



Ph.D. STUDENT HANDBOOK

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The School of Public Health, Georgia State University

Ph.D. Student Handbook
Academic Year 2021-2022

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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 Departments and Faculty

The graduate programs in the School of Public Health (SPH) are comprised of two academic departments. Each department is headed by a Department Chair, with faculty assigned to specific concentrations. Academic Departments provide academic mentoring, course offerings and research opportunities for students in SPH.

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- Mission Statement -

We provide the high quality and relevant teaching, research and service needed to evolve public health practice in a changing world. By investigating the contemporary problems that challenge diverse urban communities, we are preparing the next generation of public health professionals to make a difference through leadership, scholarship, and practice in Georgia communities and around the globe.

The Georgia State University (GSU) faculty and staff 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 four distinct degree concentrations—Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Behavior, Health Services and Policy Research, and Environmental Health. Although the GSU SPH offers Ph.D. programs in four concentrations, this Ph.D. Student Handbook will occasionally refer to a singular Ph.D. degree when discussing requirements that pertain to all SPH Ph.D. programs of study and students.

The Ph.D. 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 Catalog¹ and the GSU Schedule of Classes² 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 Conduct³. The faculty and administration encourage 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 Ph.D. 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.

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>

⁵ CEPH: <https://ceph.org>

In June 2007, the MPH program received full five-year MPH program-level accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) 5—making the GSU MPH program the first public university in Atlanta, Georgia to gain that distinction. CEPH is an independent agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to accredit schools of public health and public health programs outside schools of public health. The GSU SPH is fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH).

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 four distinct concentrations. In June 2013, the School began the rigorous process to transition from its MPH program-level only accreditation to its new full school-level accreditation in 2013. In June 2016, the CEPH Board of Councilors accredited the SPH at GSU at the school-level, superseding its MPH program-level accreditation. Two months later, the SPH enrolled its first bachelor of science in public health (BSPH) undergraduate students, and two years later, the SPH enrolled its first doctor of public health (DrPH) students.

February 2021, the SPH hosted a CEPH site visit for reaccreditation as a school of public health. The CEPH Board of Councilors will make its reaccreditation decision in fall 2021.

Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision:

Our vision is to be a leading public health research institution dedicated to understanding and solving contemporary health problems. We are the destination of choice for students seeking an affordable and meaningful public health education.

Mission:

We provide the high quality and relevant teaching, research and service needed to evolve public health practice in a changing world. By investigating the contemporary problems that challenge diverse urban communities, we are preparing the next generation of public health professionals to make a difference through leadership, scholarship, and practice in Georgia communities and around the globe.

Values:

Integrity, accountability and transparency in our operations, scholarship, and inquiry; Respect for all aspects of diversity; Health as a human right; Prioritizing health in all policy decisions; Sustainable healthy environments; Student success.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Applicants should see the SPH website for PhD program admission criteria and procedures: <https://publichealth.gsu.edu/academics-student-life/degrees-programs/doctor-of-philosophy/>

Degree Prerequisite Requirements

PREREQUISITES: PUBLIC HEALTH FOUNDATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH KNOWLEDGE AND MPH FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES.

For students admitted to the Ph.D. program who have not completed a CEPH-accredited bachelor's degree in public health or MPH degree, the following course will be required as prerequisite:

- **PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health**
 - o PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health may only be waived with a CEPH- accredited bachelor's or master's degree or completion of a similar course in a CEPH-accredited program or school.

Two additional courses may be required upon review of the student's completed graduate coursework by the Ph.D. Program Director and Faculty Advisor.

- **PHPH 7011 Epidemiology for Public Health or PHPH 7711 Epidemiologic Methods I**
- **PHPH 7017 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I**

Based upon the concentration area declared by the incoming student, the following courses will be required:

For students declaring Health Promotion and Behavior as a concentration:

- **PHPB 7140 Health Promotion Planning, Administration, and Evaluation**

For students declaring Environmental Health as a concentration:

- **PHPH 7150 Environmental Health**

For students declaring Health Services and Policy Research as a concentration:

- **PHPB 7160 Fundamentals of Health Systems, Leadership, and Policy.**

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 an MPH degree that included "B" grades or better in their MPH courses related to MPH Foundational Public Health Knowledge learning objectives and MPH Foundational Competencies, as documented by an official university transcript. Syllabi for courses may also be requested, or 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. Note: PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public Health cannot be waived by employment or other training(s). PHPH 7010 Foundations of Public

Health is only waived after the school verifies a students' previous completion of a CEPH-accredited bachelor's degree in public health or MPH degree.

Doctoral students who have not completed an MPH program must provide a **Doctoral Programs Petition** form for each of the courses being requested for waiver. The Doctoral Programs Petition is a written statement, along with any evidentiary documentation, that assures the School that the doctoral student has mastered one (or more) of the areas of foundational knowledge in public health through another manner (e.g. MPH degree, career experience, advanced or seminar coursework that included mastery of core knowledge in public health, etc.). This Petition must be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director. The Ph.D. Program Director may defer to the Department Chair in which the petitioned course is offered.

Upon approval by the Ph.D. Program or Department Chair, 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 SPH Assistant or Associate Deans 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 Ph.D. 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.

Ph.D. Curriculum and Degree Requirements

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 teaching practicum experience. Each student, along with his or her faculty advisor, will participate in a teaching practicum of the most appropriate public health course for the Ph.D. student's program of study. 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 foundational prerequisite courses, all Ph.D. students must complete the Ph.D. core courses. Building on the MPH foundation, the Ph.D. core ensures all Ph.D. 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
PHPH 8721	Epidemiologic Methods II	3
PHPB 9120	Theory and Practice in Health and Prevention Instruction	3
PHPB 9140	Advanced Research Methods	3
PHPB 9150	Public Health Ethics	3
PHPH 9810	Biostatistical Methods I	3
PHPH 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. concentration: Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Behavior, Health Services and Policy Research, or Environmental Health. 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
PHPB 9180	Doctoral Research Seminar I	3
PHPB 9181	Doctoral Research Seminar II	2

4. **TEACHING PRACTICUM AND CULMINATING EXPERIENCES.** All doctoral students are required to complete a teaching practicum experience, a comprehensive exam, and a dissertation. Each are discussed later in this Handbook.

