2014-2015 PhD Student Manual

Guidelines for the PhD in Health Services Research

Program Director
Jeffrey S. Harman
Associate Professor
Email: jharman@phhp.ufl.edu
Office: HPNP Building, Room 4135
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD IN HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH .................................................. 2
   Mission Statement .............................................................................................................. 2
   Competencies .................................................................................................................. 2
   Admission Policies and Procedures .................................................................................... 3
   Financial Assistance ........................................................................................................ 5
   Selection Of Discipline For Degree & Major Professor ..................................................... 5

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE ................................................................................................ 6
   Duties of the Supervisory Committee .............................................................................. 6

PLAN OF STUDY .................................................................................................................. 7

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION .......................................................................................... 8

TIMETABLE FOR DOCTORAL PROGRAM ......................................................................... 8

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION .................................. 9

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL PRESENTATION ....................................................................... 10

FINAL DISSERTATION RESEARCH .................................................................................... 11

ORAL DISSERTATION DEFENSE .................................................................................... 12

READMISSION PROCEDURES .......................................................................................... 13

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE ................................................................................................ 13
   Informal Stage .................................................................................................................. 14
   Formal Stage ................................................................................................................... 14

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH ...................................................................... 15
   Fraud ................................................................................................................................ 15
   Plagiarism ....................................................................................................................... 16
   Cheating .......................................................................................................................... 17
   Abuses of Confidentiality ................................................................................................. 17
   Conflict of Interest ......................................................................................................... 17

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT & HEALTH INFORMATION POLICY ........................... 18

HIPAA ................................................................................................................................. 18

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS ............................................................................................ 18

FERPA ................................................................................................................................. 18

EXIT INTERVIEW AND ALUMNI ....................................................................................... 19
GUIDELINES FOR THE PHD IN HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the University of Florida has as its defining and distinguishing characteristics research, scholarship, artistic creation, and post-baccalaureate training in the arts and sciences and in the professions. The mission of the College is to preserve, promote, and improve the health and well-being of populations, communities, and individuals. The PhD program in Health Services Research provides doctoral level training within the College, in order to conduct inquiry that will inform government officials, corporate leaders, clinicians, health plan managers, and others making decisions about complex health-related problems and issues. The program is a multidisciplinary field examining the use, cost, quality, accessibility, delivery, organization, financing, and outcomes of health care services where students learn to apply research methods and scientific knowledge to the study of health services organizations and systems.

COMPETENCIES

- Know how to apply alternative theoretical and conceptual models from a range of relevant disciplines to HSR.
- Apply in-depth disciplinary knowledge and skills relevant to health services research.
- Use knowledge of the structures, performance, quality, policy, and environmental context of health and health care to formulate solutions for health policy problems.
- Pose innovative and important research questions, informed by systematic reviews of the literature, stakeholder needs, and relevant theoretical and conceptual models.
- Select appropriate interventional (experimental and quasi-experimental) or observational (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) study designs to address specific health services research questions.
- Know how to collect primary health and health care data obtained by survey, qualitative, or mixed methods.
- Know how to assemble secondary data from existing public and private sources.
- Use a conceptual model to specify study constructs for a health services research question and develop variables that reliably and validly measure these constructs.
- Implement research protocols with standardized procedures that ensure reproducibility of the science.
- Ensure the ethical and responsible conduct of research in the design, implementation, and dissemination of health services research.
- Work collaboratively in multi-disciplinary teams.
- Use appropriate analytical methods to clarify associations between variables and to delineate causal inferences.
- Effectively communicate the findings and implications of health services research through multiple modalities to technical and lay audiences.
- Understand the importance of collaborating with policymakers, organizations, and communities to plan, conduct, and translate health services research into policy and practice.
ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The HSR PhD track adheres to the minimum standards set forth by the University of Florida Graduate School:

- A grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.0 (4-point system)
- Competitive Graduate Record Examine (GRE) scores

In addition to the above requirements, applicants must have completed and submitted an HSR application information form:

- A letter of proposed research interest
- Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- Minimum of three letters of recommendation (one of which must be academic)
- Academic writing sample (class paper, first author manuscript)

Although a formal interview for applicants is not required at this time, applicants are encouraged to visit the department prior to or during the application process.

To apply for admission to the University of Florida PhD Program in Health Services Research, applicants MUST complete BOTH of the following application procedures unless the applicant is currently enrolled at the University of Florida. Current University of Florida students do not have to apply through SOPHAS and can skip directly to Step II (Application for University of Florida Graduate Admission)

I. Submit an online application to the Schools of Public Health Application Service (SOPHAS), a service of the CEPH accredited schools of public health. The application can be found at: www.sophas.org.

