



UNC
SCHOOL OF NURSING

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN NURSING

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Academic Year
2015-2016

THE SCHOOL OF NURSING PHD HANDBOOK

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Nursing is conferred by The Graduate School of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. **The Graduate School Handbook** contains the policies and procedures of The Graduate School, as established by the actions of the Administrative Board of The Graduate School.

The School of Nursing (SoN) PhD Handbook contains the description, objectives and curriculum requirements of the PhD program in Nursing as well as information about academic advising and expected progression through the program. Policies and procedures of the SoN for progression review, academic eligibility, and reinstatement are included, as established by the actions of the PhD Executive Committee (PhDEC) of the SoN.

Each student should become familiar with the material pertaining to the PhD degree, and, together with a faculty advisor, make certain that the chosen program of study complies with all policies.

The SoN reserves the right to make changes to this Handbook at any time.

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of, and comply with all regulations, policies, procedures, and deadlines within **The Graduate School Handbook** as well as the SoN PhD Handbook.

Changes and Updates to the Current Edition¹

Future changes to the current edition of The SoN PhD Handbook will be listed on this front page.

Acronyms

PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
SoN	School of Nursing
PhDEC	PhD Executive Committee
QE	Qualifying Examination
POS	Plan of Study

¹ School of Nursing PhD Handbook Revised Summer 2015

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PHD PROGRAM IN NURSING

The PhD program of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is grounded in our commitment to enhancing the health of individuals, families and communities, increasing the effectiveness of health care systems, and furthering the translation of research into practice. Graduates of the program are prepared to advance the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of nursing science, engage in interdisciplinary inquiry, and disseminate knowledge. The PhD curriculum reflects the goals of the National Institutes of Health to foster discovery and increase the knowledge base for improving the health of all populations and to reduce health disparities. The program emphasizes the integration of the biological and behavioral sciences, the development and testing of evidence-based, theoretically grounded interventions, and the improvement of health care quality and outcomes. Faculty research addresses three areas of emphasis: enhancing health in vulnerable populations, managing chronic health problems, and strengthening health care systems. Students work closely with internationally renowned faculty from nursing and other disciplines to develop the skills and expertise needed to launch their program of research and pursue a successful career in academic and health care settings.

VISION STATEMENT OF THE PHD PROGRAM IN NURSING

To prepare a diverse group of graduates who are highly capable and driven to engage in research and scholarly scientific activities that enhance the health of individuals, families and communities; increase the effectiveness of health care systems; and further the translation of research into practice.

PHD PROGRAM TERMINAL OBJECTIVES

At the end of the PhD Program students are expected to demonstrate the following terminal objectives:

- Demonstrate substantive expertise on health care systems or an aspect of prevention and/or management of health conditions.
- Evaluate, critique, and synthesize research conducted in nursing and related disciplines.
- Understand and utilize multiple modes of inquiry in the design and conduct of nursing research.
- Use conceptual models and theories from nursing or related disciplines to design and implement nursing studies.
- Conduct research in a culturally competent manner using appropriate design and analysis techniques.
- Demonstrate scientific integrity and the protection of human subjects in the design, conduct and analysis of research studies.
- Translate research findings through multiple modes of dissemination for the purposes of improving health and health care systems.

PHD PROGRAM RESEARCH COMPETENCIES

PhD students must possess the following research competencies in order to complete the dissertation and proceed toward a program of research:

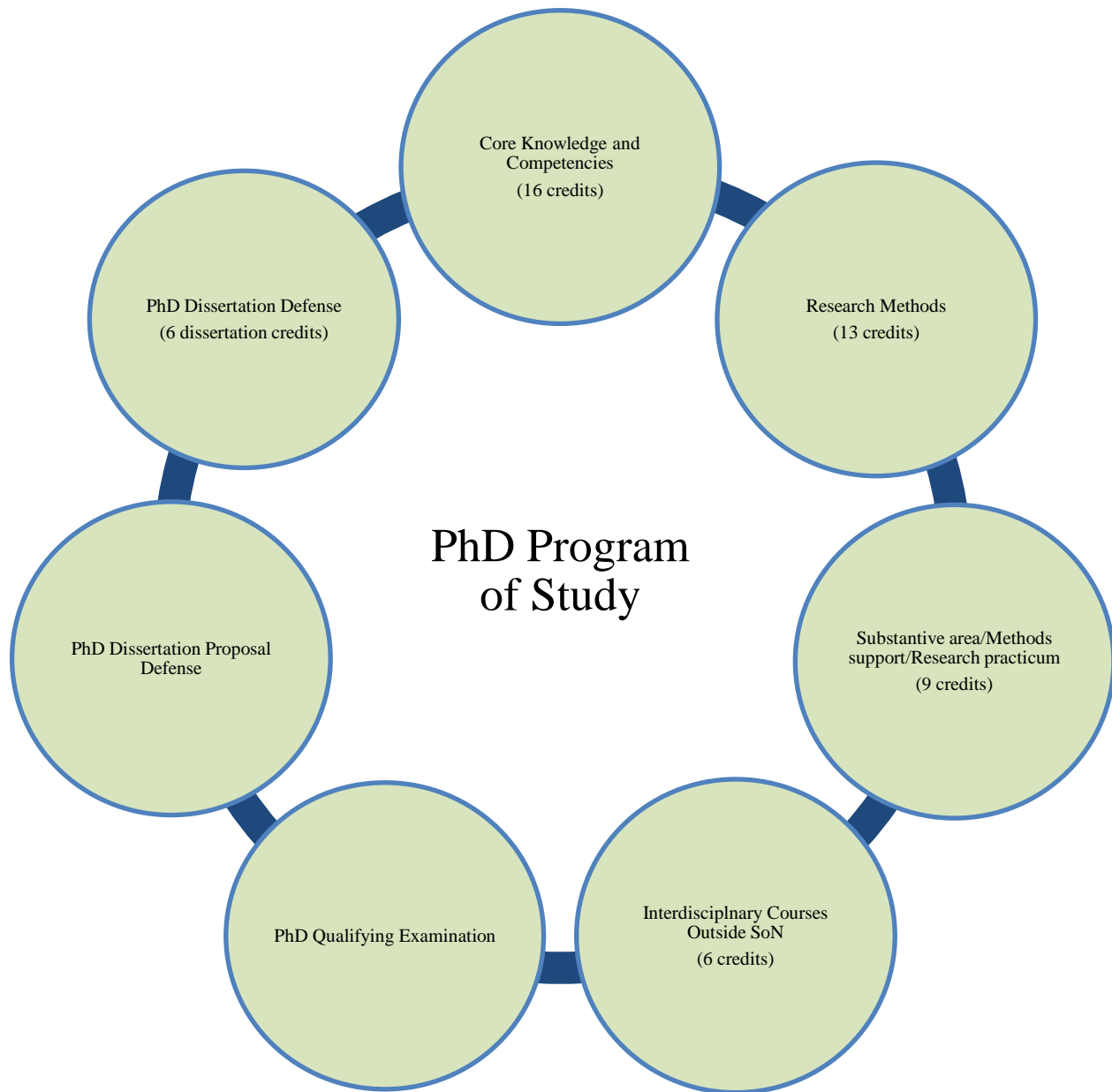
- Synthesize the literature in a focused area.
- Develop a problem statement and purpose in a focused area of inquiry.
- Evaluate theoretical/conceptual frameworks for applicability in designing a study.
- Identify and critique research methods for appropriateness in a given study.
- Utilize a research design that is consistent with the problem statement, purpose, and theoretical/conceptual framework.
- Identify, critique, and apply strategies for conceptualizing and/or operationalizing research variables.
- Write a research grant proposal.
- Use sound and consistent methods to ethically conduct data gathering activities.
- Ethically conduct research and adhere to standards of scientific integrity.
- Develop a systematic approach to data management including data entry, cleaning, tracking and maintaining confidentiality.
- Utilize appropriate data analysis techniques consistent with the purpose and design of a study.
- Interpret and synthesize the findings in light of the existing literature and theoretical framework and identify relevance for practice and future research.
- Disseminate papers through selected peer-reviewed outlets including abstracts, presentations, and publications.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

Summary

- Required Coursework
 - Core knowledge and competencies courses
 - Research methods courses
 - Substantive area / methods support / or additional research practicum courses
 - Interdisciplinary Courses Outside the SoN
- PhD Qualifying Examination (“The Doctoral Written Examination”)²
- Dissertation
 - Dissertation Proposal Defense (“The 1st Doctoral Oral Examination”)
 - Dissertation Defense (“The Final Doctoral Oral Examination”)

² Comprehensive Examination if matriculated prior to 2013



Expected Length of the PhD Program

The PhD Program can be completed in 3.5 years. PhD students can expect to take two to three years of coursework in addition to completing a major research project, the dissertation. If the student elects to take an additional 3-credit course in the first or second summer or during a fall or spring semester it is feasible to complete the PhD in 3 years. A PhD student has eight calendar years from the date of first registration in the Graduate School to complete the PhD degree (see “Time Limits” in the Graduate School Handbook). Under special circumstances an extension of time may be granted (see Graduate Student Handbook, “Extension of the Time Limit”).

