



PennState

**DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION**

PH.D. PROGRAM POLICY HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Department of Health Policy and Administration

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The Pennsylvania State University

University Park, PA 16802

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<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/graduate/phd-health-policy-and-administration>

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This Program and Policy Handbook contains the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the doctoral program as established by the HPA department faculty and the Graduate School at Penn State. Each student should familiarize him or herself with the materials contained herein and work with a faculty advisor to make certain that a selected Plan of Study complies with the pertinent requirements. The most current handbook is posted on the HPA Web site (www.hhd.psu.edu/hpa). Students are responsible for being aware of current policies.

In instances of discrepancy between this handbook and *The Graduate School Degree Programs Bulletin*, *The Graduate School Degree Programs Bulletin* takes precedence. By request, this publication is available in alternative media.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901; Tel (814) 865-4700/V, (814) 863-1150/TTY. U.Ed. HHD 07-07.

GOVERNANCE

All responsibility for the academic conduct, standards, and requirements of the doctoral program rests with the HPA department faculty in accordance with university policy.

Professor-in-Charge: The Professor-in-Charge (PIC) of the doctoral program is responsible for all administrative affairs of the Ph.D. Program, including the administration of academic conduct, standards, and requirements. In addition, the PIC is responsible for recommending admissions and financial support, assigning advisors to incoming students, advising the Ph.D. committee and faculty on the interpretation of policies and requirements, and performing other administrative duties as delegated by the department head. The current PIC for the HPA Doctoral Program is David Vanness, Ph.D.

Ph.D. Committee: The Ph.D. Committee consists of several HPA graduate faculty members and a student representative. The committee is supported by administrative staff within the HPA Department. The Ph.D. Committee advises the PIC with regard to all issues related to the Ph.D. Program (e.g., admissions, curriculum, and academic conduct) and is the main decision-making body for the doctoral program.

Staff Support: Ashlee Foreman, Graduate Programs Coordinator

FACULTY

Yubraj Acharya, Ph.D. (University of Michigan), Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Acharya's research interests include program evaluation, health disparities, global health policy, and health economics.

Christopher Hollenbeak, Ph.D. (Washington University, St. Louis), Professor of Health Policy and Administration and Department Head. Dr. Hollenbeak's research interests focus on health economics especially in relation to surgical issues, and he is also interested in development and use of Bayesian statistical methods.

Charleen Hsuan, Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles), Assistant Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Hsuan's research interests include macro-organizational behavior and understanding how organizations respond to regulations and laws in ways that exacerbate or alleviate access to health care.

John Moran, Ph.D. (Penn State University), Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Moran's research interests include the economic impact of cancer, health insurance, and other topics in health economics.

Selena Ortiz, Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles), Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Ortiz's research examines the determinants of population health policy formation, including problem recognition, the formulation of policy proposals, and politics.

Jeannette Rogowski, Ph.D. (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Rogowski's research interests are in health economics, health policy, and health disparities.

Dennis Scanlon, Ph.D. (University of Michigan), Professor of Health Policy and Administration and Director of Center for Health Care and Policy Research. Dr. Scanlon's research interests relate to consumer information and health care markets, health insurance and HMO plan performance and measurement of quality.

Mark Sciegaj, Ph.D. (Brandeis University), Professor of Health Policy and Administration and Professor-in-Charge of the Undergraduate Program. Dr. Sciegaj's research interests include issues of consumer-directed care in community long-term care services and support, workforce development, policy implementation, program evaluation, and multi-cultural issues in health and aging.

Joel Segel, Ph.D. (University of Michigan), Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Segel's research interests include cancer, health economics, patient decision making and consumer behavior, and quality of care and outcomes.

Dennis Shea, Ph.D. (Rutgers University), Professor of Health Policy and Administration; Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies and Outreach, College of Health and Human Development. Dr. Shea's research focuses on health policy for aging populations, financing for mental health, long-term care, prescription drug coverage, and socioeconomic disparities in health care access for the elderly.

Yunfeng Shi, Ph.D. (Carnegie Mellon University), Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Shi's research interests include consumer engagement and behavior, quality measurement and reporting, health care organizations, and health information technology.

David Vanness, Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Professor of Health Policy and Administration and Professor-in-Charge of the MS/PhD Programs. Dr. Vanness' research focuses on developing and applying

methods for evaluating the comparative outcomes, costs and cost-effectiveness of health care interventions. He is also interested in the process of how patients, physicians, payers and policymakers make decisions about treatment use and coverage in the presence of uncertainty. Dr. Vanness' research makes use of Bayesian, machine learning and simulation-based methods.

Jessica Williams, Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles), Associate Professor of Health Policy and Administration. Dr. Williams' research is at the intersection of occupational health and population health. She is interested in how organizational policies in workplaces and communities can alter the social determinants of health.

PH.D. CURRICULUM

CORE REQUIREMENTS

The HPA Doctoral Program core curriculum is designed for all HPA Ph.D. students, regardless of specialization track (Health Economics, Health Care Management and Organization, and Population Health). The core is broken into three segments, a health care policy and organization segment a health services research methods segment, and a professional development segment. The total credits for the core, including both segments, is 29. This consists of 12 credits in the health care policy and organization segment, 15 credits in the health services research methods segment, and 2 credits of HPA 590 (departmental research colloquium).

Health Care Policy and Organization Segment (12 credits)

HPA 520: *Introduction to Health Services Organization and Delivery* (3 credits): This course provides an overview of health care in the United States. Topics covered include defining what is meant by health systems; health care need, utilization and health status; differences among medical care, health services delivery and public health; and the structure of health care in the United States, including personnel and types of provider organizations (e.g., hospitals, ambulatory practices, long-term care facilities).

HPA 521: *Research Seminar on Health Services Organization and Delivery* (3): The goal of this course is to expose research degree students to the literature to build a strong foundation for advanced research courses and the thesis. The course focuses on reading published research on health services organization and delivery. It is normally to be taken in the same semester as HPA 520, and topics may be covered in parallel. The articles studied include many of the health services research classics. The course emphasizes how health service research methods are applied in published research. Classes include a mix of lectures, mock research design exercises, and student presentations on research readings. Concurrent or Pre-requisite: HPA 520.

HPA 510: *Introduction to Health Services Financing and Policy* (3): This course provides an overview of health services financing and policy in the United States. Topics covered include the different arrangements for financing and paying for health care in the United States, including the Medicare and Medicaid programs and commercial insurance; the problem of the uninsured; current issues in health payments and reimbursement; and other public finance issues related to health care. The course examines financing and policy issues, including classic and recurring debates as well as contemporary policy issues.

HPA 511: *Research Seminar on Health Services Financing and Policy* (3): The goal of this course is to expose research degree students to the literature to build a strong foundation for advanced research courses and the thesis. The course focuses on reading published research on health services financing and policy. It is normally to be taken in the same semester as HPA 510, and topics may be covered in parallel. The articles studied include many of the health services research classics. The course emphasizes how health service research methods are applied in published research. Classes include a mix of lectures, mock

research design exercises, and student presentations on research readings. Concurrent or Prerequisite: HPA 510.

Health Services Research Methods Segment (15 credits)

HPA 518: *Basic Analytic Methods for Health Services Research* (3 credits): This course provides an introduction to basic methods for undertaking research pertaining to health services organizations and systems. In addition to basic methods, the course also provides "the current state of the art" in health services research. Students will gain an understanding of research design, statistics, and methodology while developing critical thinking and analytical skills to examine the health services research literature.

HPA 540: *Epidemiological Applications in Health Services Research* (3): This course presents research and quantitative methods for the design and analysis of epidemiologic studies. These studies use observational methods to assess the health and disease status of human populations or to identify factors associated with health and disease status. Specific topics include causation and research hypotheses in epidemiology; measures of disease frequency (case definition, incidence and prevalence, rates and ratios, and standardization); measures of association (odds and risk ratios, and risk differences); study designs (ecological, cross-sectional, case-control, and cohort); bias, confounding effects, and effect modification; multivariate analysis (logistic regression and Poisson regression); sample size and power estimation for epidemiologic study designs; and special topics (disease prevention and screening, molecular epidemiology, geographic variation in disease occurrence, race/ethnicity and health disparities in epidemiological research. Prerequisite for HPA students: HPA 440, HPA 528.

HPA 561: *Introduction to Research Design in Health Services Research* (3): This course is an introduction to research design and methods in health services research. Topics include the scientific method, motivation for health services research questions, frameworks and hypotheses, types of validity, sample design, and randomized, quasi-experimental, and observational research designs. Students write a research proposal.

HPA 564: *Research Methods in Health Services Research* (3): The focus of this course is the basic linear regression model, which serves as the main building block and point of departure for more advanced econometric methods. Both the theoretical underpinnings and practical aspects of regression models will be discussed. Prerequisite: HPA 518.

HPA 528: *Health Data Analysis for Research* (3): This course trains students in data base management (data cleaning, types of missing data, file construction, confidentiality procedures, and documentation); alternative ways of treating missing data; and the features (sample design, components, contents, and special design features) of some of the main secondary data sets used in health services research (e.g., HRS, MCBS, MEPS, Medicare claims data); merging data and extracting analysis files. The course also provides students with some hands-on experience analyzing one of the main secondary data sets using major software packages.

Professional Development Segment (2 credits)

HPA 590: *Colloquium* (1 per semester, fall and spring of first year): Introduction to the field of health services research.

PH.D. PROGRAM TRACKS

Health Economics

This track consists of 24 credits in theory, research methods, and related electives as described below.

Prerequisite: Undergraduate intermediate microeconomics and a basic calculus course. These are popular courses and many universities, including Penn State, offer sections over the summer. Alternatively, students could take these courses at a local college or university before arriving at University Park or during their first fall semester.

Theory (9 credits)

EEFE 512: *Applied Microeconomic Theory* (3 credits): Basic principles of microeconomic theory using calculus, with an emphasis on applied theory and problem solving. Topics include consumer choice and demand, production and supply, the functioning of competitive and monopolistic markets, and general equilibrium and welfare analysis. Prerequisite: ECON 302 and basic calculus.

HPA 445: *Health Economics* (3): Economic analysis of the U.S. health care system; planning, organization, and financing; current public policy issues and alternatives. Prerequisite: ECON 302, ECON 315, or ECON 323.

(or)

HPA 545: *Introduction to Health Economics* (3): Survey of the application of economics to the roles of markets and government in health care.

HPA 562: *Economics Applications in Health Services Research* (3): Selected topics in health economics with an emphasis on recent developments in the literature. Prerequisite: HPA 445 or HPA 545.