II. Submit the University of Florida online Application by February 1st for Graduate Admission. The application can be found at: www.admissions.ufl.edu/phhp2009

Application period: November 1 – February 1.

Requirements for each application are outlined below.

I. Application Requirements for SOPHAS (Applications should be submitted at: www.sophas.org)
   1. Complete the SOPHAS online application and pay the application fee. (Please note that the fee will vary according to the number of school designations)
   2. Arrange for GRE exam scores to be sent to SOPHAS
   3. Arrange to have one set of official transcripts from each institution attended sent to SOPHAS (the address is listed below)
   4. Arrange to have 3 Letters of Recommendation submitted.
5. Submit your professional Statement of Purpose outlining objectives that match the philosophy and focus of the program.

6. Submit a Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

**SOPHAS Mailing Address:**  
SOPHAS  
P.O. Box 9111  
Watertown, MA 02471

**For Overnight Delivery Only:**  
SOPHAS  
c/o Liaison International  
311 Arsenal Street  
Watertown, MA 02472

II. Application Requirements for the University of Florida, Application for Graduate Admission  
(Applications should be submitted at: www.admissions.ufl.edu/phhp2009)

1. Complete the University of Florida Application for Graduate Admissions online and pay the non-refundable $30 application fee. You may pay online by credit card or send the application fee and other required materials to the Office of Graduate Admissions (the address is listed below). Please note that the $30US application fee is required from all students applying to a graduate program including current and former University of Florida students.

2. When completing the application:
   i. Under College/School, select Public Health and Health Professions (PHHP)
   ii. Under Program/Major, select Health Services Research
   iii. Note: The Statement of Purpose should be submitted in SOPHAS only. Therefore, when prompted to enter your Statement of Purpose on the UF Application for Graduate Admission, please type “Submitted in SOPHAS.” If you are a current UF student and not applying through SOPHAS, then submit the Statement of Purpose on the UF Application for Graduate Admission.

3. Arrange to have official transcripts from each previous institution attended (other than University of Florida) sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions (the address is listed below).

4. Arrange to have official GRE test scores sent directly to University of Florida. The University of Florida code is 5812. Please allow 6-8 weeks for the official scores to arrive.

5. Arrange to have official TOEFL, IELTS or MELAB scores sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions (International students only).

   UF Office of Graduate Admissions  
   University of Florida  
P.O. Box 2946  
Gainesville, FL 32602-2946  
(352) 392-1365
Financial Assistance

It is the general policy of the department of Health Services Research, Management and Policy (HSRMP) that graduate students must demonstrate adequate financial support and the department is committed to finding financial support for all doctoral students if necessary and possible. However, the nature of that financial assistance may change on a yearly basis and will be based on admission ranking and adequate progression in the program. Financial aid is generally provided in the form of teaching and research assistantships with the expectation that students will contribute no more than 20 hours per week to these activities except in extenuating circumstances. Students taking longer than four years to complete the doctoral program assume responsibility for obtaining their own financial aid.

Prior to the beginning of each academic year, every graduate student will receive a letter of offer specifying (1) the total amount of the stipend for that period, (2) the position to which he/she is appointed (e.g., Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, or other), (3) the starting and ending dates of the appointment, (4) the assignment for that period, (5) the supervisor for that period, and (6) other pertinent information. Students will be asked to sign the form to indicate that it has been read, understood, and accepted. A copy of this document will be kept in the student’s personnel file.

At the end of every academic year, each supervisor will provide a written evaluation of the student to the department of HSR. Students will receive a copy of the evaluation and have the right to a written rebuttal in case he/she disagrees with the evaluation. The evaluation will also be kept in the student’s personnel file.

When possible, decisions concerning the allocation of state stipends are made by the HSR PhD Committee at the same time a decision is made to admit a particular candidate. (Note: Sometimes awards must be finalized at a later date due to delays in decisions regarding allocations from the university to the college.) Allocations will be reviewed on a yearly basis to ensure that the student is making adequate progress.

Selection of Discipline for Degree & Major Professor

Upon entering the department, the HSR Program Director will assign each incoming student a “first-year” advisor/mentor. During the course of the year, each student is encouraged to meet with several HSRMP faculty so as to find the best scientific and interpersonal fit. Students may change advisors during the summer following their first year upon establishing written agreement from both the new and original advisors. (Note: Students are not allowed to maintain funding from the original advisor’s grant or contract when switching advisors unless there is explicit written permission.) After the summer of the first year, if a student desires to change the major advisor, he/she must inform the PhD Program Director in writing. The student will then be assigned to a new advisor as part of a no-fault one time change in mentorship. The department PhD coordinator will advise each student on general policies as set forth in this document. The department chair, associate chair, and doctoral program coordinator are responsible for general oversight of the PhD program for quality assurance, assignment of teaching duties, and recruitment of students.
Supervisory Committee

The supervisory committee is proposed by the student’s major advisor in consultation with the student, nominated by the executive committee, approved by the chair of the department, and forwarded to the Graduate School. The advisor must hold Doctoral Graduate Faculty status within the HSR PhD Program and all committee members must hold Graduate Faculty status with the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School is an ex-officio member of all supervisory committees. Graduate students should set up their supervisory committees by the end of their second semester. The student is encouraged to meet with the supervisory committee as often as possible.

