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Ph.D. in Health Services Research

Student Handbook

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Disclaimer: This Handbook describes the program, policies, and practices of the UNC Charlotte Ph.D. program in Health Services Research. In the event of a conflict between this document and University documents on any issue, University documents shall have precedence.

Who is Covered by the Requirements Given in this Handbook: All matriculating students to the Health Services Research Ph.D. program are governed by the policies described in this Handbook.

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The Department of Public Health Sciences

Overview

The Department of Public Health Sciences was originally founded as the Department of Health Behavior and Administration on July 1, 2002 as part of the transformed College of Health and Human Services. The new Department was conceived in response to recommendations derived from UNC Charlotte's Health Commission report (2000) as well as a variety of initiatives placing emphasis on population health and health behavior research. In May 2007 the Department was renamed to Public Health Sciences to better reflect the unit's larger-scale set of current and planned research programs, degree offerings, and service activities. Faculty research programs focus on individual and population health including: the prevention and management of disease across the lifespan; the health status of diverse, urban communities; and population health and health care analytics. Our goals include creating North Carolina's second accredited School of Public Health. The Department favors the development and implementation of collaborative academic programs and interdisciplinary scholarship; and embraces the University's core values encouraging diversity and equal educational and employment opportunities throughout the University community. The University's non-discrimination policies, the Council on University Community, and the Multicultural Resource Center support these values.

Our excellence is rooted in the competence of our highly collegial faculty and staff; support from the university's administrative leadership; expert peer review; and the understanding and enthusiasm of our community partners including advisory board members, part-time instructors, and internship preceptors. We welcome your advice and guidance; your collaborations and partnerships; your support and contributions; and your commitment to excellence.

Mission

The Department of Public Health Sciences aspires to excellence in educational programs, scholarship and research, and community service in the health and human services

Vision

The Department of Public Health Sciences offers professionally recognized and accessible undergraduate and graduate programs that are nationally and globally relevant, and responsive to changing health care and human service needs in the state and region. The Department achieves excellence through informed and effective teaching in its degree programs, community partnerships, and professional activities and research to create knowledge, advance science and inform practice in the health and human services professions.

The Ph.D. Program in Health Services Research

Overview

Health Services Research is a field of scientific investigation that studies how financing systems, health technologies, organizational structures and processes, personal behaviors, social factors, and policies affect access to health care, quality and cost of health care, and societal health and wellbeing. It is an interdisciplinary field that draws on a wide range of disciplines, including biostatistics, epidemiology, sociology, social work, economics, medicine, nursing, public health, engineering, management, and public policy. Health services research provides knowledge to guide the decisions of those who direct the billions of dollars allocated to health care each year in the United States and globally.

The Institute of Medicine of The National Academy of Sciences offers a similar definition:

“Health services research is a multidisciplinary field of inquiry, both basic and applied, that examines the use, costs, quality, accessibility, delivery, organization, financing, and outcomes of health care services to increase knowledge and understanding of the structure, processes, and effects of health services for individuals and populations.” (Committee on Health Services Research: Training and Workforce Issues. (1995). *Health Services Research: Workforce and Educational Issues*. M.J. Field, R.E. Tranquada, and J.C. Feasley (Eds.). Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

The Ph.D. Program in Health Services Research at UNC Charlotte is an interdisciplinary program. It includes course work in health economics, health organizational structures and processes, epidemiology, health policy, health behavior, grant writing, statistical analysis, research design and implementation, program evaluation, and research ethics. Graduates are prepared to conduct interdisciplinary research using quantitative and qualitative methods and to create new knowledge supporting innovations in health care delivery systems and health policy. Students complete core courses, courses and projects sufficient to develop an individual area of interest, and a dissertation. The dissertation is the capstone of the program and is expected to be a significant contribution to knowledge. It is original and independent research of sufficient quality to warrant publication in peer-reviewed, indexed journals. Our program also emphasizes development of skills in grant writing, which are useful for obtaining research funding. Students are encouraged to submit grants to support their Ph.D. studies and their dissertation research, as well as their research expenses and professional travel.

Mission of the Program in Health Services Research

The Ph.D. program in Health Services Research at UNC Charlotte is committed to providing students the interdisciplinary knowledge and skills needed to excel in research and education that improves health and human services in diverse socioeconomic

groups and geographic settings.

Core Competency Goals of the Ph.D. Program in Health Services Research

The Ph.D. Program in Health Services Research encompasses fourteen core knowledge and skill competencies common to all health services research professionals trained at the doctoral level. These competencies were developed by key stakeholders from schools of public health accredited by CEPH in a report to the U.S. Agency for Health Care Research and Quality (available at:

<http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/training/hsrcomp.htm>.)

To develop doctoral competency in Health Services Research, Ph.D. students at UNC Charlotte will:

1. Know how to apply alternative theoretical and conceptual models from a range of relevant disciplines to Health Services Research.
2. Apply in-depth disciplinary knowledge and skills relevant to health services research.
3. Use knowledge of the structures, performance, quality, policy, and environmental context of health and health care to formulate solutions for health policy problems.
4. Pose innovative and important research questions, informed by systematic reviews of the literature, stakeholder needs, and relevant theoretical and conceptual models.
5. Select appropriate interventional (experimental and quasi-experimental) or observational (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) study designs to address specific health services research questions.
6. Know how to collect primary health and health care data obtained by survey, qualitative, or mixed methods.
7. Know how to assemble secondary data from existing public and private sources.
8. Use a conceptual model to specify study constructs for a health services research question and develop variables that reliably and validly measure these constructs.
9. Implement research protocols with standardized procedures that ensure reproducibility of the science.

10. Ensure the ethical and responsible conduct of research in the design, implementation, and dissemination of health services research.
11. Work collaboratively in multi-disciplinary teams.
12. Use appropriate analytical methods to clarify associations between variables and to delineate causal inferences.
13. Effectively communicate the findings and implications of health services research through multiple modalities to technical and lay audiences.
14. Understand the importance of collaborating with policymakers, organizations, and communities to plan, conduct, and translate health services research into policy and practice.

Source: Table 1. Health Services Research (HSR) Doctoral Level Core Competencies; available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/fund/training/hsrcomptab1.htm>.

Program Description

The Ph.D. program in Health Services Research is designed to prepare students to conduct health services research and/or teach at a university level. The program of study is designed around the interests of the individual, taking previous academic training and professional experience into account. The program emphasizes research methods, statistics, and theoretical and empirical concepts in health services research, policy, and management. The Health Services Research Ph.D. Program is offered for full-time and part-time students.

Graduates of the Ph.D. Program in Health Services Research will be prepared for employment as researchers and senior program leaders in: colleges and universities, federal and state governmental agencies, public health organizations, health care provider organizations, advocacy organizations, and international health provider and advocacy organizations.

Administratively located in the Department of Public Health Sciences (<http://publichealth.uncc.edu/>), the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program is interdisciplinary, with courses taught by faculty from the College of Health and Human Services, the Belk College of Business, and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. This approach allows the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program to incorporate multiple perspectives and draw on the strengths of scholars from diverse disciplines.

The Ph.D. in Health Services Research consists of 57 total credit hours including 3 major areas:

1. Interdisciplinary theoretical courses (9 credits);
2. Methods and methodological issues (15 credits);
3. HSRD 8200 Seminar, to be taken every spring for the first 4 years (1 credit/year);
4. GRAD 8002- Professionalism and the Responsible Conduct of Research (2 credits);
5. Areas of Interest (9 credits); and
6. Dissertation (18 credits).

As defined in the Graduate Catalog, a semester course load totaling nine credit hours is considered full-time. Doctoral-level courses are considerably more time-consuming than most courses at the master's level, and doctoral students should also typically be involved in conducting research in collaboration with faculty. Students should not typically register for more than 10 credit hours in a given semester. A course load less than nine hours is considered part-time.