Methods (9 credits)

HPA 566: *Advanced Methods in Health Services Research I* (3 credits): Advanced topics course focusing on extensions of the ordinary least squares regression model. Topics include discrete choice models, limited dependent variable models, count models, hazard models, models that account for censoring and sample selection, multilevel models, and panel data. Prerequisite: HPA 564 or equivalent.

HPA 567: *Advanced Methods in Health Services Research II* (3): Advanced topics course focusing on causal inference. Topics include fixed effects models, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables, propensity score matching, and regression discontinuity designs. Prerequisite: HPA 564 or equivalent.

Choose 3 additional credits in consultation with and approved by the Doctoral Thesis Committee.

Electives (6 credits)

Select 6 credits in consultation with and approved by the doctoral thesis committee. The thesis committee will work with the student to identify classes that will be useful for the student's dissertation research. These may include courses in business, public health sciences, economics, demography, or statistics.

Sample Electives

Below is a list of courses that may be of interest to doctoral students in the Economics and Health Policy Track. Many others around the university also may be appropriate.

BA 427: *Risk and Decisions*: Conceptualizing decisions involving risk, analyzing choices, estimating the risk, and communicating the analysis.

BA 450: *Optimization for Business Decisions*: Optimization models quickly and efficiently analyze a large number of scenarios to find the best course of action for business applications.

BA 597D: *Advanced Microeconomic Analysis*: This course discusses topics in advanced microeconomic analysis including competitive analysis, game theory, and mechanism design.

ECON 463: *Economic Demography*: Microeconomics of demographic behavior; interrelationships between demographic and economic factors in developing and industrialized economies; economic welfare and policy implications.

ECON 515: *Labor Economics I*: Labor supply and income maintenance; human capital, job search and training; labor demand, minimum wage, and discrimination.

ECON 516: *Labor Economics II*: Topics in Labor Supply: Analysis of microeconomic models of labor supply, human capital, hedonic wages, job search, fertility and marriage. Emphasis is on applied work in econometric methodology.

ECON 521: *Advanced Microeconomic Theory*: Survey of topics in microeconomic theory.

ECON 543: *Industrial Organization and Public Policy*: The structure of American industry; performance and behavior; public policies toward business.

PHS 535: *Quality of Care Measurement*: Emphasizes the concept and measurement issues involved in assessing and improving the quality of health care.

PHS 536: *Health Survey Research Methods*: This course provides instruction on how to design health research survey questionnaires and how to conduct survey studies.

PHS 570: *Health Economics and Economic Evaluation*: An introductory course on applied economic evaluation, with emphasis on micro-economic theory, cost-effectiveness and economic modeling.

STAT 464: *Applied Nonparametric Statistics*: Tests based on nominal and ordinal data for both related and independent samples. Chi-square tests, correlation.

STAT 503: *Design of Experiments*: Design principles; optimality; and confounding in split-plot, repeated measures, fractional factorial, response surface, and balanced/partially balanced incomplete block designs.

Health Care Management and Organization Track

This track consists of 24 credits in management or business courses, subdivided into theory, methods, and elective courses.

Theory (6 credits)

HPA 503: *Health Services Organizational Behavior* (3 credits): A systematic application of the principles of organizational behavior to understanding professional roles in health services organizations.

HPA 563: *Organizational Studies in Health Services Research* (3): Applications of theoretical and empirical tools of organizational studies in the delivery of health care.

Methods (9 credits)

Select HPA 566 (below) and two other 3-credit methods courses.

HPA 566: *Advanced Methods in Health Services Research I* (3 credits): Advanced topics course focusing on extensions of the ordinary least squares regression model. Possible topics include discrete choice models, limited dependent variable models, count models, hazard models, models that account for censoring and sample selection, multilevel models, and panel data. Prerequisite: HPA 564.

HDFS 521: *Qualitative Methods in Human Development and Family Studies* (3): Introduction to interdisciplinary qualitative methods, principles and theory of interpretation, methodologies, data collection and analysis.

MGMT 539: *Seminar in Organizational Social Networks* (3): Learn theory, concepts, and methods for research on organizational social networks. Prerequisite: admission to a doctoral program at Penn State.

MGMT 588: *Seminar in Multi-Level Organizational Research* (3): The seminar addresses theory, research, and methodological issues surrounding the multi-level integration of micro- and macro-organizational concepts. Prerequisite: MGMT 528, MGMT 538, OR equivalent.

MGMT 592: *Qualitative Research Methods* (3): This course provides students with an introduction to and experience with qualitative research methods employed in organizational contexts. Prerequisite: admission to a doctoral program at Penn State.

NURS 585: *Qualitative Methods in Health Research* (3): Provides an overview of advanced qualitative research methodologies useful in the conduct of social and behavioral health research.

PHS 536: *Health Survey Research Methods* (3): This course provides instruction on how to design health research survey questionnaires and how to conduct survey studies. Prerequisite: HES 520; HES 500.

HPA 567: *Advanced Methods in Health Services Research II* (3 credits). Advanced topics course focusing on causal inference. Possible topics include fixed effects models, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables, propensity score matching, and regression discontinuity designs. Prerequisite HPA 564 or equivalent.

Sample Electives (9 credits)

Select 9 credits from in consultation with and approved by the doctoral thesis committee. The thesis committee will work with the student to identify classes that will be useful for the student's dissertation research. Elective courses should complement the HPA required courses and should focus on the student's area of interest, relevant to cognate/discipline (e.g., business/management, sociology, etc.) AND unit of analysis (e.g., individual, organizational, community). Students also should be mindful of prerequisites and timing of elective courses.

A description of courses is found at: <https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate>. The courses listed below are recommendations only. Other courses, throughout the university, also may be appropriate for students in this track. The student's doctoral thesis committee must approve elective courses.

Organizational Change

HPA 805: *Change Leadership in Health Services Organizations* (3 credits): Exploration of diagnostic and intervention strategies employed in planned change in health and human services organizations and programs.

MGMT 523: *Organizational Change: Theory and Practice* (3): Analysis of research, theory, and practice in dynamics of organizational change. Research literature reviewed for evaluation of concepts and methods.

Work Force and Human Resources

MGMT 541: *Human Resource Management* (3 credits): An in-depth examination of the strategic planning and implementation of human resource management, including staffing, development, appraisal, and rewards.

MGMT 548: *Seminar in Human Resource Management* (3): Current theoretical and methodological issues applicable to the design, implementation, and evaluation of human resource practices and programs.

PSY 523: *Social-Organization Psychology in Industry* (3): Analysis of the role of social and organizational variables as they affect employee performance and employee attitudes. Prerequisite: PSYCH 484.

WF ED 508: *Work Force Education Management* (3): Introduction to theories and concepts of managing workforce education programs in the public and private sector.

WF ED 574: *Strategic Planning for Education for Work* (3): Study of human capital as a component of education, industrial and business training strategic planning at economy, and organizational levels. Prerequisite: WF ED 471, WF ED 572, WF ED 573.

HRER 501: *Labor and Employment Law* (3): Legal context of employment in the United States.

HRER 502: *Organization of the Workplace* (3): Organization and transformations of the workplace and the labor process, including Taylorism, Fordism, and flexible forms.

HRER 504: *Seminar in Industrial Relations* (3): Theory, process, and issues of industrial relations, including collective bargaining and contract administration.

HRER 505: *Seminar in Human Resources* (3): Current human resource topics in the context of organizational strategy, planning, and responsibility.

HRER 516: *Labor Market Analysis* (3): Neoclassical, institutional and systemic theories of external and internal labor markets and their dynamics.

HRER 535: *Labor and Human Resources Public Sector* (3): Processes and issues of employment relations in the public sector, including union-management relations and human resource issues.

HRER 536: *Diversity in the Workplace* (3): Women and minorities in the workplace.

NURS 501: *Issues in Nursing and Health Care* (3): Analysis and evaluation of the health care system with emphasis on health policy and economic issues affecting nursing practice.

Quality Improvement

HPA 551: *Quality Improvement in Healthcare* (3 credits): Examination of major approaches to performance improvement in contemporary healthcare systems.

PHS 535: *Quality of Care Measurement* (3): Emphasizes the concept and measurement issues involved in assessing and improving the quality of health care. Prerequisite: enrollment in the master's degree program in Health Evaluation Sciences and satisfactory completion of HES 510, 520.

HPA 523: *Managerial Epidemiology* (3): This course is intended to familiarize students with the principles and methods of managerial epidemiology and its applications to health care quality improvement. Prerequisite: HPA/BBH 440.

Organizational Theory and Behavior

HPA 524: *Management of Health Services Organizations* (3 credits): A systematic study of the roles of health services managers and the organizational and environmental context within which they work.

MGMT 528: *Seminar in Organizational Behavior* (3): Current theoretical and research issues applicable to the study of individual and group behavior within organizational settings.

MGMT 538: *Seminar in Organization Theory* (3): Current theoretical and research issues applicable to the study of design and management of complex organizations.

MGMT 558: *Seminar in Organizational Decision Making* (3): An in-depth examination of decision making, including bounded rationality, political behaviors, choice and post-decision processes.

SOC 544: *Current Issues in Complex Organizations* (3): Critical survey of recent developments in sociological study of organizations and the theory of bureaucracy, including reciprocal effects on environments. Prerequisite: SOC 444.

Information Technology

HPA 855: *Information Systems in Health Services Administration* (3 credits): Foundations of information systems for supporting clinical services, quality improvement, and administrative functions in health services management.

IST 501: *Integrative Theories and Methods of the Information Sciences and Technology* (3): An integrative treatment of research and theories on how technologies are used to meet information needs at multiple levels of analysis.

IST 531: *Human Information Behavior: Information and the User* (3): Introduction to research into the nature of human information and communication processes at the individual, social, and organizational levels. Prerequisite: IST 501.

IST 532: *Organizational Informatics* (3): Researching information and information systems in organizations. Prerequisite: IST 501.

IST 571: *(MIS) Information Technology Strategy* (2): Examines link between firm's corporate strategy and vision and information technology strategy; covers how information technology transforms and enables business.

Marketing and Strategy

MGMT 578: *Seminar in Corporate Strategy* (3 credits): Current theoretical and research issues applicable to the study of corporate strategy formulation and implementation.

Prevention and Community Health

HPA 541: *Poverty, Race, Ethnicity, and Child Health* (3 credits): This graduate seminar focuses on disparities in infant, child, and adolescent health and policies and programs impacting these disparities.

HDFS 503: *Human Development Intervention: Analysis of Theories and Approaches* (3): Theoretical and empirical analyses of multilevel approaches for enhancing development of individuals and families. Prerequisite: graduate status in HDFS or related fields; first in a sequence.

HDFS 506: *Design and Evaluation of Prevention Programs Across the Life Span* (3): An introduction to the theory and application of program evaluation; both process and outcome evaluation strategies are addressed. Prerequisite: HDFS 503, HDFS 516.

