

**PH.D.
IN
REHABILITATION SCIENCES**

HANDBOOK
2016-2017



Rehabilitation Sciences PhD Program

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Contents

Introduction.....	3
Admissions.....	4
Transfer of Credits	4
Summary of Degree Requirements.....	5
Program of Study	5
Required Courses	5
Elective Courses.....	6
Concentrations.....	6
Rehabilitation Sciences Degree (RSD) Course Descriptions	7
Minimum GPA.....	10
Qualifying Examination, Dissertation Proposal, and Admission to Candidacy	10
Doctoral Dissertation Committee Composition.....	10
Graduate Assistantship and Tuition Waivers.....	11
Outside Employment	11
Computers and Other Technology	11

Introduction

Welcome to the PhD program in Rehabilitation Sciences at University of South Florida's School of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Sciences.

The mission of the PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences degree program is to prepare faculty researchers who will contribute to the development of rehabilitation practice, research and education in an emerging 21st century health care environment. Graduates of the proposed PhD program in Rehabilitation Sciences are expected to demonstrate advanced knowledge and productivity related to research, education, and service delivery through interprofessional collaborations designed to generate and extend knowledge that is focused, evidence-based and clinically-relevant. The School of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Sciences faculty collaborate with other researchers from a wide range of disciplines across the USF campus, and conduct practice- and community-based research throughout the Tampa Bay region.

The following is an overview of the milestones of the Rehabilitation Sciences PhD program. More detailed information is provided in the relevant sections of this handbook:

- The Rehabilitation Sciences PhD program requires a minimum of 66 semester credit hours beyond a Master's degree
- A minimum of a 3.0 grade point average is required to be maintained by all students
- The supervisory committee consists of four members. With the help of the dissertation chair, the student forms the supervisory committee no later than the second semester of study
- Per graduate school guidelines, the supervisory committee should convene at least once per year and review student progress.
- A qualifying exam is required of all students. The dissertation chair and supervisory committee will prepare and evaluate the exam.
- A proposal of dissertation topic and approval of the topic by the supervisory committee is required. It is recommended that this take place within 1 semester of the qualifying exam.
- Admission to candidacy for the PhD occurs after all coursework is satisfactorily completed, the qualifying exam is passed, and the proposal of dissertation topic is approved.
- All students are required to complete a written dissertation in accordance with the guidelines of the Graduate School. This document must be presented to the supervisory committee in advance of the final PhD defense.
- The student is strongly advised to check the required deadlines for all items related to the PhD defense. These deadlines are provided by the Graduate School, and are not the same from year to year.

This handbook serves as a quick resource guide as you navigate the PhD program. The most recent version is available on the web site. The information contained herein is subject to change and may vary based on requirements of the specific concentrations and other factors. It is recommended that you discuss any specifics not covered in this handbook with your dissertation chair or the Program Coordinator. Also, the PhD program follows the USF Graduate Studies policies, procedures, and guidelines (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>). It is your responsibility as a graduate student to follow program policies and USF Graduate Studies policies.

Admissions

Admissions Requirements

Admissions requirements for the PhD program follows:

- At least a Master's Degree or first-professional Doctoral Degree in a rehabilitation or rehabilitation sciences related discipline
- Minimum of a 3.0 GPA or equivalent in prior graduate and/or professional degree studies
- Preferred Score of at Least 70th percentile on the quantitative, verbal and analytic subtests of the GRE
- Three (3) Letters of Recommendation
- Personal Statement describing prior experiences and accomplishments in a rehabilitation or rehabilitation sciences related discipline
- Curriculum Vitae
- Campus Interview with two (2) Rehabilitation Sciences core faculty members and at least one (1) faculty member from intended Concentration Area of study
- Applicants from countries where English is not the official language must also demonstrate proficiency in English in one of the following ways:
 - By providing a score of 79 or higher on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFLiBT)
 - By providing a score of 6.5 or higher on the International English Lang Testing System (IELTS)
 - By earning a score of 500 (or equivalent) on the GRE-Verbal exam
 - By earning a baccalaureate or higher degree at a regionally accredited institution in the US
 - By earning a degree at a foreign institution where English is the language of instruction (must be documented on the transcript)

Transfer of Credits

The PhD program in Rehabilitation Sciences adheres to the [University of South Florida Graduate Studies policy regarding transfer of credits](#). Students should email any specific inquiries to: phd-admissions@health.usf.edu or speak to their dissertation chair.

Summary of Degree Requirements

The Rehabilitation Sciences PhD consists of 66 total credit hours with additional credits, if necessary, through dissertation completion.

