



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA  
COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

**DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
PROGRAM (DrPH)**

**STUDENT MANUAL**

**(Revised 1-10-11)**

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

## **Introduction**

This Manual is designed to provide students with the pertinent information needed to successfully progress through the DrPH program at USF College of Public Health and to assist students in navigating through their program. This Manual provides an overview of the DrPH program and identifies the admission requirements. For instance, information regarding the DrPH competencies, the plan of study, and course sequencing is provided. In addition, the processes for the practice-based internship, qualifying examination and dissertation are outlined, and information on advisors, doctoral committees and other student policies are presented. Along with the USF Graduate School Student Resources (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/students.asp>), we hope that this Manual will support you in your endeavors of being a successful DrPH student.

# **Part I: Academic Requirements**

## **Overview**

The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) is a professional, practice-oriented degree which is granted in recognition of the attainment of a broad set of practice, analytic and evaluative skills, including demonstrated public health leadership skills. Emphasis will be placed on proficiency in policy development and health policy strategies, public health leadership and management of health programs. Demonstration of applied research skills and strength in evaluation methods via practice-based specialized study will be expected. The DrPH will require 90 semester hours beyond the baccalaureate degree. Candidates will have an MPH or equivalent degree prior to admission, therefore the actual additional hours required for the DrPH beyond the Master's level will average 45 to 50 semester hours, depending upon the program designed by the student and his or her committee. Per University guidelines, all requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within eight calendar years from the student's date of admission for doctoral study. Students have four years to complete all required coursework, pass the qualifying examination, and be admitted to doctoral candidacy. Students then have four years from the date of doctoral candidacy to complete degree requirements.

## **Program Philosophy**

The DrPH program of studies is intended to be an individually designed program that is structured in a way that makes it possible for each of the unique students to develop (with his or her committee and major professor) their needed course of study. The program recognizes that the students recruited into the program have experience in the field of public health or similar disciplines and have career directions that may vary tremendously: including policy development and services; senior leadership positions; applied research; and other foci. Given this variability it is recommended that while the program retains its academic rigor, it nevertheless, be a program that is designed to be flexible enough to respond to the individual needs of each student. Students will be expected to graduate with not only excellent methodological skills, but also a wider and deeper understanding of public health and their individual area of focus, and that they will have the opportunities to learn much more about their fields of choice in a way that prepares them well for future leadership positions in those areas.

## **Mission**

The mission of the DrPH program is to prepare practitioners for leadership and advocacy in public health practice through a scientific, interdisciplinary approach to understanding and solving public health problems in the public and private sectors, the United States, and worldwide. This mission relates directly to the University of South Florida's mission which includes creating a community of learners together with significant and sustainable university-community partnerships and collaborations; and designing, strengthening and building sustainable healthy communities and improving quality of life.

## **Competencies**

Upon completion of the DrPH program, the student will be able to:

1. Critically evaluate and use scientific theories and frameworks relevant to public health practice.
2. Critically analyze substantive public health problems using evaluation, applied research and statistical methods.
3. Collect, synthesize and apply knowledge from a broad range of public health disciplines.
4. Design, implement and evaluate innovative strategies and interventions to solve public health problems.
5. Demonstrate leadership by mobilizing, coordinating and directing collaborative actions targeting a public health problem.
6. Demonstrate effective written and oral skills in communicating accurate statistical, programmatic, and scientific information in both professional and lay settings.

## **Admission Requirements**

Application deadline for the DrPH program is December 15 for Fall semester admittance. Please refer to Application Procedures (below) for information on the application process.

Applicants to the DrPH program must meet the following minimum criteria in order to be considered for admission. However, the meeting of these criteria per se shall not be the only basis for admission.

1. The GRE is required for all DrPH applicants and will be considered along with the other required application materials when decisions for admission are made.
2. MCAT scores are accepted for the doctoral programs only in the Departments of Community and Family Health, Environmental Health and Global Health. The minimum score required is a mean of 8.

Applicants seeking consideration to the DrPH program must possess the MPH, MHA or equivalent degree and a minimum of two years work experience in public health, a closely related field or as a health professional. Those who hold other graduate degrees will be considered, but as a pre-requisite they must complete all five public health core courses.

All requirements for doctoral degrees must be completed within eight (8) calendar years from the student's date of admission for doctoral study. Students have four (4) years from the date of admission to complete all required coursework, pass the qualifying examination, and be admitted to doctoral candidacy. Students then have four (4) years from the date of doctoral candidacy to complete degree requirements.

The following requirements must be met:

DrPH Students:

1. Successful completion of required coursework including 12 credit hours of policy, leadership and management courses.
2. Successful performance on the qualifying examination for doctoral candidacy
3. Preparation and formal approval of dissertation proposal which must be practice based
4. Conduct of dissertation research activities and preparation of dissertation document
5. Nine credit hours of practice-based internship (data from which can be used in preparation of dissertation document). For CFH students, their committee may waive 3-6 credit hours of internship requirements after careful and deliberative review if they feel that 3 credit hours is appropriate to meet the goals of the students plan of study. (See internship requirements in later section)

## **Application Procedures**

Applicants to the DrPH degree are required to complete both a SOPHAS application and a USF Graduate School application. For application instructions, see our admissions information page at:

<http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/degreeeqsapplicationreqs.html>.

The most current information on admission criteria, program requirements, and procedures can be found in our College of Public health catalog at <http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/catalog.html>. Specifically see the DrPH information at [http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/catalog\\_current/programs/dd\\_drph.pdf](http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/catalog_current/programs/dd_drph.pdf).

In order to be considered for admission to the DrPH Program in Public Health, applicants must be fully prepared to register as full-time students for at least one full academic year (consecutive Fall and Spring semesters).

## **Areas of Study**

- ✓ Community and Family Health
- ✓ Global Health

## **Major Professor**

Upon admission the department chairperson appoints a major professor to each student. The major professor also chairs of the dissertation committee. The major professor serves as a mentor and facilitates the student's doctoral studies by:

1. Meeting with the student to develop a plan of study for doctoral committee approval by the end of the second semester.
2. Monitoring and informing the doctoral committee of the student's progress.
3. Meeting with the student on a regular basis about academic and research progress and professional and career goals.
4. Coordinating the development, administration, and grading of the qualifying exam.
5. Guiding the student in development and implementation of a quality practice-based study experience and dissertation (including proposal, implementation of the research, and the written document).
6. Recommending an appropriate outside chair for the dissertation defense.

Occasionally, a student desires to change their major professor or committee members. This may occur when practice, professional or research interests are more closely matched with another faculty member, the student and faculty member mutually agree that another person is more appropriate, or a faculty member is leaving the university. This action is to be approved by the department chair, the dean of academic and student affairs, and the Graduate School.

## **Doctoral Committee**

By the end of the second semester the major professor and student shall form a doctoral committee. The committee will meet with the student and approve the student's plan of study. The plan of study shall include all required program/departmental courses, prerequisites, research tools, courses required outside of the department, and teaching activities (if applicable). The plan should include proposed time schedule to complete each course, and copies shall be given to each committee member and to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. The doctoral committee members, major professor, or student have the privilege of calling additional meetings to discuss student's progress, research ideas, plan for qualifying exam, or a significant change in plan of study. It is the student's responsibility to arrange these meetings.

The doctoral committee may continue to serve as the dissertation committee, although this is not always the case. The dissertation committee will formally approve the student's written research proposal after an oral presentation given by the student, supervise the research, read and approve the dissertation for defense, and conduct the dissertation defense. In the DrPH program, a student's doctoral committee must have a minimum of four members, which includes at least two faculty members from the sponsoring department and a public health professional or practitioner. (According to Graduate School guidelines, a faculty member outside of the department is specially appointed to chair the dissertation defense.) A minimum of 9 dissertation credits is required.

The doctoral committee is responsible for the following:

1. Meet with the student to discuss plan of study, practice-based specialized study, applied research proposal, qualifying exam, or academic progress.
2. Facilitate opportunities for strengthening leadership and management skills, applied research skills and scholarly growth.
3. Approve and monitor a plan of study that prepares the student to sit for qualifying exams and conduct dissertation research.
4. Develop and grade qualifying exam.
5. Guide student throughout practice-based specialized study and dissertation.
  - A. Approve written dissertation proposal through a formal oral presentation process.
  - B. Provide guidance and support during dissertation.
  - C. Evaluate dissertation through dissertation defense process.