The supervisory committee shall consist of at least four members of the UF Graduate Faculty, including at least two members from within the department of HSRMP. The committee chair need not be tenured, but must hold an appointment in the department and be voted in as a member of the HSR Ph.D. program faculty. For purposes of the latter designation, all Ph.D. program faculty members are voting members.

In rare cases, one’s doctoral research may require the guidance of a specialist in an area of study other than that of the supervisory committee chair. In such cases, the PhD committee chair may recommend the appointment of a co-chair who should be on the graduate faculty.

Duties of the Supervisory Committee

- To provide optimum support and guidance to the student so as to help the student meet his/her academic goals.
- To inform the student of all regulations governing the Ph.D. degree (listed in this document and on the university website). This does not absolve the student from the responsibility of becoming informed of these regulations.
- To meet soon after appointment with the student to consider the student’s individual goals and proposed program.
- To evaluate the student’s progress to date.
- To conduct the student’s written qualifying examination after the student has completed all required course work. The supervisory committee should also assist in the departmental oral qualifying exam.
- To discuss and approve the student’s dissertation topic, and if the student has passed the examination to the committee’s satisfaction, recommend the student’s admission to candidacy.
- To monitor and evaluate the student’s progress and give clear directions as to the final work plan leading to graduation.
- To meet as a committee once a year before the student advances to candidacy and every six months thereafter to review the student’s research.
- To conduct the final oral examination in defense of the dissertation.
It is important to remember that any changes made to the supervisory committee must be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School as the changes occur. Changes need to be approved at least 30 days prior to the date of the Final Oral Defense so that all new members will have ample time to become familiar with the dissertation. Committee changes cannot be made after a final oral defense takes place.

**Plan of Study**

A minimum of 90 credit hours beyond the Master’s degree is required for the doctoral degree and all credits earned in the approved degree program count toward this minimum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSES</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>CREDITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTORY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line / no credit</td>
<td>Public Health for Health Professions</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOUNDATIONS</strong> (Taught Every Year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6114</td>
<td>US Health Care Sys</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6126</td>
<td>Health Insurance Sys</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6436</td>
<td>Health Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6052</td>
<td>Stat Methods for Research I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6053</td>
<td>Regression Methods for Hlth &amp; Life Sci</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6001</td>
<td>Principles of Epidemiology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HSR CORE</strong> (Taught Every Other Year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7936</td>
<td>Costs &amp; Financing Hlth Serv</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7106</td>
<td>Health Serv Access &amp; Util</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7759</td>
<td>Qual &amp; Outcomes in HSR</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7116</td>
<td>Health Serv Orgs Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7414</td>
<td>Soc, Health &amp; Medicine</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7157</td>
<td>Res Found Health Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7437</td>
<td>Adv Health Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HSR METHODS</strong> (Taught Every Year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7707</td>
<td>HSR Methods I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7708</td>
<td>HSR Methods II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHC 6716</td>
<td>Survey Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Methods Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPORTING FIELD</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Field Course I</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Field Course II</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Field Course III</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Field Course IV</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADVANCED SEMINARS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7938</td>
<td>Adv Seminar in HSR (integrative)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7938</td>
<td>Adv Seminar in HSR (grant prop)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESEARCH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7979</td>
<td>Advanced Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 7980</td>
<td>Research for Doctoral Dissertation</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PROFESSIONAL SKILLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6910</td>
<td>Practical Research Experience</td>
<td>variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6940</td>
<td>Supervised Teaching</td>
<td>variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSA 6911</td>
<td>Research Seminar in HSR</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSD 6706</td>
<td>Scientific Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL HOURS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fall – Spring – Summer – On-Line – Every Semester**
Course work must be at the 5000 level or higher. Courses for major credit must be taken by letter grade, except for those courses listed as S/U in the catalog. Students with a previous graduate degree can petition the graduate council to have up to 25 credits applied towards the doctoral program. Prior to petitioning the graduate council, the course list must be approved by the student’s academic advisor and PhD Program Director.

Each student, together with his/her supervisor and/or committee, will put together a course program of study specifically designed to meet the student’s interests and professional goals.

