**Determining your start date**

Students may take 1-3 weeks off after 4th term final exams, and then **start in the lab by mid-June**. Deviations from this schedule of starting in the lab by mid-June are allowable under special circumstances, but **must be discussed with and approved by your advisor**. It is also very important to take into consideration the time it will take to complete the degree (i.e., the sooner you start, and the sooner you could finish). **It typically takes ~12-13 months to accumulate enough data to write up the ScM thesis, and then to write the thesis and have it approved by your readers.** Delaying your research start will delay completion of the degree.

**Registration in the ScM year**

ScM students do **not have to register for the first summer**. During the academic year, you will register for **12 credits of 120.820 (Thesis Research) and 4 credits of 120.840 (Special Studies)**. See below under "ScM degree requirements" about registration in the second summer.

If you take any coursework (as in regular classes), you **adjust the 120.820 credits accordingly, so that the total is 16 per term**. However, **it is unusual and not recommended for a ScM student to take a significant number of classes in the research year**. The main mission of the research year is completing the ScM research project and writing the ScM thesis. Research is a fulltime commitment, meaning you will be spending 40+ hours per week on your research. You need permission from your ScM advisor to take time off from research for coursework, and you are responsible for managing your time around class time and study time to make sure your research continues to make progress.

**ScM degree requirements**

As noted above, the majority of ScM students who start their research in June will finish their degree work in June or July of the next year. This is because it takes 12-13 months to accumulate enough data for the ScM thesis, and then to write the thesis and have it approved by your advisor and thesis reader. Be advised that it is unusual, although not impossible, to get the ScM degree completed in time for May graduation (see details on deadlines below).

If you are completing your degree in time for spring degree conferral, then this will be covered by deadlines defined for Academic Year 2017-2018.

If you are completing your degree in summer or fall of 2018, this will be covered by the deadlines defined for Academic Year 2018-2019 (these deadlines will be released sometime in early 2017).

A. **Presentation of work at departmental retreat and other venues**

ScM students are **required to present their work at the spring BMB departmental research retreat.** ScM students are also encouraged to present their work at other venues, including the departmental colloquium, multi-lab group meetings, and regional/national scientific meetings.
B. Appointment of Thesis Readers

The ScM thesis must be read and approved by a committee of two readers. **Be advised that the appointment of readers for a ScM thesis is more formal than that of the MHS thesis**, with a form that must be submitted to Records and Registration by a specific deadline.

The following form must be submitted to Records and Registration:
https://my.jhsph.edu/Offices/StudentAffairs/RecordsRegistration/MastersCandidateInformation/Documents/ScM%-20-%20MBe%20Appointment%20of%20Thesis%20Readers%20Form.pdf

Or go to my.jhsph.edu:
- At the main page, select the *Offices* tab,
- pull down to *Student Affairs*
- On the main Student Affairs page, select *Records and Registration* (under the heading "Offices")
- Scroll the bottom of this next page to "Other Areas" and select "Masters Candidate Information"
- Look for the document, "ScM - MBe Appointment of Thesis Readers Form"

Approximate deadlines for submission for different completion dates and degree conferral are below. *We encourage all ScM students regardless of anticipated degree completion to submit the Appointment of Thesis Readers Form in mid-February.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For spring degree conferral (and marching in Convocation ceremonies)</th>
<th>Mid-February</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For US citizens and permanent residents only - For submission by June 30, to have thesis submission covered by 4th term tuition</td>
<td>Last day of 4th term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For summer degree conferral</td>
<td>Mid-June *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For fall degree conferral</td>
<td>Mid-October *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The exact date changes from year to year; be sure to check the Records and Registration site on my.jhsph.edu for the dates.*

The URL for deadlines for Academic Year 2017-2018 is *(copy and paste this address)*: https://my.jhsph.edu/Offices/StudentAffairs/RecordsRegistration/MastersCandidateInformation/Documents/

* The deadlines for Academic year 2017-2018 (for summer and fall degree conferral) will be released in spring of 2018.

The ScM thesis reader committee consists of two members, one of which is the student’s advisor. The second member MUST be a full-time (professor, scientist, lecturer, instructor of any rank), emeriti, or adjunct faculty from any JHSPH or JHU department, including the student’s sponsoring department. However, only one adjunct may serve on the committee of thesis readers. Visiting faculty may not serve on the committee.
C. **Completion and submission of the ScM thesis**

Be advised that submission of the ScM thesis is a more structured and formalized process than is submission of the MHS thesis.

You must remain registered until your final thesis is submitted and until all your committee members' letters are on file in Records and Registration. Students also must be registered for at least *two consecutive terms* leading up to submission of the thesis and completion of the ScM degree.

**Non-US citizens/permanent residents:** You must ensure that your student visa will be current throughout your completion of the degree. If you will not be completing the program in 9 months and your visa is expiring, please bring the appropriate visa documentation to **Haleema Ali’s office in Rm. W8501.** It is crucial to be in contact with the Office of International Services (OIS; [http://ois.jhu.edu/](http://ois.jhu.edu/)) to stay on top of any impending deadlines, regarding your visa, potential application for Optional Practical Training (OPT), etc. It is essential to keep your supervisor and BMB administration informed.

