OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

PhD in Health Systems & Policy

Program Overview and Degree Requirements 2019-2020

http://ohsu-psu-sph.org/index.php/phd-health-systems-policy/

Version Date: September, 2019
OHSU-PSU School of Public Health
2019-2020 Program Overview and Degree Requirements for PhD Students in Health Systems & Policy

Information in this document is updated annually. Please refer to the document for the year you entered the PhD program, as the degree requirements listed are your programmatic contract. Some institutional information and contacts may change while you are enrolled; check the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health website and online resources referenced throughout this document for the most current information.

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This document is also available at the SPH website. Forms and other online resources referenced can be accessed from the SPH website.
OVERVIEW OF THE HEALTH SYSTEMS & POLICY DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Doctoral Program in Health Systems and Policy (HS&P) is an interdisciplinary program of study. It is administered through the OHSU - PSU School of Public Health and draws on faculty with educational backgrounds in public health, health policy, health services research, public affairs, management, economics, epidemiology, social work, psychology, systems science, and sociology from the OHSU - PSU School of Public Health, PSU’s College of Urban and Public Affairs, and other academic units at Portland State University (PSU) and Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU).

The program is designed to provide doctoral students with advanced knowledge, analytic skills, and competencies in conducting research and developing teaching and learning skills in health systems and policy with foundations in public health, management theory, health services research, and policy analysis. The program provides a unique educational experience for students interested in immediately applying theory to practice as they prepare for careers as researchers and teachers.

The HS&P program is one of the three doctoral programs in the OHSU - PSU School of Public Health (SPH). It reflects the vision and mission of the SPH and is designed so that students will achieve the core competencies for all students in the SPH:

**OHSU-PSU SPH Core Competencies:** All graduates of the School of Public Health will act ethically and demonstrate cultural competence to 1) Integrate social determinants into public health science, practice and policy; 2) Engage with communities to improve population health; and 3) Apply public health knowledge and skills to eliminate health disparities.

The HS&P curriculum includes core content in health systems and public health, extensive study of policy domains and applications, and intensive training in research methods and research design. This program design helps students to integrate coursework with applied research and practice, and emphasizes community-engaged learning and scholarship reflecting the mission of the SPH.

PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

Students in the HS&P PhD program will master the following competencies by graduation, as evident through their demonstrated ability to:

1. Apply relevant theories and frameworks to issues pertaining to health systems and policies.
2. Select and apply appropriate qualitative and quantitative research techniques to identify strategies to improve health system effectiveness.
3. Formulate a testable research question and propose a relevant study design and analytic approach that has the potential to advance knowledge of health systems and policy.
4. Conduct an independent study that demonstrates synthesis of knowledge and application of research skills.
5. Apply principles of ethics and cultural competence when conducting health systems and policy research and education.
6. Evaluate evidence-based public health policy and health systems transformation strategies to identify emerging issues in health systems and policy.
7. Create and deliver effective presentations of scholarly activities to academic and lay audiences.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Faculty members participate in the HS&P PhD program through teaching, advising, mentoring, and governance. The core faculty in the Health Systems Management and Policy group in the School of Public Health have expertise in multiples domains related to health systems, management and policy; they are listed on the SPH faculty webpage. Many other SPH, PSU and OHSU faculty teach required and elective courses, and may participate in advising, mentoring, and student supervision for academic committees and research projects. Students should feel free to approach any faculty with questions and inquire about their research, and consult with them on issues of professional development; core faculty should be consulted regarding the course of study.

LEADERSHIP AND ADVISING

Program Director
The HS&P Program Director coordinates the doctoral program and is the main point of contact regarding program of study, rules, procedures, leave of absence, complaints, and other administrative matters. The HS&P Program Director works with the core faculty and staff to review curriculum, coordinate scheduling of courses, monitor student progress, plan for accreditation or other reviews, maintain relevant records of student progress, and address any other programmatic issues.

Faculty Advisor
Upon entry to the doctoral program, each student is assigned a faculty advisor. The advisor helps to guide and familiarize the student with the faculty, available courses, and other resources in the HS&P program. Positive relationships between doctoral students and their advisors can be a major factor in timely program completion. However, a student may identify an alternative faculty advisor, and may switch advisors if the other faculty member (who must be a core faculty in the HS&P program) agrees to assume the advisor role. A student should inform the HS&P Program Director when they wish to change to a new primary advisor, and provide evidence of the new advisor’s agreement. A form to initiate change of faculty advisor is available from the Program Director.