**Preliminary Examination**

Preliminary examinations are expected to be completed at the end of the second year of PhD studies. Satisfactorily passing the preliminary examination is a requirement for admission to candidacy (i.e., when the student actually becomes a candidate for the Ph.D. degree). To take the preliminary examination, the student must: (1) have a minimum 3.00 GPA; (2) have completed letter-grade course work; (3) have completed all HSR Core courses and HSR Methods I and II; and (4) be registered as a student at the time the examination is taken. Exceptions may be granted by the supervisory committee (e.g., if a core course is not offered, but the student has fulfilled all other requirements and has formulated a research program).

**Timetable for Doctoral Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP</th>
<th>TIME FRAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Early Spring Year 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission</td>
<td>Late Spring Year 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment to Advisory</td>
<td>Summer Year 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Summer Year 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Semester Plan of Study</td>
<td>Summer Year 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare list of courses for transfer credits</td>
<td>Fall Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop full plan of study</td>
<td>Spring Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select supervisory committee</td>
<td>Spring/Summer Year 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval from supervisory committee on dissertation topic</td>
<td>Spring Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take written preliminary examination</td>
<td>Summer Year 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write dissertation proposal with input from supervisory committee</td>
<td>Fall Year 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend dissertation proposal</td>
<td>Fall Year 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct dissertation research</td>
<td>Fall Year 3 – Fall Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write dissertation with ongoing input from supervisory committee</td>
<td>Fall Year 4 – Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schedule defense upon approval of supervisory committee</td>
<td>Early Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit dissertation draft to supervisory committee</td>
<td>Early Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 weeks prior to defense)</td>
<td>Early Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend dissertation</td>
<td>Mid-Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make revisions suggested by supervisory committee</td>
<td>Mid-Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit final dissertation to graduate school for approval</td>
<td>Mid-Spring Year 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

- The format for the preliminary examination will be a written in-class examination and a take-home examination. The preliminary examination will take place during the Summer A semester.

- The preliminary examination should be completed after all HSR core PhD seminars have been completed, including HSR Methods I and HSR Methods II. It is expected that this coursework will be completed by the end of the second year in the PhD program. Students who enter the program without a relevant master’s degree (e.g. MHA or MPH) may need to wait until the end of the third year in the PhD program.

- The in-class portion of the preliminary examination will take place over a two day period and will be broken into sections, with one section corresponding to each of the HSR core seminars. Each day will consist of two three-hour examination sessions, with one session in the morning and one session in the afternoon. Some sections will be closed book while other sessions will be open book. Students will be informed prior to the examination whether each section is closed or open book.

- The take-home portion will take place after the completion of the in-class portion of the exam. Students will be provided with two current health policy topics and are required to prepare a proposal to evaluate the implications of one of the health policies. Students will have one week to complete this portion of the examination. Students should provide an outline of their proposal to their advisor by the end of the second day for approval by their advisor and the PhD program director before preparing the full written application.

- All students who will be taking the exam are required to enroll in HSA 7938 during the summer semester.

- The instructor for each of the HSR core seminars will prepare the questions corresponding to the particular seminar and will prepare study guidelines at least one month prior to the examination date that will be provided to all students enrolled in HSA 7938. The instructor for each core seminar will be the primary grader for those questions, but grades will be determined by all members of the PhD program committee. The take-home portion of the examination will be graded by all members of the PhD program committee.

- The student’s grade (i.e. pass with distinction, pass, marginal pass, fail) along with any comments from the examiners will be reported to the student by the PhD program director. The student’s grade in HSA 7938 will be based on the performance on the preliminary examination.

- Students who pass all sections of the preliminary examination may register for HSA 7979 and begin preparation of their dissertation proposals. Students who fail up to two sections or who have grades of marginal pass on four or more sections will be required to complete remediation which may involve re-writing sections of the exam and/or re-enrolling in HSR core coursework. The length of time required to complete the remediation will be determined
A doctoral student becomes a doctoral candidate when the following requirements are satisfied.

- The student’s academic record is satisfactory (GPA of 3.0 or higher)
- Required coursework is completed
- The student has passed the preliminary examination
- The student has successfully defended their dissertation proposal
- The Admission to Candidacy form has the required approvals

Students are responsible for scheduling their proposal and dissertation defenses and for completing all necessary paperwork required by the Graduate School.

The Student Services Office must be notified at least two weeks in advance of the oral qualifying examination so the Announcement of Examination form can be mailed and the Admission to Candidacy form prepared. This form should be taken to the qualifying exam by the student, signed by the supervisory committee, and returned to the Student Services Office for processing.

If the student fails the oral portion of the qualifying exam, he or she may retake it only once and it must be retaken within one semester.

If a student fails the oral portion of the qualifying examination for a second time, the Graduate School will be notified. A re-examination may be requested but it must be recommended by the student’s supervisory committee and approved by the Graduate School. At least one semester of additional preparation is considered essential before re-examination.