Required Coursework

Students often elect to take more than the minimum required courses. Students may also elect to take other courses within the nursing graduate programs as long as they do not include clinical practicums. For example, students may elect to take additional graduate level courses in nursing education.

Students are minimally required to take the following³:

- A. Core knowledge and competencies (16 credits required of all PhD students)
 - NURS 912: *Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (3 credits)*
 - NURS 959: *Research Grant Writing (3 credits)*
 - NURS 962: *Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims (4 credits)*
 - NURS 963: *Writing for Publication (3 credits)*
 - NURS 985: *Research Seminar and Practicum: Guided Individual Research Experience (3 credits)*
- B. Research methods courses (13 credits required of all PhD students)
 - NURS 972: *Statistical Models for Health Research (4 credits)* (approved alternative: HPM 882 *Linear Regression* [note: HPM 880 is a prerequisite] plus HPM 881 *Categorical Data Analysis* plus HPM 883 *Advanced Methods in Health Policy and Administration*; prerequisite: HPM 880 *Math/Stata Tutorial*)
 - NURS 976: *Issues in Sampling and Design (3 credits)*
 - NURS 977: *Qualitative Approaches to Knowledge Development (3 credits)*
 - NURS 978: *Principles of Measurement (3 credits)*
- C. Substantive area courses/methods support courses/or additional research practicum (9 credits required of all PhD students) (see “Required courses for subgroups of students”)
- D. Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (6 credits required)
- E. Minimum of 6 dissertation credits required (NURS994)

³ See “Required Coursework for Students who Matriculated Prior to 2013” if appropriate

Required Coursework for Students who Matriculated Prior to 2013

- A. Core knowledge and competencies (16 credits required of all PhD students)
- NURS 910: *Nursing Theory (3 credits)*
 - NURS 915: *Nursing, Health Organizations, and Policy Making (3 credits)*
 - NURS 928 or NURS 923: *Theories of Prevention/Management of Chronic Conditions or Organizational Theories Applied to Nursing (3 credits)*
 - NURS 985: *Research Seminar and Practicum: Guided Individual Research Experience (3 credits)*
- B. Research methods courses (13 credits required of all PhD students)
- NURS 970: *Advanced Statistics I (3 credits)* (approved alternative: HPM 882 *Linear Regression* plus HPM 881 *Categorical Data Analysis* plus HPM 883 *Advanced Methods in Health Policy and Administration*; prerequisite: HPM 880 *Math/Stata Tutorial*)
 - NURS 971: *Advanced Statistics II (3 credits)*
 - NURS 976: *Issues in Sampling and Design (3 credits)*
 - NURS 977: *Qualitative Approaches to Knowledge Development (3 credits)*
 - NURS 978: *Principles of Measurement (3 credits)*
- C. Substantive area courses/methods support courses/or additional research practicum (9 credits required of all PhD students) (see “**Required courses for subgroups of students**”)
- D. Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (6 credits required)
- E. Minimum of 6 dissertation credits required (NURS994)

Students must have completed a research practicum (N985) prior to defending their dissertation proposal. Equivalent knowledge gained as a research assistant or researcher may be substituted for N985 as long as this experience helps the student achieve program objectives and research competencies for the PhD program. Students receiving T32 funding must participate in a specified number of hours of their mentor’s research per week; this serves as research practicum experience. In the event N985 can be waived, another course is substituted for N985.

The requirement of six interdisciplinary credits outside the SoN is intended to strengthen students’ understanding of essential knowledge from related fields applicable to their area of study in nursing. We encourage students to think about how other disciplines approach their area of interest and to situate their work within a broader context. Because of the rich resources

available on the University's campus, courses are available in a wide range of fields; students have taken courses in psychology, sociology, management and organizational behavior, anthropology, epidemiology, history, women's studies, health behavior and health education, health policy and administration, exercise and sports science, genetics, biomedical engineering, and physiology. All non-Nursing courses must be at the graduate level (i.e. courses numbered 600 or above); preferably at the doctoral level.

A dissertation is required, with a minimum of six credit hours of dissertation (NURS 994). Three credits of NURS 994 confers full-time status as a graduate student (see Graduate Student Handbook, section on **Registration**).

A student who was registered for the immediately preceding fall and spring semesters does not need to enroll during either of the summer sessions to maintain status as a full-time matriculated student. However, students are required to be registered for a minimum of three credit hours of dissertation (994) during the semester(s) or summer term in which the dissertation proposal is defended and during the semester or summer that the final dissertation is defended and whenever University resources (including faculty time) are being used. Use of faculty resources during the summer is contingent upon the faculty member's appointment in the SoN. Many faculty have 9-month faculty appointments. You need to discuss your summer plans with your advisor to determine their availability.

Registration during a semester or summer for the proposal defense or the dissertation defense covers a student from the first day of class in the semester or summer until the day before classes begin for the next semester. For example, if a student is registered for three credit hours of 994 in the fall semester and intends to defend in the same term, s/he must defend between the first day of fall classes and the day before the first day of spring classes. Similarly, summer registration would cover a defense occurring anytime between the first day of summer session I classes until the day before the first day of fall classes. If the defense takes place during a summer, students must be registered for a minimum of three credit hours of 994 during either the first or second summer session to be covered for the entire summer term.

Required Courses for Subgroups of Students

Non-T32 Students with Focus of Health Care Systems, Quality, and Patient Outcomes

Course recommendations include: N928 (*Organization Theory*) and/or N933 (*Health Care Quality and Patient Outcomes: Conceptual and Methodological Approaches*) and/or N915 (*Health Care Policy*). Which of any of these courses selected by the student would be a decision made by the student and his/her advisory committee, given the student's specific research focus.

T32 Interventions to Prevent and Manage Chronic Illness

Course requirements: NURS 957 (*From Theory to Intervention*) and NURS 958 (*Designing Intervention Studies*)

T32 Health Care Quality and Patient Outcomes

Course requirements: NURS 928 (*Organization Theory*) and NURS 933 (*Health Care Quality and Patient Outcomes: Conceptual and Methodological Approaches*) and HPM 715 (*Health*

Economics for Policy and Management).

PhD Course Offerings in the SoN (number, title, description, time of offering, credits)

Required

NURS 912 Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry

This course critically analyzes historical and current views of knowledge development and scientific development. It examines the underlying ontological and epistemological assumptions of these views and how they influence scientific inquiry. Students will learn to critically evaluate extant theories, concepts and models for use in research, including their testability and utility. Required; offered every fall semester; 3 credits.

NURS 959 Research Grant Writing

Course is designed to assist doctoral students and post-docs with preparation of Individual National Research Service Award (NRSA) or other research grant application. All steps in grant writing process will be addressed. Student should have solidified research idea prior to course. Mentor must agree to work with student throughout course. Required; offered every spring semester; 3 credits.

NURS 962 Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims

Prerequisite: Graduate standing. This course is designed to develop students' skills in conducting systematic reviews of the literature in their area of research focus. In addition, students will gain proficiency in developing aims for a research study and in using findings from their systematic literature reviews to further develop and refine those aims. Required; offered every fall semester; 4 credits.

NURS 963 Writing for Publication

In this course, students apply principles and practices of writing to the preparation of manuscripts for publication. Required; offered every spring semester; 3 credits.

NURS 972 Statistical Models for Health Research

Prerequisite: Successful completion of the placement exam or NURS 777 or NURS 671. This course will examine principles of bivariate and multiple regression and correlation, as well as univariate ANOVA, multiple ANOVA, ANCOVA, and repeated measures ANOVA. Emphasis is on application of these techniques in the analysis of nursing and health-related data. Required; offered every spring semester; 4 credits.

NURS 976 Issues in Sampling and Design

Prerequisite: Graduate standing. Systematic and critical analysis of quantitative research designs including experimental, quasi-experimental, longitudinal, comparative, correlational, and descriptive. Examines sampling frameworks, types of samples, sampling errors and biases, and advantages and disadvantages of these designs for the study of nursing and healthcare issues. Required; offered every fall semester; 3 credits.

