



DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK

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The School of Public Health, Georgia State University
Doctoral Student Handbook
Academic Year 2015-2016

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Note: The School of Public Health reserves the right to change information contained within this handbook without prior notice.

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Academic Divisions

The graduate programs—Master of Public Health (MPH) and the Doctor of Philosophy—in the School of Public Health are comprised of four academic divisions. Each division is headed by a Division Director and supported administratively by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Ph.D. Program Director. Academic Divisions provide academic mentoring, course offerings and research opportunities for graduate students in School of Public Health. The Doctor of Philosophy is currently offered in three of the four divisions.

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Mission Statement

***Advancing health through leadership, scholarship, research and service
to better the human condition and promote the common good,
especially for urban communities and for global populations.***

The Georgia State University (GSU) faculty of the School of Public Health (SPH) is committed to providing a supportive academic environment that promotes the growth and progress of students engaged in graduate studies. This handbook contains information that will be helpful to a student while enrolled in the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Public Health program and its three distinct degree concentrations—Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Behavior, and Health Services and Policy Research. While the GSU SPH offers Ph.D. program in three different concentrations—EPIP, HPBP, and HSRP—this Doctoral Student Handbook will occasionally refer to a singular Ph.D. degree when discussing requirements that pertain to all SPH doctoral programs of study and students.

The Doctoral Student Handbook contains the most recent SPH policies and procedures; thus, this handbook supersedes any publication regarding policies and procedures related to the Ph.D. This handbook does not replace published college and university requirements and should be used in conjunction with the *GSU Graduate Catalog*¹ and the *GSU Schedule of Classes*² to answer policy and procedural questions regarding your program of study. Students are subject to all policies and procedures of GSU, specifically those listed in the *GSU Graduate Catalog* and the *Student Code of Conduct*³. The faculty and administration encourages you to obtain and keep a copy of the GSU Graduate Catalog for the year in which you were admitted. Updated versions of the SPH Doctoral Student Handbook will be available on the SPH website.

Referenced forms and policies can be found in the Appendices, and original forms may be downloaded from the SPH website⁴.

Background, Accreditation, and Goals

In the 2002-2003 Academic Year, GSU began offering the Graduate Certificate in Public Health (GCPH) to provide an introduction to public health concepts, methods and theory. In January 2004, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program at GSU. The first MPH cohort of students was accepted during the 2004-2005 Academic Year. In June 2007, the MPH program received full five-year MPH program accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH)—making the GSU MPH program the first public university in Atlanta, Georgia to gain that distinction.

¹ GSU Graduate Catalog: <http://www.gsu.edu/enrollment/catalogs.html>

² GSU Schedule of Classes: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckschd.p_disp_dyn_sched

³ GSU Student Code of Conduct: <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

⁴ GSU SPH Website: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu>

The Ph.D. degree program in Public Health at GSU was approved by the Board of Regents in March 2011, and the inaugural class enrolled in August 2011. The Ph.D. degree program is offered in three distinct concentrations. In June 2013, the GSU’s application to become a School of Public Health was accepted by CEPH—and the GSU SPH is now fully engaged in the two-year process necessary to gain accreditation as a School of Public Health.

Note: At Handbook press time, the SPH was currently undergoing strategic planning revision and development. Strategic planning may result in revised mission statement, values, and goals. Any revisions made will be published on the School’s website.

Values

Six values were determined in a college-wide strategic plan created in 2008. All values were developed with input from the administration, faculty, staff and students and were reaffirmed by the School as an independent unit in the University. The values are succinct and specific in nature and are reflected in faculty, staff and students’ instruction, service and learning activities. The values are:

- Scholarship and inquiry
- Human rights and social justice
- Diversity in multicultural and multiethnic environments
- Integrity, accountability and transparency
- Leadership, innovation and transformation
- Healthy, sustainable social environments

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Prepare students to use multi-disciplinary skills to address contemporary public health problems.
The SPH degree programs facilitate student mastery of public health core knowledge.
The SPH degree programs require each student to successfully demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities described in his or her concentration’s competencies.
Doctoral students produce original research in the form of a dissertation that contributes to at least one of the five public health knowledge areas and demonstrates proficiency in research design, synthesis of evidence, data analysis, and interpretation and dissemination of findings.
The SPH maintains and expands partnerships with public health employers in order to enrich student training through practice-based collaboration with public health professionals.
The SPH produces employable graduates in the time prescribed for matriculation.
The SPH has adequate resources to support the number of students and the specific instructional aims of each program of study.
The SPH is committed to the representation, inclusion and engagement of diverse populations, and provides a learning environment that prepares students with broad skills regarding diversity and cultural competence.
The SPH is seen as a competitive, destination of choice for prospective students.
Goal 2: Advance public health sciences and our understanding of the causes and prevention of disease.
The SPH increases unit productivity in acquiring research grants and contracts.
The SPH produces and disseminates original research in academic, professional, and community domains through faculty and doctoral student contributions to scientific knowledge and community practice.

Goal 3: Promote service activities and initiatives by implementing community-based projects, educating professional and lay audiences, and collaborating with the public health workforce to advance health promotion and disease prevention.

The SPH faculty and staff contribute to academic, university, and community-based service activities.

The SPH students engage individually and collectively in community-based service activities.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

PREREQUISITES: PUBLIC HEALTH CORE KNOWLEDGE AREAS. Applicants to the Ph.D. in public health degree must provide documentation of successful completion of the five core public health competencies on the graduate level.

MPH Core Courses, 16 credit hours required as prerequisite work to the Ph.D.

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 7011 or PH 7711	Introduction to Epidemiology or Epidemiologic Methods I (<i>EPID doctoral students must complete PH 7711; HPBP & HSRP doctoral students may complete either</i>)	3
PH 7017	Fundamentals of Biostatistics I	4
PH 7140	Social and Behavioral Aspects of Public Health	3
PH 7150	Environmental Health	3
PH 7160	Introduction to Health Care System	3

The credit hours earned through these prerequisite courses do not count towards the minimum of sixty-two (62) credit hours of doctoral coursework; likewise, any other course taken for the MPH or applied to any other degree program may not count towards the minimum of sixty-two (62) credit hours of doctoral coursework.

Doctoral students may waive these MPH Core Courses if they:

- enter the Ph.D. program with a MPH degree that included “B” grades or better in their MPH courses related to the five knowledge areas basic to public health (*Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Environmental Health Sciences, Health Services Administration, and Social and Behavioral Sciences*), and/or they
- have successfully completed a comparable course(s) with a grade of “B” or better, as documented by an official university transcript. Syllabi for courses may be requested. Or, if they
- have completed employment or other training(s) that enable them to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired in the MPH core courses listed above.

Doctoral students meeting the above criteria must provide a **Petition for Waiver** form for each of the five areas (courses) being requested for waiver. The Petition for Waiver is a written statement, along with any evidentiary documentation, that assures the School that the doctoral student has mastered one (or more) of the five areas of core knowledge in public health through another manner (e.g. MPH degree, career experience, advanced or seminar coursework that included mastery of the five areas of core knowledge in public health, etc.). This Petition must be approved by the Doctoral Program Director. The Doctoral Program Director may defer to the Director of the Division in which the petitioned course is offered.

Upon approval by the Doctoral Program or Division Director, the Petition is then forwarded to the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services (OAA) for review and approval. OAA may request the input of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and/or the Academic Affairs Committee. Upon approval by OAA, the student's file and program of study is updated to note satisfaction of the required doctoral program prerequisite(s). Doctoral students are responsible for ensuring their program of study is updated to note satisfaction of the required doctoral program prerequisite courses.

SUMMARY OF PH.D. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: 62 CREDIT HOURS. The Ph.D. program requires completion of a minimum of 62 credit hours of doctoral course work in a declared public health concentration. Students are required to complete a practicum experience. Each student, along with his or her faculty advisor, may choose to participate in a teaching, research, or practice based practicum. Students are also required to complete a comprehensive exam and dissertation. Doctoral students must satisfy the course requirements (see Appendix A for a Sample Course Plan, see Appendix D for a list of courses) and credit hours in their declared concentration. All doctoral students will take the following core and research courses in addition to their concentration courses:

1. COURSES REQUIRED FOR ALL Ph.D. STUDENTS. Beyond the MPH core courses prerequisite, all doctoral students must complete the Ph.D. Core courses. Building on the MPH foundation, the Ph.D. Core ensures all doctoral students develop a more advanced knowledge-base in public health. Almost all Ph.D. Core Courses are 9000-level, and therefore, restricted to doctoral students.