Between the date of completion of the qualifying exam and the date of the degree, there must be a minimum of two semesters if the candidate is in full-time status or a calendar year if the candidate is in attendance on less than a full-time basis. The semester in which the qualifying examination is completed is counted provided that the exam is completed before the midpoint of the second term. No more than five years may pass between the completion of the qualifying exam and the conferring of the degree.

**Dissertation Proposal Presentation**

1. It is suggested that the research proposal be presented no later than one year following successful completion of qualifying exams. The topic of the research proposal must be an original research project. A written abstract of the research proposal, maximum of one page in length, should be provided, examined, and approved by the academic committee chair and committee prior to preparation of the complete proposal.
2. The written proposal prepared in the format of a granting agency (e.g., NIH R01 format) should be distributed along with "key" references to the committee at least 14 days prior to the oral dissertation proposal presentation. There is no page limit for the written proposal.

3. The graduate student will give a succinct, 30-minute presentation (complete with visual aids) that focuses on the proposal topic and methodology. The duration of the oral examination is 2 hours. Examination will commence with the presentation of student’s research proposal. The student will then be examined by the committee. Oral questions posed to the student will be related to the written and oral dissertation proposal.

4. The committee will identify questions relevant to the research focus area, which may include but not be limited to:
   - Literature evaluation skills
   - Writing skills
   - Theoretical application
   - Scientific background
   - Study design
   - Analytical methods
   - Measurement methods
   - Data and statistical analysis skills
   - Differentiation of clinical/policy and statistical significance
   - Basic concepts covered in the professional courses

5. The final evaluation of the proposal by the dissertation committee should be communicated to the student and the graduate academic affairs committee utilizing the following scale:
   a. Pass - With written feedback on strengths and weaknesses
   b. Remedial work needed:
      - Specific needs for additional learning experiences (e.g., scientific area, statistics, and writing) may be identified.
      - Remedial work may include a minor rewrite of the proposal or a major rewrite and re-defense of the proposal.
      - Remedial work must be completed within six months from the time of proposal presentation.

**Final Dissertation Research**

The PhD final exam consists of an oral defense of the research results that are described in the doctoral dissertation. This exam is given within six months of graduation, after the first submission of the dissertation, and the completion of all other prescribed work for the degree. Students must submit the dissertation electronically and should refer to the Graduate School Editorial Office for more information regarding the dissertation submission. The guidelines are also online at: (http://gradschool.rgp.ufl.edu/editorial/introduction.html)
Electronic submission requires a signed ETD Submission Approval Form, Final Exam Form, and one electronic copy to the Student Services Office.

The Student Services Office should be informed of the examination one week prior to the defense date in order to process the Final Exam Report form and send out notices.

Copies of the student’s dissertation must be given to the supervisory committee members at least two weeks in advance of the final examination. Graduation may be delayed for those who do not adhere to this rule.

Students are also required to complete an Exit Survey during the semester they plan to graduate. Students can find more information about the Exit Survey in the Student Services Office.

All work for the Ph.D. degree must be completed within five calendar years after the completion of the Ph.D. qualifying examination.

**Oral Dissertation Defense**

This will comprise a presentation of the candidate’s research. At the time of the oral defense, all dissertation committee members should sign the signature pages in the dissertation and sign the Final Exam Report form which is to be returned to the Student Services Office. Students will also submit the original copy of their dissertation to the Student Services Office.

A written abstract of the project (200 words minimum) will be provided to the Dissertation Committee Chair no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled presentation.

**Final Dissertation Examination**

Every candidate for a doctoral degree is required to prepare and present a dissertation that shows independent investigation and is acceptable in form and content to the supervisory committee and to the Graduate School. Because all doctoral dissertations are published, it is necessary that the work be of publishable quality and that it be in a form for publication.

Students must follow dissertation submission criteria and deadlines outlined by the Graduate School (see below). An announcement of the scheduled examination must be submitted in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School by the chair of the supervisory committee at least ten working days prior to the scheduled date. An announcement of the examination is sent at least one week prior to the date of examination to faculty members in the College of Public Health & Health Professions inviting them to attend.

At least four Graduate Faculty members, including all members of the supervisory committee, must be present at the oral portion of the final examination. Only the official members of the supervisory committee may sign the dissertation signature pages. The Chair of the committee and the student must be present in person; however other members of the supervisory committee may attend via phone or video conference if attendance in person is not possible.
Assuming the candidate is successful, the Final Dissertation Report shall be signed by all faculty members attending the examination. The dissertation, original and copies, are to be signed by the official members of the supervisory committee and by the Dean of the College of PHHP. The signed Final Dissertation Report and the original copy of the dissertation should be returned to the Graduate School after the dissertation has been corrected.