The advisor is not required to serve on the student’s comprehensive examination or dissertation committees, but often will be a member of either or both committees, and may be the chair. The assigned faculty advisor:
- Reviews the student’s “Program Planner” at program entry, and works with the student throughout their program to ensure they complete all required courses, as well as electives relevant to their proposed dissertation research.
- Recommends approval of transfer of credit for previously completed courses and course substitutions; the HS&P Program Director gives final approval.
- Assists the student with their transition to doctoral student life.
- Meets with the student regularly to provide overall mentoring, including help with goal-setting and review of educational, research, service and professional activities.
- Mentors the student on research activities throughout their course of study and aids the student in the establishment of a dissertation committee and selection of a chair (not necessarily the faculty advisor) and committee members.
- Notifies the student of relevant School of Public Health, community-based, and national professional development events and services, and advocates for student participation.
- Regularly checks students’ academic progress in Degree Works and submits requests for exceptions to degree requirements to staff as appropriate.
- Provides timely support and guidance to advisees when students are in academic or personal difficulty.

**SUMMARY OF DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The award of the PhD in HS&P is the culmination of a sequential process of coursework, comprehensive examination, and the research, writing, and defense of a dissertation. The program includes credits in required core courses, policy courses, health systems courses, and research design and methods courses. Students are required to enroll in a one-credit health systems and policy doctoral seminar each quarter during their first two years of coursework to help prepare them for the dissertation process (up to 6 credits). Finally, students complete 27 credits of dissertation preparation. A revision in the curriculum is expected to receive final approval in Fall 2019; a summary of the prior and proposed curricula is presented below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Type</th>
<th>Prior to Fall 2019 Admission</th>
<th>Effective Fall; 2019 Admission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Courses</td>
<td>21-27 required</td>
<td>21 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Courses</td>
<td>10 required</td>
<td>9-10 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9-12 elective</td>
<td>9-12 elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Systems Courses</td>
<td>3 required</td>
<td>6 required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 elective</td>
<td>6 elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design and Methods</td>
<td>3 research design required</td>
<td>10-11 research design and methods required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 research design elective</td>
<td>9-12 research design and methods elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 research methods required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-8 research methods elective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Seminar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>104-116</td>
<td>103-111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variation in course credits reflects the options available for elective courses. Students need to ensure that at least 75% of their course credits are at the 600 level in order to meet OHSU standards for a PhD program (required 600 level courses satisfy 75% of total credits).
The comprehensive examination that follows the completion of all course requirements assesses the student’s ability to critically synthesize across the courses they have taken, and is an opportunity for students to think prospectively about the application of this material to their dissertation work. This is a take-home written examination, followed by an in-person discussion with the examination committee. Successful completion of the examination enables the student to advance to the dissertation. See the detailed discussion below for further information on the comprehensive examination.

The four primary emphasis areas for dissertation research reflect faculty expertise, and are: 1) health systems organization, financing and delivery; 2) health policy analysis and application; 3) health services access, quality and cost; and 4) community-based health and social services. Students develop a dissertation topic in consultation with their selected committee; complete a written dissertation proposal with an oral defense; submit a written dissertation; and complete an oral defense. See the detailed discussion below for further information on the dissertation.

In addition to completing the degree requirements, students may also engage in teaching or research activities that are not necessarily directly related to their doctoral program of study. These are intellectually enriching experiences, but may extend the time it takes to complete the degree. University time limits on the completion of degree requirements are discussed below.

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

**Limitation on By-Arrangement Courses**
Admitted PhD students may utilize no more than 12 credits of Research and/or Reading and Conference credits (by arrangement courses). In cases where more than 12 credits are needed because of the lack of regularly scheduled classes, the student must submit a written request waiver to their advisor for approval.

**Expectations of Student Excellence**
Students enrolled in the HS&P program are expected to meet the highest standards of honesty, diligence, fairness, integrity, and professionalism in all of their program activities. Student enrolled in graduate programs at the OHSU-PSU SPH must adhere to both the OHSU and PSU codes of conduct (http://www.ohsu.edu/xd/about/services/integrity/policies/coc.cfm) and (https://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct).

**Timeline to Degree Completion**
Students pursuing the HS&P degree on a full-time basis should complete the degree in four to five years. Part-time enrollment will extend the time to completion. A student who transfers in courses from a previous masters degree could complete coursework in 1½–2 years, and then proceed with their dissertation. A student who does not transfer in any previous equivalent coursework will need 3 years of full-time study to complete the coursework; part-time study will extend the time to completion. See the discussion on time limits and on application/transfer of credit at admission in the policies section on the SPH website.
COURSEWORK

The School of Public Health uses the quarter system, and students are expected to enroll in fall, winter and spring quarters. Limited course offerings are available in the summer session. In general, courses meet once per week, and are offered Monday to Thursday in the late afternoon or evening. Students should plan ahead and discuss timing and sequencing of courses with their advisor.

Students must follow the degree requirements in place upon matriculation. Should degree requirements change during a student’s tenure, a student may elect to opt into the newer requirements. The decision should be made in consultation with the student’s advisor and Program Director.

