

# Doctoral Program Manual

2023–2024



SCHOOL OF  
SOCIAL WORK

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# DOCTORAL PROGRAM MANUAL

## BACKGROUND OF THE PROGRAM

### **Brief Description of the Doctoral Program**

The primary goal of the doctoral program is to produce social work scholars and educators who are prepared with the knowledge base and skill set to seek careers in academic and research and policy settings. We prepare our graduates to qualify for academic positions at top schools of social work in order to advance the knowledge base, improve practice, and influence policy. The knowledge and skills gained through our program focus on planning and evaluating social interventions, communicating new findings that can inform policy, and contributing to and disseminating tested theory. The doctoral program brings together a highly select group of students and social work faculty to address matters related to the conduct of basic and applied evaluative research into key health and human service issues.

**Program mission.** The mission of the doctoral program as accepted by the Faculty Senate is given below:

The hallmark of the social work profession is a dual focus on identifying pressing issues affecting vulnerable, marginalized populations and then developing and implementing novel interventions to assist these individuals, families, and communities—all within a broad environmental context. Building on 100 years of excellence and service to the State of North Carolina and beyond, the SSW is committed to its work in understanding the etiology of social problems and advancing the design, development, and implementation of evidence-informed policies and practices to advance equity, transform systems, and improve lives. (Adopted by the Faculty in AY 2018-2019).

**Social intervention: Organizing theme of the program.** When planning the doctoral program, the faculty chose *social intervention* as the organizing theme around which to create the program and curriculum. During a subsequent self-study, the faculty reviewed and reaffirmed their commitment to social intervention as the organizing theme, as stated below:

Based on an analysis of the current status and trends in doctoral education in social work, an assessment of professional social work practice and community needs, and a review of faculty resources in the School of Social Work and across the University campus community, the School chose an explicit organizing theme for guiding the development of its doctoral

program, focusing student recruitment activities, and coordinating and developing faculty resources: social intervention. Social intervention is defined as those policy, program, and direct practice interventions related to the "enhancement of social competency and functioning and/or the solutions to social problems that affect the ability of people to meet life demands and realize their potential for growth, health, and adaptive social functioning (Germain & Gitterman, 1986; Hartman & Laird, 1983; Pincus & Minahan, 1973)." This perspective is distinguished by two features, each related to the primary theme of social intervention:

- a) An emphasis on theoretically grounded analysis of social needs and problems and testing and elaborating theory through the evaluation of social interventions; and
- b) The recognition of interdependence among levels of analysis and intervention in planning and implementing social interventions.

Such an organizing perspective assumes the design of social interventions in accord with the mission and values of the social work profession. An important aspect of this mission is strengthening the fit between human needs and environmental and social resources and supports through empowerment and enablement within a value framework that respects the worth and dignity of all people and their need for self-determination.

In selecting social intervention as the doctoral program's organizing theme, the faculty expresses its desire that the program encompass the entire field of social work and social welfare, whether at the level of policy, program, or direct practice. The faculty has also chosen "social intervention" as the primary focus because of the paramount need in social work to advance empirically based theories of intervention, and because the evaluation of social interventions can be conducted in such a way to test both explanatory and practice theory. Social intervention provides a framework for inquiry in all fields of social work practice; it also expresses the conviction of the faculty that levels of intervention are interrelated and cannot be viewed separately from one another. Although providing a definitive program perspective, this theme allows students considerable latitude in designing and tailoring programs of study that are responsive to their particular areas of interest. (Revised and approved by the Faculty Senate on February 23, 2012)

**Program history.** The doctoral program began in 1993 and to date has admitted 174 students and produced 133 graduates. Prior to 2013, students were accepted into either the PhD program (i.e., students who had completed an MSW or related degree) or the MSW/PhD continuum (i.e., students who were pursuing an MSW in conjunction with their doctoral studies); effective 2014, new admissions are accepted only into the PhD program.

### **Need and Demand for the Program**

The doctoral program at UNC Chapel Hill was designed to contribute to the field of social work by (a) satisfying the growing need for social work educators and researchers in graduate and undergraduate social work programs across North Carolina and the nation; and (b) meeting the critical demand for highly trained researchers who have the ability to assume leadership positions and to contribute to the social welfare knowledge base on global, national, regional, state, and local levels. With the rapid changes in contemporary society, both in the United States and globally, social, and economic problems and conditions have become increasingly more complex. Social work is foremost among the major professions that address these problems at the individual, family, community, and societal levels. The combined need for social work educators to train highly skilled social work practitioners, and for social work researchers to conduct research on key social problems toward developing and evaluating social interventions, has never been greater.

The demand for doctoral graduates continues to grow as more social work programs are established across the country. Over the past 30 years, the number of doctoral-level social work programs has grown tremendously. Currently, GADE membership includes 87 research doctorate programs (77 in the United States, 9 in Canada, and 1 in Israel) and 17 practice doctorate programs. Overall, more students are pursuing doctoral degrees today (3,421) than 5 years ago (2,545). Data nationally show that numbers of enrolled students in practice doctorate programs have greatly increased, and both practice and research doctorates have added programs.

Historically, a shortage exists of doctoral graduates to fill faculty positions in BSW and MSW programs (Anastas & Kuerbis, 2009), and many institutions require professors to hold the Doctorate in Social Work to be eligible for tenure and promotion. Therefore, the need for PhD programs such as the social work doctoral program at UNC Chapel Hill is definite and immediate.

Effectively addressing on-going societal changes requires a sophisticated understanding of the underlying dimensions and causes of social problems, the design of effective interventions, the careful assessment of intervention and program outcomes, and the capacity to interpret and disseminate research findings to taxpayers, policymakers, consumers, and other stakeholders. Likewise, a strong need exists for leaders who can translate research findings into effective programs. The translation of research to practice requires the ability to understand the research process and the vision to apply findings to new and existing programs. Finally, these leaders must evaluate the effectiveness of new programs to provide optimal services and to continue to secure funding. Social work doctoral graduates with expertise in research and who understand social problems are essential to address these needs, further illustrating the ever-increasing demand for doctoral programs.

### **Statement on Anti-Racism**

In June of 2020, the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education adopted [this statement](#) on anti-racism. As a member of the GADE, the UNC Chapel Hill School of Social Work concurs with and strives to uphold the ideals represented in this statement. In

particular, the doctoral program seeks to be mindful and responsive to following text found in the statement:

*Despite efforts to reduce and eliminate racism, racism continues to be a “grand challenge” for America and must be a core concern of the social work profession. The legacy of American slavery, followed by decades of racist laws and practices blocking full political participation and enabling discrimination in housing, employment, education, social services, and everyday social life, has been fueled by the lie that people of African descent are intellectually and morally inferior. This notion has been institutionalized in the marginalization and oppression of people of color throughout all contemporary American systems and organizations, including higher education. In academia, including social work academe, racism can manifest in admissions, hiring, tenure, and promotion decisions and the belief that African American students and professors are not fully suited for intellectual pursuits, or that their place in the academy is unearned. Moreover, because of their racial bias and dubious validity, the measures of excellence prominently used in academia to evaluate student quality and achievement reinforce this stigmatization. Further, racism can show itself in the form of tokenism and its consequences that include professional isolation and lack of support.*

*GADE promotes socially just research and condemns the subtle and at times explicit racism found in social science, including social work research. Racism in social science and social work research can be manifested by the research questions posed, theories and methods used, samples selected, and interpretations provided. Racism in social science is also evident in the use of research to uphold and support institutions that exist outside or even in opposition to the needs of communities of color. To the extent that research is a subjective enterprise influenced in part by racist ideas, human subjectivity through interpretation remains a major avenue through which racism is sustained.*

*GADE promotes a teaching of historical and contemporary social work that critically engages the contributions of Black scholars and other scholars of color and other marginalized groups and that exposes doctoral students to the robust and consequential work of practitioners, activists, policy makers, and others within these communities. Black social work pioneers, underscoring the “triple jeopardy” of gender, class, and race, were some of the first to recognize the critical role of intersectionality to deepened understanding. They embraced an ethic of collectivism and interconnection and self-preservation, and modeled the dynamic interplay between theory and practice (Bent-Goodley, Snell, & Carlton-LaNey, 2017<sup>2</sup>). Dorothy Height reminded us in her 1989 reflection that the Civil Rights movement “was not a new event so much as a continuation of an old tradition” in the Black community (Height, 1989<sup>3</sup>). Understanding this history and applying it to contemporary critique and analysis is essential to the establishment of a rigorous social work education. Such a focus makes us better scholars and it strengthens and expands our knowledge base.*

## EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

**Goals and objectives.** Graduates of the doctoral program will be prepared to engage in theory construction, research, and teaching. Graduates are expected to be well prepared in the following areas as evidenced by the related competencies:

1. Building, testing, and refining explanatory and practice theory and will be able to:
  - 1.1 synthesize and summarize the literature in a substantive area;
  - 1.2 explain practice perspectives in a substantive area;
  - 1.3 develop and test explanatory models of human behavior related to a substantive area; and
  - 1.4 critically examine and explain major theoretical, methodological, policy, and practice issues in a substantive area, including developments over time and future directions.
2. Designing theoretically grounded social interventions and will be able to:
  - 2.1 conceptualize a theory of change (e.g., logic or other model with malleable mediators) for an intervention in a substantive area;
  - 2.2 translate explanatory theories and theories of change into sequenced practice activities; and
  - 2.3 develop an intervention manual.
3. Assessing the effects of planned social interventions and will be able to:
  - 3.1 design an intervention research project, including the selection of appropriate sampling, measurement, and analysis strategies;
  - 3.2 use research tools for theoretically grounded evaluation of interventions within a substantive area of interest;
  - 3.3 analyze and address ethical issues and dilemmas, including informed consent, faced by researchers and practitioners;
  - 3.4 explain potential theoretical, policy, practice, and research implications of findings from intervention studies, including issues affecting minority and disadvantaged groups;
  - 3.5 evaluate alternative research designs as tests of theory; and
  - 3.6 use results of research to refine social interventions.
4. Disseminating and translating research findings for student, public, and professional audiences and will be able to:
  - 4.1 write publishable research manuscripts and make professional presentations that effectively and accurately convey the findings and the policy, practice, and ethical implications of intervention studies; and
  - 4.2 use the results of research to advance theory development, guide policy, and improve practice.
5. Teaching at the BSW or MSW level in a social work program and will be able to:
  - 5.1 describe the history, philosophy, and organization of social work education;



- 5.2 design, implement, and evaluate social work and social welfare curricula, including specific courses within such curricula; and,
- 5.3 identify and use evidence-based instructional techniques in social work education.
- 5.4 create inclusive and respectful classrooms in which students from all backgrounds can belong and be empowered to learn

By providing education and research opportunities that are focused on expanding the frontiers of knowledge and addressing issues central to societal well-being, the program seeks to carry out the University's mandate to develop carefully selected graduate students into scholars and educators who are both qualified and motivated to continue the pursuit of knowledge.

**Interdisciplinary activities.** Although the doctoral program does not offer joint or dual-degree programs, the program is inherently interdisciplinary in that all students take electives in other social or behavioral science disciplines such as psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, or economics, and in other professional schools such as law, education, public health, or nursing. These electives provide complementary research and theoretical perspectives to inform students' areas of research. Also, because the School's doctoral program requires students to invite at least one faculty member from outside the school to serve on their dissertation committee, students are highly motivated to take a formal course or a directed studies course with a faculty from another discipline who is an expert in their research area. Students from other departments and schools also enroll in our doctoral courses, which increases the interdisciplinary nature of class discussions.

Several of our doctoral students have worked as research assistants or doctoral fellows with faculty in other departments and schools including the Schools of Medicine and Nursing, and the Gillings School of Global Public Health. Other students have held assistantships or fellowships with interdisciplinary research institutes and centers on campus including the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, and the UNC Institute on Aging. In these endeavors, students study with nationally recognized experts across the UNC campus as well as at Duke University, meeting potential colleagues who are addressing similar issues from different perspectives.

Many of our doctoral faculty are involved with research centers and institutes affiliated with UNC Chapel Hill, and several are involved with research centers at sister schools such as Duke University. In addition, several faculty members coordinate dual- and joint-degree programs and certificate programs with other schools on campus and with Duke University.

**Knowledge and skills that doctoral students are expected to master.** Students from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work master substantive knowledge; human subjects research knowledge; methodological skills; analytic skills; academic writing skills; academic presentation skills; research proposal writing and application skills; teaching, advising, and mentorship skills; and professional skills. The table on the next page details this knowledge and these skills.