Teaching Practicum & Culminating Experiences, 12 credit hours required

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

Environmental Health Concentration

The concentration in Environmental Health will provide Ph.D. students with the skills, knowledge, and experiences to understand the chemical, physical, and microbiological aspects of environmental and occupational exposures. Students will study the transport and fate of environmental contaminants by measurement and modeling of ambient, indoor, and personal exposures to environmental and workplace contaminants and hazards. They will also develop instruments and methods for collecting, analyzing, and assessing the effects of physical, chemical and biological stressors. Students will learn techniques for measuring the influence of environmental factors (physical, chemical and biological) on human disease in communities to provide scientific evidence for sound environmental and health policies.

Competencies: Graduates with a Ph.D. in public health with a concentration in environmental health will be expected to be able to:

- Ph.D. EVHT 1. Effectively communicate the concepts of source to receptor of environmental and occupational hazards and the differentiation of the concepts of exposure from dose.
- Ph.D. EVHT 2. Critically analyze alternate routes of entry of toxins into the body including inhalation, ingestion (both dietary and non-dietary) and dermal and the importance of integration of routes with regards to total dose.
- Ph.D. EVHT 3. Demonstrate expertise with instrumentation and their underlying constructs employed for the measurement of chemical, physical and biologic
- Ph.D. EVHT 4. Understand health effects of chemical, physical and biologic agents and the interrelationship of toxicity and dose in defining levels of risk.
- Ph.D. EVHT 5. Critically review, synthesize, and evaluate community and governmental agency conduct of environmental research and interventions and present appropriate implications for public health practice, public policy, and further research.
- Ph.D. EVHT 6. Incorporate ethical standards of practice as the basis of interactions with organizations, communities, and individuals

Assessment Points that Determine the Competency is Met	Ph.D. EVHT Competencies					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Doctoral Program Activity						
PHPH 9270 Environmental Exposure Analysis (3) course		Homework (4 parts total)	Final Project			
PHPH 8310 Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology (3) course	Midterm Exam			Grant Application/Policy Briefing Assignment		
PHPH 8320 Human Health and Global Environmental Change (3) course					Final Exam	
PHPB 9150 Public Health Ethics (3) course						Final Exam
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPH 9960 Doctoral Practicum (students and preceptors select at least one)	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (<i>SPH Faculty completes rubric</i>)	X	X	X	X	X	X

Ph.D. In Public Health – Environmental Health Concentration

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH Concentration Courses, 9 credit hours requires *(Complete all courses)*

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPH 9270	Environmental Exposure Analysis	3
PHPH 8310	Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology	3
PHPH 8320	Human Health and Global Environmental Change	3

Environmental Health Advanced Research Methods & Statistics Courses, 12 credit hours required

Select at least 4 courses in consultation with the Faculty Advisor

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPB 8260	Spatial Population Health I	3
PHPB 8261	Spatial Population Health II	3
PHPH 8690	Special Topics in Environmental Health	3
PHPH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3
PHPH 8840	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables I: Structural Equation Modeling	3
PHPH 8850	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables II: Finite Mixture Modeling	3
PHPH 8860	Multilevel Models in Public Health	3
PHPH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PHPH 9731	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
PHPH 9741	Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods	3
PHPH 9890	Doctoral Seminar in Advanced Statistical Modeling	3
Other appropriate research methods/statistics courses may be approved by the Faculty Advisor on the Doctoral Program of Study form. There are a number of departments at the university that offer relevant courses including, but not limited to, Mathematics and Statistics, Managerial Sciences (Decision Sciences unit), Economics, Marketing, Sociology, Public Management and Policy Studies, Psychology, and Educational Policy Studies (Research unit). Other courses that may be approved to satisfy this elective requirement include, but are not limited to, Structural Equation Modeling, Finite Mixture Modeling, Hierarchical Linear Modeling, Longitudinal Modeling, Survival Analysis, Bayesian Inference, Survey Sampling, Causal Inference, Missing Data, or Nonparametric Statistics.		1-12

Environmental Health Elective Courses, 6 credit hours required

Select 2 courses in consultation with the Faculty Advisor

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPH 8285	Social Determinants of Health	3
PHPH 8330	Environmental Factors in Maternal and Child Health	3
PHPH 8340	Genetic Susceptibilities and Environmental Health	3

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 health 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:

- Ph.D. EPIP 1. Understand the strengths and weaknesses of various epidemiologic study designs and research methods.
- Ph.D. EPIP 2. Demonstrate expertise in the ethical conduct of human subjects' research, including confidentiality and vulnerable populations.
- Ph.D. EPIP 3. Critically review, synthesize, and evaluate the scientific literature and present appropriate implications for public health practice, public policy, and further research.
- Ph.D. 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.
- Ph.D. EPIP 5. Demonstrate mastery and independence as a researcher by pursuing and completing a specialized area of epidemiologic research.
- Ph.D. 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					
Doctoral Program Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
PHPB 9150 Public Health Ethics (3) course		Midterm & Case Study Presentations				
PHPH 9731 Epidemiologic Methods III (3) course			Assignment #3			
PHPH 9741 Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods (3) course	Assignment #6			Assignment #6	Assignment #6	
PHPH8830AdvancedStatisticalTopics(3)course						Final Presentation
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPH 9960 Doctoral Practicum (students and preceptors select at least one)	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (SPH Faculty completes rubric)	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
PHPH 9731	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
PHPH 9741	Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods	3
PHPH 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
PHPB 8260	Spatial Population Health I	3
PHPB 8261	Spatial Population Health II	3
PHPH 8840	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables I: Structural Equation Modeling	3
PHPH 8850	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables II: Finite Mixture Modeling	3
PHPH 8860	Multilevel Models in Public Health	3
PHPH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PHPH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PHPH 9890	Doctoral Seminar in Advanced Statistical Modeling	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
PHPH 7265	Epidemiology and the Prevention of Violence	3
PHPH 7275	Chronic Disease Epidemiology	3
PHPH 7280	Infectious Disease Epidemiology	3
PHPH 7290	Case Studies in Epidemiology	3
PHPH 7365	Epidemiology of Adolescent and Young Adult Risk Behaviors	3
PHPH 8285	Social Determinants of Health	3
PHPH 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 prior 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:

