

# **Doctoral Student Handbook**

## **Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior**

Arnold School of Public Health  
University of South Carolina



2008-2010

Updated August 14, 2009

# HPEB Doctoral Handbook

(2008 - 2010)

**Note: Students admitted prior to Fall 2008 may choose to follow the guidelines of either this handbook or the student handbook in force at their time of matriculation into the program. For previous handbook information, go to: (<http://www.sph.sc.edu/hpeb/current.htm>)**

## Table of Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section 1</b>	
Overview of the USC Arnold School of Public Health	4
Overview of the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior	4
Faculty and Areas of Specialization	6
Overview of Graduate Assistantships	8
<b>Section 2</b>	
Important Guidelines and Regulations	10
<b>Section 3</b>	
Stages and Milestones	15
Table of Doctoral Milestones and Responsibilities	17
Timeline for Program Progression	20
<b>Section 4</b>	
Definitions and Explanations of Terminology	22
FAQ's	25
<b>Section 5</b>	
Qualifying Examination	26
<b>Section 6</b>	
Dissertation Proposal Guidelines	28
Dissertation Outline	32
Dissertation Requirements	33
Dissertation Format	34
<b>Section 7</b>	
Resources and Information	37

# Preface

## The Graduate Studies Bulletin

The *Graduate Studies Bulletin* is the official manual of regulations and guidelines for graduate study at the University of South Carolina. It is available on the University website at <http://www.sc.edu/bulletin/>. Graduate students are expected to read and adhere to the regulations of this publication throughout their matriculation at the University. Students are bound by the bulletin in effect at the time they begin or renew their enrollment in The Graduate School. If they wish to make a change to a subsequent bulletin, they must obtain permission of The Graduate School to do so.

## Carolina Community Student Handbook and Policy Guide

Please refer to the Carolina Community Student Handbook and Policy Guide for policies on the student code of conduct, student grievance, sexual harassment and other areas. The Carolina Community Student Handbook and Policy Guide is available online at <http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/>.

## Disability Services

Students with disabilities are assisted through the Office of Disability Services (<http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/>). Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services at 803-777-6742 (TDD) or 803-777-6744 for specific information about services. When students receive the Graduate School's offer of admission, they should notify the Office of Disability Services of their need(s) for specific accommodation(s).

## Acronyms Used Throughout This Handbook

ASPH	Arnold School of Public Health
BIOS	Department of Biostatistics
COMD	Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders
ENHS	Department of Environmental Health Sciences
EPID	Department of Epidemiology
EXSC	Department of Exercise Science
HPEB	Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; also called "Department;"
HSPM	Department of Health Services, Policy and Management
GA	Graduate Assistant; Graduate Assistantship
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
USC	University of South Carolina

# Section 1

## Overview of the USC Arnold School of Public Health

The Arnold School of Public Health was established by legislative action in 1974 and was fully accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) in 1979, 1984, 1990, 1996, and 2001. The school has as its major mission the improvement of public health status by preventing health hazards and by promoting improved health services through its education, research, and service programs. The school is mandated to improve environmental quality, to strengthen health promotion and disease control efforts, and to improve health service delivery.

An integral part of the training of students at the school is participation in research activities. Since the state is experiencing rapid demographic and industrial changes, health problems range from those of a traditional rural setting (infectious diseases, infant mortality, access to health care) to those of a modern industrial setting (impact of new industries on air and water quality and the safety of the workplace). The school has been committed to "action research" since its inception. The importance of dealing with operating programs and defined problems has led to close working relationships with human service programs, health care facilities, and governmental agencies throughout the state and region.

The Arnold School of Public Health is divided into the Departments of Health Services Policy and Management; Epidemiology and Biostatistics; Environmental Health Sciences; Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; Communication Sciences and Disorders; and Exercise Science. The school also contains the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Center for Research on Nutrition and Health Disparities, Rural Health Resource Center, and Speech and Hearing Center.

## Overview of the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior

The Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior (HPEB) at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health has as its focus understanding how policy, environmental, institutional, and individual actions can improve the public's health. This work, usually done in partnership with organizations and communities, uses principles and methods from the social and behavioral sciences to promote health in diverse settings across South Carolina, the US, and the globe.

The department is committed to a three-part mission of:

- Conducting timely interdisciplinary research that attracts extramural funding and generates knowledge leading to improvements in public health practice and outcomes
- Attracting and training talented and motivated students who will work to improve public health
- Providing research-linked service to professionals and communities to advance practice, support the profession, and improve public health

An important motivation for our work is that, in many cases, scientists and practitioners have identified which actions should and can be taken to improve public health, but these actions are often either carried out ineffectively or at too small a scale. For example, at least half of the worldwide annual deaths of 11 million

children under 5 years old can be prevented by proven actions, but we lack sufficient understanding of how to effectively mobilize sociopolitical processes, program design and implementation, and community partnerships to enact these actions. Behavioral and social research, training, and outreach aimed at acquiring, sharing, and applying knowledge about effective mobilization and coordination processes can therefore have large public health impacts.

The Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior is located on the second and third floors, north wing of the Arnold School of Public Health at the corner of Greene and Sumter streets.

## Faculty and Areas of Specialization:

FACULTY	AREA OF SPECIALIZATION
<p><b>Lucy Annang, PhD, 2003</b> University of Alabama at Birmingham Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Women’s reproductive health; sexually transmitted infection (STI) prevention; racial health disparities; community-based participatory research</p>
<p><b>Deborah L. Billings, PhD, 1995</b> University of Michigan Assistant Professor <i>(Joint appointment with Women’s and Gender Studies Program)</i></p>	<p>Latino health disparities, community-based participatory research, women’s health issues</p>
<p><b>Christine E. Blake, PhD, 2006</b> Cornell University Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Factors that influence food choice, dietary patterns and situational eating, food meanings, schema and scripts in context, maternal and child nutrition, obesity and chronic disease</p>
<p><b>Heather M. Brandt, PhD, 2003</b> University of South Carolina Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Cancer prevention and control; cancer disparities among underserved populations; social and behavioral aspects of human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer; community-based participatory research strategies; health literacy influences on health, behavior, and research participation; women's health</p>
<p><b>Sara J. Corwin, PhD, 1996</b> University of South Carolina Clinical Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Program evaluation, qualitative research methods; adolescent pregnancy prevention, healthy aging; stress management, teaching methods</p>
<p><b>Daniela B. Friedman, PhD, 2006</b> University of Waterloo Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Health communication, health literacy and the Internet, gerontology</p>
<p><b>Edward A. Frongillo, Jr., PhD, 1991</b> Cornell University Department Chair and Professor</p>	<p>Growth, development, and feeding of infants and young children,; family stress and parenting,; household food insecurity; policy and programs for improving nutrition and development; advancing consensus, commitment, and capacity for nutrition in poor countries; design and analysis of longitudinal studies</p>
<p><b>Sonya Jones, PhD, 2002</b> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Assistant Professor</p>	<p>Nutrition, social and policy determinants of health, youth empowerment and development</p>