## DrPH Course of Study

**Prerequisites:** Applicants must have an MPH, MHA or equivalent degree from an accredited university, and a minimum of two years work experience in public health, a closely related field or as a health professional.

**Required Coursework:** Please note that course offerings may change due to enrollment and faculty availability. Please confirm offerings via oasis

**A. Public Health Core (15 credit hours; may be transferred from a previously granted masters degree)**

	Credit Hours	Pre-requisites	Tentative Semester Offered*	Semester/Year Taken
PHC 6000 Epidemiology	3	C.I.	Spring	
PHC 6050 Biostatistics I	3	College Algebra or C.I.	Fall	
PHC 6102 Principles of Health Policy and Management	3	C.I.	Fall Spring Summer	
PHC 6357 Environmental and Occupational Health	3	C.I.	Fall Spring Summer	
PHC 6410 Social and Behavioral Sciences Applied to Health	3	C.I.	Fall Spring Summer	

**B. 7000 Level Courses (minimum 12 credit hours; pick from below or choose others)**

PHC 7931 Advanced Doctoral Seminar (must take three 1 credit seminars)	3		Fall Spring Summer	
PHC 7936 Seminar in Health Care Outcomes	3	C.I.	Spring	
PHC 7937 Advanced Seminar in Grant Writing	3	PHC 7934,	Spring	
PHC 7152 Policy and Practice in Community and Family Health	3	X	Spring	
PHC 7934 Writing for Scholarly Publication in Health Sciences	3	X	Summer	
PHC 7935 Community Based Health Promotion	3	PHC 7405, Advanced Qualitative RM, Advanced evaluation and RM	Fall	
PHC 7935 Special Topics in Public Health	3	C.I.	None	
PHC 7910 Directed Research	1-3	C.I. or graduate students.	Fall Spring Summer	
PHC 7417 Family Systems & Public Health	3	PHC 6500 or equivalent	Fall	
PHC 7935 Community Directed Interventions	3	C.I.	Fall	

<b>C. Applied Research (minimum 15 credit hours)</b>					
		<b>Credit Hours</b>	<b>Pre-requisites</b>	<b>Semester offered</b>	<b>Semester/Year Taken</b>
	PHC 6051 Biostatistics II	3	PHC6000 and PHC6050 or C.I.	Spring Fall	
	Evaluation course (pick below or identify other)	3			
	PHC 6708 Health Program Evaluation		PHC6430, PHC6180, and PHC6151 or C.I.	Fall	
	MHS 7740 Survey of Mental Health Planning, Evaluation, and Accountability	3	Master's in field related to human services or at least 16 credits towards a Master's degree.	Spring Fall	
	Quantitative Research Methods course (pick below or identify other) <sup>1</sup>	3			
	PHC 6191 Quantitative Analysis in Health Care Management	3	PHC6050 and PHC6180, PHC6430 and PHC6151 or C.I.	Fall	
	PHC 6112 Global Health 2: Assessment Strategies	4	PHC6000, PHC6050	Spring Fall	
	Qualitative Research Methods (pick below or identify other) <sup>1</sup>	3			
	PHC 6194 Qualitative Methods in Community Health Research	3	X	Spring	
	Epidemiology Course	3			
	PHC 6010 Epidemiology Methods I (if student only had Epi)	3	PHC6000 or C.I.	Spring	
	PHC 6011 Epidemiology Methods II (if student only had Epi 0 and Epi 1)	3	PHC6000, PHC6010 or C.I.	Fall	
	PHC 7001 Practical Issues in Epidemiology (if student had Epi 0, Epi 1, and Epi 2)	3	PHC6000	Summer	

<sup>1</sup> Can substitute two mixed methods courses for quantitative and qualitative requirements

<b>D. Policy, Leadership and Management (minimum 12 credit hours)</b>						
			<b>Credit Hours</b>	<b>Pre-requisites</b>	<b>Semester offered</b>	<b>Semester/Year Taken</b>
		Policy course <sup>2</sup>	3			
		PHC 6151 Health Policy and Politics	3	PHC6102	Spring	
		Planning course <sup>2</sup>	3			
		PHC 6146 Health Services Planning and Evaluation (online)	3	PHC6050 or C.I.	Fall Spring Summer	
		Management/Leadership course <sup>2</sup>	3			
		PHC 6104 Management of Public Health Programs (online)	3	PHC6102 and C.I.	Summer Fall	
		PHC 6180 Health Services Management	3	PHC6102 and undergraduate accounting course or C.I.	Fall Spring	
		PHC 6181 Organizational Behavior	3	PHC6102 or C.I.	Fall	
		PHC 6934-201 Leadership in Public Health	3	C.I.	Spring	
		One related elective (pick from below or choose other)	3			
		PHC 6934 Leadership in Public Health	3			
		PHC 6421 Public Health Law and Ethics	3	PHC6102 recommended	Fall Spring	
		PHC 6934 Perspectives in Health Disparities	3	C.I.	Spring	
		PHC 7935 Community Directed Intervention		C.I.	Fall	
		MHS 6934 Legal Issues in Behavioral Health	3	Not listed in catalog.	None	

<sup>2</sup> Each department (or doctoral committee if department guidelines do not exist) should choose the appropriate policy, leadership, and management courses for the student's plan of study

**E. Discipline-Specific (minimum of 18 credit hours)**

Courses should pertain to focal discipline and interest area. Hours can be transferred from Master's degree.

**F. Culminating Requirements (18 credit hours)**

	Credit Hours	Pre-requisites	Semester offered	Semester/Year Taken
Written qualifying exam				
PHC 7908 Specialized Study (Practice-Based Internship)	9	C.I. Advanced graduate standing	Fall Spring Summer	
PHC 7980 Dissertation (Practice-Based)	9	Admission to candidacy	Fall Spring Summer	
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>	<b>90</b>			

**Note:** *The indicated semesters that the above courses are offered are the latest available but should be checked with advisors and committees regularly. Some courses are offered every other year. Please check course offerings before deciding on courses.*

**Teaching:** Teaching is not a requirement for DrPH students; however, for those students who have an interest in academic positions or in teaching as part of their career it is strongly recommended that they have a teaching experience as part of their curriculum of study. The teaching experience should be designed by the student and their major professor and committee.

**Practice-Based Internship:** All DrPH students will engage in a practice-based specialized study for a total of 9 credit hours. This provides an opportunity for in-depth study in a particular area of public health. The practice-based study is designed to focus on developing and demonstrating strategic policy-making skills and advanced leadership skills in the identified public health discipline. It will be jointly planned by the student, major professor and Field Placement Coordinator. A qualified community-based professional preceptor will mentor the student in the practice setting. DrPH students in the Department of Global Health are required to do their field work outside of the United States. The credit requirement for the Department of Global Health for an International Executive Internship is a minimum of 9 credits. The credit requirement of the department of CFH is also 9 credit hours. However, the DrPH Committee of the CFH student may waive 3-6 credit hours if they determine the student has sufficient relevant prior experience to warrant a more focused and limited field experience within the DrPH program. See DrPH Program Internship section in this manual for more information.

**Qualifying Exam:** When all required coursework is satisfactorily completed, the student must pass a written comprehensive qualifying examination covering the subject matter in the major and related fields. The department sets the specific criteria. This exam may

be supplemented by an oral exam as determined by the department. Results of the written exam will be communicated in writing to the student within 15 working days of the examination. If all or part of the exam is failed, the student has one more opportunity to retake the exam. Each department has specific guidelines for retakes. After successful completion of the qualifying exam and appropriate paperwork is submitted to Graduate School, the student is admitted to candidacy and may register for dissertation hours. See Qualifying Examination section for more information.

**Dissertation:** All students must follow the University's "Guidelines for Dissertations and Theses." See Dissertation section below for more information.

## Section II: Practice-Based Internship

### Introduction

The internship is an integral component of the DrPH program. The primary goal of the internship is to provide students with opportunities to integrate their educational experiences and conceptualize how public health's core areas of policy, research, and practice translate to practical applications in public health settings.

