being available for enrollment. To create a new selective use this [FORM](#).

BSHS does not anticipate additional student costs associated with any of the listed selectives. Please contact the BSHS committee should a concern arise.

ENROLLMENT

For existing selectives: Review the prerequisites for the desired selective shown in the online brochure. Please check whether completing a [C-form](#) is required. If so, please fully complete the C-form and obtain the faculty member's signature before submitting to enrollment services. If not, please enroll online and do not complete a C-form as this may delay/impede enrollment of the selective.

For new selectives: Please complete the following online form (login is required): "[Add a Selective](#)". Then have the faculty member carefully review it. Your selective proposal will be reviewed by the BSHS committee, and the entire approval process can take up to 8 weeks. Upon approval, a C-form will be completed on your behalf to enroll you in the newly created selective.

BSHS CRITERIA

A Selective will be a four-week, full-time scholarly activity for 4th year medical students emphasizing the integral role of the sciences and humanities in the practice of medicine and involving a large measure of self-directed, independent learning. Selectives will meet the following additional criteria:

- A UTMB faculty member with appropriate expertise for supervision of the subject matter under study will be responsible for the direction of the selective, although other faculty (at UTMB or elsewhere) may participate in the course at the discretion of the selective director and the Selectives Course Committee.

- A Selective may be designed either by faculty or by student(s) in conjunction with a member of the faculty.
 - The selective will be appropriately rigorous for a 4th- year student.
 - It may be organized within a single department or interdepartmentally.
 - **It must result in a graded scholarly product**, such as an essay, oral presentation, PowerPoint presentation, or anything of “capstone” quality approved by the course committee. Final grades for BSHS courses may also be based on attendance and other course activities.
-

GRADING

Grades will be given according to a scale of **Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory(pass or fail)** in accordance with grading criteria specified by the selective faculty director. Such criteria must be communicated to the student prior to the start of the selective. A student must pass every evaluated component of the selective to receive a passing grade. A student producing highly meritorious work may be recognized through a letter of commendation to the Dean from the selective director. **In receiving an Unsatisfactory, the student must repeat the entire selective or choose another selective**(**If a failing grade is received, the student must repeat the entire selective or choose another selective**). Faculty have up to thirty days to provide grades, evaluations, and scholarly product to the BSHS coordinator. Once coordinator receives all requirements, grades will be posted.

- A student may receive elective credit for a Selective if they have already received a Satisfactory grade for a different Selective. All criteria for the Selective must be satisfied even if it is being taken for elective credit.

Evaluations by students of the selective course and faculty are highly encouraged. **Timely evaluations** of students by selective course directors is required. Student evaluations by course directors are expected to be reported to the BSHS Coordinator on the last day of the course. The required scholarly product **must** be attached to the student evaluation before grades can be posted in MySTAR. Posting grades in MyStar is limited to BSHS coordinator and only upon completion of Faculty evaluation of the student and the submission of the final scholarly product.

JOHN P. MCGOVERN ACADEMY OF OSLERIAN MEDICINE AWARD (McGovern BSHS Essay Award)

UTMB selectives must include either original research, a scholarly project, or an immersion experience which emphasizes in-depth study of one or more basic science, social science or humanities topics. In previous years, it was mandatory for students to produce a 10-page essay to satisfy the BSHS course requirements. Effective in June 2024, the BSHS Course Committee has broadened this requirement to include other forms of scholarly products (under BSHS CRITERIA). The selection of acceptable final product formats rests with the course director, who must revise the course syllabus accordingly for review and approval by the BSHS Committee. Once alternative scholarly formats are approved, the course director is responsible for clearly communicating the following information to students:

- If a student wishes to be considered for the John P. McGovern Academy of Oslerian Medicine Award, a 10-page written product is still a requirement. This award was established for excellence in Basic Science or Humanities for an essay written by senior medical students taking a BSH selective course. Student papers may be nominated by their faculty director for the award.
 - “Written product” may include a research paper, literature review, science or humanities-based clinical report, grant proposal, or other such written report. **Other scholarly products are not eligible for the McGovern Award.**
-

TASKS OF THE BSHS COURSE COMMITTEE

- 1) Review all SOM BSHS selectives every three years or earlier, if so determined during the previous review, and provide feedback to selectives directors.
- 2) Preview and approve/reject/revise all new selectives put forth by faculty.
- 3) Preview and approve/reject/revise all student created selectives.
- 4) Review nominations for the Excellence in Basic Science or Humanities Selective Essay Award and submit ranking of nominated students to the John P. McGovern Academy of Oslerian Medicine.

Tasks of the BSHS Director

- 1) Report to the Chair of the Curriculum Committee annually on the progress and outcomes of the committee.
- 2) Respond to directives from the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.
- 3) Ensure there is adequate membership for the work of the committee by communicating with the Chair of the Curriculum Committee and Vice Dean of the SOM when the BSHS Committee needs new members appointed.

Process and Procedure for Review of Selectives

- 1) The committee coordinators send a request to the selective director requesting input on strengths and weaknesses of the selective, and if any changes were made based on the previous review.
- 2) The BSHS coordinator sends the reviewers data pertinent to the course. That data includes an updated description of the course, course objectives, annual enrollment since the last review, the previous review feedback, a response letter from the selective director, all end of course student feedback for the past three years. Reviewers are directed also to review the online course description in the SOM BSH selectives Brochure.
- 3) The reviewer creates a report that the Subcommittee coordinator will send back to the course director and coordinator for discussion during BSHS course review meetings. The findings of the committee are then forwarded to the BSHS Selective Director. The feedback may include any changes directed to address professionalism issues or other problems, changes to online course description to make it more clear for students to understand the course, advice to recruit additional students if low enrollment, or ways for the selective to better fit with the SOM mission.
- 4) If significant problems are noted with a selective, a list of requirements to continue to offer the selective will be detailed with a timeline for improvement and re-review.
- 5) If the BSHS Selective Director is routinely late in reporting student grades, the committee may flag the course for review in the following year. If the tardiness in reporting grades persists, the committee may recommend that the course be discontinued or identify an alternate course director.

Process for approval of NEW selectives proposed by faculty

- 1) Faculty complete the blank selective Template form online describing the selective, including goals and objectives, description of activities, who would benefit, schedule, evaluation (means of evaluation and of what skills assessed), and any additional expectations.
- 2) The course committee reviews the proposal in group and will decide:
 - a. Approve – the objectives are appropriate for the level of training and the assessment is appropriate (see specific selective criteria).
 - b. Revise – the course objectives are not appropriate to level of training or the description isn't clear.
 - c. Reject – this is not an appropriate selective or this is duplicating another selective in the catalog without distinction.

Process for approval of student created selectives

- 1) Student fills out the Student Created or R-Form (for research).
- 2) The Subcommittee reviews the proposal in group and will decide:
 - a. Approve – the plan is appropriate to level of training and the selective is doable (student may rotate with that faculty, there is appropriate IRB approval for the research)

- b. Revise – the proposal is not clear or does not meet sufficient standards (IRB not clarified, not sufficient time in clinic, etc.)
- c. Reject – this is not an appropriate selective because it is not obtainable (research goals not appropriate for student) or duplicates other activities (same project more than once)