Ph.D. Core Courses, 18 credit hours required

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 8721	Epidemiologic Methods II	3
PH 9120	Theory and Practice in Health and Prevention	3
PH 9140	Advanced Research Methods	3
PH 9150	Public Health Ethics	3
PH 9810	Biostatistical Methods I	3
PH 9820	Biostatistical Methods II	3

2. REQUIRED Ph.D. CONCENTRATION COURSES. All students must complete concentration coursework and electives. Twenty seven (27) hours of required concentration coursework and electives have been established to ensure that students achieve proficiency in the competencies and skills related to each Ph.D. program of study: Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Behavior, or Health Services and Policy Research. Concentrations and their required courses are discussed later in this Handbook.

3. PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR COURSES FOR ALL Ph.D. STUDENTS. All doctoral students are required to complete doctoral seminar courses.

Professional Seminars for All Ph.D. Students, 5 credit hours required

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 8180	Doctoral Research Seminar I	3
PH 8181	Doctoral Research Seminar II	2

4. RESEARCH/TEACHING/APPLIED SKILLS PRACTICUM AND CULMINATING EXPERIENCES

All doctoral students are required to complete a practicum experience, a comprehensive exam, and a dissertation. Each are discussed later in this Handbook.

Research/Teaching/Applied Skills Practicum & Culminating Experiences, 12 credit hours required

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 9960	Doctoral Practicum	3
N/A	Doctoral Comprehensive Exam	N/A
PH 9990	Doctoral Dissertation	9

Epidemiology Concentration

Program Description: Epidemiology (EPIP) is a scientific discipline commonly defined as the study of the distribution and determinants of disease and injury in human populations. This broad scope includes understanding the distribution, patterns and causes of adverse health outcomes as well as those associated with their control and prevention, and the complex interaction of factors that play a role in these processes. The Ph.D. degree in Public Health with a concentration in epidemiology is designed to prepare students for careers in health agencies; for consultation, especially in the public fields; for independent epidemiological research; and for academic careers in schools of public health and medicine. A concentration in epidemiology prepares students to advance the scientific understanding of health and disease with an emphasis on urban and marginalized populations.

Competencies: Graduates with Ph.D. in Public Health with concentration in epidemiology will be expected to be able to:

- EPIP 1. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of various epidemiologic study designs and research methods.
- EPIP 2. Demonstrate expertise in the ethical conduct of human subjects research, including confidentiality and vulnerable populations.
- EPIP 3. Critically review, synthesize, and evaluate the scientific literature and present appropriate implications for public health practice, public policy, and further research.
- EPIP 4. Demonstrate proficiency in epidemiological research by: (1) formulating a research question and/or corresponding hypotheses, (2) developing the study design, (3) participating in data collection, (4) conducting statistical analyses, and (5) interpreting scientific results.
- EPIP 5. Demonstrate mastery and independence as a researcher by pursuing and completing a specialized area of epidemiologic research.
- EPIP 6. Effectively present and disseminate findings from epidemiologic research to scientific and lay audiences.

Assessment Points that Determine the Competency is Met	EPIP Competencies					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Doctoral Program Activity						
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9960 Doctoral Practicum (<i>students and preceptors select at least one</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X

Ph.D. in PUBLIC HEALTH - EPIDEMIOLOGY CONCENTRATION REQUIREMENTS

EPIDEMIOLOGY Concentration Courses, 9 credit hours required (*Complete all courses.*)

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 9731	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
PH 9741	Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods	3
PH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3

EPIDEMIOLOGY Concentration Advanced Research Methods and Statistics Courses, 6 credit hours required (*Select at least 2 courses in consultation with your Faculty Advisor.*)

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
STAT 8090	Applied Multivariate Statistics	3
STAT 8440	Survival Data Analysis	3
STAT 8760	Sample Surveys	3
EPRS 8830	Sampling Principles and Questionnaire Design	3
EPRS 8840	Meta-Analysis	3
EPRS 8560	Structural Equation Modeling	3
EPRS 9550	Multivariate Analysis	3

EPIDEMIOLOGY Concentration Electives, 12 credit hours required

(*Select at least 4 courses in consultation with your Faculty Advisor.*)

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 7265	Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence	3
PH 7275	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	3
PH 7280	Infectious Disease Epidemiology	3
PH 7290	Case Studies in Epidemiology	3
PH 7365	Epidemiology of Adolescent and Young Adult Risk Behaviors	3
PH 8285	Social Epidemiology	3
PH 8790	Special Topics in Epidemiology	3
Other	Other appropriate Ph.D. EPIP elective courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. Students are recommended to receive approval from their Faculty Advisor <i>prior</i> to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3

Health Services and Policy Research Concentration

Program Description: The Ph.D. concentration in Health Services and Policy Research (HSRP) is concerned with the preparing scholars to formulate and implement research related to public health and health care policy, the distribution of and access to health care services, the finance and reimbursement of health care services, and quality and outcomes of health care services and programs. The Health Services and Policy Research concentration, within the Health Management and Policy Division, draws not only from public health, but also additional disciplines, including health administration, health policy, public administration, business, public health law, health ethics, and economics, in order to prepare doctoral scholars to conduct interdisciplinary research that can have broad public health impact.

Competencies: Graduates with Ph.D. in Public Health with concentration in health services and policy research will be expected to be able to:

- HSRP 1. Apply social science (economics, political science, sociology, etc.) concepts, theories and methods to the framing and analysis of research questions in health services delivery and health care policy.
- HSRP 2. Describe major problems in health services delivery and health care policy that are currently the subject of empirical investigations
- HSRP 3. Apply advanced methods of analysis and research design to describe policy-relevant issues in contemporary health care, such as: access to health care, health care financing, insurance market functioning, physician and hospital performance, healthcare management and organization, patient safety and quality of care, and health care workforce
- HSRP 4. Effectively teach concepts and methods of health services and health policy research to students
- HSRP 5. Design a health services or health policy research proposal involving qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approaches
- HSRP 6. Conduct a health services or health policy research activity investigation suitable for peer-reviewed publication as an independent researcher
- HSRP 7. Function as an interdisciplinary team collaborator in the design and conduct of a health services or health policy research investigation.

Assessment Points that Determine the Competency is Met	HSRP Competencies						
Doctoral Program Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9960 Doctoral Practicum (<i>students and preceptors select at least one</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

**Ph.D. in PUBLIC HEALTH – HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH CONCENTRATION
REQUIREMENTS
(Health Management and Policy Division)**

HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH Concentration Courses, 9 credit hours required *(Complete all courses.)*

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH8220	Principles of Health Service Research I: Thematic Background	3
PH8240	Introduction to Health Services Research II: Basic Methods	3
PH8250	Health Economics and Policy	3

HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICY RESEARCH Concentration Advanced Research Methods, Statistics and Electives Courses, 18 credit hours required

(Select at least 6 courses in consultation with your Faculty Advisor.)

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 8285	Social Determinants of Health	3
PH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3
PH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PH 8290	Population Health Informatics	3
ECON 8220	Human Resources and Labor Markets	3
ECON 8740	Applied Statistics and Econometrics	3
PMAP 8131	Applied Research Methods and Statistics II	3
PMAP 8141	Microeconomics for Public Policy	3
PMAP 8521	Evaluation Research: Design and Practice	3
PMAP 9211	Applying Research to Policymaking: Examples from Health Care Policy	3
SOCI 8020	Research Methodology	3
SOCI 8118	Aging, Health, and Disability	3
SOCI 8234	Race-Ethnicity and Health	3
STAT 8090	Applied Multivariate Statistics	3
STAT 8760	Sample Surveys	3
Other	Other appropriate Ph.D. HSRP elective courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. Students are recommended to receive approval from their Faculty Advisor <i>prior</i> to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3

Health Promotion and Behavior Concentration

Program Description: The concentration in Health Promotion and Behavior (HPBP) will provide Ph.D. students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences to conduct rigorous research on health promotion and behavioral aspects of public health. Students will focus on the theories and methods used to understand and affect public health from a social and behavioral perspective. The program emphasizes an understanding of public health from the social-ecological perspective, and understanding disparities in health. The specific public health problems of focus can be customized for each student’s experience based on student’s academic and career goals.