The internship is strategically designed and utilized in order to facilitate the student's program of study and enhance professional development. The internship will provide students with an opportunity allowing them to develop their skills and abilities and broaden their understanding of the field of public health.

To this end, students will design their internships to diversify their experiences while building upon their interests. For example, a student:

- interested in federal or global policy development, currently employed at the state level, may develop an internship in a federal program office;
- employed in a health setting may develop an internship within a organization that offers mental health care;
- with extensive management experience may develop an internship within an organization that provides direct services; or
- with experience in grant writing may develop an internship within an organization that provides grant-funded services directly to populations;
- interested in community based intervention might work within a resource poor country to assess, design, implement and evaluate a program.

Practical experience is a significant component of the educational plan. All DrPH students will engage in a practice-based specialized study for a total of 9 credit hours. This provides an opportunity for in-depth study in a particular area of public health. The practice-based study is designed to focus on developing and demonstrating strategic policy-making skills and advanced leadership skills in the identified public health discipline. It will be jointly planned by the student, major professor and Field Placement Coordinator. A qualified community-based professional preceptor will mentor the student in the practice setting. DrPH students in the Department of Global Health are required to do their field work outside of the United States. The credit requirement for the Department of Global Health for an International Executive Internship is a minimum of 9 credits. The credit requirement of the department of CFH is also 9 credit hours. However, the DrPH Committee of the CFH student may waive 3-6 credit hours if they determine the student has sufficient relevant prior experience to warrant a more focused and limited field experience within the DrPH program. This is intended to be utilized for students who have extensive practice experience in the area where the internship would be served. However, the committee may substitute other internship requirements or divide the internship as appropriate. In either department, students may choose to complete a much more extensive internship depending on their individual plan of study.

The sequence of the internship may vary depending on the student's educational plan, interests, and past experiences. With approval from the doctoral committee, the internship may be taken, in part, at the beginning of the program if the student's goal is to experience first-hand a setting that will assist in designing their course of study. In contrast, the internship may be taken after most classes are completed to provide the student settings for practical application of educational material. The internship must be completed before the comprehensive exams.

Internship planning should be a careful part of the student's discussion with his/her major professor and committee.

The internship provides a practical learning experience through which the student can develop proficiency in each of the core competencies of the DrPH Program. Core competencies developed by the Association of Schools of Public Health Education Committee (Version 1.3, November 2009) are listed as follows:

- Advocacy
- Communication
- Community/cultural orientation
- Critical analysis
- Leadership
- Management
- Professionalism and ethics

The student must refer to the ASPH Education Committee as a guide when developing the internship plan. (<http://www.asph.org/UserFiles/DrPHVersion1.3.pdf>)

The core competency that serves as a foundation for all others is leadership. As such, the internship should provide the student with learning through and practical experience in a leadership role. Along with leadership, the internship experience should focus on one or more of the other competencies referenced above. This integration of activities, providing leadership opportunities with experiences directed toward competencies, will be developed through formulation of the learning goals and ultimately the internship plan.

## **Key Roles**

**Major Professor:** The student's major professor, a committee member or other faculty with expertise in the internship field of study (in concert with the faculty committee) serves to ensure the internship is integrated with the student's course of study and research interests and the plan is relative to overall goals of the department. The major professor also assists the student with the integral aspects of the internship including site selection and developing the internship goals.

**Field Supervisor:** The field supervisor works for the agency that hosts the student and assists the student in developing objectives and deliverables of the internship plan. Once the student is placed, the field supervisor provides guidance on an ongoing basis,

assists the student on a limited basis with deliverables, and works with the major professor to complete the mid and final evaluation.

## **Steps to Internship**

- Develop learning goals with major professor and committee.
- Identify site with major professor and committee.
- Visit site (if practical).
- Register for internship credits with university.
- Develop learning objectives with major professor.
- Develop deliverables based on learning objectives with field supervisor, in coordination with major professor.
- Obtain approval of deliverables from field supervisor and major professor.
- Submit internship plan (deliverables, objectives, and goals) for final approval by major professor.

## **Develop Learning Goals**

Along with the major professor, the student will examine their interests as well as past experiences to develop broad learning goals for the internship. When developing the learning goals, the student will consider diversifying their experiences while further developing their interests. The student will honestly assess their experience and build upon any limitations to enhance their skills and practice knowledge of public health. These goals will represent the 'place the student wants to be' once the internship is completed. Carefully considering what additional experiences are needed to round out the student's skills and practical knowledge is primary, along with ensuring that opportunities are included to enhance leadership skills.

## **Identifying the Site**

Once the student has developed broad learning goals through the process above, the student will work with the major professor to identify a site or sites that meet their needs. The agency that hosts the student can be a local, state, federal or internationally funded department or agency or a community-based organization providing public health services. Public health services can be defined broadly to accommodate the student's need. For example, a federally funded agency that develops regulations or policies that are health related could be as appropriate as a community-based setting that offers direct patient care.

A number of sites with affiliated field supervisors currently exist; however, a new site can be developed in coordination with the major professor and the site agency. In cases where a new site is developed, the major professor or field placement coordinator will initiate contact with the site agency to inquire about feasibility.

## **Site Visit**

After a site has been selected that can accommodate the student's goals, the student will make a preliminary visit (if feasible) to meet with the field supervisor to discuss the internship and learn about the agency. This meeting is intended to allow both parties to assess if the setting is the best-fit for the student. The meeting can be accomplished by phone, if necessary (i.e., international setting).

## **Develop Learning Objectives**

If the setting meets the needs of the student, and upon agreement by the field supervisor, the student will work with the field supervisor and major professor to develop learning objectives that will achieve the broad goals while ensuring they can be accomplished within the setting and the time allotted for the internship. These objectives will further define the goals of the internship in a measurable and time-limited way. Once developed, the objectives will be reviewed and approved by the major professor. If the major professor suggests modifications of the objectives, the student will work to do so.

## **Develop Deliverables Based on Learning Objectives**

Upon the review and approval of the objectives, the student will work directly with the field supervisor to map out the tasks that will result in deliverables to be used in the evaluation. These deliverables will assume the role of a project that meets the objectives that will achieve the broad goals established for the internship. Tasks associated with the deliverables will be directly related to one or more of the core competencies and include activities that allow the student to assume leadership responsibilities. These leadership responsibilities will be site-associated within either a group, department, or for the agency. The mid and final evaluation will be based on the quality, completeness, and timeliness of the deliverables. Firm review dates will be established regarding necessary completion items for both reviews. The field supervisor and student will agree upon deliverables and present them to the major professor for review and approval; if modifications are necessary the student will do so with the field supervisor.

## **Develop Internship Plan and Obtain Final Approval from Major Professor**

The goals, objectives, and deliverables become the internship plan. Once the plan has been developed, reviewed, and approved by the field supervisor, it will be presented to the student's major professor for final approval. The major professor will review and submit the plan to student's committee and a letter of acceptance will be transmitted to the field supervisor. The letter includes the plan, (goals, objectives, and deliverables) and specifics regarding start date, hours, and evaluation periods. A copy of the letter and plan is given to the student and placed in the student record.

## Evaluation

Formal mid and final evaluations are held in person, if practical, with the major professor, field supervisor, and student. Those tasks or projects to be completed by the mid-point are reviewed along with progress toward objectives. A record of the review is developed based on achievements and work completed as well as documentation of tasks necessary to achieve for the final review; this record is signed by all parties. Final reviews are conducted in the same manner. Evaluations are based on completion of all tasks or projects, if the objectives were met, and achievement of the broad-based goals developed when the internship was initiated.

Upon completion of the final Internship experience the student will be required to give an oral presentation to the committee and invited faculty and students. The presentation will include, but not be limited to:

1. Site description(s) and setting(s), location, supervisor's role
2. Purpose of the internship within the context of the agency
3. Goals and outcomes
4. Lessons learned and experiences that can be helpful for other students
5. Competencies and relevancy to leadership and public health.

## Section III: THE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION<sup>3</sup>

### Purpose of the Qualifying Examination

The purpose of the Doctoral Qualifying Examination is for the doctoral student to demonstrate that she/he has the ability to identify, undertake, and analyze a specific substantive area (or areas) of community and family health research that would be appropriate for a dissertation topic in public health.