NURS 977 Qualitative Approaches to Knowledge Development

Prerequisite: Graduate standing. Examines the philosophical orientation and techniques of qualitative methodologies including qualitative description, grounded theory, ethnography, and narrative. Design issues related to sampling, data collection, data analysis, and data representation, validation, rigor, and ethical concerns are considered. Required; offered every spring semester; 3 credits.

NURS 978 Principles of Measurement

Examination of measurement and techniques for assessing validity, reliability, and structure of data collection instruments. Instrument construction and procedures for critical evaluation of instruments are included. Required; offered every fall semester; 3 credits.

NURS 985 Research Seminar & Practicum: Guided Individual Research Experience

Directs students to develop research skills related to dissertation and future research. Minimum of 3 credits required; offered every spring and fall semester and both summer sessions; 1-6 credits.

NURS 994 Dissertation

Dissertation credits. Minimum of 6 credits required; offered every spring and fall semester and both summer sessions; 3 credits.

Elective

NURS 899 Special Topics

Independent study with an authority in the field. Elective; offered every spring and fall semester and both summer sessions. 1-6 credits.

NURS 915 Health Organization Policy

Examines interrelated changes in nursing, ethical and legal expectations, and the organization of health care and health policy. Ways that nurse leaders in health care organizations adapt to and challenge public policies throughout the policymaking process and consequences for organizations and for health, practice, research and education are explored. Elective; offered every spring semester. 3 credits.

NURS 928 Organizational Theories

Examines the major theoretical paradigms, perspectives, and issues in organization theory, particularly as applied to organizations providing health care services. Elective; offered every other spring semester, odd years. 3 credits.

NURS 930 Children at Risk: Prenatal Period Through Emerging Young Adulthood

This course will apply ecological and developmental perspectives to research with children at risk for conditions that threaten life and quality of life, and resilience under risk. Emphasis is on critically evaluating conceptual models, designs and methods, and responsible conduct of research that aims to understand, prevent or manage risk. Elective; offered every other spring

semester, even years; 3 credits.

NURS 932 Families and Health

Explores theoretical, methodological, and ethical issues related to research in families and health across the life span. Content includes family research related to health promotion, risk reduction, vulnerability, and health risk, and the family in the context of acute and chronic illness. Cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic issues are included. Elective; offered every other year, fall semester, even years; 3 credits.

NURS 933 Health Care Quality and Patient Outcomes: Conceptual and Empirical Approaches

Prerequisite: NURS 976 or permission of instructor. Examines literature on quality of care - effectiveness, safety, efficiency, equity, timeliness and patient-centeredness. Critically evaluates conceptual frameworks, research designs, sources of data, analytic approaches, and implications for health care policy. Elective; offered every other spring semester; even years; 3 credits.

NURS 950 Analysis of the Academic Role in Nursing Education

This course examines knowledge, theories and skills necessary for transition into an academic teaching role in university schools of nursing. Particular emphasis on the teaching-learning process as utilized in higher education. Elective; offered every other spring semester, odd years; 3 credits.

NURS 953 Ethics and Law in Health Care and Research

Focuses on the analysis of contemporary ethical/legal dilemmas in health care and research. Examines nurses' ethical/legal responsibilities, law and the impact of judicial precedent upon clinical practice and research, the interface of law and ethics, and comparative theories/models of ethical reasoning and decision-making. Elective; offered every other spring semester, odd years; 3 credits.

NURS 957 From Theory to Intervention

Prerequisite: NURS 912 or graduate level theory course. In-depth exploration of selected programmatic research in nursing and related fields on prevention and management of chronic conditions in order to generate and evaluate treatment theory and intervention protocol. Elective; offered every fall semester; 3 credits.

NURS 958 Designing Intervention Studies

Prerequisite: NURS 957 or permission of instructor. Examines methodological, ethical, and practical issues in the design and implementation of theory-based intervention studies. Elective; offered every spring semester; 3 credits.

NURS 965 Issues in Gerontological Research

Designed to enhance the student's knowledge of relevant issues researchers face when planning, designing, and implementing, research with an older adult population. Elective; offered every other year, fall semester, even years; 3 credits.

NURS 979 Qualitative Analysis

Prerequisite: NURS 977 or equivalent doctoral level qualitative methods course. Emphasizes the work of analysis and interpretation. Students apply relevant qualitative techniques to their own data. Elective; offered every other year, spring semester, even years; 3 credits.

NURS 980 Observational Methods

This course explores quantitative observational research techniques. Strategies for developing coding systems, determining reliability and validity, and analyzing data are included. Elective; offered every other fall semester; odd years; 3 credits.

NURS 981 Longitudinal Methods and Analysis

Prerequisite: NURS 972, or permission of the instructor. Examines longitudinal research methods, including conceptualization, design, and analysis. Assumptions and limitations of longitudinal statistics, relationship between design and analyses, and strategies to maintain scientific integrity are covered. Elective; offered every other fall semester, odd years; 3 credits.

Sequencing of PhD Course Offerings in the SoN

Courses offered every year: Fall

NURS 899 Special Topics

NURS 912 Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry

NURS 957 From Theory to Intervention

NURS 962 Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims

NURS 976 Issues in Sampling and Design

NURS 978 Principles of Measurement

NURS 985 Research Seminar & Practicum: Guided Individual Research Experience

NURS 994 Dissertation

Courses offered every year: Spring

NURS 899 Special Topics

NURS 915 Health Organization Policy

NURS 958 Designing Intervention Studies

NURS 959 Research Grant Writing

NURS 963 Writing for Publication

NURS 972 Statistical Models for Health Research

NURS 977 Qualitative Approaches to Knowledge Development

NURS 985 Research Seminar & Practicum: Guided Individual Research Experience

NURS 994 Dissertation

Courses offered every other year: Fall Semester, Odd Years

NURS 980 Observational Methods

NURS 981 Longitudinal Methods and Analysis

Courses offered every other year: Fall Semester, Even Years

NURS 932 Families and Health

NURS 965 Issues in Gerontological Research

Courses offered every other year: Spring Semester, Odd Years

NURS 928 Organizational Theories

NURS 950 Analysis of the Academic Role in Nursing Education

NURS 953 Ethics and Law in Health Care and Research

Courses offered every other year: Spring Semester, Even Years

NURS 930 Children at Risk: Prenatal Period Through Emerging Young Adulthood

NURS 933 Health Care Quality and Patient Outcomes: Conceptual and Empirical Approaches

NURS 979 Qualitative Analysis

PhD Full Time Plan of Study Example (Student Taking 3 Courses/Semester)

<u>Year 1</u>		
Fall		9 credits
NURS 912	Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (3 credits)	
NURS 962	Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims (4 credits)	
NURS 976	Issues in Sampling and Design (3 credits)	
Spring		11 credits
NURS 959	Research Grant Writing (3 credits)	
NURS 972	Statistical Models for Health Research (4 credits)	
NURS 977	Qualitative Methods (3 credits)	
QUALIFYING EXAMINATION		
<u>Year 2</u>		
Fall		9 credits
NURS 978	Principles of Measurement (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum course (3 credits)	
Spring		9 credits
NURS 963	Writing for Publication (new course 3 credits)	
NURS 985	Research practicum (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (3 credits)	
<u>Year 3</u>		
Fall		9 credits
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (3 credits)	
NURS 994	Dissertation (3 credits)	
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE		
Spring		3 credits
NURS 994	Dissertation (3 credits)	
<u>Year 4</u>		
Fall		3 credits
NURS 994	Dissertation (3 credits)	
DISSERTATION DEFENSE		

PhD Part Time Plan of Study Example (Student Taking 2 Courses/Semester)

<u>Year 1</u>		
Fall		6 credits
NURS 912	Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (3 credits)	
NURS 962	Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims (4 credits)	
Spring		7 credits
NURS 972	Statistical Models for Health Research (4 credits)	
NURS 977	Qualitative Methods (3 credits)	
<u>Year 2</u>		
Fall		6 credits
NURS 976	Issues in Sampling and Design (3 credits)	
NURS 978	Principles of Measurement (3 credits)	
Spring		7 credits
NURS 959	Research Grant Writing (3 credits)	
NURS 963	Writing for Publication (new course 3 credits)	
QUALIFYING EXAMINATION		
<u>Year 3</u>		
Fall		6 credits
NURS 985	Research practicum (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (3 credits)	
Spring		6 credits
XX XXX	Interdisciplinary courses outside of nursing (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum (3 credits)	
<u>Year 4</u>		
Fall		6 credits
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum (3 credits)	
XX XXX	Substantive area/methods support course or research practicum course (3 credits)	
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL DEFENSE		
Spring		3 credits
NURS 994	Dissertation (3 credits)	
<u>Year 5</u>		
Fall		3 credits
NURS 994	Dissertation (3 credits)	
DISSERTATION DEFENSE		

The PhD Doctoral Written Examination*⁴

All students in the SoN take a doctoral written exam. See *Graduate School Handbook, Doctoral Degree, Comprehensive Examinations*. Students who matriculated 2013 or after complete a Qualifying Examination following completion of five required courses commonly taken in students' first year of study. Students who matriculated prior to 2013 complete a Comprehensive Examination following completion of the required coursework and prior to the dissertation proposal defense.