Knowledge and Skills that Doctoral Students are Expected to Master	
<u>Substantive Knowledge</u>	
• Knowledge of journals publishing, and research conducted, in the field of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Knowledge of research instruments/measures used in the field of interest	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Knowledge of individuals and organizations conducting research in the field of interest, including networking with these individuals and organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Knowledge of agencies and organizations funding research in the field of interest, including networking with these agencies and organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Knowledge of significant, innovative, and transformative issues requiring study in your field of interest, which requires mastery of seminal work, debates/challenges, and methodological strengths/weakness of the body of research	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Human Subjects Research Knowledge</u>	
• Knowledge of issues related to protection of human subjects and the ethical conduct of research	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Knowledge of requirements to develop materials for institutional review, including consent forms	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Methodological Skills</u>	
• Employing experimental, quasi-experimental, and other research designs, and various sampling strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Developing indices/scale and conducting psychometric analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Developing a treatment manual	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Conducting a systematic literature review	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Quantitative data collection: collecting, tracking, and entering data	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Qualitative data collection: collecting, tracking, and entering data	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Developing basic statistical software programming skills needed to work with analytic data files	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Working with a multidisciplinary research team	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Analytical Skills</u>	
• Using statistical software programs to conduct basic and advanced analyses of primary and secondary quantitative data (and knowing when to use each)	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Using qualitative software programs to analyze qualitative data	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Academic Writing Skills</u>	
• Writing all sections of an academic manuscript, even if not within the same manuscript	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Co-authoring between two and four peer-reviewed academic manuscripts other than the dissertation*	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Academic Presentation Skills</u>	
• Presenting research at a local/regional conference or organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Presenting research at a national conference (at least once as a lead author)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Research Proposal Writing and Application Skills</u>	
• Developing a research proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Identifying relevant funding sources	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Developing a budget and other administrative components necessary for proposal submission	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Submitting a proposal and successfully receiving funding	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Teaching, Advising, and Mentorship Skills</u>	
• Serving as a guest lecturer for an MSW (or other) class	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as a teaching assistant for an MSW (or other) class	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as the lead instructor for an MSW (or other) class	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as a mentor/advisor/consultant to MSW or PhD students	<input type="checkbox"/>
<u>Professional Skills</u>	
• Developing a professional curriculum vitae, cover letter, and other materials to enter the job market	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Engaging with practitioners and/or policy makers to conduct and/or disseminate research	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as a manuscript reviewer for a peer-reviewed journal, in collaboration with faculty	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as a research proposal reviewer, such as for a faculty member's or peer's proposal	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Serving as a member of professional organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>

\* Guidelines exist regarding criteria for authorship; confer with faculty or consult resources if they are unclear to you.

# THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum leading to the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work combines a core curriculum in social work and social welfare with outside coursework drawn from related disciplines, and includes thorough training in research methodology and data analysis. At the same time, the curriculum allows students reasonable flexibility in tailoring programs of study to their special area(s) of interest under the guidance of their doctoral advisor, chair, and committee. Maximizing the opportunity for students to use the rich multidisciplinary resources and research opportunities at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is a key feature of the doctoral program. Such an orientation assists in building a theoretical base and research expertise for formulating and testing explanatory and practice theory relevant to social intervention.

## PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The minimum curriculum includes 12 courses in the School of Social Work (9 core courses, the professional development seminar, the teaching seminar/practicum, and the dissertation seminar), with additional elective courses to accomplish other learning requirements. Students complete 45 credits of coursework (five semesters of three 3-credit courses each) in advance of their doctoral dissertation.

Students choose outside coursework and may guide the design of their research practicum to support their development in a specialized area of study. The specialized area can be a field of practice (such as family services, child welfare, aging, health, or mental health), a practice method (e.g., administration, community organization, group work, case management, casework), or specific issues within either of these. Students also may combine a practice method and a field of practice for their specialized area, such as case management in developmental disabilities. In all components of the program, students use their assignments to further their scholarly inquiry, and to develop research questions and designs within their specialized area of study.

### Transfer of Academic Credit

If a student has already taken and successfully passed a course substantively similar to a course that fulfills the program requirements, a request may be made for a transfer of academic credit. To request transfer of academic credit earned at a previous institution, or at this institution before admission to a degree program at the Graduate School, the student completes the Transfer Credit Recommendation Form at <http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/wtrnform.pdf>. In addition to completing this form, the student should provide (1) the syllabus for the transfer course being proposed for the corresponding UNC-CH course; (2) a short narrative addressing the objectives and assignments of the transfer course and how those relate to corresponding UNC-CH course; and (3) an official transcript showing successful completion of the transfer course. The form includes a link providing additional information related to transferring academic credit. This information should be reviewed in advance of submitting the Transfer Credit Recommendation form for approval.

## REQUIRED CURRICULUM

Completion of 45 credit hours prior to advancing to candidacy, as follows:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
<b>Social Work Courses</b>	*SOWO 900 Conceptualizing Social Problems to Inform Interventions *SOWO 910 Research Methods in Social Interventions *SOWO 911 Introduction to Social Statistics and Data Analysis (unless exempted) *SOWO 913 Advanced Research Methods in Social Intervention / Dissertation Seminar *SOWO 914 Measurement in Social Intervention Research SOWO 916 Structural Equation Modeling SOWO 917 Longitudinal and Multilevel Data Analysis *SOWO 918 Applied Regression Analysis and Generalized Linear Models SOWO 919 Analyzing and Addressing Inequality *SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar, Section I *SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar, Section II *SOWO 921 Qualitative Research Methods *SOWO 923 Systemic Reviews and Meta-Analysis *SOWO 940 Development of Social Intervention Models *SOWO 941 Teaching Seminar / Practicum
<b>Courses Outside School of Social Work</b>	Students may take Analyzing and Addressing Inequality as a substantive elective. At least one substantive course to be taken outside the School of Social Work.
<b>Electives</b>	Students may add as many electives as they wish.
<b>Statistics Courses</b>	In addition to required statistics, at least two advanced statistics courses are highly recommended.
<b>Dissertation</b>	Once students have completed all required course work, they enroll in SOWO 994 for 3 dissertation credits

\* Denotes a required course.

In addition to the required curriculum, students are required to attend “Stats Camp I” (incoming first year students) in August, the week before the beginning of classes. The Stats Camps prepare students for their upcoming methods courses.

**Grades.** Grades in the doctoral program are assigned as follows:

- H** High Pass
- P** Pass
- L** Low Pass
- S** Making satisfactory progress
- IN** Incomplete
- F** Fail

As per the policy of the Graduate School, students who receive a single grade of F or nine or more hours of L are ineligible to continue in the program (see <http://handbook.unc.edu/eligibility.html>). Likewise, if an incomplete “IN” is not changed to a satisfactory grade within the year, the grade converts to an “F” and the student becomes academically ineligible to continue. Appeals and requests

for reinstatement are coordinated and considered by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and consultation with the Doctoral Program Committee.

## ELECTIVES

Students may select elective courses from within the School of Social Work or from other departments and professional schools within or external to the university. The intent of electives is to add to the student's substantive, methodological, and multidisciplinary expertise needed to complete the dissertation. As noted earlier, at least one substantive course must be taken from outside the School of Social Work. SOWO 919 Analyzing and Addressing Inequality is recommended as the SSW elective.

With proper approval, elective courses may include a reading-focused independent study. The independent study should be designed to permit the student to do one or more of the following:

- a) Explore broadly within an area of interest in order to define the specialized area of study;
- b) Review the literature in depth within a defined specialized area of study; and/or
- c) Conduct some other type of focused inquiry within the specialized area of study that moves the student toward the dissertation.

Students who wish to do an independent study elective must obtain and complete the planning form in the school or department in which they are taking the independent study and file it with the Doctoral Program.

## COMPETENCE IN RESEARCH METHODS AND ANALYSIS

Students should build and demonstrate statistical and/or data analysis competence. This competence involves a working knowledge of descriptive and inferential statistics for social work research appropriate to each student's specialized area of study.

All students are expected to achieve basic competence in using both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis, an understanding of the appropriate application of each method, and an advanced level of expertise in one or the other. To develop this competence, students are required to take two advanced statistics courses and one qualitative methods course. Students are **strongly encouraged** to take two or more additional advanced statistical courses and most do.

Before the first year of study, students wishing to exempt the first level statistics course (SOWO 911) should discuss this request with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and the SOWO 911 instructor, and complete an exemption form. See section on Transfer of Academic Credit for details.

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

# SOWO 900: CONCEPTUALIZING SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO INFORM INTERVENTIONS

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

An application and critical analysis of behavioral and social science theories and theory- driven research for understanding the etiology of social problems for purposes of social intervention

## Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Understand the application of the scientific process to social work research and practice, including the role of research and theory in evidence-based social work practice.
- Understand the reciprocal and dynamic links among theory, research, and practice.
- Understand distinctions among theories at different levels of abstractness and scope, as well as the distinction between explanatory theories and practice theories.
- Review specific examples of the use of conceptual frameworks for informing the development of explanatory substantive models for understanding social problems, and how these substantive models inform the development of social interventions.
- Identify a specific social problem, describe its incidence/prevalence and significance for social work intervention, and identify and critique relevant conceptual frameworks and substantive models that have been used to frame and inform understanding of the problem (explanatory theories).
- Understand the development and application of theories in the context of race, ethnicity, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and culture and history

Prerequisites: None

# SOWO 910: RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL INTERVENTION

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This course introduces the basic principles and procedures used in planning and evaluating social interventions. Topics include the philosophy of research, problem formulation, design, measurement, analysis, and the application of findings to theory and practice.

## Course Objectives:

This course provides an opportunity for students to gain knowledge about the following issues in social intervention research:

- The quantitative-comparative experimental paradigm that prevails in social intervention research,
- Special legal and ethical issues that impinge on social intervention researchers,
- Broadly inclusive processes to plan, implement, and evaluate social interventions,
- The need for culturally aware social intervention research that is responsive to the diversity of community values and preferences, and
- Implementation constraints that often compel the use of designs other than fully randomized experiments.

Students taking the course are expected to be able to:

- develop “well-built” research questions for estimating the causal impact of social interventions on desired outcomes for target populations;
- develop logic and other conceptual models to support proposed social interventions and explicate underlying theories of change;
- assess the validity and reliability of alternative qualitative and quantitative measures of constructs in conceptual models that guide social intervention research;
- understand basic aspects of data analysis, sample design and statistical power analysis;
- critically evaluate various experimental, quasi-experimental, and non-experimental research designs by identifying various threats to the validity of each design; and
- prepare an application for IRB approval of human subjects research
- develop “well-built” research questions for estimating the causal impact of social interventions on desired outcomes for target populations;

Prerequisites: None



# SOWO 911:

## INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL STATISTICS AND DATA ANALYSIS

*(July 2022)*

### Course Description and Objectives:

This course is designed to explore basic statistical concepts related to the behavioral sciences and to provide instruction on the following topics: basic data analysis; construction and analysis of data tables; graphical analysis of data; knowledge and application of descriptive and inferential statistics; and knowledge and application of statistical software programs to analyze data. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Use a computing software package to create and analyze data relevant to social and behavioral research;
2. Understand a normal distribution and apply it to an inference of a population mean by conducting univariate z-tests and t-tests;
3. Know how to develop and test alternative and null research hypotheses, understand Type I and II errors, and understand factors affecting statistical power;
4. Understand the central limit theorem and other sampling theories and the application of this knowledge to assessing the strengths and limitations of probability and nonprobability sampling strategies;
5. Understand the chi-square distribution and apply it to the analysis of contingency tables involving two or more categorical variables;
6. Understand correlation and apply it to the evaluation of associations between continuous variables;
7. Know how to perform independent samples t-test, paired t-test, one-way between-subject analysis of variance (ANOVA), one-way within-subject ANOVA, and two-factor ANOVA;
8. Know how to interpret results of statistical analysis and clearly and effectively communicate findings, and
9. Have general knowledge about non-normal distributions (Bernoulli, binomial, exponential and exponential family, and multinomial) in preparation for advanced statistics courses.
10. Use data visualization methods to tell compelling narratives.

Prerequisites: Students must participate in the “Stats Camp” that is offered one week before the course begins.

# SOWO 913: ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIAL INTERVENTION/DISSERTATION SEMINAR

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

In this PhD-level course, students build advanced competence in research design, data collection, and data analysis and statistics by analyzing exemplary social work research and presenting independent learning projects within specialized areas of study.

Students develop a draft dissertation proposal and prepare material for their comprehensive examination, completing independent learning projects that build substantive, theoretical, and methodological knowledge appropriate for their specialized areas of study.

## Course Objectives:

By course end, students will be able to:

- Describe the stages of social research with particular emphasis on formulation of the research problem and an advanced research design.
- Describe critically the major conceptual frameworks, substantive theories, and research designs that inform their specialized area of study.
- Describe issues in study populations, sampling strategies and generalizability of findings in research in their specialized area of study.
- Identify ethical issues and dilemmas that pertain to conducting and reporting scholarly research in their specialized area of study, including human subject considerations.