Competencies: Graduates with Ph.D. in Public Health with concentration in health promotion and behavior will be expected to be able to:

- HPBP 1. Develop expertise in social and behavioral theory, and application of theory to address public health problems at the individual, community or population level.
- HPBP 2. Critically analyze research in terms of the appropriateness of the study design, sample, measures, data analysis, results, and interpretation and critically evaluate the potential impact of the new knowledge gained on public health practices and policies.
- HPBP 3. Develop expertise in research methods and the ethical conduct of research to address scientific questions regarding health promotion research and practice.
- HPBP 4. Develop expertise in statistical and analytic methods used in health promotion research and practice.
- HPBP 5. Develop expertise in planning, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination of social and behavior interventions and/or policies that address public health and health behavior, especially around social-ecological interventions and interventions that address health disparities.
- HPBP 6. Develop expertise in the communication of scientific findings, both writing and oral presentations, for both scientific and lay audiences.

Assessment Points that Determine the Competency is Met	HPBP Competencies					
Doctoral Program Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9960 Doctoral Practicum (<i>students and preceptors select at least one</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X
PH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X

Ph.D. in PUBLIC HEALTH – HEALTH PROMOTION AND BEHAVIOR CONCENTRATION

HEALTH PROMOTION AND BEHAVIOR Concentration Courses, 9 credit hours required *(Complete all courses.)*

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 7535	Dissemination and Implementation Science	3
PH 9130	Intervention and Evaluation of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	3
PH8095	Measurement and Outcomes in Social and Behavioral Health	3

HEALTH PROMOTION AND BEHAVIOR Advanced Research Methods and Statistics Courses, 12 credit hours required *(Select at least 4 courses in consultation with your Faculty Advisor.)*

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3
PH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PH 9731	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
PH 9741	Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods	3
EPRS 8540	Quantitative Methods and Analysis in Education II	3
EPRS 8550	8550 Quantitative Methods and Analysis in Education III	3
EPRS 8830	Survey Research, Sampling Principles and Questionnaire Design	3
EPRS 8840	Meta-Analysis	3
EPRS 9560	Structural Equation Modeling	3
PSYC 8420	Psychological Research Statistics II	3
PSYC 8430	Psychological Research Statistics III	3
STAT 8440	Survival Data Analysis	3
Other	Other appropriate Ph.D. HPBP elective courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. Students are recommended to receive approval from their Faculty Advisor <i>prior</i> to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3

HEALTH PROMOTION AND BEHAVIOR Concentration Electives, 6 credit hours required

(Select at least 2 courses in consultation with your Faculty Advisor.)

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
Other	Appropriate Ph.D. HPBP elective courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. Students are recommended to receive approval from their Faculty Advisor <i>prior</i> to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3
Other	Appropriate Ph.D. HPBP elective courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. Students are recommended to receive approval from their Faculty Advisor <i>prior</i> to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3

Practicum

All doctoral students are required to complete a practicum experience. Each student, along with his or her advisor, may choose to participate in a teaching, research, or practice based practicum.

- For the teaching practicum, a student must work with a faculty member over one – two semesters and participate in lectures, hold study sections, etc. The student may also choose to teach one of the online undergraduate courses.
- For the research practicum, a student must work with a faculty member over one-two semester to complete a specific research product that is separate from their dissertation or typical Graduate Research Assistantship work.
- For the practice-based practicum, as student must complete 300 hours of practicum with a relevant public health agency. This objective cannot be met by current full-time work in which the student is already involved; instead, a separate and distinct experience is required.

The practicum experience can occur over the course of at least one semester and a maximum of two consecutive semesters. However, students should only register for *PH 9960 Doctoral Practicum* once, and may be given an “In Progress” grade if completing over two consecutive semesters. The selection of a teaching, research, or a practice-based practicum should reflect the student's interests and professional goals. Currently, there is no option to waive the doctoral practicum.

Comprehensive Exam

Doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination before being admitted to candidacy. The purpose of comprehensive examination is to assess each student's mastery of the doctoral program competencies and to determine the student's readiness to complete the dissertation. To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, the student must have completed and achieved a 3.2 or greater cumulative grade-point average in the doctoral program of study courses—including Ph.D. core, concentration, and seminar courses—and received approval from their Faculty Advisor. The exam is generally offered once a year.

The comprehensive examination is a written exam, for which the content and structure may vary between concentrations, and from year to year, to ensure relevance to the student's training and integrity in the testing procedure. The exam may include on-campus and take home portions. To successfully pass the comprehensive exams, the student must demonstrate expertise in expressing ideas with clarity and depth, synthesizing knowledge from public health and related fields, and applying knowledge and critical thinking skills to specific problems or issues in public health. The exam is graded according to a matrix by faculty members who instruct the courses in the core areas, as well as faculty in the student's identified concentration area. If the student meets expectations on all exam sections, the student will pass the exam. If the student has minor issues on one section of the exam, the faculty graders may opt to offer the student an opportunity for a faculty directed revision via a written addendum that focuses on the identified area of weakness. If the student demonstrates major weaknesses on one or more sections of the exam, the student will be offered one additional opportunity to complete the written exam the next time the exam is offered. Students who do not meet expectations on the initial exam may be required to take additional coursework or complete other learning experiences prescribed by the student's Faculty Advisor, Doctoral Advisory Committee, the Doctoral Program Coordinator, and/or a designated faculty member, prior to retaking the exam. Failure on the second attempt will result in scholastic dismissal from the doctoral program.

Dissertation

The dissertation is intended to allow the student to contribute to the theoretical, conceptual, empirical, or practice base in the field of public health. Students pursuing a Ph.D. must complete a dissertation on a subject connected with their concentration. The dissertation must present original research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery of a field of study. Its conclusions must be logical, its literary form must be acceptable, and its contribution to the field of public health should merit publication. At a minimum, the dissertation should contribute to at least one of these knowledge bases, as related to the student's concentration. These activities must take place under the direction of the student's dissertation committee. The dissertation must include all of the following:

1. Identification of an appropriate theory to inform the study.
2. Conceptualization of research questions and hypotheses.
3. Development of a sound research design.
4. Application of an appropriate methodology.
5. Interpretation of study results.

Note: These guidelines do allow for secondary data analysis.

Dissertation Proposal/Prospectus Meeting. Prior to beginning the dissertation, the student must present a dissertation proposal (prospectus) to his/her Faculty Advisor. When the Faculty Advisor certifies that the written proposal for the dissertation is satisfactory, the student should schedule a meeting with the Doctoral Advisory committee to present the proposal (prospectus meeting or prospectus defense), and receive approval from the committee before moving forward with dissertation development. Specifically:

- The student will provide a complete copy of the proposal (printed hard-copy and electronic) to all members of the Doctoral Advisory committee at least two weeks before the prospectus meeting. The proposal must be formatted according to the APA Manual of Style (latest addition).
- The proposal will include all elements of either the Traditional proposal or European (manuscript) proposal:
 - Traditional proposal:
 - Chapter 1: Introduction and Statement of Purpose
 - Chapter 2: Review of the Literature
 - Chapter 3: Methods
 - Reference Section
 - Appendices Section
 - European (manuscript) proposal include:
 - Chapter 1: Introduction and Statement of purpose
 - Chapter 2: Description and outline of three studies that will be developed and submitted during the dissertation process. NOTE: if one study has already been developed and submitted, please include a copy of that study and describe how the next 2 studies will build on this work

- Reference Section
- Appendices Section

Approval of the proposal signifies that members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee believe that the student has proposed a satisfactory dissertation plan. Approval of the proposal requires the agreement of all members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee except one, as endorsed by their signatures on the appropriate form that, together with this approved prospectus, is filed with the OAA (specifically, the Graduate Advisor). Before starting the data collection for the dissertation, the student must request approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) if human subjects are involved in the research project. The Faculty Advisor has the primary responsibility for guiding research, but the student should consult all members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee to draw upon their expertise in relevant areas.

Dissertation Development. The SPH will accept either the traditional dissertation format (i.e., five chapters) or the European (manuscript) dissertation format. The European (manuscript) dissertation format contains a first chapter that consists of a thorough review of the literature for the content area of the student's dissertation. The next chapters consist of three of the following – in any combination: (a) peer-reviewed published manuscripts, (b) peer-reviewed manuscripts in press, (c) manuscripts submitted to peer-reviewed journals. Because the manuscripts may have been published, submitted, or targeted for different journals with varying formatting styles, the chapters may also vary in format and style. Each chapter must have Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion sections, unless the paper is a review article. One review article is allowed if approved by the Doctoral Advisory Committee (dissertation committee). For students who plan for a European (manuscript) dissertation, but the data findings are not amenable to publication in a peer review journal, students should complete a draft of the paper(s) in the format of a publishable paper, with the null findings included and a discussion section. This is to be included as a chapter in the dissertation, with a statement that the chapter will not be submitted for peer review.