FACULTY	AREA OF SPECIALIZATION
<b>Lisa L. Lindley, DrPH, 1997</b> University of South Carolina Clinical Assistant Professor	HIV/STI prevention, sexuality education, adolescent pregnancy prevention, sexual minority health
<b>Kara M. Montgomery, DrPH, 2004</b> University of South Carolina Clinical Assistant Professor	Nutrition, obesity/eating disorders; college student health issues; maternal and child/adolescent health
<b>Donna L. Richter, EdD, 1982</b> University of South Carolina Professor	HIV/AIDS prevention and research; public health practice; public health leadership; women's health issues; gerontology
<b>Ruth P. Saunders, PhD, 1986</b> University of South Carolina Associate Professor	Physical activity in children and adults, organizational change for health promotion, school health programs
<b>David S. Simmons, PhD, 2002</b> Michigan State University Assistant Professor <i>(Joint appointment with Anthropology)</i>	International health, health disparities, medical anthropology
<b>Lillian Smith, DrPH, 2004</b> University of South Carolina Clinical Assistant Professor	Worksite development, inter-disciplinary/organizational training, distance education
<b>Mindi Spencer, PhD, 2006</b> West Virginia University Assistant Professor <i>(Joint appointment with Institute for Southern Studies)</i>	Gerontological health, health disparities, health in the American South, care giving in diverse populations
<b>Jim Thrasher, PhD, 2005</b> University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Assistant Professor	Cancer prevention/control, tobacco, mass media and health communication, socio-cultural determinants of health, global health
<b>Robert F. Valois, PhD, 1984</b> University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Professor	Child and adolescent health, health risk behaviors, smoking cessation, program evaluation
<b>Katrina Walsemann, PhD, 2005</b> University of Michigan Assistant Professor	Lifespan development, early life experiences and health aging, environmental influences on population health
<b>Ken Watkins, PhD, 1999</b> University of Michigan Associate Chair & Graduate Director Clinical Associate Professor	Aging and health, diabetes self-management, quality of life, faith and health, self-regulation theory

### Distinguished Professor Emeritus

Roger G. Sargent, Ph.D., 1971 University of South Carolina	Applied nutrition, weight management; maternal and child nutrition
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# Overview of Graduate Assistantships

## Overview of Graduate Assistantships:

### Who Exactly is a Graduate Assistant?

A graduate assistant is a fully admitted graduate student who receives a stipend and some educational benefits in exchange for specific services that the student provides. A graduate assistant usually works directly with one or more faculty members, in a university office, or with a specific state agency. For more information, see:

<http://www.gradschool.sc.edu/gradassist/>

### Who is Eligible to Receive a Graduate Assistantship?

Any fully admitted student taking six to twelve graduate hours is eligible. There is generally no special consideration given for financial need or level of education. Employment is usually made on specific qualifications and skills of the individual. Sometimes the degree program in which a student is enrolled is a consideration. A student receiving other financial assistance in the form of work-study, stipend, or grant from another agency may not qualify to receive a graduate assistantship; but, some scholarships and fellowships may be received at the same time.

### How do I apply for a Graduate Assistantship?

There are no specific graduate assistantship applications available for Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior. To be considered for a position, an applicant must indicate an interest in being a graduate assistant on the admissions application form. The student will then be considered for any available graduate assistantships that match their qualifications and skills. Contact the HPEB Academic Programs Coordinator (Dr. Casey Goldston) for more information.

### What Types of Work do Graduate Assistants Perform?

The work responsibility of a graduate assistant depends entirely on the skills and work experiences he/she has and the project that they would be working on. Some teach undergraduate courses, grade papers, or proctor testing; others do research, assist with administration of programs and of the College, do clerical work including typing and filing or supervise student teaching practica. If you have any research skills/experience, be sure to include them on your resume. The assignment/tasks depend on the professional needs of the faculty members/supervisors with whom you work.

### How are Graduate Assistants Selected?

Faculty members who have positions for graduate assistants review the student applications on file and make selections. Consequently, students are strongly advised to inform the faculty members in their individual program of their interest in an assistantship.

### What Benefits do Graduate Assistants Receive?

Graduate students from out of state who hold qualifying assistantships are given an automatic tuition reduction to the in-state tuition level. Graduate assistantship paperwork must be completed no later than 25 calendar days from the first day of class in order to qualify for this reduction. In addition, graduate students who hold assistantships in the spring semester and pre-register for the upcoming fall semester automatically are accorded the reduced in-state tuition rates during the summer sessions (Maymester, Summer I, and Summer II).

## **GA Work Assignments & Course Load Limits:**

Work Assignments	Minimum	10 hours per week (Half-time)
	Maximum	20 hours per week (Full-time)

*Graduate assistants working more than the required hours per week must have approval of the Dean of Graduate School prior to the beginning date of their graduate assistantship appointment.*

Course Load Limits	Minimum	6 semester hours (1 hr summer)
	Maximum	15 semester hours

Academic Fees (Same for all GAs)                      Per credit hour amount

*Graduate Assistantship tuition may increase when the University's tuition increases.*

NOTE: Graduate assistants **DO NOT** receive any of the following benefits: free parking stickers; paid activity/technology fees; sick leave or paid holidays; insurance; or reduced textbook rates at either bookstore. Graduate assistants are **NOT** entitled to faculty benefits or privileges. Graduate assistants may pay separately for health services/activities fees by paying the University fee at the time of registration.

### **Do I Have to Make Up Time Missed for Holidays?**

You are not required to work when classes are not in session; but, two weeks notification and the permission of the supervisor are required for not working during USC-recognized holidays. Two weeks notification and the permission of the supervisor are also recommended for any/all vacation days you wish to request.

While USC students are not required to work during days when classes are not in session, the student may be asked to make up the hours if they received pay from the agency for a workday falling on a USC holiday. We advise each student to check with the agency and the supervisor on the agency's policy, as different agencies have different vacation policies.

Note: Fall break and Spring break are not considered official USC holidays.

### **When Will I Know if I Have an Assistantship?**

Assistantships are awarded on a semester basis beginning in late August and/or January. If you receive an assistantship, an offer letter will be mailed to you prior to the opening of the semester. Usually assistantships last for two semesters; but, money is allotted for one semester at a time and there is occasionally a turnover of assistantships after one semester period. In this instance, assistantship offers may be extended as openings occur throughout the semester.

### **What Should I Do if I Hear about a Possible Position?**

The Department has several recurring assistantships from year to year. Students who identify potential positions for graduate assistantships outside of the recurring positions may contact the Department's Academic Programs Coordinator for guidance to establish a new assistantship in an area of interest.

### **Do I Have to Reapply for an Assistantship Each Semester that I am in School?**

It is a good idea to verify with your supervisor that your position will be funded for each upcoming semester. Paperwork may need to be completed on acquiring a new assistantship position.

### **What other Types of Financial Aid are Available?**

In addition to graduate assistantships, financial aid is available in the form of part-time jobs, work/study opportunities, veterans benefits, and loans. For information on grants, loans and other financial assistance contact the USC Student Financial Aid Office at 803.777.8134 or online at: <http://www.sc.edu/financialaid/>

# Section 2

## Important Guidelines and Regulations

### Valid Period of Admission

An offer of admission to The Graduate School generally must be accepted and followed by enrollment within one year unless a shorter period is specified by a particular program. Unless a deferred enrollment has been approved by the program and The Graduate School, a student who fails to enroll within this 12-month period must submit a new application and pay a \$50 application fee. In addition, the student becomes subject to the regulations of the *Graduate Studies Bulletin* in effect when the student begins course work.

After enrollment, students are expected to make satisfactory and timely progress toward their degrees. Following three years of nonenrollment (less in some programs), the graduate admission of students admitted to degree programs becomes invalid. Degree-seeking students must reapply and fulfill the admission requirements then in effect if they wish to continue graduate study. Upon readmission, these students are subject to regulations in the current *Graduate Studies Bulletin* and of the program to which they are admitted.

The University reserves the right to decline admission to applicants, to suspend students, or to require the withdrawal of students when, for any reason, such action is deemed to be in the interest of the University.

### Maximum Period for Completing Doctoral Degree

All work toward a doctoral degree must be completed within eight years of initial enrollment. Some out-of-date courses may be revalidated (see “out of date courses”); transfer credit courses or courses from another institution may not be revalidated.