Program of Study

An official program of study will be developed in conjunction with the student's dissertation chair within the first 2 semesters after acceptance to the program. A sample program of study is shown in Table 1.

Required Courses

Rehabilitation Sciences Core

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
RSD 6111	Introduction to Rehabilitation Sciences	3
RSD 6112	Advanced Rehabilitation Sciences	3
RSD 6920	Colloquium in Rehabilitation Sciences I	1
RSD 6921	Colloquium in Rehabilitation Sciences II	1
RSD 7300	Rehabilitation Ethics	3
RSD 7910	Mentored Research Apprenticeship	1
RSD 7910	Mentored Research Apprenticeship (repeat)	1
RSD 7930	Research Proseminar in Rehabilitation Sciences	2
Total		15

Statistics/Research Methodology Core **15**

Concentration (one of three tracks), including the appropriate Special Topics course: **15**

RSD 7931	Special Topics in Chronic Disease	3
RSD 7932	Special Topics in Neuromusculoskeletal Disability	3
RSD 7933	Special Topics in Veteran's Health/Reintegration	3

Electives **9**

Dissertation **12**

Dissertation credits may exceed twelve (12) if the student's advisory committee feels that additional time is required in order to satisfactorily complete the dissertation.

Total **66**

Elective Courses

Considering the interdisciplinary and interprofessional focus of this PhD Program, students may select from a wide range of elective courses within the Rehabilitation Sciences program and from other programs, departments, and colleges across the USF main campus and USF Health. Electives to be included in the Program of Study will be discussed with and approved by the student's dissertation chair.

RSD electives include:

Course Number	Course Title	Credits
RSD 6941	Teaching Practicum in Rehabilitation Sciences	3
RSD 7900	Directed Readings in Rehabilitation Sciences	3

Concentrations (15 hours)

Students admitted to the PhD in Rehabilitation Sciences must choose from one of three concentrations prior to beginning coursework in the program. The three concentrations are listed below.

Chronic Disease

This concentration addresses coursework and research in chronic diseases (such as diabetes, heart disease, pulmonary conditions, osteoarthritis, osteoporosis, rheumatoid conditions, obesity-related conditions, and many other conditions) and/or the movement adaptations resulting from these types of chronic conditions. (For example, the person with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease may demonstrate adaptations in gait speed, response to activity, and postural modifications that impact breathing.)

Veteran's Health/Reintegration

This concentration addresses coursework and research in best practice for veterans and their families directed toward successful reintegration, long-term health, and holistic care. The primary focus of this concentration includes wounded veterans (from current and previous military service) with issues such as: traumatic brain injury, musculoskeletal trauma, prosthetics, therapeutic robotics, assistive devices, behavioral health, post-traumatic stress disorder, speech pathologies, cognition, audiology, psychology, gait and balance, age-related disorders, physical rehabilitation, neurosciences, holistic family resilience, coping skills, and degenerative disorders.

Neuromusculoskeletal Disability

This concentration addresses coursework and research in neuromusculoskeletal movement-related disorders from a variety of perspectives including anatomic, physiologic, epidemiologic, medical, diagnostic, rehabilitative, and many others.

Rehabilitation Sciences Degree (RSD) Course Descriptions

Required Courses

RSD 6111 Introduction to Rehabilitation Sciences (3)

This course will provide an introduction to and overview of the field of rehabilitation sciences, emphasizing the interdisciplinary and interprofessional nature. The enablement-disablement process will be highlighted as well as a survey of current scientific literature highlighting both quantitative and qualitative lines of inquiry and issues in the field. Topics would include epidemiology, demographics, and models of disability; outcomes research and evidence-based practice; rehabilitation engineering and technology translation; research ethics, grant writing; use of human subjects in research; and use of information retrieval systems. A survey of current scientific literature will be used to highlight both quantitative and qualitative lines of inquiry and issues in the field.

RSD 6112 Advanced Rehabilitation Sciences for Research, Education, and Practice (3)

This course provides an in-depth analysis of theoretical and methodological issues in rehabilitation science research, education and practice.

RSD 6920 & RSD 6921 Colloquium in Rehabilitation Sciences I and II* (1 ea)

This seminar will meet weekly with faculty and guest speaker presentations on timely topics and current research in the field. Students may present results of projects in which they are involved or lead discussion of contemporary journal articles in rehabilitation sciences. This may be repeated up to three (3) hours.