PhD Qualifying Examination: Committee Procedures and Guidelines for the Administration of the PhD Qualifying Exam

Statement of Purpose

All PhD students will take a uniform Qualifying Exam (QE) to ensure they are progressing in their ability to think critically, and analyze and synthesize content from the core areas of philosophical, theoretical, and scientific knowledge. This content is covered in the five required courses commonly taken in students' first year.

- NURS 912: Theoretical Foundations of Scientific Inquiry
- NURS 962: Conducting Systematic Reviews and Writing Specific Aims.
- NURS 972: Statistical Models for Health Research
- NURS 976: Issues in Sampling and Design
- NURS 977: Qualitative Approaches to Knowledge Development

The QE is a written exam. The exam process will be one in which students respond to a common set of exam questions that focus on broad doctoral course content, rather than on specific content of individual research interest. This approach will promote consistency in the process used to assess students' knowledge.

Qualifying Exam Committee (QEC)

Responsibilities of the Committee. The QEC is responsible for writing QE questions, administering the exam at the scheduled time (to be determined annually by PhD Executive Committee (PhDEC) in consultation with students), and evaluating student responses to exam questions using a grading rubric.

Constitution of the Committee. The QEC is comprised of three SoN faculty members meeting the following criteria: a) actively mentoring PhD student(s) as an academic advisor; b) serving as a PhD Committee chair or member; or c) actively engaged in the PhD Program (e.g., serving on PhDEC, PhDAC, etc.). The QEC will not include faculty who taught one of the first year required courses listed above during the academic year (AY) in which the QE is administered. However, faculty teaching the required courses will be consulted during the development of exam questions.

⁴ Students who matriculated prior to 2013 take a Comprehensive Exam instead of a Qualifying Exam. See the Comprehensive Exam section that follows.

- The Director of the Pre and Post-doctoral Program (PD) will solicit faculty volunteers whose names will be considered during a PhDEC meeting, and the QEC members will be selected by PhDEC from this pool. If there are insufficient volunteers, the PD and/or members of PhDEC will make personal appeals to individuals meeting the criteria. PhDEC will make the final decision on QEC membership.
- QEC members' terms of service. QEC members will serve staggered 3-year terms. The first year on the committee will provide an orientation to the QE process, the second year will be in a mentored leadership role, and the third year will be as chair of the QEC. The name of the Chair will be communicated to the PhDEC and the PD.

QE Structure

- The QE will be offered annually at the end of the spring semester, in the interim between final exam week and the start of Summer Session I. All students must be registered during the spring semester in which the examination is taken, in accordance with the Graduate School Handbook. The date of the August administration of the exam will be announced at the same time as students are informed of the specific dates for the May administration of the exam.
- Each question will be constructed so that students must synthesize and integrate knowledge/content across the first year required courses, and develop a logical, defensible argument.
- A grading rubric will be developed, reviewed and/or modified by the QEC prior to administration of each exam, and used to ensure consistent evaluation of exams across students. This grading rubric will be made available to students in advance of the exam.
- Any student who encounters extenuating circumstances that would prevent him or her from taking the exam as scheduled will have/receive an individualized plan developed by the QEC, in collaboration with the PhDEC Chair for completing the exam., and PD,

Administration of the QE

- The QE will be emailed to each student. Students will have 48 hours from the time the QE is distributed to complete the examination and submit their responses.
- The QEC will have 2 weeks to grade and submit results to the PD, who will then inform students of the outcome of the exam.
- Exams will be blinded with regard to student names. Exams will be read by each QEC member and each question will be evaluated as "passing" or "failing." At least two-thirds of the members must rate a student's response to each question as "passing" in order for the student to pass a question.
- The QE as a whole will be scored on a pass/fail basis. Students who pass all QE questions will pass the QE. Students who fail one or more questions will fail the QE
- If a student fails the QE, the exam and QEC comments will be sent to the student and their academic advisor by the PD (copies of all exams will be stored electronically in the PhD

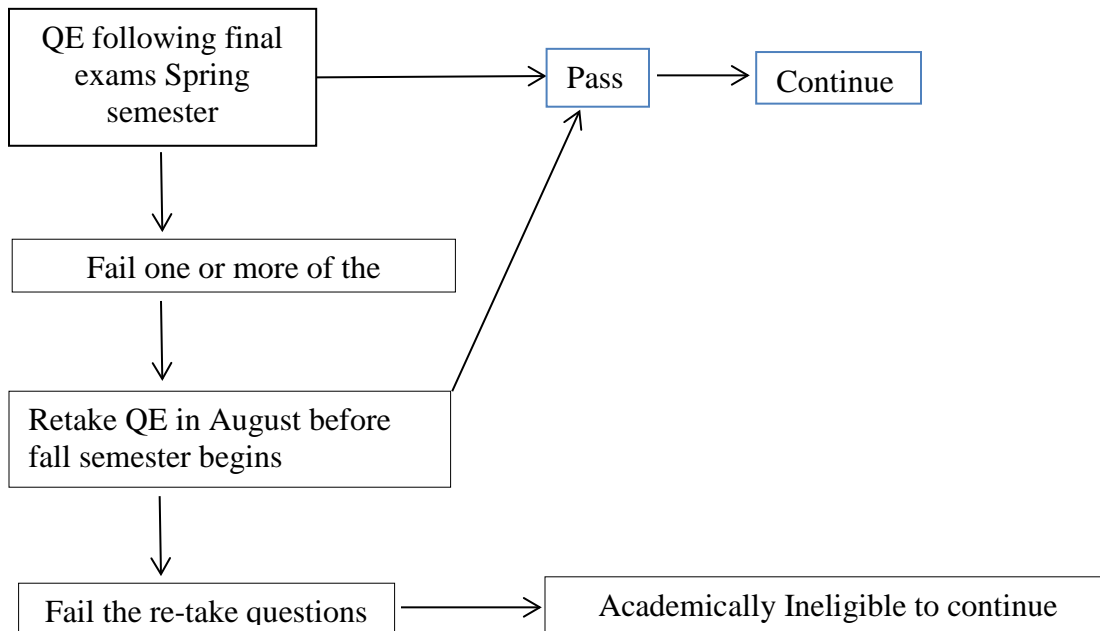
program files on the S:drive). The QEC will provide extensive comments that will serve as a guide to students to prepare for a re-take of the exam.

- During the first summer session, a faculty member will be available to students who did not pass the exam, on a limited “as needed” basis to clarify feedback provided by the QEC. At the time students receive their exam results, the PD will inform them of the name of the faculty member.

Re-take of the QE

- Students who fail the QE will re-take the exam prior to the beginning of the fall semester in August immediately following the spring semester in which the QE was initially taken. They will be required to retake only the question(s) failed on the initial QE. Students will not be required to register for summer session.
- Students who fail the QE will be informed of the date of the QE re-take in the email informing them of the outcome on the QE.
- Students who re-take the QE will be allowed to enroll in courses during the summer semester only. Students must pre-register, but will not be able to complete enrollment in courses for the fall semester until they pass the QE.
- The QEC will have one week to grade and submit the results of the re-take QE to the PD. The re-take QE will be graded by the same QEC, using the procedures outlined above. Students and their academic advisors will be notified via email by the PD of their outcome on the re-take exam.
- Students who fail the re-take QE will be academically ineligible to continue in the PhD program. Those students who seek reinstatement into the PhD program must follow the procedures in accordance with the Graduate School Handbook.