### Course Loads

A graduate student may enroll for a semester load not to exceed 15 graduate hours. Some programs limit their students to a 12-hour maximum semester load. A student with a load of 9 or more hours during a fall or spring term is classified as full-time for academic purposes. The maximum course load in each of the two summer sessions is 6 hours. May Session enrollment is part of the 6-hour limit for Summer I. A student must be enrolled for at least 1 credit during any semester in which thesis or dissertation progress is made and such University resources as the library, computer facilities, or faculty time are used. Graduate assistants carrying 6 or more hours for graduate credit are classified as full-time students. Graduate assistants are required to carry a minimum of 6 hours of graduate credit during the fall and spring terms.

### Residency

The intent of a residency requirement is to ensure that doctoral students benefit from and contribute to the full spectrum of educational and professional opportunities provided by the graduate faculty of a research university. When establishing residency, the student should interact with faculty and peers by regularly

attending courses, conferences, and seminars and using the library, library services, and other resources that support excellence in graduate education.

The doctoral residency requirement may be satisfied only after admission to a doctoral degree program. It requires enrollment in at least 18 graduate credit hours within a span of three consecutive semesters (excluding summers). Enrollment in a summer term is not required to maintain continuity, but credits earned during summer terms (including May Session) will count toward the 18 hours required for residency.

The student's advisory committee certifies, on the program of study, the time period in and the courses with which the student satisfied the residency requirement.

## **Degree Requirements**

The granting of a doctoral degree by the University of South Carolina presupposes a minimum of three full years of graduate study (or the equivalent) and requires a minimum of 60 graduate hours (including 12-30 hours of dissertation preparation) beyond the baccalaureate, or a minimum of 30 graduate hours, including 12 hours of dissertation preparation, beyond the master's degree. Candidates for doctoral degrees must complete at least half of their credit hours in courses numbered 700 and higher. A dissertation based on original research, with credit for a minimum of 12 hours of dissertation preparation, is required in most doctoral programs. The specific curriculum for the doctoral degree varies with the discipline, and students are referred to the appropriate section of the *Graduate Studies Bulletin*, the respective graduate student handbook, and the graduate director of their program for that information.

## **Program of Study**

Every degree student must file a program of study in The Graduate School for approval by the dean of The Graduate School. A program of study is a list of courses that satisfy degree requirements, and it must be approved by the advisor, the graduate director, and the dean of The Graduate School. This formal agreement serves a number of purposes that benefit both the student and the University. It causes the student and advisor to engage in early planning with a specific goal in mind; it provides useful information for the planning of course offerings; it facilitates subsequent advisement; and it protects the student in the event of unexpected curriculum or faculty changes. Although programs of study are binding, they can be modified when conditions warrant.

Programs of study should be filed at the earliest convenient date (*normally by the end of the first year for a master's degree program and by the end of the second year for a doctoral program*).

- Students pursuing a Certificate of Graduate Study must have an approved program of study on file in The Graduate School. Candidates must achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 on all USC courses taken for graduate credit. No more than 6 hours of C credit can be used on the program of study.
- Students pursuing a master's, specialist, or doctoral degree must have an approved program of study on file in The Graduate School. Candidates must achieve a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 on all courses taken for graduate credit and a 3.00 on all courses numbered 700 and above. Some programs have more stringent requirements.

## **Transfer of coursework**

A maximum of 12 graduate credit hours may be transferred into the doctoral program:

- Graduate coursework taken outside of a completed program of study may be used toward the doctoral degree. Such transfer requires approval from the student's program advisory committee.

- HPEB (or equivalent) courses that were taken as part of the masters program of study also may be used toward the doctoral degree. Such transfer requires approval from the student's program advisory committee and the HPEB faculty.

All transfer courses must meet Graduate School requirements regarding the eight-year period of viability, taken from an accredited institution recognized by USC, carrying graduate credit with a grade of "B" or better, and number of reduced tuition rate hours allowed (6), as described in the Graduate Studies Bulletin.

### **Changes in Degree Requirements and Academic Regulations**

Graduate students may obtain degrees in accordance with the regulations set forth in the Graduate Studies Bulletin in force at the time of admission to a degree program or under subsequent regulations published while enrolled in a degree program. A student must choose only one specific bulletin. Doctoral students have a period of eight years to claim the rights of a specific bulletin. Doctoral students whose admissions lapse, lose the rights to previous bulletins and come under the bulletin in force when they are readmitted.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

Candidates must pass comprehensive examinations, both written and oral, in the chosen fields of study. These comprehensive examinations are conducted under the supervision of the department or college chiefly concerned. The committee for the oral examination must comprise no fewer than four members, at least one of whom must be from outside the candidate's major department. The comprehensive examination normally is given after the candidate has completed all course work listed on the program of study except for courses in which the student may be currently registered. The comprehensive examination may not be given less than 60 days before the student receives the degree.

*Note: Certification of the comprehensive examination for doctoral students remains valid for five years (term specific), after which it must be revalidated.*

For the DrPH and PhD in HPEB, the written dissertation proposal and the oral defense of the proposal meet the Graduate School requirements for the written and oral comprehensive examination respectively.

### **Dissertation**

No later than five years after passing the comprehensive examination, the student must present a dissertation based on research that has been approved by a committee of professors in the major field. During the preparation of the dissertation, any student who uses University facilities or confers with faculty about dissertation work must be officially enrolled for at least one hour of academic credit. Twelve credits in 899 Dissertation Preparation are required for doctoral degrees, but 12-30 hours are allowed on the program of study.

### **Dissertation Examination and Submission of Final Dissertation**

A dissertation must be successfully defended before an examining committee comprised of no fewer than four members, at least one of whom must be outside of the candidate's major department. The examination on the dissertation should not be given less than 30 days before the date on which the candidate expects to receive the degree. At least 20 days prior to the date on which the candidate expects to receive the degree, the candidate must deposit the dissertation with the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Graduate School has converted to electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) submission rather than the previous paper submission (<http://gradschool.sc.edu/thesisdissertation/>). Students complete their thesis

defense/reading or dissertation defense; and, after any required revisions, the final approved dissertation will be submitted electronically in a PDF format (see instructions on the Graduate School website).

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Graduate Students**

Your responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Guidelines - be aware of and follow Graduate School requirements as stated in the Graduate Bulletin and guidelines provided in the HPEB Doctoral Handbook
- Advisement - student is responsible for knowing program requirements, taking an active role through all steps of their program and keeping copies of all important records and documents.
- Keeping the advisor (and committee members, as appropriate) apprised of your progress and barriers you are experiencing
- Working with your committee - understand the roles of your doctoral committee and of the members of the committees
- Deadlines - be aware of and meet graduate school and university deadlines
- Transfer credit - inform your advisor of your intention to apply for transfer credit immediately during advisement. Transfer credit must be approved as part of your program of study and is subject to faculty approval.
- Qualifiers – with your advisor, determine the appropriate time for you to take qualifiers; take appropriate steps to prepare for the qualifiers
- Dissertation - although the formal dissertation process begins after course work is complete, think about your research interests and possible dissertation topics as you go through your course work; discuss your ideas with faculty and students to develop them
- Formatting dissertation - obtain guidelines for formatting the dissertation from the graduate school early and format the dissertation accordingly. This is easiest if these guidelines are used in the early drafts of the dissertation proposal, as well as the final dissertation. Also, ask for additional guidelines specific to HPEB

## **Applications for Graduation**

During the final academic term, all candidates for graduate degrees and certificates must file formal application for graduation with the Graduate School. It will be necessary for the student to check for deadlines in each session. Applications submitted after the announced filing deadline will be accepted if supported by a letter from the graduate director and accompanied by a late fee. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Bulletin.

## **Academic Standards**

Graduate courses may be passed for degree credit with a grade as low as C, but the student's average on all courses attempted for graduate credit during the allowed period of study (six years for master's programs, eight years for doctoral programs) must be at least B (3.00 on a four-point system). Additionally, the student's average on all courses numbered 700 or above must be no less than 3.00. Grades earned on credits transferred from other universities do not count in the grade point average.