- Ph.D. 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.
- Ph.D. 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.
- Ph.D. HPBP 3. Develop expertise in research methods and the ethical conduct of research to address scientific questions regarding health promotion research and practice.
- Ph.D. HPBP 4. Develop expertise in statistical and analytic methods used in health promotion research and practice.
- Ph.D. 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.
- Ph.D. 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					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Doctoral Program Activity						
PHPB 7535 Dissemination and Implementation Science (3) course					Final Project	Final Presentation
PHPB 9120 Theory and Practice in Health and Prevention Instruction (3) course	Final Exam					
PHPB 9130 Intervention and Evaluation of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (3) course			Final Project Paper			
PHPB 9140 Advanced Research Methods (3) course				Grant Proposal & Brief Journal Article		
PHPB 9095 Measurement and Outcomes in Social and Behavioral Health (3) course		Final Survey & Report				
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPB 9960 Doctoral Practicum (students and preceptors select at least one)	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPB 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (SPH Faculty completes rubric)	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 requires *(Complete all courses)*

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPB 7535	Dissemination and Implementation Science	3
PHPB 9130	Intervention and Evaluation of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	3
PHPB 9095	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
PHPB 8260	Spatial Population Health I	3
PHPB 8261	Spatial Population Health II	3
PHPH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3
PHPH 8840	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables I: Structural Equation Modeling	3
PHPH 8850	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables II: Finite Mixture Modeling	3
PHPH 8860	Multilevel Models in Public Health	3
PHPH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PHPH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PHPH 9731	Epidemiologic Methods III	3
PHPH 9741	Advanced Topics in Epidemiologic Methods	3
PHPH 9890	Doctoral Seminar in Advanced Statistical Modeling	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 prior 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 prior 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 prior 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 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:

- Ph.D. 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.
- Ph.D. HSRP 2. Describe major problems in health services delivery and health care policy that are currently the subject of empirical investigations
- Ph.D. 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
- Ph.D. HSRP 4. Effectively teach concepts and methods of health services and health policy research to students
- Ph.D. HSRP 5. Design a health services or health policy research proposal involving qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approaches
- Ph.D. HSRP 6. Conduct a health services or health policy research activity investigation suitable for peer-reviewed publication as an independent researcher
- Ph.D. HSRP 7. Function as a collaborative team member in the design and conduct of a health services or health policy investigation.

Assessment Points that Determine the Competency is Met	HSRP Competencies						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Doctoral Program Activity							
PHPB 9220 Principles of Health Service Research I: Themes (3) course		Brief Papers 1-4			Term Paper & Seminar Presentation		
PHPB 9240 Principles of Health Service Research II: Methods (3) course	Term Paper		Problem Sets & Brief Reports 1-3	Term Paper Presentation			
PHPB 8250 Health Economics and Policy (3) course						Final Paper	In-Class Presentations
Annual Review Student Self-Assessment with Faculty Advisor	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPB 9960 Doctoral Practicum (students and preceptors select at least one)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
PHPB 9990 Doctoral Dissertation (SPH Faculty completes rubric)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Ph.D. in Public Health – Health Services and Policy Research Concentration Requirements

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

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPB 9220	Principles of Health Service Research: Themes	3
PHPB 9240	Principles of Health Services Research: Methods	3
PHPB 8250	Health Economics and Policy	3

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

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

COURSE NUMBER	COURSE TITLE	CREDIT HOURS
PHPB 8260	Spatial Population Health I	3
PHPB 8261	Spatial Population Health II	3
PHPB 8285	Social Determinants of Health	3
PHPB 8290	Population Health Informatics	3
PHPH 8830	Advanced Statistical Topics	3
PHPH 8840	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables I: Structural Equation Modeling	3
PHPH 8850	Statistical Modeling with Latent Variables II: Finite Mixture Modeling	3
PHPH 8860	Multilevel Models in Public Health	3
PHPH 8885	Fundamentals of Clinical Trials	3
PHPH 8890	Special Topics in Biostatistics	3
PHPH 9890	Doctoral Seminar in Advanced Statistical Modeling	3
ECON 8220	Human Resources and Labor Markets	3
PMAP 8131	Applied Research Methods and Statistics II	3
PMAP 8141	Microeconomics for Public Policy	3
PMAP 9211	Applying Research to Policymaking: Examples from Health Care Policy	3
SOCI 8118	Aging, Health, and Disability	3
SOCI 8234	Race-Ethnicity and Health	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 prior to enrolling in, paying for, and completing the course.	3

Teaching Practicum

All Ph.D. students are required to complete a teaching practicum experience during one semester of the Ph.D. Program. For the teaching practicum, a student may choose one of the following in conjunction with the Ph.D. Program Director, their Faculty Advisor, and the Director of the Undergraduate Program.

- A student may work with a faculty member to teach a sub-section of a large undergraduate course
- A student may co-teach with a faculty member and assist with lectures and grading of an undergraduate or graduate course.
- A student may choose to teach an undergraduate course and be listed as a course instructor of record. **Note:** There may be restrictions to this option based on HR and CETL requirements, please work with faculty to ensure this opportunity is available during the semester you are interested in teaching.