**Thesis preparation and submission process**

- The thesis must formatted according to University specifications.
  - Basic information - [http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd](http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd)
  - Formatting the thesis - [http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd/formatting](http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd/formatting)
  - It will also be helpful to look at past ScM theses. The BMB McCollum Reading Room (W8017) has copies of past students’ theses. Your advisor may have copies from past students as well.
- ScM students work closely with their advisor to write the ScM thesis. The ScM advisor will read drafts, and ultimately, the ScM advisor must approve the version that is distributed to the other thesis reader.
- Once the thesis is acceptable to the advisor and approved by the advisor for distribution, the student then provides a copy of the ScM thesis to the other thesis reader.
  - It is recommended that you give your readers this near-final, advisor-approved version of your thesis *approximately three weeks before the date you need to submit the final copy.* This gives the readers plenty of time to read your thesis, provide critique, and for you to revise your thesis in response to their feedback as necessary.
- The student must incorporate recommended thesis revisions from the thesis readers.
- The final thesis, incorporating the thesis readers' revisions, is then submitted by the student electronically to JHU Sheridan libraries through the ETD process (ETD = Electronic Thesis and Dissertation - [http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd](http://guides.library.jhu.edu/etd)).
- The final thesis must be submitted and verified by the indicated deadlines for degree conferral. **Be advised that sometimes verification can take a couple days, so you do not want to wait right up to the very last day.**
- The two members of the thesis reader committee must submit thesis acceptance letters to Records and Registration by the indicated deadlines for degree conferral.
Approximate deadlines for submission + verification of final thesis and acceptance letters from advisor and thesis reader:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For spring degree conferral (and marching in Convocation ceremonies)</th>
<th>Third Friday in April</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For US citizens and permanent residents only - To have thesis submission covered by 4th term tuition</td>
<td>Last working day in June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For summer degree conferral (requires paying summer term tuition)</td>
<td>Mid-August *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For fall degree conferral (requires paying 1st term, and if necessary, 2nd term tuition)</td>
<td>Mid-December *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The exact deadlines change from year to year; be sure to check the Records and Registration site on my.jhsph.edu for the dates.*

The URL for the document with deadlines for Academic Year 2017-2018 is:
http://www.jhsph.edu/academics/calendar/2017-2018.html

* The deadlines for Academic year 2017-2018 (for summer and fall degree conferral) will be released in spring of 2017. To find this, go to my.jhsph.edu:
  - At the main page, select the Offices tab,
  - Pull down to Student Affairs
  - On the main Student Affairs page, select Records and Registration to see Subsites
  - Select "Masters Candidate Information"
  - Look for the appropriate Due Dates document.

Transcripts, degree conferrals, and graduation ceremonies

For submission of the thesis for summer or fall degree conferral, your transcript will say you have your ScM degree as soon as the Committee for Academic Standards (CAS) meets and approves your degree being awarded. If you need verification of degree completion prior to this CAS approval (e.g., for medical/graduate school), the department can write a letter to state you have completed the degree requirements. If you want to march in the School's Convocation ceremony, you can do this next spring.

Salary / Living expenses

ScM students are paid in their research year for hours worked up to 19 hours per week at $11.00 per hour, up to a maximum of 987 total hours or up to 13 months on payroll, whichever comes first. In general, your research time will be a 40+ hours per week commitment (with some variation from day to day, week to week). You are likely to find that lab time will be highly variable; some days might be longer, some might be shorter, depending on the lab work you are doing on any particular day.

ScM students in BMB are allowed **up to 13 months on the payroll, or payment for a maximum of 987 hours, whichever comes first**. Haleema Ali, HR Coordinator, located in room W8501, will track your accumulating work hours and keep you posted as you near the 987 hour maximum (Federal Work Study hours are not included in the 987 hour max). If it takes longer
than 13 months to finish your degree and you have not yet reached the 987 maximum, your advisor will make the decision regarding your payroll status.

Note: If living expenses and/or stipend payments are received through external funding sources (i.e. grant, fellowship, etc.), you are still required to commit 40+ hours of research time in the lab.

**Non-US Citizens**

1. Bring your completed New Hire Form to Haleema Ali’s office (W8501).

2. Prior to your first day of work, you must have your U.S. employment eligibility verified. All non-citizens (without a SSN) must complete part 1 of the I-9 in Haleema’s office. This process must be completed on your first day of work.

**Working while waiting on a SSN:** You may work while the Social Security number application is being processed. There is no provision in the law that required employers to have their employees’ SSNs before hiring them. There is no provision that prohibits an employee from beginning work if he or she has not yet obtained an SSN. However, you must have employment authorization from your program sponsor or USCIS before you begin working.