## **Academic Suspension Policy**

Graduate students whose cumulative grade point average drops below 3.00 (B) will be placed on academic probation and allowed one calendar year in which to raise the grade point average to at least 3.00. Students who do not reach a cumulative 3.00 grade point average during the grace period will not be permitted to enroll for further graduate course work in that degree program.

## **Appeals for Reinstatement**

Appeals for reinstatement from students who have been suspended should be reviewed first by the academic unit and then forwarded to the dean of The Graduate School for review by the Graduate Council.

## **Enrollment in Graduating Semester**

The Graduate School requires that each graduating student be enrolled for a minimum of one graduate credit in the graduating semester. For example, if a student is planning to graduate in May at the conclusion of the Spring semester, the student must be enrolled for at least one credit during the Spring semester.

This is the only instance in which the Graduate School considers Summer I and Summer II to be the same semester. Therefore, a student who plans to graduate in August at the conclusion of the Summer sessions, need only be registered for one credit hour over Maymester, Summer I, or Summer II. The Graduate School can make an exception to this policy if a student has successfully completed all degree requirements, including submission of his or her dissertation, before the first day of classes for the graduating semester. In this instance, the Graduate School can waive the mandatory enrollment requirement for the graduating semester.

## **Out of Date Courses**

Candidates for graduate degrees at the University of South Carolina may revalidate out of date USC graduate courses over eight years old for doctoral programs (over six years old for certificate, masters, and specialist programs). Each academic unit will determine which of its graduate courses are appropriate for the revalidation process. The Graduate School's GS 04 form (Permit for Revalidation Examination) must be completed for the revalidation process.

Courses transferred from other institutions may not be revalidated.

# Section 3

## Stages and Milestones for Doctoral Degrees in HPEB

This section provides information on stages, milestones, and other degree requirements.

Attainment of a doctoral degree entails successful completion of a series of tasks that fulfill the requirements for the doctoral degree.

This sequence of stages is similar to general requirements of the University of South Carolina for doctoral programs, with some variation by department. As each stage is passed, there is typically some written or formal notice taken, usually initiated by the student's advisor. Remember, you are accountable for your progress. Make and retain copies of all important records.

## Overview of Doctoral Program Requirements

There are two doctoral level programs offered by the HPEB department: The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH).

Both doctoral programs require:

- 60 hours of graduate credit, including a 12-hour dissertation;
- completing a series of steps: course work, qualifying exam, program of study, advancement to candidacy, dissertation proposal, conducting and defending a dissertation; and
- completing required course work in at least three areas: health education/health behavior, research and statistics/planning and evaluation and a cognate area.

There are some distinctions between the programs, based on different emphases in the course work and purposes of the degrees.

## Doctoral Degrees and Requirements

### The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The PhD degree is designed for those who seek to advance the state of the art and science of health promotion, education, and behavior. This degree stresses understanding of research designs and methodologies.

#### Program of Study Area Graduate Hours

Health education/health behavior 6 – 12

Research/statistical methods 18 – 24

(HPEB courses include 551, 704, 707, 710, 802, 810, 818 - Students will also need to take research/statistics courses from departments outside of HPEB)

Cognate 12 – 18

Dissertation 12

## **The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)**

The DrPH degree is the professional public health doctoral degree designed for individuals who wish to apply new knowledge in health promotion, education, and behavior programs. This degree stresses program development and evaluation methodologies.

### Program of Study Area Graduate Hours

Health education/health behavior 12 – 18

Research and evaluation and planning courses 9 – 18

(HPEB courses include 551, 704, 707, 710, 802, 810, 818 - Students will also need to take research/statistics courses from departments outside of HPEB)

Cognate 24 – 30

Dissertation 12

## **Overview of Stages and Milestones for Doctoral Degrees**

**Note: Students admitted prior to Fall 2008 may choose to follow the guidelines of either this handbook or the student handbook in force at their time of matriculation into the program. For previous handbook information, go to:**

**<http://www.sph.sc.edu/hpeb/current.htm>**

This next section provides a broad overview of various stages and milestones for the doctoral degree programs. The typical time it takes a student to complete the PhD or DrPH degree is usually between 3 ½ - 6 years. In this section, stages and milestones of the PhD and DrPH degrees are presented. “Typical” time frame is provided for each stage as information only and is not intended to indicate expected or preferred progress. Many factors influence this time frame including part-time or full-time enrollment, employment, family responsibilities, and personal issues.

In each spring semester, students submit an annual report of program progression to their advisor.

A more detailed description of the stages and milestones is provided below:

Milestone to be achieved	Criteria	Assesses:	Program goals	HPEB procedures and responsibilities	Student responsibilities
Admission to HPEB	GRE GPA Letters of Recommendation Letter of Intent	Academic capability  1. Research interests;  2. Potential fit with <i>an available</i> faculty mentor.	<b>HPEB faculty:</b>  to admit qualified students interested in becoming researchers or research-based practitioners and who have a good fit with faculty research interests.	<b>HPEB faculty</b> should:  • identify applicants who have a clear research focus • identify applicants who are capable of succeeding in a doctoral program • assign an initial advisor based on good fit of interests	<b>Applicants</b> should:  • accurately present professional goals and research interests in application • arrange pre-admission discussion/s with faculty members concerning research interests
Admission to candidacy	Full admission  Pass qualifying examination  File approved Program of Study (POS)	1. Breadth of knowledge regarding basic principles of health promotion, education, and behavior;  2. Ability to apply this knowledge in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of health promotion research and programs;  3. Ability to apply this knowledge in designing and evaluating health promotion research and programs.	<b>HPEB faculty:</b>  to advocate advancement to candidacy for students who have demonstrated mastery of basic HPEB principles and ability to think critically (through successful completion of Qualifying Examination).  <b>Committee:</b>  to approve Program of Study designed to develop advanced knowledge and skills in HPEB, research/ statistics or planning/ evaluation, and selected cognate area (HPEB faculty approve transfer credit).	<b>Faculty mentors</b> should:  • provide initial advisement and guidance, including preparation for qualifying exam • provide research mentoring as appropriate • facilitate early formation of advisory committee • facilitate selection of optimal dissertation chair and committee members • in conjunction with the program advisory committee, advise student on and approve the POS • conduct “annual review” with each doctoral student	<b>Students</b> should:  • take HPEB 704 (doctoral seminar) in each of their first two semesters • choose chair by end of first semester of enrollment • form advisory committee during second semester (committee will continue with the student throughout the student’s program) • take and pass the qualifying exam at the first administration (January or August) following the end of the second semester of full-time study (about 12-18 hours) • develop and present to chair of committee an annual report describing progress for duration of program (see guidelines); signed report due to Dr. Goldston by April 20 each year • meet with committee to

Milestone to be achieved	Criteria	Assesses:	Program goals	HPEB procedures and responsibilities	Student responsibilities
					<p>propose program of study to achieve professional goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>at least once per year duration of doctoral program meet with full committee to review progress (based on annual report) and to plan for future; there should be at least two full committee meetings prior to the dissertation proposal defense</li> </ul>
<p>Doctoral comprehensive examination</p>	<p>Coursework completed</p> <p>Assure comprehensive mastery of literature</p> <p>Approval of written dissertation proposal</p> <p>Pass oral defense of proposal</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Academic progress: As and Bs on courses;</li> <li>Advanced knowledge of profession and selected specialty;</li> <li>Sound research plan and ability to carry out research plan presented in a proposal format similar to NIH (see guidelines).</li> </ol>	<p><b>Committee:</b></p> <p>to approve moving forward to dissertation research students who have demonstrated advanced knowledge, developed an appropriate dissertation plan, and demonstrated ability to carry out research.</p>	<p><b>Faculty mentors</b> should provide mentoring and guidance to facilitate development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>comprehensive mastery of literature guided by dissertation focus</li> <li>sound dissertation research proposal and professional skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students</b> should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and demonstrate to committee comprehensive mastery of relevant literature (e.g., literature review and synthesis document, independent study report, oral exam as determined by the committee);</li> <li>develop a high quality proposal in research proposal format for dissertation research, working in collaboration with chair and committee</li> <li>take third semester of HPEB 704 (doctoral seminar)</li> </ul>
<p>Completion of dissertation</p>	<p>Approval of dissertation document</p> <p>Pass oral defense of dissertation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissertation research carried out appropriately;</li> <li>Well-written dissertation document, including two manuscripts (see guidelines);</li> </ol>	<p><b>Committee:</b></p> <p>to recommend awarding doctoral degree for students who have carried out research, developed well-written dissertation, and presented results.</p>	<p><b>Faculty mentors</b> should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide dissertation guidance, research mentoring, and professional mentoring</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students</b> should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop high quality dissertation document and presentation, working in collaboration with chair and committee</li> </ul>

Milestone to be achieved	Criteria	Assesses:	Program goals	HPEB procedures and responsibilities	Student responsibilities
		3. Presentation <i>and successful defense</i> of dissertation results.			