The original copy and the second copy of the dissertation must be presented to the Dean of the Graduate School on or before the date specified in the University Calendar. A copy of the final dissertation must also be provided to the Chair of the student’s dissertation committee, Chair of the department of HSR, and committee members by request.

Note: Upon completion of the dissertation, students are required to submit the appropriate paperwork to IRB indicating the completion of the study. If a student continues to analyze data at other institutions, he/she must submit an IRB to the corresponding institution.

**READMISSION PROCEDURES**

Students who have left the program prior to graduating and wish to be readmitted require the following:

- A minimum GPA of 3.0 for courses taken during the doctoral program.
- GRE scores that satisfy the admission requirements of the HSR program in effect at the time of readmission.
- Three letters of recommendation from faculty members in the HSR department.

Readmission is not guaranteed, regardless of the circumstances that necessitate it.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The following is the grievance procedure from the Graduate School Student Handbook. The HSR program uses the Graduate School’s procedure for handling student grievances.

The University of Florida is committed to a policy of treating all members of the university community fairly in regard to their personal and professional concerns. A formal grievance procedure exists to ensure that each graduate student is given adequate opportunity to bring complaints and problems of an academic nature, exclusive of grades, to the attention of the University administration with the assurance that each will be given fair treatment.

A grievance is defined as dissatisfaction occurring when a student thinks that any condition affecting him or her is unjust or inequitable or creates unnecessary hardship. Areas in which student grievances may arise include scientific misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination, employment-related concerns, and academic matters. The University has various mechanisms available for handling these problems when they arise, and it can sometimes be confusing for the student in knowing where to turn. In general it is desirable to settle grievances in an informal fashion rather than initiating a formal grievance. Communication is the key element. As soon as a grievance issue arises, the student should speak with either the supervisory committee chair or the
department graduate coordinator. If neither of these individuals is available, the department chair is the next alternative. In most cases these individuals can work with the student and the person causing the grievance to resolve the issue informally, as specified below.

Students must first attempt to resolve the issue through their academic unit and then college. Only if the issue cannot be resolved may students contact the Ombudsman for an appointment. Documentation must be provided of all formal actions taken to resolve the issue. The Ombuds is located in 31 Tigert Hall, 392-1308.

**Informal Stage**

In the informal phase of the academic grievance procedure, oral discussion between the student and the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance is strongly encouraged. The discussion should be held as soon as the student first becomes aware of the act or condition that is the basis of the grievance. Additionally, or in the alternative, the student may wish to present his or her grievance in writing to the person(s) alleged to have caused the grievance. In either case, the person alleged to have caused the grievance must respond to the student either orally or in writing.

**Formal Stage**

If the student considers the response to the discussion to be unsatisfactory and feels that the grievance still exists, the grievance should be brought in writing, with all supporting documentation, to the department chair or a designated representative of the department. The response of the department to the student's grievance must be given in a timely fashion. If the grievance is still considered to be unresolved, the student may then file the grievance in writing with the dean of the college, who shall investigate the matter and respond to the student within a reasonable time.

The right of appeal in writing to the Ombuds for graduate and professional students, as the authorized representative of the President of the University, shall be the final appeal but only after the prescribed administrative channels and grievance procedures have been exhausted. Employment-related grievances are covered by the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 11, between the Florida Board of Education of the State University System and Graduate Assistants United. Students with employment-related concerns should contact the GAU office at 392-0274. Issues of research misconduct are covered by Rule 6C1-1.011, Florida Administrative Code. Any allegations of research misconduct should be brought to the attention of the administrative officer (e.g., department chair, dean) to whom the accused party reports. Students may wish to seek advice from the Director of the Division of Sponsored Research, 219 Grinter, 392-1582, before making a formal complaint. Graduate students who have complaints or problems with other aspects of university life should consult the Dean of Students Office in 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261 for the appropriate grievance procedure.
**RESponsible Conduct of Research**

Integrity in scholarly work has received considerable attention in recent years both in academic circles and in the news. Some notorious cases of fraud have made those in higher education sensitive to this issue. Some of these instances, especially in the sciences, have surfaced when attempts to replicate work failed. In the humanities and social sciences, plagiarism assumes greater prominence. Cheating, the bane of many high school and undergraduate teachers resurfaces at the graduate level, as well. Moreover, in our increasingly complex professional world, graduate students may find themselves embroiled in abuses of confidentiality or conflicts of interest. All five of these problems are of major concern to graduate students, faculty, and other graduate educators.

Although many graduate students will have few problems with the ethical decisions involved in maintaining integrity in their work, others may not see the issues so clearly. Some may even be unaware of the potential for problems with integrity in graduate study. The Graduate School has prepared these guidelines for units to be consistent should fraud, plagiarism, cheating, abuses of confidentiality, or conflicts of interest arise.