The overall process for the QEC is shown below:



Example Instructions for PhD Qualifying Examination

- The Qualifying Examination will be emailed to you by [insert name] at [insert time] on [insert date].
- Your QE responses must be submitted via email to [insert name and email address] not later than [insert time and date].
- Place your name and the UNC Honor Pledge on the first page of the exam (do not place your name on any other page). That page will be deleted before the Qualifying Examination Committee receives your exam, so our review will be blinded.
- Follow this formatting: a) single Microsoft Word document, with pages numbered, b) 12 point font, in either ARIAL or TIMES NEW ROMAN, c) double-space, and d) 1-inch margins. For each question, limit your response to approximately 5 – 7 pages, exclusive of citations. Use appropriate citations and place references at the conclusion of each question, or at the end of the document in some semblance of APA format (grading is not based on strict adherence to that format).
- Use of textbooks, publications, the Internet, and/or class notes is allowed.
- Discussing the exam with any other student or any faculty member is NOT allowed.
- If you do not understand a question (which is different from not being able to figure out how to answer it), please contact [insert name and email address]. She will be available to respond to emails of a clarifying nature on [insert date(s) and time(s)]. You may also contact [insert name and email address] with your questions. Dr. [insert name] will be available to respond to clarifying questions on [insert date(s) and times(s)].
- If you become ill or there is an emergency and you are unable to complete the exam, contact [insert name] immediately. If you do not receive an email response from [insert name] within an hour, please contact the Director of the PhD program [insert email address].

Your response to all questions will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- (1) Does the response answer the question? Here, we are looking to determine whether your responses address the questions posed, including any related components of the question. When a question includes multiple components, focus on achieving an appropriate balance in your response to the components, so that attention to each component is adequate (without some areas getting too much or too little attention).
- (2) Does the response demonstrate synthesis across courses?
- (3) Is the response thoughtful? Your response should reflect an analysis and careful consideration of relevant issues so that it is obvious to readers how you reached your conclusions. For example, if you select one approach over another, we will expect to see a justification of your position. Your response should also read as if it received the appropriate time and attention, and not like it was written in haste.

- (4) Is the response logical, and is there logic in the presentation of your response? In other words, we will evaluate the flow of your response, and the “fit” between all parts of your response. For example, in a question about research design, we would expect there to be a “fit” between your research question(s), hypotheses, data collection procedures and analysis strategies.
- (5) Is the response well organized, well written, and understandable? Effective written communication allows the reader to logically progress from sentence to sentence and section to section. Section headings to address sub-parts of the questions would be a helpful. Perfect English grammar is not required to effectively communicate, so do not let English language challenges undermine your confidence in answering the questions.

Reviewed/modified: February 10, 2014, June 2, 2015
Adopted by PhDEC: March 16, 2015

Written PhD Comprehensive Examinations (Required of students who matriculated prior to 2013)

In the SoN, the written Comprehensive Exam is aimed at assessing the adequacy of the students' skills and knowledge to begin the dissertation process. It is not intended to assess the students' knowledge of course material that has already been evaluated in each course. Rather, the Comprehensive Exam is intended to assess the students' ability to synthesize and integrate concepts, skills, and knowledge gained in coursework and the scholarly literature in their area of interest. The exam tests the ability of the student to critically evaluate the strengths and limitations of the methodological and substantive literature. Students are expected to be able to make a logical argument that illustrates synthesis to justify their conclusions.

PhD Comprehensive Exam Process

The written comprehensive examination is taken when all required courses are completed. The comprehensive exam shall consist of questions prepared by the Dissertation Committee and given to the student by the Office of Academic Affairs. The comprehensive exam may be graded exclusively by the SoN committee members. A time limit of two weeks is established for answers to be completed and returned to the Office of Academic Affairs.

Students may use any inanimate source (e.g., books, articles) they need to answer the comprehensive examination questions. However, they may not consult any person about the questions except their committee Chair and, with the consent of the committee Chair, other member of their committee.

An exception for ESL students is as follows: If an ESL student's committee agrees, that student may use an editor for comprehensive exams. At the end of two weeks, the students will return the unedited version of the comprehensive exams to the Graduate Programs assistant and also take a copy to the approved editor. Before the end of the third week, the student will get the edited version and revise the original submission based on the editor's suggestions. At the end of the third week, the student will return the edited version to the Graduate Programs Assistant.

The edits that have been made must be identifiable in the final version for the chair of the committee. The committee members will be given a clean version of the comprehensive exam, and may request to see the identifiable edits held by the chair upon request.

Exceptions for non ESL students can be made by the dissertation chair at the discretion of the director of the PhD program. The student and his/her committee will complete the same procedure and forms as noted above within the same amount of time. See the **PhD Program Documents** for the following forms:

- Chair and Committee Approval for Editing Written Comprehensive Examinations
- Editor Honor Form for Editing Comprehensive Exams

Passing/Failing the PhD Comprehensive Examination

- The distribution of the exam for readership is a committee decision. Committees may decide whether all answers are read and graded by all members of the committee or whether each answer is only read by a subset of the committee.
- The exam should be graded based on the following criteria: (a) the answers involve a comprehensive and accurate citing of the literature; (b) the literature is cited using APA format; (c) the students' response addresses the question asked and clearly identifies the component of the question being addressed in each section of the answer; (d) the responses demonstrate synthesis and integration of concepts, skills, and knowledge gained in coursework and the scholarly literature in their answers; (e) the responses include a critical evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the methodological and substantive literature; and (f) the responses illustrate synthesis and make a logical argument to justify conclusions made.
- Exams should be graded in a timely fashion by the committee. Under ordinary circumstances (e.g., exams given within the regular school year), results should be given to the student in about 3 weeks.
- Decisions about exam grading can be done through individual contact between the chair and members or through a meeting of the committee. Meetings are important if the committee members have differing perspectives.
- Advisors are expected to meet with the student to discuss the results.

Prevailing practice: Many committees will offer the student a chance to rewrite one or more written comprehensive exam questions without reporting a no pass to the Graduate School, and many committees will, beyond that, offer the student an opportunity to further improve a response verbally as part of the first oral exam.

Within 2 months after the written comprehensive examinations are begun, the Chair will forward to the director of the PhD program, the decision of the committee—pass, fail, or pass contingent on acceptable remediation (rewriting question and/or verbal responses) and the type of remediation required. The Chair will inform the director of the PhD program when the remediation is complete. Generally, the student will then have 6 months to complete the remediation, or a failing grade will be assigned. Exceptions to this policy will be individually negotiated between the committee Chair and the director of the PhD program and are contingent on evidence of student progress. The Committee maintains the right to pass the student with weaknesses and require additional coursework or other defined activities, such as integrative review of specific literature, prior to writing the dissertation proposal.

PhD Dissertation

Forming the PhD Dissertation Committee

Prior to completion of required coursework, the student must choose a five-member *dissertation committee*. First, the student selects a chair who may or may not be the academic advisor. The chair should be a nursing faculty member who has been approved to chair dissertations. If the student selects someone other than the academic advisor, a Graduate Advisor Change form must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs and be signed by the student and the proposed chair (see **PhD Program Documents**). No signature or permission from the current academic advisor is needed, but the new advisor's signature is required and must be approved by the PhD Program Director. When the dissertation chair is selected, s/he and the committee will take the place of the academic advisor and advisory committee. At that time, all aspects of the doctoral program, including dissertation research, the written comprehensive examination and the oral defense of the proposal will become the responsibility of the chair and the committee.

With the advice of the chair, the committee members are chosen. A committee of at least five members is required. A majority of the members of a doctoral committee (and a majority of the people passing the student on an examination or approving a doctoral dissertation) must be regular members of the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate Faculty from the SoN. Other members may be special appointees to the Graduate Faculty. At least one member must be from a substantive area outside the SoN; in the case of a student with an approved minor program, from the minor department. The outside members may be selected from among scholars from other academic programs or from other institutions where scholarly work is conducted. All must be approved for the functions they provide (directing or serving on dissertation committees). It is the student's responsibility to submit the names of the committee members and chair to the director of the PhD program for approval, using the [Report of Doctoral Committee Composition form](#) (first part of linked document). Usually the dissertation committee membership remains the same through the dissertation defense, but sometimes the membership changes because of changes in a student's research focus.

All tenured and tenure-track faculty at the ranks of Assistant, Associate and Full Professor are automatically members of the Graduate Faculty. Clinical or research professors (non-tenure track) in the SoN can receive fixed-term appointments or, in special cases, regular appointments to the Graduate Faculty. Other individuals can receive special, fixed-term appointments, which may include: faculty emeriti, scholars from other institutions, independent scholars and practitioners. They shall be appointed for terms no greater than five years in length, though such terms may be renewed indefinitely. If a student wants to include such an individual on the dissertation committee, the individual's curriculum vitae should be submitted to the director of the PhD program at the time the [Report of Doctoral Committee Composition](#) is submitted. The director of the PhD program will review the prospective appointee to ensure that he or she meets the high qualifications necessary for serving on a dissertation committee. If the prospective appointee does not have a doctoral degree, the committee chair needs to write a letter to the director of the PhD program justifying the unique qualifications of the individual for serving on a dissertation committee. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will forward nominations for fixed-term appointments to the Dean of the Graduate School who makes the final decisions on Graduate Faculty Appointments.