The timing of the Doctoral Qualifying Examination will be determined by the student's major professor in consultation with the doctoral committee. Typically, students will complete the qualifying exam only after completing all required coursework for the DrPH. However, in some cases, the student, a student's major professor or doctoral committee may determine that additional coursework is needed *following* the qualifying exam.

The Doctoral qualifying examination involves a period of significant self-preparation where the student will emerge with the ability to identify a specific focus area within community and family health, summarize and synthesize the relevant research literature, and design a sound methodology for her/his doctoral dissertation research study.

The specific goals of the qualifying exam are for the doctoral student to demonstrate the capacity to:

- Develop a firm knowledge related to public health in general and specific to a relevant content area;
- Integrate information from these areas to identify a major public health issue;
- Design an appropriate methodological approach to define, evaluate, and analyze a major public health issue; and
- Discuss the potential contribution of the proposed research study to the body of knowledge of public health theory and implications for public health practice.

### How to Register

It is the student's responsibility to notify the major professor of the intention to take the examination. Notification must be made at least **eight weeks** prior to the scheduled examination start date. The purpose of the notification is to allow adequate time to secure proper facilities and equipment for the examination, and to solicit questions from members of the doctoral committee.

All doctoral students planning to take qualifying exams will need to fill out a one-page

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<sup>3</sup> This section borrows heavily from the USF Department of Anthropology Qualifying Examination Guidelines.

***Application for the DrPH Qualifying Exam*** and submit it to the Copenhague Office of Academic and Student Affairs, along with an updated Plan of Study form, at least **four weeks** prior to the exam. Students must check the exact deadline with the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. This form will allow staff in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs to check the student's grade point average and assure that there are no outstanding requirements. Students and their major professors will be notified of approval to proceed with the qualifying exam.

## **Timing and Format of the Qualifying Examination**

- Prior to the qualifying exam, each student will develop a concept paper or research plan outlining the intended topics and goal of the dissertation. When the student and her/his major professor determine that the concept paper/research plan is sufficiently developed, the student will present the concept paper/research plan to the student's doctoral committee.
- Typically, following the presentation, a student's doctoral committee will determine the topics on which the exam will focus. At that time or following the meeting, the committee will draft and agree upon 4-6 questions on which the student will write for the exam.
- A student's doctoral committee will determine the specific expectations for the qualifying exam, although certain parameters must be met, as follows:
  - Each student will have 10 weeks to complete the exam from the time topics are finalized and provided to the student. Students who wish to complete the exam in less than 10 weeks may turn the exam in early.
  - Each student must answer between 3 and 5 questions for the exam, totaling no more than 75 pages double-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt font or Arial 11 pt font.
  - During the exam period, students may request clarification of the topics or questions to be addressed but drafts of the papers will not be reviewed by the committee.
  - Once the exam is complete, the doctoral committee will be given at least 2 weeks to review the exam. Within 3 weeks of exam completion, the student will receive written feedback from the committee chair, denoting strengths and weaknesses of the exam, and providing an evaluative assessment for each question (i.e., pass, borderline, or fail; see table below). After a student receives a "pass" for each exam question, the committee may choose to meet with the student for a post-qualifying exam discussion, during which the committee may ask questions to further clarify statements in the exam and/or discuss future directions towards dissertation proposal development

## Content of the Qualifying Examination

The content of the doctoral examination will be drawn from five areas:

1. Specific knowledge of the state of the literature regarding the student's focus area(s)
  - Evaluation will be based upon a student's ability to obtain research materials, synthesize the literature, identify knowledge gaps, and discuss the potential to make contributions to the focus area.
  - Discussion of relevant theories for pursuing the area of interest and assessment of the contribution the study will make to theory and public health practice.
2. Research methods and evaluation, including statistical competence, particularly related to the student's specific research interests.
  - Evaluation will be based upon the student's review of multiple methods for researching the focus area, discussion of strengths and weaknesses of each method, and conclusion about which method(s) are best suited to studying the area of interest.
3. The broad field of public health, including community and family health.
  - Questions related to this topic will vary. Evaluation will be based on the extent to which the answer directly corresponds to the question. Typically, synthesis of the pertinent research literature will be paramount to a successful response. Additionally, students may be required to identify and discuss aspects of public health, including but not limited to: core functions of public health, essential public health services, important historical milestones in public health, public health principles, and relevant theories or paradigms, and/or to apply their knowledge of the broader field to a specific scenario. Students may also be required to make recommendations for advancing the field.
4. The area of policy and program management.
  - Evaluation of this section will relate to concepts of management, leadership, application of research to practice, and policy development.

## Preparation of Examination Topics/Questions

Each member of the student's doctoral committee will be invited to contribute items to a pool of topics or questions for each section of the qualifying examination. The doctoral student may be invited to submit topics/questions for consideration. Topics/questions are submitted to the student's major professor. The major professor has responsibility for final construction of the qualifying examination.

## Evaluation and Grading

Responses to each exam question will be evaluated and scored separately by the doctoral committee chair and at least two doctoral committee members. In addition, the doctoral committee will provide appropriate written remarks regarding strengths and weaknesses of the responses to each question. A topic/question of an examination is considered "failed" only after two committee members (one of whom may be the chair) evaluate the questions as "failed". A "failed" question of the exam will require a rewrite. The student will have one additional opportunity to be examined on the previously failed topic(s)/question(s). Students will be allotted two weeks for rewriting each exam question. In no case will a student be allowed a third attempt to complete examination or individual topics/questions of the exam. Topics/questions of the examination that have been passed on the first administration are not administered a second time. Failure to pass any topic/question after two administrations of the examination may result in the student's dismissal from the program. The doctoral committee will use the interpretive statement presented below for evaluating each question of the examination.

Evaluation	INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT
Pass	Competent and sound work for a doctoral student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well reasoned, and demonstrates clear recognition and good understanding of the salient issues.
Borderline overall	Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete, and performance, if consistently at this level, would be below the level of adequate graduate-level performance. Students will address these issues in the first chapters of the dissertation or in a rewrite of the failed question, depending on the preference of the doctoral committee.
Fail	Unacceptable work for a doctoral student; work at this level demonstrates neither a conceptual grasp of salient issues nor an aptitude for scholarly work. Each student will be given one opportunity to rewrite their response to each "failed" question.

In rare instances, students whose performance is truly exceptional may be awarded a grade of "Pass with Distinction." Work at this level is creative, thorough, well-reasoned, insightful, well written, and shows clear recognition and an incisive understanding of the salient issues. Work at this level is of outstanding professional quality.

## Notification of Examination Results

As noted, the major professor will provide the student with written feedback denoting strengths and weaknesses of the exam, and providing an evaluative assessment for each question (i.e., pass, borderline, or fail). The Department Chairperson and the other

committee members will receive copies of the written feedback. The Department Chairperson will submit written notification of the examination results to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, College of Public Health, using the ***Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree*** form (available on the Graduate School website). Exams will be stored in student's permanent folder in the Office of Academic and Student Affairs, College of Public Health.

## **Admission to Candidacy**

### **Letter of Candidacy**

The student receives an official Letter of Candidacy from the Graduate School upon approval of written notification of qualifying examination results. In a semester during which a student completes the requirements for admission to candidacy, directed research credits may be counted toward fulfilling dissertation credits, with approval of the major professor.

### **Mandatory Enrollment**

Doctoral students who have completed all degree requirements, and have been admitted to candidacy are required to register for a minimum of 2 credit hours every semester following admission to candidacy, until the degree is granted.

## Section IV: Dissertation Requirements

### Dissertation Committee

The student is ready for the dissertation process after the successful completion of the qualifying examination. The membership of the dissertation committee may be the same as that of the doctoral committee, unless the DrPH candidate or major professor recommends a change, and it is approved by the Department Chair and Associate Dean for Academics. The ***Changes to the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee*** form (available on the Graduate Studies website) must be used to request any changes to the committee.

The Graduate School has the following requirements for doctoral committees:

1. a minimum of four members; three members have their primary appointment in the Department, and one is outside of the Department.
2. members of the doctoral committee must be credentialed by the College of Public Health, and the Chair must be of full graduate faculty status; it is the student's responsibility to verify that each committee member is credentialed. (Note: Even though a faculty member may have "Professor" rank, this does not ensure credentialing for doctoral committees.)