All Students

- HSRD 8200 Seminar in Health Services Research (Every spring 1st – 4 years) (1)
- GRAD 8002: Responsible Conduct of Research (required) (2)

Interdisciplinary Theoretical Courses (9 credits required)

- HSRD 8001: Introduction to Health Services Research (3)
- HSRD 8002: Healthcare Systems and Delivery (3)
- HSRD 8004/PPOL 8667: Economics of Health and Healthcare (3)
- HSRD 8005/PPOL 8663: Health Policy* (3)

Methods & Methodological Issues (15 credits)

- HSRD 8101: Design of Health Services Research* (3)
- HSRD 8102: Advanced Design of Health Services Research* (3)
- HSRD 8103: Large Data Sets and Health Services Research* (3)
- HSRD 8104: Healthcare Program Evaluation, Outcomes, and Quality* (3)
- HSRD 8106: Advanced Data Analysis for Health Services Research (3)
- HSRD 8110/STAT 8110: Applied Biostatistics: Regression* (3)
- HSRD 8111/STAT 8111: Applied Biostatistics: Multivariate* (3)

Areas of Interest (9 credits, courses selected in consultation with advisor):

1. Research Methods
2. Gerontology
3. Health Disparities
4. Mental Health
5. Public Policy

Dissertation (18 credits)

HSRD 8801: Dissertation Research (1-9)

**Has prerequisites or co-requisites*

A student may also select another relevant area of interest, providing it can be fulfilled with existing graduate courses or through independent study courses with Health Services Research Ph.D. faculty.

All newly admitted doctoral students are required to enroll in the online non-credit course, GRAD 8990- Academic Integrity. Students must successfully complete this course prior to registering for the next semester.

Graduate Certificate Opportunities

With careful course selection, students can also earn a Graduate Certificate in a specialty area, often with few or no additional courses. Graduate certificates are available in Gerontology; Applied Ethics; Emergency Management; Africana Studies; Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies; and Health Informatics. Please consult the Graduate School website for more information (graduateschool.uncc.edu).

Academic Advising

All course selections require the approval of the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director or the student's faculty advisor. All students shall have a faculty advisor when they are admitted. The faculty advisor must be a member of the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Faculty.

During the first year of full-time study or two years of part-time study, students are expected to begin to narrow the focus of their research interest to an area of proposed dissertation study. Each student will typically identify a Dissertation Committee Chair by the end of their first year of full-time study or the beginning of the second year of full-time study. Once the Dissertation Committee Chair is selected, he or she becomes the student's faculty advisor for the remainder of the program. The Dissertation Committee Chair will advise the student in her or his area of specialization and guide the student in recommending additional courses relevant to the planned dissertation. The Dissertation Chair also will advise the student in the selection of additional Dissertation Committee members. Note that Dissertation Chairs must be members of the Program Faculty or members of the Participating Faculty with a Program Faculty member as co-chair of the Dissertation Committee.

Who is Covered by the Requirements of this Handbook

This handbook covers program requirements for students who matriculated into the HSR Ph.D. program in 2017. Earlier cohorts of students should consult with the Ph.D. Program Director regarding previous editions of the handbook.

Time Limits and Continuous Registration

Time Limits

All courses beyond the master's degree, except transferred credit, cannot be older than eight years at the time of graduation. Courses that exceed this time limit must be revalidated or retaken, whichever the graduate program decides necessary, if they are to count in a degree program.

To revalidate a course, the student, along with the Program Director and the course instructor, prepare a revalidation plan that must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate School. This plan often involves taking a special examination designed by the faculty of the graduate program. Once the plan has been completed, the Program Director must notify the Graduate School in writing. The “**Course Revalidation Form**” is available at:

<https://graduateschool.uncc.edu/sites/graduateschool.uncc.edu/files/media/Course-Revalidation-Form-11-2015.pdf>.

Students may not revalidate courses with a grade of C or lower, courses that are internships or other forms of practica, or courses taken at other institutions. Additionally, no more than 25% of the courses on a student's program of study may be revalidated, and no course older than ten years may be revalidated. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Program Director to initiate the revalidation process.

Continuous Registration

From the Graduate Catalog: Students in graduate degree programs are required to maintain continuous registration (fall and spring semesters) for thesis, dissertation, project, or directed study until work is completed. Students are not required to enroll in any summer term unless they are using campus facilities or they are completing degree requirements in that term. Students using University resources should enroll in the number of graduate credit hours that best reflects the amount of resources being used (typically three (3) or more graduate credit hours). The continuous registration requirement begins with the semester in which the student first registers for his/her thesis, dissertation, project, or directed study.

Note: Students must be enrolled during the term (semester or summer) in which they graduate from the University.

GRAD 9999

GRAD 9999 (**Doctoral Graduate Residency Credit**) has no fees associated with it (only tuition) and is only 1 credit. This course meets Graduate School requirement for continuous enrollment during final term prior to graduation when all degree requirements (including dissertation) have been completed. This course is non-graded, and credit for this course does not count toward the degree. It may be repeated once. Doctoral students who are not using University resources and have already defended their dissertation but have yet to graduate can register for 1 credit hour of

GRAD 9999.

GRAD 9800

GRAD 9800 – Full-time Enrollment for Research is an option for graduate students completing their thesis or dissertation research. Students who have completed all required credit and passed all milestones except the defense are eligible to enroll. This 3-credit course can be used to elevate the qualifying student to full-time enrollment. Students working toward their defense should use this course and not the 1-credit residency course, GRAD 9999. That course (GRAD 9999) should be requested only when a student misses the deadline to defend the thesis/dissertation in one semester and must defend in the first four weeks of the next semester to graduate. That student is using few university resources and simply needs to be registered to graduate. When more thesis or dissertation work is needed, the GRAD 9800 course is appropriate.

Directed Study Courses (Independent Study)

There are no specific limitations imposed by the Graduate School on the number of independent study credits for a Ph.D. student. Students considering more than a total of 6 credits of independent study should consult with the Program Director. Only in unusual circumstances will more than 6 credits of independent study be acceptable.

Independent study classes can in some instances be used to satisfy a required course. After consulting with the Program Director, students should complete the independent study class substitution request using the Graduate Academic Petition tool (<https://gpetition.uncc.edu/login>). Students intending to take independent study credits must complete the “**Independent Study Application Form**” (see Appendix F), which must be completed (with signatures from the student, the faculty mentor supervising the independent study course, and the Program Director) no later than the end of the first week of classes in the semester in which the independent study occurs. Independent study courses will not typically be approved to satisfy existing required courses that are offered in the semester that the independent study is taken or that are scheduled for the following semester. Independent study classes in the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program will be taught by Health Services Research Ph.D. Faculty. The Program Director must approve all independent study courses taken to fulfill requirements of the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program.

The Qualifying Examination

The student takes the Qualifying Examination after completing all required Health Services Research Ph.D. courses, excepting the dissertation hours, and after having prepared for the defense of the dissertation proposal. The Qualifying Examination and the defense of the dissertation proposal, although conceptually separate, are scheduled and conducted at the same time.

With the active participation of the Dissertation Committee chair, the student will select a committee that includes the chair and two additional faculty from the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Faculty or Participating Faculty. Current lists of such faculty are included in this handbook. These faculty also will serve as the student's committee for the dissertation proposal and dissertation defense. The student submits the form "**Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee.**" The Graduate School then appoints a fourth committee member. The student may select an optional fifth committee member from the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Faculty or Participating Faculty. Refer to the section that describes the selection of the dissertation committee for additional information. This form should be completed well in advance of the dissertation proposal.

The Qualifying Examination includes an oral examination focused on the dissertation proposal and the student's doctoral portfolio.

The portfolio must include:

- A detailed cover letter, which summarizes the student's progress through the Health Services Research program to date and orients the examining committee to the contents of the portfolio.
- Current curriculum vitae.
- Papers completed during courses taken in the Health Services Research program, including research papers, policy papers, grant proposals, etc., as relevant depending on the courses the student has completed.
- Research papers published or in press since admission to the Health Services Research program.
 - Typically every Ph.D. student should have at least one manuscript published, in press, or at an advanced stage of preparation by the time of the Qualifying Examination.
 - If a student cannot present such a paper, a manuscript in progress may be substituted. In this instance the examining committee will be charged with conducting a peer-review of the manuscript, to ensure that the student is making adequate progress toward publishing and is prepared for dissertation research.
 - Papers representing research conducted with faculty or other Health Services Research students are acceptable for the portfolio, whether published, in press, or in manuscript form. However, as with any co-author, the student must have made significant contributions to such papers, which should be detailed in the cover letter. The examining committee will expect that students are completely familiar with the research represented in the paper, including, where applicable, the

literature reviewed in the background section of the paper, the research design and statistical analysis, the findings and limitations, and the implications for policy and practice.

- Abstracts representing research presented at professional conferences since admission to the Health Services Research Ph.D. program.
- A professional personal statement (typically 2 to 3 pages) covering, at a minimum, the student's research focus area(s), and the student's 2- to 3-year research plan.

When relevant to the student's experience and career plans, the doctoral portfolio may also include:

- Additional manuscripts published or under development.
- Syllabi developed by the student since admission to the Health Services Research Program.
- Student and faculty evaluations of the Health Services Research student's teaching.
- A statement of teaching philosophy.

