

80.40.001 *ADMISSIONS POLICY AND PRACTICES*

Admissions Policy and Practices

PURPOSE

This policy outlines general graduate admission and recruiting practices of the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences ("Graduate School"). This policy is governed by (1) integrity and honesty, (2) consistency with the Graduate School's mission, (3) identifying students committed to personal achievement and drive to succeed, (4) academic excellence, and (5) promoting diversity across all degree programs.

SCOPE

This policy and its accompanying procedures apply to all Graduate School staff, faculty, current and prospective students.

STAKEHOLDERS AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

Stakeholders affected by this policy include all Graduate School faculty and staff actively engaging in admissions as well as current and prospective students.

POLICY

- 1.1. All potential applicants are referred to the Graduate School website for information and instructions on how to apply and the detailed information of required admissions materials, supplementary materials, and admission timeline (admissions page for each program).
- 1.2. Financial incentives are strictly prohibited although applicants are fully supported during recruitment visits to the Graduate School. In addition, Graduate School staff and students host potential applicants at group events during meetings and other recruiting events.
- 1.3. Student selection into each program is overseen by Admissions Committees that are comprised of Graduate School faculty members. The Admissions Committee for each degree granting program is responsible for identifying the best candidates for entry into the program. Although the charter governing each program's Admissions Committee is largely uniform, there are some program specific admissions requirements that are fully described on the website. The Associate Dean may serve as an ex officio, non-voting member and must be free of all conflicts of interest. All members of the Admissions Committees must declare any potential conflicts of interest and abstain from discussion, ranking, and voting of any applicant with whom they have a conflict of interest.
- 1.4. The entire admissions process is coordinated by dedicated software that is widely used in the US and abroad by prospective graduate students.
- 1.5. A graduate student at another institution may not transfer into the Graduate School unless accompanied by a St. Jude-recruited and THEC-approved Graduate Faculty member; additionally, students who transfer with a St. Jude-recruited THEC-approved Graduate Faculty member may only transfer into the doctoral program and not into the master's program.

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- 1.6. The Graduate School has specific guidelines for transfer admissions, which can be reviewed in the Transfer into the Graduate School from other Programs Policy.
- 1.7. St. Jude and the Graduate School do not discriminate or grant a preference on the basis of race, national origin, sex, genetic information, age, religion, disability, veteran's status, disabled veteran's status, or any other status protected by federal or Tennessee law. The Graduate School is committed to creating a welcoming learning environment.
- 1.8. Admissions decisions will be made initially without consideration to criminal history; however, all applicants must pass background and registry checks prior to final admission into the Graduate School (exceptions may be made for international applicants). Criminal history will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- 1.9. All students must be proficient in English because all instruction will be given in English.
- 1.10. Late enrollment is available at the Dean's discretion, and the applicant must go through the Graduate School's admissions process.

PROCEDURE

- 2.1. Each Graduate School program follows the same admissions process, which comprises:
 - 1) advertising and encouraging applications,
 - 2) acceptance of applications until the deadline (typically the end of the day on December 1st PST),
 - 3) review of applicants by the respective Program Admissions Committee,
 - 4) a ranked list of all applicants,
 - 5) selection of those for further consideration,
 - 6) visits to the Graduate School for interviews with faculty, if applicable (or web-based interviews, if necessary, for example for overseas applicants)
 - 7) final selection of applicants who will be offered admission. Depending on how the yield proceeds, the respective Admissions Committee may consider further offers and interviews based on the ranking list.
- 2.2. The Admissions Committees consult with the Dean prior to the admissions cycle to confirm the number of slots available for each program based on the strategy and budget of the Graduate School.
- 2.3. Once the application review process is complete, each Admissions Committee generates a final offer list.
- 2.4. The Graduate School uses the following admissions decisions:
 - Acceptance: the student is granted admission into the Graduate School
 - Conditional acceptance: the student is granted admission under specific circumstances
 - Denial: the student is denied acceptance from the Graduate School
 - Waitlist: the student is not granted denial or acceptance and is placed on a list that will be revisited depending on the yield for that program (depending on the program, this may be a ranked list)

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- Deferral: the student is offered admission and may defer their admission for up to 2 years maximum
- 2.5. Applicants are required to accept/reject/defer offers by April 15th, which is the national acceptance date in the US. However, further offers can be made and accepted after this date. Depending on the number of accepted offers, additional applicants may be considered after April 15th. Such applicants must complete an application, be reviewed, and recommended by the respective Admissions Committee and interviewed (if applicable) by the Chair of the Admissions Committee and at least one additional Admissions Committee member, then reviewed and approved by the appropriate Admissions Committee.
 - 2.6. All applicants must pass background and registry checks and drug screen prior to final admission into the Graduate School. Exceptions may be made for international applicants.
 - 2.7. All offers of admission in any degree program are valid and in effect up to the deadline noted in the admit letter and their acceptance prior to the admit deadline will be honored irrespective of the number of offers that are accepted.
 - 2.8. After the incoming cohort is confirmed for each degree program, a debrief meeting of the process is held with the respective Admissions Committee Chair, Associate Dean, and Assistant Dean, along with the Dean or the Dean's Designee to review the process and identify opportunities for improvement.
 - 2.9. The Graduate School applies its Protection of Student Data Policy to admission records. Admission records are retained according to the retention periods outlined in the Records Retention policy.

DEFINITIONS

- **Acceptance:** the student is granted admission into the Graduate School Conditional acceptance: the student is granted admission under specific circumstances
- **Denial:** the student is denied acceptance from the Graduate School
- **Waitlist:** the student is not granted denial or acceptance and is placed on a ranked list that will be revisited depending on the yield for that program
- **Deferral:** the student is offered admission and may defer their admission for up to 2 years maximum
- **Transfer applicant:** a prospective student that has begun their graduate education at another institution and is applying to transfer into the Graduate School to continue their education; the applicant must meet the criteria for transfer stated in the Transfer into the Graduate School from other Programs Policy

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

- Transfer into the Graduate School from other Programs Policy
- Record Retention Policy

FORMS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

N/A

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POLICY DETAILS

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| Policy Type | Policy Revision |
| Policy Number | 80.40.001 |
| Policy Category | Student Policy |
| Policy Sponsor | Steven Varga |
| Approval Authority | Admissions Committees |
| Policy Effective Date: | July 1, 2023 |
| Policy Owner (Contact Info) | Steven Varga (steven.varga@stjude.org) |
| Policy Alternate | Steven Varga |
| Last Review Date | May 30, 2025 |
| Next Scheduled Review Date | By June 1, 2026 |

REVISION HISTORY

V1.0 – June 6, 2023

V2.0 – August 19, 2024

APPROVALS

Applied Biomedical Data Sciences – Approved on August 26, 2024

Clinical Investigations Admissions Committee – Approved on August 29, 2024

Global Child Health Admissions Committee – Approved on August 27, 2024

Biomedical Sciences Admissions Committee – Approved on August 26, 2024