### Dissertation Format

A dissertation may take one of two formats. The first, the **traditional format**, has at least five chapters: Introduction, Review of the Literature, Methods, Results, and a final chapter containing Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations. The second option is the **manuscript format** which has at least four sections. The manuscript option also requires the student's committee to approve the refereed journals that will be targeted for submission and the number of manuscripts that will be included in the dissertation.

**Table 1. Requirements for the traditional format dissertation.**

Part	Chapter	Content	
I		<u>Preliminary Pages</u> Title Page Note to Reader (if applicable) Dedication (optional page) Acknowledgments (optional page) Table of Contents List of Tables (if applicable) List of Figures (if applicable) Abstract	
	II		Main Text
		1	Introduction
		2	Literature Review
		3	Methods
		4	Results of the dissertation
	5	Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	
III		References/ Bibliography	
		Appendices Title Page	
		Appendix Sections (i.e., instruments, etc., if applicable)	
IV		About the Author (required)	

**Table 2. Requirements for the manuscript format dissertation.**

Part	Section	Content	
I		<u>Preliminary Pages</u> Title Page Note to Reader (if applicable) Dedication (optional page) Acknowledgments (optional page) Table of Contents List of Tables (if applicable) List of Figures (if applicable) Abstract	
	II		Main Text
		1	Introduction including theoretical framework
		2	First manuscript
		3	Second manuscript <sup>4</sup>
	4	Conclusions and recommendations for the entire study	
	III		References/ Bibliography (comprehensive list)
		Appendices Title Page	
		Appendix Sections (this section <u>must</u> include a literature review, and may include instruments, etc.)	
IV		About the Author (required)	

<sup>4</sup> If additional manuscripts are required by the committee, the section numbers will change. For example, in a dissertation with three manuscripts, the third manuscript will be labeled Section 4 and the “Conclusions and Recommendations” will be labeled Section 5. In a dissertation with four manuscripts, the fourth manuscript will be labeled Section 5 and the “Conclusions and Recommendations” will be labeled Section 6.

## **Writing the Dissertation: Traditional Format <sup>5</sup>**

The DrPH candidate, with the approval of the doctoral committee, will agree upon a dissertation subject and develop a proposal, consisting of three chapters: Introduction/Statement of the Problem, Review of the Literature, and Methods. The remaining chapters will be completed before the defense of the doctoral dissertation.

### **Chapter 1. Introduction and Statement of the Problem**

The Introduction should describe the nature and purpose of the study, and explain the significance of and justification for conducting the study. This chapter should also present the specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation study, clearly relating these to the lines of investigation and conjecture detailed in current literature. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this chapter.

### **Chapter 2. Review of the Literature**

Literature reviews should be thorough and systematic. Chapter 2 presents a critical analysis of prior scholarship related to the central questions of the dissertation. Although the degree of completion of the literature review at the proposal stage is a matter of deliberation with the committee, in most cases it is important that the literature review in a proposal:

1. Demonstrates thorough understanding of the subject of the dissertation, through review and analysis of previous research;
2. Identifies chief researchers and documents in the community of scholars to which the dissertation is meant to contribute;
3. Identifies areas of consensus, dispute, and ignorance in the scholarship of the field and evaluates the nature and quality of support for various contentions;
4. Draws new insights or new questions from the literature to offer a conceptual or theoretical framework in which the dissertation should be understood; and
5. Examines and weighs previous and potential methods for investigating the hypotheses or research questions to be addressed in the dissertation.
6. Prepares the reader to appreciate how the dissertation will contribute significant new understanding to this framework;

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<sup>5</sup> This section generously used materials from [http://www.albany.edu/etap/graduate\\_programs/doctoral/Dissertation%20guidelines.doc](http://www.albany.edu/etap/graduate_programs/doctoral/Dissertation%20guidelines.doc)

\*Note: Citation of and specific credit to relevant earlier works is part of the author's scientific and scholarly responsibility. The review should focus only on literature and conclusions directly pertinent to the subject and the problem addressed in the dissertation.

### **Chapter 3. Methods**

This chapter is typically divided into labeled subsections. Often a subsection describing participants or subjects, including a description of the population from which they are drawn, is followed by subsections describing data collection, testing or other measurement procedures to be undertaken with the participants and a subsection describing how the resulting variables will be analyzed to help resolve the problems stated in the introduction. Tense should be appropriate to the situation—if methods have yet to be done, they should be written in the future tense, whereas methods that have already been completed should be written in the past tense.

- **Subjects and setting:** The characteristics of participants of the study, how they were selected, and the setting of the study should be presented in detail.
- **Instrumentation:** Any tools or instruments that might be important for readers to understand (such as, assessment instruments, surveys, interview formats, observation protocols, and data collection devices), should be described in detail. If subjects interacted with special equipment or software, or other materials, a detailed description is essential.
- **Data collection procedures:** The readers should be given a thorough description of all the steps involved in data collection. Timelines are helpful, either in outline or graphical representation. Efforts to protect the reliability of findings and the validity of inferences should be detailed.
- **Data analysis:** Regardless of the data collection method used, an analytic strategy must be applied to make sense of the observations. Chapter 3 should describe the analytic strategies employed and a rationale for their use. To the degree that readers may be unfamiliar with the strategy, greater detail may be needed. Methods of “data cleaning” and refinement, categorization schemes and how they were developed, data transformations, statistical tests, and checks on the validity and generalizability of conclusions are suitable topics.

### **Chapter 4. Results**

The fourth chapter summarizes and analyzes the study's data with only minimal interpretation. This chapter should bring readers as close as reasonable to the original data and experiences of the study. This involvement with the data gives the reader some chance to form his or her own inferences and match them against conclusions in Chapter 5. It should begin with a brief review of the purpose of the study and the research method employed. The presentation in Chapter 5 should closely follow the guiding questions or hypotheses articulated earlier in the dissertation. The results should be presented first in their simplest form (such as simple narrative descriptions,

simple counts of frequency, and descriptive statistics), and later in more complex forms (multifactor interactions and generalized patterns or inferential statistics).

Generally, interpretation of findings is reserved for Chapter 5, but if the study is complex, it may become tedious for readers to review page after page of un-interpreted results. Sometimes it is useful to highlight the most important findings both in the text and in accompanying tables and to draw some simple conclusions in anticipation of more developed discussions in Chapter 5.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

When completing a **traditional format** dissertation, Chapter 5 will include a discussion of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations for research and practice. It is, perhaps, the most crucial chapter because it presents the contribution to the research literature and because some cursory readers will attend to this chapter only. Therefore, it is typical to give a brief summary of essential points made in Chapters 1 and 3: why this topic is important, and how the study's design contributed to understanding of the topic.

The remainder of the chapter teases out the implications of the study's findings. These implications can be grouped into: theory or generalization, public health practice, and future research. Theoretical implications involve interpretation of the dissertation findings in terms of the questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

It is appropriate to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the work, including the degree to which conclusions are credible given the method and data. It also should provide a critical retrospective examination of the framework presented in the literature review in light of the dissertation's findings.

Practice implications should delineate applications of new insights derived from the dissertation to solve real and significant public health problems.

Two kinds of implications for future research are possible: one based on the study's actual findings and the other based on its limitations. Generally, future research could look at different settings, interventions with new protocols or dependent measures, or new theoretical issues which emerged from the study. It is appropriate to suggest which of these possibilities are likely to be most fruitful.

The last words should give the "take home message," the enduring ideas or conclusions. This should be presented in the simplest possible form, being sure to preserve the conditional nature of the insights.