A copy of the portfolio must be submitted to the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director for use by the examining committee at least one week before the Qualifying Examination. Students should also retain a copy of the portfolio. Students should maintain a record of materials relevant to the portfolio from their first day as doctoral students, and should begin to prepare the final portfolio well before the Qualifying Examination.

In addition to the oral examination on the portfolio, the Qualifying Examination includes the defense of the dissertation proposal described in the following section.

Students who do not pass the Qualifying Examination on the first attempt will be permitted to schedule one additional attempt. Failure on the second attempt will result in dismissal from the Health Services Research Ph.D Program.

The Dissertation Process

Summary of Dissertation Steps, with Required Forms

Note regarding forms: the forms described below are required by the Graduate School. So that the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program has a complete record of each student's progress, each form should be submitted to the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director. A copy of each form will be included in the student's program file. The Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director will forward the original forms to the Graduate School.

Step 1: The students selects a Dissertation Chair. The Chair must be a member of the

Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Faculty, or a member of the HSR Participating Faculty with a co-Chair who is a member of the Program Faculty. Students should consult with their faculty advisor and the Program Director as they develop their plans for selecting the dissertation committee chair, and for forming the dissertation committee. It is important that the Chair of the dissertation committee is actively involved with the selection of the other committee members. Having identified a Chair who agrees to serve in that role, the student should work closely with the Chair on identifying other committee members, and typically should approach other faculty about serving on the committee only after consulting with the Chair.

Step 2: The student selects the Dissertation Committee, which must be at least 4 members. Three must be from the HSR Ph.D. Program Faculty or Participating Faculty (one of whom is the Chair). The student submits the "**Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee**" form. The Graduate School appoints the 4th member. The four members of the dissertation committee will serve as the student's committee for the refinement of the dissertation topic, the development and defense of the dissertation proposal, the development of the dissertation, and dissertation defense.

Experts in the University who are not members of the Program or Participating Faculty may be nominated for membership at the appropriate level. Interested faculty should contact the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director. Experts outside the university who can contribute usefully to the dissertation committee can also be nominated for participation. This requires: (1) adjunct faculty status in one of the departments of the CHHS, (2) admission to the UNC Charlotte Graduate Faculty, and (3) admission to the Health Services Research Ph.D. Participating Faculty. It should be noted that the 3 approval processes just described can take several months; students who want to involve an outside expert should plan accordingly.

Step 3: The Chair of the dissertation committee and the student together select the dissertation topic. The Chair of the dissertation committee is responsible to ensure that all members of the committee are actively involved and agree to the direction and the specifics of the proposal (e.g., data, methods). Ensuring this involvement and agreement is a major goal of the Topic Approval Meeting. When the Chair approves the topic and approach to the dissertation, the student schedules the Topic Approval Meeting with the Dissertation Committee. The student submits a 2-3 page description of the dissertation plan to the Dissertation Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the Topic Approval Meeting. This single-spaced description of the topic includes the following sections: (1) Background and Significance, (2) Hypothesis and

Specific Aims, (3) Methods. The Topic Approval Meeting is not typically open to visitors. Students will present a brief oral summary of: the dissertation topic, the context of related research literature, data and methods, and implications for policy and practice, followed by questions and discussion among the committee and the student. The Topic Approval Meeting may be repeated as needed.

Step 4: Following the Topic Approval, the student writes the Dissertation Proposal and prepares for the Oral Proposal Defense. Students should consult with their Dissertation Chair and Committee early in the process to determine whether the “traditional” or “three manuscript” approach is most applicable to their proposed dissertation research. Regardless of the approach selected, the dissertation proposal should contain the following elements:

1. Introduction. This chapter should highlight the importance of the problem to health services research and the significance of the proposed research.
2. Literature Review. This chapter should critically review and synthesize literature relevant to the proposed topic. It may be appropriate to include a conceptual or biological model to further position the research questions to be explored.
3. Hypotheses and Specific Aims.
4. Methods. This chapter should include information on the study design, study population, measurement of variables, and statistical analysis plan. For the proposal, this chapter should also contain information on study strengths, limitations, and potential implications. Please note that this information will be incorporated into a different chapter for the final dissertation.
5. References. Students should consult with their Dissertation Chair regarding what citation style to use.
6. Appendix. This chapter is optional but may include dummy tables, questionnaires, informed consent forms, data request forms, or other relevant information that is referenced in an earlier chapter.

If students plan on using the “three manuscript” approach they should also include a brief description of the three manuscripts they will produce and relate them to their hypotheses and specific aims. Students should also list target journals for these manuscripts. For the proposal, this information can be included within Chapter 3. For additional information on the “three manuscript” approach, please consult the Graduate School website.

Students are expected to meet with their Dissertation Chairs on a regular basis to discuss their dissertation research. Students and Dissertation Chairs should consult with the Dissertation Research Credit Application that they completed together to ensure that

appropriate progress is being made during the semester. All members of the committee must receive the full proposal at least 2 weeks before the Proposal Defense.

Step 5: The submission of the proposal is followed by the Oral Proposal Defense. In the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program, the Oral Proposal Defense is open to faculty and students. The student must provide the title of the proposed dissertation, the date, time, and location of the Oral Proposal Defense to the Program Director no later than two weeks prior to the Oral Proposal Defense. This is designed to ensure that interested Health Services Research Ph.D. faculty and students have adequate notice to attend the Oral Proposal Defense. Health Services Research Ph.D. students are particularly encouraged to attend these Oral Proposal Defenses. The proposal defense announcement template, which should be completed by the student and provided to the Program Director, can be found in Appendix G.

The student should prepare a PowerPoint presentation approximately 20 minutes in length summarizing the research proposal. Following the student's presentation, the committee will ask questions about the research plan. The student will be excused from the meeting to permit the committee to discuss the merits of the proposal, after which the student will return to the meeting to receive the committee's comments and required modifications to the research plan. After successful completion of the Oral Proposal Defense, the student submits two forms, "**Proposal Defense for Doctoral Dissertation and/or Master's Thesis**," and "**Report of Comprehensive Exam or Qualifying Exam (Doctoral)**." Additionally, the student must apply for candidacy through Banner Self Service's Student Services.

A doctoral student advances to candidacy after the dissertation topic and approach has been approved by the student's advisory committee and the Dean of the Graduate School. NOTE: Completing Step 3 above, the Topic Approval Meeting, does not constitute advancement to candidacy. Advancement to candidacy requires approval of both the topic and the detailed dissertation plan at the time of the oral proposal defense, including any required plan for the protection of human subjects. **If Human Subjects are involved, the Proposal Defense for Doctoral Dissertation and/or Master's Thesis form requires the attachment of the IRB approval.**

Candidacy must be achieved at least six months before the degree is conferred.

All members of the committee must usually be physically present at the Proposal Defense. The Graduate School provides for one exception only for a single committee member who may participate remotely via audio or video conferencing, where the latter is preferred. Remote participation requires the form, "**Approval of Remote**

Committee Participation.” All conditions listed on the form must be fulfilled. This form should be completed and returned to the Graduate School well in advance of the proposal defense.

A student who fails to complete the Oral Proposal Defense/Qualifying Examination satisfactorily may be given the opportunity to revise components of the research proposal under the direction of the Chair and/or to repeat the Oral Proposal Defense, at the discretion of the Dissertation Committee; a second failure results in dismissal from the PhD program.

Step 6: The student writes the dissertation. The student is required to maintain continuous enrollment in HSRD 8801 for dissertation study until the dissertation is completed. The continuous enrollment requirement begins in the semester after the dissertation topic is approved. Students conducting dissertation research should meet regularly with their committee Chair and other members of the committee. At a minimum, the student must meet with the committee Chair at least once each semester.

Step 7: When the chair of the dissertation committee agrees that all work on the dissertation, including the defense, is likely to be completed successfully, the candidate applies for graduation through Banner Self Service. See the section, “Deadlines for Form Submission,” below.

Step 8: The final examination on the dissertation research, commonly called the Dissertation Defense, is the culminating activity of doctoral studies. Typically the dissertation chair and committee should not schedule the defense until they are reasonably confident that the dissertation is likely to be approved, either as-is or with relatively minor revisions. The Graduate School requires that the dissertation must be submitted to the committee at least three weeks before the date of the final examination in which the dissertation is defended. The announcement of the final defense can be disseminated through the Academic Affairs listserv (<http://graduateschool.uncc.edu/current-students/graduation-clearance/submit-your-dissertation-defense-announcement>) or the posting of flyers on campus. The announcement of the dissertation defense should include the identification of the student’s full name, the date of the defense, the location of the defense, the time of the defense, the title of the dissertation, the name of the Chair of the Dissertation Committee, and a brief abstract of the dissertation. Doctoral students should complete the form for the Academic Affairs listserv at least two weeks prior to their defense date.