The SPH requires that the student submitting the dissertation must be listed as the first author of each article used for the dissertation. One first-author manuscript submitted by the student prior to the dissertation prospectus defense (no more than one year in advance) and is linked to the overall theme of the dissertation may be included as one of the three chapters with approval of the major advisor. The inclusion of any previously published articles requires permission from the copyright holder. Articles not yet copyrighted by another party will be covered under the copyright of the dissertation.

It is most important that the persons who serve on the Doctoral Advisory Committee (occasionally referred to as the Doctoral Dissertation Committee) be those faculty members most knowledgeable in the areas of the student's research. Within the guidelines for committee membership, they should be selected regardless of their concentration affiliation. The Doctoral Advisory Committee consists of a minimum of three members: Two members must be within the SPH and hold graduate faculty status (list maintained by the SPH Associate Dean of Faculty Development). The third member may be from the SPH or outside the School/GSU, but must have a Ph.D., MD, or other terminal degree and

must have expertise in the content area or methodology used in the proposal that can be demonstrated upon review of a curriculum vita by the Doctoral Program Director or student's Faculty Advisor. Sometimes it will be appropriate for the membership of the Doctoral Advisory Committee to remain unchanged during a student's entire doctoral program, while at other times, changes in the composition of the original committee will be necessary.

Dissertation Approval and Defense. When the Faculty Advisor is satisfied with the completed dissertation, he or she will certify that it has his or her approval and is ready to be read by members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee. The Faculty Advisor will then distribute copies of the dissertation to the remaining members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee and will schedule a final oral defense and notify the school.

Subsequently, the SPH will announce the time and place of the defense of the dissertation to the University community. The committee members will have three weeks to read and evaluate the completed dissertation. Written assent of all committee members except one is required before a dissertation is approved as ready for a final defense. If the Doctoral Advisory Committee declines to approve the dissertation as ready for the final defense, the Faculty Advisor will notify the student and the School in writing and the defense date will be cancelled. The final dissertation document must conform to all format and content requirements specified by the SPH.

The Faculty Advisor will chair the dissertation defense (and is sometimes referred to as the Dissertation Chair). All members of the Doctoral Advisory Committee, except one, must approve the dissertation and the defense, and must certify their approval in writing. The SPH will only recommend the award of a doctoral degree when the student has demonstrated mastery of necessary theories, concepts and subject matter, and demonstrated competence in the knowledge and skills defined in the competencies for the student's chosen doctoral program concentration.

Student dissertation progress will be reviewed as part of the annual evaluation procedures, beginning in the student's third year of the doctoral program. If a student is not making expected progress on the dissertation, this will be noted on the faculty rated student annual evaluation form as not meeting expectations. If a student does not make adequate progress in the dissertation in two consecutive annual evaluations, this may result in dismissal from the program. Enrollment for dissertation credit is permitted only after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Students must register for a minimum of nine credit hours of *PH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation*.

Procedural Matters

Doctoral students will be subject to all the doctoral program completion milestone requirements, details and policies distributed in the SPH Doctoral Student Handbooks. Failure to meet any of these doctoral program completion milestones may result in scholastic dismissal from the doctoral program.

FACULTY ADVISOR AND DOCTORAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS

Upon admission to the Ph.D. in Public Health programs, a student is assigned a Faculty Advisor from the SPH faculty. The Faculty Advisor serves as the primary advisor, and mentors the student throughout the program and assists the student in choosing courses, signing off on official documents, and chairing the students' doctoral advisory committee. In the majority of cases, the Faculty Advisor remains unchanged during the student's entire doctoral program; however, changes in the Faculty Advisor are occasionally necessary and are accommodated on an individual basis by the Doctoral Program Director. Usually the Faculty Advisor ultimately serves as the chair of the dissertation.

Doctoral students must establish a Doctoral Advisory Committee following the completion of their comprehensive exam, but some establish the committee earlier in their program of study. The Doctoral Advisory Committee may advise the student on all aspects of the doctoral program of study, as well as career development and professional opportunities. The Doctoral Advisory Committee primarily aids the student in the doctoral program culminating experiences, primarily the dissertation. Additional criteria for the doctoral advisory committee membership may be found in the Dissertation section of this Handbook.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Ph.D. students will be given feedback from their Faculty Advisor on an annual basis. Students are required to:

- Set up an appointment with the Faculty Advisor by June 1st each year.
- One week prior to the scheduled appointment students must submit an Annual Review Portfolio that includes:
 - A summary of the courses and grades taken since beginning the program.
 - A summary of professional scholarship in the last year.
 - A course paper/assignment or another product that demonstrates the student's scientific writing skills, and proficiency with statistics.
 - A self-assessment of mastery of the doctoral competencies to date.

Faculty Advisors will use this portfolio to evaluate student progress in several areas: coursework progress and demonstrated mastery of doctoral competencies, professional scholarship, scientific writing, statistical proficiency, and overall professionalism. Ph.D. milestones and goals for the next academic year should also be discussed. All students will receive written feedback from the Doctoral

Program Director or designated faculty mentor summing up the evaluation ratings and the student's standing with the program.

If progress is unsatisfactory, the student will plan a course of action with his or her advisor and the Doctoral Program Director to improve his/her progress. If the student demonstrates unsatisfactory progress on the plan, or during more than one annual review, he or she may be scholastically dismissed from the doctoral program.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT POLICY AND DEGREE COMPLETION

Students in all graduate programs, including doctoral programs, must maintain enrollment totaling six hours (or more) over three consecutive semesters, including summers. In other words, the total enrollment of the current term plus the two terms preceding it must add up to six hours or more. The status of all students will be checked by the midpoint of each term for compliance with the continuous enrollment requirement. Any student whose enrollment is noncompliant will receive a hold on their registration, which would prevent registering for all current and future classes. Those students will be notified by an e-mail message sent to their official GSU e-mail account. To resume their programs, students with continuous holds on their enrollment must file for re-entry by the published deadline and must enroll at a level sufficient to satisfy the continuous enrollment criterion. That is, their enrollment in the reentry term plus the two terms preceding it must total six hours or more. The maximum required enrollment level for the re-entry term is six hours. For more information on the reentry process, contact the Office of Academic Assistance and Career Services.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE AND COURSE GRADE REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Doctoral students must maintain a 3.2 or better institutional grade point average (GPA) to progress from one semester to the next, and must receive at least a grade of "B" or better for each School of Public Health based course (courses with a prefix "PH" in front of the course number). Any doctoral student earning a grade of B- or below must repeat the public health course or not count the course towards their doctoral program of study. Doctoral students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.2 at the end of a semester will receive a scholastic warning from the School. If at the end of the following six semester hours of enrollment, the student has not achieved a 3.2 cumulative GPA, he or she will be scholastically excluded from the doctoral program. Any student who is scholastically excluded from the program may apply for readmission after a period of one year. Time limitations for doctoral students will still apply.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS AND TIME LIMITATIONS

The purpose of requiring completion of all degree requirements within a fixed period is to ensure currency, continuity, and coherence in (or residency in) the academic experiences leading to the degree. Within nine years of the students' term of first matriculation, it is required they complete all degree requirements. Moreover, all requirements for doctoral candidacy (coursework, comprehensive examination, prospectus approval) must be completed within seven years of the students' first term of matriculation. No coursework completed more than seven years before admission to candidacy may be used to meet any doctoral degree requirement.

Enrollment for a minimum of three semester hours of credit is required during at least two out of each three-term period following successful completion of the comprehensive examination until graduation. This enrollment must include a minimum of nine semester hours of dissertation (PH 9990) credit but may also include other coursework. The student must be enrolled in and successfully complete three semester hours of graduate credit (typically dissertation hours) during the academic term in which all degree requirements are completed. Additional information about time limits and expected doctoral program completion milestones may be distributed by the Doctoral Program Coordinator, Division Directors, or a designated faculty member to doctoral students in writing or via email during the doctoral program.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM OF STUDY FORM—PRELIMINARY AND FINAL

The signed preliminary Doctoral Program of Study must be submitted to OAA following the student's first annual evaluation with his or her faculty advisor. The preliminary Doctoral Program of Study form is used by OAA and the Doctoral Program Director to confirm that each doctoral student fully understands the doctoral program requirements, has a realistic plan and timeline in place to complete the requirements within the prescribed time limits and course options, and has made preliminary connections to his/her Faculty Advisor.