Each PhD student is expected to consult with members of the dissertation committee at frequent intervals throughout the progress of his or her research.

Program Approval/Readiness for the PhD Dissertation Proposal Defense

Students must meet one or more times with their Dissertation Committee to have them approve the plan of study and begin preliminary planning for the dissertation. Prior to dissertation approval any transfer coursework and exceptions to course requirements must be approved. Exceptions also must be approved by the director of the PhD program and the PhD Executive Committee. See [Course Transfer Policy](#).

To help the committee determine readiness for proposal defense, the student needs to present a summary of the content taken in courses. Often, at the request of the chair, students do this by giving the committee members a portfolio that includes representative syllabus pages, papers directly related to the dissertation and research proposals. The exact format of this portfolio depends on chair and student preferences.

Before the proposal defense is completed, the student must have fulfilled, or will have fulfilled by the end of the semester in which the defense is to be completed, the qualifying exam (or comprehensive exam if matriculated prior to 2013), all required coursework (including no incomplete grades), and the minimum residence requirement for the doctorate (see [Graduate School Handbook](#), Residence Credit Requirement).

In addition, the student must be judged by his or her committee to have made significant progress in achieving the [PhD Program Research Competencies](#).

The PhD Dissertation Proposal Defense (“The Doctoral Oral Exam”)

When a student is ready for the PhD dissertation proposal defense, it is his or her responsibility to request their [Doctoral Exam Report Form](#) from the Office of Academic Affairs.

As per the [Graduate Student Handbook](#), the dissertation proposal is successfully defended if it is approved by the majority of the dissertation committee members. The Graduate School considers the dissertation committee's vote to be final. A student who fails the dissertation proposal defense may not schedule a second defense until at least three months have elapsed. A student who fails the dissertation proposal defense for the second time becomes ineligible for further graduate work. No student may continue in the SoN's PhD program without approval by the Administrative Board of the Graduate School.

When the dissertation proposal is successfully defended, the student's committee members sign **Part II of the Proposal Defense/Report of Dissertation Committee Composition Form** and the dissertation chair completes the **Part II of the Doctoral Exam Report Form**.

PhD Dissertation Format

Dissertations from SoN students are done in one of two formats: (a) a traditional monograph format or (b) a collection of manuscripts. These formats differ only in organization; the extent of the dissertation research is the same for both formats. The choice of the format is made by the student and their dissertation committee. In either case, the text must conform to the

Dissertation Guide of the Graduate School with respect to font size, line spacing, margin sizes, paper type, binding, number of copies, etc.

Dissertations are usually done in APA format (except where this format differs from the *Theses and Dissertation Guide*), but occasionally the dissertation committee may approve an alternate format if more appropriate to the student's area of research. Dissertation proposals are temporary documents and, as such, may be done in any format that the committee approves. However, it is generally to the student's advantage to write the proposal in a format that can be folded into the final dissertation.

The purpose of the dissertation is to demonstrate research competence as a culminating project of the graduate program. Working under the supervision of the Dissertation Committee, the student's work must be original and rigorous and approved by the student's Committee in order to graduate.

Publishing research is an important element of the scientific research process. In order to encourage publication of the dissertation research findings, the PhD Program will accept either a publishable/published manuscript dissertation format or a traditional monograph dissertation format and consider them equivalent. The Graduate School *Theses and Dissertation Guide* must be followed with either option. All other dissertation requirements of the SoN apply.

While the work of the dissertation is the same for either option, students may use the publishable manuscript format as a way to enhance dissemination of their scholarship and further peer review of their research. Either way, the student will select the format in consultation with their Committee prior to the Proposal Defense; the committee chair will provide direction for the proposal development. Using the manuscript option, at least three manuscripts are required for the dissertation (at least one of which must present original data based findings) in a five chapter dissertation. The first chapter of the dissertation is the proposal, chapters 2-4 are publishable manuscripts agreed upon with the Committee, and chapter 5 is a synthesis and discussion of the findings with implications for research and practice (see table). Chapter 1 for the manuscript option will include the background and significance of the problem, study aims, proposed methods, and description of each of the three manuscript topics and proposed journals for submission. If the dissertation format changes (from monograph to manuscript options or vice versa), the student must obtain approval from the Committee for the change.

For PhD dissertations submitted in the form of publishable manuscripts (e.g. ready for submission), the three publishable/published manuscripts addressing the dissertation aims are typically related, either by their substantive content or methodology, and constitute a cohesive whole. Each manuscript should be accompanied by its own abstract, references and appendices, if needed. It is strongly encouraged that at least one of the three publishable manuscripts is submitted for publication by the time of the student's Dissertation Defense. All committee members must approve each manuscript prior to submission to any journal if that occurs before the final defense and all of the manuscripts for the final dissertation.

Journal Publication: Two to three high-quality peer reviewed journals must be identified for each planned manuscript in the initial proposal and approved by the Dissertation Committee. If the focus of the manuscript shifts in topic during the dissertation process, the student must inform

the Committee and obtain approval for the change. On occasion, a paper may have been published prior to submission of the final dissertation, in which case the published version may be included in lieu of a typescript if it meets the UNC Graduate School formatting requirements. If a manuscript has been published prior to completing the dissertation, the student must obtain a signed waiver from the copyright owner (usually the publisher) and submit this to the Graduate School with the final dissertation.

Authorship: The dissertation must be the intellectual work and primary responsibility of the student. The student will be responsible for writing of the manuscript(s) and be either sole author or first author if co-authors are included for all the manuscripts. If the publication option will include co-authors, the student should discuss publication order and credit prior to submission with co-authors and Dissertation Committee. According to the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors, the Authorship credit should be based on 1) substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; 2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and 3) final approval of the version to be published. All authors should meet conditions 1, 2, and 3 to be included. Since the relative contributions of co-authors may change over the course of a project and across manuscripts, this can be revisited as appropriate prior to actual manuscript submission. All authors must review and approve the manuscript prior to submission.

Format: The organization of this format is described in the Table below. While publishability is not necessary for acceptance of the dissertation, the fact that a paper has been published in a peer-reviewed publication does not, in itself, make it acceptable for the purposes of the dissertation. The committee may require expanded content to be included in the appendices (e.g. expanded literature review, methodology, results, any tools or techniques such as decision models, data collection forms, code books, etc.), if not fully described in the manuscript.

The second format alternative is a traditional monograph-style dissertation. The organization for this format is described below and must follow the requirements of the UNC Graduate School (see **Thesis and Dissertation Guide**).

PhD Dissertation Format Summary

	Published/Publishable Manuscript(s)	Monograph
Title page, including graduation month	Yes	Yes
Copyright page for dissertation as a whole	Optional	Optional
Copyright permission for use of all copyrighted material ^a	Yes	Yes
Abstract (350 word max)	Yes	Yes
Dissertation committee approval page	Yes	Yes
Dedication, Acknowledgements, Preface	Optional	Optional
Table of Contents, with page references	Yes	Yes
List of Tables, with titles and page references	If applicable; each chapter may have its own list	If applicable; one list following table of contents
List of Figures or Illustrations, with titles and page references	If applicable; each chapter may have its own list and is identified in	If applicable; one list following table of contents

	the dissertation's table of contents	
List of Abbreviations [and Symbols]	If used extensively; each chapter may have its own list and is identified in the dissertation's table of contents	If used extensively; one list following table of contents
Introduction or Background Aims Methods Results Discussion Tables Figures or Illustrations	Chapter 1: Proposal ^b Chapters 2-4: Published reprint or publishable manuscripts following Grad School formatting requirements. If publishable manuscript, tables and figures should follow text and references Chapter 5: Synthesis of dissertation	An initial 1-3 chapters presenting the introduction, literature review, purpose statement, and research questions or hypotheses A methods chapter One or more results chapters A discussion and conclusions chapter
Appendices (if applicable)	At the request of the Committee, expanded content or appendices may be required for manuscript chapters	Additional materials, including tools such as surveys, decision trees, case report forms, data tables, etc.
Bibliography/References	At the end of each chapter and is identified in the dissertation's table of contents	At the end of each chapter or at the end of the dissertation

^a includes manuscript chapters that have been published; file copies of all copyright permissions with the Graduate School and with the SoN PhD Program

^b The proposal for the manuscript option includes the background and significance of the problem, study aims, proposed methods, and description of each of the three manuscript topics and proposed journals for submission.

References

Baggs, J. The dissertation manuscript option, internet posting, and publication. *Research in Nursing Health*; 2011: 34, 89-90.

Robinson, S. & Dracup, K. Innovative options for the doctoral dissertation in nursing. *Nursing Outlook*; 2008: 56(4): 174-178.