The student also must inform the Program Director of the final dissertation title, and the place and time of the scheduled final examination, at least 3 weeks before

the final examination. The final defense announcement template, which should be completed by the student and provided to the Program Director, can be found in Appendix H. The final examination is open to the university community.

All members of the committee must usually be physically present at the Dissertation Defense. The Graduate School provides for one exception only, for a single committee member who may participate remotely via audio or videoconferencing. Remote participation requires the form, “**Approval of Remote Committee Participation**.” All conditions listed on the form must be fulfilled.

In some instances the dissertation committee may not approve the dissertation at the time of the first defense. In keeping with the Graduate School’s regulations, no student is permitted to take the final examination more than twice.

Guidelines for the preparation of the dissertation are available from the Graduate School and on the Graduate School website.

Along with the accepted dissertation, the student files the form, “**Final Defense Report**.” This form requires the signatures of the entire dissertation committee, and should be completed at the conclusion of the successful dissertation defense. The Program Director should be the last person to sign this form; as such, when delivering this form to the Program Director the student should have already obtained the signatures of all committee members (including the Graduate Faculty Representative).

The physical format of the dissertation is governed by the University. Dissertations must conform to required margins, paper type, and so forth, in order to be accepted by the Graduate School. The student should consult these resources at The Graduate School early in the dissertation process: *Manual of General Formatting Requirements for Dissertations and Theses, 2017-2018*, and other resources available at the Dissertation & Thesis Formatting webpage through the Graduate School (<http://gradlife.uncc.edu/resources/dissertation-thesis-formatting>). In order to graduate, the student must make an appointment to meet with the Center for Graduate Completion Specialist to review compliance with dissertation formatting. Appointments can be made at <https://aurayoung.youcanbook.me/>; please note the deadlines for doctoral students.

Deadlines for Form Submission

Academic deadlines, such as the **Application for Graduation** in a particular semester, are available in the Academic Calendar, <http://www.registrar.uncc.edu/calendar>. Students should note that dates for submission of candidacy forms and applications for graduation occur very early in each semester; for May graduation, for example, the date for the **Application for Graduation** typically occurs in the 3rd week of January.

Similarly, the last day to file a dissertation with the Graduate School for May graduation typically occurs no later than the 3rd week of March. See the Academic Calendar for exact dates that apply for a given semester. It is the responsibility of the student to review the academic calendar frequently for relevant deadlines.

Further Definition of the Doctoral Dissertation

An appropriate dissertation provides an *original* and *significant contribution* to health services research as judged by the candidate's doctoral dissertation committee. The dissertation is the culminating research experience of the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program.

“Original contribution” implies that the body of work undertaken and intellectual contribution of the research is the candidate's own. It is expected that the candidate will be an expert in the contributions of others scholars to provide a foundation for his or her original research.

"Significant contribution" implies that the result of the dissertation scholarship notably advances a useful area of health services research as judged by peer scholars. The most meaningful criterion in this regard is that the research is judged by the committee to be appropriate for submission in at least one or two manuscripts to scholarly peer-reviewed journals.

It is our expectation that doctoral candidates will be able to demonstrate competent application of research methods that are appropriate to the area of study; research methods include qualitative or quantitative methods, or mixed methods.

Ethical Procedures Approval, Institutional Review Board (IRB): All dissertation-related materials must comply with ethical review guidelines current at the time of review. Students are required to submit all required documents for review and receive formal approval prior to beginning any research involving human subjects.

Dissertation Format: Students have two options for the format of the dissertation. They may choose either the traditional five chapter format or the three article/manuscript format (which also has five chapters). The breadth, depth, and rigor are the same for both formats. The format is chosen by the student in close collaboration with the Dissertation Chair and the Dissertation Committee. The choice of format occurs during the proposal development stage, and cannot be changed once the dissertation proposal has been approved. Each of the two formats is listed below. Please review the graduate school website for more information on the two formats.

The traditional five-chapter dissertation format:

Chapter One: Introduction. A relatively brief statement of the topic and why it is important.

Chapter Two: Conceptual Model and Literature Review. A thorough review of the literature of all literature relevant to the topic.

Chapter Three: Methods. A description of all methods to be used to complete the research. If a conceptual framework is used, it should be described. All variables should be described. The analysis approach, qualitative or quantitative, should be described, as well as how the hypotheses and/or research questions will be addressed.

Chapter Four: Results. All results should be presented. Descriptive findings are usually presented first, followed by bivariate, and then multivariate. Results can also be organized by hypotheses and/or research questions.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations. This chapter should include a brief summary of the findings, the limitations of the research, a discussion of the implications of the research for policy and practice, and suggestions for future study.

References

Appendices

The three chapter dissertation format:

Students who elect this option will complete Chapter One, as described above. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 will be replaced by two to three manuscripts. Each manuscript must be complete and prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. Each manuscript will include a title page, abstract, introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion sections, as well as references, and tables/figures. Appendices to the manuscripts may provide additional detail.

An additional final chapter may be included, briefly summarizing the dissertation findings, and discussing implications for policy and practice, as well research extensions, in greater detail. The specific format of the dissertation will be determined by the dissertation committee.

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Article 1

Chapter Three: Article 2

Chapter Four: Article 3

Chapter Five: Overall Conclusions

References

Appendices

Graduation

During the semester before the PhD candidate expects to receive the degree, the candidate will review his/her academic record and progress on the dissertation with the chair of

his/her dissertation committee. If the chair of the dissertation committee agrees that all work on the dissertation, including the defense, is likely to be successfully completed by the end of the following semester, the candidate will apply for the graduation on Banner Self Service. The candidate will then be billed by Student Accounts for the Application for Degree fee. Graduation announcements may be ordered through the campus bookstore. Caps, gowns, and hoods may be either rented or purchased through the bookstore.

The student signs the form and submits it to the advisor, who verifies that the listed courses fulfill the requirements for the degree. Once all signatures are in place, this constitutes an agreement between the student and the University, guaranteeing that the student will receive the degree if the listed courses are completed satisfactorily. For this reason, the form *must* be completed well in advance of graduation; otherwise graduation may be delayed.

Residency Requirement

The student must satisfy the UNC Charlotte continuous residency requirement for the program by completing 21 credit hours. Residency is considered to be continuous if the student is enrolled in one or more courses in successive semesters until 21 hours are earned. Continuous enrollment in fall and spring semesters is adequate for the purpose of establishing continuous residency.

The purpose of the residency requirement is to ensure that doctoral students benefit from and contribute to a broad array of educational and professional opportunities provided on the UNC Charlotte campus. When establishing residency, it is expected that the student will interact regularly with faculty and peers by regularly participating in courses, seminar series, and actively use the library and other facilities, including laboratories, available for graduate education.

The Health Services Research Ph.D. Graduate Assistantship

Exceptionally qualified full-time students may be offered graduate assistantships. The assistantship provides a stipend (salary), currently \$18,000 per year for a 12-month position with a work commitment of 20 hours per week (excluding university holiday periods). Students with assistantships will assist faculty with research, teaching, and/or service. The Health Services Research Ph.D. Program provides students an opportunity to teach LBST 2214 Issues of Health and Quality of Life under the supervision of the course faculty member. The Health Services Research Ph.D. Program strives to match student research interests with

those of the faculty with whom they are assigned for the graduate assistantship, although this cannot be guaranteed in every instance.

For students with assistantships of at least \$6,000, the University's Graduate Assistance Support Plan (GASP) provides a highly competitive multi-year support package. The award package covers both resident and non-resident tuition (as appropriate), and provides coverage under the University's student health insurance program. This award package is *in addition* to assistantships and/or fellowship stipends. Other student fees totaling about \$900 each semester are not covered by this award.

The College of Health and Human Services will in most instances provide 3 years of assistantship support. Students with assistantships must maintain good academic standing.

Professional Responsibilities of Students with Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are intended to serve as an extension of the teaching and research mission of Health Services Research Ph.D. Program and the CHHS, by giving students experience in research and teaching in a mentorship relationship with faculty. Students with assistantships will also gain experience with fulfilling academic service needs, and in this way will learn more about becoming a productive and successful member of an academic community. While serving in on- or off-campus graduate assistantships, students are representatives of UNC Charlotte. As such, they will act with total professionalism at all times.