Once the student is eligible to complete the comprehensive exam, the Doctoral Program of Study form is revised and resubmitted by the student. This final Doctoral Program of Study form must be approved by the final Faculty Advisor *and* the final Doctoral Advisory Committee members (who will serve as the dissertation committee) and be submitted to OAA before the student can apply for admission to candidacy. OAA uses the form for degree-audit and final approval. The Final Doctoral Program of Study form must show all courses relevant to the doctoral program (including masters-level prerequisite courses and any courses approved as transfer-credit from other universities), in addition to GSU courses satisfying the minimum doctoral degree requirements. OAA notes the completed in the student's electronic program of study form (on GoSOLAR). Students may login to GoSOLAR, view, and confirm OAA's to-date notations on their electronic program of study at any time.

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

Admission to candidacy for a doctoral student is possible after the successful completion of the comprehensive oral examinations. The following is a complete list of requirements for admission to candidacy:

1. The Doctoral Advisory Committee, the Doctoral Program Director, and OAA have approved the final program of study.
2. A GPA of 3.2 (B) has been maintained for all graduate courses taken and for all completed courses on the program of study (no course with a grade below C+ may be placed on the final program of study).
3. The doctoral comprehensive examination has been passed, and passing scores have been reported to OAA.
4. The Doctoral Advisory Committee, including any necessary changes in the membership, is confirmed and all its members have been notified of their appointment.

5. The residence requirement has been met.

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

This form must be submitted to OAA as soon as possible following the completion of admission to candidacy requirements. Candidacy begins on the date the form is received by the OAA. After admission to candidacy, a student must register for at least nine (9) hours of dissertation credit during the completion of the degree program. Students planning to graduate the same semester they enter candidacy must be admitted by the published deadline for candidacy during that semester and register for three (3) hours. The student must also meet all other deadlines for graduation in that semester. A student must register for a minimum of three (3) dissertation credit hours in any semester when using University facilities, and/or faculty or staff time. The School shall not accept a dissertation if the student has not been admitted to candidacy for the degree.

TIME LIMIT ON CANDIDACY

All doctoral degree requirements must be successfully completed within nine (9) years of a student's first term of matriculation. The dissertation must be completed within four (4) years following admission to candidacy to qualify for graduation. If a doctoral student's candidacy expires after the first week of classes in the final semester, the student is granted the remainder of the semester to complete degree requirements without special permission of the School. Additional information about time limits and expected dissertation completion milestones may be distributed by the Doctoral Program Director, Division Directors, or a designated faculty member to candidacy eligible students immediately prior to their admission to candidacy. Doctoral students will be subject to all the dissertation completion milestone requirements, details and policies distributed at that time. Failure to meet any of these dissertation completion milestones may result in scholastic dismissal from the doctoral program.

TRANSFER CREDITS FROM ANOTHER INSTITUTION

A student may apply a maximum of nine (9) semester hours of approved course credit transferred from another sufficiently accredited institution toward fulfilling Ph.D. degree requirements. Transfer credits are processed by the School and must be approved by petition. Students requesting to petition for transfer of credits must work with the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance. Approval is at the discretion of the Doctoral Program Coordinator—approval is not guaranteed. The Doctoral Program Director may defer to the Director of the Division in which the petitioned course is offered. All credits, including transfer credits, presented for the Ph.D. degree must have been earned within nine calendar years of the date of degree conferral. No previously taken course with a grade of "B-" or below may be transferred into the doctoral program. Courses transferred-in for the doctoral degree may not be used in fulfilling the Doctoral Public Health Core Courses requirements or the doctoral credit-hour residency requirement.

CREDITS EARNED AT GSU IN EITHER TRANSIENT, NON-DEGREE, OR OTHER-GSU-DEGREE STATUS

A student may apply a maximum of nine (9) semester hours of applicable GSU course credit earned prior to Ph.D. program admission (while taking public health courses as either transient, non-degree, or other-GSU-degree or program status) toward fulfilling Ph.D. degree requirements. Credits are

processed by the School—petition is not required, but students should confirm their previously completed GSU courses are applicable. Students may work with the Doctoral Program Director and the Graduate Advisor in the Office of Academic Assistance to confirm applicability. Approval is at the discretion of the Doctoral Program Coordinator—approval is not guaranteed. The Doctoral Program Director may defer to the Director of the Division in which the course is offered. All GSU credits presented for the Ph.D. degree must have been earned within nine calendar years of the date of public health doctoral degree conferral. Courses taken at GSU that were applied to another GSU degree program may *not* be applied to the Ph.D. degree; instead, a student should seek a doctoral course waiver for these courses already applied to another GSU degree program.

DOCTORAL COURSE WAIVERS

Doctoral students may receive a course waiver for any doctoral course already completed as part of another GSU degree program (including the MPH degree program), or if the course content was already learned at another institution or training area, but was not eligible for transfer credit. Students are still expected to take the minimum number of credit hours expected for the Ph.D. degree at GSU (sixty-two credit hours), but when granted a course waiver, the student may complete a different graduate level course substituted into their doctoral in order to complete the total sixty-two credit hour requirement of their doctoral degree program.

No previously taken course with a grade of “B-” or below may be used for course waiver. Courses waived for the doctoral degree may not be used in fulfilling the Doctoral Public Health Core Course requirements or the doctoral credit-hour residency requirement.

Students hoping to waive a course and substitute it with another should provide a Petition for Waiver noting each doctoral course they hope to waive, and which course they would like to substitute in its place. The Petition for Waiver is a written statement, along with any evidentiary documentation, that assures the School that the doctoral student has mastered the course material in the course to be waived through another manner (i.e. MPH degree, another GSU degree, etc.). This Petition must be approved by the student’s Faculty Advisor and the Doctoral Program Director. The Doctoral Program Director may defer to the Director of the Division in which the petitioned course is typically offered.

Upon approval by the student’s Faculty Advisor and the Doctoral Program (or Division Director), the Petition is then forwarded to the OAA for their approval. OAA may request the input of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and/or the Academic Affairs Committee, but that is not required. Once the Director of OAA notes OAA’s approval, the student’s file and program of study is updated to note a waiver of the required course(s) and the substitution of another course taking its place. (MPH-Level Core Course prerequisite requirements for the doctoral program are exempt from this rule, since these prerequisite course do not count toward the sixty-two (62) credit hour minimum requirement for doctoral programs).

REGISTRATION, ACADEMIC, AND HOLIDAY CALENDARS

The University publishes official calendars⁹ detailing registration times, course meeting dates, final exam times, student holidays, and university closure periods. These can be helpful for any student planning around their doctoral program commitments.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Course descriptions for every GSU course, including SPH courses, may be found in the *GSU Graduate Catalog*¹⁰ and the *GSU Schedule of Classes*¹¹, and the GSU Course Description search website¹².

STUDENT COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES OR WAIVER REQUESTS

The School provides avenues for student feedback and communication of student concerns following University policies, published in the section *1050.80 Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals* of the Graduate Catalog¹³ and in the section *Policy Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals* of the GSU Student Code of Conduct¹⁴. This policy outlines the different types of appeals and waivers, and the procedures to follow when making requests at the university-, college- and unit (division)-level. The appeals cover final course grades, admissions, financial aid, course loads, scholastic discipline, course substitutions, and academic regulations. The School assures all students the right to due process in the appeal of a performance evaluation. This due process provides a way of receiving a fair determination of the School of Public Health Appeals procedure.

Student Responsibilities: The student is responsible for stating the basis upon which the student evaluation or grade is questioned and for initiating and maintaining communication and compliance within the framework of the grievance process.

Faculty Responsibilities: Each faculty member is responsible for being aware of the student's right of grievance of an evaluation or grade and for providing the student with guidance to initiate the process. The faculty is responsible for maintaining evaluation materials and providing materials necessary to the grievance process.

Unit (Division) Responsibilities: The School of Public Health will ensure that the student's expected progression through the program is not interrupted during the grievance process.