HDFS 508: *Best Practices in Preventive Intervention* (1-6): Implementing empirically validated preventative programs; discussion and evaluation of theory and techniques. Prerequisite: HDFS 503.

R SOC 552: *Theoretical Frameworks for Rural Community Research* (3): Application of community theories to the study of communities in rural areas. Prerequisite: R SOC 452.

Leadership

MGMT 535: *The Upper Echelons Perspective: Theory and Research* (3 credits): To learn to evaluate and conduct research on top executives and their influence on organizational strategy, structure and performance. Prerequisite: admission to a doctoral program at Penn State.

R SOC 505: *(CEDEV) Leadership Development* (3): Exploration, understanding, and application of leadership roles, strategies, and principles in group and community settings. Prerequisite: R SOC 305; 6 credits in social or behavioral sciences.

Finance, Economics, and Policy

HPA 835: *Financial Management in Health Services Organizations* (3 credits): The financial environment of health services organizations; financial aspects of management decision making; emphasis on revenue sources, budgeting, and cost control. Prerequisite: HPA 447.

HPA 545: *Introduction to Health Economics* (3): Survey of the application of economics to the roles of markets and government in health care. Prerequisite: ECON 302.

HPA 562: *Economics Applications In Health Services Research* (3): Application of theoretical and empirical tools of microeconomics to issues in health services utilization and delivery. Prerequisite: ECON 302; HPA 445 or HPA 545.

Law, Ethics, and Health Management

HPA 836: *Health Law* (3 credits): The legal process as it applies to the health administrator, health organization, medical provider, and patient. Prerequisite: HPA 520.

BMMB: 509 *Ethics in Biomedical Science* (1): Discussion of ethical issues relevant to scientific research in the biomedical sciences.

Management of Health Services for Aging Populations

HDFS 590: *Gerontology Colloquium* (1 credit)

SOC 535: *Sociology of Aging* (3): Current research and methodological issues in the sociological study of aging.

Health Services Research

PHS 535: *Quality of Care Measurement* (3 credits): Emphasizes the concept and measurement issues involved in assessing and improving the quality of health care.

PHS 536: *Health Survey Research Methods* (3): This course provides instruction on how to design health research survey questionnaires and how to conduct survey studies.

PHS 570: *Health Economics and Economic Evaluation* (3): An introductory course on applied economic evaluation, with emphasis on micro-economic theory, cost-effectiveness and economic modeling.

Population Health Track

This track consists of a minimum of 24 credits in population health and demography courses. While all students in this track take coursework in demography and population health, many choose to pursue a dual title degree in Demography and Health Policy and Administration or a Demography minor.

To qualify for a minor in Demography, students must take at least **15 course credits** in demography in addition to enrolling in DEMOG 590 (Colloquium, Professional Development) for 1 credit each fall semester in residence. A minimum of 3 credits is required in each of the following: (1) disciplinary survey courses, (2) demographic techniques (SOC 573), (3) seminars in demographic processes, and (4) seminars in population studies. **For students in departments participating in the dual-title major (Agricultural, Environmental, and Regional Economics; Anthropology; Economics; Health Policy and Administration; Human Development and Family Studies; Rural Sociology; and Sociology), all credit requirements for a Demography minor must be in core demography courses outside his/her major field.** The student's doctoral committee must approve of the choice of the Demography minor, and one member of the doctoral committee must be from the Demography Program faculty.

Students completing the dual title Ph.D. must meet the following requirements:

- Complete a minimum of **24 demography-related course credits**. The following is required as a minimum in each curriculum category:
 - Disciplinary Survey Course (3 credits)
 - Demographic Methods Courses (6 credits)
 - Seminars in Demographic Processes (6 credits)
 - Seminars in Population Studies (3 credits)
 - DEMOG 590 (Colloquium, Professional Development) (1 credit required each fall semester in residence until completion of Comprehensive Exam)

Final course selection is determined in consultation with the student's doctoral committee. For students entering with a master's degree from another institution, equivalent course credits can be accepted. **At least 3 demography course credits must be taken outside the graduate major program department.**

- Choose demography as one of the main areas of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination. **A four-member committee is required** for a dual-title degree program. The chair or director of dissertation research and at least one additional member of the doctoral committee must be members of the Demography program faculty. The Demography faculty members on the student's committee are responsible for administering an examination in demography, which constitutes a portion of the comprehensive examination of the doctoral student in the program option.
- Write a dissertation on a topic related to demography.

Additional information about the minor and dual title degree in HPA and demography can be found at <http://www.pop.psu.edu/demography>. All graduate students admitted to HPA who plan to pursue the demography minor or the dual title degree must complete an application for the Demography Program, available from Stephen Matthews (sxm27@psu.edu). Courses denoted by an asterisk (*) below are especially relevant to health and may be of particular interest to HPA students.

Theory (6 total credits)

HPA Disciplinary Survey Course (3 credits)

Students must take the following course:

HPA 525: *Health Care Across the Life Course* (3 credits): This graduate seminar uses a population health approach to examine vulnerable populations with shifting demographics that access health and health services at different, sometimes unequal, rates across the life course.

Demography Disciplinary Survey Course (3 credits)

Students also should take one of the courses listed below.

SOC 423: *Social Demography (3): Social demographic perspectives on fertility, mortality, morbidity, migration, population density, demographic transitions, immigration, family, the aged and minorities.

ECON 463: *Economic Demography* (3): Economic aspects of growing versus stationary populations; historical interrelationships between demographic and economic factors; economic welfare and policy implications.

ANTH 408: *Anthropological Demography* (3): Analysis of demographic studies in traditional and very small populations.

Methods (Minimum 9 total credits)

Demographic Techniques (3 credits)

Students must take the following courses:

SOC 573: *Demographic Techniques (3 credits): Survey of demographic research methods; demographic data; measures of health, mortality, fertility, and migration; life tables, population projections.

HPA 567: *Advanced Methods in Health Services Research II* (3 credits): Advanced topics course focusing on causal inference. Possible topics include fixed effects models, difference-in-differences, instrumental variables, propensity score matching, and regression discontinuity designs. Prerequisite HPA 564 or equivalent.

Advanced Courses (3 credits)

Students also should take one of the courses below.

SOC 576: *Applied Mathematical Demography* (3 credits): Survey of mathematical models used in the study of population growth, survivorship, fertility, migration, stability, kinship, labor force projections.

SOC 577: *Techniques of Event History Modeling* (3): In-depth review of survival analysis methods for the analysis of change in discrete dependent variables.

SOC 579: *Spatial Demography* (3): Spatial analysis tools applied to demographic research, including issues in the collection, integration, manipulation, visualization, and analysis of both primary and secondary demographic data sources in GIS.

(Students may count one but not both of the following courses toward the Ph.D. Demographic Methods requirement.)

SOC 578: *Multilevel Models* (3): Contextual analysis and growth modeling as applied to characteristics of schools, neighborhoods, geographic regions, and individual outcomes. Two-level and three-level models, multilevel analysis of discrete dependent variables, and latent variable models.

HDFS 517: *Multivariate (Multi-Level) Change* (3): Analysis of both general linear mixed models and the multilevel formulation, i.e. the hierarchical linear model (HLM). Course emphasis is on longitudinal (growth curve) models.

Electives (Minimum 9 total credits; For a Demography minor: 6 credits in Seminars in Demographic Processes, 3 credits in Seminars in Population Studies, 6 credits in other courses selected in consultation with and approved by the doctoral thesis committee [must include 2 credits in DEMOG 590]).

Seminars in Demographic Processes (6 credits)

Students should take two of the courses listed below.

SOC 521: *Family Demography* (3 credits): Current theoretical, methodological and substantive issues in family demography; nuptiality, divorce, household composition, female employment, migration, and fertility.

SOC 523: *Internal and International Migration* (3): Theories, frameworks, and policies related to internal and international migration patterns in developed and developing nations.

SOC 524: *The Demography of Human Fertility* (3): Overview of major issues and methodological approaches in the demographic study of human fertility in developing and developed countries.

R SOC 525: *Fertility, Population Change, and Development* (3): Fertility and population growth in less-developed countries; theories of fertility change, agricultural development, and population policies.

SOC 527: *Migration, Urbanization and Policy in Developing Countries* (3): Dynamics of international and internal migration processes in the developing world; impacts on urbanization; human capital and “brain-drain” migration; policy implications.

SOC 535: *Sociology of Aging* (3): Major theoretical and empirical research on aging. Demographic and sociological perspectives for understanding key social problems confronting older population members and policy makers.

ANTH 566: *Infectious Diseases in Human Populations (3): Population aspects of infectious disease demography, ecology, and epidemiology; interactions between human host and its microparasites; and the implications of infectious diseases in modeling human population dynamics and ecology.

SOC 597: *Global Health and Mortality (3): Theoretical and empirical analysis of current and historical developed and developing country issues concerning epidemiological/health transition, demographic and socioeconomic differentials in health and mortality, infant and child mortality, status of women and health, environment and health, demographic change and nutrition, health care systems, and health planning policies.

SOC 597: *Race, Ethnicity and Family Processes* (3): Cultural and structural explanations of racial and ethnic variation in family processes and their implications for inequality in child and adult well-being in the U.S.

Seminar in Population Studies (3 credits minimum)

Students should take at least one of the courses listed below.

HPA 526/SOC 526: *Health Disparities (3): This graduate seminar utilizes an interdisciplinary, population health approach to analyze health disparities, the social conditions that are related to the health of populations, and some of the mechanisms through which these patterns are produced.

EDTHP 516: *Education and Demographic Change in the U.S. and Abroad* (3): Interrelationship between schooling and employment, marriage, fertility, and migration. Focus comparatively on the U.S. and developing countries.

EDTHP 597: *Education of Immigrants’ Children* (3): This course is designed to give students a broad familiarity with sociological perspectives and research on immigration and schooling for children.

SOC 522: *Demography of the Life Course* (3): Theoretical bases, critical concepts, and methods of life course analysis; applications to age and gender population cohorts.

HPA 541: *Poverty, Race, Ethnicity and Child's Health (3): This graduate seminar focuses on socioeconomic and racial/ethnic disparities in the health and well-being of infants, children, and adolescents, as well as policies and programs aimed at improving children's health and reducing disparities.

R SOC 530: *Sociology and Demography of Poverty in the U.S.* (3): Theory and measurement of poverty with an emphasis on the U.S., social and demographic characteristics of the poor, urban underclass and vulnerable rural groups, and social welfare policy.

SOC 530: *Sociology of the Family* (3): In-depth analysis of major issues and demographic empirical research in family, work and gender; social class and families; father and grandparents; family law and policy issues.