Prior to or during the teaching practicum experience, the student should enroll in at least one of the training options listed below. The best option for each student will be based on their teaching assignment and discussions in collaboration with the Ph.D. Program Director, the Faculty Advisor, the Director of the Undergraduate Program, and the faculty mentor for teaching:

- Doctoral course **EPY 9000 Facilitating College Teaching**
 - Course description: Facilitating College Teaching. Prerequisite: Ph.D. student. Students review adult learning literature and prepare syllabi, tests, and portfolios. They practice implementing effective teaching strategies and learn to incorporate technology in their teaching and assessment. They also consider legal and ethical issues in college teaching. Course is graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory. (Offered once a year in fall or spring semester)
- The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) General Pedagogical Training (<https://cetl.gsu.edu/services/instructional-support/>)
- CETL Certificate of Excellence in College Teaching
<https://cetl.gsu.edu/programs-grants-awards/graduate-teaching-assistant-pedagogy-award/>

*There is no option to waive the doctoral teaching practicum.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Doctoral students must pass a comprehensive examination before being admitted to candidacy. The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to assess each student's mastery of the introductory public health learning objectives, the doctoral program core curriculum, and to determine the student's readiness to proceed to the dissertation. To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, the student must have completed all

doctoral program prerequisites (MPH Core/Foundational Courses), all doctoral core courses (18 credit hours), and achieved a 3.2 or greater cumulative grade-point average. Students must also receive approval from their Faculty Advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director. Once approved to take the exam, the Ph.D. Program Director will provide a study guide for the exam.

The exam is generally offered once per year, in August, prior to the start of the Fall semester. The comprehensive examination is a written exam that includes an on-campus and take-home portion. The on-campus portion includes four sections based on coursework completed in the doctoral program core courses: PHPH 8721 Epidemiologic Methods II; PHPB 9120 Theory and Practice in Health and Prevention Instruction; PHPB 9140 Advanced Research Methods; and PHPB 9150 Public Health Ethics. The take-home portion of the exam is the fifth section of the exam based on PHPH 9810 Biostatistical Methods I and PHPH 9820 Biostatistical Methods II.

To successfully pass the comprehensive exam, 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. Each section of the exam is graded Pass/Not Pass according to a rubric developed by faculty members who instruct the courses in the core areas and compose the exam questions.

The student must pass each of the five sections to pass the comprehensive exam. If the student does not pass two or more sections of the exam, then they do not pass the comprehensive exam. If this occurs, then the student will be offered one opportunity to retake the entire comprehensive exam the next time the exam is offered. If the student passes all but one section of the exam, then the faculty grader for the failed section may, at their discretion, offer the student an immediate opportunity to revise their response on that section. The faculty grader will provide oral and/or written feedback to the student (and their advisor, if requested) that highlights area(s) of weakness. If the student does not pass the section on the revision, then the student will be offered one opportunity to retake the failed section the next time the exam is offered. Students who do not pass one or more sections of 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 Ph.D. Program Director, and/or a designated faculty member, prior to retaking the exam. Not passing one or more sections of the exam on the second attempt will result in scholastic dismissal from the Ph.D. program.

The comprehensive exam does not include a focus on the concentration courses. The student is expected to demonstrate expertise in the concentration area and its competencies during the dissertation process (proposal meeting, drafting, and dissertation defense). Each concentration may have specific requirements related to demonstrating concentration mastery during the dissertation process, and demonstration of concentration competencies will be graded according to a rubric developed by the concentration faculty. Students should meet with their Faculty Advisor to determine the requirements for the concentration.

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. For full details about the dissertation processes and procedures, please see Appendix G.

PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Ph.D. students will be subject to all the doctoral program completion milestone requirements, details and policies distributed in the SPH Ph.D. Student Handbook. Failure to meet any of these doctoral program completion milestones may result in scholastic dismissal from the Ph.D. 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 Ph.D. 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 dissertation process. 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 meet with their Faculty Advisor for an annual evaluation each year they are enrolled in the Ph.D. program. For the annual evaluation process, students are required to:

- Set up an appointment with the Faculty Advisor by September 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. The annual evaluations will be reviewed by the Ph.D. Program Director. All students will receive written detailed feedback from their 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 Faculty Advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director to improve his/her progress. If the student demonstrates unsatisfactory progress on the plan, or during more than one annual review, the student may be scholastically dismissed from the Ph.D. 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" (3.0) or better for each School of Public Health- based course (courses with a prefix "PHPH or PHPB" in front of the course number). Any doctoral student earning a grade of B- or below in a public health course must repeat the public health course or not count the course towards their doctoral program of study. No course with a grade below C+ may be placed on the final 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, the student will be scholastically excluded from the Ph.D. program. Students may also appeal this decision.

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 (PHPH/PHPB 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 Ph.D. Program Director, Department Chairs, or a designated faculty member to doctoral students in writing or via email during the doctoral program.

DOCTORAL PROGRAM OF STUDY FORMS

This final Doctoral Program of Study form is completed following the successful completion of the student comprehensive exam and must be approved by the Faculty Advisor and be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Director and OAA when the student applies for admission to candidacy. OAA uses the form for degree-audit and final approval. The 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 courses in the student's electronic academic evaluation (in PAWS). Students may log in to PAWS, 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 examination. The following is a complete list of requirements for admission to candidacy:

1. The Faculty Advisor, the Ph.D. Program Director, and OAA have approved the final program of study.
2. A GPA of 3.2 or higher has been maintained for all graduate courses taken and for all completed courses on the program of study. Students must receive at least a grade of "B" (3.0) 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. 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 residency 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 Ph.D. Program Director, Department Chairs, 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 Office of Academic Assistance. Approval is at the discretion of the Ph.D. Program Director—approval is not guaranteed. The Ph.D. Program Director may defer to the Chair of the Department 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 Ph.D. public health core course requirements or the doctoral credit- hour residency requirement. Courses taken that were applied to another degree program may not be applied to the Ph.D. degree, but may be transferred into document completion of a prerequisite.

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 Ph.D. Program Director and the Office of Academic Assistance to confirm applicability. Approval is at the discretion of the Ph.D. Program Director—approval is not guaranteed. The Ph.D. Program Director may defer to the Department Chair 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 Ph.D. core course requirements or the doctoral credit-hour residency requirement.

Students hoping to waive a course and substitute it with another should provide a Doctoral Programs Petition noting each doctoral course they hope to waive, and which course they would like to substitute in its place. The Doctoral Programs Petition 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 Ph.D. Program Director. The Ph.D. Program Director may defer to the Department Chair in which the petitioned course is typically offered.

