



CENTRE OF BIOMEDICAL ETHICS AND CULTURE
Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation

Graduate Evaluation Policy

Master's in Bioethics- MBE

Centre of Biomedical Ethics and Culture (CBEC)
Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT)
Sindh Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS)

Preamble

This policy outlines the rules and regulations governing the evaluation of candidates enrolled in the Master's in Bioethics (MBE) program offered by CBEC through SIMS, Karachi. It has been developed to comply with the requirements set forth by HEC Pakistan and professional academic standards. It is designed to ensure clarity, fairness, and consistency in the evaluation process for all MBE students.

Aims of the Policy

- To provide students with clear guidelines on assessment and evaluation criteria.
- To ensure that the faculty is clear about the process of student evaluation, while being fair, transparent, and with academic integrity.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all students registered in the MBE program at CBEC, offered through SIMS, Karachi. It also encompasses faculty members, thesis supervisors, and external reviewers involved in the evaluation process.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students: Expected to follow the code of conduct set forth by CBEC for its students in particular and by SIMS for all students under its umbrella, in general.

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Faculty: Responsible for conducting teaching sessions, evaluating assignments, and providing feedback to students. Additionally, one or more faculty will be assigned as Thesis Supervisor/s to supervise thesis-related work to ensure academic rigor and provide mentorship.

Examiners: Internal examiners evaluate all written examinations.

Thesis Review Committee (TRC): Composed of national and international scholars and professionals from relevant fields. Responsible for reviewing and grading theses as 'pass,' 'requires modification and resubmission,' or 'fail.'

Administrative Office: Maintains official records of student grades, communicates results, and ensures compliance with institutional regulations.

Evaluation Process

The Master's in Bioethics program spans two years, comprising of 4 semesters with 4 modules throughout the period, interspaced with distance learning and continuous assessment.

Criteria for Receiving the Master's Degree

- Students must maintain an average of at least 65% marks (C+ grade) throughout the program.
- Successful completion of all mandatory assignments and activities.
- Successful completion and approval of the MBE thesis in the second year.

Modes of Evaluation

Contact Sessions (Semesters 1–4)

MBE students, attend four in-person modules annually, each lasting up to two weeks. These modules are conducted jointly for both MBE and PGD program students. Attendance in all sessions is mandatory.

MBE Teaching Sessions:

- MBE students are assigned to teach PGD students under faculty supervision, and are graded on their performance.
- Evaluation criteria include content knowledge, clarity, time management, and ability to engage peers.

End of Module Tests:

- An end-of-module test is held after each of the first three modules. These tests consist of a combination of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and Short Essay Questions (SEQs).

MBE Distance Learning Components

Written Assignments:

- Full-length scholarly papers related to courses taught during modules. These are graded on:
 - Relevance and strength of arguments.
 - Understanding of topics in both global and local contexts.
 - Ability to identify, analyze, and critique key ideas and themes in scholarly literature.
 - Coherence and clarity in writing.
- Assignments are mandatory and are connected to the coursework taught in Semester 1 and Semester 2.
- All scores/grades awarded by faculty are final.

Directed Research/Book Review:

- Students must read and review at least one book relevant to bioethics during the coursework year.
- Reviews must explore themes in depth and critique the book through research on the subject.

MBE Thesis

The MBE Thesis is a mandatory component of the program and represents the culmination of directed research and academic inquiry.

Structure

- The thesis spans Semesters 3 and 4, during which students engage in directed research and thesis-related work.
- Students are assigned one or more faculty supervisors to guide their research.
- The thesis must be 15,000–18,000 words in length and based on original research on an ethics-related topic.
- Acceptable formats include:

- Empirical, qualitative, or quantitative research.
- Comprehensive literature review and analysis.
- The choice of topic and methodology is often influenced by the student's professional background and interests.

Proposal

- Students begin by drafting a thesis outline for review by their supervisor.
- Where applicable, proposals are submitted to SIUT's Research Advisory Committee for defense prior to ethical review.
- Research involving human subjects may only begin after approval from:
 - SIUT's Ethics Review Committee (ERC).
 - ERC of the institution where research is conducted.

Evaluation

- Final theses are reviewed by a Thesis Review Committee (TRC) composed of national and international scholars and professionals.
- The TRC assigns one of the following outcomes: Pass, Requires Modification and Resubmission, Fail
- Students must receive a 'Pass' grade from all reviewers to be awarded the MBE degree.

Extensions

- Students unable to submit their thesis by the deadline due to unforeseen circumstances may be granted an extension of up to three months, at the faculty's discretion.
- If modifications are required, students may receive an additional three-month extension to resubmit.
- In extraordinary circumstances, students may be granted leave for up to two years (one academic cycle) to complete modifications at their own pace. This is subject to:
 - Evidence of extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control.
 - Completion of all coursework and assignments with an exceptional academic record.
 - Official designation as 'On Leave' in CBEC and SIMS records.

Appeals

- Students receiving a 'Fail' grade may appeal to the CBEC Chairperson.
- An independent committee will be formed to reassess the thesis.
- The Chairperson's decision is final.

Grading System

- Students receive alphabetical grades (e.g., A+, A, A-, B+, B, B- and so on) on all tests, written assignments, and teaching sessions. These grades are recorded on official transcripts.
- To pass any graded activity, students must earn at least a C+ grade, equivalent to 65%.

Retention Criteria

- Students must maintain an average of at least 65% in the first four graded assignments to continue in the program.
- Students who fail to meet the required average, despite faculty support and counselling, may be dropped from the program.
- Additionally, students who meet the minimum average but fail three graded activities (including MBE teaching sessions, written assignments), may also be dropped.
- Attendance is mandatory for all sessions of every module. In accordance with existing policy, absence for any reason may result in dismissal from the program.
- Students who are dropped due to unexpected illness may be considered for preferential re-admission in the next academic cycle, subject to faculty discretion.

Failed Assignments and Retakes

- If a student receives less than 65% on the first assignment, they will be debriefed in person by faculty and provided feedback.
- Students may be allowed to rewrite up to three failed assignments.
- A successfully rewritten assignment will be awarded a maximum grade of C+, equivalent to 65%.
- Failure to submit an assignment by the deadline without prior permission from faculty will result in zero marks for that assignment.
- All grades awarded by faculty are final and not subject to appeal.

Announcement of Results

The CBEC Administrative Office will communicate the results of assignments, coursework, and thesis evaluations to students in a timely manner.

Use of Unfair Means and Scientific Misconduct

Any use of unfair means during coursework or scientific misconduct in assignments or thesis-related work is a punishable offense. Cases will be referred to the relevant institutional committee, and disciplinary action will follow established SIMS policies.

Award of Certificate(s)/Diploma in lieu of MBE

At the discretion of the faculty, MBE students who are dropped from the program may be offered either certificates for Research and Public Health Ethics and/or Clinical Ethics, or the Postgraduate Diploma in Biomedical Ethics (PGD), depending on the coursework completed successfully. The faculty's decision in this case will be final. Students can also be provided a letter listing courses taken by the students and grades awarded.

Review of Policy

The policy will be reviewed every four years for revisions and/or amendments, unless the faculty determines that a review is required earlier.

Appendix 1 – Grades to Percentages Conversion Scale

A+	: 95 and above
A	: 90 – 94
A-	: 85 – 89
B+	: 80 – 84
B	: 75 – 79
B-	: 70 – 74
C+	: 65 – 69 (minimum pass grade)
C	: 60 – 64
C-	: 55 – 59
D	: 40 – 54
E	: 25 – 39
F	: Below 25