SOC/HDFS 531: *Family Disorganization* (3): Theory and research on population-related family processes including family formation, parent-child relations, divorce, and family in remarriage.

HDFS/SOC 537: *Biosocial Perspectives on the Family* (3): Theoretical and measurement advances in knowledge about family processes resulting from the integration of information from the fields of behavioral endocrinology (study of hormones), behavioral genetics, evolutionary psychology, and demography.

AGEC 550: *International Economic Development and Agriculture* (3): The economic development process with particular emphasis on agriculture and population.

SOC 560: *Urban Sociology* (3): Examination of the structure and dynamics of North American cities and the residents' experiences in such settings.

SOC/HDFS 537: *Biosocial Perspectives on the Family* (3): The implications of knowledge from behavioral endocrinology, behavior genetics, and evolutionary psychology for understanding family relationships and child development.

HDFS 525: *Introduction to Family Studies* (3): Introduction to current theory and research about micro and macro forces related to family relationships and development.

ANTH 566: *Infectious Diseases in Human Populations (3): Population aspects of infectious disease demography, ecology, and epidemiology; interactions between human host and its microparasites; and the implications of infectious diseases in modeling human population dynamics and ecology.

SOC 597: *Race, Ethnicity and Residence* (3): Residential experiences, regional redistribution, suburbanization, segregation, homeseeking behavior, housing market discrimination, neighborhood preferences, and local social relations in different types of race/ethnic settings (ghettos, barrios, Chinatowns, etc.).

Additional Population Health Related Electives

BBH 501: *Biobehavioral Systems in Health and Development: Theory and Processes* (3 credits): Examination of theories and basic processes for understanding individuals as dynamic biobehavioral complex systems functioning through continual inter-actions.

BBH 502/PSYCH 502: *Health: Biobehavioral Perspectives* (3): Health and different kinds of illnesses or disabilities result from the interaction of biological, psychological, behavioral, and environmental factors. This seminar draws upon knowledge from behavior medicine, health psychology, and other fields to understand such multivariate interactions in the etiology of health and illness and illustrates those processes with different kinds of health issues.

BBH 503: *Biobehavioral Systems in Health and Development: Processes and Integration* (3): Examination and integration of basic processes for understanding individuals as dynamic biobehavioral complex systems functioning through continual interactions. Prerequisite: or concurrent: BB H 501.

BBH 504: *Biobehavioral Health Intervention Strategies* (3): Effective Biobehavioral intervention strategies to promote healthy development, prevent illness, and facilitate recovery or rehabilitation from illness requires a multi method approach targeted towards the interaction of biological, behavioral, and environmental variables. This seminar reviews the characteristics of such an approach and examines the nature of and evidence about the effectiveness of specific methods in current use.

BBH 505: *Biobehavioral Health Research Strategies* (3): To advance the knowledge base underlying a Biobehavioral approach requires an interaction of theory development and empirically based research strategies and methods to the relevant issues. This seminar examines the philosophy of science and the array of research strategies and methods relevant to the study of Biobehavioral health issues.

BBH 521: *Structural Equation Modeling* (3): Review of reliability, factor analysis, and multiple regression; confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and the LISREL program; identification, specification, and goodness of fit; multiple group CFA; latent variable regression and path models; SEM with missing data. The approach in this course is mainly conceptual and practical, with BB H and social science research examples.

BBH 551: *World Health Promotion* (3): Analysis of the various health problems that affect humans throughout the world; emphasis will be placed on personal health issues.

Health Services Research

PHS 535: *Quality of Care Measurement* (3 credits): Emphasizes the concept and measurement issues involved in assessing and improving the quality of health care.

PHS 536: *Health Survey Research Methods* (3): This course provides instruction on how to design health research survey questionnaires and how to conduct survey studies.

PHS 570: *Health Economics and Economic Evaluation* (3): An introductory course on applied economic evaluation, with emphasis on micro-economic theory, cost-effectiveness and economic modeling.

OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Once admitted, students must satisfy requirements established by the Graduate School and those specified by the HPA Department. The following sections describe both sets of requirements:

Ph.D. students are responsible for knowing and meeting the requirements of the Graduate School and of the HPA Program as described in the following documents: 1) *The Pennsylvania State University Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate>); 2) *The Thesis Guide* published by the Graduate School (www.gradsch.psu.edu/current/thesis.html); 3) the *Ph.D. Program and Policy Handbook*

(<https://hhd.psu.edu/hpa/graduate/phd-health-policy-administration/phd-degree-handbook>); and 4) other policies, notices, and announcements emanating from the University, the Graduate School, or HPA Department.

Many major and minor items relate to orderly progress through a graduate program. The Graduate School web site (www.gradsch.psu.edu/) and the HPA Doctoral Program Web site (www.hhd.psu.edu/hpa/graduate/phd-health-policy-and-administration) provide regular updates related to graduate study. Be especially alert to relevant deadlines. Each semester, the Graduate School issues a calendar of deadline dates, which is available online and in the Kern Graduate Center. Students are also encouraged to watch bulletin boards and notices distributed through student mailboxes, e-mail, and the HPA web site (www.hhd.psu.edu/hpa).

HPA PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The health policy and administration field is, by nature, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. A multiplicity of views and interests is encouraged, though students fare best when specializing in a particular area. Programs of study for individual students should be discussed with advisors, research mentors, and doctoral committee members on an individual basis within the framework of the requirements described below. Doctoral studies require students to identify those courses that will help them begin to establish their expertise. This requires that students establish a long-range plan for coursework, study, and research experience early in their academic careers.

This "Plan of Study" requires changes and updates as one moves through the program and learns more about what one's professional contribution can be, what competencies are needed to achieve one's goals, and what resources are available at Penn State to develop those competencies.

Some of these requirements may be met through prior graduate coursework at Penn State or other universities. In addition, several credits of thesis research are required by the Graduate School.

Mentors and Advisors

Mentoring is core to the learning experience at the graduate research degree level. Faculty mentors ensure that the student becomes knowledgeable in the field of health services, learns to think critically, is challenged intellectually, and aspires to create new knowledge. Moreover, the mentor helps the student develop personal skills needed for successful professional practice. The mentoring relationship recognizes that graduate training is a time of socialization to the norms, values, and behaviors of the profession and discipline. The relationship is also different for each student, varying according to age, gender, culture, and experience. Mentoring is also an opportunity for growth for the mentor.

Advisors are normally appointed in early summer before the students' arrival on campus. Each student will be notified of the faculty member who will act as his or her advisor and how to contact that person. Each student is encouraged to contact his or her new advisor early to begin planning the first semester program and to otherwise facilitate transition into the Ph.D. program. Advising assignments are, in some sense, an official recognition of an intended or existing mentoring relationship. Ideally, the initial advisor will be the person whom the student will appoint as mentor and thesis chair. However, this may not always be the case, and early in a student's graduate career, he or she should select a research mentor. The main responsibility of the initial advisor is to assist the student in choosing courses and other experiences that will form the foundation for the doctoral dissertation. The student should interact with the advisor on a regular basis.

Responsibilities of Advisor and Student

Students bear primary responsibility for developing and planning their own programs of study. The main role of the advisor is to consult with the student. The advisor assists the student in this regard and also makes recommendations to the HPA Ph.D. Committee as necessary.

The advisor has the following specific responsibilities:

1. To review with each incoming student prior graduate work to determine which, if any, HPA Program requirements and/or prerequisites may already have been fulfilled. The advisor will make recommendations to the HPA Ph.D. Committee to approve relevant prior work as fulfilling program requirements.
2. To provide advice and consultation on the details of each semester's schedule of classes.
3. To consult in the development of the Plan of Study.
4. To advise on the choice of faculty to form the student's dissertation committee.
5. To solicit informal and formal evaluations of student performance in courses and in scholarly activities from faculty both in and outside the HPA Department, for the purpose of ongoing student development.
6. To participate in the doctoral student's candidacy review, as requested by the program committee.

The student's responsibilities are:

1. To be an active participant in the advising and mentoring relationship.
2. To ensure that the program of study meets his or her needs.
3. To keep track of requirements and deadlines.
4. To be knowledgeable of Graduate School policies and procedures.
5. To take advantage of the opportunities offered by the University.
6. To take ultimate charge of his or her program and research development.
7. To inform advisors and mentors of problems and successes.
8. To communicate in an open and regular fashion with advisors.

Plan of Study

The Plan of Study (see Appendix C) is the primary mechanism through which doctoral students, their advisors, their thesis committees, and the program committee assure that courses and other developmental activities necessary to fulfill Ph.D. program requirements are met. The Plan of Study also serves as a mechanism to help ensure that the student's educational objectives are met in a timely manner. The Plan of Study consists of two items, a Plan of Study and a Statement of Career Goals (see Appendix D).

Development of Plan of Study

Students, in consultation with their advisors, should develop an initial Plan of Study by the end of their first semester of course work. The Plan of Study is formally submitted to the Ph.D. program at the end of the first year of study as part of the candidacy review. While approval of the Plan of Study does not take place until the candidacy review is completed after the second semester, the initial Plan of Study provides the student with a long-range plan early in his or her academic program.

The advisor and other HPA faculty members are available to assist the student in developing educational and related objectives. They are also available to direct students to academic and financial resources to help achieve those objectives. Development of the Plan of Study requires that the student undertake a significant effort to explore the resources available throughout the university.

The format of the Plan of Study should include the following elements:

1. Educational, career, and professional goals
2. Plan and timetable to fulfill program requirements

Educational, career, and professional objectives should be expressed more broadly than simply a series of courses designed to meet the program requirements. They should, for example, include plans to develop specific research skills and an indication of desired career goals and specific professional positions sought. The dates for completing program requirements should indicate a timetable by semester and include all coursework as well as other educational activities. The timetable should continue through the dissertation defense.

Before Submitting an Initial or Revised Plan of Study To The Program Committee, Students Must Consult With Advisors Or Thesis Chairs Or Obtain Signature(s) On The Plan Of Study.

The Plan of Study is first presented to the Ph.D. program committee as part of the candidacy review at the end of the first year of study. That committee makes recommendations on the plan, which are included in the candidacy report. The initial Plan of Study will be placed in the student's file with recommendations of the Ph.D. Committee resulting from the candidacy review.

Once a doctoral thesis committee is established, the student's doctoral committee gives approval of the plan. The student must update the Plan of Study at least annually with the doctoral thesis committee and thesis advisor, and the student must submit a revised Plan of Study each year as part of the required Ph.D. student annual review.