3. Applying for a Social Security Number (SSN)
   - No more than 30 days before the start date on your Employment Authorization Document (EAD)
   - New F-1 and J-1 students must wait at least 10 business days after arrival in the U.S. and be registered in an academic program

**Foreign National Information Form (FNIF)**

Foreign National Information Form (FNIF) must be completed by all non-US citizens except for LPR (green card holders). Failure to complete the form could result in payment being held. The following documents must accompany the form and be brought to Haleema on your first day:

1. Copy of passport
2. Copy of visa
3. Copy of I-94 Departure Record
4. Copy of work authorization document (e.g. Form I-20, DS-2019, I-797, EAD card)
5. Copy of Social Security card or ITIN card (when available).

Forms without documentation will not be processed and will result in payment being held.

4. Financial Aid Letters: All non-citizens require a financial support letter from the department for the Office of International Services (OIS). The letter confirms your registration as a student in the fall term and outlines how much tuition you will be paying. Please e-mail Haleema Ali (hali16@jhu.edu) for this letter when you submit your paperwork to OIS.

**US Citizens and Permanent Residents**
(1) Prior to your first day of work, you must complete an I9 to have your U.S. employment eligibility verified.

- Insert employer code 11472 and "continue."
- Enter the text in the box and "continue."
- Complete Section 1 of the Form I-9.
- For the location box, select "Students from other JHU schools"
- Review the information you have provided for accuracy.
- Complete the agreement section.
- Click "Continue."
- A receipt page will be displayed that includes a list of documents (unexpired) to be presented.
- Use the “print this page” option to print your receipt as it will be needed to complete the process.

(2) Bring your completed New Hire Form and an accepted form of ID from the E-Verification website (in most cases, your passport or your driver’s license and social security card) to the Haleema Ali’s office (W8501).

**WEEKLY TIMESHEETS**

**IMPORTANT:** Submit your weekly timesheet to Haleema’s office every Friday by 2:00pm. You will be paid on the 15th and last day of the month for the timesheets submitted in that period of time. You will ALWAYS report 19 hours, unless you take a break from your studies (vacation, etc.) and report fewer hours or no hours.

In the Fall, eligible ScM students can convert to Federal Work-Study (FWS); preparation for converting to work-study in the Fall should be submitted/approved in August:

(1) Consult the Financial Aid Office (E1002) to verify if you qualify for FWS.

(2) **IF YOU ARE WORK-STUDY ELIGIBLE:** Amy Jones, in the Financial Aid Office, will provide you with a Work-Study Position Posting form which outlines the terms of your employment. You will continue to submit your weekly timesheets to Haleema as usual.
FAQs

Can I take courses during my research year in the ScM program?

It is unusual and not recommended for a ScM student to take a significant number of courses in the research year. The purpose of the research year is to complete the research project and writing of the ScM thesis. The coursework you’ve completed in Year 1 of the MHS program is a required part of the ScM degree.

If a ScM student wants to take a course in any term (even online), the ScM student must get permission from the ScM advisor. If approved, and you take a course, you are responsible for managing your time around class and study time to ensure your research continues to progress. Fourth (4th) term of the research year will be especially busy, with wrapping up your research and writing the ScM thesis.

Am I allowed to take time off during winter break between 2nd and 3rd terms or spring break between 3rd and 4th term during my research year in the ScM program?

Typically not. The research year is very different from the MHS coursework year, as it is not confined by the academic terms when courses occur. It is common to take off time around the December and New Year’s holidays. Otherwise, most research activities in BMB labs go on throughout the year. (For example, we still have our departmental research seminar during these breaks in the academic calendar.) Taking off for vacation may vary, and depends solely on your research progress and your desired time line for completing your degree. All leave should be approved by your ScM advisor.

What is the Master’s Tuition Scholarship (MTS)? Am I eligible?

If you have successfully completed the MHS year of the ScM program, you are automatically eligible for the MTS scholarship. The MTS is a scholarship award worth up to 75% of the School’s tuition to eligible students. Please note, an award of less than 75% will be made when other sponsored tuition support is available to the student. Receipt of this scholarship is limited to four academic terms.

How many classes do I register for during my first summer?

Although ScM students are expected to commence their research in June, ScM students do not have to register for the first summer session.

Summer tuition

If you have not completed the program by the end of fourth term (4th), you must register for summer. Tuition is typically covered by your advisor.
**How much do I get paid?**

ScM students are paid in their research year for hours worked up to **19 hours per week at $11.00 per hour**, up to a maximum of 987 total hours or up to 13 months on payroll, whichever comes first. In general, your research time will be a 40+ hours per week commitment (with some variation from day to day, week to week).

**When are time sheets due?**

Submit your weekly timesheet to Haleema’s office **every Friday by 2:00pm**. You will be paid on the 15th and last day of the month for the timesheets submitted in that period of time. You will ALWAYS report 19 hours, unless you take a break from your studies (vacation, etc.) and report fewer hours or no hours.

**When is Federal Work Study (FWS) available?**

**In the Fall**, eligible ScM students can convert to Federal Work-Study (FWS); preparation for converting to work-study in the Fall should be submitted/approved in August.

1. Consult the Financial Aid Office (E1002) to verify if you qualify for FWS.

**How do ScM students apply to the BMB PhD program?**