All students are required to satisfy core public health curricular requirements. Transcripts for all students are reviewed at admission to determine if core requirements have been completed in previous study. A student who does not have an MPH or equivalent courses will usually be required to take the masters level core courses in epidemiology, biostatistics, and foundations of public health early in their program of study; these are not included in the HS&P curriculum credits. Required courses map to the seven HS&P PhD program competencies as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Competencies</th>
<th>Courses Contributing To Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Apply relevant theories and frameworks to issues pertaining to health systems and policies.</td>
<td>HSMP 610 Organizational Theory and Health Systems&lt;br&gt;HSMP 671 Health Policy&lt;br&gt;HSMP 673 Values and Ethics in Health&lt;br&gt;HSMP 674 Health Systems Organization&lt;br&gt;HSMP 677 Health Care Law and Regulation&lt;br&gt;HSMP 686 Introduction to Health Economics&lt;br&gt;HSMP 575 Advanced Health Policy&lt;br&gt;PAP 616 Policy Process&lt;br&gt;USP 615 Economic Analysis of Public Policy or HSMP 610 Economics of Health Systems &amp; Policy&lt;br&gt;PHE 622 Health and Social Inequalities&lt;br&gt;HSMP 681 Population Health: Policy and Practice Implications&lt;br&gt;HSMP 607 Doctoral Seminar in Health Systems and Policy Comprehensive Examination&lt;br&gt;HSMP 603 Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Select and apply appropriate qualitative and quantitative research techniques to identify strategies to improve health system effectiveness.</td>
<td>HSMP 660 Contemporary Research in Health Systems and Policy&lt;br&gt;HSMP 689 Research Design in Health Services&lt;br&gt;USP 615 Economic Analysis of Public Policy or HSMP 610 Economics of Health Systems &amp; Policy&lt;br&gt;PHE 520 Qualitative Research Design&lt;br&gt;SOC 638 Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Methods&lt;br&gt;HSMP 607 Doctoral Seminar in Health Systems &amp; Policy Comprehensive examination&lt;br&gt;HSMP 603 Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step</td>
<td>Task Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Formulate a testable research question and propose a relevant study design and analytic approach that has the potential to advance knowledge of health systems and policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Conduct an independent study that demonstrates synthesis of knowledge and application of research skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Apply principles of ethics and cultural competence when conducting health systems and policy research and education.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Evaluate evidence-based public health policy and health systems transformation strategies to identify emerging issues in health systems and policy.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
7. Create and deliver effective presentations of scholarly activities to academic and lay audiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HSMP 660</td>
<td>Contemporary Research in Health Systems &amp; Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSMP 689</td>
<td>Research Design in Health Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHE 622</td>
<td>Health and Social Inequalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSMP 677</td>
<td>Health Care Law and Regulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSMP 607</td>
<td>Doctoral Seminar in Health Systems and Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Comprehensive examination - oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSMP 603</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Core Courses (21 credits, all required)

The core courses provide the foundation in health systems and policy. A student who has completed an MPH in health management and policy or a comparable masters degree could potentially waive some or all of the first six courses in the core. All students take HSMP 660 in their first quarter of the program. The courses listed below are for the curriculum that is anticipated to receive approval in Fall 2019.

- HSMP 610 Organizational Theory and Health Systems (3)
- HSMP 671 Health Policy (3)
- HSMP 673 Values and Ethics in Health (3)
- HSMP 674 Health Systems Organization (3)
- HSMP 677 Health Care Law and Regulation (3)
- HSMP 686 Introduction to Health Economics (3)
- HSMP 660 Contemporary Research in Health Systems and Policy (3)

Policy Courses (18-21 credits)

The policy courses provide students with foundational as well as elective topics, and should be selected to prepare the student for the policy applications of their dissertation.

*Required:*

- HSMP 675 Advanced Health Policy (3)
- PAP 616 Policy Process (3)
- USP 615 Economic Analysis of Public Policy (4) or HSMP 610 Economics of Health Systems & Policy (3)

*Electives: Choose 3 from the following (others may be accepted with advisor approval):*

- HSMP 682 Oregon Health Policy: Lessons for State and National Reform (3)
- PAP 653 Policy Analysis: Theoretical Foundations (3)
- PAP 656 Advanced Political Economy
- PHE 657 National Long-term Care Policy (3)
- SOC 684 Social Inequality (4)
- SOC 687 International Health Inequalities (4)
- SW 652 Advanced Social Policy Analysis (3)
- USP 536 Policy Evaluation Methods
Health Systems Courses (12 credits)
Students select health systems courses from existing 500 and 600 level courses across relevant graduate programs at PSU and OHSU, with advisor approval, to create a relevant knowledge base and complement their interests.

Required:
PHE 622 Health and Social Inequalities (3)
HSMP 681 Population Health: Policy and Practice Implications (3)

Electives:
Choose two courses with advisor approval (6)

Research Design and Methods Courses (19-23 credits)
In addition to the required courses listed below, students select elective courses in research design and methods that will help prepare them with relevant knowledge and skills for their dissertation research.