Graduate assistants are expected to provide service to the Department, the College, the University, and the community. Such service can include attending orientation for 1st year doctoral students (for 2nd year students and above), mentoring 1st year doctoral students, attending faculty candidate research presentations, meeting with faculty candidates during times scheduled for students, service as an officer or active member of the graduate student organizations, membership on departmental, College, or University committees, assisting the Program Director with occasional information gathering required by the Program and the Department, performing service in the community as a representative of the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program, and so forth. *Although success in the HSR Ph.D. Program is primarily judged by scholarship, the HSR Ph.D. Program takes the student's record of service into consideration when recommending students for fellowships and grants, including travel grants, tuition support, and competitive dissertation-year fellowships at the*

university.

Graduate assistantships are typically arranged for 12 months annual commitment. Graduate Assistants receive University holidays, but are otherwise expected to work on their normal schedule throughout the 12 month period.

A graduate assistant must register for at least six graduate level semester hours during each semester in which an assistantship is awarded. Graduate assistants enrolled in GASP must register for a minimum of 9 graduate credit hours each term. Students with support from GASP must maintain at least a 3.0 average to be eligible for continued support.

If a student does not have an assistantship, the Graduate School does not impose any limitations on either part-time or full time employment. Students with assistantships are limited to no more than 20 hours of total weekly employment. Thus, students with assistantships of 20 hours per week are not permitted to have additional employment. Students with assistantships who consider taking part-time teaching positions at the University must consult with the Program Director, as in this situation the number of hours devoted to the assistantship must be reduced to limit total weekly work hours to 20.

All graduate assistants (e.g. administrative assistants, research assistants, and teaching assistants) will have performance evaluations conducted each semester. The student should initiate a discussion of their performance with their direct supervisor toward the end of a given semester. The supervisor will complete the “**Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form**” each semester as a means of evaluating progress and performance. The Fall Semester form (Appendix I) is due to the Ph.D. Program Director by December 1st, and the Spring Semester form (Appendix J) is due to the Ph.D. Program Director by April 1st. Teaching assistants’ performances will be additionally evaluated by their students. The teaching assistant’s supervisor should administer this evaluation form to the class’s students such that it can be completed anonymously.

Conference Support & Travel

Conference Travel Support through the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program

- a. Priority will be given to national conferences, although regional and state conference travel also may be funded as resources permit; of the latter, North Carolina conferences will be given priority.
- b. Support can include conference registration, air and ground travel, food and lodging.
- c. Podium and poster presentations will be given equal priority.
- d. Individuals seeking Health Services Research Ph.D. travel support must complete the travel application in Appendix C and provide the Ph.D. Program Director a description

of the conference, a copy of the accepted abstract and the acceptance notification, and a travel budget. Students working on travel budgets should consult with the Business Services Coordinator (Shena Cunningham); however, it is the student's responsibility to develop the initial travel budget and itinerary.

- e. Students arranging conference travel are responsible for making flight reservations, identifying a hotel (see item "i" regarding "appropriate restraint"), registering for the conference, and for making any related reservations or arrangements. Students are encouraged to work closely with the Business Services Coordinator (Shena Cunningham) regarding these arrangements, but making reservations for flights, lodging, and conference reservations are the student's responsibility.
- f. For conferences in the spring through the end of the fiscal year, travel dollars will be reserved for students who are awaiting acceptance for submitted abstracts, assuming that the student has provided a copy of the submitted abstract and the conference information to the Ph.D. Program Director and the student has met with the Business Services Coordinator (Shena Cunningham) to estimate conference travel costs.
- g. Particularly in an era of tight budgets, conferences that might be viewed by the public as taking place in resort areas or related travel destinations will not be funded.
- h. For both faculty and students, by State budget requirements travel is limited to instances involving public safety, public health, job requirements, economic development opportunities and emergency situations. Provide a justification that addresses one or more of these categories. The Ph.D. Program Director can help with this.
- i. Showing "appropriate restraint" in the budget request can increase the likelihood of funding; this can be shown by sharing costs among students (e.g., shared lodging), selecting low-cost lodging, etc.
- j. Students receiving conference travel support are expected to provide all required receipts and evidence of conference attendance (e.g. boarding passes) to the Business Services Coordinator (Shena Cunningham) within one week following their return from the conference.

Student conference travel receives the highest priority.

- a. Students are expected to seek funding from the UNC Charlotte Graduate & Professional Student Government (GPSG). Students will not be reimbursed for support dollars that would typically be funded by GPSG travel funds. Travel forms are available at <http://suar.orgsync.com/org/gpsguncc/Funding>
- b. Priority will be given to abstracts that include one or more Health Services Research Ph.D. faculty; however, students are encouraged to submit abstracts with or without faculty, and travel for the latter will be funded when possible.
- c. We cannot guarantee funding for all travel requests. Please do not assume that you have received a travel award until the Health Services Research Ph.D. director has notified

- you.
- d. Conference funding is available to both full- and part-time students. Special State budget criteria apply to students who do not hold assistantships; although their conference travel may be fundable, students who do not have assistantships should consult with the Business Services Coordinator (Shena Cunningham) about the budget criteria details.
 - e. Additional criteria, Professional Responsibilities of Students with Graduate Assistantships, apply to conference support as previously outlined in this Handbook: *“Although success in the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program is primarily judged by scholarship, the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program takes the student’s record of service into consideration when recommending students for fellowships and grants, including travel grants.”*

Research Support

Support is conditional on availability of funds. Funds can be used to cover expenses directly related to the conduct of dissertation related research, such as statistical software license, participant incentives, travel to data collection sites, and specialized data analysis courses which are not available at UNC Charlotte.

Priority

Priority will be given to students who have defended a dissertation proposal and who have the support of their dissertation advisor.

Steps Involved

The process of applying for support includes the following:

1. Complete the research support form Appendix C and provide the Ph.D. Program Director a brief description of the need and support requested.
2. Submit the form to the Program Director for signature, and then route to the appropriate administrative support person for processing.

Academic Standards and Graduation Requirements

UNC Charlotte requires that graduate students maintain academic standards as outlined in the Graduate School Bulletin.

- Graduate students must average at least B (3.0 on a 4.0 point system) over all courses attempted as part of the requirements to qualify to receive a graduate degree.
- Complied with relevant university policies and procedure including the

timely application and payments of fees for candidacy and for the diploma (See Graduate school website and/or the Academic Calendar for specific deadlines and fees)

Accumulated Low Grades

Doctoral studies typically require excellence in academic performance. It is typically expected that most Ph.D. students will earn “A” grades in most or all of their courses. A student earning a large number of “B” grades as a doctoral student should recognize that this may indicate questionable preparation for the dissertation, and may be viewed negatively by some potential employers—particularly colleges and universities. A total of two C grades or a single grade of U results in termination. A terminated student may not register for classes unless approved for reinstatement. If the program reinstates a student, a subsequent grade of C or U will result in immediate dismissal from the program. If a program does not approve reinstatement, the student is dismissed from the program. (Note that even a single C grade is unexpected in doctoral study; it is unlikely that the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program will consider reinstating a student in this situation in the absence of unusual extenuating circumstances.)

Annual Evaluation of Health Services Research Ph.D. Students

Each Health Services Research Ph.D. student will complete an annual self-evaluation in conjunction with their advisor/chair. This evaluation will help prepare doctoral students professionally and document their progress in the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program. The evaluation content includes academic and research progress, professional development evaluation, and plans for the following year. Upon completion of this evaluation and agreement between the student and the advisor/chair regarding the content, the advisor/chair will submit the completed and signed form to the Ph.D. Program Director for final approval. The advisor/chair may also provide additional confidential feedback regarding the student’s performance. The advisor/chair should submit the completed and signed evaluation by April 1st. The evaluation form can be found in Appendix E.

The advisor evaluation becomes part of the student’s permanent file. They may be used when evaluating the adequacy of student progress for continued assistantship funding, fellowship opportunities or other honors, determining priorities for funding 4th year assistantships in years when they might be available, preparing letters of recommendation for employment, and so forth.

The course plan for the Health Services Research Ph.D. represents the minimum number of courses and credit hours for completion of the degree. Students whose progress in developing skills or knowledge required for successful completion of the dissertation may be required to

take additional courses. The requirement to take additional courses will be determined jointly by the student's advisor and the Program Director.

Students with graduate assistantships will be additionally evaluated by their direct supervisor every semester. Please refer to the *Professional Responsibilities of Students with Graduate Assistantships* section in this handbook for more details.