## **Some of the activities by which students will meet these objectives include:**

- Learn the requirements for preparing for the comprehensive examination, the dissertation proposal, and dissertation.
- Identify and critically review pivotal scholarly works and current intervention research in their specialized area of study.
- Develop strategies for forming and working with a dissertation committee.
- Meet with dissertation chair or doctoral advisor to review substantive focus, activity schedule, and timeline for completing the material for the comprehensive examination.
- Review the IRB requirements for review of research using human subjects.
- Develop material related to the comprehensive examination for critique by classmates and for review by the dissertation chair or doctoral advisor.
- Develop an activity schedule, including a timeline, for preparing for the comprehensive examination.
- Prepare a draft dissertation proposal (DP) outline that will be submitted to the dissertation chair for review.

## Prerequisites:

SoWo 900    Conceptualizing Social Problems to Inform Interventions  
SoWo 910    Research Methods in Social Intervention  
SoWo 911    Introduction to Social Statistics and Data Analysis, or equivalent  
SoWo 914    Measurement in Social Intervention Research  
SoWo 940    Development of Social Intervention Models

# SOWO 914: MEASUREMENT IN SOCIAL INTERVENTION RESEARCH

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This course focuses on the development of knowledge and skills in measuring social, psychological, environmental, and other factors related to intervention with individuals, families, groups, and organizations.

## Course Goal:

Students will develop an understanding of qualitative and quantitative measurement strategies and issues.

## Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Describe the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological foundations of qualitative and quantitative measurement;
- Develop and test theory-based scales, starting from a theoretically and empirically justified item pool;
- Conduct cognitive testing of potential scale items with representatives of an appropriate target audience and analyze the data;
- Conduct exploratory factor analysis using one or more basic statistics programs to identify and evaluate the factor structure of scales;
- Conduct confirmatory factor analysis to further support the validity of scales, and understand the implications of data characteristics on the choice of software and analysis strategies
- Evaluate the reliability and validity of quantitative indices and scales;
- Apply principles of measurement to research that involves issues of difference arising from culture, ethnicity, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and other aspects of human diversity

## Expanded Course Description

This course focuses on measurement (primarily quantitative) broadly and scale development and validation in particular. In social work and other social/behavioral sciences, researchers aim to measure mental, behavioral, and social phenomena, such as depression, delinquency, addiction, stigma, child maltreatment, attachment, family resilience, relationship quality, client/patient satisfaction, agency climate, and community empowerment. Such phenomena are complex and difficult to measure, but their measurement is essential for intervention research where the end goal is effective interventions used to address health and social problems. In this course, students will learn about validity and reliability, which are foundational concepts in measurement, as well as a mixed methods approach to scale development and validation.

## Prerequisites:

SoWo 911 Social Statistics and Data Analysis, or permission from instructor

# SOWO 916

## STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM)

(July 2022)

### Course Description:

This PhD-level course was originally developed by Dr. Shenyang Guo. We will make use of much his syllabus, materials, and assignments throughout the semester.

*Structural equation modeling (SEM)* is a general statistical method that can be employed to test theoretically derived models. It is “a class of methodologies that seeks to represent hypotheses about the means, variances, and covariances of observed data in terms of a smaller number of ‘structural’ parameters defined by a hypothesized underlying model” (Kaplan, 2000). In this course, students will learn fundamental concepts and skills to conduct SEM, and how to apply these techniques to social work and related areas of research.

### Course Objectives:

At the completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Understand the fundamental hypothesis of SEM and its relationship to the specification, identification, and estimation of a structural equation model;
- Run path analysis and test mediating hypotheses using SEM;
- Conduct confirmatory factor analysis to evaluate measurement validity;
- Conduct structural equations with latent variables and apply the method to test/confirm a theoretically derived model;
- Understand statistical indices measuring goodness-of-fit of a model;
- Conduct multiple group comparisons with SEM to test moderating effects;
- Perform power analysis with SEM and know how to determine minimum sample size needed\*;
- Understand basic concepts and skills to deal with interactions and quadratics in latent variables, and categorical variables\*;
- Understand the linkage between SEM and hierarchical linear models, and conduct multilevel analysis and latent growth curve analysis with SEM;
- Understand strategies dealing with missing data.

### Prerequisites:

Students are assumed to be familiar with descriptive and inferential statistics. A solid understanding of multiple regression analysis is a key. They should have statistical and statistical software background at least equivalent to that provided by SOWO919 (applied regression analysis and generalized linear models), SOCI209, PSYC282, EDUC284 (linear regression), or SOCI211 (categorical data analysis).

# SOWO 917: LONGITUDINAL AND MULTILEVEL DATA ANALYSIS

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This course introduces the context and intuition for longitudinal and multilevel models, and the statistical frameworks, analytical tools, and social behavioral applications of multilevel modeling (MLM) and longitudinal analysis.

## Course Objectives:

At the completion of the course, students will have a solid understanding of the challenges and problems associated with longitudinal and multilevel data. They will know how to choose appropriate statistical analyses that best suit the type of data and research questions for a given study. Students will be able to conceptualize, design, and conduct longitudinal and multilevel analyses; and interpret and communicate results clearly and effectively. Students will gain familiarity with two-level models, three-level models, longitudinal modeling approaches, MLMs with categorical or count outcomes, situations of cross-classification, and cross-level interactions.

## Prerequisites:

Students are assumed to be familiar with descriptive and inferential statistics as well as multiple regression analysis. They should have statistical and statistical software background at least equivalent to that provided by SOCI209, PSYC282, EDUC284 (linear regression), or SOCI211 (categorical data analysis). Students without such prerequisites should contact the instructor to determine their eligibility to take this course.

# **SOWO 918: APPLIED REGRESSION ANALYSIS AND GENERALIZED LINEAR MODELS**

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This PhD-level course introduces statistical frameworks, analytical tools, and social behavioral applications of OLS regression models, weighted least-square regression, logistic regression models, and generalized linear models.

## Course Objectives:

At the completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Understand the type and nature of research questions and data that are suitable for regression analysis;
- Use Stata computing software package to manage and analyze data with the OLS regression model;
- Understand the Gauss-Markov theorem and the BLUE property of OLS, especially conditions under which BLUE does not hold;
- Have a solid understanding of the five assumptions embedded in the OLS regression;
- Know how to conduct statistical tests detecting violations of OLS assumptions (i.e., multicollinearity, heteroskedasticity, influential data and outliers, etc.);
- Know how to take remedial measures if harmful violations exist (i.e., weighted least-squares regression, etc.);
- Understand the type and nature of research questions and data that are suitable for the generalized linear models;
- Have a solid understanding of basic concepts of categorical data (i.e., odds ratio, relative risk, marginal probability, and conditional probability);
- Use Stata computing software package to manage and analyze data with the binary, ordered, and multinomial logistic regressions;
- Know how to interpret results of regression analysis and logistic regression analysis, and communicate findings to general audiences clearly and effectively in writing;
- Understand limitations of the regression and logistic regression models, and common pitfalls in using these models;
- Understand the basics of conducting a Monte Carlo study.

## Prerequisites:

Students are assumed to be familiar with descriptive and inferential statistics. They should have statistical and statistical software background at least equivalent to that provided by SOWO 911. Students without such prerequisites should contact the instructor to determine their eligibility to take the course.

**SOWO 919:**  
**INEQUALITY IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: ANALYZING & ADDRESSING**  
**DISPARITIES IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMIC OUTCOMES**  
*(July 2022)*

Course Description:

Persistent disparities in health, education, and economic outcomes result from historic and multi-system forces that shape inequality in the United States. In order to respond effectively to inequality, researchers need tools for analyzing history, theory, policy, and data. This course is designed to: 1) describe the historic events that shaped 21<sup>st</sup> century inequalities in the United States; 2) provide students an overview of major theories related to inequality; 3) give students a chance to explore and review potent research agendas related to identifying, explaining, and remedying inequality in the form of health, education, and economic disparities; and 4) help students translate learning about inequality into meaningful scholarly products.

Course Objectives:

- Students will understand the historic roots of inequality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century United States
- Students will understand major sociological, economic, and critical theories used to frame inequality and related use of the terms disparity, equity, and equality
- Students will explore research agendas, empirical evidence, and methods used to identify and explain disparities associated with but not limited to race, ethnic, gender, economic, and citizenship status
- Students will explore policy and social agendas for reducing disparities
- Students will use course learning to create products for research and engagement

Prerequisites:

SOWO 911: Social Statistics and Data Analysis

SOWO 918: Applied Regression Analysis and Generalized Linear Models

# SOWO 921: QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

(July 2022)

## Course Description:

This PhD-level seminar course introduces the application of qualitative research methods for social work research.

## Course Objectives:

The student who successfully completes this course will be able to:

- Distinguish qualitative research from other research paradigms and understand the utility of qualitative research methods in intervention research;
- Define fundamental concepts of qualitative research including: interpretation, participant meaning, and context;
- Understand sampling and recruitment of participants and the ethical issues involved in qualitative research with vulnerable participants;
- Apply basic methods of study design, instrument development, data collection and data analysis, and writing qualitative research reports; and
- Understand rigor in qualitative research methods and critically appraise the rigor of qualitative research studies

## Expanded Description:

The objective of this course is to provide an overview of the fundamentals of the use of qualitative research, particularly as it applies to intervention research. The focus of this class is on the development of skills used by qualitative researchers. Particular attention will also be paid to developing skill in the evaluation of qualitative research methods, designing rigorous, high quality qualitative studies, and the protection of vulnerable research participants in qualitative studies.

Prerequisites: None



# SOWO 923: SYSTEMATIC REVIEWS AND INTRODUCTION TO META-ANALYSIS

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This course focuses on conducting and writing systematic reviews in social work and related behavioral/social sciences, as well as an introduction to meta-analysis.

## Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Describe a systematic review and its purposes, understand the different types of systematic reviews, and develop appropriate research questions for a systematic review
2. Apply the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) standards for conducting a systematic review
3. Understand the rationale for and how to develop a protocol for a systematic review
4. Develop a search strategy for a systematic review, which includes identifying bibliographic databases for literature searches and creating search terms
5. Describe forms of gray literature and ways to locate gray literature
6. Discuss best practices for screening search results, extracting data from included studies, and assessing study quality and risk of bias
7. Use a reference management software program to organize and distill located studies
8. Understand and apply methods for synthesizing and summarizing data from included studies
9. Describe meta-analysis and appropriate conditions for meta-analysis
10. Understand effect sizes used in meta-analysis and steps to prepare data for meta-analysis
11. Understand the steps to perform a meta-analysis and how to interpret, explore, and report meta-analysis results

**PREREQUISITES: NONE**

# SOWO 940: DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL INTERVENTION MODELS

*(July 2022)*

## Course Description:

This PhD-level course focuses on preparing advanced graduate students with the knowledge and skills needed to design and evaluate interventions that address social needs, problems, and conditions.

## Course Objectives:

Students completing this course are expected to be able to:

- Identify and assess the social-environmental factors involved in defining a specific social need, problem, or condition;
- Analyze a social need, problem, or condition relevant to a particular population and identify appropriate interventions;
- Assess the theoretical and empirical support for alternative interventions that address a selected need, problem, or condition with a particular population;
- Describe and apply a logical sequence of research activities that guides the design, implementation, and evaluation of social interventions;
- Select and apply appropriate research methodology in developing a social intervention;
- Demonstrate awareness of the interplay of different levels of intervention and moderators such as age, class, culture, disability status, ethnicity, gender, language, race, religion, and sexual orientation in designing, implementing, and evaluating a social intervention;
- Generate hypotheses for guiding empirical inquiry for testing social interventions;
- Delineate effective strategies for collaboration between academic and practice communities in designing, implementing, and evaluating social interventions
- Develop a NIH Exploratory/Developmental Research Grant (R21) proposal, including a treatment manual

Prerequisites: *(may be waived by permission of the instructor)*

SoWo 900    Conceptualizing Social Problems to Inform Interventions  
SoWo 910    Research Methods in Social Interventions  
SoWo 911    Social Statistics and Data Analysis (unless exempted)  
SoWo 914    Measurement in Social Intervention Research

# SOWO 941: TEACHING SEMINAR/PRACTICUM

(July 2022)

The Teaching Seminar/Practicum (SOWO 941, 3 credit hours) is required of all Ph.D. students except those with substantial teaching experience. Students will receive a total of three (3) semester hours of credit.

## Course Description:

This PhD-level practicum provides a range of supervised classroom opportunities and seminars designed to prepare doctoral students for teaching in social work education.

## Expanded Description:

The goal of this practicum is to familiarize aspiring professors with evidence based practices for instructional design and delivery in social work education. Students achieve this goal through a supervised learning experience with a teaching mentor and seminars on syllabus construction, learning objectives, instructional methodologies, strategies for evaluating student performance, and managing sensitive issues in the classroom. The seminars will also provide an opportunity for students to discuss their progress in the practicum and receive feedback from their peers and the instructor.

## Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, students should be able demonstrate the following at beginning levels:

- Knowledge of the history, philosophy, mission, organization, and curricular linkages of social work education at the baccalaureate (BSW) and master's (MSW) levels
- An awareness of a personal preferred teaching style and knowledge of how to adapt teaching to the learning styles of students.
- The ability to design instructional activities (e.g., lecture, discussion, exercises) that help students gain understanding, knowledge, or skills in a particular social work area.
- The ability to implement these instructional activities and various educational methods in ways that facilitate, enhance, and amplify students' learning and skill development.
- A developing competence in the design, implementation, and grading of student evaluation methods for social work (e.g., papers, tests, presentations).
- An ability to assess and critique their own and their colleagues' teaching style, instructional methods, and general strengths and weaknesses as a social work instructor.