Upon approval by the student’s Faculty Advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director (or Department Chair), the Petition is then forwarded to the OAA for their approval. OAA may request the input of SPH Assistant or Associate Deans 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 courses do not count toward the sixty-two (62) credit hour minimum requirement for doctoral programs).

REGISTRATION, ACADEMIC, AND HOLIDAY CALENDARS

The University publishes official calendars⁶ 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 Catalog⁷ and the GSU Schedule of Classes⁸, and the GSU Course Description search website⁹.

⁶ GSU Calendars: <http://registrar.gsu.edu/registration/semester-calendars-exam-schedules/>

⁷ GSU Graduate Catalog: <http://www.gsu.edu/enrollment/catalogs.html>

⁸ GSU Schedule of Classes: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckschd.p_disp_dyn_sched

⁹ GSU Course Description search website: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/bprod/bwckctlg.P_DisplaySubjects

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

If admitted into the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Graduate Certificate program, Ph.D. students may concurrently complete the MCH Graduate Certificate program requirements and earn the MCH Graduate Certificate while completing their Ph.D. program of study. Ph.D. students will be expected to fulfill all the requirements of the MCH Graduate certificate program, including its prerequisite, foundational public health, and MCH core courses. As determined by the Ph.D. program of study and faculty advisor to the Ph.D. students, some of the MCH graduate certificate core courses may count toward the Ph.D. program of study electives – students should confirm in the Ph.D. Student Handbook and with the Ph.D. program director and their Faculty Advisor exactly which MCH courses may count toward their Ph.D. program of study.

MCH Graduate Certificate students complete an applied practice experience (APE) within an MCH-focused organization or community-based setting. The APE learning contract required for APE course registration must identify exactly how MCH Graduate Certificate students will demonstrate the MCH Graduate Certificate competencies in their MCH-focused community-based setting. APE courses completed prior to MCH Graduate Certificate program admission or without an MCH Graduate Certificate-focused learning contract or experience will not count toward the MCH Graduate Certificate. Students earning the Ph.D. and MCH Graduate Certificate may not concurrently complete one Ph.D.-level practicum (PHPB 9960) to satisfy both programs, because PHPB 9960 is intended to be a teaching practicum and the MCH Graduate Certificate APE requires applied practice in the MCH field.

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 Catalog¹⁰ and in the section Policy Procedures for Student Complaints, Petitions for Policy Waivers and Variances, and Appeals of the GSU Student Code of Conduct¹¹. This policy outlines the different types of appeals and waivers, and the procedures to follow when making requests at the university-, college- and department-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.

Department Responsibilities: The School of Public Health and its departments 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 website: <https://publichealth.gsu.edu/office-academic-assistance/forms-resources/>. Please see Appendix B for more information.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

All admitted Ph.D. 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 three years (subject to funds being available and satisfactory performance by the Ph.D. 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, Ph.D. 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 Policy¹², GA New Hire packet and payroll policies¹³.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND FELLOWSHIPS

Conference Attendance. Ph.D. students interested in obtaining travel funds for professional conferences must receive pre-approval from the Director of OAA. If the Director of OAA is not available, please seek approval from the College Finance Officer (position vacant at time of Handbook publication). Students are allowed to request up to

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

¹¹ GSU Student Code of Conduct: <http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

¹² GSU GA Policy: <https://cas.gsu.edu/files/2018/08/Graduate-Assistant-Policy-Approved-by-Administrative-Council.pdf>

¹³ GSU GA New Hire Packet and Payroll Policies:

http://managers.hr.gsu.edu/resources/formspoliciesguidelines/search-forms/?gf_search=Payroll

\$250 in assistance if the student is a lead presenter at a conference and \$150 if the student 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.

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning¹⁴ 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 CETL 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.

The University Research Services and Administration Education and Training Program. The mission of the University Research Services and Administration (URSA) Education and Training Program¹⁵ 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, William Suttles Graduate Fellowship, Provost's Dissertation Fellowships. The purpose of the GSU Dissertation Grant Program¹⁶ 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 costs associated with their dissertation work. There is a campus-wide competition for these awards. In addition, the provost's office offers a competitive fellowship that includes a stipend of \$2000 per month for doctoral students in their final year, who have an approved dissertation project.

STUDENT HEALTH AND SERVICES

Doctoral students have access to various services around campus, including the Student Health Clinic¹⁷, Student Health Insurance¹⁸, mental health counseling and services¹⁹, recreation center²⁰, and disability accommodation testing and services²¹.

14 The GSU Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning: <http://cie.gsu.edu/>

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

16 GSU Dissertation Grant Program and William Suttles Graduate Fellowship: Doctoral Dissertation Grants and Fellowships

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

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

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

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

21 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 Core	Required Concentration Courses	Concentration Advanced Research Methods, Statistics & Electives	Professional Seminars	Teaching Practicum	Comprehensive Exam	Dissertation	Total Hours
Year 1								
Fall	PHPH 8721 (3) PHPB 9140 (3) PHPH 9810 (3)							9 hrs
Spring	PHPB 9120 (3) PHPB 9150 (3) PHPH 9820 (3)							9 hrs
Year 2								
Fall		PHPH 9731 (3) PHPH 8830 (3)	PHPH 7265 (3)					9 hrs
Spring		PHPH 9741 (3)	PHPH 8840 (3) PHPH 7275 (3)			Comp Exam		9 hrs
Year 3								
Fall				PHPB 9180 (3)	PHPH 9960 (3)		PHPH 9990 (3)	9 hrs
Spring			PHPH 7280 (3)	PHPB 9181 (2)			PHPH 9990 (3)	8 hrs
Year 4								
Fall			PHPH 8890 (3) PHPH 8885 (3)				PHPH 9990 (3)	9 hrs
Spring			PHPH 9890 (3) PHPH 7290 (3)				PHPH 9990 (3)	3 hrs
Total Hours	18 hrs	9 hrs	18 hrs min.	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**

Students should see the most recent version of the *Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct and Administrative Policies and Procedures* found here:

<https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

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.