**FRAUD**

Fraud usually involves the intentional and deliberate misuse of data in order to draw conclusions that may not be warranted by the evidence. Falsification of results may take one of two forms: (1) fabrication of data or (2) omission or concealment of conflicting data for the purpose of misleading other scholars. An intermediate form, difficult to detect especially in quantitative analyses, occurs when students are sloppy about categorization. All researchers, irrespective of discipline, can agree that the fabrication of data is fraudulent, and most will agree that the deliberate omission of conflicting data is also fraudulent. But a few scholars might argue that one person’s conflicting data is another person’s irrelevant data. In general, the best researchers are those who come to terms with any piece of evidence which others may regard as conflicting. Strong support for a given hypothesis involves disposing of or dealing with alternative hypotheses.

The best insurance against fraud in graduate student research is careful and close supervision by the faculty advisor and exemplary behavior by other members of the academic community. The student should communicate regularly and frequently with his or her major professor. He or she can do so in a variety of ways, such as by submitting laboratory notebooks for frequent faculty review, by having faculty monitor the student’s reading in the field, by regular progress reports to the faculty advisor, and so forth. Faculty should normally expect such communication, and in the absence of faculty initiative, graduate students should initiate dialogues with faculty. Such communication will help the student develop intellectually and will lessen the possibility of fraud. If a student is suspected of fraud, the academic community should handle the matter forthrightly and with a clear regard to the rights of the graduate student such that the career of a student researcher who may be innocent is not damaged. Similarly, if graduate student fraud is verified, it must be adjudicated in accordance with established University procedures. The Graduate School will provide information on those procedures to any interested party.
Plagiarism

Unlike fraud, which is usually the deliberate creation of false data or results, plagiarism is the use of another's words, ideas, or creative productions or omission of pertinent material without proper attribution (i.e., without giving due credit to the original source). Flagrant cases of plagiarism may involve extensive borrowing of material from articles, books, or creative productions with perhaps only slight modifications. In such cases, penalties are usually severe for the student and would likely result in expulsion from Graduate School or, if a degree has already been earned, the rescinding of that degree. Less extensive cases of plagiarism may be either intentional or unintentional (e.g., carelessness or ignorance of the commonly accepted rules) but may also have severe repercussions. In using other people’s work, one must cite that work in the text or, more commonly, in footnotes, and use either direct quotations or skillful paraphrasing for all ideas that are not one’s own. Since much of the basic information about our disciplines comes from outside ourselves through a variety of sources common to all work in a discipline, it is unnecessary to footnote those facts and ideas, which are, so to speak, in the common domain of the discipline. Otherwise, we would be footnoting everything we know. But an intimate familiarity with the literature of the discipline, or a sub-discipline thereof, lets one know when the distinctive words or ideas of another researcher should be given proper attribution. The fairly common practice among scientists of citing the previous significant literature relating to the subjects of their articles or books serves as something of a safeguard against plagiarism, but such reviews of the pertinent literature are less usual in the humanities.

Every graduate student should have a comprehensive knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism. Ignorance of the concept of plagiarism on the part of the student is no excuse for resorting to it at the graduate level, if indeed ignorance is an acceptable excuse at the undergraduate level. Graduate students who have any confusion about the concept should discuss plagiarism with faculty members. Students should expect faculty members to demand that they know what constitutes plagiarism. There are problems, however, not always associated with traditional perceptions of plagiarism. One of these is the danger, when borrowing from the works of others, of quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing the material in such a way as to misrepresent what the author is trying to say. A second problem arises when a student is overly dependent on the work of another, even if it is cited meticulously. Still another problem is plagiarizing oneself by submitting the same data or findings in more than one article or by reviewing the same book in two different journals. And, finally, there is the problem of a graduate student’s findings being used by his or her mentor without proper attribution to the student either in the article or book, indeed of not giving credit for joint or co-authorship in articles or books where a substantial amount of the work is done by the student. The student should discuss any perceived problem of this nature with the faculty member involved, the chair of the department, or, if need be, with the Graduate School.

In nearly all of these instances of plagiarism, or variations therein, the best preventive is the example and consultation of the faculty advisor and the rest of the academic community, who should be sensitive to all of these nuances. Again, as with cases of fraud, University of Florida faculty should handle any suspicion of plagiarism with due regard to the student’s rights, and any detection of plagiarism should be adjudicated in accordance with established University procedures. The Graduate School will provide procedural information on request.
**Cheating**

Cheating at the graduate level may not differ morally from the same action on the undergraduate level, but many find graduate cheating more reprehensible and the consequences, understandably, are more severe. Academic dishonesty for one whose presence in graduate school declares he or she has opted for the intellectual life is a serious matter indeed. While cheating in the classroom is covered by regulations emanating from other parts of the University, cheating on qualifying or preliminary examinations is not. Such dishonesty, once proven, will at the very least result in failure of the examination and may mean termination of the student’s enrollment.