RSD 7300 Rehabilitation Ethics (3)

This course is designed to introduce the student to the social, moral, policy, and ethical dimensions of rehabilitative healthcare including informed consent, research on human subjects, health care allocation and disparities.

RSD 7910 Mentored Research Apprenticeship in Rehabilitation Sciences (1)

Directed research in rehabilitation sciences. Course is repeatable up to 2 credit hours total.

RSD 7930 Research Proseminar in Rehabilitation Sciences (2)

This seminar course provides an opportunity for the student to explore current topics in rehabilitation science research. The student will develop an in-depth analysis in a research area related to the concentration. Students will gain experience in presenting, facilitating and discussing the research of interest to them.

RSD 7980 Dissertation - Directed Research in Rehabilitation Sciences* (12)

Under the supervision of a dissertation chair and committee, students will pursue independent study of a topic, research or project relevant to contemporary rehabilitation sciences.

Elective Courses

RSD 6941 Teaching Practicum in Rehabilitation Sciences* (3)

This course covers learning theories, teaching methods, assessment techniques and curriculum construction for the adult learner. Students will be paired with a teacher-mentor and have the opportunity to act as a teaching assistant in a course relevant to their rehabilitation discipline. (Recommended for those who are interested in teaching in a university, college, or clinical setting.)

RSD 7900 Directed Readings in Rehabilitation Sciences* (3)

Individually planned readings guided by a faculty member involving in the area of students' concentration-(a) Chronic Disease, (b) Veteran's Health/Reintegration or (c) Neuromusculoskeletal Disability but not currently covered by formal course work.

RSD 7931 Special Topics in Chronic Disease * (3)

This course creates a framework for understanding rehabilitation for individuals with chronic health conditions. Focuses on the application of validated rehabilitation examination and intervention approaches or strategies that are consistent with contemporary evidence based practice.

RSD 7932 Special Topics in Neuromusculoskeletal Disability * (3)

This course creates a framework for understanding rehabilitation for neuromusculoskeletal movement-related disorders. Focuses on the application of validated rehabilitation examination and intervention approaches or strategies that are consistent with contemporary evidence based practice.

RSD 7933 Special Topics in Veteran's Health/Reintegration * (3)

This course creates a framework for understanding rehabilitation for veterans and their families directed toward successful reintegration, long-term health, and holistic care. Focuses on the application of validated rehabilitation examination and intervention approaches or strategies that are consistent with contemporary evidence based practice.

Year	Semester								Total	
	Fall			Spring			Summer			
	Course	Cr.		Course	Cr.	Course	Cr.			
1	RSD 6111	Intro to Rehabilitation Sciences	3	RSD 6112	Adv Rehabilitation Sciences	3	RSD 7300	Rehabilitation Ethics	3	29
	RSD 6920	Colloquium 1	1	RSD 6921	Colloquium 2	1		Concentration	3	
		Concentration Statistics/Research Methodology	3 3		Concentration Statistics/Research Methodology	3 3		Statistics/Research Methodology	3	
2	RSD 7930	Research Proseminar in Rehabilitation Sciences	2	RSD 7910	Mentored Research Apprenticeship	1		Elective(s)*	6	25
	RSD 7910	Mentored Research Apprenticeship	1		Concentration	3		Qualifying Examination		
		Statistics/Research Methodology Concentration	3 3		Statistics/Research Methodology Elective(s)*	3 3		<i>Accepted to Candidacy</i>		
3	RSD 7980	Dissertation	3	RSD 7980	Dissertation	3	RSD 7980	Dissertation	3	12
4**	RSD 7980	Dissertation Elective(s)*	--	RSD 7980	Dissertation	--	RSD 7980	Dissertation	--	

* A wide range of electives within the Rehabilitation Sciences program and from other departments on the USF and USF Health campuses are available to students. Student may select electives (upon approval of their dissertation committee chair) that complement their course work and provide knowledge and skills that they will find useful upon graduation.

**if required

Table 1. Sample Program of Study.

Minimum GPA

Students are expected to maintain a Grade Point Average (GPA) of not less than 3.0. A student whose GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The student will have 2 semesters in which to meet the minimum GPA requirements. If, after the 2 semesters, the student's GPA remains below the 3.0 minimum requirement, the student will be dismissed from the program.

Students must earn a minimum of a B grade in all required RSD and concentration-specific courses. If the student earns a grade less than a "B" in a required course, the student will have the opportunity to take the course a second time. However, the student's stipend and tuition waiver may be suspended. If the student earns less than a "B" in the same required course for the second time, the student will be dismissed from the program. This "second chance" rule does not supersede the requirement to maintain a minimum overall 3.0 GPA throughout the Ph.D. program.