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 Faculty Advisor, 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 _____

Ph.D. 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
----------------------------	----------------------

APPROVALS: Signatures below indicate approval of the attached proposal

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND FACULTY ADVISOR	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: Dean, School of Public Health
From: Dissertation Committee Chairperson and Faculty Advisor
 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:

All students are required to upload their dissertations to ScholarWorks to receive a final grade for PHPB/PHPH 9990.

Approvals:

Signatures below indicate acknowledgment of results reported above.

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

Appendix F

Dissertation Manual

DISSERTATION OVERVIEW

The dissertation process is intended to engage the Ph.D. student in a project that will significantly contribute to theoretical, conceptual, and/or empirical research in the field of public health. 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. These guidelines do allow for secondary data analysis.

The student is ready to initiate the dissertation process after the successful completion of the comprehensive examination, though in most cases, a student would have begun brainstorming dissertation topics and even preparing for the topic of study prior to the comprehensive exam in partnership with the faculty advisor.

General phases of the dissertation process include:

1. Identification of a Dissertation topic and Selection of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee
2. Finalize topic and determine the dissertation format
3. Develop a written dissertation proposal
4. Complete a dissertation proposal meeting
5. Conduct dissertation research proposed and agreed upon in the proposal meeting
6. Develop a written version of the full dissertation document
7. Complete a dissertation defense meeting

Identification of a Dissertation Topic and Selection of a Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC)

Prior to beginning the dissertation process, the student must meet with their Dissertation Chair (their Faculty Advisor) to brainstorm dissertation topics and agree upon ideas or areas of focus for the dissertation. The Dissertation Chair must be in the School of Public Health and have Graduate Faculty Status.

Once a topic is identified, the student and Dissertation Chair (Faculty Advisor) should discuss the appropriate DAC members. Once DAC members are agreed upon, it is the student's responsibility to seek out the additional DAC committee members to ask about their willingness to serve and get their approval of the proposal topic. It is important that the persons who serve on the DAC be those faculty members who are most knowledgeable in the areas of the student's research. The DAC will consist of a minimum of three members: Two members—including the Dissertation Chair—must be within the GSU SPH and hold graduate faculty status (list maintained by the SPH Associate Dean of Research and Faculty Affairs). 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. The terminal degree requirement may be waived in unique circumstances with a strong rationale provided by the student for consideration of such persons; however, typically

the terminal degree requirement is only waived for an optional fourth or fifth member on the committee.

Individuals outside of GSU must receive approval from the Dissertation Chair (Faculty Advisor) and the student will be required to submit the following to the Ph.D. Program Director:

- The Curriculum Vitae of the individual
- A brief rationale for the appointment.

The general responsibilities of the DAC and the student are described below.

Responsibilities of DAC:	Student’s responsibilities in working with the DAC:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and provide feedback on the dissertation proposal and attend the proposal meeting • Advise on and regularly review dissertation progress • Provide expertise and constructive feedback on the full dissertation, beyond the specific parts in which the member has specialized expertise • Ensure quality of the final dissertation • Attend the dissertation defense meeting • Assist with the development of an application for funding the dissertation, as appropriate and requested by the student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate regularly with each member of the DAC and assume responsibility for initiating these contacts. • Meet with Dissertation Chair at least bi-monthly. • In consultation with the Dissertation Chair, consider meeting with, or at a minimum provide progress updates to the DAC every three months • Provide drafts of the dissertation to members at least two weeks in advance of any review deadlines. • Keep in mind that the DAC will review and approve the full dissertation. Therefore, make an effort to keep all DAC members up-to-date on all aspects of the dissertation process

DAC Changes

Sometimes it will be appropriate for the membership of the DAC 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. When a change is necessary, it is the student's responsibility to update the dissertation contract, and notify the Dissertation Chair (Faculty Advisor), the Ph.D. Program Director, and OAA.

Selection of Dissertation Format

Once the DAC is confirmed, the student should determine with the committee whether the topic selected would be best suited for a Traditional Dissertation Format or a 3-manuscript format. The two formats are fully delineated below.

Traditional Dissertation:

**This format will be most appropriate for students who are collecting original data, but also may be appropriate when a student is focusing on an innovative topic area where few existing datasets are available.

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Statement of Purpose. Literature Review should include (a) a comprehensive review of the student's area of research, (b) a discussion of the limitations in this body of research, and (c) a description of how the student's research can enhance the field of public health. Literature reviews should be thorough and systematic. Theoretical underpinnings should be discussed and tied to the basis of proposed research. This chapter should conclude with a Statement of Purpose, which includes the purpose of the study, and explains the significance of and justification for conducting the study. This chapter should also present the specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation study. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Methods. This chapter is typically divided into labeled subsections (further delineated in bullets below) including targeted participants/subjects, testing /measurement to be undertaken with the participants, and procedures which describes the data collection methods. study design, whether IRB was obtained, the study sample, the recruitment strategies, and a description of the intervention (if appropriate). If the student is working with data in partnership with an advisor outside of GSU, the student is responsible for meeting all requirements for the affiliated site IRB and clearance processes and documenting the process in the Methods section. While receiving IRB approval at an affiliated site may qualify the study for exempt status at GSU, the student must submit an application for exemption with approval documentation from the affiliated site to the Georgia State University IRB.

- **Subjects and setting:** The characteristics of participants of the study, how they were selected, and the setting of the study should be presented in detail. IRB details should be included here as well.
- **Instrumentation/Measures:** Any tools or instruments that might be important for readers to understand (such as, assessment instruments, surveys, interview formats, observation protocols, and data collection devices) should be described in detail. If subjects interacted with special equipment or software, or other materials, a detailed description is essential.
- **Data collection procedures:** The readers should be given a thorough description of all the steps involved in data collection, including the consent process.