## Exemptions:

Starting with the 2022 cohort, the Teaching Practicum will be mandatory. Exemption will still be considered for students in current cohorts. A current student who has taught at least two courses in an accredited school of social work (BSW or MSW level) in the five years preceding their matriculation as a Ph.D. student in social work, may request an exemption from Social Work 941 (Teaching Seminar/Practicum) by completing a course exemption form.

## SOWO 994: DOCTORAL DISSERTATION CREDIT

*(July 2022)*

In semesters subsequent to the dissertation seminar, students continue to register for SOWO 994 for a variable number of credits in order to retain their status as full time students. Grades are to be assigned each semester by the dissertation chair. A grade of P, L, or F may be assigned. Passing grades reflect that students have demonstrated active progress toward their dissertation. Students who have made limited or no progress over the course of the semester should receive grades of L, for limited progress, or F if no progress is made. Students encountering personal circumstances that delay their progress should seek guidance from the graduate school and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education to assess their options.

**\*\* STUDENTS MUST BE REGISTERED IN THE SEMESTERS THAT THEY TAKE  
THEIR COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION AND DEFEND THEIR DISSERTATION  
PROPOSAL AND FINAL DISSERTATION\*\***

## **SOWO 919: PRO-SEMINAR**

*(July 2022)*

This seminar-style course seeks to bolster the explicit and implicit curriculum of preparing social work scholars. The course focuses on preparing students for a successful doctoral education experience and individual development of their scholarly identities. The course will also introduce students to specialized knowledge and skills that will allow them to develop and implement a program of research in their future careers. This course is required for first year doctoral students in the School of Social Work. Other doctoral students are welcome to attend sessions of interest with permission from the instructor.



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Name _____	Date of Admission _____	Expected Graduation _____
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**Summary of Doctoral Program Requirements**

**SSW Doctoral Courses (completion of 45 credit hours prior to advancing to candidacy):**

- \*SOWO 900 Conceptualizing Social Problems to Inform Interventions (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 910 Research Methods in Social Intervention (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 911 Introduction to Social Statistics and Data Analysis (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 913 Integrative Research Methods in Social Intervention (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 914 Measurement in Social Intervention Research (3 credit hours)
- SOWO 916 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) (3 credit hours)
- SOWO 917 Longitudinal and Multilevel Data Analysis (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 918 Applied Regression Analysis and Generalized Linear Models (3 credit hours)
- SOWO 919 Analyzing and Addressing Inequality
- \*SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar, Section I
- \*SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar, Section II
- \*SOWO 921 Qualitative Research Methods (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 923 Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 940 Development of Social Intervention Models (3 credit hours)
- \*SOWO 941 Teaching Seminar/ Practicum (3 credit hours)

In addition, students must complete a substantive course from outside the School of Social. Further, it is recommended that students consider taking one or more advanced methods courses after completing SOWO 918 (i.e., SOWO 916, 917, 922, or courses outside the School of Social Work).

*\*Required courses*

**Additional Guidelines:**

- Once students have completed all required course work, they may enroll in SOWO 994 for 3 dissertation credits.
- Students must have completed all course work (including incompletes) before they will be allowed to take their substantive comprehensive exam.
- Students are required to complete their comprehensive examination and the related oral defense in the semester following completion of coursework. Students who do not meet this deadline will receive an "L" for SOWO 994.
- Students are encouraged to present their dissertation proposal at the same time they defend their comprehensive examination.
- Once students have advanced to candidacy, they must enroll for at least two semesters of dissertation credits SOWO 994 (3 credit hours each).

**The following is a recommended course sequence for doctoral students. Students may take a course overload with permission of their advisor and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.**

**1<sup>st</sup> Year / Fall Semester**

Course	Credit	Completed	Transfer/Exempt*	Notes
SOWO 900 Conceptualizing Social Problems – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 910 Research Methods in Social Interventions – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 911 Social Statistics/Data Analysis – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar - <i>required</i>	1.5			

**1<sup>st</sup> Year / Spring Semester**

Course	Credit	Completed	Transfer/Exempt*	Notes
SOWO 918 Applied Regression Analysis – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 921 Qualitative Methods – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 923 Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis – <i>required</i>	3			
SOWO 919 Professional Development Seminar - <i>required</i>	1.5			

*By the end of the semester, complete the First Year Review (attended by the student's advisor, research supervisor, course instructors, and the Associate Dean).*

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year / Fall Semester**

Course	Credit	Completed	Transfer/Exempt*	Notes
SOWO 914 Measurement in Social Intervention Research – <i>required</i>	3			
Advanced stats course (e.g., SOWO 917/HLM) or substantive course (i.e. Inequality)	3			
Elective in substantive area	3			

**2<sup>nd</sup> Year / Spring Semester**

*At the beginning of the semester, submit the signed Research Practicum Proposal.*

Course	Credit	Completed	Transfer/Exempt*	Notes
Elective or Independent Study	3			
Advanced stats course (e.g., SOWO 916/SEM) or substantive course (i.e. Inequality)	3			
SOWO 940 Development of Social Intervention Models – <i>required</i>	3			

*By the end of the semester, make arrangements for the Teaching Practicum, begin to identify dissertation committee members, and complete the Second Year Review (attended by the student's advisor, research supervisor, one or two members of the doctoral committee, and the Associate Dean).*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Year / Fall Semester**

*At the beginning of the semester, complete the Comprehensive Methods Exam.*

Course	Credit	Completed	Transfer/Exempt*	
941 Teaching Practicum – <i>required</i>	3			
Advanced stats course, or substantive course	3			
913 Dissertation Seminar– <i>required</i>	3			

*With permission, students may take SOWO 941 (Teaching Practicum) earlier than the fifth semester.  
By the end of the semester, be prepared to take the Comprehensive Substantive Exam and complete the  
dissertation proposal.*

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Year / Spring Semester**

Course	Credit	Completed
994 Dissertation Credits	3	
(Substantive Exam, Dissertation Proposal, and Oral Defense)		

*By the end of the semester, complete the Comprehensive Substantive Exam and oral defense, and possibly  
present the dissertation proposal.*

### **Subsequent Semesters**

Course	Credit	Semester/Year Completed
994 Dissertation Credits	3	

**The Graduate School requires that students be enrolled in the semesters in which they take their  
comprehensive examination and defend their dissertation, and have taken at least 6 credit hours of  
SOWO 994, capped at 3 hours per semester.**

**Plan of Study Reviewed and Approved**

\_\_\_\_\_  
FACULTY ADVISOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
ASSOCIATE DEAN, DOCTORAL PROGRAM

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**\*Courses transferred into the program, independent study, and course exemptions or exceptions must be  
approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. List replacement courses for exempted courses.**

8/15/22



# STUDENT ADVISING/MENTORSHIP

Students are assigned advisors and research supervisors when they enroll in the program. These individuals and other faculty initially assume an advisory role. Over time, the research supervisor and/or other faculty become true mentors to the student, working together closely as the student acquires the knowledge and skills to become a successful scholar. The primary mentor typically serves as the doctoral dissertation chair. Because the knowledge and skills students are expected to master are comprehensive, it may occur that more than one mentoring relationship is in place (e.g., one for learning how to use complex datasets, another to promote publication skills).

## ADVISING

### First Year Advising

- a) During the first year, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will serve as the academic advisor for all in-coming students. Advising also will be accomplished through a First Year Review completed at the end of the academic year attended by a standing sub-committee of the Doctoral Program Committee and the Associate Dean.
- b) As the second year approaches, the student and the Associate Dean will identify and appropriate advisor going forward.

### Second Year Advising

What students need to accomplish this year in consultation with their advisor and/or research supervisor:

- a) Fall Semester: Plan and design the research practicum and identify the site and/or research supervisor; discuss options for who might be a suitable dissertation chair.
- b) Spring Semester: Begin to formulate a dissertation area and some possible research questions. On the basis of the probable direction for the dissertation, identify and recruit the dissertation chair, and work with the chair to identify and perhaps begin to recruit members of the Dissertation committee.

The student should consult with the advisor/chair about research assistantships for the third year. The advisor/chair should encourage the student to explore possible sources of funding for the dissertation research.

At the end of the fourth semester, the student will undergo a second year review that will provide the opportunity to summarize progress and clarify plans for the coming years. The student and advisor/chair should prepare together for the second year review.

## FIRST YEAR REVIEW

At the conclusion of spring semester of the first year, doctoral students will meet with a standing sub-committee of the Doctoral Program Committee and the Associate Dean.

The purpose of the first-year review is:

1. To discuss the student's acculturation into the program
2. To review progress regarding courses and other learning
3. To identify areas of strength and potential challenges, and how to rectify them
4. To facilitate communication between doctoral program faculty and students about the doctoral program and other issues germane to doctoral student life
5. The student and the Associate Dean will identify and appropriate advisor going forward.

**Preparation.** The doctoral student will complete the *First Year Doctoral Student Review* form in preparation for the meeting. Students will meet with their advisor in advance of the meeting for purposes of preparation.

The doctoral program chair will solicit feedback from all first-year student instructors and advisors prior to the review.

**Filing the Form.** At the end of the meeting, the student will summarize next steps at the end of the form and the student and advisor will sign the form and provide a copy for the student's doctoral file.

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### First Year Doctoral Student Review

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Current Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ RA Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Potential Advisor going forward \_\_\_\_\_

Have you taken all courses in standard sequence this first year?

\_\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_\_ No; briefly explain: \_\_\_\_\_

What elective courses do you plan to take next year? \_\_\_\_\_

What have been your activities as a research assistant? \_\_\_\_\_

In the context of your coursework and research experiences to date:

- What do you consider your strengths?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- What do you consider potential challenges, and how might they be rectified?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How networked are you with your cohort and other doctoral students? Any areas for change?

\_\_\_\_\_

How networked are you with the faculty? Any areas for change?

\_\_\_\_\_

How satisfied are you with your scholastic experiences? Any areas for change?

\_\_\_\_\_

How satisfied are you with the time you have for non-scholastic activities? Any areas for change?

\_\_\_\_\_

Please comment on any curricular, structural, financial, or advising problems that you have encountered, and indicate suggestions for improvement.

Comments/next steps from First Year Review (complete after the meeting and return to Doctoral Program).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature

(8/2016)

## SECOND YEAR REVIEW

- c) At the conclusion of spring semester of the second year, doctoral students will meet with their advisor, a standing sub-committee of the Doctoral Program Committee, and the Associate Dean.

The purpose of the second-year review is:

- 6. To review the student's progress regarding courses and other learning.
- 7. To discuss the student's plans for the next two years and provide advice regarding faculty and courses that could help achieve those plans.
- 8. To facilitate communication between doctoral program faculty and students about the doctoral program and other issues germane to doctoral student life.

**Preparation.** The doctoral student will complete the *Doctoral Program Student Educational Plan* and the *Second Year Doctoral Student Review* form in preparation for the meeting. Students will meet with their advisor in advance of the meeting for purposes of preparation.

**Filing the Form.** At the end of the meeting, the student will summarize next steps at the end of the form and the student and advisor will sign the form and provide a copy for the student's doctoral file.

## Second Year Doctoral Student Review

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_ RA Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Have you completed your research practicum?

\_\_\_ Yes

\_\_\_ No; briefly describe the status and timeline: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your substantive area of research? \_\_\_\_\_

What substantive (elective) courses have you taken in this area? \_\_\_\_\_

What elective course do you plan to take next year? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your plans for your teaching practicum? \_\_\_\_\_

What is the likely topic of your dissertation? \_\_\_\_\_

Who are potential members of your examination/dissertation committee?

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What are your experiences, successes, and plans related to publications? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your experiences, successes, and plans related to proposal development and submission? \_\_\_\_\_

What would you like to do after graduation, and when do you anticipate graduating? \_\_\_\_\_

What would be helpful to you in completing your program and pursuing your career goals? \_\_\_\_\_

Please comment on any curricular, structural, financial, or advising problems that you have encountered, and indicate suggestions for improvement.

Comments/next steps from Second Year Review (complete after the meeting and return to Doctoral Program).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature

(8/2016)

## THIRD YEAR ADVISING

What students need to accomplish this year in consultation with their chair:

- a) Fall Semester: Students will complete the material that will form the basis of their comprehensive substantive examination and dissertation proposal as part of the fifth semester dissertation seminar (SOWO 913). They will consult regularly with their dissertation chair while completing this work.

On the basis of the probable dissertation plan, students should decide the composition of their committee, and consult with them about the material being developed in preparation for the comprehensive substantive examination and dissertation proposal.

The Chair should encourage or assist the student to explore possible sources of funding for the dissertation research.