Steps necessary to develop the Plan of Study:

1. Develop a list of educational, career, research, and professional objectives.
2. Consult with the advisor and other HPA and affiliated faculty to learn of and consider resources available to help meet those objectives.
3. Explore educational resources available within Penn State.
4. Complete the development of the initial Plan of Study by the end of first semester, in consultation with the faculty advisor.
5. Revise and update the Plan of Study and present it to the Ph.D. Committee as part of the candidacy review at the end of first year.
6. Review and make changes to the Plan of Study based on the Ph.D. Committee's recommendations.
7. Revise and update the Plan of Study before the end of the second year and present it to the doctoral thesis committee for feedback.
8. Review and make changes to the Plan of Study based on the committee's recommendations.
9. Regularly review and amend the Plan of Study, at least on an annual basis, until completion of the dissertation defense, seeking the advice and approval of the doctoral thesis committee and informing the Ph.D. Committee of any changes.
10. Submit an updated Plan of Study for the required annual review of doctoral students.

DOCTORAL THESIS COMMITTEE

By the end of the spring semester of the second year, the student, in conjunction with the advisor, should request the appointment of a doctoral committee. The primary purpose of this committee is to provide the expertise and advising necessary to carry out a well-conceived program of research.

In addition to providing advice, the committee has several specific functions:

1. To annually review and approve the updated Plan of Study;
2. To prepare, conduct, and evaluate the comprehensive examination or proposed defense;
3. To assist in planning the dissertation research; and
4. To evaluate the dissertation and conduct the final oral examination.

Membership of the Doctoral Committee

Students select their own doctoral committee members subject to University and departmental guidelines. **The Graduate School requires that the committee include at least four members of the Penn State graduate faculty.** The committee chair and at least one other member must be graduate faculty in the HPA Department. At least one member of the committee must be from outside the HPA program. If the student has elected a graduate minor, the outside member represents the student's minor area of study.

The Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program has responsibility for notifying the Graduate School of the recommendations for committee membership. This occurs once the student notifies the Professor-In-Charge of the committee membership via completion of the paperwork with the HPA Ph.D. Program staff assistant. If it becomes necessary to change the membership of the doctoral committee, the student should prepare a written request, including the rationale for the change. This should be submitted to the Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program who will forward the request, along with a recommendation, to the Graduate School.

Procedures

The following is a checklist of procedures for forming an HPA Doctoral Committee:

1. During the semester after the candidacy review, the student and his or her advisor discuss the membership of the doctoral committee and initiate discussion with those faculty members as to their interest and abilities to serve on the committee.
2. The student secures the agreement of one faculty member to serve as a Doctoral Committee Chair and additional faculty members to serve as Doctoral Committee members.
3. The student provides the graduate programs staff assistant with the list of faculty members who have agreed to serve as chair and committee members to be submitted to the Graduate School for appointment as the Doctoral Committee.
4. The student must also obtain a Committee Appointment Signature Form from the graduate staff assistant to circulate among committee members for their signatures. The student must then return the form to the staff assistant.

RESEARCH AND THE THESIS

Each HPA Ph.D. student must demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research and show competence in scholarly exposition through preparation of a thesis on a topic related to health policy and administration. The thesis should (1) represent a significant contribution to the field, (2) be prepared in a scholarly manner, (3) reveal an ability on the part of the student to do independent research of high quality, and (4) indicate skill in the application of appropriate research methods. It is expected that elements of the thesis will be publishable in high quality, scholarly journals, and the faculty is expected to use the potential for publication as a criterion for approving the thesis.

Dissertation Formats

The dissertation can take one of two forms. A student may choose to offer a comprehensive treatment of a single topic. Alternatively, a “multi-article” format is also acceptable. Regardless of the format, a thesis will generally include all of the elements listed below in the guidelines for writing the proposal (literature review, theoretical framework, hypotheses, data and methods, results, implications). Doctoral thesis committees are expected to apply comparable standards in assessing and enforcing the preceding requirements with respect to significance, skill, and quality, regardless of the format.

With the multi-article format, a student may package the dissertation research as several scholarly products. Each product should be written in the format of a journal article. The articles should be bound together by a common theme or methodological element, and the dissertation should draw together the articles with a common introduction and a common conclusion. The thesis may include other common chapters, such as a literature review or description of methods. Since the final product must constitute a significant contribution to the field and demonstrate the student’s ability to do independent research, the multi-article format typically involves three articles. However, the number may range from two to four at the discretion of the faculty committee.

Dissertation Proposal

Although the Graduate School does not require a formal dissertation proposal, each student is encouraged to consider a defense of a dissertation proposal as part of or shortly after the comprehensive examination. If this consideration is made, each student should finalize the dissertation proposal immediately after successful completion of the comprehensive exam. However, all students should begin conceptualizing and planning the thesis during the first semester enrolled in the program. Ideally, papers written for classes and with faculty members would build the critical mass of expertise needed to write the proposal. Students may register for HPA 600 for the proposed development research and should complete the proposal defense by the end of the fall term of their third year.

Guidelines for Writing a Dissertation Proposal

The main purpose of the proposal is to clearly and convincingly demonstrate the significance of the contribution the student’s research will make to the field of health services research. Significance is measured by the potential to publish the student’s work in reputable journals in the field. The proposal focuses on the student’s research question and on the methodology(ies) he or she has selected and how the student applies them in the research.

Procedures

The proposal should contain the following elements:

- 1. Statement of Research Questions or Hypothesis**
A statement of research question(s) and/or the hypothesis(es) to be tested.
- 2. Literature Review**
Concise and critical review of the relevant literature. Weaknesses and important gaps in the literature should be noted.
- 3. Theoretical or Conceptual Model**
A fully developed theoretical or conceptual model. The logical connection between the conceptual model and the research questions or hypothesis should be detailed.

4. Data and Analytic Method

Identify needed existing databases and assess their appropriateness or the data collection strategy. Sample questionnaires or documentation of existing data files should be included as appendix materials. Also, include a detailed description and justification of the analytic procedures to be used.

5. Implications for Health Policy and Administration

The likely significance of the research and its implications for improving the organization, management, financing, or outcomes of health care should be clearly noted.

6. Publication Plan

A detailed statement of the expected impact of the student's research, including the significant contributions it will make, noting the journals where the research might be published.

The length of the proposal should be determined in consultation with the dissertation advisor and the student's doctoral thesis committee.

Human Subjects Protection

University policy requires that all research involving human subjects, including the use of secondary and primary data, be reviewed by the university to ensure protection of the rights of human subjects. Information and materials to be submitted for human subjects review is available through the Office of Research Protections (ORP) in the Kern Building or online at www.research.psu.edu/orp.

In addition, students proposing to conduct research involving human subjects must take and pass the web-based training programs on human subjects and HIPPA offered through the University's Office for Research Protections: www.research.psu.edu/irb/step1.

Style and Format of the Thesis

The Graduate School's Thesis Office sets general specifications for the thesis format. Students must comply with all Graduate School requirements for theses, including deadline dates for graduation. The *Thesis Information Bulletin* is available at 115 Kern Graduate Center. The editor in the Thesis Office is available to answer questions about style and format. Students are encouraged to use the Thesis Office's informal spot-checking procedure early in the writing phase to determine if their format is acceptable.

The HPA Department does not prescribe a particular style to be followed. The *American Psychological Association Manual* or the *Chicago Manual of Style* is recommended. Using a previously accepted thesis as a model is not recommended.

Thesis Submission

The Graduate School publishes a schedule of deadlines for each semester indicating key dates for students completing their thesis and doctoral studies. There are no exceptions to these Graduate School deadlines. Visit www.gradsch.psu.edu/current/thesis.html for further information.

Following a successful oral defense of the thesis, the student should have a copy of the thesis signatory page signed by each member of his or her committee. In addition, the thesis requires the approval and signature of the HPA department head. A copy of the approved thesis and copies of the signatory page should be given to the department head at least a week prior to the deadline for thesis submission to the Graduate School. The department head's signature certifies the program's approval of the thesis.

Graduate Program in Scholarship and Research Integrity

All students entering any master's or doctoral program in the College of Health and Human Development (CHHD) are required to undertake training in Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI).

There are two options for fulfilling this requirement. The first, currently in use by HPA, is the completion of a single 11-week course, taken in the spring semester of the student's first year of study, known as RISE (Research Integrity and Scholarly Ethics). HPA students are automatically enrolled in this course by program staff and successful completion of the course fully satisfies the SARI requirement.

The second option is to complete the traditional SARI program, which is described below.

The SARI Program consists of three complementary components: 1) a university component consisting of an online program offered through the Office of Research Protections (ORP); 2) a CHHD component consisting of a series of interactive sessions aimed at the timely exploration of universal issues related to the responsible conduct of research; and 3) a departmental component consisting of approved content in discipline-specific research ethics and integrity. Consistent with University guidelines, all students will complete a minimum of ten (10) hours of SARI training, one-half (5 hours) of which must include the online university component taken in the first year of graduate study. The remaining five hours may be customized and distributed within the college-wide or departmental offerings as determined by each student in consultation with his or her advisor. Doctoral students must meet the entire ten-hour minimum requirement prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy while master's students must fulfill the requirement in order to graduate.

University Component

The SARI Resource Portal (<http://www.research.psu.edu/training/sari/>) offered by the Office of Research Protections provides access to the required online training program specifically designed for Penn State by the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI: www.citiprogram.org). Information, teaching tools, and links to other resources to support SARI program activities are also provided. HPA students are required to take the CITI Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course for the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Health and Human Development Component

CHHD will offer three, 100-minute RCR workshops per academic year. Workshops will be open to all CHHD graduate students and will be announced college-wide approximately one month prior to the scheduled date. Attendance will be recorded using college forms specifically designed for SARI documentation. The form will specify the workshop attended, the total hours and dates of delivery and the signatures of student and course instructor to verify delivery and attendance.

The college component of the SARI program will focus on more universal issues related to ethical scholarship and the responsible pursuit of research irrespective of discipline. A non-comprehensive list of potential topics is provided below:

- Acquisition, Management, Sharing, and Ownership of Data
- Publication Practices and Responsible Authorship
- Conflict of Interest and Commitment
- Research Misconduct
- Peer Review
- Mentor/Trainee Responsibilities
- Collaborative Science
- Human Subjects Protections

- Animal Welfare

Departmental Component

The departmentally delivered component of the CHHD SARI Program is intended to provide RCR instruction aimed at specific academic disciplines and/or domains of research. This component takes advantage of course content and program requirements already in existence in some HHD graduate programs. To qualify for SARI credit hours, a course must explicitly include RCR material in its content as reflected by the course syllabus. The number of hours devoted to RCR instruction must also be explicitly stated. Students wishing to use SARI approved course content to satisfy their SARI requirement will at the time of instruction procure, complete, and return a brief college form from the departmental graduate administrator. The form, the same as that used for college-wide workshops, will specify the course in question, the total hours and dates of RCR content delivery and the signatures of student and course instructor to verify delivery and attendance.