UNC Charlotte Student Resources

The Center for Graduate Life

To be successful, graduate students must do more than excel in their academic work. Success requires that students develop skills like public speaking, professional writing and financial literacy. The Graduate School sponsors professional development opportunities for graduate students through the Center for Graduate Life. The Center features teaching seminars, writing workshops, sessions on research skills, programs on writing the dissertation, and more. In addition to gaining new skills, students have the opportunity to network with peers from across disciplines. These workshops are covered through the usual tuition and fees, without addition cost. You can find details about the Center for Graduate Life at: <https://gradlife.uncc.edu/>

The Graduate School at UNC Charlotte also offers a broad array of other professional development activities, including career fairs, funding opportunities, and special guest speakers, throughout the year. Health Services Research Ph.D. students are updated about these opportunities through email announcements from the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Director.

Career Services

The UNC Charlotte University Career Center offers career development services to both graduate and undergraduate students. The office is located at 150 Atkins Building. This office exists to serve students who need assistance in making a successful transition from college or graduate school to their chosen field or career. Their contact information is: Phone: 704-687-0795; Fax: 704-687-5298, Website: <http://career.uncc.edu/>

Student services offered by the University Career Center include workshops on: career planning, internships, resume's and cover letters; effective interviewing.

Disability Services

The Office of Disability Services works with current undergraduate and graduate students along with prospective students to ensure equal access to UNC Charlotte's campus and educational programs. All services are dependent upon verification of eligibility. Once approved for services, students receive appropriate and reasonable accommodations which

are based upon the nature of an individual's disability and documented needs. Their contact information is, Phone: 704-684-0040, Website: <http://ds.uncc.edu/>

Counseling Center

The UNC Charlotte Center for Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers individual counseling to assist students with concerns of a personal nature by helping them develop better coping strategies, resolve conflicts and handle crisis situations. Typical concerns are depression, anxiety and stress, relationship issues, identity development, substance use problems, eating and body image issues. Further information is at: <http://caps.uncc.edu/>

A staff psychiatrist is also available through the Student Health Center to assess whether medication may be helpful in addressing the student's concern or for follow-up on previously prescribed medications. The psychiatrist will write prescriptions when appropriate and follow-up with students to make adjustments to medications as necessary. Further information is at: <http://www.studenthealth.uncc.edu/>

Students who wish to consult with our psychiatrist should contact the Student Health Center directly at 704-687-7400. Students can also discuss a referral to psychiatry with a counselor at CAPS. The counseling and psychiatry services are supported by the usual tuition and fees, and are available without additional cost.

Professional Student Organizations

Graduate and Professional Student Government (GPSG)

The purpose of GPSG according to the by-laws, is to serve as an appropriate voice on campus for graduate students, to meet the various needs of graduate students, and to establish a liaison between graduate faculty, graduate students, and the University. The UNC Charlotte GPSG is here to serve as an advocate for students, and it will be as strong and effective as the passion and participation of its members; thus, your active participation will ensure that your issues are heard and addressed.

Graduate Public Health Association (GPHA)

The purpose of GPHA is to foster an environment that contributes to the enhancement of the academic and professional concerns, goals, and careers of public health students and others at UNC Charlotte interested in the professions of Public Health. (See also link from the Public Health Department website.)

The GPHA also is the official voice of students in the governance and continuous quality improvement processes within the graduate public health programs. While students are always welcomed and encouraged to directly contact faculty and administrators with course and/or program concerns and suggestions, the GPHA provides an official voice with representatives

on the Graduate Public Health Programs Committee. Doctoral students are encouraged to participate in GPHA as leaders.

Charlotte Healthcare Executives Student Organizations (CHESO)

CHESO is a chartered graduate student membership society for future healthcare executives from UNC Charlotte. CHESO is designed to meet its member's professional, educational, and leadership needs; to promote high ethical standards and conduct while providing opportunities for members to learn from one another as well as those in the healthcare executive profession.

The International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research at UNC Charlotte (ISPOR-UNC Charlotte)

ISPOR is a nonprofit, international, educational, and scientific organization that promotes health economics and outcomes research excellence to improve decision making for health globally. ISPOR-UNC Charlotte is the local student network which provides an environment where students can share knowledge in pharmacoeconomics and health outcomes research; serve as a bridge in bringing together students interested in pharmacoeconomics and members of the pharmaceutical industry, health-related organizations, and academia; act as a resource for new students interested in pharmacoeconomics and outcomes research; and provide an opportunity for student chapter members to become familiar with the affairs of ISPOR as well as have representation in its affairs.

Doctoral Student Responsibilities and Code of Ethics

Code of Student Academic Integrity

Students enrolled in any educational program in CHHS are required to demonstrate the highest ethical standards. These requirements pertain to both academic and professional behavior.

All Health Services Research Ph.D. students are required to read and abide by the Code of Student Academic Integrity (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>). *Please especially note: you are held accountable to this Code even if you violate it inadvertently.*

Violations include the following:

Cheating: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids, or other devices in any academic exercise. This definition includes unauthorized communication of information during an academic exercise.

Fabrication and falsification: intentional and unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification is a matter of altering information, while fabrication is a matter of inventing or counterfeiting

information for use in any academic exercise.

Multiple submissions: the submission of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without instructor approval.

Plagiarism: intentionally or knowingly presenting the work of another as one's own (i.e., without proper acknowledgment of the source). The only exception to the requirement of acknowledging sources is when the ideas, information, etc., are common knowledge.

Abuse of academic materials: intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible library or other academic resource material. Typical Examples: Stealing or destroying library or reference materials needed by other students.

Complicity in academic dishonesty: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Applicable Policies

Health Services Research Ph.D. students are expected to be knowledgeable about and abide by the policies of CHHS, the Graduate School, and UNC Charlotte.

- The policies for CHHS can be found in the CHHS Handbook, located at: <https://health.uncc.edu/sites/health.uncc.edu/files/media/2017-18%20Student%20Handbook.pdf>
- The Graduate School policies are located at: <https://catalog.uncc.edu/index.php?catoid=21>.
- The University level policies can be found at: <http://www.legal.uncc.edu/policies/>.

University policies that are highly relevant for Health Services Research Ph.D. students include, but are not limited to:

- The Code of Student Responsibility (<http://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-406>);
- The Code of Student Academic Integrity (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-407>);
- Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedures (<https://legal.uncc.edu/policies/up-502>);
- Information Technology Services' Standard for Responsible Use (<https://itservices.uncc.edu/iso/standard-responsible-use>)

Note: Both the Graduate School and the College of Health and Human Services have adopted policies requiring students to demonstrate knowledge and awareness of academic integrity violations and policies.

Doctoral students are typically expected to have a thorough understanding of academic

integrity issues from their undergraduate and master's-level education. As a result, the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program simply expects academic integrity. A doctoral student who commits any of the violations listed above may be dismissed from the Health Services Research Ph.D. Program.

In addition to compliance with the UNC Charlotte Information Technology Services' Standard for Responsible Use policy described above, the program requires students to have access to a personal laptop or desktop computer. Students may be required to bring a laptop to class at the discretion of the professor. If students do not have access to a personal laptop for required coursework, the J. Murray Atkins Library has PC and Mac laptops available for 24-hour loan periods. Laptop rentals are located on the first floor of the library near the main entrance and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. A valid UNC Charlotte ID card must be presented for laptop rentals.

Appendix A: Health Services Research Faculty Directory

Health Services Research Ph.D. Program Faculty

Ahmed Arif, Ph.D., MD., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Epidemiology of asthma and occupational asthma, occupational epidemiology, public health data analysis. **aarif@uncc.edu**

Bruce Arrigo, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Criminal Justice; Adjunct Professor in Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Mental health services research from the perspective of medical sociology, bioethics, and law. **barrigo@uncc.edu**

Christopher Blanchette, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences; Director of the Data Science Initiative. Research interests: Pharmaceutical Health Services Research, Epidemiology, Medical Sociology. **cblanche@uncc.edu**

Suzanne Boyd, Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Social Work. Research interests: Child and adolescent mental health, adult mental health, consumer-operated services, peer support mental health services, building research capacity within organizations, program evaluations, recovery-based mental health systems. **sboyd@uncc.edu**

Mark DeHaven, Ph.D., Dean W. Colvard Distinguished Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Behavioral research and methodology, international behavior. **mark.dehaven@uncc.edu**

Michael Dulin, Ph.D., MD. Director for the Academy of Population Health Innovation; Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. **mdulin3@uncc.edu**

Christine Elnitsky, Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Nursing. Research interests: health systems and other factors influencing military-affiliated populations at risk for reintegration difficulties, with particular emphasis on behavioral and functional health issues. **celntisk@uncc**