Required:
HSMP 689 Research Design in Health Services (3)
PHE 520 Qualitative Research Design (4) (or equivalent)
SOC 638 Integrating Qualitative & Quantitative Methods (4)

Electives: Choose three from the following (others may be accepted with advisor approval):
BSTA 516 Design & Analysis of Surveys (4)
CPH 636 Community Based Participatory Research (3)
EC 569 Introduction to Econometrics (4)
EPI 636 Epidemiologic Data Analysis and Interpretation (4)
HSMP 588 Program Evaluation and Management in Health Services (3)
LING 516 Discourse Analysis (4)

PHE 524 Social Epidemiology Methods and Theory (3)
PSY 597 Applied Survey Research (4)
PSY 621 Univariate Quantitative Methods (5)
PSY 625 Categorical Data Analysis (4)
PSY 626 Multilevel Regression (4)
SOC 637 Qualitative Data Analysis (4)
SOC 695 Advanced Quantitative Methods (4)
SYSC 513 Holistic Strategies for Problem Solving (4)
SYSC 514 System Dynamics (4)
SYSC 540 Introduction to Network Science (4)
SYSC 625 Agent Based Simulation (4)
SYSC 651 Discrete Multivariate Modeling (4)
USP 520 Applied Demographic Methods (4)
USP 531 Geographic Information Systems for Planners (4)
USP 634 Data Analysis I (4)
USP 654 Data Analysis II (4)
**Doctoral Seminar in Health Systems and Policy (6 credits)**

Students enroll in a one-credit seminar (HSMP 607) each quarter of their first two years to help prepare them for the dissertation process. Students continue to attend the seminar throughout the entire course of study. The seminar meets regularly with the program director to discuss research topics, including critical evaluation of health systems and policy research, framing research questions, proposal writing, the grant application process, data collection and synthesis, human subjects review, dissertation writing and presentation, the review process, program requirements, and publication opportunities. HS&P students present their dissertation research as work-in-progress at the seminar, providing an opportunity to give and receive feedback on their dissertations at every stage of development. The seminar also provides an opportunity for HS&P students to regularly interact with other students in the doctoral program. Guest speakers are occasionally invited to discuss topics relevant to doctoral studies and career development.

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

The comprehensive examination is taken after the student has finished all required and elective coursework. The key steps in the examination are formation of a committee, preparation for the examination, and the written and oral components of the examination.

**Examination Committee**

Approximately two academic quarters prior to completion of all curriculum credits, students assemble an examination committee consisting of three faculty members. The chair must be a core faculty member in the HS&P program; the other two members are usually core SPH faculty. The members should be selected to represent the central topical areas of the PhD program (health services organization and systems, policy, and research design and methods), and must have breadth of knowledge of the academic domain on which they will examine the student. The committee must be approved by the HS&P Program Director, using the **Formation of Comprehensive Exam Committee** form, which is retained in the student’s academic file.

**Timing of the Examination**

Students in the HS&P program are expected to take the comprehensive examination in the quarter after completing course requirements (and could extend with permission from program director); this does not include summer when PSU-based faculty are involved.

**Preparation for the Examination**

Students typically enroll in a 1-3 credit independent study course with each committee member during the quarter(s) prior to the examination in order to discuss and define the relevant content area, read new material and review previously studied material, and develop and answer practice questions. Students work with their committee to determine the timing and format of the examination based upon their program of study; the Committee chair is responsible for review of the questions to avoid duplication, and for preparation and distribution of the examination. The student is responsible for scheduling the time and location of the oral examination in consultation with the Committee.
Examination Structure and Process
The examination is designed to evaluate the student’s broad expertise in health systems and policy, and preparation to conduct dissertation research, as well as knowledge of the more specific field of study. The examination requires a written response to three discrete questions and covers specific areas that integrate the student’s coursework and their planned research. The specific questions are given to the student when the examination is administered; students have five consecutive days to complete the examination, working off-campus at a location of their choice. The completed written examination is submitted electronically to all committee members.

The examination may be taken in the final quarter in which the student is completing their coursework. It may not be administered when the university is not in session and the student must be registered during the quarter in which the examination is taken. Examinations are normally not conducted in summer when PSU faculty are not on regular contract.

The written examination is followed by an oral defense that is a private two-hour meeting of the Committee and the student. The oral defense is scheduled approximately two weeks after the written examination is submitted; the Committee uses this discussion to further assess the student’s academic preparation to date, and to provide direction as the student begins the dissertation process. The Committee determines the result of the complete examination (written and oral) in private deliberation after the oral defense; the outcome is pass or fail. The outcome is shared with the student at the conclusion of the deliberations. The examination ends with a discussion among the Committee and the student regarding plans for appointment of the dissertation committee and initial schedule. Committee member complete and sign the Report on Comprehensive Examination form which is retained in the student’s academic file.