**Abuses of Confidentiality**

Abuses of confidentiality by graduate students can take various forms. Students often have access to thesis and grant proposals, data, or unpublished papers of other graduate students or faculty members. Some students use this privileged material in their own research without permission, even though proper attribution may be made. Such an abuse of confidentiality would include the adaptation into one’s own research of a thesis or dissertation proposal or any unpublished work that one has opportunity to read or indeed of adopting ideas first floated, and not yet relinquished, by someone else. Another example of an abuse of confidentiality is when the graduate student gains archival or library materials about living or recently-living subjects and uses them in his or her research without permission from the library or archive or, in some cases, from the individual. Any research on live subjects can present similar dilemmas. Confidentiality is one of the forms of integrity, which is relatively easy to abuse and relatively difficult to detect. Once again, as with fraud and plagiarism, the example of the graduate student’s mentor and that of the rest of the academic community is the best preventive.

**Conflict of Interest**

Conflicts of interest between graduate students and faculty members may arise in a variety of ways. We have already alluded to the problems that can occur when the research of a graduate student is inadequately acknowledged by faculty, either by failure to footnote properly or to give co-authorship credit. But another set of professional interpersonal relationships must be handled with great care if the integrity of graduate study is to be preserved. As continuing formal education becomes more common and as academics begin to become involved in the world of business, the possibility of a business relationship between student and teacher becomes greater. All of us are familiar with the kind of conflict of interest which may arise through nepotism, that is, when a person serves in an administrative or supervisory relationship to those who are related to him or her by blood or marriage. Most universities have rules that try to regulate professional relationships in such cases. Many faculty members are reluctant to have their own sons, daughters, or spouses take their courses for credit on the grounds that such students may be perceived by others to have an unfair advantage. A business relationship including a consulting one must evoke the same kind of caution. And a student should be careful about working for a company owned or administered by faculty involved in the student’s degree work.

Similarly, a student should not date an instructor while the student is enrolled in the instructor’s course. A student should not ask any instructor to serve as his or her thesis or dissertation director.
(or research committee member) if the student is having or has had either an intimate personal relationship, a family relationship, or business relationship with that instructor.

If such a relationship should develop after a professional one has been established, the student should expect the instructor to remove him or herself from the professional role. Such a relationship, whether between a graduate student and a faculty member or between a graduate student acting as an associate instructor and an undergraduate, constitutes a potential conflict of interest, especially as perceived by other students and faculty members. Because of perceptions, and also because of the possibilities for exploitation, such relationships should be scrupulously avoided.

**CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT & HEALTH INFORMATION POLICY**

All members of the workforce in UF medical components and affiliated entities, including faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and third parties are required to sign UF’s Confidentiality Statement. All members of the workforce, whether full-time or part-time, temporary or permanent, paid or not paid, must sign the UF Confidentiality Statement within 5 days of joining the workforce or student body, and annually thereafter, agreeing to maintain the confidentiality of patient health information created, received, and maintained by the University of Florida.

**HIPAA**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a broad federal law that is in part designed to provide national standards for protection of certain health information. As required by HIPAA, the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) promulgated complex regulations known as the Privacy Rule, which implement the federal law.

All faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and business associates who work in or for a University of Florida medical component or an affiliated entity are required to complete specialized training about privacy and security on an annual basis. The Department of Physical Therapy maintains records of training compliance for the RSD students. Training certification is for 12 months from the date on the certificate.

**BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS**

All RSD students are required to complete an annual online Blood Borne Pathogens training. The certificate of completion must be placed in your student record.

**FERPA**

The 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as the Buckley Amendment, is a federal law (20 U.S.C. 1232g) that protects the privacy of a student’s educational record. FERPA applies to all educational institutions receiving funds from the United States Department of Education, from kindergarten through university level.
FERPA training is required annually for UF faculty, staff, and student assistants. When working with student records, a student assistant should work cooperatively with their supervisor to ensure FERPA compliance.

**Exit Interview and Alumni**

All students are required to complete an exit interview with the Program Director during the semester of their graduation. It is the student’s responsibility to email the Program Director to schedule an appointment to complete the interview.

After graduation, HSR alumni are encouraged to keep in touch with the department. Alumni can contact the Program Director or staff to update contact information, current position, and share success stories.

University of Florida Graduate School policies, including grievance procedures and other pertinent information, can be found on the University of Florida Graduate School website: [http://graduateschool.ufl.edu](http://graduateschool.ufl.edu).