- b) Spring Semester: During this semester (i.e., the semester following the completion of coursework), students should complete their comprehensive examination and ideally present their dissertation proposal and have it approved by their committee. The chair will help schedule and oversee these efforts.

## REGULAR CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN STUDENT AND CHAIR

Over time, the chair and/or other faculty become true mentors to the student, working together closely as the student acquires the knowledge and skills to become a successful scholar. Mentors provide ongoing guidance and are closely involved with the student, providing opportunities for new knowledge and skill building, and general oversight for the entire learning process.

Regular consultations between the student and dissertation chair are an important means to encourage timely completion of the dissertation. Both the student and chair should be responsible for seeing that such meetings take place on a regular basis. (Council of Graduate Schools: 21)

A good rule of thumb regarding contact is to meet with the chair twice a month once students have entered their fourth year of study. If students have no contact with their chair for a period of six months, the chair will contact the student to clarify his/her efforts and intentions regarding ongoing involvement in the program.

### What your mentor expects of you:

- You will read and regularly review the doctoral manual
- You will drive your educational experience
- You will talk with him/her if something is affecting your progress
- You will let him/her know when you want to meet
- You will be open to critique of your work
- You will disagree with him/her
- You will respond promptly to e-mails
- You will take advantage of opportunities
- You will work hard toward your goals and balance your life (i.e., life balance)

### What you can expect of your mentor:

- Your mentor is committed to your success
- Your mentor will make time for you, be responsive, and meet with you on a regular basis
- Your mentor will help you pursue your path
- Your mentor will help you gain knowledge and skills that extend beyond the classroom

The Center for Faculty Excellence provides excellent resources for helping mentors and mentees talk specifically about different aspects of how they will work together. Please see this link for these resources. <https://cfe.unc.edu/mentoring/resources-for-graduate-student-mentees/>

# DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

## WHAT'S PRESCRIBED BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The following material is excerpted from the Graduate School Handbook regarding Doctoral Examinations. <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>

“A doctoral written examination, a doctoral oral examination, and a final oral examination covering the dissertation and other topics as required by the examining committee are required for doctoral degree completion.

The first two items together constitute a comprehensive examination of the student’s command of his or her field. If the student declares a minor, the student will be examined on the minor in at least one of the two doctoral examinations. Together they should:

- assess the extent and currency of the candidate’s knowledge in a manner that is as comprehensive and searching as the best practices of that field require;
- test the candidate’s knowledge of all transferred courses;
- discover any weaknesses in the candidate’s knowledge that need to be remedied by additional courses or other instruction; and
- determine the candidate’s fitness to continue work toward the doctorate.

The final oral examination is primarily a true 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. Questions that relate the dissertation to the field are appropriate.”

### **Examining Committee for the Dissertation**

“A committee of at least five members is required. A majority of the members of a doctoral committee must be regular members of the UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate Faculty from the student’s major academic program. Other members may be special appointees to the Graduate Faculty. Doctoral programs are encouraged to include scholars from outside the program to serve as members of doctoral committees.” If a committee member is not a member of the UNC Graduate School faculty and a fixed-term appointment is required, the Doctoral Program Coordinator will complete the procedure.

The committee should be in place no later than the end of the student’s fifth semester of study. Each doctoral student is expected to consult with members of the dissertation committee at frequent intervals while completing the dissertation. Although the committee members have an evaluative responsibility, it is expected that the process of working with the student will be consultative and collaborative in nature. Frequent scholarly dialogue with committee members should characterize the dissertation process.

Doctoral Students are encouraged to finish their degree in four-five years. Students who have not graduated by August of their fourth year will be required submit a progress report to each member of the committee and to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education to ensure timely progress to graduation.

Academic programs determine the order of doctoral written and oral exams. Before the student may take the second exam (i.e., the defense of the dissertation) he/she must have fulfilled, or will have fulfilled by the end of the semester in which the exam is to be taken, all required courses and the minimum residence requirement for the doctorate. In addition, the **Report of Doctoral**



**Committee Composition** form (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/wdcomm.pdf>) must be submitted to and approved by the Graduate School before the second examination. Provide this form to the Doctoral Program Coordinator for submission to the Graduate School.

## PROCESS AND CONTENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN AND ORAL EXAMINATION (PRIOR TO THE DISSERTATION)

In the School of Social Work, the doctoral comprehensive examination consists of three components, each of which is intended to promote and assess mastery:

1. **Methods examination:** The intent of the methods examination is to assess students' competence in two areas required to be a social work scholar: (a) mastery of core research skills, and (b) capacity to demonstrate related critical thinking. Questions will assess comprehension, application, and synthesis related to content taught in required doctoral courses, including research design, sampling, measurement, and analysis.

This exam will take place on two adjacent mornings in the Computer Lab of the School of Social Work, before the beginning of classes (August) preceding the fifth semester of study (i.e., the beginning of academic year 3). Students will receive three questions in the morning of each of two subsequent days (they answer two of the three questions each morning: one required, one of two optional).

- Questions will address material covered in any of six required courses (SOWO 910, 911, 914, 918, 921, 940). In addition, questions will address material covered in optional advanced courses (SOWO 916, 917, 922) but students will be able to receive a passing grade if their responses do not reflect material covered in optional courses.
- Questions will require a narrative reply; they will not include true/false or multiple-choice questions.
- Students will be required to receive a passing grade on all four questions; if one or more questions are not passed, only those questions need be retaken to pass the exam.
- A study guide will be provided, specifying the nature of the material over which mastery is expected.

It is required that the methods examination be successfully passed before the student takes the substantive examination. The methods exam is graded by members of the methods exam sub-committee of the Doctoral Program Committee.

- Grades: Fail; Pass; Pass with Distinction
- Two graders will grade each question:
  - If one grader assigns "fail," a third grader will be solicited.
  - If the two graders disagree, they will meet to discuss the grade to assign; if they do not come to consensus, a third grader will be solicited.
- If students pass, they will not receive comments; if they fail, they will receive comments.
- Passed exams will not be returned to the students.

2. **Substantive examination:** The intent of the substantive examination is to promote and assess students' mastery of their social problem of interest, including critical thinking related to research, practice, and policy. The exam will integrate, synthesize, and assess mastery of the social problem of interest (e.g., etiology, epidemiology, incidence, prevalence); theoretical perspectives related to the etiology and treatment of the social problem; policy relevance of the social problem; intervention research related to the social problem; implementation challenges in the delivery of interventions intended to address the social problem; as well as critical gaps in the relevant literature related to the issues listed above. Because each substantive exam is designed for the student by their chair and members of their committee, exam questions will likely be related to some, but not all of the above-mentioned areas.

This take-home exam is ideally completed early during the sixth semester of study, over a period of one month. The exam, which will include three questions, will be developed by the student's dissertation chair and in consultation with the student's committee members who are faculty in the School of Social Work. On some occasions, an outside committee member may participate in this process. The questions will explicitly note the level of depth and specificity expected to be included in the student's answers.

The exam questions will be informed both by students' final paper from SOWO 913, as well as students' plans for their dissertations. The SOWO 913 paper focuses on the student's social problem of interest, and addresses theory, conceptual models, research design and methods, relevant interventions and other research, evidence, implementation issues, and important, innovative areas meriting additional study; during the semester, the student reviews each section with the dissertation chair and makes recommended modifications.

Before exams are submitted to the students, they will be reviewed and approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education in consultation with the Doctoral Program Committee (DPC). Such reviews occur to ensure there is consistency among exams both across students and across time. In planning the timing of their exams, students should work with their committee chair, as well as allow enough time for the exam questions to be developed and fully reviewed by the Associate Dean and DPC.

Once the exam is finalized, the student will receive the exam by email from the Associate Dean. Students will be required to answer two of the three exam questions. The Chair will specify as to whether one or both questions are mandatory and the student may choose between questions two and three, or whether the student may choose between all three questions. This decision is made based on the educational needs of the student.

- Students may use any published literature or course materials they choose to complete the examination. However, all of the work must be the student's own, meaning that students are not permitted to obtain editing support or to discuss their answers with other students, friends, or family. Such actions are violation of the university honor code and will be referred to the honor court in accordance with graduate school procedure. The cover page of the exam should include a signed honor pledge attesting that, "I have not given nor received unauthorized aid in the preparation of this work."
- The response to each question should be 10-15 pages (maximum limit), 12-point font, double-spaced, one-inch margins; citations and tables are in addition to the 10-15 pages. All writing is to adhere to APA (American Psychological Association) style.

- The completed exam (PDF version) must be e-mailed to the Associate Dean, [mimi@email.unc.edu](mailto:mimi@email.unc.edu), no later than 5:00 p.m., 30 days after the student receives the questions. Extensions to this deadline will be considered in extreme situations when requested in advance of the due date.
- Should they wish, students may confer with their chairs or members of their committee about the direction and organization of their answers. Chairs and committee members may not provide copy-editing or substantive editing to the document. They may provide feedback about areas to explore, the level of depth required as compared to what the student has thus far written, and suggestions for organization.
- Students with disabilities that affect their participation and who wish to have special accommodations should contact the University's Disabilities Services and provide documentation of their disability at least two weeks in advance of their exam date. Disabilities Services will notify the Associate Dean that the student has a documented disability and may require accommodations. Students should discuss the specific accommodations they require directly with the Associate Dean and their chair.
- Students will be required to receive a passing grade on both questions; if one question is not passed, a new question covering relevant content will be created for the student. If this question is passed, the exam will be considered passed. If both questions are failed, the student becomes academically ineligible and must follow the graduate school's guidelines for re-entry.

The substantive examination must be successfully passed before the student proceeds to the oral examination.

- *Grades: Fail; Pass; Pass with Distinction*
- *All committee members will independently grade each question and convene to assign a grade. If there is not consensus, the Associate Dean will ask an outside individual to read the relevant material and provide feedback. The Associate Dean and the Chair will then consider the balance of the feedback and decide what grade to assign.*

3. **Oral examination:** The intent of the oral examination is to (a) display critical thinking in response to academic questioning; and (b) provide an opportunity for the student to present the dissertation proposal for committee critique.

The oral examination is to be completed during the sixth semester of study, within one month of the submission of the substantive examination. Two weeks are needed to grade the exam. (If the substantive examination is not passed, the oral examination will be delayed.) Students who opt to defend both their oral exam and their dissertation proposal at the same time will be allowed six weeks to defend. The student's Chair could request an extension if the student needs longer, which must be approved by the Associate Dean. The oral exam allows the student to convey knowledge in a verbal presentation and thereby promote presentation skills, and also to respond to questions the committee members pose based upon the substantive examination. In addition, questions may be asked based upon the material and literature cited in the SOWO 913 final course paper.

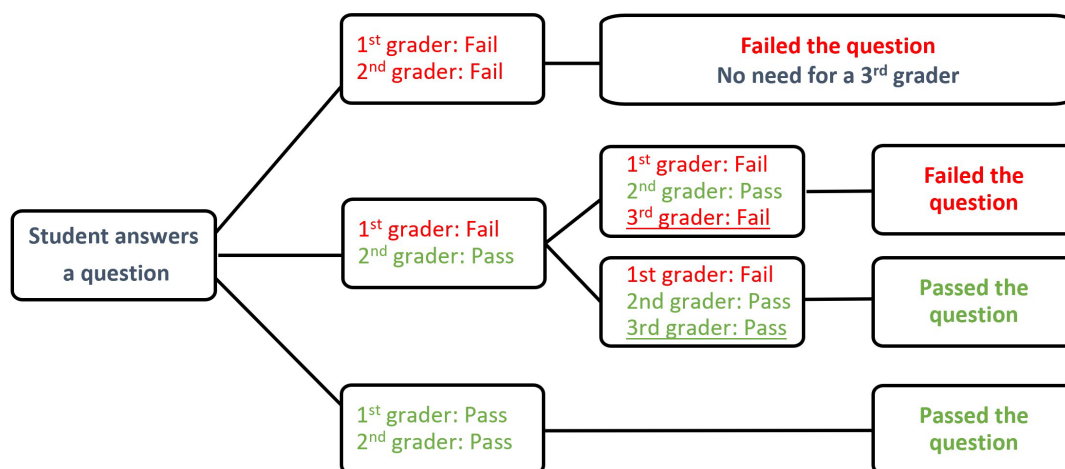
- If desired, the verbal presentation will be open to faculty, students, and others in addition to the committee members; the question and answer period will be closed.
- The student will leave the room while the committee deliberates as to whether the oral exam was successfully passed.

- Students will be required to pass the oral exam.
- If the oral exam is successfully passed, the student may present the dissertation proposal.
- Two hours will be allotted for the exam and presentation of the dissertation proposal.

### Criteria for Evaluating the Comprehensive Examination

Students are required to successfully pass all three components of the comprehensive examination. Grades assigned to each component are fail, pass, or pass with distinction. The vote must be unanimous.

## SSW Doctoral Program Methods Exam Grading Flow Chart



### Failure of the Comprehensive Examination

The following material details the situation when the comprehensive examination is failed and is derived from the Graduate School Handbook.