The PhD Dissertation Defense (“The Final Oral Examination”)

The final oral examination shall be a defense of the dissertation. It may be open to the public, limited in attendance to the candidate and the committee, or a combination of the two. The dissertation defense must be registered with the Office of Academic Affairs to prevent overlapping public dissertation presentations and to enable the Office of Academic Affairs to assist with reservation of rooms, and the design and posting of announcements of presentations. The defense should be registered at least three weeks in advance. If a defense is postponed, the subsequent date also must be approved.

The final oral examination shall be held only after all members of the committee have had adequate opportunity to review a final draft of the PhD dissertation. The dissertation chair is responsible to the members of the student's committee for determining that the draft is in an appropriate form for their evaluation. A student passes the final oral examination only upon approval of at least two thirds of the members of the dissertation committee. All dissertation committee members sign **Parts III and IV of the Doctoral Exam Report Form** to document successful defense of the dissertation. The committee may, at the time of the final oral

examination but no later, require alterations and corrections. The dissertation chair is responsible for verifying that the changes required by the committee have been made and may delegate this responsibility to the committee member(s) who imposed the requirements. In addition, students must give the raw data to the dissertation chair for storage [data storage policy].

PhD Dissertation Submission

Dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School according to the schedule listed in the [Graduate School Calendar](#). The Graduate School accepts only dissertations produced and submitted according to the standards in the *Theses and Dissertation Guide*.

ACADEMIC ADVISING/MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESSION

The Academic Advisor

The process of academic advisement is one of information exchange, communication, teaching and guidance. The advisor should be the advisee's most accurate source of information about the system at the Program, School and University levels. The advisor makes sure that the advisee receives relevant notices, is available on a regular basis for questions or consultation and helps the student manage problems that interfere with the student's educational progress.

As a guide or consultant, the advisor has the opportunity to help the student articulate and realize some segment of her or his life goals. Advisors are responsible for and instrumental in guiding the student to plan and pursue a program of study that meets all requirements for graduation as well as focusing on the student's goals. The advisor is more than a source of information about registration; s/he is a coordinator of a student's entire educational experience.

Students are assigned a faculty academic advisor by the Director of the PhD program upon admission to the program. Consideration is given to student preference, match of faculty and student research interests, and faculty availability. The academic advisor is responsible for approving activities that satisfy course requirements. If appropriate, either the student or advisor may decide later that another faculty member is more suitable as academic advisor. Change of advisor occurs routinely, however, the availability of a graduate faculty member qualified and willing to serve as advisor must be available. The director of the PhD program approves all advisor changes.

PhD students are expected to work independently to make appropriate progress in the program; at the same time, students do work closely with their advisor and other faculty. The academic advisor provides the student with assistance in identifying courses and helps with any problems affecting the student's relationships with faculty, colleagues, or the PhD program as a whole. Students are responsible for seeking meetings as needed with their advisors. We encourage students to get to know and work with a range of faculty during their first two years of the program.

PhD Plan of Study (POS)

Upon enrollment, students meet with their assigned advisor to plan their program of study. The

entire program should be over-viewed so that the student has a context for her or his course of study. The investment of time needed for the program should be addressed so the student can make necessary adjustments to work or personal schedules to accommodate any unanticipated demands. To assist in planning the course of study, the advisor will explore with the student both long- and short-term goals as well as any aids the student perceives s/he will need to complete the program. Knowledge of the student's goals will help the advisor make recommendations of electives or courses to support the student's goals. The advisor can link the student with campus resources that might be of assistance. The advisor will inform the student about how s/he handles advisement appointments and provide the student information about the advisor's availability and ways s/he can be contacted.

This POS is an estimate of the student's plan and can change as his/her focus of study becomes clearer. Current plans of study provide essential information for planning course offerings in future academic years. The advisor (and advisory committee once it is formed) and student refer to the student's POS at least once a semester during the registration advisement period. Students need to have their plans of study approved by either their advisory committee or their dissertation committee prior to taking the written comprehensive examination (not necessary for student eligible to take the qualifying exam).

Students may substitute equivalent courses for the required courses with approval of the advisory committee, the PhD Executive Committee and the Director of the PhD and Post-doctoral Programs (see **course transfer policy**). Students must have 2 years in residence before the dissertation proposal is approved, and they must meet a language requirement. In the SoN, taking two PhD level research courses fulfills the language requirement (e.g., N972, N976, N977, N978).

Signing Up For Classes

Each semester the Office of Admissions and Student Services will notify students of the registration period(s). The Office of Admissions and Student Services will assist students who encounter problems with telephonic registration.

Class lists, course schedules, and the course map are posted on the SoN Website. Each student will schedule an appointment with her or his advisor during the advisement period to plan the next semester's course(s) and update the POS. Each spring the student also updates their academic curriculum vitae (CV). The POS and CV are submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs by the advisor signifying review of the student's materials by the advisor.

The Academic Advisory Committee (“Three-Person Committee”)

The advisor for the PhD student along with an advisory committee will coordinate the student's academic activities until the student selects a chair for her or his dissertation committee. In the first year of course work, the student selects two other faculty who together with the academic advisor advise the student. The *academic advisory committee* assists both the student and advisor in formally reviewing the student's progress in the PhD program. This committee is also referred to as “the three-person committee.” The academic advisory committee guides the

student in developing a plan of study, reviews the need for transfer of equivalent courses, and facilitates the student's development of research competencies.

Expected Benchmarks for a Full-Time PhD Program

Fall, 1 st year	Estimated Plan of Study Completed
End of spring semester, 1 st year	Advisory Committee Selected; meeting convened Qualifying Examination Completed

By the end of the first year of full-time PhD study, the student should be able to:

- ✓ Articulate a focused area that could generate a researchable question
- ✓ Articulate a researchable question in the problem area
- ✓ Select courses that relate to the general problem area
- ✓ Complete assignments in each course that develop justification of the focus on the general problem area, portions of relevant literature, and potential methods to address the problem

End of spring semester, 2 nd year	Dissertation Chair & Dissertation Committee Selected Meeting Convened with Dissertation Committee
Fall, 3 rd year	Coursework Completed Dissertation Proposal Defense Successfully Passed
Spring, 3 rd year	Dissertation Study IRB Approved Data Collection/Analysis Completed
Fall, 4 th year	Final Defense of Dissertation

Annual Review

The Graduate School requires each program to conduct an annual review of all PhD students. In the SoN, this is accomplished with a report of the student's current status in the program and accomplishments in the past year (e.g., funding, presentations, publications). To facilitate this record keeping, at the time of spring registration, students turn in to the Office of Academic Affairs an updated curriculum vitae and their plan of study.

Academic Performance and Progression for PhD Program Students

The academic performance and progression of each student enrolled in the SoN PhD program is regularly reviewed by the academic advisor, the advisory committee (a three-person advisory committee or dissertation committee), course faculty, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Student Affairs. The purpose of progression review is to make certain each student is making satisfactory progress in her/his program of study based upon stated criteria established by the SoN and the University. This review also provides an opportunity for students who are having difficulties to be directed toward the help and support they need.

The PhD Progression Review Committee ("Committee") is the subcommittee of the PhDEC responsible for monitoring academic performance and progression of students. The Committee is

composed of five voting members: a chair and four additional members. The chair of the Committee is nominated and selected from the existing membership of the PhDEC. The chair serves a three-year term. Chair responsibilities include: oversight of the process of constituting and maintaining the Committee's membership, administration of the Committee's meetings; and biannual reports of the Committee's activities to the PhDEC. Committee members are appointed by the PhDEC based upon the chair's recommendations.

Members serve 3-year staggered terms. Initial appointments include two 3-year terms, two 2-year terms, and one 1-year term, with at least one new member annually. All members must have experience advising PhD students. The Director of the PhD Programs and the Assistant Dean of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) serve as ex officio (non-voting) members of the Committee.

The Committee meets to conduct progression review shortly following receipt of the grades by the SoN Registrar at the end of each semester. The Committee reviews all students who:

- Are on academic probation
- Receive an "F" or an "L" during the past semester
- Have unresolved temporary grades for more than one semester (IN, AB, or NG)
- Withdrew from a required course in the past semester
- Are non-compliant with health and safety requirements at any point in an academic term
- Have raised research ethics concerns
- Have been recommended by their academic advisor based upon one or more of the following circumstances:
 - Student ending third year of full time study without a scheduled dissertation proposal defense
 - Student ending fourth year of full time study without a scheduled dissertation defense
 - Other; academic advisor requests progression review

Additional meetings of the Committee will occur under special circumstances during the semester, for instance, to address a student's non-compliance with health and safety requirements.