**Timeline for doctoral progression for full-time\* HPEB doctoral students (See Graduate School website for exact deadlines)**

**Students with Fall admission**

Event	Admission, select committee chair	Form advisory committee, propose POS, write and submit 1 <sup>st</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Advance to candidacy</b>		Pass qualifying exam ,take course work, early stages of work toward comprehensive mastery of literature and dissertation proposal; write and submit 2 <sup>nd</sup> annual report		Demonstrate comprehensive mastery of literature and defend dissertation proposal; write and submit 3 <sup>rd</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Doctoral Comp Exam</b>		Conduct dissertation research, draft dissertation document, defend dissertation study; write and submit 4 <sup>th</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Completion of dissertation &amp; graduation (May or August)</b>				
Year	Year 1			Year 2		Year 3		Year 4				
Semester	Semester 1	Semester 2	Summer	Semesters 3 & 4		Summer	Semesters 5 & 6		Summer	Semesters 7 & 8		Summer
<b>Fall admits</b>	Aug-Dec	Jan – May	June July	Aug – May		June July	Aug – May		June July	Aug – May		June July

**Students with Spring admission**

Event	Admission, select committee chair	Form advisory committee, propose POS, write and submit 1 <sup>st</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Advance to candidacy</b>		Pass qualifying exam ,take course work, early stages of work toward comprehensive mastery of literature and dissertation proposal; write and submit 2 <sup>nd</sup> annual report			Demonstrate comprehensive mastery of literature and defend dissertation proposal; write and submit 3 <sup>rd</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Doctoral Comp Exam</b>			Conduct dissertation research, draft dissertation document, defend dissertation study; write and submit 4 <sup>th</sup> annual report  <b>Milestone: Completion of dissertation &amp; graduation (December)</b>		
Year	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4		
Semester	Semester 1	Summer	Semester 2	Semester 3	Summer	Semester 4	Semester 5	Summer	Semester 6	Semester 7	Summer	Semester 8
<b>Spring admits</b>	Jan - May	June July	Aug -Dec	Jan - May	June July	Aug- Dec	Jan - May	June July	Aug-Dec	Jan-May	June July	Aug – Dec

\* Part-time doctoral students work with primary advisor to adjust timeline as appropriate

(Doctoral students may demonstrate mastery of relevant literature by developing a separate, comprehensive literature review document for the committee that is intended to inform the development of the research plan. There are many possible strategies for organizing this document; one useful approach is to organize it around the key elements of the conceptual model. Other options for demonstrating mastery of relevant literature include independent study report, oral exam as determined by the committee.)

# Section 4

## Definitions and Explanations of Terminology

### Advisor

The initial academic advisor is assigned and based on a match between student and faculty research interests, with information available in student application. When the student selects the chair of the Program Advisory and Dissertation Committees, this person becomes the academic advisor.

### Candidacy

The Graduate School considers doctoral students to be candidates for their respective degrees when they have 1) passed a qualifying examination; 2) been fully admitted to the doctoral degree program; and 3) filed an approved doctoral program of study with The Graduate School. While the qualifying examination is often taken early in a doctoral program, a graduate student does not become a candidate for the doctoral degree until granted admission to candidacy by the dean of The Graduate School.

The dean of The Graduate School admits the student to doctoral candidacy after completion of all three conditions. The Graduate School will notify the student and graduate director of the admission to candidacy. Completion of all three components of the admission to candidacy procedure should be at least one full academic year before granting of the degree.

### Committee Chair

The student selects a committee chair for the Program Advisory and Dissertation Committees. This is the person with whom the student will work most directly and should be selected on the basis of the area of study. Students typically discuss research interests with potential committee chairs and the final decision is made based on the “fit” of research interests, working relationship, and faculty availability.

### Comprehensive Examination

Doctoral Comprehensive Examinations are required by the Graduate School near the completion of doctoral course work and prior to beginning the formal dissertation process. For the DrPH and PhD students, the written draft and oral defense of the dissertation proposal meets this requirement.

### Dissertation

The culminating document that describes research that has been approved by a committee of faculty members in the major field. A minimum of 12 hours of dissertation credit are required for all doctoral programs. The traditional dissertation has five chapters: introduction, literature review, research methods, manuscripts and discussion plus references and appendices, as appropriate. (Students in HPEB are required to develop a minimum of two manuscripts ready for publication as Chapter 4 of the dissertation.)

## **Dissertation Proposal**

A written document which describes a research problem, develops support for examining the problem and describes the research methodology proposed for the dissertation; the written document and oral defense of the proposal must be approved by the dissertation committee.

## **Dissertation Proposal Defense**

The oral defense of the proposed dissertation (see above); typically, the student will prepare an oral presentation (approximately 30-45 minutes) of the proposed dissertation which will be followed by questions and discussion. The presentation proposal defenses are open and must be posted by date, time, and location; the committee meets with the student for further questions and discussion after guests have left.

## **Dissertation Defense**

An oral presentation of the dissertation study results is presented. Defenses are open and must be posted by date, time, and location (see <http://gradschool.sc.edu/thesisdissertation/announcements/gdda.asp>); the committee meets with the student for further questions and discussion after guests have left.

## **Doctoral Committees**

Forms for approval of doctoral committees can be found in the HPEB and Graduate School websites – both departmental and Graduate School forms must be completed. Although the composition of the different doctoral committees (described below) may be independent of each other, it is strongly recommended that all committees have the same committee members.

***Program Advisory Committee:*** guides the student in developing a Program of Study that is consistent with degree guidelines and student's career goals; this committee is comprised of three or more members including an outside member (also known informally as the Program of Study committee). This is an internal HPEB committee.

***Oral Comprehensive Examination Committee:*** oversees student's progress through the Graduate School's written and oral comprehensive examinations requirement; for PhD and DrPH students, the written draft and oral defense of the dissertation proposal meets this requirement.

***Dissertation Committee and Dissertation Defense Committee:*** Each committee must include an outside member and at least three other members with two or more members from the student's major degree program.

## **HPEB Department Chairperson (“Department Chair”)**

The administrative head of the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior; HPEB is one of six departments in the Arnold School of Public Health

## **HPEB Department Graduate Director (“Graduate Director”)**

The faculty member who oversees and signs off on paperwork pertaining to graduate admissions, programs of study, progression through the program and graduation clearance; coordinates the development and administration of the Qualifying Examination..