“A graduate student who fails either a written or oral examination may not take the examination a second time until at least three months after the first attempt. The student should work with his or her academic program to identify areas needing additional emphasis and to establish an action plan to prepare for taking the exam a second time.

A student who fails an examination for the second time becomes academically ineligible to continue in The Graduate School.

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. Students and academic program representatives must fill out the **Request for Reinstatement to Graduate School Form** (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/wrenstmt.pdf>). In addition, no student may continue in a program or take an examination a third time without approval by the

Administrative Board of The Graduate School.” <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html> (Failure of Examinations).

### **Examination Forms**

As per the Graduate School:

“Immediately after each examination has been given, results should be sent to The Graduate School on the **Doctoral Exam Report Form** (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/wdexam.pdf>). If the report of the first doctoral oral shows that the dissertation prospectus has not been examined or that it has been considered but not accepted, a separate report must be filed with The Graduate School as soon as the prospectus is approved.” (<http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html>)

When the student has scheduled the oral examination, he/she should obtain from the Doctoral Program Office or download from the Graduate School website the two Graduate School forms that record the written and oral comprehensive examination, the oral defense of the dissertation, and the committee composition. The student should type the requested information on the form before the examination.

After the examination, at which the committee members will have signed the forms, the student should return them to the Doctoral Program Coordinator for proper filing and forwarding to the Graduate School.

### **Including the Dissertation Proposal in the Comprehensive Examination Defense**

If the student’s chair approves, and no later than three weeks before the student takes the oral examination, he/she may submit the dissertation proposal to the dissertation committee, so that it may be orally presented and approved during the oral exam. This is an option and not required. Alternately, in consultation with the Chair, students may choose to schedule a second meeting with their dissertation committee to present and defend the dissertation proposal. The content of the dissertation proposal is described in the section of the manual dealing with the dissertation.

Of note, it is expected that the student will have initiated conversations with the committee members in advance of the presentation of the proposal, and that their feedback will have been incorporated into the proposal.

# THE DISSERTATION

## PURPOSE OF THE DISSERTATION

"The dissertation is the beginning of one's scholarly work, not its culmination. Dissertation research should provide students with hands-on directed experience in the primary research methods of the discipline, and prepare students for the type of research/scholarship that will be expected of them after they receive the Ph.D. degree." (Council of Graduate Schools)

## THE DISSERTATION PROCESS

As students apply to and enter the program, they are encouraged to begin defining their area of interest and the research questions they wish to investigate.

Each course assignment in required and elective courses has the potential to help the student develop the dissertation proposal. The student should use his/her research assistantship (if practical), and definitely the research practicum, to complete building the blocks for the dissertation. "The dissertation ought to be viewed as contiguous with course work, not remote from it." (Council of Graduate Schools)

## GUIDELINES FOR THE DISSERTATION

What follows is a general description of how the dissertation is conceived:

"The doctoral dissertation should (1) reveal the student's ability to analyze, interpret, and synthesize information; (2) demonstrate the student's knowledge of the literature relating to the project or at least acknowledge prior scholarship on which the dissertation is built; (3) describe the methods and procedures used; (4) present results in a sequential and logical manner; and (5) display the student's ability to discuss fully and coherently the meaning of the results." (Council of Graduate Schools)

Within the context of the doctoral program of the School of Social Work, the dissertation should represent an original and independent piece of work contributing to theory and/or to the knowledge base for social work practice.

**The question of originality.** In its most general sense, "original" describes research that has not been done previously or that creates new knowledge. Although a dissertation should not duplicate another researcher's or scholar's work, the topic, project, or approach taken need not be solely that of the graduate student. The chair or other faculty member should encourage a student to explore a particular topic or project with the idea that the student himself/herself will independently develop the "thesis" of the dissertation. The student should be able to demonstrate what portion of the scholarship represents his/her own thinking.

**The question of collaboration.** "In those disciplines where doctoral research efforts are typically part of a larger collaborative project, it is crucial that an individual student's contribution be precisely delineated. Whether the collaboration is between faculty and students or among students, Ph.D. candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate the uniqueness of their own contributions and to define what part of the larger work represents their own ideas and individual efforts." (Council of Graduate Schools)

In the context of the doctoral program of the School of Social Work, the passages above mean that the dissertation research may be part of a larger project, but the student should demonstrate in the dissertation proposal how the specific thesis or research question, and the development of the means of testing or answering it, are uniquely the student's own.

## INTENDED FEATURES OF A DISSERTATION IN SOCIAL WORK AT UNC-CH

The intended features of a dissertation are detailed below.

- a) Related to the design and evaluation of social interventions; and
- b) Contributing to the knowledge base for social work practice;

Examples: Test of an intervention; or analysis of needs with a view to planning social interventions to address them; or analysis of characteristics of a target population with a view to planning social interventions in a way that will be useful and accessible to the population; or testing the effectiveness of organizational structures for service delivery; or historical analysis of a policy or intervention; or other examples.

- c) Incorporating attention to all three levels of intervention, although not necessarily in the research question;
- d) Grounded in and adding to theory or theories relevant to the subject of study;
- e) Flexible in terms of methods, which can include qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, and/or historical methods, and can include secondary analysis of existing data; and
- f) Including relevant content relating the dissertation topic and findings to oppressed groups.

**Advice Regarding the Dissertation.** The first criterion for the scope of the dissertation is manageability. Because manageability is difficult for the novice to judge, the student will need to rely on the guidance of the chair, with consultation from other committee members, to delineate a manageable scope to the dissertation project.

The second criterion is that the dissertation project leads to a significant contribution to knowledge, as determined by the student's chair and committee members. A dissertation question should lead to answers that will make a difference, contributing new and useful information to the field.

## POLICIES REGARDING THE DISSERTATION AND ACCEPTABLE FORMATS

"The dissertation should be publishable, or the source of publishable materials." (Council of Graduate Schools)

"Although the 'traditional' dissertation as a unified work with an introduction that states an objective, a literature review, a presentation of the methodology or procedures to be used, and a concluding discussion of results, should be respected, flexibility with respect to form should be permitted." (Council of Graduate Schools)

"Whether the form of the dissertation is a monograph, a series of articles, or a set of essays, is determined by the research expectations and accepted forms of publication in the discipline, as well as by custom in the discipline and the student's program." (Council of Graduate Schools)

Two formats will be acceptable for the dissertation in the School of Social Work:

a) The traditional "book-style" document that covers:

- Statement of problem
- Background (significance, theory, literature review, intervention context)
- Conceptual framework for the research
- Research questions or hypotheses to be tested
- Design and methods, including sampling, data collection, and method of analysis
- Results
- Discussion and conclusions, including implications for theory, practice, policy, and future research; strengths and weaknesses of the study

In the background and significance, interpretation and discussion, and/or implications for theory and practice, the student should consider the interrelationship among the policy, program, and practice matters relevant to the dissertation topic. The student should also include relevant content relating the dissertation topic and findings to oppressed groups.

b) An alternative style that includes the same content, but one or more of the topics can be presented in the form of manuscripts (typically three) suitable and ready for submission for publication.

Historically, dissertations often became publishable books. However, given today's emphasis on publishing in peer reviewed journals, and less focus on single-author books in the field of social work, professional schools are increasingly encouraging students to write dissertations that more readily convert into published articles. Publishing articles so that they are more accessible to the field is a strong tradition at the School of Social Work.

Manuscripts can address the scholarly literature underlying the research question, the conceptual framework for the study, the methodology, and the research findings. The dissertation should typically include three manuscripts, unified by chapters or appendices that present the rest of the required content noted above, including (as appropriate) a review of the literature, an expanded methods section, an overall synthesis of the research findings, and a discussion of implications for practice and directions for future research.

Guidelines for preparation of a dissertation of this format are as follows.

- Each manuscript should be of the quality, length and format suitable for publication in a peer reviewed journal; it is acceptable for the format of the citations to deviate from that of the APA if something different is expected for the intended journals.
- The papers must represent the work of the student alone, even if they will later be revised along with a collaborator, or if in published form they will have co-authors listed.
- Articles may be published prior to inclusion in the dissertation, as long as the committee members agree to the timeline.
- The work can derive from one or multiple datasets, as long as the overall work forms a coherent whole.
- Additional detailed results and other material may be presented in appendices.
- There should be sufficient documentation of the research process to demonstrate the student's related competence.
- The dissertation must include an introductory "chapter" that explains the overall focus of the dissertation, its importance, the intent of each article, and how they relate to each other.



- The dissertation must include a synthesis “chapter” that provides the following material (not necessarily in this order):
    - An overview of the major research findings
    - A discussion of the significance: the ways in which the research contributes to the field -- that is, where it confirms previous work or breaks new ground, or the context in which the research should be placed, and the applications to practice and policy that the work suggests
    - A discussion of the major strengths and weaknesses of the work
    - Directions for future research
- The synthesis should reflect the entire research agenda reflected in the dissertation; that is, it should synthesize across the individual papers.

As students determine which format is most suitable, it will be helpful to consider the importance of publications in their intended career track. At the time the dissertation proposal is approved, the student, chair, and committee will negotiate the final scope of the dissertation research and the format of the dissertation (book-style or manuscript), based on the appropriateness of the selected format to the research question, the project, and the student’s publication plans.

Most of our students are now doing three paper dissertations that also contain an overall introduction and a conclusion. Hopefully, each of the three papers will result in at least one publication, although all will likely need to be shortened before submission. Some questions have arisen about self-plagiarism. Our understanding is that this is not an issue. The journal publisher may ask them to add a line in the article indicating that the work was adapted from part of their dissertation or may have some other guidance. MIT Libraries has put together a page with publisher policies

( <https://libraries.mit.edu/scholarly/copyright/theses-copyright/theses-and-article-publishing/> ) on accepting journal submissions that first appeared in an author’s previously released thesis/dissertations. APA has a page on converting dissertations into published articles ( <https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/research-publication/dissertation-thesis> ) but doesn’t mention self-citing.

Students should hold the copyright to their dissertations even though it is “published” in the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Database (and the Carolina Digital repository).

## **INVOLVEMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THE THREE WEEK RULE**

Because working on the dissertation proposal and dissertation is a consultative process, committee members should be called upon in that capacity during the process. In discussions with committee members, students should gain a clear understanding of the role that the committee members are willing and expect to play. Some may want to be involved in many aspects of the project; some will want only to read select sections; and others will want to read the dissertation only after it has been thoroughly reviewed by the chair. Typically, the student and the chair will work closely on the dissertation before submitting it to other committee members.

Faculty need three weeks to review the dissertation proposal and dissertation.

Responsibility for timeliness of reading/returning drafts is shared by the student, the committee members, the committee chair, and as a last resort, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. The student should choose committee members who are expected to return drafts promptly. At the same time, students are responsible for informing committee members when they will be delivering drafts, and for negotiating with each committee member when comments will be

returned. If a committee member fails to return drafts as agreed, the student should first talk with that committee member; if that discussion does not yield results, the committee chair should intervene; if that fails, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education can be asked to take action.

## THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

Students may submit the dissertation proposal during the same semester in which they take their comprehensive substantive examination, or write and defend the dissertation proposal in the semester following their comprehensive examination (typically the fall of the fourth year of study).

The dissertation proposal will be a well-developed 8-12 page (double spaced, one inch margins) narrative that addresses the background and significance of the problem (very brief, including relevance for social work), proposed research questions, hypotheses (including the rationale for the hypotheses), design, and anticipated limitations/challenges of the intended topic; in addition, the proposal will indicate the format of the dissertation (i.e., three paper or book-style) and a timeline for completion.

The first page (which is in addition to the 8-12 pages) will use the same one-page format as the specific aims page of an NIH proposal.

Appendices including measures or other relevant material may be included if relevant for purposes of discussion.

Section	Approximate Number of Pages
Overview	1
Background, significance (including relevance for social work theory, practice, and/or policy), research questions, hypotheses (including rationale)	2-2½
Design (methods, sample, measures, analyses)	4-8
Anticipated challenges/limitations	½-1
Format of the dissertation: draft chapter headings or manuscript titles	½
Timeline	½
Appendices (if applicable)	

In addition, and as relevant, the proposal may include indication of human subjects' clearance and letters of support or agreement from research site(s), as well as an agreement about authorship and ownership of data. If the dissertation research is based on a faculty member's project, issues about co-authorship of material to be published from the dissertation are to be discussed and an agreement specified in writing. If circumstances change during the course of the dissertation research, the written agreement will be revised.

Because the dissertation proposal constitutes a contract about what the student will do, it should be explicit on all points. The proposal contract can be re-negotiated between the student and dissertation committee members should the need arise and both the dissertation chair and the student believe a renegotiated proposal is warranted.

When the chair and the student agree that the proposal is complete, it will be circulated to committee members, who will provide feedback and suggestions to the student before it is presented to them for formal approval.

As the contract about the work between the student and the committee, committee members should sign the approved proposal. When the proposal has been signed, a copy of it will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for review and inclusion in the student's file. Using the graduate school form, the Doctoral Program Coordinator will notify the graduate school that the committee has approved the student's proposal.