If a student fails the comprehensive exam, they may repeat it during the next regular academic term (excluding summer term), no fewer than 10 weeks and no longer than one year after the first attempt. The results of the second attempt are final; if a student fails the second attempt, the student will not be allowed to continue in the doctoral program. Any issues that might result in the need for a longer period allowed between the first and second attempts should be brought to the attention of the Program Director, who will consider them and decide action on a case-by-case basis.

DISSERTATION
The dissertation is the doctoral student’s most substantial achievement — a significant work of research built upon immersion in the academic literature, informed theoretical reasoning, and original research and analysis, intended for an educated readership of one’s peers.

The final dissertation is a book-length manuscript that is a thorough review of the relevant academic literature, informed by theoretical reasoning and the application of policy in practice, and based upon original research and analysis. It is defended in an oral presentation that presents the dissertation project’s purpose, implementation, findings, contribution to scholarship, and implications for future research. During the research and writing of the dissertation, students enroll in at least 27 dissertation
credits (HSMP 603). A student should register for HSMP 603 dissertation credits any time they are working substantively on their dissertation with faculty members, including prior to the formation of a dissertation committee as part of initial research to prepare the dissertation proposal. A student does not need to have completed their comprehensive examination in order to enroll in dissertation credits.

**Dissertation Committee**

Students assemble their dissertation committee based upon their research topic and their relationships with core faculty. The committee consists of 4-5 faculty, all of whom have relevant academic qualifications to serve on a dissertation committee (i.e. doctorally prepared). The committee is chaired by a core HS&P faculty member. At least one other faculty member must be an SPH primary or affiliated faculty; the third (and fourth possibly) must bring relevant expertise and be eligible for an SPH appointment.

One member of the committee (the fourth or fifth member) should bring a complementary, external perspective that will enrich the student’s learning, and must have topical or methodological expertise relevant to the student’s research. This person could be based at PSU, OHSU, a health system, state government, or another university, and should be currently active (if emeritus or retired, justification of the appointment must be provided). This person is recommended by the student and the dissertation chair and the appointment is approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. This person reads all drafts and participates in the proposal and final defenses, but does not necessarily engage as heavily as others in editing, hours of advising, etc. (this will depend upon the individual’s interests and availability).

The HS&P PhD Program Director is responsible for ensuring that most committee members have experience either mentoring students through a dissertation or extensive research and publication experience, in order to understand the rigor of the dissertation process. Good academic advice and mentoring will have a profound positive effect on the student’s progress through the dissertation, intellectual and scholarly development, and career prospects. Careful composition of the dissertation committee is essential to meet students’ academic interests and facilitate successful completion of the dissertation. Once the student and their dissertation chair have agreed upon the composition of the committee and sought agreement to participate from all members, they complete the Appointment of Dissertation Committee form which is signed by the HS&P Program Director and the SPH Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. This form must be approved before the student can commence substantial work on their dissertation.

The doctoral student’s working relationship with the dissertation committee chair and other members is a function of the student’s background and experience, the nature of the project, and the expertise of the faculty supervisors. Students work very closely with their committees, seeking guidance and feedback frequently throughout the process of research and writing. The dissertation chair provides considerable oversight and guidance, so careful selection of a chair is vital for the student and will help facilitate completion of the dissertation in a timely manner. If a PhD student has concerns with due process during the dissertation, they should consult with their Program Director, and then the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, as necessary.
**Dissertation Proposal**

The dissertation proposal establishes the viability of the student’s proposed research and its potential contribution to scholarship on health systems and policy. Proposals set out the statement of the problem and research question(s) (Chapter 1); comprehensive review of relevant domains of literature (Chapter 2); and proposed design and methods for data collection, analysis and reporting, early reflections on limitations of the design and methods, and a timeline for progress to dissertation completion (all in Chapter 3). The proposal also includes a statement of intent by the student as to the format for the dissertation: a single comprehensive manuscript, or three publishable papers. At the time of the proposal defense, the student and the committee make the decision as to which option will be pursued, based upon the best fit for student success given the topic, design and methods, context, resources, time constraints, and other factors. By making this decision at the time of the defense of the proposal, the committee assists the student in charting a path of highest certainty towards timely dissertation completion and successful oral defense.

A proposal defense may be scheduled only during the regular academic terms. A proposal defense during summer term requires advance agreement of all committee members regarding scheduling, since PSU faculty are not on regular contract and may not be available. Once the student has obtained the consent of the committee for scheduling, they complete the **Dissertation Proposal Defense Request** form. Once the defense is scheduled, the student informs the HS&P Program Director -- no later than two weeks in advance of the dissertation proposal defense -- so that a public announcement may be circulated.