## **Program of Study**

The Program of Study is a document that reflects degree requirements and student professional goals; it is a binding agreement between the student and the Graduate School when approved, although the student can modify under appropriate circumstances; the Program Advisory Committee approves the Program of Study. This form is available on line at:

<http://gradschool.sc.edu/DocLibrary/documents/doctoralprogramofstudy.pdf>

Adjustments to the Program of Study may be made on the Program Adjustment Form. This form is available on line at:

<http://gradschool.sc.edu/DocLibrary/documents/programadjustmentform.pdf>

## **Qualifying Examination**

The qualifying examination for the PhD and the DrPH is a written exam administered over seven days; it is taken at the first administration (January or August) following the end of the second semester of full-time study (about 12-18 hours).

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

**QUESTION:** *How do I change my Program of Study?*

**ANSWER:** The Program of Study can be changed with the approval of your Committee Chair and the Graduate Director.

**QUESTION:** *What if I need to make a change on a doctoral committee?*

**ANSWER:** The doctoral committee can be changed with the approval of your committee chair, the Graduate Director and the Dean of the Graduate School. The “Doctoral Committee Appointment Request” form must be completed to appoint and change doctoral committee members.

**QUESTION:** *What if my committee chair leaves the university?*

**ANSWER:** Discuss the situation with your chair prior to his or her leaving the university; if you are very early in your program, it will be necessary to identify another chair. In some limited circumstances when you are very close to finishing your program, a change may not be needed.

**QUESTION:** *What happens if I do not pass all or part of the qualifying exam?*

**ANSWER:** Consult with the Graduate Director and your advisor for advice. You may need to re-take all or part of the exam. You have two chances to pass the qualifying examination.

**QUESTION:** *What happens if I am late on a graduate school deadline?*

**ANSWER:** Depending on how late and what deadline it is, it may be possible to pay a late fee and get a letter of support from your advisor. Prevention is best: pay attention to the Graduate School and University deadlines!

**QUESTION:** *When should I take my qualifying examination?*

**ANSWER:** The qualifying examination should be taken at the first administration (January or August) following the end of the second semester of full-time study (about 12-18 hours).

**QUESTION:** *When should I sign up and pay for dissertation credit hours?*

**ANSWER:** You must take a minimum of 12 dissertation hours; these hours can be taken in almost any configuration. You are required to register for at least 1 credit hour any time you are using university resources (such as working with faculty, using the library or computer resources). You are also required to be registered in at least 1 hour the session you plan to graduate. You can take more than 12 dissertation credit hours if needed. For example, if you have already taken 12 dissertation hours and still have one more session in which to complete your dissertation, you must register for at least one more hour.

**QUESTION:** How can I keep up with Graduate School deadlines and requirements?

**ANSWER:** Check the Graduate School calendar at <http://www.gradschool.sc.edu/>

# Section 5

## **Qualifying Examination for PhD and DrPH Students**

### *Overview of the HPEB Qualifying Examination*

The purpose of the doctoral qualifying examination is to assess students' breadth of knowledge regarding the basic principles of health promotion, education, and behavior; capacity to critically review and conduct research in this discipline; and potential for successfully completing the doctoral degree in HPEB.

The exam reflects the content of the MPH HPEB core courses. Although it is not necessary for doctoral students to take each of these courses, students are expected to have a mastery of the concepts and skills contained in these courses:

HPEB 700 CONCEPTS AND METHODS IN HEALTH PROMOTION  
HPEB 701 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH PROMOTION  
HPEB 702 PLANNING HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS  
HPEB 707 HEALTH PROMOTION RESEARCH METHODS  
HPEB 710 EVALUATION OF HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAMS  
HPEB 748 COMMUNITY HEALTH DEVELOPMENT

The examination is comprised of two sections: one, critical review of published research manuscript (provided with the exam), and two, development of a program proposal focusing on planning, implementation, and evaluation. This is a take-home examination to be completed in one week's time (i.e., 7 days). Students may use any non-human resource in preparing answers, but the work must be original – in other words, not copied from an existing source. Students must cite references that are used. In citing references, APA or similar reference style may be used, but students must be consistent with the reference style that is used. Responses to each section will be limited to no more than 20 double-spaced typed pages. All key material should be contained within the 20-page limit (i.e., not in an appendix).

## **Registration for the Qualifying Examination**

The qualifying examination is offered two times each year:

- Early January
- Early August

Exact times will be arranged with the Graduate Director during the semester prior to the exam times. Students should attend the qualifying exam informational meeting the semester prior to taking the exam, and register at that time.

## **Failure to Complete the Qualifying Examination**

When students who register for the qualifying exam fail to arrive or fail to complete the qualifying exam at the scheduled time, for whatever reason, the matter will be referred to the Doctoral Committee. The Committee will make a determination about the student's status regarding this matter.

## **Evaluation of the Qualifying Examination**

The qualifying examination is evaluated by section. Each section is graded by three faculty members assigned to that section. Exam reviewers grade exams independently. After the exams have been graded, *Pass* is assigned when at least two of the three graders have evaluated the section as “pass”; *Fail* is assigned when at least two of the three graders have evaluated the section as “fail”. Grades are reported to the Graduate Director. HPEB faculty approves all qualifying exam grades. For sections graded “fail”, students will be required to take the sections of the exam failed (i.e., section 1, section 2, or both) at the next exam administration. Graders provide the Graduate Director written summaries of feedback for students, and any suggestions that the graders have for remediation (if student failed section) or improvement (if student passed section but some weaknesses were apparent). After approval of grades by HPEB faculty, all students are notified of results via email by the Graduate Director; the student’s academic adviser is copied on this communication. Students will be instructed to confer with Graduate Director. The Graduate Director provides all students (pass or fail) written feedback from the graders. The HPEB Graduate Director and student’s advisor develop a “remediation plan” for/with a failed student, in consultation with the doctoral committee.

## **Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy**

In the Department of Health Promotion, Education, and Behavior passing the qualifying exam is a prerequisite to advancement to candidacy for the PhD and DrPH degrees. At this point, the Graduate Director will notify the Dean of the Graduate School of the student’s progress.

# Section 6

## Dissertation Proposal Guidelines

The following outline guides the development of the dissertation proposal for doctoral students in HPEB. A more detailed description of the research plan, adapted from NIH, follows this outline. Note that two options are presented to cover the situations when both papers come from the same data source and when each paper comes from a different data source (e.g., one qualitative and one quantitative paper). The methodology for the dissertation may be quantitative and/or qualitative, and data for analysis may come from primary (e.g., student-collected) or secondary data sources. This document assumes that two papers are planned for the dissertation. Recommended number of pages assumes double-spacing.

(Doctoral students may demonstrate mastery of relevant literature by developing a separate, comprehensive literature review document for the committee that is intended to inform the development of the research plan. There are many possible strategies for organizing this document; one useful approach is to organize it around the key elements of the conceptual model. Other options for demonstrating mastery of relevant literature include independent study report, oral exam as determined by the committee.)