Andrew Harver, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Asthma; dyspnea; COPD; symptoms. **arharver@uncc.edu**

Larissa Huber, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Reproductive epidemiology including unintended pregnancy, contraceptive failure, and trends in contraceptive use. **lrhuber@uncc.edu**

James Laditka, Ph.D., D.A., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Health services research, health disparities, gerontology, active life expectancy, preventable hospitalization and access to health care for people in vulnerable

groups, promotion of brain health. **jladitka@uncc.edu**

Sarah Laditka, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Formal and informal long-term care, healthy life expectancy for older people, public health preparedness for frail and disabled older populations, and access to primary health care for people in vulnerable groups. **sladitka@uncc.edu**

Reuben Howden, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology. Research interests: Genetic control of cardiopulmonary function and mechanisms associated with isometric training in regulating resting blood pressure. **rhowden@uncc.edu**

Yvette Huet, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Kinesiology. Research interests: The role of estrogen in disease processes: the effects of neonatal exposure to environmental estrogens on adult disease; exercise and PCOS and the roles nitric oxide in early pregnancy. **ymhuet@uncc.edu**

David Langford, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Nursing. Research interests: Community health, domestic violence, safety planning, bullying in schools, qualitative research **drlangfo@uncc.edu**

Susan McCarter, Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Social Work. Areas of research: risk and protective factors in adolescence: specifically race/ethnicity and juvenile justice. **smccarter@uncc.edu**

Jane Neese, Ph.D., R.N., Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Nursing. Research interests: Outcomes of health care delivery of older adults, psychiatric nursing, and psychometric properties of instruments. **jbneese@uncc.edu**

Sharon Portwood, Ph.D. Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Child maltreatment; child trauma; community psychology; family violence; program evaluation; health promotion; human development; public policy; psychology and law; prevention therapeutic jurisprudence; violence prevention; youth development. **sgportwo@uncc.edu**

Diana Rowan, Ph.D., MSW., Associate Professor, School of Social Work. Research interests: Social Work with HIV/AIDS, International Social Work (Africa), Social group work. **drowan@uncc.edu**

Theresa Scheid, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Sociology, Adjunct Professor in Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Medical sociology, sociology of mental health and illness, social organization, social theory, research methods. **tlscheid@uncc.edu**

Michael Thompson, Dr.PH., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Competency-based education; accreditation; community

assessment; program evaluation; chronic disease; health disparities; community-based research. **methomp1@uncc.edu**

Lucille Lombardi Travis PhD, RN, NE-BC, Professor, School of Nursing. Research Interests: Heart failure, quality of life, informatics and technology, clinical applications of technology for patient care (telehealth monitoring), strategic planning, and curriculum development. **ltravis1@uncc.edu**

Jennifer Troyer, Ph.D., Professor and Senior Associate Dean, Belk College of Business; Adjunct in Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Health economics; nursing home quality, costs, and access. **jtroyer@uncc.edu**

Health Services Research Ph.D. Participating Faculty

Allison H. Burfield, RN, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Nursing; Affiliate Faculty, Gerontology Program. Research Interests: Geriatrics/geropsychiatrics—pain assessment and treatment, falls prevention, medication management, social engagement, pharmacotherapeutics, pharmacoeconomics, secondary dataset use, interdisciplinary practice, and care level transitions. **aburfiel@uncc.edu**

Maren Coffman, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Nursing. Research interests: Health literacy and access to health care in adult Latinos with diabetes. **mjcoffma@uncc.edu**

Judith Cornelius, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Nursing. Research interests: HIV prevention in African American families; HIV prevention in older African American women. **jbcornel@uncc.edu**

Boyd Davis, Ph.D., Professor, Department of English. Research interests: Discourse among individuals with cognitive impairment. **bdavis@uncc.edu**

Christine Davis, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies. Research interests: Community children's mental health system of care. **christine.s.davis@uncc.edu**

Claudia Flowers, Ph.D., Department Chair and Professor, Department of Educational Leadership. Research interests: Large-scale assessment, assessing students with disabilities, applied statistics. **cpflower@uncc.edu**

Virginia Gil-Rivas, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Psychological Science. Research interests: Exposure to adversity (i.e., traumatic events, chronic illness, violence) and development of physical and mental health difficulties across the life-span. **vgilriva@uncc.edu**

Tricia Hubbard Turner, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology. Research interests: Ankle instability, physical activity. **thubbar1@uncc.edu**

Donna Kazemi, PhD, RN. Associate Professor, School of Nursing. Research Interests: Diseases, Substance Abuse, Rural and Migrant Health. **dkazemi@uncc.edu**

Crystal Piper, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Health education & behavior, health planning & evaluation, and research methods, health disparities. **cpiper1@uncc.edu**

Elena Platonova, Ph.D., MHA, Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: strategic health care management, public health systems, and health services research; patient trust, patient satisfaction, and patient loyalty to primary care physicians. **eplatono@uncc.edu**

Beth Racine, Dr.PH., Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Nutrition and physical activity intervention, behavioral nutrition and food insecurity. **efracine@uncc.edu**

Lori Thomas, Ph.D., M.S.W., Associate Professor, School of Social Work. Research interests: Aging, homelessness, and mental health, religion and social welfare, and social work macro practice. **mthom117@uncc.edu**

Meredith Troutman-Jordan, Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Nursing. Research interests: Instrument development and theory testing related to successful aging; investigation of how older adults characterize successful aging; identification of strategies for successful aging; health promotion in older adults. **meredithtroutman@uncc.edu**

Jan Warren-Findlow, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Research interests: Community-based health disparities research. **jwarren1@uncc.edu**

Appendix B: Health Services Research Ph.D. *Dissertation Research Application*

This application should be submitted each semester prior to registering for dissertation credits. It should be completed by the student in conjunction with his/her Dissertation Chair; registration for dissertation credits is contingent upon Program Director approval. After approval by the Program Director, only changes agreeable to both the student and Chair are permissible. Changes must be in writing, signed by the student and faculty member, and approved by the Program Director. **It is the student's responsibility to verify that this course is added to his or her schedule following approval by the Program Director.**

- **Title of proposed course:** HSRD 8801 – Dissertation Research
- **Proposed semester (Term/Year):** _____
- **Number of credits proposed for semester:** _____
- **Cumulative number of *previous* HSRD 8901 credits (not including proposed semester):** _____
- **Faculty member who will Chair the Dissertation Committee:** _____
- **Proposed method (email, in-person, phone, etc.) and frequency of meetings with Chair:** _____
- **Dissertation topic, tentative research objectives, and datasets to be analyzed** (*include attachments as needed*):

- **List of deliverables (or other means of evaluating student progress) and anticipated date of deliverables** (*include attachments as needed*):

It is my responsibility to make appropriate arrangements with the Chair for developing, discussing, and submitting timely deliverables toward the stated objectives.

Student Name Printed and Signature

Date

I agree to supervise this dissertation research on a regular basis.

Dissertation Committee Chair Name Printed and Signature

Date

I approve the student's application to register for dissertation credits.

Program Director Signature/Approval

Date

Appendix C: Ph.D. Student Research Funding Application

Name: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Amount Requested (\$): _____ **Local Phone:** _____

Please provide the following information in support of this application:

1) A description of how these funds will be used (e.g., gift cards for research participants, supplies required for data collection, purchase of a book or software program, publishing costs, etc.):

2) A short description of how this research pertains to the student’s chosen area of study:

All applications must also include the following. Please check each is included.

- 3) A letter of support or endorsement from the student’s advisor or faculty co-investigator, including an indication of the importance of the research to the student’s progress in the program.
- 4) Supporting documentation showing the cost of the supplies or materials requested, if applicable (e.g., printout from webpage, invoice, etc).
- 5) A list of other sources of funding applied for and/or being used for this research, if applicable.

Signature of Student	Date
Signature of Advisor/Faculty Co-Investigator	Date
Signature of Ph.D. Program Director	Date

Applications must be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Director at least 30 days prior to the date upon which you need to use these funds.

Approved: YES NO Amount: \$_____

*We cannot guarantee funding for all research requests. Please do not assume that you have received a research funding award until the Ph.D. Program Director has notified you.