The professors in charge of graduate education in each academic unit are responsible for proper documentation, oversight and system compliance. Records documenting student participation will be maintained by departmental graduate education administrative assistants. Beginning fall 2009, each student record/progress checklist will include the ten-hour SARI requirement. Records of online participation will be made available to departmental administrators by the ORP. Signed forms for verifying attendance at college-wide workshops will be distributed to the departmental homes of those students attending to be entered into student records. SARI hours from approved departmental coursework will be documented internally using the same form.

Graduate School Requirements

The Graduate School admits each student to work toward a specific degree. The Dean of the Graduate School must approve any change in the sought-after degree.

For attainment of the Ph.D., the Graduate School requires no specific number of courses or credits. Instead, the individual department or program determines course requirements. Graduate School requirements for the doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree include:

1. Pass the admission to candidacy review. Admission to graduate study is not synonymous with admission to the Ph.D. Program. Students must, additionally, be admitted to candidacy to the Ph.D. by means of the candidacy review conducted by Ph.D. Committee.
2. Demonstrate competence in the English language, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
3. Demonstrate competence in the communication and foreign language requirements that have been established within the major program.
4. Reside at the University Park campus for two consecutive semesters over a 12-month period and be enrolled for full-time academic work. The period of residence must occur between the admission to candidacy and completion of the Ph.D. requirements.
5. Complete a Plan of Study, meeting the minimum requirements of the Graduate School and receiving approval by the program committee.
6. Pass the comprehensive exam administered by the thesis committee.
7. Write a satisfactory thesis demonstrating independent, competent research and scholarship that makes a significant contribution to the field, where significance is measured by publishable work.
8. Pass the final oral examination, which is normally devoted to defending the student's thesis work.
9. Maintain at least a 3.00 grade-point average.

The Graduate School also requires that the student complete the program, including the doctoral thesis, within eight years from the date of acceptance as a doctoral candidate.

Allowance for Prior Graduate Study

Many incoming HPA doctoral students have prior graduate degrees or have taken graduate-level coursework from Penn State or elsewhere. In order to avoid repetition in coursework but still assure that each student receives adequate preparation, the department has established the following policies.

A maximum of 10 credits of high-quality graduate work at an accredited institution may be applied toward the requirements for the doctoral degree. The program committee will only consider granting allowances for courses completed within five years of the date of acceptance into graduate study. Only prior graduate courses in which the student earned a B or better will be considered. Course content must be documented with a syllabus or other similarly descriptive material. Because the Graduate School does not establish minimum credit requirements for the Ph.D. degree, students need not formally transfer credits for courses taken in other graduate programs. In most cases, students will be expected to substitute more advanced courses rather than reduce the total credit load required for the doctoral degree.

The procedure for requesting an allowance for prior graduate study is:

1. Early in the first semester of study, if not before, the student should discuss with his or her advisor whether any prior academic work is comparable in content and rigor to specific courses or subject area requirements. At this time, the student must provide the advisor with a course syllabus or similar descriptive material for any academic work for which allowance is sought.
2. Once comparable academic work has been identified, the student and the advisor should jointly draft a memo to the Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. program requesting the allowance. This memo should identify the Ph.D. program requirement(s) for which the allowance is sought and justify the request with supporting documentation, such as transcripts and course syllabi. Both student and advisor should sign this memo.
3. The HPA Ph.D. Committee reviews all requests for allowances and documents its decisions via a memo to the student and the advisor. A copy of the memo is placed in the student's departmental file and appropriate notation is made on the student's Plan of Study. All decisions by the Ph.D. Committee are final.

English Language Competence

Every graduate program shall have a formal mechanism for assessing and improving English language competence of both domestic and international students. This mechanism, to include guidelines and evaluation criteria, must be presented in the graduate program's handbook, which must be provided to the student upon matriculation. If English language competence is assessed contemporaneously with another assessment, it should not be conflated with the assessment of disciplinary knowledge, analytical thinking, or other skills.

Assessment shall include:

- a. Original writing of a length and complexity suitable for assessing high-level English language competence.
- b. An oral component that assesses the student's listening, comprehension, and speaking skills.

HPA verifies written competence in English (Part a, above) as part of the Qualifying Examination at the end of the first year of study, based on an assessment by each member of the qualifying exam committee. The results of this assessment are reported to the PIC of the PhD program. Competence in spoken English (Part b, above) is evaluated based on a presentation each student gives in the AcademyHealth Student Chapter seminar series

during their third semester of study. The presentation will be attended by at least one member of the PhD Program Committee, who will provide their assessment to the PIC of the PhD program.

Programs must document the outcome of the assessment of English competence, including any areas requiring improvement and remedial steps, at the time of reporting the outcome of the Qualifying Examination.

English competence shall be formally attested to by the graduate program before the doctoral student's Comprehensive Examination is scheduled.

Requirement for Residence

The Graduate School requires that students, once they become doctoral candidates, spend at least two consecutive semesters as registered full-time students engaged in academic work at the University Park Campus. For purposes of this requirement, students may include the semester during which the candidacy review is undertaken, as long as the registration is full-time. The Graduate School considers full-time registration to include a minimum of 9 credits or maximum of 12 credits with half-time assistantship; a minimum of 9 credits or maximum of 14 credits with quarter-time assistantship; and 9 credits per semester for students holding fellowships or traineeships.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Graduate students in HPA have five options for financial assistance: (1) the HPA Department; (2) faculty with grant monies for research assistants; (3) the Fellowships Office; (4) the Office of Student Aid; and (5) external agencies. The process for aid consideration is decentralized; it is necessary to file applications with each office.

The deadlines for submitting applications vary with each area. Early application for financial aid is recommended as early applicants are the most likely to receive favorable consideration. It is often necessary to apply by early February for the succeeding year. It is best to apply for all sources of aid simultaneously rather than one after the other, which might lead to missed deadlines if the first choice is unsuccessful.

Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are of two types: (1) those funded by the college and administered by the HPA Department for teaching and research assistants and (2) those funded through research or training grants directed by individual faculty. The Department Head makes funding and work assignment decisions on recommendations made by the Ph.D. Committee and the faculty member responsible for administering the grant funding. Because assistantships are limited, providing funding to every qualified student is not always possible.

Graduate assistants are assigned to individual faculty and perform roles in classroom instruction, research or other work. Graduate assistantships serve two interrelated functions. (1) They give students training and experience in diverse academic pursuits. As such, they represent an apprenticeship in the student's graduate program. (2) They assist the department in meeting its educational and professional obligations. Graduate assistantships are not honorary fellowships, and students are expected to meet their work obligations with a sense of responsibility and to view them as an integral part of their graduate education.

Graduate assistantships are only available to full-time degree students. They are normally half-time, although quarter-time assistantships may be available. Half-time assistantships pay a stipend plus full resident tuition. An average of 20 hours of work per week is expected. Although the period of instruction each semester is 15 weeks, graduate assistants are appointed for 18 weeks of activities each semester.

A student holding a half-time assistantship must schedule between 9 and 12 credits of academic work each semester during the fall and spring. The credit load limit may be increased or decreased for a specific semester by permission of the student's assistantship supervisor, the student's advisor, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Permission is given provided the total work load is properly balanced in each semester and the average credit load over an academic year is in conformity with the guidelines stated above.

A graduate assistant may only accept concurrent employment outside the university if the Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program and the HPA Department Head grant permission. Concurrent employment normally may not be held within the University. A student may receive a concurrent fellowship supplement.

Student performance in teaching and research assistantship duties is evaluated each semester by the faculty member to whom the student is assigned. This review entails a written description of the student's activities and an appraisal of the quality and productivity of the student's work as a graduate assistant. Performance evaluations are used in decisions to renew funding and in evaluations of the student's overall development. Performance evaluations are discussed with the student and are filed in his or her departmental file.

Faculty Senate Guidelines for TA Preparation

Legislation passed by the University Faculty Senate requires the following for students performing duties as a teaching assistant (TA) as part of the graduate assistantship:

1. All TAs must be provided with the instructional goals and objectives for the course and, if teaching in any capacity, directions to attain teaching goals and objectives.
2. TAs must be offered preparation in generic teaching strategies (e.g., how to question, how to respond to student comments, how to incorporate different types of explanations into lesson plans, how to construct and grade exams).
3. Departments must provide TAs with information on appropriate teaching methods, activities, exercises, and/or grading policies and techniques for the course to which the TA has been assigned.
4. Departments must provide all TAs with faculty supervision and/or mentorship.
5. All TAs must receive some type of formative instructional evaluation (i.e., evaluation that provides feedback about instructional effectiveness for the purpose of improving the TA's teaching).
6. Departments must direct International Teaching Assistants (ITAs) who score below 250 on the AEOCPT - American English Oral Communicative Proficiency Test to take the state requirement courses for certification and to follow the guidelines for teaching responsibilities that correspond with the course. Courses are offered by the Department of Applied Linguistics. Further details about this test can be found online at: <http://aplng.la.psu.edu/programs/about-the-aecpt/about-the-american-english-oral-communicative-test-aecpt>.

The department expects faculty supervisors to provide TAs with the necessary preparation and feedback for instructional improvement. Graduate assistants are also strongly encouraged to take advantage of the programs offered by the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence at www.schreyerinstitute.psu.edu/ and the opportunity to earn a teaching certificate through the Graduate School.

International students who have received an offer to be a graduate assistant must take and pass the AEOCPT to be able to perform their duties. Information about the test is available online at <http://aplng.la.psu.edu/programs/about-the-aecpt/about-the-american-english-oral-communicative-test-aecpt>. Students can register to take the test at the same website. Students who do not achieve a passing score on the AEOCPT must take additional coursework in English. Information on required coursework is also available at the above website.

Forms

For incoming graduate students, the department includes several forms with the assistantship offer that must be completed and returned to the HPA financial assistant in order to receive payment on the first payroll date at the end of August. The forms are:

1. Offer Letter
2. Terms of Offer Agreement
3. I-9, Immigration and Naturalization Form
4. PSU Employment Application
5. W-4, Tax Withholding Form
6. Salary Deposit Request Form
7. University Intellectual Property Agreement Form
8. Worker's Compensation Employee Notification
9. Affirmative Action Application Data Card

These forms do not need to be re-filed for returning students, except for a new assistantship contract. A new W-4 form should be completed if a student changes his/her name or address or wishes to change withholding rates.