The dissertation proposal defense is an oral presentation by the PhD candidate of the dissertation proposal, typically lasting two hours. The defense summarizes the background, research question, core literature, research design and proposed methods, plans for human subjects review if necessary, initial observations on limitations and assumptions, and timeline for completion. As indicated above, the student also proposes their preferred format (single manuscript or three papers). The student makes a presentation of no more than 25 minutes, directed mainly to the dissertation committee, who are expected to be present (except in unusual circumstances). The proposal defense is an open meeting. At the defense, the dissertation committee members question the candidate regarding the significance, limitations and implications of the work and anticipated findings. At the end of the questioning, the committee meets in executive session to determine the outcome of the defense (pass or fail), and then meets privately with the candidate to share the decision. The committee completes and signs the **Dissertation Proposal Approval** form at the completion of the defense. Students are encouraged to hold a small “dress rehearsal” of their defense presentation with peers and the program director in order to receive feedback in advance of the actual proposal defense.

**Human Subjects Review and Approval**

After dissertation proposal approval and if human subjects are involved in the dissertation research, IRB approval for human subjects research must be obtained before advancement to doctoral candidacy can occur. Human Subjects Institutional Review Board approval may be obtained at OHSU, at PSU with OHSU ceding oversight, or at another institution with OHSU ceding oversight as appropriate for the
research project. Students conducting human subjects research must complete human subjects research training per IRB requirements (the CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative or the NIH Human Subjects Protection Training; information can be found at the IRB sites for each university). If a student’s research can be waived from IRB review, the student must obtain a waiver from the IRB to proceed. Dissertation research cannot commence until IRB approval, or a waiver, is acquired. The student must work with their dissertation chair on this review, as a faculty member is usually required to submit the materials as principal investigator.

After receiving confirmation from the HS&P Program Director that the dissertation proposal has been approved, and once IRB approval for proposed research involving human subjects has been obtained (if necessary), the dissertation chair will complete the **Advancement to Candidacy** form and submit it to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to change the student’s status and advance them to PhD candidacy. PhD candidates are students who have completed “all but the dissertation” (ABD).

**Written Dissertation Format**
The final dissertation is a substantial manuscript that has been reviewed by all members of the committee, edited by the student, and reviewed again, ultimately through multiple iterations. The student works with the dissertation chair to receive initial approval of each section of the dissertation; the student then sends the written material to each committee member for individual review, and responds to and integrates the feedback in consultation with the dissertation chair. Committee members must be given adequate time (approximately 2-3 weeks) to review each section of content and give feedback. As a result, students must be attentive to overall timing and consult with committee members in order to ensure a smooth process of review and feedback without substantial delays, recognizing the multiple commitments of each committee member. Advance planning and scheduling is strongly encouraged (with allowance for unexpected delays).

The format for a single manuscript dissertation typically is: Chapter 1, background and problem statement; Chapter 2, literature review; Chapter 3, design and methods; Chapter 4, findings and discussion; Chapter 5, conclusions, limitations and assumptions, and implications for future research. Chapter 4 may be split into two chapters (one for presentation of findings and one for discussion), in which case the final manuscript will have six chapters. A complete bibliography is included, and all relevant supporting materials are appended (invitations to participate, consent forms, data collection instruments, etc.).

The three publishable paper option modifies Chapters 3 and 4 to consist of three discrete manuscripts, all derived from the foundational work in Chapters 1 and 2. [Note that this option of three papers applies to HS&P students admitted from 2017 forward, and to students with earlier admission who had not yet formed their dissertation committee as of Fall 2017.] A concluding chapter is required, discussing conclusions, limitations and assumptions, and implications for future research. A complete bibliography is included, and all relevant supporting materials are appended (invitations to participate, consent forms, data collection instruments, etc.).
The dissertation is comprised of the following sections:

- **Title page** (required, this page does not carry a page number), includes title, student’s name, program name, names of dissertation committee members, and date of oral defense
- **Copyright Notice page** (this page does not carry a page number). This page is required if you have registered for copyright; otherwise it is optional but recommended.
- **Introductory pages.** The following pages are numbered with lower-case Roman numerals (i, ii, iii, iv, etc.). A page number must be printed on every page. Each of these sections must begin on the top of a new page.
  - Dedication (optional)
  - Acknowledgments (optional)
  - Table of Contents (required)
  - List of Tables (required if tables included in the dissertation)
  - List of Figures (required if figures included in the dissertation)
  - Glossary or List of Abbreviations/Symbols (required if abbreviations and symbols are used in the dissertation)
  - Preface (optional)
- **Text of the Dissertation,** divided into Chapters. Beginning with the first page of Chapter 1, all pages are numbered with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, etc.); this pagination continues to the end of the document. A page number must be printed on every page.
  - **Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem Statement:** This chapter should provide a cohesive justification for the body of research that makes up the dissertation. It introduces the topic, briefly sets out the background, provides a statement of the problem to be studied, and presents the research question and study aims.
  - **Chapter 2: Review of the Literature:** This chapter reviews and synthesizes the foundational literature relevant to the dissertation, identifying the knowledge that exists and the gaps. This section concludes with a synthesis that demonstrates the cohesive nature of the student’s work.
  - **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methods:** This chapter begins with a restatement of the research question and study aims, sets out the design of the research, defines operational definitions of variables to be studied, explains the methods to be used and addresses any methodologic challenges in dealing with primary or secondary data, describes data sources, and explains methods of data collection and analysis.
  - **Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion:** The primary results of the research are presented and discussed using a framework that flows from the research question, aims, and specification of study variables. Linkages are made to the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Depending on the nature of the work, it may be appropriate to present findings and discuss them by subtopic; alternatively, it may be appropriate to present all findings in one chapter and then present the discussion in another chapter. This should be decided with the dissertation chair. If the student is using the three-paper format, then each paper will address a specific aim or area of emphasis of the study, as agreed upon at the proposal defense with the dissertation committee, and be included in the dissertation as a chapter.
Chapter 5 (or 7 for the three-paper format): Conclusion: This chapter synthesizes the findings into a set of themes related to the research question and study aims, offers conclusions and implications for theory and practice directed to academics, policy-makers and/or practitioners, discusses significance/importance of the conclusions, presents suggestions for future research, discusses study limitations and assumptions, and offers concluding comments.