Appendix D: Ph.D. Student Travel Application

Name _____ E-mail _____

Amount Requested (\$) _____ Local Phone: _____

- 1) Name of conference/ organization and url _____
- 2) Date(s) of Conference: _____
- 3) Location of conference: _____
- 4) Date scheduled to present: _____
- 5) Has the abstract/paper been accepted for presentation? YES NO
- 6) Will you present the paper/abstract at the conference? YES NO
- 7) Have you applied for GPSG travel funds? YES NO

If yes, when? _____

If yes, what amount was awarded? \$ _____ ***Attach copy of award notice.*

Please attach the following documentation:

- 1) A letter explaining the importance of the conference or event, signed by the advisor or faculty co-author.
- 2) A copy of the accepted abstract or paper.
- 3) A copy of the acceptance notification to participate in the conference. An email invitation will suffice if sent as the formal invitation.
- 4) A travel budget narrative, listing costs and sources of support.
- 5) Copies of notification of any other financial support for the travel, such as GPSG.

Signature of Student	Date
Signature of Advisor/Faculty Co-Author	Date
Signature of Ph.D. Program Director	Date

Application must be submitted to the Ph.D. Program Director at least 45 days prior to travel.

Approved: YES NO Amount: \$ _____

We cannot guarantee funding for all travel requests. Please do not assume that you have received a travel award until the Public Health Sciences Ph.D. director has notified you. **Students are responsible to keep receipts for reimbursement, such as parking, taxi, hotel, etc.*

2. DOCTORAL PROGRAM PROGRESS:

Please take a screenshot and insert the image below to document relevant doctoral program milestones (e.g. date of comprehensive examination passed, date of dissertation proposal defense). This information can be found in DegreeWorks under the section entitled “Degree in Doctor of Philosophy.”

3. COURSEWORK PROGRESS

Please take a screenshot and insert the image below to document your coursework progress. This information can be found in DegreeWorks under the section entitled “Major in Public Health Sciences” or “Major in Health Services Research”

4. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP EVALUATION *(if applicable)*

a. *Briefly describe (200-400 words) your role/responsibilities as an RA or TA this academic year and include the name of your supervisor. Also include a list of deliverables provided to your supervisor this year.*

b. *Please indicate if you have an assistantship in place for the next academic year and include any known details (e.g. supervisor, RA or TA, etc.). If you do not have an assistantship but wish to be considered for one next academic year, please state that here.*

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

a. *Briefly describe (200-400 words) the professional progress you have made this academic year as it pertains to research (e.g. publications, conferences, presentations, etc.) and service (e.g. reviewer for journal, member of a University committee, member of a professional organization, etc.).*

b. *Describe your professional development plans for the upcoming academic year.*

6. STUDENT CHECKLIST AND SIGNATURES

- Did you complete Section 1 in its entirety?
- Did you insert DegreeWorks screenshots for Sections 2 and 3?
- Did you complete Section 4 (*if applicable*) and Section 5?
- Did you attach an updated CV?

The student and advisor/chair agree to the content of this evaluation and the proposed plans for the upcoming academic year.

Student Printed Name and Signature

Date

The student and advisor/chair agree to the content of this evaluation and the proposed plans for the upcoming academic year.

Chair/Advisor Printed Name and Signature

Date

*****Chair/advisor:** you may provide additional, confidential feedback regarding the student's performance below. *Please sign and return the form to the Ph.D. Program Director by **April 1**.*

The content provided in the optional feedback section above is accurate to the best of my knowledge and was informed by my professional opinion.

Chair/Advisor Printed Name and Signature

Date

The Ph.D. Program Director approves the content of this evaluation and the student's plans for the upcoming year.

Ph.D. Program Director Printed Name and Signature

Date

Appendix F: Health Services Research Ph.D. *Independent Study Application*

This application should be submitted prior to registering for independent study credits. It should be completed by the student in conjunction with the faculty member supervising the independent study; registration for independent study credits is contingent upon Program Director approval. After approval by the Program Director, only changes agreeable to both the student and faculty supervisor are permissible. Changes must be in writing, signed by the student and faculty member, and approved by the Program Director. **It is the student’s responsibility to verify that this course is added to his or her schedule following approval by the Program Director.**

- **Title of proposed course:** HSRD 8800 – Independent Study in Health Services Research.
- **Proposed semester (Term/Year):**
- **Number of credits proposed for semester:**
- **Cumulative number of *previous* HSRD 8800 credits (not including proposed semester):**
- **Faculty member who will supervise the independent study:**
- **Proposed method (email, in-person, phone, etc.) and frequency of meetings with faculty member:**
- **Independent study topic(s), objectives, reading list, and/or datasets to be analyzed (*include attachments as needed*):**

- **List of deliverables (or other means of evaluating student progress) and anticipated date of deliverables (*include attachments as needed*):**

It is my responsibility to make appropriate arrangements with the supervising faculty member for developing, discussing, and submitting timely deliverables toward the stated objectives.

Student Name Printed and Signature _____
Date

I agree to supervise this independent study on a regular basis.

Supervising Faculty Member Name Printed and Signature _____
Date

I approve the student’s application to register for independent study credits.

Program Director Signature/Approval _____
Date

Appendix G: Proposal Defense Announcement Template

Full template follows on next page.



UNC CHARLOTTE
College of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health Sciences

Announces a Public Proposal Defense by

STUDENT NAME

Candidate for Doctor of Philosophy in Health Services Research

**“Title of Dissertation: Insert Title of
Dissertation Here”**

Day, Date, Year

Time

Department of Public Health Sciences

9201 University City Blvd.

Room Number

Committee:

Committee Member 1
Committee Member 2
Committee Member 3
Committee Member 4
Committee Member 5

Appendix H: Final Defense Announcement Template

Full template follows on next page.



UNC CHARLOTTE
College of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health Sciences

Announces a Public Final Defense by

STUDENT NAME

Candidate for Doctor of Philosophy in Health Services Research

**“Title of Dissertation: Insert Title of
Dissertation Here”**

Day, Date, 2017

Time

Department of Public Health Sciences

9201 University City Blvd.

Room Number

Committee:

- Committee Member 1
- Committee Member 2
- Committee Member 3
- Committee Member 4
- Committee Member 5

Appendix I: Fall Semester Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form

Form is to be completed by the student's supervisor and should cover the student's performance for the Fall semester. This form is due to the Ph.D. Program Director by December 1st.

Student Name:

Type of Graduate Assistantship:

Employed in this position since (Semester/Year):

Responsibilities/Performance Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Below Expectations	Met Expectations	Exceeded Expectations
Accomplishes assigned tasks in a timely manner				
Able to work independently to accomplish assigned tasks				
Actively seeks to improve skills and knowledge				
Consistently acts in a professional manner (e.g. punctual, respectful, cooperative, responsive)				
Demonstrates ethically responsible actions in his/her duties				
Demonstrates good oral and written communication skills.				
Demonstrates problem-solving skills				
Overall/general assessment of student's performance				
Additional comments or feedback				

Supervisor/Evaluator Printed Name

Supervisor/Evaluator Signature

Date

Appendix J: Spring Semester Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form

Form is to be completed by the student's supervisor and should cover the student's performance for the Spring semester. This form is due to the Ph.D. Program Director by April 1st.

Student Name:

Type of Graduate Assistantship:

Employed in this position since (Semester/Year):

Responsibilities/Performance Indicators	Unsatisfactory	Below Expectations	Met Expectations	Exceeded Expectations
Accomplishes assigned tasks in a timely manner				
Able to work independently to accomplish assigned tasks				
Actively seeks to improve skills and knowledge				
Consistently acts in a professional manner (e.g. punctual, respectful, cooperative, responsive)				
Demonstrates ethically responsible actions in his/her duties				
Demonstrates good oral and written communication skills.				
Demonstrates problem-solving skills				
Overall/general assessment of student's performance				
Additional comments or feedback				

Supervisor/Evaluator Printed Name

Supervisor/Evaluator Signature

Date

Appendix K: Teaching Assistant Evaluation Form
Please use the Opscan sheet to complete this ANONYMOUS survey:

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Overall, I learned a lot in the discussion sessions.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. Overall, this TA was effective.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. I am free to express and explain my own views in class.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. My TA displays a clear understanding of course topics.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. My TA has stimulated my thinking	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. My TA's presentations and explanations were organized and clear.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. My TA established a climate that facilitated comments, questions, clarifying info.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. My TA displays enthusiasm when teaching	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. My TA seems well-prepared for class	SA	A	N	D	SD
10. My TA deals fairly and impartially with me	SA	A	N	D	SD
11. Grades are assigned fairly and impartially	SA	A	N	D	SD
12. I would enjoy taking another course with this TA	SA	A	N	D	SD
13. The TA facilitated a respectful and inclusive environment for diverse students	SA	A	N	D	SD

Please write comments below, to ensure confidentiality all comments will be typed before being submitted to the TA.