Funding from External Agencies

An excellent sign of one's ability to succeed in a doctoral program is the ability to secure funding for research. A number of government agencies, such as the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, provide support for dissertation research. Private foundations also provide such support.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult with their thesis committee regarding opportunities for research funding. Preparation of an application for external funding can be an important part of a student's development.

Tuition Assistance Program (Summer Session Only)

Students may apply for tuition assistance, so they can continue graduate studies during the summer. Tuition assistance is also provided to graduate students appointed as graduate lecturers during the summer and for some students who have had assistantships for two consecutive semesters.

Students wishing to apply for this program can complete the on-line STAP application by visiting <https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/cosign/stap>.

Health Insurance

Health insurance is not mandatory for U.S. graduate assistants and fellows. However, all GAs and fellows are eligible for participation in the Graduate Fellow Health Insurance Plan. Penn State requires medical insurance for international students and their accompanying dependents (spouses and/or children). If international students would like to elect alternate coverage, they must present proof of that coverage.

All GAs and fellows are automatically enrolled in the Penn State Graduate Assistant Graduate Fellow Plan but can elect to decline this coverage by completing a form within the first 20 days of the beginning of the semester. The University will not supplement, nor will a payroll deduction be made, for insurance policies other than the Penn State Graduate Assistant Graduate Fellow Plan.

For students enrolled in the Penn State Graduate Assistant Graduate Fellow Plan, the remaining 20 percent of the premium is deducted from the student's assistantship stipend, half in the fall semester and half in the spring

semester. The coverage continues at no additional cost during the summer for students on graduate assistantships or fellowships in the spring (or fall and spring) semester(s).

Students who do not qualify for the Penn State Graduate Assistant Graduate Fellow Health Insurance Plan may purchase alternative coverage through the Graduate Student Association, the Student Insurance Office, or through any carrier of their choosing.

To talk with someone at the Student Insurance Office (SIO), students should either stop by and see a representative at 302 Student Health Center or call (814) 865-7467. Information is also available at the website: <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health-wellness/health-insurance>.

It is important to note that when graduate students are compensated as wage payroll (or) fixed term II employees, rather than as graduate assistants, their eligibility for premium support ends.

Pay Dates

Graduate assistants are paid on the last working day of each month. For students holding full academic year appointments, there are ten pay dates. The first check is issued at the end of August and the last check is issued at the end of May. Paychecks are directly deposited into an individual's bank account. Forms to initiate direct deposit are available from the graduate staff assistant.

Tax Status of Financial Assistance

Income from graduate assistantships is considered taxable income. Some sources of financial assistance are taxable and some are not. Current information is available from the Graduate Student Association by calling (814) 865-4211.

REGISTRATION

Students are encouraged to preregister for each semester's courses. This saves time and trouble and provides leverage for gaining entrance into courses that may be overenrolled. Preregistration enhances faculty planning by providing valuable information regarding expected class size and other matters.

Each semester, the registrar publishes a *Schedule of Courses* for the following semester. This is available online at <https://www.registrar.psu.edu/soc/index.cfm>. The schedule describes the procedures and deadlines to be followed to preregister or register for the upcoming semester.

Continuity of Registration

The Graduate School requires that graduate students maintain continuous registration, except for the summer session. Even after completion of coursework (and the comprehensive examination for doctoral students), students must maintain continuous registration in the program by registering for HPA 600/601 or HPA 610/611 for both the fall and spring semesters.

Any break in the continuity of registration, except for summer sessions, requires the completion of a "Resume Study" form with The Graduate School. In effect, this is an application for readmission. Each student should make sure that his or her committee and the Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program know of the student's intentions on these matters because readmission is not guaranteed and will depend on each student's progress in the program to date. Normally, the Ph.D. Committee consults the student's thesis committee for a recommendation on readmission based on adequate progress on the thesis. Additionally, the Ph.D. Committee requires that students continue to register up to and including the semester of graduation.

REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

PH.D. PROGRAM QUALIFYING EXAM

Students enrolled in the HPA Ph.D. Program, regardless of selected track, will be required to pass a qualifying exam that will occur at the end of the first academic year (i.e., in May or early June). The results of the exam will be considered in the doctoral candidacy review which occurs around the same time. Students will not be advanced to doctoral candidacy until they have passed the qualifying exam.

Purpose

The purpose of the exam is to demonstrate that core competencies in health systems organization and delivery, health policy and finance, and research design have been acquired during the first year of the curriculum. Another purpose of the exam is to provide students with an opportunity to review and integrate the first year material through a comprehensive period of study in preparation for the exam.

Content

The exam will cover elements of the core curriculum in the following classes: HPA 518, HPA 520, HPA 521, HPA 528, HPA 510, HPA 511, HPA 561, and HPA 564.

Structure

The exam will occur over a one-day period. Responsibility for the exam's development and grading will rest with the core faculty responsible for teaching the relevant courses. The Ph.D. Committee will have final oversight and responsibility for reviewing and for administering the exam. A "Qualifying Exam Committee" will be convened by the Ph.D. Committee in August of each academic year and should include the relevant course instructors who will prepare the exam.

Grading

The exam will be graded by the Qualifying Exam Committee. Grades will be pass or fail. A student must receive a passing grade in order to satisfy the qualifying exam requirement. Detailed feedback will not be provided for passing grades. Feedback will be provided for failing grades. Students who fail the initial exam will have an opportunity for a maximum of one retest, to occur by the end of July. Students failing the second exam will lose eligibility for the Ph.D. and may be encouraged to consider an M.S. instead (pending the student's first year progress in other areas).

DOCTORAL CANDIDACY REVIEW

The purpose of the doctoral candidacy review is to provide a formal evaluation of the student's potential for completing the Ph.D. degree. Passing the doctoral candidacy review merely enables the student to continue in the Ph.D. program; it does not ensure that a degree will be granted. Specifically, HPA and Graduate School policies allow students to be terminated at any time because of lack of adequate progress as determined by the annual review.

Timing

Candidacy reviews are conducted after the student has completed 18 credits of graduate work toward the Ph.D. in the HPA program. Courses must include the health care policy and organization segment and at least one graduate course in research methods (HPA 561) and one in statistics. The candidacy review will normally be conducted during the summer after completing the first year of graduate study, with students' review materials due to the Ph.D. Committee by May 1 of that year.

Content and Conduct of the Review

The Ph.D. Committee conducts the doctoral candidacy review.

The review consists of the following elements:

1. Review of the Plan of Study. The committee may make recommendations regarding changes in the Plan of Study.
2. Review of the qualifying exam results.
3. Review of performance in coursework. This includes a review of transcripts and may include a review of graded papers and other work completed in classes.
4. Evaluation of the student's assistantship performance, if applicable.
5. Assessment of competence in reading, writing, listening to and speaking the English language.
6. Evaluation of potential for successfully completing the Ph.D. Program requirements, including coursework and the thesis in a timely fashion.
7. The committee meets to discuss the student's portfolio and determine if the student is approved for admission to candidacy.
8. The Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program notifies the student and the primary advisor by letter of the outcome after the candidacy review. This letter becomes the formal notification to the Graduate School. In the event that the student fails the candidacy review, he or she has the right to appeal this decision per the Graduate School's policies regarding termination from graduate programs (www.gradsch.psu.edu/). The Ph.D. Committee may, but is not required to, allow the student to retake the candidacy review at a later date, but the student must pass the candidacy review no later than 18 months from the beginning of the degree program.

Procedures

The following is a checklist of procedures for the candidacy review:

1. The Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program schedules a Doctoral Candidacy Review meeting of the Ph.D. Committee between May 1 and August of each year.
2. The student submits to the Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program a portfolio including the following: Plan of Study, unofficial copy of Penn State transcript, assistantship performance evaluations, statements of career goals and thesis progress, and Plan of Study materials.
3. The Professor-in-Charge makes the portfolio available to the members of the Ph.D. Committee.
4. The doctoral candidacy review is held.
5. The Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program documents the outcome of the review in a letter following the review meeting.

ANNUAL REVIEW

All HPA doctoral students undergo a review of their progress on an annual basis. For first-year doctoral students, the review is titled “candidacy review.” The Penn State Graduate School requires this review before a student can be officially accepted into doctoral candidacy (new students are admitted to the doctoral program, but not officially eligible for doctoral candidacy until the candidacy review is passed). Students who have passed the candidacy review are also subject to an “Annual Progress Review.”

Both reviews require that students complete forms (see attachments in appendix) that elaborate a Plan of Study, grades in completed coursework, research plans (as discussed with a chosen advisor), etc. These materials are to be submitted to the graduate program staff assistant and are then reviewed by the Ph.D. Committee. The committee provides students with a letter indicating the outcome of the review, usually within 45 days of the submission of materials. The committee uses the review process to judge a student’s progress and, in most cases, will notify the student of satisfactory performance or possibly a few suggestions on which to focus.

However, the committee can also use the reviews as the basis for termination from the doctoral program or a probationary period, if necessary. In all cases, the Ph.D. Committee makes decisions through a majority vote, with written notification to the student. The student will have the recourse of appeal as specified by the Graduate School's policies.

DOCTORAL COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The third important milestone in the Ph.D. program is the doctoral comprehensive examination. The doctoral comprehensive examination serves to assess the student’s mastery of the following: (1) a broad range of issues related to health policy and administration, (2) knowledge of the economic and organizational underpinnings of the field, and (3) the core methods of health services and health policy research, and (4) preparation for completion of a dissertation and of the program’s three tracks.

Procedures

In order to begin the comprehensive examination process, the student must meet the following requirements: (1) be a Ph.D. candidate (i.e., have successfully passed the Ph.D. candidacy examination); (2) have a minimum grade-point average of 3.00 and have no deferred or missing grades; and, (3) be registered as a full-time student. In addition, the student must have formally formed his doctoral thesis committee as evidenced by the Graduate School's records.

The exam is administered by the student’s doctoral thesis committee and is normally administered near or shortly after the end of the student’s second year. The doctoral thesis committee determines the content of the exam. Normally, a significant portion of the examination will focus on the student’s area of specialization, but the examination should address the student’s mastery of the HPA core, methods, and statistics.

The student and his or her doctoral thesis committee should meet and select a date for the comprehensive examination at least one month in advance. The schedule should include the dates for the written examination and for the oral defense of the responses. At this meeting, any clarifications about content, format and expectations for the examination can be discussed.

The student and his or her doctoral thesis committee chair should notify the HPA Ph.D. Program Staff and the Ph.D. Program Professor-in-Charge of the examination date, including both the dates for the written examination and the date for the oral defense of the written responses. The Graduate Staff Assistant and Ph.D. Program Professor-in-Charge should notify the Department Head of the examination dates. The examination is

scheduled and announced officially by the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services upon recommendation of the department or program head. Two weeks' notice is required by the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services for scheduling this examination, so the student and the doctoral thesis committee chair must provide notification several weeks in advance.