Waiver Requests. Students are required to fill out a Student Petition form when requesting a waiver of an established policy and procedure. The form is electronic and is available on the SPH

⁹ GSU Calendars: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/semester-calendars-exam-schedules/>

¹⁰ GSU Graduate Catalog: <http://www.gsu.edu/enrollment/catalogs.html>

¹¹ GSU Schedule of Classes: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckschd.p_disp_dyn_sched

¹² GSU Course Description search website: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckctlg.P_DisplaySubjects

¹³ GSU Graduate Catalog Section 1050.80: <http://catalog.gsu.edu/graduate20152016/university-information/#student-complaints-petitions-for-policy-waivers-and-variances-and-appeals>

¹⁴ GSU Student Code of Conduct: <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

website: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/students/program/>. Please see Appendix B for more information.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

All admitted doctoral students who plan to enroll full-time will be considered for Graduate Assistantships (GAs) in the form of Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), or Graduate Lab Assistant (GLA). Assistantships cover the cost of tuition (except for \$37.50 and the cost of mandatory student fees) and provide an annual stipend for at least four years (subject to funds being available and satisfactory performance by the doctoral student each semester).

The following criteria must be met and maintained for a student to be a GA.

- Students must have and maintain a 3.2 or higher cumulative grade point average.
- Students must be enrolled in the minimum hours deemed a full-time load (nine semester hours during the regular academic year and six semester hours in the summer).
- Concurrent with the assistantship appointment, doctoral students should not be engaged in other significant outside employment. Students in this situation should request approval for hire through the head of the academic unit and director of the doctoral program.

Graduate Assistants may be subject to policies that apply to any other employed person of GSU, and should familiarize themselves with the appropriate policies, including but not limited to the GA Policy¹⁵, GA New Hire packet and payroll policies¹⁶.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FELLOWSHIPS

Conference Attendance. Ph.D. students interested in obtaining travel funds for professional conferences must receive pre-approval from Colleen Blanchard (cblanchard2@gsu.edu). If she is not available, please seek approval from Fred Grant (fgrant@gsu.edu). Students are allowed to request up to \$250 in assistance if he/she is a lead presenter at a conference and \$150 if he/she is simply attending a conference, but not presenting. Once a student receives approval to receive the funds for a conference, he/she will get further instruction about how to receive the reimbursement.

GSU SPH Biostatistics Consulting Services. Statistical support is available for SPH students, including its doctoral students. This includes assistance with statistics related aspects of grant proposals, dissertation research study design, data management, statistical modeling, data analysis and interpretation, and utilization of statistical software. Inquiries at any stage of a study are welcome. However, consultation during the planning stage is recommended. In order to request a consultation, students complete an online statistical consultation request form found on the SPH Biostatistics

¹⁵ GSU GA Policy: http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/files/2013/06/Graduate_Assistant_Policy.pdf

¹⁶ GSU GA New Hire Packet and Payroll Policies: http://managers.hr.gsu.edu/resources/formspoliciesguidelines/search-forms/?gf_search=Payroll

Consulting Services website¹⁷. Once completed, students are contacted to schedule a meeting with the most appropriate faculty mentor match.

The Center for Instructional Effectiveness. The Center for Instructional Effectiveness (CIE)¹⁸ supports GSU doctoral Teaching Assistants in their role as educators. The center fosters the use of evidence-based learning pedagogies to promote teaching effectiveness, classroom practices and provide a forum for all instructors and TAs to discuss teaching successes and challenges. The CIE seminars, workshops and events are aimed at encouraging Georgia State instructors and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) to think deeply about their teaching, build community around educational innovations, explore new approaches to solving pedagogical problems, and identify tools that open new possibilities in face-to-face and online settings. Seminars are also designed to facilitate idea sharing, brainstorming, community building, and collaborative problem solving, while workshops are more technology focused and often include click-along style instructional approaches.

All CIE workshops and seminars are free to GSU instructors and Graduate Teaching Assistants. Most are catered events. Previous topics included: Teaching Assistants' Challenges in the Classroom I: How to explain content clearly; Developing a Teaching Philosophy; Internet Ethics: Preparing Your Student to Successfully Navigate, Reference, and Contribute to the Internet; The Class from Hell: How to Cope with Student Behaviors that Interfere with Learning.

The University Research Services and Administration Education and Training Program. The mission of the University Research Services and Administration (URSA) Education and Training Program¹⁹ is to provide educational support to the research community—including doctoral students—of GSU. Their main goal is to help researchers and research administrators smoothly navigate the world of research administration from beginning to end. They offer a variety of training opportunities designed to increase knowledge and skills in the areas of grants management, finding internal and external funding sources, research compliance and safety.

GSU Dissertation Grant Program and William Suttles Graduate Fellowship. The purpose of the Dissertation Grant Program²⁰ is to support dissertation research of doctoral level graduate students at GSU, including those in the SPH. The grant program is designed to help full-time graduate students meet the cost associated with their dissertation work. There is a campus-wide competition for these awards each year and award winners may elect to apply the funds to the current or to the next fiscal year. Applicants to the Dissertation Grant Program may also be nominated for the William M. Suttles Graduate Fellowship by their dissertation director, or Faculty Advisor in the SPH. The fellowship is awarded to the applicant deemed to have the most outstanding qualifications within their field of study and who also submits an outstanding dissertation grant proposal as determined by the team of

¹⁷ GSU SPH Biostatistics Consulting Services: <http://publichealth.gsu.edu/biostatistics-consulting-service/biostatistics-consulting/>

¹⁸ The GSU Center for Instructional Effectiveness: <http://cie.gsu.edu/>

¹⁹ GSU URSA Education and Training Program: <http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/resources/training/>

²⁰ GSU Dissertation Grant Program and William Suttles Graduate Fellowship: <http://ursa.research.gsu.edu/ursa/funding/funding-opportunities/internal-grant-program/>

faculty reviewers. Dissertation Grants are limited to \$2,000 per award and provided to fund expenses associated with conducting the dissertation work. The Suttles Fellowship provides an additional award of \$1,500 beyond the \$2,000 awarded through the Dissertation Grant Program. To date, one SPH doctoral student has already received this award.

STUDENT HEALTH AND SERVICES

Doctoral students have access to various services around campus, including the Student Health Clinic²¹, Student Health Insurance²², mental health counseling and services²³, recreation center²⁴, and disability accommodation testing and services²⁵.

²¹ GSU Student Health Clinic: <http://health.gsu.edu/>

²² GSU Student Health Insurance: <http://sfs.gsu.edu/tuition-fees/student-health-insurance/>

²³ GSU Counseling and Testing: <http://counselingcenter.gsu.edu/students/services/counseling-services/>

²⁴ GSU Recreation: <http://recreation.gsu.edu/>

²⁵ GSU Disability Services: <http://disability.gsu.edu/about-us/rights-responsibilities/>

Appendix A

Sample Ph.D. Course Plan

A sample course plan for a student accepted into the EPIP program with an earned MPH degree.

	Doctoral PH Core	Required Concentration Courses	Concentration Advanced Research Methods, Statistics & Electives	Professional Seminars	Teaching/Research/ Applied Skills Practicum	Comprehensive Exam	Dissertation	Total Hours
Year 1								
Fall	PH 8721 (3) PH 9120 (3) PH 9150 (3) PH 9810 (3)			PH 8180 (1)				13 hrs
Spring	PH 9140 (3) PH 9820 (3)	PH 9731 (3)	PH 8885 (3)	PH 8181 (1)				13 hrs
Year 2								
Fall		PH 9741 (3)	PH 7265 (3)	PH 8180 (2)				13 hrs
Spring		PH 8830 (3)	EPRS 8840 (3) PH 7275 (3) PH 8285 (3) PH 8790 (3)	PH 8181 (1)				16 hrs
Year 3								
Fall					PH 9960 (3)	Comp Exam		3 hrs
Spring							PH9990 (3)	3 hrs
Year 4								
Fall							PH9990 (3)	3 hrs
Spring							PH9990 (3)	3 hrs
Total Hours	18 hrs	9 hrs	18 hrs	5 hrs	3 hrs		9 hrs min	62 hrs min

Appendix B

Georgia State University

Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers

& Variances, and Appeals

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT COMPLAINTS, PETITIONS FOR POLICY WAIVERS AND VARIANCES, AND APPEALS