## Writing the Dissertation: Manuscript Format

The DrPH candidate, with the approval of the doctoral committee, will agree upon a dissertation subject and develop a proposal, consisting of three or four sections, depending on whether two or three manuscripts will be in the dissertation. After careful consideration and approval of committee members, candidates will select a minimum of two scientific journals (one primary and one secondary) where they will plan to submit each manuscript for publication. Listed below are essential points to consider:

- Please review the previous traditional format's description of each chapter as this will give guidance as to the expectations for each section.
- This version of the dissertation is formatted in sections instead of chapters. Section 1 is the introduction which includes the statement of the problem and theoretical framework. The Introduction should describe the nature and purpose of the study, and explain the significance of and justification for conducting the study. This section should also present the specific hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the dissertation study, clearly relating these to the lines of investigation and conjecture detailed in current literature. Terms likely to be used throughout the proposal should be defined in this section. A thorough review of the conceptual/theoretical framework(s) or models to be used is expected.
- Prior to approval of the proposal, the committee may decide that three or more publications are needed to report results adequately. At least two of the manuscripts must report on the research data. A systematic review of the literature may be considered as a third publication if there is an appropriate scholarly journal that publishes systematic reviews.
- In preparation for the proposal defense, manuscripts will be Sections 2 and 3. If more than two manuscripts are required by the committee, those manuscripts will be Sections 4 (for third manuscript) and 5 (for fourth manuscript). Each proposed manuscript will follow the specific manuscript guidelines, and will include the introduction and statement of the problem, literature review, and methods. It is recommended that a copy of the journal's instructions for authors be available to each committee member.
- At the oral defense of the proposal, the student is expected to present items in Section 1, a comprehensive review of the literature,<sup>6</sup> as well as an overview of each manuscript's research questions/hypotheses, specific methods, and rationale for each journal selection. The manuscripts are to cover the entire dissertation research.

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<sup>6</sup> The student must present a comprehensive review of the literature in the appendices.

- The final dissertation will include Section 1 (introduction and framework), a section for each completed manuscript (including all components required by the specific journal guidelines), final conclusion and recommendation section, references, and appendices. The last section focuses on conclusions and implications of the entire dissertation. Additionally, it is necessary for this section to cover the items below **if not** covered in the manuscripts.
  - ❖ Theoretical implications involved in interpretation of the dissertation findings and in terms of the questions and hypotheses that guided the study. It also should include a critical, retrospective examination of the framework presented in Section 1 in light of the dissertation's findings.
  - ❖ An evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the work, and the degree to which conclusions are credible given the methods and data.
  - ❖ Practical implications and new insights derived from the dissertation to solve real and significant public health problems.
  - ❖ Implications for future research based on the study's actual findings and the study's limitations. Generally, future research could look at different settings, interventions with new protocols or dependent measures, or new theoretical issues which emerged from the study. It is appropriate to suggest which of these possibilities are likely to be most fruitful.
  - ❖ A "take home message," the enduring ideas or conclusions that readers need to keep when they are done. This should be presented in the simplest possible form, being sure to preserve the conditional nature of the insights.
  
- The entire dissertation must conform to basic format requirements as required by Graduate School. ( see [http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/manuscript\\_format.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/manuscript_format.asp) ) This format includes dissertation abstract, table of contents, acknowledgements, pagination, format style (e.g. APA), table, figure, and appendix numbering, font type and size, margin and spacing requirements and header consistency. Each manuscript in the dissertation will follow *journal* requirements/standards as to page length, abstract format, and general structural guidelines. Although co-authors will need to be identified for manuscript submission, co-author's names should not be included in the dissertation itself. There will be one comprehensive reference list at the end of the dissertation that will conform to Graduate School guidelines. All appendices will be at the end of the dissertation.
  
- There may be situations in which the original publication plan or manuscript structure is not well suited to the dissertation findings. In those cases, students can work with their Major Professor or Co-Major Professor to modify the publication plan prior to the dissertation defense.
  
- The acceptance of any of the manuscripts for publication is not a requirement for graduation although the manuscripts must be submitted for publication before graduation. The student and committee should agree to authorship of the

publications before the defense of the doctoral proposal and reconfirm prior to the dissertation defense.

- In the unlikely situation that a manuscript needs to be published before the dissertation is submitted (e.g., there is a submission deadline for a special issue), the committee must review and approve in writing that the manuscript is ready for publication.

## **Standard Writing Style**

Research is discovery to be shared, and the USF Graduate School sets guidelines to help you display your research results in a consistent, professional manner. As researcher and author, the graduate student has full responsibility for the form and substance of the dissertation. The major professor and the members of the committee are a panel of advisors to oversee the substance, direction, and writing of the research, in addition to providing guidance for the format of the document. The Manuscript Editor of the Graduate School ensures University format guidelines are met. The Graduate School offers workshops to assist graduate students in meeting the goal of consistent and professional presentation. Contact the Graduate School for more information and to find out when the next available workshop will be held.

## **Choice of Style Manual**

The Graduate School does not prescribe any single style for dissertations as formats differ across disciplines. Students should select a style manual established by their department or committee and consistently follow the guidelines of that manual throughout the entire manuscript (not only for the reference/bibliography sections).

## **Presenting Your Research Proposal**

The proposal is presented in a formal meeting to the doctoral committee. This meeting is open to other faculty, other doctoral students and other students. At the discretion of the student and the Committee, guests of the student and the general public may be invited. The proposal date is scheduled by common agreement of the student and the doctoral committee members. This date is approved by the Department Chairperson. Proposals may only be scheduled during the regular fall semester, spring semester, or summer C session. A list of important dates and deadlines is published by the department and distributed at the beginning of each semester.

## **Summary of Steps in the Presentation of the Research Proposal Process:**

1. The student has the option of scheduling a final committee meeting prior to distributing the research proposal that will be presented. At this meeting, the student and committee should finalize any changes needed to prepare the

- proposal for presentation. After this meeting, the student will make the recommended changes. If a meeting is not scheduled, the draft proposal must be received by committee members at least four and a half weeks prior to the anticipated defense date. Committee members are permitted two weeks to review the proposal and discuss changes prior to signing the ***Request for Presentation of Research Proposal*** form.
2. All committee members sign the ***Request for Presentation of Research Proposal*** indicating that they have read the proposal and approve it for presentation. This form is available from the Department's Academic Coordinator or on the CFH Student Resources web page.
  3. Submit the ***Request for Presentation of Research Proposal*** and a copy of the announcement (***Research Proposal Announcement***) to the Department Chairperson at least 18 days prior to the presentation.
  4. The ***Research Proposal Announcement*** must be posted at least 14 days prior to the proposal presentation. Once approved, the Academic Program Coordinator will post and distribute the announcement to the faculty and to the doctoral students. Flyers will be posted throughout the College, placed on the COPH listservs and USF-NEWS.
  5. A final copy of the research proposal is given to the committee members and the Department Chairperson 7 days prior to the defense. **No further changes may be made to the research proposal until after the presentation.** Approval for presentation is not an endorsement of the proposal as a completed research plan.
  6. All forms are placed in the student's advising file.

## **Presentation of the Research Proposal**

The purpose of the dissertation proposal presentation is to provide students with the opportunity to present their plans for research, and if appropriate, refine the methods, and gather further information and suggestions from the audience at-large. Following the proposal presentation, the committee members convene to make final determination of the appropriateness of the research being proposed and to deliberate recommendations for changes in the proposal.

The purpose of this meeting is not to determine if the student's presentation was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Rather the purpose is to decide what, if any, proposal changes are needed before proceeding with the research. Committee members sign the ***Approval of Research Proposal*** only after the corrections, additions or changes have been made in writing and the corrected final copy has been distributed to the committee and Department Chairperson. At their discretion, committee members may sign this form prior to the changes being made with the understanding that the Dissertation Committee Chairperson will supervise the requested revisions. This form is available from the Department's Academic Coordinator or on the CFH Student Resources web page.

**Approval of Research Proposal** occurs only after the proposal defense and the corrections, additions or changes have been made in writing and the corrected final copy has been distributed to the committee and Department Chairperson. At their discretion, committee members may sign this form prior to the changes being made with the understanding that the Dissertation Committee Chairperson will supervise the requested revisions. This form is available from the Department's Academic Coordinator or on the CFH Student Resources web page.

Acceptance of the proposal in its final form constitutes the following:

1. Traditional format- Chapters 1- 3.
2. Manuscript format-<sup>7</sup>
  - a. If two manuscripts proposed- Sections 1- 3.
  - b. If three manuscripts are proposed- Sections 1-4.
  - c. If four manuscripts are proposed- Sections 1-5.

This acceptance does not preclude the committee from requiring modifications to the data analysis plan or review of literature at a later date. The committee must approve changes in the proposal or the conduct of the study initiated by the student. The committee may require that a proposal be presented for a second time before being approved, if actions after the initial proposal meeting indicate that substantive modifications in the proposal are necessary. Students are advised not to collect data for their dissertation until final approval of the proposal is completed by the doctoral committee. When the committee approves the proposal as an appropriate dissertation study, the major professor sends formal notification (***Approval of Research Proposal*** form) to the Department Chair that the proposal has been presented and approved. The major professor keeps this form in the student's advising file.