It will be the understanding of the student and the committee that the dissertation proposal may continue to evolve, and that later changes in the research plan will be reviewed by, and must be approved by, the chair and the committee.

In the event that new members join the committee after the proposal has been approved (i.e., a committee member departs and is replaced), the student and the committee chair should ensure that the new committee member has reviewed and approved the dissertation proposal.

One practical issue may require early completion of a dissertation proposal. That is, because (a) the financial support that the School of Social Work provides is finite and concentrated in the first four years of study; (b) financial support is the most critical determinant of time to completion; and (c) deadlines for dissertation grants and fellowships fall long before funding could begin, students may need to prepare the dissertation proposal and have it approved before the comprehensive examination is passed. When students are preparing proposals for dissertation support before completing their comprehensive examination, they should negotiate committee approval of the proposal.

## TIMETABLE TO THE PH.D.

Component	Timeline
Comprehensive examination and dissertation proposal	The comprehensive examination must be completed by the end of the semester after coursework is completed. The dissertation proposal may be approved at the same time or in a subsequent meeting of the committee in the following semester.
Dissertation	Defended usually 1 (or 1.5) years following completion of coursework.

Policies governing dissertation preparation and requirements are in the Graduate Handbook and should be read and followed.

## THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

It is expected that students will be making steady progress toward formulation of the dissertation topic and completion of steps preparatory to the dissertation through course assignments. As the topic of the dissertation takes shape, the student's committee should be formed, preferably by the end of the fourth semester, and certainly during the semester in which the student participates in the dissertation seminar.

The student's chair and committee members advise the student about the dissertation proposal and grade the comprehensive substantive examination. The committee approves the dissertation proposal, oversees completion of the dissertation, approves the dissertation, and conducts the final

oral examination on the dissertation. As noted earlier, working on the dissertation proposal and dissertation is a consultative process, and committee members should be called upon in that capacity at numerous times during the process.

## **COMMITTEE COMPOSITION** ( <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html#dissertation> )

In the School of Social Work, the student's committee must have no fewer than five members. Three of these must be tenured or tenure track members of the School of Social Work Faculty, and one must come from outside the school.

Additional members of the committee may be drawn from faculty of the School of Social Work, from the Research Practicum site, or from other organizations, but the majority of committee members must be from the School of Social Work. One School of Social Work Graduate Faculty member will serve as chair of the committee. Members of the student's committee who are not members of the university graduate faculty will receive a Fixed-term Appointment. The student has the responsibility to contact the Doctoral Program Coordinator to complete the paperwork for this appointment.

According to the Graduate School Handbook, "a majority of the members of the doctoral (oral) committee must be full members of the Graduate Faculty. Other members may be limited members of the Graduate Faculty or special appointees."

Committee members should be selected on the basis of substantive and methodological expertise in the area of the student's dissertation. There must be at least one member with expertise in the substantive area being examined, the methodology being used, and the statistical or data analytic strategies being employed.

### **External Committee Member**

Students are encouraged to select an outside committee member in consultation with their chair. The external committee member is usually a member of The Graduate Faculty of the University and has a primary appointment in a department or school in which the student has taken at least one supporting course. This person will serve on the student's committee, participating in and evaluating the substantive and oral comprehensive exams, and helping to guide the student to prepare the dissertation.

### **Formation of the Student's Committee**

The student and the dissertation chair will list the individuals the student has determined would be willing to serve on his/her committee. This list will be forwarded to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, who may propose additional or alternative members as appropriate. The final decision about composition will be negotiated by the student, chair, and Associate Dean. The Associate Dean approves the committee members and chair with approval by the Graduate School. The Graduate School allows co-chairs; however, in the case of a co-chair, the School of Social Work retains the chair as final authority.

### **Change in Committee Members**

Replacements or additions of committee members can be made at any time if good cause exists, with the approval of the chair, Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, and the Graduate School.

Good cause includes (for example) irreconcilable differences in which both the student and committee member have valid points but cannot reach agreement on certain basic issues. Other

matters, such as challenges scheduling meetings (comprehensive examination, dissertation proposal, or defense) or a committee member requesting changes to the students' materials, are not cause for a change in committee members.

If a change in committee members is being considered, the involved members (those being replaced and potential new members) will be contacted by the chair before decisions are made to change committee membership.

If it is the chair who is being considered for replacement, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education with advice from the Doctoral Committee will consider the replacement and related next steps.

## COMPLETION OF DISSERTATION AND ORAL DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation should not proceed to the point of defense until all committee members agree that it is suitable for defense. Before the dissertation defense is held, the student must solicit feedback from every committee member, and every member must agree that the student is ready to defend the dissertation. The Graduate School Handbook specifies the following:

<http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html#examinations>

“The final oral defense will be held only after all members of the committee have had adequate opportunity to review a draft of the doctoral dissertation. The dissertation advisor (chair) is responsible for determining that the draft is in an appropriate form for committee evaluation. If substantial revisions are necessary, they should be completed before the final oral defense is scheduled [*underline added for emphasis*]. The committee may, at the time of the final oral but no later, require alterations and corrections, but these should constitute relatively minor changes agreed to by a majority of the committee members. The dissertation advisor (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.

All committee members are expected to be present at the defense [*underline added for emphasis*].

The student should not bring refreshments to the dissertation defense and is cautioned about scheduling a celebration immediately thereafter. The defense is a component of the examination process leading to the doctoral degree, and should be treated as such; situations have occurred wherein committee group discussion resulted in the student not passing the defense, and/or postponing formal approval to a later date.

The student's presentation of the final oral examination may be open to the public or limited in attendance to the candidate and the committee, as the student prefers. The doctoral student may invite who they want to attend their defense, including family members, and may post an announcement on our website. The question and answer period will be closed. The student will leave the room while the committee deliberates as to whether the dissertation was successfully passed. The attendees may be welcomed back after all deliberations are complete.

A dissertation is accepted only after the approval of a majority of the examining committee members (including a majority of those from the school of social work). The Graduate School does not have a policy stipulating that the committee chair needs to be one of those who find the dissertation acceptable. However, if a student's primary committee lead is not in support of passing the work, there is indication that a discussion is warranted between the student, chair, and others, including the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

When these requirements have been met, the Doctoral Exam Report Form (including signatures of all committee members) and the dissertation, in final form designed to meet the standards as defined in *A Guide to Theses and Dissertations* (<http://gradschool.unc.edu/academics/thesis-diss/guide/>) is to be submitted to The Graduate School.

### **SUMMER DEFENSE OF DISSERTATION**

Because most social work faculty have nine-month appointments, not all may be available to review materials or participate in a dissertation defense over the summer. Consequently, dissertation defenses should not be scheduled for the summer months unless all faculty members on the committee are in agreement.

### **THE QUESTION OF DISSERTATION WITH DISTINCTION**

The UNC Graduate School does not recognize distinction with dissertations. The chair and committee may tell students that the dissertation is meritorious, but they should not represent it as having graduated with distinction.

### **AUTHORSHIP**

Students are to be the sole author of their dissertation, but manuscripts derived from the dissertation may be co-authored – and in fact, if the chair or committee members merit authorship on dissertation publications, it is appropriate that they be included as authors.

<https://www.apa.org/science/leadership/students/authorship-paper>

### **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT**

In order to graduate, doctoral students must complete a minimum of six credit hours of dissertation (SOWO 994). They must be registered for a minimum of three credit hours during the semester in which the dissertation proposal is approved and the semester in which the dissertation is defended.

<http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html#dissertation>

**The Graduate School's Dissertation Writing Bootcamp** is a week-long opportunity for students currently writing dissertations to set writing goals, practice disciplined writing habits, learn new strategies, and connect with other dissertation writers.

<https://careerwell.unc.edu/event/dissertation-writing-boot-camp-in-person-4/2023-06-30/>

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT

## RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Several kinds of research assistantships are offered within the school: a) assistantships funded by a grant or contract, in which the student works on that specified project; b) assistantships funded by school or program resources, in which the student works with social work faculty on one or more projects; and c) Merit Assistantships, funded by the UNC Graduate School, in which the student works with social work faculty.

### GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Research assistantships, in which a student works under a faculty member's direction and supervision in various research related tasks, are one means by which students are prepared for careers of research performance and productivity. For this reason, it is recommended that all doctoral students have the opportunity to serve as research assistants. The following guidelines help inform the design and implementation of these opportunities.

- a) A primary intent of the research assistantship is educational, supporting the development of research scholars who are capable of producing and disseminating knowledge for the profession and the field of social welfare.
- b) All research assistantships, paid and unpaid, represent voluntary relationships on the part of both faculty members and students.
- c) If either the faculty member or the student feels that the assistantship is not meeting his or her respective needs, they should address this situation together. If they are unable to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement, they should then consult with the student's Advisor/Chair; if still unable to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement, they should then consult with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education; if all else fails they should ask the Dean to help reach a solution.
- d) With the approval of their Advisor/Chair and committee, students may receive academic credit for work performed under a faculty member's supervision as an unpaid research assistant. This work may qualify for credit as a research practicum if it meets the criteria for the research practicum.
- e) Students will not receive academic credit for work performed as a paid research assistant.
- f) Although both full time students (registered for 9 or more hours of academic credit) and part time students (registered for less than 9 hours of academic credit) may qualify to serve as either paid or unpaid research assistants, priority for paid assistantships will be given to full time students.
- g) In order for students to give priority to their academic program of study, it is recommended that all assistantships be limited to no more than 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students who receive paid assistantships through funds from the Graduate School or School of Social Work will be limited to 15 hours per week for first year students and 20 hours per week for other students during the academic year, unless alternate plans are approved by the student's Advisor/Chair. Faculty who are funding assistantships are urged to limit the actual work accordingly, if possible.

- h) Flexibility of hours to accommodate time demands in either the student's coursework (e.g., mid-term and finals exams) or the research project should be worked out with the research supervisor. Projects may require that students complete time sheets documenting the number of hours worked. While any one month may require more or less than the allotted number of work hours, at the end of the semester, the total number of hours worked shall not average more than 20 (or 15 in the case of first year students) hours per week for the total number of weeks of the semester.
- i) To clarify the requirements for research assistantship hours over winter break and breaks in general: The Business Office contract stipulates that research assistantships that span an entire academic year (9 months) entail 36 weeks of work between August 1 and April 30. The contract also states that work hours may be adjusted to fit the requirements of a project. In practical terms, then, the student and faculty sponsor have the latitude to determine which three weeks, within the 39 weeks that span August 1 – April 30, the student will not be working.
- j) Students are responsible for keeping their Advisor/Chair and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education informed of their involvement as either paid or unpaid research assistants. Advisors/Chairs and students are encouraged to examine together how research assistantships fit or can be made to fit with the student's educational and career objectives.
- k) Before beginning their work together, the research supervisor will provide the student with a written contract (Payment Arrangement – see *Sakai: Doctoral Program Resources / Resources/ Funding*) that states what the sources of funding are, what the stipend is, and what the expected work hours will be. For returning students, in order to be paid for August, students need to complete and return this form to the Doctoral Program Coordinator by July 31<sup>st</sup>. For new students, the form is completed at orientation. Faculty are accountable to their funding source and may require the student to complete bi-weekly timesheets or a monthly time-log. Timesheets are available from the Business Office and the time-log can be found at *Sakai: Doctoral Program Resources / Resources / Funding*.

Faculty members within the School of Social Work who wish to request a research assistant may submit a proposal for the assistantship to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. Information in the request may include the required work activities; the educational benefits of these activities in helping to prepare the student for a career of research performance and productivity in social work; the number of work hours required per week during the academic year; the duration of the assignment, and if the assignment involves more than one year, plans to continue support for the student and/or to help the student apply for support; the availability of funds in the present academic year, if any, to provide financial support for the student; and plans for supervision and direction of the student's work. The Associate Dean will work with faculty members to make a good match with prospective students, and students will be encouraged to make appointments with faculty members to discuss proposed research assistantships.



## DISSERTATION RESEARCH SUPPORT

Numerous programs exist to support doctoral study and dissertation research. As the student develops his/her dissertation topic, it is advisable that he/she develop and submit a proposal to obtain support for carrying out this research.

UNC social work doctoral students have successfully competed for support from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Spencer Foundation, the Hartford Foundation, the National Association of Social Workers, the Council on Social Work Education, and university competitive research grants, among others. Pre-doctoral training grants available within the university are another source of student support, and our students have received such positions through the UNC Institute on Aging, the Program on Integrative Medicine, and the Carolina Consortium on Human Development. The appendix provides a longer list of sources that support doctoral students and their work.

In addition to the Doctoral Program Office and individual faculty members, the University Office of Research Services will assist students to locate potential sources of funding.