Chapter 3: Data analysis and Results. Regardless of the data collection method used, an analytic strategy must be applied to make sense of the observations. Chapter 3 should describe the analytic strategies employed and a rationale for their use. To the degree that readers may be unfamiliar with the strategy, greater detail may be needed. This chapter should include tables summarizing the data findings according to the study purpose and hypotheses. The results should be presented first in their simplest form (such as simple narrative descriptions, simple counts of frequency, and descriptive

statistics), and later in more complex forms (multifactor interactions and generalized patterns or inferential statistics). Generally, interpretation of findings is reserved for Chapter 4, but it may be pertinent to highlight the most important findings both in the text and in accompanying tables and to draw some simple conclusions in anticipation of more developed discussions in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations. This chapter should include a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for research and practice. It is imperative to present the contribution of the study findings to the research literature. The chapter should begin with a brief summary of why the topic is important, and how the study's design contributed to understanding of the topic. The remainder of the chapter teases out the implications of the study's findings. These implications can be grouped into: theory or generalization, public health practice, and future research. Theoretical implications involve interpretation of the dissertation findings in terms of the questions and hypotheses that guided the study. It is appropriate to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the work, including the degree to which conclusions are credible given the method and data. It also should provide a critical retrospective examination of the framework presented in the literature review in light of the dissertation's findings. Practice implications should delineate applications of new insights derived from the dissertation to solve real and significant public health problems

Reference Section. GSU SPH does not prescribe any single style for dissertations as formats differ across content area of focus in public health (e.g. American Psychological Association, AMA Manual of Style). Students should select a style manual established by their department or committee and consistently follow the guidelines of that manual throughout the entire manuscript (not only for the reference/bibliography sections).

Appendices Section. The Appendix should include protocols, questionnaires, intervention manuals or other relevant documents that facilitated implementation of the research.

Three-study proposal include (European Format):

Chapter 1: Literature Review and Statement of Purpose. Literature Review should include (a) a comprehensive review of the student's area of research, (b) a summary of limitations in this body of research, and (c) a description of how the student's research can enhance the field of public health. Literature reviews should be thorough and systematic. Theoretical underpinnings should be discussed and tied to the basis of proposed research. This chapter should conclude with a Statement of Purpose, which includes the purpose of the line of research proposed, and a brief summary of the 3 studies. This chapter should explain the significance of and justification for conducting each study. This chapter should also present the specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation studies.

Chapters 2-4. Publishable Research. These chapters should consist of three of the following – in any combination: (a) peer-reviewed published manuscripts/chapters, (b)

peer-reviewed manuscripts/chapters in press, (c) manuscripts/chapter submitted for peer-review, (d) documents in peer-review manuscript format that summarize the study proposed in the initial dissertation proposal process. Option d is included for students who plan for a Three-Study dissertation, but the data findings are not amenable to publication in a peer review journal. In this case, 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. Each study should include a reference section and relevant appendices.

The SPH requires that the student submitting "submitted" or "published articles" as part of the dissertation must be listed as the first author. One first-author manuscript submitted by the student prior to the dissertation proposal defense (no more than 12 months in advance) that is linked to the overall theme of the dissertation may be included as one of the three chapters with approval of the Dissertation Chair. 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.

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 DAC.

Chapter 5. Dissertation Summary and Future Directions in Research. This chapter should summarize the line of research established in Chapters 2-4, discuss the overall contribution to the field of study, and propose next steps and future directions in research. Theoretical implications should be addressed, related to the findings across studies and the hypotheses that guided the line of research. Additionally, this chapter should include a discussion of:

- Practical implications and new insights derived from the dissertation to solve real and significant public health problems.
- Implications for future research based on the dissertation findings and limitations.
- A "take home message," the enduring ideas or conclusions from the completed dissertation.

Reference Section. GSU SPH does not prescribe any single style for dissertations as formats differ across content area of focus in public health (e.g. American Psychological Association, AMA Manual of Style) Students should select a style manual established by their department or committee and consistently follow the guidelines of that manual throughout the entire manuscript (not only for the reference/bibliography sections).

Appendices Section. The Appendix should include protocols, questionnaires, intervention manuals or other relevant documents that facilitated implementation of the research.

Written Dissertation Proposal

Once a student has selected a doctoral advisory committee (DAC) and agreed upon a topic and dissertation format, it will be time to begin writing the dissertation proposal. This document will include Chapters 1 and 2 for the Traditional Dissertation, and Chapter 1, along with the introduction and methods sections of Chapters 2-4 for the Three-Manuscript format. The proposal must be formatted according to the AMA style or APA Manual of Style (latest addition) or in a style commensurate with target journals.

The written dissertation proposal should be continuously discussed and shared with the Dissertation Chair throughout the development process, as the depth of the proposal and additional requirements for the proposal are at the discretion of the Dissertation Chair. When a version is approved by the Dissertation Chair, the student should share the proposal with the DAC members and begin to schedule a date for the dissertation proposal meeting.

Dissertation Proposal Meeting. When the Dissertation Chair (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 (also sometimes called: “prospectus meeting” or “prospectus defense”) and receive approval from the DAC 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 dissertation proposal meeting (or “prospectus meeting or defense”). The proposal must be formatted according to the AMA or 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: Literature Review and Statement of Purpose.
 - Chapter 2: Methods.
 - Chapter 3: Data analysis plan
 - Reference Section.
 - Appendices Section.
 - European (manuscript) proposal include:
 - Chapter 1: Literature Review and Statement of Purpose.
 - Chapters 2-4. Publishable Research (for those studies not submitted or published, include Intro, Methods, Data analysis plan).
 - Reference Section
 - Appendices Section

During the dissertation proposal meeting, the student should be prepared to provide a 30 to 60- minute presentation that will provide the DAC with the rationale of the dissertation, the theoretical framework applied, the statement and purpose of the project(s), research questions and hypotheses, and a detailed overview of the proposed

methods. The presentation will be followed by an in-depth discussion of what is proposed between the student and DAC. Please note that each concentration may have specific, additional requirements for the student during the dissertation process, including at the time of the dissertation proposal meeting. This may include faculty posing questions to the student at the dissertation proposal meeting that extend beyond the dissertation proposal itself and include assessing the students' knowledge and skills related to concentration competencies, based on student concentration coursework and learning experiences. Please meet with your Faculty Advisor and/or Department Chair to discuss the specific expectations for your concentration's proposal meeting, as well as the full dissertation process.