- Footnotes or Endnotes, if used
- Bibliography using a standard social science citation format (such as APA or Chicago Manual of Style); a single bibliography is presented, even with the three-paper format.
- Appendices: Appendices should be labeled A, B, C, etc. Data collection instruments, recruitment materials, IRB application, coding manuals, and any other relevant information that is referenced in the dissertation should be appended.

SPH procedures regarding formatting, submission, and SPH-level deadlines and forms for dissertation submission prior to graduation must be followed. Details on specific formatting requirements should be followed, using https://www.pdx.edu/ogs/electronic-thesis-and-dissertation-etàd-formatting-requirements.

**Oral Defense of Dissertation**

The student develops the dissertation over a number of months, keeping in close contact with all committee members. As the student nears completion, the oral defense should be scheduled in consultation with all committee members. The student initiates the **Dissertation Defense Request** form, ensuring it is complete and signed in a timely manner, and filed in the student’s academic file.

The dissertation defense is an oral presentation by the PhD candidate of the completed written dissertation, typically lasting two hours. The oral defense presents the purpose, implementation, and findings of the dissertation project, and makes a case for the project’s contribution to scholarship in a particular field of study. The student makes a presentation of no more than 30 minutes, directed mainly to the dissertation committee, who are expected to be present (except in unusual circumstances). The dissertation defense is open to the public, and current doctoral students are strongly encouraged to attend (as well as others who are interested in the topic and/or wish to support the candidate by their presence). At the defense, the dissertation committee members question the candidate regarding the significance, limitations and implications of the work and findings. At the end of the questioning, the committee meets in executive session to determine the outcome of the defense (pass or fail), then meets privately with the candidate to share the decision.

A dissertation defense may be scheduled only during the regular academic terms, at least five weeks prior to the end of the term of anticipated graduation. A summer defense requires advance agreement of all committee members regarding scheduling, since PSU faculty are not on regular contract and may not be available. Once the candidate has obtained the consent of the committee for scheduling, the candidate informs the HS&P Program Director no later than two weeks in advance of the dissertation defense of the time and location so that a public announcement may be circulated. The candidate
prepares an abstract using a standard format for HS&P (available on the HS&P program website), which is circulated with the announcement of the defense.

The candidate must deliver a completed final version of the dissertation to all members of the committee no less than two weeks before the dissertation defense. Candidates are encouraged to hold a small “dress rehearsal” of their defense presentation with peers and the program director in order to receive feedback in advance of the actual defense.

The dissertation is accepted by the dissertation committee when there is no more than one dissenting vote after the dissertation defense. If there are two or more dissenting votes, the candidate will be given a second opportunity to defend the dissertation. The second defense may take place no sooner than one month and no later than six months after the first defense. If there are two or more dissenting votes at the second defense, the student fails the dissertation defense.

At the completion of the dissertation defense, the Committee members sign the Dissertation Defense Approval form, indicating any pending requirements and timing for pending revisions. The student is responsible for timely completion of such revisions and for submission of the final manuscript to the OHSU library. The requirements for electronic submission of the approved dissertation are specified on the library website.

Once successfully defended, the dissertation becomes a public document. Graduates are expected to submit a brief written summary explaining the content and significance of their work for the public to the HS&P Program Director for posting on the SPH website.

RULES AND PROCEDURES

The rules and procedures to be followed during each stage of the HS&P doctoral program for students admitted from 2017 on have been consolidated within the SPH in line with OHSU and PSU policies; see the SPH website. Procedures specific to the HS&P program are summarized here; any areas not addressed should be raised with the HS&P Program Director for clarification.