I. Purpose and Applicability

Georgia State University seeks to maintain the highest standards of integrity and fairness in its relationships with students. The Undergraduate Catalog and the Graduate Catalog (both found at http://www.gsu.edu/es/catalogs_courses.html), and the [Student Code of Conduct](#) set forth policies and requirements for Georgia State students. Students are expected to know and comply with these policies. Students may, however, seek relief or resolution when they believe that:

- A. The application of these policies and procedures will create undue hardship for them or will not recognize their extraordinary or extenuating circumstances; or
- B. Specific actions, practices, or decisions on academic or non-academic matters have been made or carried out in an arbitrary, discriminatory, or inequitable manner. The procedures set forth below cover complaints, petitions, and appeals related to University-wide and college-based policies. Individual colleges or departments may have additional or more specific procedures that may also apply to complaints, petitions, and appeals. Students are referred to the office of the dean of the particular college for information about additional or more specific procedures that apply. In case of conflict among policies, this University policy takes precedence over College and Departmental policies. The following policies include their own complaint, petition and waiver procedures. This policy may not be used in lieu of these policies.
 1. Any policy for anyone other than a student to make a complaint, file a grievance, or request a waiver, such as policies that govern faculty and staff.
 2. All policies in the student code of conduct
 3. Emergency withdrawal policy
 4. Admission, readmission, and exclusion policies
 5. Discriminatory and sexual harassment policies
 6. Disability policies
 7. College of Law Honor Code
 8. Student parking policy

The procedures set forth below are applicable to undergraduate and graduate students of the University. All appeals under these procedures will be made based only on the written record. A student's appeal under these procedures will be granted only if the student can prove by preponderance of evidence that a decision was arbitrary, discriminatory, or inequitable.

II. Student Complaints on Academic Matters

- A. College-Level Academic Complaints
 1. Final Course Grade Appeals
 - a. Students are encouraged to discuss concerns and disputes over final course grades with the instructor prior to filing a formal grade appeal, in an effort to gain understanding about the basis of his/her grade. Instructors are encouraged to be available to students for such discussion regarding grades so that grade disputes, to the extent possible, are resolved informally. The Office of the Ombudsperson can provide assistance to students, instructors and administrators with resolving disputes informally through voluntary facilitated

discussions, in an effort to bring resolution to the matter prior to the initiation of a formal complaint.

- b. In situations where such informal resolution does not occur or is not successful, the student may appeal the final course grade to the Department Chair. The appeal must be in writing and describe the precise reason for the appeal. Any pertinent information must be submitted with the appeal in order to be considered in this or subsequent appeals. The appeal must be submitted within 10 business days of the beginning of the academic term (fall, spring, summer) that follows the term in which the final grade was submitted by the instructor. For example, if a student took an incomplete in a fall term course and completed the course works in the following spring semester, then an appeal of that grade must be submitted within 10 business days of the beginning of the summer term. The Department Chair will provide a decision in writing to the student, normally within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint in the Department.
 - c. The student may appeal the decision of the Department Chair, as described in section 2-c through 2-e below.
2. Other College-Level Academic Complaints
- a. Judgments on the suitability of academic decisions made within a college are most appropriately made by individuals with expertise in the particular academic discipline involved. For this reason, resolution of student complaints about college level academic decisions, actions, or practices is the responsibility of the department and college involved. Normally, such complaints can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion with the faculty member directly involved. The Office of the Ombudsperson can provide assistance to students, instructors and administrators with resolving disputes informally through voluntary facilitated discussions, in an effort to bring resolution to the matter prior to the initiation of a formal complaint.
 - b. In situations where such informal resolution does not occur or is not successful, the student may submit a formal complaint to the Chair of the appropriate academic department. The student's complaint must be submitted in writing and be accompanied by pertinent documentation describing (a) the specific action, practice, or decision that is problematic; (b) the impact of that decision; (c) what resolution is being sought; (d) and why it should be granted. To promote prompt resolution, complaints must include current contact information and be submitted at the earliest possible time. Consideration will not be given to any complaint submitted later than the end of the term immediately following the term in which the matter in question arose. The Department Chair will provide a decision in writing to the student, normally within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint in the Department.
 - c. The student may appeal the Department Chair's decision within 10 business days of being notified of the Chair's decision. Such appeal will be made, in writing, to the Dean of the College in which the Department is located. At the discretion of the Dean, an advisory panel may be appointed to review the written documentation and make a recommendation to the Dean. The Dean will issue a decision to the student in writing, normally within 10 business days of the receipt of the appeal.
 - d. A student may appeal the Dean's decision to the Provost, in writing, within 10 business days of being notified of the Dean's decision. The Provost will issue a decision to the student, in writing within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.

- e. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President, in writing, within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will issue a decision to the student in writing within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
- f. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents, in writing, within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision. Decisions regarding grades may not be appealed to the Board of Regents (BOR Policy 407.01).

B. University-Level Academic Complaints

1. Judgments on the suitability of academic decisions made at the University level are most appropriately made by individuals with expertise in the particular area. Normally, such complaints can be resolved quickly through discussion with the Academic Administrator directly involved. (See the University Organizational Chart at http://www.gsu.edu/administrative_organization.html.) Students can contact the Office of the Ombudsperson for assistance in preparing for discussion with academic administrators. The Office of the Ombudsperson can also provide assistance to students and academic administrators with resolving disputes informally through voluntary, facilitated discussions, in an effort to bring resolution to the matter prior to the initiation of a formal complaint.
2. In situations where such informal resolution does not occur or is not successful, the student may submit a formal complaint to the Vice Provost. The student's complaint must be submitted in writing, and be accompanied by pertinent documentation describing (a) the specific action, practice, or decision that is problematic; (b) the impact of that decision; (c) what resolution is being sought; and (d) why it should be granted. To promote prompt resolution, complaints must include current contact information and be submitted as early as possible, but no later than the end of the term immediately following the term in which the matter arose. The Vice Provost will normally issue a decision to the student in writing, within 10 business days of receiving the complaint.
3. The student may appeal the Vice Provost's decision to the Provost within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
4. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
5. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents in writing within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision. Decisions regarding residency and the Guaranteed Tuition Plan may not be appealed to the Board of Regents (BOR Policy 407.01).

III. Non-Academic Complaints

- A. Judgments on the suitability of non-academic decisions are most appropriately made by individuals with expertise in the particular area. Normally, such complaints can be resolved quickly through discussion with the Administrator in charge of the department making the decision. Students can contact the Office of the Ombudsperson for assistance in preparing for discussion with non-academic administrators. The Office of the Ombudsperson can also provide assistance to students and non-academic administrators with resolving disputes informally through voluntary, facilitated discussions, in an effort to bring resolution to the matter prior to the initiation of a formal complaint.
- B. In situations where such informal resolution does not occur or is not successful, the student may submit a formal complaint to the Vice President or Vice Provost who oversees the area. The student's

complaint must be submitted in writing, and be accompanied by pertinent documentation describing (a) the specific action, practice, or decision that is problematic; (b) the impact of that decision; (c) what resolution is being sought; and (d) why it should be granted. To promote prompt resolution, complaints must include current contact information and be submitted as early as possible, but no later than the end of the term immediately following the term in which the matter arose. The Vice President or Vice Provost will provide a decision to the student in writing, normally within 10 business days of the receipt of the complaint.

- C. The student may appeal the Vice President's or Vice Provost's decision to the Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
- D. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
- E. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents in writing within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision. Decisions regarding traffic citations may not be appealed to the Board of Regents (BOR Policy 407.01).

IV. Student Petitions for Academic Policy Waiver or Variance

- A. College-Level Policy Waiver or Variance Petitions
 1. Students may petition for a waiver or variance of a department-level or college-level policy. The appropriate College Office of Academic Assistance can provide the student with college policies and petition procedures.
 2. The student must submit a petition, in writing, to the Office of Academic Assistance of the College which has made the policy in question. The petition must include the following: (a) the policy from which the student is seeking a waiver or variance, (b) the deviation being sought; and (c) the reason(s) why the exception should be granted. The Office of Academic Assistance representative will determine whether the petition needs to be addressed at the departmental or college level, and will forward the petition to the appropriate administrator who will notify the student of his or her decision.
 3. The student may appeal the decision, in writing, following the procedures stated in Section II.A.2.c through f above, the College-Level Academic Complaint Policy and Procedures. If the original decision was rendered by a Department Chair, the appeal should be initiated at the level of the Dean; if the original decision was rendered by the Dean (or his or her designate), the appeal should be initiated at the level of the Provost.
- B. University-Level Policy Waiver or Variance Petitions
 1. Students may request a waiver or variance of a policy established by the University or the Board of Regents.
 2. All requests for waivers or variances from university-level policies will be made based only on the written record.
 3. The petition must include the following: (a) The section number from the Catalog (or other official University document) of the policy or requirement from which the student is requesting a waiver; (b) the deviation being sought; (c) the reason(s) why the exception should be granted; (d) a current copy of the student's academic evaluation record; and (e) a current copy of the student's Georgia State University transcripts (unless the petitioner is not a yet a Georgia State student); and (f) transcripts from any other college the student has attended (if the petitioner has attended other colleges).