Approval of the dissertation proposal signifies that those members of the DAC believe that the student has proposed a satisfactory dissertation plan and that if the student completes the plan as proposed, the student should successfully pass the dissertation defense. Approval of the proposal requires the agreement of all members of the DAC, as endorsed by their signatures on the appropriate form that is filed with the OAA. If the DAC requests further clarification in the proposal document, the student should submit this information to the DAC in writing. If this supplementary material clarifies the DAC concerns, then the DAC should sign the appropriate form and the Dissertation Chair should send this form to OAA. In rare circumstances, a second proposal meeting may be necessary. This should occur when significant changes to the proposal are required for approval (such as changing study topic, or methods). If the student demonstrates unsatisfactory progress on the dissertation proposal during the second proposal meeting, the student may be scholastically dismissed from the Ph.D. program.

Before starting the data collection or data analyses for the dissertation, the student must receive approval from the GSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) if human subjects are involved in the research project.

It may be important to begin discussion of authorship for the dissertation studies at the proposal meeting. In most cases, the student should be the first author for papers submitted based on the dissertation, and the Dissertation Chair would be the second author. At times, there may be expected authorship for DAC members and other graduate students involved in the research. Early and continued discussions about authorship expectations are encouraged. The Dissertation Chair (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.

Conducting the Dissertation Research

Institutional Review Board Approval (IRB). All research investigators are responsible for making the initial determination as to whether their research will involve human subjects. When it is not clear whether the research involves human subjects, research investigators must seek assistance from the GSU Office of Research. If it is determined that human subjects are involved, the investigator is responsible for applying for review

by the appropriate IRB. This task is accomplished by research investigators preparing a protocol giving a complete description of the proposed research, a detailed application and, when appropriate, a sample of the proposed informed consent form. All forms can be found online at the Human Subjects (IRB) website.

Dissertation Progress

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 Ph.D. program. Enrollment for dissertation credit is permitted only after successful completion of the comprehensive examination. Students must register for at least nine cumulative credit hours of PH 9990 Doctoral Dissertation prior to graduation.

Final Dissertation Document/ Structure

Students should confer with their doctoral advisory committee about which formatting, and style guide the student will adhere to throughout the written document.

The final document should include the following:

1. Title Page
2. Copyright Page
3. Abstract (should not exceed 350 words for a dissertation)
4. Dedication, Acknowledgements, and Preface (each optional)
5. Table of Contents, with page numbers
6. List of Tables, List of Figures, or List of Illustrations, with titles and page numbers (if applicable)
7. List of Abbreviations (if applicable)
8. List of Symbols (if applicable)
9. Chapters
10. References
11. Appendices (if applicable)

Dissertation Defense. The final dissertation document must conform to all format and content requirements specified by the SPH and the student's DAC. When the Dissertation Chair is satisfied with the completed dissertation, the Dissertation Chair will certify that it has the Dissertation Chair's approval and is ready to be read by members of the DAC. The student will then distribute copies of the dissertation to the remaining members of the DAC and will schedule a final oral defense and notify the school. Scheduling of the oral presentation of the dissertation is by mutual agreement of the student and the DAC members.

The Dissertation Defense must take place no later than three weeks prior to the grade submission deadline for the semester in which the student plans to graduate—earlier dates are recommended so there is ample time for any necessary revisions. Once a date is determined, the student must schedule a room for the meeting and submit abstract and meeting details to OAA. Subsequently, the SPH will announce the time and place of the defense of the dissertation to the University community.

The committee members will have at minimum three weeks to read and evaluate the completed dissertation. Written assent of all committee members is required before a dissertation is approved as ready for a final defense. The Dissertation Chair should send an email to DAC members prior to the defense meeting to determine if there are major concerns that should result in a rescheduling of the defense meeting. If the DAC declines to approve the dissertation as ready for the final defense, the Dissertation Chair will notify the student and the School in writing and the defense date will be cancelled.

The Dissertation Chair will lead the dissertation defense meeting. All members of the DAC are expected to be present at the defense. If they are unable to be present, committee members are expected to notify the chair and the candidate at least ten business days in advance and to make necessary arrangements for remote participation. The chair must sign the Results of Dissertation Defense form for any member who participates remotely. All members of the DAC, except one, must approve the dissertation and the defense and must certify their approval in writing via the Results of Dissertation Defense form. 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 Ph.D. program concentration.

Important Deadlines for Dissertation Defense

6 semester weeks before grades due	Submit final draft to DAC
4 semester weeks before grades due	Submit dissertation defense announcement to designated person in the OAA
3 semester weeks before grades due	Dissertation defense and Results form submitted to OAA
3 business days before grades	Upload dissertation to ScholarWorks to receive final grade for PH 9990

A student who misses any of these deadlines may have their doctoral graduation postponed to the following semester. Please note that holiday weeks (i.e. spring break, Thanksgiving break, etc.) do not count as semester weeks, and business days do not include weekends or university holidays/closures.

Procedures Following Defense

Within 24 hours following the defense, the Results of Dissertation Defense form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Assistance & Career Services. Once OAA has

received documentation that the student successfully passed, email directions will be sent for uploading the final dissertation to ScholarWorks, the university's digital library.

Although uploading to ScholarWorks is mandatory for a final grade, the student can choose to embargo his or her work for up to 2 years at a time and can extend the embargo if necessary. Once the final document is uploaded, the Ph.D. Program Director will assign a final grade for PHPH/PHPB 9990.

Dissertation Funding

Students have opportunities to solicit funding for their dissertation project. Below are links to a few of the commonly applied for dissertation awards by students in the School of Public Health:

<https://ursa.research.gsu.edu/files/2019/08/FY20-Dissertation-Grant-Call-for-Proposal.pdf>

http://www.sreb.org/page/1113/types_of_awards.html

http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/ac_search_results.htm?sort=ac&text_curr=r36&Search_Type=Activity

Registering for dissertation hours

All students in the School of Public Health who are involved in writing a dissertation must register for at least three credit hours of PHPH/PHPB 9990 each semester from the time they begin their dissertation until they have successfully defended. The Ph.D. Program Director must approve the student's request to register for PHPH/PHPB 9990 for the first time. For all subsequent semesters, the student may email the OAA to request authorization.