### **Format of Proposal Presentation**

The proposal presentation is conducted in the following format:

1. Introduction by proposal moderator. *Any credentialed USF faculty member, not on the committee, may serve as moderator.*
2. Oral presentation of the research proposal by student not to exceed 35 minutes.
3. First round of questions by committee members.
4. Second round and subsequent rounds of questions by committee members.
5. One round of questions by attending non-committee faculty members.
6. Questions from non-faculty members in attendance beginning with doctoral students, other students, and other attendees.
7. Final round of questions by committee if desired.

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<sup>7</sup> Manuscripts will be included up to the point of results (following each manuscript's format).

## Conducting Your Dissertation Research

Preparation and distribution of preliminary copies of the dissertation are the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to meet individually with doctoral committee members, in addition to the major professor, as needed.

### **Institutional Review Board Approval (IRB)**

All research investigators at USF are responsible for making the initial determination as to whether their research will involve human subjects as defined in the **Quick Start Guide for Investigators** (2004), available online at <http://www.research.usf.edu/cs/quickstart.htm>. When it is not clear whether the research involves human subjects, research investigators must seek assistance from the Division of Sponsored Research. If it is determined that human subjects are involved, the investigator is responsible for applying for review by the appropriate IRB. In most cases, CFH students will apply to the IRB 02 Social/Behavioral Board. This task is accomplished by research investigators preparing a protocol giving a complete description of the proposed research, a detailed application and, when appropriate, a sample of the proposed informed consent form. All forms can be found online at <http://www.research.usf.edu/cs/download02.htm>.

As a part of the application process, the investigator should ensure that the Department Chair certifies on the application form that adequate scientific review of the research study has been performed. Normally in the Department of Community and Family Health, student research contains the student's signature, the major professor's signature, the signature of the Chair of the Department's Research Committee (or representative), and the signature of the Department Chair before the IRB form is forwarded. *All doctoral students must complete the IRB credentialing process and HIPAA training during their first semester following admission.* IRB training courses are available online at <http://www.research.usf.edu/cs/irb.htm>.

## Presenting the Oral Defense of your Dissertation

Scheduling of the oral presentation of the dissertation is by mutual agreement of the student and the doctoral committee. This date is approved by the Department Chairperson. Dissertation presentations may only be scheduled during the regular fall semester, spring semester, or summer C session.

Members of the doctoral committee sign the **Request for the DrPH Oral Examination** form prior to the oral presentation of the dissertation indicating that they have read the dissertation and approve it for presentation. Copies of the dissertation must be distributed to committee members four and half weeks prior to the anticipated defense date. Committee members are permitted two weeks to read the dissertation and provide feedback prior to signing the form. Approval does not preclude changes in the final form of the dissertation, which may be suggested during or after the oral presentation. The format for the oral presentation is consistent with policies of the College of Public Health

and the Graduate School, but as much as possible, is governed by the mutual wishes of the student and the doctoral committee.

The signed ***Request for the DrPH. Oral Examination*** and the ***DrPH Oral Presentation Announcement*** must be submitted to the Department Chair for approval **18 days** prior to the defense date. Once approved and at least **14 days** prior to the scheduled date, the Academic Program Coordinator will post and distribute the announcement to the faculty and students.

The student, in consultation with the major professor, selects the moderator of the dissertation meeting. The moderator must be a fully credentialed member of the USF graduate faculty. In accordance with Graduate School policy, the outside chair cannot be a member of the doctoral committee or a faculty member within the Department of Community and Family Health.

The student provides a final copy of the dissertation for each committee member and the moderator at least **7 days** prior to the scheduled oral presentation date. The student also provides a copy of the dissertation to the Department Chairperson. **No changes should be made to the document after this date.**

Successful completion of the oral examination is the culminating step of the doctoral program. This defense is the student's opportunity to present the dissertation in a public forum where faculty, other students, and guests are invited.

### **Summary of Steps for the Final Oral Presentation of the Dissertation:**

1. The student has the option of scheduling a final committee meeting prior to distributing the dissertation that will be presented. At this meeting, the student and committee should finalize any changes needed to prepare the dissertation for presentation. After this meeting, the student will make the recommended changes. If a meeting is not scheduled, the draft proposal must be received by committee members at least four and a half weeks prior to the anticipated defense date. Committee members are permitted two weeks to review the proposal and discuss changes prior to signing the ***Request for DrPH Final Oral Presentation*** form.
2. All committee members sign the ***Request for DrPH Final Oral Presentation*** form indicating that they have read the proposal and approve it for presentation. These forms are available from the College of Public Health Office of Academic and Student Affairs and online (see Resources for current website information).
3. The ***Request for DrPH Final Oral Presentation*** and a copy of the announcement (***DrPH Oral Presentation Announcement***) must be submitted to the Department Chairperson for approval **at least 18 days prior to the presentation**. Once approved, the Academic Coordinator will post and distribute the announcement to the faculty and to students. Flyers will be

posted throughout the College, placed on the CPH listservs and USF-NEWS.

4. A final copy of the dissertation is given to the committee members, Department Chairperson, and moderator at least **7 days** prior to the presentation. **No further changes may be made to the research proposal until after the presentation.** Approval for presentation is not an endorsement of the dissertation as a completed research project.
5. All forms are placed in the student file.

### **Format of the Final Oral Presentation**

The oral presentation will be conducted in the following format:

1. Introduction by dissertation presentation moderator.
2. An oral presentation of the research by the student (not to exceed 30 minutes).
3. First round of questions by committee members.
4. Second round and subsequent rounds of questions by committee members.
5. One round of questions by attending non-committee faculty members.
6. Questions from non-faculty members in the attendance, beginning with doctoral students, other students, and finally, other attendees.
7. Final round of questions by committee if desired.
8. The entire oral examination process normally should not exceed 3 hours in duration.

The student's doctoral committee has final approval of the oral examination and the written product. Following the dissertation presentation, the doctoral committee convenes without the student present to assess the student's performance in presenting the dissertation research. The doctoral committee may require modifications of the dissertation following the examination and before granting its final approval. If the modifications are extensive, the committee may ask the student to undergo another formal presentation.

A student is recommended for the doctorate only if ALL members of the committee judge both the dissertation and the performance of the student in oral examination to be satisfactory. Approval of the dissertation is indicated by signature on *the **Successful Defense of the DrPH Dissertation*** form. The student has sole responsibility for assuring that all forms related to the proposal and dissertation are completed, and that all work related to the dissertation conforms to the accepted style and format of the USF Graduate School.

Read the Graduate School website for specific details required by the USF Graduate School regarding dissertation presentation and preparation of the final manuscript.

[http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis\\_dissertation.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis_dissertation.asp)

## After the Successful Presentation of a Dissertation

1. Signed copy of ***Successful Defense of the DrPH Dissertation*** form by Committee members and moderator.
2. ***Certificate of Approval Form for Theses and Dissertations*** signed by committee members after all corrections and modifications have been completed satisfactorily.
3. Submit your dissertation electronically by the appropriate deadline. See [http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis\\_dissertation.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis_dissertation.asp) for information on the electronic submission process.

## Format of Dissertation Manuscript

The format and content of the dissertation must be in compliance with the guidelines set forth on the Graduate Studies website:

[http://www.grad.usf.edu/Thesis\\_and\\_Dissertations/format.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/Thesis_and_Dissertations/format.asp).

It is the responsibility of the student to meet with the Manuscript Editor at the Graduate School. The first meeting will be to drop off the final draft of the dissertation. The second meeting will be to discuss, in detail, any corrections needed for final approval by the Graduate School. It is important that you are aware of all Graduate School deadlines during your final semester. These deadlines are announced at the beginning of each semester. When in doubt, call the Graduate School at (813) 974-2846 or check online at [http://www.grad.usf.edu/manuscriptdealines\\_new.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/manuscriptdealines_new.asp). Failing to meet the deadlines will delay your graduation. You will then be required to submit a new application for graduation, pay a new manuscript fee, and register for an additional two hours of dissertation during the following semester.

