

Best Practices for Managing when a Student's Dissertation Mentor Moves to a New Institution

When a doctoral student's mentor is leaving the OUHSC, the student has the following options:

Option 1: Remain at OUHSC and begin a new research project with a new mentor.

Option 2: Remain at OUHSC and continue working on their current research project with an OUHSC faculty mentor in collaboration with the departing mentor.

Option 3: Move with their mentor to the new institution and remain an OUHSC graduate student.

Option 4: Withdraw from OUHSC and enroll in a program at the new institution.

The student and mentor should meet with the Director of the Graduate Program to discuss these options and determine which is best for the student, if necessary in consultation with the Graduate College.

Option 1 Procedure: The student's stipend will be paid up to 3 months by the Department in which the departing mentor had primary academic appointment. This will allow the student time to find a new mentor. The [Graduate College Petition for Acceptance](#) must be signed by all parties.

Option 2 Procedure: Student remains at OUHSC and continues to work on current research project with a new OUHSC mentor and departing mentor.

A plan that addresses the following items must be developed by the Graduate Program, mentor and student and approved by the Graduate College. Fill in the [Form for Option 2](#).

2.1 Dissertation Committee

- The departing chair must become Co-Chair and a Temporary Graduate Faculty Member. The program should request the temporary graduate appointment.
- The faculty member whose lab the student will be working in must become Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee.
- A new committee member from the student's Graduate Program must be appointed to the Dissertation Committee.

2.2 Funding

- The student's stipend, tuition, fees, and health insurance will still be the departing mentor's responsibility.
- A subcontract between OUHSC and the mentor's new institution should be set up to cover these expenses.

Option 3 Procedure: Student moves with the departing mentor but remains an OUHSC graduate student.

A plan that addresses the following must be developed by the Graduate Program and approved by the Graduate College. Fill in the [Form for Option 3](#)

3.1. Dissertation Committee

- Departing chair must become Co-Chair and a Temporary Graduate Faculty Member.
- An OUHSC faculty member in the student's graduate program must become Co-Chair of the Dissertation Committee
- A new committee member from the student's Graduate Program must be appointed to the Dissertation Committee

3.2. Program of study

- Identify coursework student will enroll in.
- Determine how program requirements, such as attendance at journal clubs and seminars, presentations, will be managed.
- Determine how oversight of student's research progress by dissertation committee will be managed.

3.3. Enrollment

- Student must enroll in at least 6 hours of coursework fall and spring semester and 3 hours in the summer term (2 credit hours in the semester in which they take the General Examination or defend their dissertation).
- Student may enroll in OUHSC coursework such as Doctoral Dissertation Research and may enroll in other courses.
- Student may enroll in courses at the new institution as long as these are approved by the student's Graduate Program and Graduate College. Up to 44 hours from the new institution can be transferred to OUHSC and applied to degree requirements.

3.4. Funding

The student's stipend, tuition, fees, and health insurance will remain the mentor's responsibility.

- Student may be appointed an OUHSC GRA and contract set up with Graduate College and departing faculty member to pay stipend to OUHSC who pays student.
- Student may be appointed a staff member at new institution and receive salary equivalent to OUHSC stipend or stipend given to graduate students at new institution, whichever is higher.

3.5 Tuition and Fees

- Student may receive a non-resident tuition waiver
- Student will present OUHSC tuition and fees bill to mentor for payment.

3.6 Health Insurance

- Student must verify they have health insurance.
- Student may have OUHSC student health insurance purchased by mentor.
- Student may have health insurance from new institution purchased by mentor if enrolled or paid as staff at that institution.

International Students:

1. Student and program must notify the OUHSC Office of International Student Affairs to inform them of the student's intent to conduct research at institution where mentor is relocating to receive SEVIS information.

2. The student may complete doctoral dissertation research at another institution as long as full-time enrollment and GRA position is retained at OUHSC and the student is compliant with all immigration regulations. A letter from the mentor listing approval and explanation of the student's partial dissertation abroad is required. The department is required to contact OUHSC Human Resources for approval of the out-of-state employment withholding and state income taxes for student employment in the state.

3. If the student's mentor is moving to an institution in another country, the student should be aware of how participation in academic activities outside the U.S. affects the maintenance of their SEVIS record eligibility for re-entry to US, and eligibility for benefits, such as practical training, after completing the activity abroad.

If traveling outside the U.S., the student will be required to maintain a valid visa, passport, and I-20 and follow immigration regulations that apply to that country.