Qualifying Examination, Dissertation Proposal, and Admission to Candidacy

A qualifying exam is required of all students. To be eligible for the qualifying examination, students must successfully complete all coursework in their program of study. The qualifying examination consists of both written and oral components. Specific examination requirements will be determined by the student's dissertation committee who will also prepare and evaluate the examination.

A proposal of the dissertation research topic and approval of the topic by the dissertation committee through a formal defense is required. It is recommended that the formal defense take place within 2 semesters following the successful completion of the qualifying examination.

Admission to candidacy for the PhD occurs after all coursework is satisfactorily completed, the qualifying exam is passed, and the dissertation proposal is successfully defended.

Doctoral Dissertation Committee Composition

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee will be formed within six months of the selection and approval of a dissertation committee chair (i.e. major professor), and no later than four terms (including summer) after entering the program.

The committee will consist of a minimum of four credentialed USF graduate faculty members: the dissertation committee chair and three other individuals who are experts in fields relevant to student's research area. At least one committee member shall hold a primary appointment in another department.

The Program Coordinator shall approve the composition of the doctoral dissertation committee via the University of South Florida's Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Appointment Form. As per University guidelines, the Doctoral Dissertation Committee is officially designated by the College of Medicine's Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. The Graduate Student Advisory Committee Appointment Form can be found at <http://gradaffairs.health.usf.edu/forms.html>.

Graduate Assistantship and Tuition Waivers

Graduate Assistantships are available to selected students pending availability of extramural funding by university graduate faculty affiliated with the program and departmental resources.

Graduate Assistantships, including tuition waivers and stipends for employment, will be administered according to the policies, procedures, and guidelines of USF Graduate Studies (<http://www.grad.usf.edu/assistantships.php>).

Outside Employment

This PhD program is designed for full-time students. The rigorous courses and requisite research efforts of the PhD Program do not permit time for employment, either within or outside the university. However, under special circumstances, outside employment may be approved with prior permission of the Program Coordinator.

Computers and Other Technology

Computing facilities on the University and USF Health networks are a vital component of the academic environment. Each person using computers on these networks must be considerate of other users. The purpose of these facilities is the support of teaching and research by its authorized users.

In order to promote a classroom environment that is conducive to learning, PDAs and/or cell phones are to be turned off during class time. Students who require cell-phone access for emergency situations or to care for sick children, family members, or significant others may keep their cell phones turned on in the muted mode with permission of the instructor.

The use of personal computers during class time for course-related work is a privilege allowed or disallowed at the instructor's discretion. (Course-related work includes taking notes, following the instructor on PowerPoint or Canvas, and working on in-class assignments.) Computers are not permitted to be used during classtime for e-mail, instant messaging, Internet surfing, playing games, doing homework, etc.

Inappropriate use of electronic devices will result in the loss of privileges. Repeated infractions of this rule may affect the professionalism portion of the student's final grade in the course or result in other disciplinary action.

Activities that damage or impede the work of other users are of particular concern. Such activities are discourteous and illegal. The State of Florida has laws which hold that unauthorized use (including accessing another user's account) leading to offenses against intellectual property and/or computer users, is a felony. Besides civil penalties that can include imprisonment of up to fifteen years and fines, the college and/or university may impose administrative penalties and sanctions against those found to have violated the law. USF wishes to provide open access to students and faculty with as few restrictions as possible. Courteous and thoughtful computing will minimize the need for regulations and annoying security procedures.

University policies are explicit (Student Code of Conduct) and any violation of these policies, including sending hate mail, is unacceptable and will be dealt with severely.

The following activities are forbidden and may result in loss of the student's computer account, administrative sanctions and penalties by the university and/or college, as well as imprisonment and fine by civil authorities.

- Use of another's account.
- Allowing another person to access one's account or share one's password.
- Use of USF computing resources for private profit, or for promoting a religious or political group.
- Intentionally impeding the legitimate use of computing facilities by other people.
- Using USF facilities, including printers, for junk mail, mass mailing, or non-course related work.
- Using USF computers to access pornographic material.

Individuals using this system without authority, or in excess of their authority, are subject to having all of their activities on this system monitored and recorded by system personnel. While monitoring individuals improperly using this system or during system maintenance, the activities of authorized users may be examined. Anyone using this system agrees to such examination and is advised that if it reveals possible evidence of criminal activity, system personnel may provide this evidence to law enforcement officials.