Option 1: both papers come from same data source

- I. Introduction** (unified across papers)
- II. Specific Aims\***
  - a. Paper 1—Aim 1
  - b. Paper 2—Aim 2

\*Research Questions may be used in place of Aims for some studies (e.g., qualitative studies)
- III. Background and Significance** (unified)
- IV. Preliminary Studies**
  - a. Previous work done
  - b. Preparation of student
- V. Research Design and Methods**
  - a. Overview of research design
  - b. Conceptual framework (Note: sometimes this may fit better in the background section)
  - c. Sample description /sampling procedures
  - d. Measures and specification of variables, as appropriate
  - e. Data collection procedures
  - f. Analysis Plan/ Analytic Approach
  - g. Potential Limitations
- VI. Logistics** (unified)
  - a. Human subjects (i.e., IRB) materials and consent forms drafted
  - b. Timeline
  - c. Budget
- VII. References**
- VIII. Appendices** (as appropriate)

Option 2: each paper comes from a different data source

- I. Introduction** (unified across papers)
- II. Specific Aims\***
  - a. Paper 1
  - b. Paper 2

\*Research Questions may be used in place of Aims for some studies (e.g., qualitative studies)
- III. Background and Significance** (unified)
- IV. Preliminary Studies**
  - a. Previous work done
  - b. Preparation of student
- V. Research Design and Methods**
  - a. Overview of research design for Papers 1 and 2
  - b. Conceptual framework for Papers 1 and 2 (Note: sometimes this may fit better in the background section)
  - c. Methods for Paper 1
    - i. Overview of research design
    - ii. Sample description /sampling procedures
    - iii. Measures and specification of variables, as appropriate
    - iv. Data collection procedures
    - v. Analysis Plan/ Analytic Approach
  - d. Methods for Paper 2
    - i. Overview of research design
    - ii. Sample description /sampling procedures
    - iii. Measures and specification of variables, as appropriate
    - iv. Data collection procedures
    - v. Analysis Plan/ Analytic Approach
  - e. Potential Limitations for Papers 1 and 2
- VI. Logistics** (unified)
  - a. Human subjects (i.e., IRB) materials and consent forms drafted
  - b. Timeline
  - c. Budget
- IX. References**
- X. Appendices** (as appropriate)

## Guidelines on the Research Plan (adapted from NIH)

The Research Plan should include sufficient information needed for evaluation of the project, independent of any other document (e.g., previous proposal or appendix). The format for preparing this section is provided below. Be specific and informative, and avoid redundancies.

### Page Limitations

**Do not exceed 45 double-spaced pages with 1 inch margins for *Items II-V*.** All tables, graphs, figures, diagrams, and charts must be included within the 45-page limit. Be succinct and remember that there is no requirement to use all 45 pages allotted to *Items II-V* of the Research Plan.

### Content of Research Plan

Please use the following format and page distribution. Organize *Items II-V* of the Research Plan to answer these questions: *What do you intend to do? Why is the work important? What has already been done? How are you going to do the work?*

#### I. Introduction

#### II. Specific Aims

List the broad, long-term objectives and the goal of the specific research proposed, e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology. **Two pages are recommended per paper.**

#### III. Background and Significance

Briefly sketch the background leading to the present application, critically and comprehensively evaluate existing knowledge that is specifically relevant to the proposed research, and specifically identify the gaps that the project is intended to fill. State concisely the importance and health relevance of the research described in this application by relating the specific aims to the broad, long-term objectives. If the aims of the application are achieved, state how scientific knowledge or clinical practice will be advanced. Describe the effect of these studies on the concepts, methods, technologies, treatments, services or preventative interventions that drive this field. This section will be based on comprehensive mastery of the relevant literature (see HPEB Doctoral Progression). The Background and Significance section should present a concise and well-articulated argument for conducting the proposed research with citations of selected, key articles to support the argument. **A maximum of seven pages are recommended.**

#### IV. Preliminary Studies

Use this section to provide an account of the students' or research program's preliminary studies pertinent to this application, including his/her preliminary experience with and outreach to the proposed study participants. This section can also include independent studies, pilot work, or descriptive work related to the proposed project. This information will also help to establish the experience and competence of the investigator to pursue the proposed project. **A maximum of seven pages are recommended.**

## **V. Research Design and Methods**

Describe the research design, conceptual or clinical framework (which may be derived, in part, from the comprehensive literature review), procedures, and analyses to be used to accomplish the specific aims of the project. Include how the data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted as well as the data-sharing plan as appropriate. Describe any new methodology and its advantage over existing methodologies. Describe any novel concepts, approaches, tools, or technologies for the proposed studies. Discuss the potential difficulties and limitations of the proposed procedures and alternative approaches to achieve the aims. Point out any procedures, situations, or materials that may be hazardous to personnel and the precautions to be exercised. Be as succinct as possible.

## HPEB Dissertation Outline

The table below provides guidance for development of the final dissertation document for doctoral students in HPEB. Note that dissertations must be formatted in accordance with Graduate School guidelines.

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Content of Dissertation</b>	<b>Relation to Proposal Sections</b>
1	Introduction	Adapted from Introduction to reflect refinement of dissertation purpose and goals
2	Background and Significance	Based on Background and Significance and updated to reflect most recent literature and understanding of potential significance.
3	Research Design and Methods	Updated from Research Design and Methods to reflect methods as actually implemented
4	Paper 1	Self-contained manuscript formatted appropriately for a selected journal; Introduction adapted from Specific Aims and relevant elements of Background and Significance (note in chapter 2 it is unified)
	Paper 2	Self-contained manuscript formatted appropriately for a selected journal; Introduction adapted from Specific Aims and relevant elements of Background and Significance (note in chapter 2 it is unified)
Chapter 5	Conclusions and Implications	New but should be related to Significance
References		Include all references cited in dissertation document
Appendices		May include IRB documentation, instruments, etc.

## **Dissertation Requirements**

**Students are expected to produce a minimum of two manuscripts towards publication as part of their dissertation.** For researchers, academics, and practitioners, productivity is measured by peer-reviewed publications. Manuscripts under review on the student's curriculum vitae are evidence of productivity when applying for positions.

This format differs from that of a traditional dissertation in that two publishable manuscripts are placed in Chapter 4 of the final dissertation. Students work with the committee chair and committee to develop the two manuscripts. Students may wish to write more than two manuscripts upon committee approval.

Each journal provides instructions for authors that include information on how to submit manuscripts, section headings, manuscript length, number of tables and graphs, reference style, etc. NOTE: Each journal has its own specifications, which must be followed to be considered for publication.

Doctoral candidates will be first authors of dissertation manuscripts. Students will also be responsible for obtaining agreement among the committee members on the order of authorship for each manuscript before the dissertation approval form is signed.

## Dissertation Format

(Note: Also refer to the dissertation outline described in Section 3 of this handbook.)

### Chapter 1 - Introduction

**Problem identification:** State the problem.

**Problem definition:** Describe the nature, background, social and economic costs of the problem. This section should include a brief review of previous research related to the problem to support the student's points. What gaps in the literature have not been addressed?

Formal statement of problem:

- a. What are the broad objectives/aims of study?
- b. Identify the theoretical framework that will guide the research. This is the link between the problem and research design.
- c. What are the specific research questions/hypotheses the student will address?

**Justification of research:** How will the student's study add to the body of science? Information should be included to demonstrate why the research is being done.

**Preview** Provide a brief description of what will be presented in each chapter.

### Chapter 2 – Background and Significance

This section synthesizes previous research to facilitate an understanding of the problem. It provides the preface for the present research problem and justifies the importance of the present dissertation project. Sources of literature include historical and recent publications, vital statistics, data from relevant agencies, communications from experts, etc. The chapter includes specific discussion of the nature of the problem, i.e. descriptions of agencies involved with the problem, research studies which have investigated the problem, summaries of reviews of the problem, and the relevance of the problem to the target population. Findings from other studies need to be discussed in past tense with conclusions and recommendations in the present tense. Also include subsections regarding theoretical background for the study. The final paragraph summarizes findings and restates the study objective. Length will vary according to topic and amount of prior research.

The following elements should be included:

- a. Introductory paragraph - State outline of the literature review and justification of literature selected.
- b. Body of the literature review - Organize by subheadings. Ensure a logical flow both between and within each subheading. Organizational options may include but are not limited to: 1) Historical to recent studies; 2) Weaker to stronger design; 3) General to specific studies, and; 4) Topic. For each reviewed study, tersely state findings, conclusions or recommendations, and methodological issues pertinent to the study. End each subsection with a few specific summary statements.
- c. Summary of current status of problem - State overall and specific strengths and limitations of the literature. End with concise statements on how the proposed research project will address these and

build on the literature. Restate the study aims/hypotheses. Present theoretical/conceptual model for the study.