The comprehensive examination may be held fully in-person, fully remote, or hybrid with some individuals participating in-person while others participate remotely.

Student preference for delivery mode should be strongly considered, but the student and adviser must agree on the mode. If the student and adviser cannot agree on the mode, the Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program will make the final decision. Either the student or adviser can appeal the decision of the Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program to the HHD Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

Grading of the examination is determined by the doctoral committee. A favorable vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the committee is required for passing. The results of the examination are reported to the Department Head and the Office of Graduate Enrollment Services. In case of failure, it is the responsibility of the doctoral committee to determine whether the candidate may take another examination. The committee will determine the timing of the re-examination and may require additional coursework or other remediation before the reexamination occurs.

When more than five years has elapsed between the passing of the comprehensive examination and the completion of the program, the student is required to pass a second comprehensive examination before the final oral examination of the dissertation will be scheduled.

DOCTORAL FINAL ORAL EXAMINATION

The final step toward the Ph.D. degree is an oral examination administered and evaluated by the student's doctoral thesis committee. It consists of an oral presentation and defense of the thesis by the student followed by a period of questions and responses. The questions will relate largely to the thesis but may cover the student's entire program of study, since one of the purposes of the examination is to assess the general scholarly attainments of the student. The portion of the examination in which the thesis is presented is open to the public.

Scheduling

The Graduate School requires that students be registered full-time or part-time for the semester in which the final oral examination is taken. Normally, the Graduate School does not allow the final oral examination to be scheduled until at least three months have passed since the comprehensive examination. The Dean of the Graduate School may grant a waiver in appropriate cases.

The final oral examination is scheduled by the Professor-in-Charge of the Ph.D. Program through the Graduate School on the joint recommendation of the committee and the student. Two weeks' notice is required by the Graduate School. The deadline for holding the examination is ten weeks before commencement.

Thesis Draft

The student's dissertation must be in its penultimate draft form before a final oral examination will be scheduled. Both the content and style should be correct and polished by the time this draft is submitted to the doctoral committee. It is the responsibility of the student to provide a copy of the thesis to each member of the doctoral committee at least one month before the date of the scheduled examination.

Mode of Administration

The final oral examination (dissertation defense) may be held fully in-person, fully remote, or hybrid with some individuals participating in-person while others participate remotely.

Student preference for delivery mode should be strongly considered, but the student and adviser must agree on the mode. If the student and adviser cannot agree on the mode, the Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program will make the final decision. Either the student or adviser can appeal the decision of the Professor-in-Charge of the HPA Ph.D. Program to the HHD Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

Evaluation

Final oral examinations are graded on a five-point scale of superior, above average, average, below average, and failure. A favorable vote of at least two-thirds of the members of the doctoral committee is required for passing. Even with a “pass” decision for the final oral examination, the student may be required to make revisions in the thesis or conduct additional analyses. If a student fails the examination, the doctoral committee has the responsibility to determine whether another examination will be granted.

APPENDICES

A:
Independent Study (596) and Thesis Research (600/610) Agreement
 Department of Health Policy and Administration

SECTION I

This form must be submitted to the Graduate Program’s Staff Assistant for each semester (and each course) that a student enrolls in HPA 596, HPA 600, or HPA 610. All such forms **must be received before or within the first two weeks of the semester**. After that deadline, students will not be permitted to enroll for independent study/research without permission of the Professor-in-Charge of the graduate program.

Name (please print)		
Last	First	Middle
Date Filed		Student Number
Signature of Professor in Charge (if filed after second week of semester)		
Course		Course Number
Semester		Number of Credits
Grading method (place an “X” in the appropriate blank):		
Does the student expect to receive an “R” _____ or a letter grade _____ at the end of the semester?		
<p>Hours: The number of credits should be commensurate with the work required. University policy recommends a minimum of 40 hours of in- and out-of-class work per credit during a 15-week semester. Thus, a three-credit independent study is expected to require eight hours per week.</p>	<p>Approval: The actual project is based on negotiation by the student and the instructor (see next page). The instructor and student must sign this form after the completion of both pages.</p>	
<p>Instructor’s Signature:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>	<p>Student’s Signature:</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p>	

Independent Study (596) and Thesis Research (600/610) Agreement

Department of Health Policy and Administration

SECTION II

This short form must be completed to identify the work to be completed for independent study or thesis research credit. The student and instructor should jointly discuss and agree upon these requirements and expectations and then describe them below.

Briefly describe the independent study or thesis research:	
Student-faculty meetings (provide information below):	
Number of meetings (per week/month/semester)	Length of meetings (30 minutes/60 minutes/90 minutes)
List or describe any readings or texts that will be required. If the readings are to be identified by the student as part of the course, describe the process for identifying and selecting the readings:	
Briefly explain the grading policy for the course. Describe the criteria and standards (including the schedule outlined below) that will be used to grade the student and, if appropriate, the relative weights of each criterion.	
Schedule (please list major milestones and dates below):	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.2.3.4.5.	

B:

Graduate Student Annual Progress Evaluation

Department of Health Policy and Administration

Student's Name: _____

Advisor: _____ Degree Program: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: All Ph.D. and M.S. students should complete their required sections of this form and ensure that appropriate personnel complete and sign all other sections. Ph.D. students should complete **Section B** of the form, while M.S. students should complete **Section C**. Once completed, students must deliver this document and all completed attachments to 604 Ford Building, c/o graduate staff assistant. **DUE DATE FOR ALL DOCUMENTS IS MARCH 31.**

Section A: Evaluation of student's progress (advisor completes this section)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Superior	Inadequate Opportunity to Observe	Not Applicable
Performance in Courses					
Thesis Research					
Performance in Assistantship					

1. Has the student made adequate progress in the past year? Yes No

If your answer is "No," please explain why and suggest a course of action.

2. Have you read over the student's Statement of Research and Career Goals? Yes No

3. Describe any key areas where the student should focus his or her attention over the coming year.

Section B: Questions for Ph.D. Student

✓ Have you passed candidacy review? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, please list completion date _____
✓ Have you selected an official Ph.D. Committee? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If you have selected a Ph.D. Committee, please list the members' names below:	
✓ Have you passed the comprehensive exam? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, please list completion date _____
✓ Would you like to remain with your current academic advisor for the next academic year? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
✓ If no, please indicate whom you would prefer to serve as your academic advisor _____	
✓ Have you and your advisor discussed external thesis funding? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If so, what funding plans have you made?	

Section C: Questions for M.S. Student

✓ Have you identified a thesis advisor? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, please list his or her name below: _____
✓ Have you identified a second thesis reader? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If yes, please list his or her name below: _____

Section D: Attachments

Student should complete and attach the following documents:

1. Graduate Degree Plan of Study (form attached);
2. Unofficial copy of PSU Transcript (available through eLion or the University's Registrar's Office);
3. Assistantship Performance Evaluations (available from graduate staff assistant);
4. Statement of Research and Career Goals (form attached); and
5. Professional CV, including a list of all publications and presentations (including those accepted for publication or presentation).

I understand my evaluation and have read and discussed its content with my advisor.

Student's Signature

Date

I have reviewed the Graduate Student Annual Progress Evaluation and discussed the contents with the student.

Advisor's Signature

Date

*******This page to be completed by the M.S. /Ph.D. Committee*******

1. The M.S. /Ph.D. Committee reviewed the student's progress evaluation form on _____ (insert date) and made the following conclusions:

2. The M.S. /Ph.D. Committee provided the following feedback to the student (please include the date the feedback was given and the manner in which it was provided):

M.S. /Ph.D. Committee Professor-in-Charge's Signature

Date

C:

Graduate Degree Plan of Study

Department of Health Policy and Administration

Name of Student: _____ Advisor: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Indicate semester (e.g., FA '07) when the student plans to take courses that he or she has not yet completed. Indicate semester and grade for courses completed. For transfer credits note "TC" in the semester column and provide further information in the appropriate section (student may attach additional documentation). Students must update this form each spring until all courses are completed.

CORE REQUIREMENTS (Health Care Policy and Organization Segment: 12 credits)	Semester	Grade
• HPA 520 Introduction to Health Services Organizations and Delivery	_____	_____
• HPA 521 Research Seminar on Health Services Organization and Delivery	_____	_____
• HPA 510 Introduction to Health Services Financing and Policy	_____	_____
• HPA 511 Research Seminar on Health Service Financing and Policy	_____	_____

CORE REQUIREMENTS (Health Services Research Methods Segment: 15 credits)	Semester	Grade
• HPA 518 Foundations of Research Methods in Health Services Research	_____	_____
• HPA 540 Epidemiological Research Methods	_____	_____
• HPA 561 Introduction to Research Design in Health Services Research	_____	_____
• HPA 564 Research Methods in Health Services Research	_____	_____
• HPA 528 Health Data Analysis for Research	_____	_____

CORE REQUIREMENTS (Professional Development Segment: 2 credits)	Semester	Grade
• HPA 590 Colloquium	_____	_____
• HPA 590 Colloquium	_____	_____

SPECIALTY TRACK REQUIREMENTS (Total credits selected from one of the following tracks in consultation with advisor and thesis committee. Indicate course number and title.)

Select (✓) one of the tracks below:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Economics | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Care Management and Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

ADDITIONAL COURSEWORK: The student should indicate here any additional coursework he or she expects to complete during his or her graduate education. This might include plans to complete the Graduate School Teaching Certificate, the Teaching with Technology Certificate, additional courses recommended by the advisor or thesis committee, methods workshops at research conferences, etc.

Course Name	Semester	Grade
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

TRANSFER CREDITS: Indicate University, course number, title, semester and grade. Supporting documentation (transcripts, approval of allowance) should be present in the student’s file.

University	Course Number and Title	Semester	Grade
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Student’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

Advisor’s Signature: _____ Date: _____

D:

Statement of Research and Career Goals

Department of Health Policy and Administration

Name of Student: _____ Degree Program: _____

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Describe in detail (maximum of three pages, single-spaced) your research and thesis plans, including the following elements:
 - Timeline for Completion of Research;
 - Research Advisor and Committee Members (if committee is appointed);
 - Policy/Practice Relevance of Research Project;
 - Plans to Apply for External Funding Available to Graduate Students (e.g., AHRQ Dissertation Awards, Juran Fellowship, etc.); and
 - Targeted Outlets (e.g., academic journals) for Disseminating Research Findings.
2. Briefly describe (maximum of one page, single-spaced) your career goals, including the type of position you are planning to seek after graduation and the area of research you plan to emphasize.
3. Attach all pages to this form.

I have completed my Statement of Research and Career Goals and shared the information with my advisor.

Student's Signature

Date