Communications

Students must maintain constant and timely contact with the program director, their program advisor and course instructors. Students who have advanced to candidacy should provide at least quarterly updates to their dissertation chairs on their progress and periodic communications to their full committee. For communication purposes, the student’s primary university email account should be used. Students are expected to check this email account regularly for official communications (and to link multiple email accounts as feasible to ensure timely receipt of messages).

All HS&P students and faculty are subscribed to the HS&P program listserv. As a subscriber, students may post to the list by sending messages to hsp_phd-group@pdx.edu. All SPH PhD students are subscribed to a PhD student listserv; the 3 PhD program directors are the only faculty who observe this list in order to provide information as necessary. Students are also subscribed to an SPH-wide listserv for
all graduate students. Each list has a specific purpose, and there is minimal redundancy of messages. Please observe good listserv etiquette and only post relevant information to the lists, moving other communications to private emails or other mechanisms.

**Documenting and Monitoring Progress**

The HS&P Program Planner allows the student, the advisor, and the HS&P Program Director to keep track of the student’s progress through the coursework phase of the doctoral program, including credits brought into the program. An initial form is completed by the Program Director in consultation with the student at time of admission. Students should keep this form up to date and provide an updated copy to the program office at the end of each academic year so that they are available for end-of-year assessments. Students should ensure that both their advisor and the HS&P Program Director approve proposed courses that are not part of the regular program of study.

**STUDENT FUNDING**

The primary source of funding for HS&P students is usually the “internal market” of opportunities within PSU and OHSU. This includes graduate assistantships within the School of Public Health, graduate assistantships in other university units at PSU and OHSU, and part-time administrative or research positions within the universities. In addition, there are several scholarships, fellowships, and other awards administered through the PSU Office of Graduate Studies and available at the scholarship and awards page on the SPH website.

The identification of external funding sources can involve more effort but often comes with significant professional and financial rewards. HS&P program faculty and staff can advise students on funding opportunities for students in the program. Many HS&P faculty have considerable experience securing external grants and contracts for research projects that involve doctoral students or have worked with foundations and agencies that fund doctoral studies and research.

Incoming students who wish to be considered for an assistantship will be notified of the mechanism to apply for a position. The availability of some assistantships may not be known until the summer or early fall before the start of the academic year. Continuing students should advise the Program Director in the spring of the academic year of their interest in an assistantship for the following academic year. The Program seeks to identify assistantships for every student who seeks one, but cannot guarantee these as they are dependent upon “soft” funding.
STUDENT RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Detailed descriptions about the School of Public Health, student resources and support may be found at the SPH website; students are encouraged to review the following topic areas:

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Mission, Vision and Values
Accreditation
Programs of Study
Administration and Key Staff

LOGISTICS
Campus Maps
Parking and Transportation
Housing
Campus Safety
Background Checks
Immunizations

UNIVERSITY CREDENTIALS AND ACCESS
ID Badges – OHSU and PSU
Network Access
Email Accounts
Listservs
Social Media

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT
Registrar’s Office
Establishing Residency
Tuition and Fees
Student Financial Management Services
Course Descriptions and Schedules
Course Registration and Approvals
Online Course Management Systems (Sakai and D2L)
Textbooks and Course Materials

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Affirmative Action, Equity, and Compliance
Title IX

LIBRARIES AND ACADEMIC RESOURCES
Libraries
Writing Resources
Career Services
OHSU Teaching and Learning Center
PSU Office of Academic Innovation

STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS
Student Health and Dental Insurance
Student Health Services
Student Recreation Centers
Food Resource Guide
OHSU On and Off-Campus Crisis Resources

STUDENT SUPPORT
Academic Accessibility and Accommodations
Ombudsman’s Office
International Student Services
Student Legal Services

OTHER STUDENT RESOURCES
Student Centers and Lounges
Cultural Resource Centers
Queer Resource Center (QRC)
Resource Center for Students with Children
Women’s Resource Center
Little Vikings Child Care

STUDENT GROUPS AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
Student Activities and Leadership Programs (SALP)
Student Leadership Council
All-Hill Council
OHSU Student Health Advisory Committee
PSU & OHSU Institute for Healthcare Improvement Open School Chapter
Portland American Statistical Association Student Chapter
OHSU-PSU School of Public Health Alumni Association

RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Educational Records Privacy
Continuous Enrollment
Leave of Absence
Time Limits for PhD Students
Grading Standards
Minimum Course Grade Requirements
Course Repeat Policy
Academic Standing, Warning and Probation
Withdrawal Policy
Academic Dismissal from the PhD Program
Academic Dishonesty
Student Codes of Conduct
Recognition of Prior Graduate Credits for PhD Students
Course Waiver Policy
Incomplete Coursework
International Travel and Coursework
Academic Grievance Policy
Degree Conferral
Application for Degree
Graduation Ceremonies
Diplomas
Ordering Transcripts