4. Financial Appeals
 - a. Appeals of tuition and fee rules (currently in sections 1210.10, 1210.20 and 1210.30 of the Catalog), Georgia resident status rules (currently in section 1220), and financial aid rules (currently in section 1230) will be made by the University Registrar.
 - b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Financial Appeals Committee, a committee appointed by the Vice Provost. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the University Registrar.
 - c. Appeals of the financial rules of colleges and departments (e.g., lab fees, graduate assistantship rules, etc.) are considered by the college or department. See Section IV.A. above.
5. Add, Drop and Withdrawal Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Section 1332 of the Catalog)
 - a. Appeals of add, drop and withdrawal rules will be made in the first instance by the University Registrar.
 - b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Registration Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the University Registrar.
 - c. The Registrar will copy of the Chair of the Registration Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of the results of their petitions. Every semester, the Registrar will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.
 - d. This policy does not change the Emergency Withdrawal policy.
6. Course Load, Scholastic Discipline, Course Substitution in the Core, and Regents Test Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in Section 1330.30, 1360, 1410, and 1420 of the Catalog)
 - a. Appeals of rules regarding course load, scholastic discipline, course substitution in the core and Regents Test will be made in the first instance by the head of the University Advisement Center. However, appeals for waivers of Section 1330.30 (Course Load) will be considered by the student's college if the student has declared a college and will follow the procedure outlined in Section IV.A above.
 - b. If the petition is denied by the head of the University Advisement Center, the student may appeal to the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Director of the University Advisement Center.
 - c. The head of the University Advisement Center will copy of the Chair of the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of the results of their petitions. Every semester, the head of the University Advisement Center will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.
7. Academic Regulation and Graduation Requirement Appeals (Appeals of Rules Currently in other parts of Sections 1300 and 1400 of the Catalog)

- a. Appeals of other university-level rules and graduation requirements will be made in the first instance by the Assistant Vice President for Student Retention. However, appeals for waivers of Section 1330.30 (Course Load) will be considered by the student's college if the student has declared a college and will follow the procedure outlined in Section IV.A above.
 - b. If the petition is denied, the student may appeal to the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee, a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards. The student must appeal in writing and within 10 business days of being notified of the decision of the Assistant Vice President for Student Retention.
 - c. The Assistant Vice President for Student Retention will copy of the Chair of the Academic Regulations Appeals Committee on all letters to students notifying them of the results of their petitions. Every semester, the Assistant Vice President for Student Retention will distribute to the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards a report that indicates (at a minimum) the number of petitions filed, the number granted, and the number denied. Any member of Admissions and Standards may review the documents of any petition when there is a legitimate educational interest.
8. Subsequent Appeals
- a. The student may appeal the decisions of the Admissions Appeals Committee, Financial Aid Appeals Committee, the Registration Appeals Committee and Academic Regulations Appeals Committee to the Vice Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Vice Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
 - b. The student may appeal the Vice Provost's decision to the Provost in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the decision. The Provost will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
 - c. The student may appeal the Provost's decision to the President in writing within 10 business days of being notified of the Provost's decision. The President will respond in writing to the appeal within 20 business days of receiving the appeal.
 - d. The student may appeal the President's decision to the Board of Regents in writing within 20 business days of being notified of the President's decision.
9. Should a reorganization of offices lead to case where the position of University Registrar or one of the heads/directors noted above no longer exists, the Vice Provost and Chair of the Senate Committee on Admissions and Standards will jointly designate an individual to handle petitions until the Senate can revise this policy to reflect the new organization.

V. Deadlines

- A. All deadlines established in this Policy are stated in terms of business days. If a deadline falls on a weekend or scheduled holiday, the deadline will be the next scheduled workday of Georgia State University.
- B. Students lose their right to continue to the next step of the procedures if they miss a stated or agreed-upon deadline.

VI. Mediation

Students who have filed formal complaints or petitions or those who have had formal complaints filed against them under Sections II A or B of this Policy (except for grade appeals) may request that the matter be submitted to mediation in an effort to achieve resolution. Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process whereby a neutral person facilitates discussion between the parties in a mutual attempt to reach resolution on the issues raised by the parties. In the event mediation is agreed upon by both parties, the timelines under this

policy shall be suspended until which time the mediation is completed. In the event that mediation results in agreement, the student's complaint will be considered resolved. In the event that mediation does not result in resolution of the matter, the student may appeal to the next level of review under this policy. Information derived from mediation discussion may not be used as the basis for higher levels of appeal, nor can the mediator be asked to provide information or make any decision at any level of the formal appeals process. Persons interested in mediation should contact the Office of the Ombudsperson.

Revised December 11, 2008 - University Senate

Revised February 25, 2009 – University Senate Executive Committee

Revised October 27, 2011 – University Senate

Revised October 10, 2013 – University Senate

Appendix C

Admission to Candidacy Form

**Application for Admission to Candidacy
Georgia State University
School of Public Health**

This form must be submitted to the School as soon as possible following the completion of these requirements. Candidacy begins on the date the form is received by the School of Public Health OAA.

I hereby apply for admission to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health. I am fully informed of all the requirements for candidacy, and attest that I have completed them.

Student Name _____ Panther ID _____

Start Term _____ Expected Graduation Term _____

Concentration _____ GSU Student Email _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Certification and Recommendation of the School of Public Health: Please check all appropriate items.

- The Doctoral Advisory Committee, the Ph.D. Program Director, and OAA have approved the final program of study.
- The graduate record of the student named above has been examined. An average of 3.2 or greater GPA has been maintained on all completed graduate courses on the Program of Study. No course with a grade below C has been accepted as part of the Program of Study.
- The comprehensive examination has been passed as part of the Program of Study, and a passing score has been reported to the OAA.
- The residency requirement has been met.

We recommend that this student be admitted to candidacy for the degree indicated.

Faculty Advisor Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Doctoral Program Director Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Dissertation Proposal Approval Form



APPROVAL OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

TO: Dean, School of Public Health

FROM: Dissertation Committee Chairperson

STUDENT'S NAME	PANTHER ID NUMBER
ADDRESS	HOME PHONE
CITY, STATE, ZIP	CELL PHONE
DATE ADMITTED	EMAIL ADDRESS

DISSERTATION TITLE:

The committee of the above-named graduate student has approved a dissertation proposal entitled (abstract attached):

FORMAT OF DISSERTATION:

Chapter Based Dissertation	3-Study Dissertation
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APPROVALS: Signatures below indicate approval of the attached proposal

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON	DATE
COMMITTEE MEMBER	DATE
COMMITTEE MEMBER	DATE
COMMITTEE MEMBER (OPTIONAL)	DATE
COMMITTEE MEMBER (OPTIONAL)	DATE
DIRECTOR, PHD PROGRAM	DATE

Appendix E

Dissertation Defense Approval Form



RESULTS OF DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Please return to *The Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services* immediately following the defense.

To: Associate Dean
Dr. Rodney Lyn

From: Dissertation Committee Chairperson
[Click here to enter text.](#)

RE: Results of Dissertation Defense

Student Name: [Click here to enter text.](#) **GSU Email:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

Panther ID: [Click here to enter text.](#) **Phone number:** [Click here to enter text.](#)

The above named candidate defended a dissertation entitled: [Click here to enter text.](#)

- The following results are reported:**
- Successfully presented
 - Successfully presented pending revisions
 - Unsuccessfully presented

Committee Comments:

Following a successful defense, all students are required to upload their dissertations to ScholarWorks to receive a final grade for PH9990. Instructions for uploading will be sent by the Graduate Advisor upon receipt of this form.

Approvals:

Signatures below indicate acknowledgment of results reported above.

Signature	Date	Signature	Date
Committee Chair (SPH Faculty)		Student	
Committee Member (required)		Committee Member (required)	
Committee Member (optional)		Committee Member (optional)	