### **Chapter 3 - Methodology**

The methodology section should include details as necessary to allow another researcher to replicate the study. The following information should be included:

- a. Describe the study design.
- b. Identify the target population, study subjects and sampling technique. Include information on the setting in which data collection takes place.
- c. Define the variables to be collected and analyzed. Describe measures and clearly state the questions from which these variables are derived. Define terms and variables used in the study.
- d. Describe data collection procedures (e.g., interview, survey, chart abstraction) and the instrument(s) used. Clearly identify quality control procedures used during data collection. Describe procedures used to protect human subjects (informed consent, confidentiality).
- e. Describe the overall analysis plan and specific procedures.

### **Chapter 4 - Manuscript/s**

Doctoral students will work with committee members to plan two distinctly significant foci for manuscripts. The following provides a generic outline for manuscripts. Students must select potential journals for manuscript submittal and follow the instructions to authors provided by those journals. Describe findings as they relate to each specific research question.

Manuscript Title

Format:

- Abstract
- Introduction
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- References

### **Chapter 5 - Summary, Implications and Recommendations**

Concise and comprehensive summary of the dissertation: synthesis discussion of the publications resulting from the research, findings, implications and future research.

- Describe the overall conclusions that can be reached from the analyses.
- Discuss results from previous research that are pertinent to the findings.
- Describe the limitations and implications of the research and findings.
- Identify possible areas of future research.

### **References:**

The references for the literature review and the manuscripts need to be consolidated into one section. However, the references for the two manuscripts must stand-alone. It is important to note that references

need to meet the requirements for the graduate school. In addition, the student needs to prepare the manuscripts for submission according to journal requirements.

All dissertations must meet Graduate School requirements: <http://gradschool.sc.edu/thesisdissertation/>

# Section 7

## Resources and Information for Students

### Thomas Cooper Library (Greene Street)

The Thomas Cooper Library has four stack levels of books, a ground floor, a main floor (where circulation and reference sections are located), and a mezzanine. (The mezzanine is the top floor; main is the main entrance floor; the ground floor and the four stack floors go down. That is, Level 4 is the fourth floor below the ground level.)

Access to the Library collections is obtained through the USCAN/NOTIS Online Card Catalog with terminals located throughout the building. CD-ROM stations are also available for users searching multiple databases. Staff in the Reference Library is available to provide individual help. USCAN may also be accessed on the web at <http://www.sc.edu/uscan/>

The Thomas Cooper Library has other valuable services for graduate students, including 40 study rooms (seating up to four persons each), six seminar rooms for library-related seminars, and a classroom for the library-taught orientation and bibliographic instruction classes. Other special areas in the library include the Student Computer Labs (on Levels 3 and 5), the Science Library (on Level 4), Special Collections (on the Mezzanine Level), and the Map Library (on Level 5). The telephone number for the circulation department is (803) 777-3145.

### School of Medicine Library

The School of Medicine Library at the University of South Carolina can be an excellent resource for students in Public Health. Many journals can be found at both Thomas Cooper and the Medical Library, so it is good to check with Thomas Cooper first (their listings will indicate what libraries or agencies in this area carry the health journals not available at Cooper). The Medical School Library is located on the Veteran's Administration Medical Center Grounds off Garners Ferry Road. The telephone number is (803) 733-3344.

### The Richland County Public Library and other Library Resources

The Richland County Public Library is Columbia's public library and provides access to more than 650,000 books and many other materials. This new library is located on 1431 Assembly Street. In addition, there are various other branches located in neighboring communities. The telephone number for the Richland County Public Library is (803) 799-9084. The Richland County Public Library requires residency in Richland County to check out materials and to access special services. In addition, completing the membership requirements to obtain a "library card" may also be necessary.

Several State government agencies have very good libraries and may be accessible to students.

### Communication

Each student has an assigned mailbox outside of the main office area (Room 216A) in the Arnold School of Public Health. These mailboxes are used to keep the students up to date with information, events, etc., going on

in HPEB and the School. It is also a base for communication with other students, staff, and faculty. Check your mailbox every day! Students are also required to submit electronic mail (e-mail) addresses to the Department's administrative assistant to be included in the department's listserv. The listserv updates students to opportunities within the Department and University. A separate doctoral student listserv is maintained by the Doctoral Student Club.

### **Health Sciences Computing Labs**

The Arnold School of Public Health is fortunate to have excellent computer facilities and an excellent staff. The facilities include personal computers in Room 204. Early in the Fall semester the staff will be giving lectures on the use of the hardware and software that is available on this of Student equipment.

### **Office and Alumni Services**

The Office of Student and Alumni Services (in Room 112 of Arnold School of Public Health) provide many important services for students, including: course registration assistance, guidance in locating financial assistance, and services in preparation for entering your chosen career. In fact, they can help you in too many ways to list. If you need any kind of information or assistance, this is a good place to start. If they cannot help you, they can tell you who can.

### **Thomson Student Health Center**

The Thomson Student Health Center (TSHC) is located directly behind the Russell House. TSHC, one of some 120 nationally accredited university student health centers, is staffed by board certified or board eligible physicians, certified nurse practitioners, and appropriate numbers of registered nurses, most of whom are certified in college health nursing. TSHC is open mornings and afternoons, Monday through Friday, except on University holidays. A Sunday late afternoon and evening clinic is held during Fall and Spring semesters to manage urgent conditions. No inpatient, overnight, or after-hours services are available.

Daily clinics at the TSHC include General Medicine and Women's Care. Weekly clinics in Orthopedics, Dermatology, and Sports Medicine and Minor Injuries are available. Ancillary services include pharmacy, diagnostic radiology, clinical laboratory, physical therapy, and immunization and allergy injection services. All students enrolled in Columbia campus classes are eligible for services at TSHC. TSHC can be reached at <http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/tshc> or (803) 777-3174

### **Campus Wellness**

Campus Wellness is devoted to awareness and prevention of acute and chronic health issues for students, faculty and staff at the University of South Carolina. By offering a wide range of programs and services, this office assists campus community members with making healthy choices and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. For more information, go to: <http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/cwp/>.

### **Counseling and Human Development Center**

The Counseling and Human Development Center (CHDC) is located on-campus in Byrnes Building (7<sup>th</sup> floor), College Street, across from The Horseshoe. CHDC, a fully accredited counseling center offers: brief outpatient psychiatric intervention; psychological services, including individual and group counseling and biofeedback and psychological testing services; and limited social work support for Columbia campus students. Students, who need inpatient care, extended outpatient services, or other clinical care that exceeds the capabilities of CHDC, are referred to community providers of the patient's choice. Professional staff clinical evaluation and

management services are free to all students who have paid the Health Fee portion of the University Fee. CHDC is open daily, Monday-Friday (except on University holidays). Appointments are required except for acute or emergency situations. The Counseling and Human Development Center can be reached at (803) 777-5223.

### **Off-Campus Student Services**

Off-Campus Student Services, located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Russell House. It offers many services of interest to students who do not live on the USC campus. Among the many programs and services offered are a babysitter list, Columbia area resident assistance, a newsletter, and an off-campus housing locator service (finding roommates and/or apartments). Off-Campus Student Services can be reached at (803) 777-3196.

### **International Student Services**

International Programs for Students is located in room 123 of the Byrnes Building. International student services provide a wide range of services for international students, including pre-arrival information, orientation programs, immigration advising, personal assistance, and student programs and activities. Professionals with specialized training and expertise working with international students staff the office. International Student Services can be reached at <http://www.sa.sc.edu/ips/> or (803) 777-7461.

### **Disability Services**

Students with disabilities are assisted through the Office of Disability Services. Students with disabilities should contact the Office of Disability Services at 803-777-6742 (TDD) or 803-777-6744 for specific information about services. When students receive the Graduate School's offer of admission, they should notify the Office of Disability Services of their need(s) for specific accommodation(s). The Office of Disability Services is located in the LeConte building at the corner of Pickens and Green Streets.