[HTTP://GRADSCHOOL.UNC.EDU/FUNDING/CURRENT.HTML](http://GRADSCHOOL.UNC.EDU/FUNDING/CURRENT.HTML)

## CONTRACT TEACHING

Students with teaching experience, and/or those who have completed the Teaching Practicum and Teaching Seminar, may be hired as contract faculty to teach masters level courses under faculty supervision. This arrangement provides the student with experience to develop teaching skills, and is helpful to compete for academic positions after completing the Ph.D.

In addition, teaching opportunities often come available for positions outside of the UNC School of Social Work; for example, our students regularly teach at Elon University. Students will be made aware of teaching opportunities as they come available, and they are strongly encouraged to seek and accept such opportunities.

## TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT

Doctoral students are encouraged to attend and present at conferences such as at meetings of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the Society for Social Work Research (SSWR). When possible, the school is committed to helping defray the cost for attending at least one conference per year. To request reimbursement of \$350 (attending) or \$450 (presenting) for travel expenses, a Travel Request form (*Sakai: Doctoral Program Resources / Resources*) must be completed and submitted to Brenda Vawter, Doctoral Program Coordinator, prior to traveling. Approval of these travel reimbursements is subject to the funds available and financial aid. Periodically, students will receive an email requesting the list of conferences they wish to attend; it is important that they reply by the given deadline for funding consideration.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS: RESIDENCY, DEGREE APPLICATION, TIMELINES

### RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT

Individual program credit hour requirements are established by the student's academic program and must be satisfied. Doctoral students are required to complete a minimum residence credit of four full semesters, either by full-time registration, or by part-time registration over several semesters. At least two of the required four semesters of residence must be earned in contiguous registration of no fewer than six credit hours at UNC-Chapel Hill. While summer session registration is not required to maintain consecutive registration, any credits of three to six hours per session will be computed on the usual basis as part of the required two-semester contiguity. <http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html#credit>

### APPLICATION FOR A DEGREE

Each student must apply for a graduate degree for a specific graduation by the deadline shown in the Calendar of Events (please note that applying is a two-step process) found at: <http://gradschool.unc.edu/graddeadlines.html>


Each academic program determines at what point a student must fulfill language or research skill requirements, provided that all such requirements are satisfied before a student is admitted to candidacy. <https://connectcarolina.unc.edu/>

### DEGREE TIME LIMITS

A doctoral student has eight calendar years from the date of first registration in the doctoral program to complete the doctoral degree. Reapplication is required to continue pursuit of the degree if the eight-year limit expires. ([HTTP://HANDBOOK.UNC.EDU/PHD.HTML#TIMELIMITS](http://handbook.unc.edu/phd.html#timelimits))

#### Leave of Absence

Within the eight-year limit, a student in good academic standing may request one leave of absence from graduate study for a definite, stated period of time (up to one year) during which the student does not plan to make academic progress. To be eligible for a leave of absence, a student should not have received an extension of the degree time limit and not have temporary grades of IN or AB on courses taken.

In advance of the leave period, the student must complete and submit a [Request for Leave of Absence Form](https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/loareq.pdf)  ( <https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/loareq.pdf> ) to The Graduate School. This form requires approval by the academic program. If The Graduate School approves the leave of absence, the time of that leave will not count against the total time allowed for the degree. [Readmission](https://handbook.unc.edu/admission.html#readmission) ( <https://handbook.unc.edu/admission.html#readmission> ) to The

Graduate School after an approved leave of absence is generally a formality. Ordinarily, a leave of absence may not be renewed.

Students should be aware that while on leave no progress towards their graduate degree should be made. When on an approved leave of absence, they cannot be considered enrolled students and therefore will not have access to campus services and benefits afforded to enrolled students, including eligibility for holding student employment positions (e.g., TA or RA) or student health insurance, among other services.

Once students are approved for a leave of absence, their academic program can contact the PID Office to request affiliate status to have the student ONYEN and PID preserved only for the period of the approved leave.

Students taking advantage of the Parental Leave Policy ( <https://handbook.unc.edu/medical.html#parental> ) do not need to file a separate Leave of Absence request.

### **Parental Leave Policy**

The UNC-Chapel Hill Graduate Student Parental Leave Policy ( [https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/parental\\_leave.pdf](https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/parental_leave.pdf) ) is designed to assist a full-time graduate student who is the primary child-care provider immediately following the birth or adoption of a child. This policy will ensure the student's full-time, registered status and will facilitate their return to full participation in class work and, where applicable, research and teaching in a seamless manner. All matriculated, full-time graduate students who have been full-time for at least one academic year are eligible to apply for this leave. A Parental Leave Application Form ( [https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/parental\\_leave\\_application.pdf](https://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/parental_leave_application.pdf) ) along with other supporting documentation as outlined in the policy, must be completed and submitted to the Graduate School at least eight weeks prior to the anticipated birth or adoption of the child.

### **Health Insurance Plans**

As per the UNC Board of Governors, all students enrolled at UNC-Chapel Hill are required to have verifiable health insurance coverage. Graduate students are offered health insurance coverage through either a TA/RA plan ( <https://campushealth.unc.edu/charges-insurance/student-blue-ra-ta-and-postdoc-insurance> ) (offered as part of a teaching or research assistantship) or the mandatory student plan ( <https://campushealth.unc.edu/charges-insurance/mandatory-student-health-insurance> ). While enrolled, a student can switch back and forth between these two options as appropriate.

### **Readmission**

A formal request for readmission to The Graduate School is required whenever a student fails to register for a regular (fall/spring) semester or withdraws during a semester for any reason—whether the student had an approved leave of absence, withdrew during the semester, or simply did not register. To resume their studies, such students must submit an Application for Readmission according to the following deadlines:

- July 1 for the fall semester
- December 1 for the spring semester

- April 1 for the first summer session
- June 1 for the second summer session

Readmission after a long absence is not automatic and will be reviewed carefully by the academic program prior to making a recommendation to The Graduate School.

If a student has not been enrolled for one academic year, a new application for residence status for tuition purposes must be submitted with all readmission requests.

If a student is not registered for as long as two academic years, a new immunization record and Medical History Form must also be submitted to Campus Health Services to avoid future registration cancellation.

### **Reapplication**

An individual must formally apply for new admission (Admission Application, application fee, current GRE scores, etc.) in the following circumstances:

- An individual remains unregistered for five years or longer and wishes to resume graduate study. The academic program and The Graduate School will consult to determine if credits previously earned will meet current degree requirements.
- An individual withdraws during the first semester of enrollment in an academic program and later wishes to pursue the degree after two years have passed.
- A student exceeds the time limit for degree completion and wishes to continue his or her studies. See Time Limit for Master's Degree or Doctoral Degree for information about time limits and options for extensions.

To resume their studies, such students must submit an Admission Application request according to the following deadlines:

- July 1 for the fall semester
- December 1 for the spring semester
- April 1 for the first summer session
- June 1 for the second summer session

Students should first contact their former academic program to develop a feasible academic plan for returning to complete the degree. The academic program and The Graduate School will consult to determine admission application requirements, an academic plan for completion of degree requirements, and a new timeline for completion. The academic plan should be submitted as part of the reapplication materials.

If a student has not been enrolled for one academic year, a new application for residence status for tuition purposes must be submitted with all reapplication requests.

# **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

## **ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR DOCTORAL EDUCATION**

The function of the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education is to provide overall management of the development and implementation of the doctoral program, chair Doctoral Program Committee meetings, represent the doctoral program in the university and at national conferences, and coordinate all the activities of the doctoral program.

## **DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE**

A Doctoral Program Committee has the following functions, as defined in Article 6.9 of the Faculty Bylaws.

"6.9 The Doctoral Program Committee provides leadership, establishes standards, and initiates activities for the overall planning, development and coordination of the School's Ph.D. Program.

### **6.91     *Functions***

The functions of the Doctoral Program Committee shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Formulating recommendations to the Faculty regarding overall doctoral program policies and procedures;
- Engaging in activities concerning doctoral program publicity and student recruitment;
- Reviewing applications for admission and making admission recommendations to the Graduate School.

### **6.92     *Membership***

The Doctoral Program Committee shall consist of the following:

- The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education; three additional faculty members, at least two of who are currently teaching in the program; one student per cohort; and any additional members agreed upon. The Dean and Associate Dean(s) shall serve as ex officio members of the committee. Student members shall be accorded the right to vote in Committee deliberations. Except for the Associate Deans, other members of the Committee shall serve for overlapping two year terms. Vacancies shall be filled through appointment by the Dean, in consultation with the Association Dean for Doctoral Education. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education shall be appointed by the Dean with the possibility of reappointment.

### **6.93 Meetings**

The Doctoral Program Committee shall meet at least twice each semester, and on call by the Associate Dean, who shall give appropriate notice of all meetings to each member on the Committee, specifying time, place, and agenda of the meeting. Doctoral Program Committee meetings shall be open to all members of the Faculty.

### **6.94 Sub-committees**

The Doctoral Program Committee shall appoint various sub-committees it deems necessary to carry out its functions.

## **DOCTORAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

The Coordinator for the Doctoral Program is Brenda Vawter. She will answer questions, take messages, provide information, and generally be the students' first point of contact about problems, forms, and procedural issues. For example, she can provide a template to use for printing business cards upon request.

Brenda also coordinates many of the doctoral program functions. She can be reached at 962-6477 or by email: [bvawter@email.unc.edu](mailto:bvawter@email.unc.edu). Her office is 440.

# APPENDICES

## SOURCES OF STUDENT FUNDING AND SUPPORT (PARTIAL LIST)

### SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK AWARDS

Anne-Linda Furstenberg Fund for Qualitative Research  
Outstanding Doctoral Student Award  
Turner Fellowship for Dissertation Assistance

### GRADUATE SCHOOL/UNIVERSITY

Impact Award (GEAB)  
Distinguished Dissertation Award  
Dissertation Completion Fellowships  
Delores Zohrab Liebmann Award  
Graduate Tuition Incentive Scholarship  
Off-campus Dissertation Research Fellowships  
Pre-Selection Application for DAAD Grants for Study and Research in Germany  
Pre-Selection Application for Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) International  
Student Research Fellowship  
Pre-Selection Application for Delores Zohrab Liebmann Fellowship  
Graduate Tuition Incentive Scholarship  
Summer Research Fellowship  
Special Purpose Off-Campus Dissertation Research Fellowship  
Off-campus Dissertation Research Fellowships

### OTHER UNIVERSITY AWARDS RECEIVED BY PREVIOUS DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Carolina Consortium on Human Development Predoctoral Fellowship  
Carolina Program on Integrative Medicine Predoctoral Fellowship  
Carolina for Kibera Fellowships  
Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research Predoctoral Fellowship  
Center for Global Initiatives Pre-dissertation Field Research Award  
Center for Global Initiatives Pre-dissertation Travel Award  
Paul Hardin Dissertation Fellowship--Royster Dissertation Completion Award  
Gordon H. DeFries Career Development in Aging Research Award  
Jessie Ball duPont Dissertation Fellowship  
Lovick P. Corn Dissertation Completion Fellowship  
Lyle V. Jones Dissertation Fellowship--Society of Fellows Dissertation Research  
Fellowship  
Pre-Dissertation Travel Award, UNC Center for Global Initiatives  
Student Undergraduate Teaching Award  
University Research Day (oral presentation award)

### OUTSIDE AWARDS RECEIVED BY PREVIOUS DOCTORAL STUDENTS

American Association of University Women Educational Foundation Fellowship  
CSWE-Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)  
Fellowship  
CSWE-SAMHSA  
Center for Development and Learning Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and  
Related Disabilities (LEND) Fellowship (Maternal and Child Health Bureau)

The Council of Nephrology Social Works (CNSW) educational stipend from the National  
 Kidney Foundation  
 Durham Veterans Administration Medical Center Interprofessional Fellowship in  
 Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Services  
 European Association for Research on Adolescence SRA International Summer School  
 tuition and travel support (funded by Jacobs Foundation)  
 Fahs-Beck Scholar for Research and Experimentation from the New York Community  
 Trust  
 Global Education and Development Studies (Transatlantic Consortium on Early Childhood  
 Intervention)  
 Hartford Pre-dissertation Award  
 George Hitchings New Investigator Award  
 National Cancer Institute Dissertation Award  
 National Institute on Aging--Michigan Center for Urban African American Research--  
 Summer Training Workshop  
 NASW Foundation Jane B. Aron Doctoral Fellowship  
 Open Society Institute's Global Supplementary Grant (SOROS)  
 OSI Global Society Supplementary Grant  
 Philanthropic Educational Organization Scholarship  
 Point Foundation Scholarship Award  
 Public Health Social Work Leadership Fellowship (Maternal and Child Health Bureau)  
 Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowship  
 Shaver-Hitchings Scholarship from the Triangle Community Foundation  
 Spencer Foundation Educational Policy Fellowship  
 Ruth L. Kirschstein (NRSA) Training in Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV  
 SSWR Outstanding Dissertation Award  
 SSWR Doctoral Fellows Award  
 Summer Travel Award--University of Michigan Institute for Social Research, Inter-  
 University Consortium for Political and Social Research  
 Southeast SAS Users Group (SESUG) Scholar  
 Francisco J. Varela Research Award