At the end of each semester, the Assistant Dean of the OSA forwards the names of all PhD students who warrant review to the Chair of the Committee. In addition, near the end of each fall and spring semester, academic advisors will be queried by the PhD Program Director to identify students who will require progression review. The PhD Program Director will forward these names to the Chair.

The Chair of the Committee will notify the PhD Program Director regarding all students who will be reviewed as soon as the Committee's meeting agenda is assembled. The Program Director will, in turn, notify by email all students who will be reviewed prior to the Committee's meeting. The student being reviewed will not be present during the meeting but may submit a written statement to the Committee.

During the Committee meeting, the Assistant Dean of the OSA will present the academic record of all students who are being reviewed by the Committee. The Director of the PhD Program will

also present relevant information received from the student, course faculty, and/or academic advisors. In addition, the Committee may request information from other individuals who may have pertinent information regarding a student's academic performance. During the review of an individual student, the Committee may be joined by the SoN academic advisor of the individual student being reviewed.

Any member of the PhD Progression Committee who has a conflict of interest with a specific progression case under review (e.g., involved in teaching the course where the issue arose) may present information to the Committee but must recuse himself or herself from the decision portion of the meeting.

After receiving all of the information described above, the Committee will discuss the student's performance and vote upon any decision to be made with respect to the student. A simple majority of the voting members of the Committee is required for any decision regarding a student's progression in the program. The student may be warned that he or she is progressing at a rate that will negatively impact his or her time to graduation or be required to perform specific remedial work or to repeat coursework. The student may also be placed on academic probation or dismissed from the SoN PhD program.

Shortly after the meeting of the Committee, the chair of the Committee will send a letter to the student describing the Committee's decisions with copies sent to the OSA for placement in the student's academic file and to the Director of PhD Program. In cases in which the Committee has dismissed a student from the program, the letter also will contain the Committee-specific requirements for readmission and the process of appeal. The PhD Program Director will then notify the student's academic advisor, and the Graduate School (if applicable) of the determination. The student may appeal the Progression Review Committee's decision to the Dean. All appeals must be in writing and signed by the student. They must contain a summary of the evidence and arguments that the student believes supports his or her position in the appeal. Appeals should be submitted no later than the end of the first week of classes in the subsequent semester.

*Academic Performance and Progression Policy last reviewed/modified: September 23, 2013
Adopted by PhDEC: September 23, 2013*

Academic Eligibility

A student may become ineligible to continue studies at UNC-Chapel Hill and The Graduate School for academic reasons and/or student code violations. For more information, please refer to **Academic Eligibility in the Graduate School Handbook**.

Under certain circumstances a student will not be allowed to continue in The Graduate School. Registration in following semesters for academically ineligible students will be canceled automatically.

A student becomes academically ineligible to continue in The Graduate School for the following reasons:

1. S/he receives a grade of F, F*, or nine or more hours of L.
 - The computation of hours taken will include courses for which the student has received a grade of H, P, L, or F, as well as equivalent grades for courses taken through inter-institutional registration where other permanent letter grades may be assigned.
 - Undergraduate courses taken as a graduate student will not be included in this computation.
 - If a student completes or withdraws from one academic program and begins study in another academic program, all grades remain part of his or her permanent record. The grades for any courses to be credited toward the new program will be included in the calculation of academic eligibility.
 - Students may refer to **Graduate Grading** for a more detailed description of grading policies.
2. S/he fails a written or oral examination for the second time.
 - Once a student is notified of failing a written or oral exam for the second time, s/he automatically becomes ineligible for further graduate work.
 - See [Failure of Examinations for Doctoral degree](#).

The Graduate School Reinstatement Policy

When special circumstances warrant, a student made academically ineligible under the conditions stated above may be reinstated upon petition initiated through the student's academic program. See **Reinstatement in the Graduate School Handbook**. Students and academic program representatives must develop an appropriate academic plan as part of the Request for Reinstatement to Graduate School Form.

The student's director of PhD studies must submit the petition together with a statement endorsing or declining to endorse the student's request to The Graduate School. Final approval rests with The Graduate School. Graduate School staff are authorized to consider routine, first instances of reinstatement requests. If there is a disagreement between the student and his/her academic program, or for any subsequent reinstatement requests, the Academic Policy Committee of the Administrative Board of The Graduate School will hear and vote on the situation. Decisions are final and cannot be appealed.

After academic eligibility reinstatement, any subsequent grade below P or failure of the third attempt of written or oral examinations will result in the student becoming academically ineligible again.

Student Code Violations

Students are subject to the regulations of student government under the Honor Code and the Campus Code. Students may become ineligible to continue studies at UNC-Chapel Hill for student code violations. See **Student Code Violations in the Graduate School Handbook**. Instances of suspected plagiarism, cheating on examinations, or other violations of the Honor

Code or Campus Code should be reported either to the Office of the Graduate Student Attorney General or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Honor Code It shall be the responsibility of every student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to obey and to support the enforcement of the **Honor Code**, which prohibits lying, cheating, or involving academic processes or interactions with University, student, or academic personnel acting in an official capacity.

Campus Code It shall be the further responsibility of every student to abide by the Campus Code; namely, to conduct oneself so as not to impair significantly the welfare or the educational opportunities of others in the University community.

Reinstatement Policy in the SoN PhD Program

Upon student petition for reinstatement, the director of the PhD program will convene a Reinstatement Meeting and chair the proceedings. The Reinstatement Meeting includes the following participants: the student, the student's advisor, the SoN faculty who are members of the student's advisory or dissertation committee, and at least two uninvolved faculty who have not taught or advised the student. The Director of the Office of Student Affairs is present as an ex officio member of the committee.

Procedures of the PhD Reinstatement Meeting

1. The Graduate School deems the student ineligible to proceed for academic reasons and/or student code violations (see above from The Graduate School Student Handbook).
2. Should the student decide to petition for reinstatement the student submits a letter to the Director of the PhD Program stating their explanation for academic ineligibility and their plan for remediation.
3. The Director of the PhD Program convenes a Reinstatement Meeting within one week of receiving the letter. It is critical to honor this time frame as much as possible because students cannot attend classes when they are academically ineligible and international students' VISA status will be in jeopardy.
4. All members of the Reinstatement Meeting receive the student's letter in advance.
5. At the Reinstatement Meeting:
 - a. The student is given the opportunity to present their case for reinstatement
 - b. The committee can ask questions of the student and/or request additional information of the PhD Program Director and/or Director of the Office of Student Affairs (e.g., further grades may be requested, a request to speak with a former advisor can be made)
 - c. The student leaves the room while the committee deliberates
 - d. If the committee has the information they need to make a decision, a decision is determined by a majority vote of the members of the Reinstatement Meeting.
 - e. The student re-joins the committee to receive the decision.
 - f. If the decision is to support reinstatement, the committee develops a plan for remediation

with the student.

6. Following the meeting, the PhD Program Director completes the reinstatement form, has the student sign the form, and the form is delivered to the Graduate School.

Reinstatement Policy in the SoN PhD Program *last reviewed/modified: May 29, 2014*
Adopted by PhDEC: May 29, 2014

PHD PROGRAM DOCUMENTS

<i>Required Forms: PhD</i>	<i>Description</i>
Plan of Study (POS)	The plan of study is used by the student and the advisor to document and plan the program of study. It is updated each registration period by the student and advisor. The advisor also documents student progression. The POS is submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs to anticipate course needs.
Chair and Committee Approval for Editing Written Comprehensive Examinations	This form is signed by the dissertation committee chair to document approval for the student to use an editor for the comprehensive exam.
Editor Honor Form for Editing Comprehensive Exams	This form is signed by the comprehensive exam editor stating only grammatical edits have been provided.
Report of Dissertation Committee Composition and Proposal Defense	Part I: Report of Doctoral Committee Composition. Committee members and their faculty status are listed; the director of the PhD program approves the committee and signs. Part II Report of Approved Dissertation Project. All dissertation committee members sign to document approval of the dissertation proposal.
Application for Admission to Candidacy	[Optional] Following proposal defense and completion of all coursework students may apply for admission to candidacy through the Graduate School.
Doctoral Exam Report Form	Part I: Report of Preliminary Written Examination. The exam or dissertation committee chair signs to document successful completion of the Qualifying or Comprehensive Exam. Part II: Report of Oral Examination. The dissertation committee chair signs to document approval by the committee of the dissertation proposal. Part III: Report of the Final Oral Examination. Part IV: Report of the Final Dissertation.

	All dissertation committee members sign parts III and IV to document successful defense of the dissertation.
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See **Graduate Student Handbook** for additional forms.