## ProQuest Publication and Copyright

Because all dissertations must be submitted to ProQuest for publication via the Graduate School, the student will need to contact ProQuest to request permission for submission to a journal for publication. (ProQuest has indicated they will always give permission). ProQuest publishes, but does not automatically copyright the dissertation. It is best **NOT** to request copyright by ProQuest so that the copyright will not have to be transferred to the publishing journal.

**The Graduate School will contact you to verify that all requirements have been met for graduation. The successful completion of this form is a final critical step in meeting the requirements for the DrPH degree. Without final approval from the Graduate School, you will not graduate.**

## Other Responsibilities during the Final Semester

Student responsibilities during the final semester:

1. Register for a minimum of two dissertation credit hours the semester of the dissertation final oral presentation
2. Obtain a list of important dates from the Graduate School:
  - a) Application for graduation
  - b) Format check and payment of manuscript fee
  - c) Submission of an electronic dissertation to the Graduate School
3. Submit dissertation for a format check. Proceed to the **Format Check Form** (<https://etd.grad.usf.edu/format1.php>) to begin the process. This form will instruct you on exactly what you must include in your format check package, including which pages of your manuscript are required. It will walk you through the additional information needed by the Editorial Office, and then generate a cover page for your submission package and give you directions on where to drop it off. This deadline is usually early in the semester.
4. After defense and approval, submit your dissertation electronically following procedures on the Graduate School website.
5. Provide a bound copy of the final approved dissertation to the major professor. Bound copies for other members of the dissertation committee may be provided at your discretion. Bound copies may be purchased through the USF Bookstore at your own expense.
6. Purchase your cap and gown at the USF Bookstore prior to the cap and gown deadline.
7. Celebrate that you have completed your Doctoral Degree in Public Health!

## Resources

### Resources to Assist you in the Literature Review Process:

Galvan, J. L. (1999). *Writing literature reviews: A guide for students of the social and behavioral sciences*. Los Angeles: Pyrczak.

Locke, L., W. Spirduso, & S. J. Silverman (2000). *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals*. (4th ed.) Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Manning, T., Algozzine, B., & Antonak, R. (2003). *Guide for preparing a thesis or dissertation*. Morgantown, WV: PNG Publications.

Rudestam, K. E. & Newton, R. R. (2001). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process*. (2nd ed.) Newbury Park, CA: Sage

### Additional Online Sources:

Dissertation Resources (from Northern Arizona University)

<http://dana.ucc.nau.edu/~ksw8/dissertation.htm>

Writing and Presenting Your Thesis or Dissertation (from Michigan State University)  
<http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/>

\* Adapted from:

Components of the Research Proposal and Dissertation (from Gallaudet University)  
<http://gradschool.gallaudet.edu/dissertation/disspart.html>

**COPH Academic Affairs Website** <http://publichealth.usf.edu/academicaffairs/>

**Graduate School Thesis & Dissertation Website**  
[http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis\\_dissertation.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis_dissertation.asp)

**IRB Website** <http://www.research.usf.edu/cs/irb.htm>

## Section V: Policies

### Important Graduate School Policies (Effective: 2009-2010)

**Courses:** A time limit extension also extends the time limit on courses applied to the degree.

**Time Limit Calculations:** The time limits detailed below are calculated from the original date of admission to the program. Students that have been reinstated or readmitted to the same degree program must adhere to the policies in the catalog at the time of readmission; however, the time to degree will be calculated from the original date of admission.

**Leave of absence:** An approved leave of absence stops the clock during the time of the leave.

**Time Limitations - Doctoral:** Degrees must be completed within eight (8) years from the student's date of admission to the doctoral program. Courses taken prior to admission to the USF graduate program can be no older than eight (8) years at the time of graduation. Students have four (4) years from the date of admission to complete all required coursework, pass the qualifying examination, and be admitted to doctoral candidacy. Students have four (4) years from the date of doctoral candidacy to complete the degree requirements.

**Enrollment – Doctoral:** To remain in enrollment compliance, doctoral candidates must enroll in a minimum of two (2) hrs of dissertation EACH semester (including summer).

**Number of Time Limit Extensions Allowed:** Students may request ONE time limit extension based on documented exceptional circumstances that precludes completion of the degree in the original time to degree.

### COPH Policies

#### Use of “c” in Degree Acronyms for Degree Candidates:

The College of Public Health does not permit students who are pursuing masters or doctoral degrees to use the degree acronym after their names and a small “c” for candidate. In other words students are not permitted to use MPHc, MSPHc, MHAc, PhDc, or DrPHc. If students, after successfully completing all comprehensive exams (core and concentration) for the master degrees or the qualifying exam for the doctoral degree wish to put after their name the words—master degree candidate or doctoral degree candidate—we allow this..

The use of the degree acronym and small “c” creates confusion for faculty, employers, and other individuals who are reviewing students' CVs and other materials. It creates a situation wherein a student appears to have earned a degree when such is not the case. As a degree-granting College, we do not allow this.

## **Section VI: Other Resources**

## Major Milestone of the DrPH Program:

### Checklist

Milestone	Corresponding Form(s)	Completed √
Admission to DrPH Program	<i>See Application Procedures for further instructions</i>	
Assignment of Major Professor		
Formation of Doctoral Committee		
Completion of Plan of Study	<i>DrPH Plan of Study</i>	
Completion of Prerequisites (if any)		
Completion of Required Coursework		
Completion of Practice-Based Internship		
Notify Major Professor of Intention to Take Qualifying Examination (notification must be made <i>at least eight weeks prior</i> to the scheduled examination start date)		
Registration for the Qualifying Examination	<i>Application for DrPH Qualifying Exam Updated DrPH Plan of Study (if applicable) (submit these two forms at least four weeks prior to examination)</i>	
Completion of Qualifying Examination		
Admission to Candidacy	<i>Admission to Doctoral Candidacy*</i>	

Formation of Dissertation Committee (only if different members from Doctoral Committee)	<i>DrPH Change of Committee</i>	
Request to Present Dissertation Proposal	<i>Request for Presentation of Research Proposal Research Proposal Announcement (submit both forms to the Department Chairperson at least 18 days prior to the presentation) (Research Proposal Announcement must be posted at least 14 days prior to the proposal presentation)</i>	
Successful Presentation of Dissertation Proposal	<i>Approval of Research Proposal</i>	
Obtain IRB Approval for Dissertation Research		
Conduct Dissertation Research		
Request to Orally Defend Dissertation Research	<i>Request for the Dissertation Defense DrPH Oral Presentation Announcement (submit both forms to the Department Chairperson at least 18 days prior to the presentation) (Research Proposal Announcement must be posted at least 14 days prior to the proposal presentation)</i>	
Successful Oral Defense of Dissertation	<i>Successful Defense of the DrPH Dissertation</i>	
COPH Form for Graduation	<i>Thesis/Dissertation Submission</i>	
USF Graduate School Forms for Dissertation and Graduation	<i>Format Check* Theses and Dissertation Certificate of Approval (for publication and archiving for the University)* Graduate Student Exit* Proquest/UMI Agreement* NORC Survey*</i>	
Purchase your Cap and Gown at the USF Bookstore		

Attend COPH Graduation Celebration!		
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\* USF Graduate School Forms.

All other forms are from the COPH.

Go to <http://health.usf.edu/publichealth/forms.html> to access all COPH Forms.

Go to <http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis-dissertation-forms.asp> to access USF Graduate School Forms.

## **COPH Contact Numbers**

<b>Contact</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Academic Affairs</b>	(813) 974-6505
<b>College of Public Health – Front Desk</b>	(813) 974-3623
<b>College of Public Health – Copy Center</b>	(813) 974-6668
<b>Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology</b>	(813) 974-4860
<b>Department of Community and Family Health</b>	(813) 974-4867
<b>Department of Environmental and Occupational Health</b>	(813) 974-1120
<b>Department of Global Health</b>	(813) 974-1122
<b>Department of Health Policy and Management</b>	(813) 974-7701
<b>Information Technology (IT) Help Desk - Tampa Campus</b>	(813) 974-1222
<b>USF Graduate School</b>	(813) 974-2846
<b>USF Health Information Technology (IT) Support</b>	(813) 974-6288
<b>USF Tampa Library</b>	(813) 974-2729