

Doctoral Degree Programs

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4.1 DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

The Graduate College awards the doctoral degree for excellence in research and scholarship, not merely because the student completes a program of courses or spends a given time in its pursuit. The doctorate signifies the attainment of independently acquired and comprehensive knowledge and attests to the general professional competence of the recipient. The Graduate College of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center normally grants a doctoral degree only to individuals who do not already hold a Ph.D. or similar graduate degree.

A student should expect to spend a minimum of four full academic years beyond the bachelor's degree. During this period the student shall take adequate course work, successfully complete the general examination, and successfully defend the results of original research presented in a dissertation.

The minimum required number of semester hours for the doctoral degree, combining both formal courses and hours of research is 90 post-baccalaureate hours. Up to 6 hours of 5980, Research for the Master's Thesis, may be included in the 90 hours. Credits accumulated to satisfy research tool requirements will not be accepted in fulfillment of the 90 hour minimum requirement.

After admission to the Graduate College, students become prospective candidates at the discretion of their Advisory Conference Committee. Full candidacy is granted only upon successful completion of the General Examination.

Students who finish a master's degree cannot continue graduate study unless they are admitted into a doctoral program by the recommendation of a department and approval of the Graduate Dean.

4.2 DOCTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

The Doctor of Public Health degree (Dr.P.H.) is an advanced professional working degree designed to provide broad preparation in the fundamentals of community health as well as to provide education for a higher level of research, teaching, or professional service in public health than is attainable through the master's level program.

To be admitted to the Dr.P.H. program, the candidate must have a Master of Public Health degree from an accredited institution provided that the academic and experience requirements for such a degree are equivalent to those required for the M.P.H. degree at

the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Alternatively, the candidate must complete the requirements of the M.P.H. degree during the doctoral program. The candidate must be recommended for admission by the Dr.P.H. Committee within the College of Public Health and be admitted into the doctoral program by the Graduate Dean. The Dr.P.H. degree requires a minimum of 90 graduate credit hours. For additional details about the Dr.P.H. program, consult the Dean's Office in the College of Public Health.

4.3 ACCELERATED DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM

The accelerated dual degree program establishes a framework of rules by which academic units may offer students the option of earning a combined bachelor's and graduate degree in an accelerated program. The program allows students with 30 hours of advanced standing credit to earn both the bachelor's and the master's degrees within three to four years of matriculation and the bachelor's and Ph.D. degrees in as short a period as five years from matriculation. Interested applicants should contact the academic programs of interest to design a degree plan.

4.4 SPECIALIZATION IN NEUROSCIENCE

Neuroscience by its very nature is an interdisciplinary, collaborative area encompassing many different disciplines including cell biology, physiology, biochemistry and pathology, as well as, clinical neuroscience. Students may elect to receive a doctoral degree in neuroscience or a specialization in neuroscience. To receive a specialization in neuroscience, a student must be admitted to a degree- granting department at the Health Sciences Center or Norman campus. Students who complete the neuroscience specialization requirements will receive a designation of "Specialization of Neuroscience" upon completion of the Ph.D. degree.

4.5 M.D./Ph.D. DEGREE PROGRAM

Applicants wishing to combine studies for the M.D. and Ph.D. degrees must be accepted into the M.D. degree program and into a doctoral degree program. The program is individually designed for each student and requires a minimum of six years to complete.

4.6 INTERDISCIPLINARY DOCTORAL PROGRAM

A nontraditional program may be selected by students who do not choose to specialize in one of the prescribed program areas. The authority for designing and awarding an interdisciplinary doctoral degree is vested with the Graduate Council. This does not imply the relaxation of standards and levels of performance. It frees the candidate from the need to satisfy specific degree requirements of a department or unit which may not be particularly relevant to the program of study desired by the candidate. This determination is made by an Advisory Committee and the Graduate Council.

Because regular departmental programs usually require some course work in related areas, these programs must be defined so that they differ from conventional departmental programs. To this end, an interdisciplinary program is defined as one in which the candidate takes less than the normal number of courses required for a doctoral student in the disciplinary program but may require more didactic coursework than for the

traditional doctoral degree. The procedures for candidacy and for earning a doctoral degree in an Interdisciplinary program are:

- (1) The candidate must apply and be admitted to a graduate program authorized by the State Regents to grant the doctoral degree. Admission to the graduate program does not necessarily imply subsequent acceptance into an interdisciplinary program.
- (2) To be admitted into the Interdisciplinary program, the candidate must submit a petition to the Graduate Dean consisting of: a statement justifying the need for investigation in the proposed area; a list of courses to be included in the program of study; how this program significantly differs from existing programs; a research proposal; and a statement about the program from the proposed members of the Advisory Committee.
- (3) The Graduate Dean, or a person designated by the Dean, is an ex-officio member of the Interdisciplinary Advisory Committee. The Graduate Council must approve the rationale, courses, and members of the Advisory Committee. Any changes in an approved program must be authorized by the Graduate Dean.
- (4) The majority of the graduate's courses leading to the Interdisciplinary degree must be taken in departments or units authorized to offer the doctoral degree. Credit received for research for the doctoral dissertation may not be used to meet the preceding requirements.
- (5) For the Interdisciplinary program, the degree granted will bear the name of the program in which most of the candidate's courses are taken, for example, Physiology/ Interdisciplinary.
- (6) Subsequent procedures follow the rules of the Graduate College, except that the Advisory Committee is not constrained to follow the specific degree requirements of a particular department or unit.

4.7 GENERAL DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

4.7.1 Transfer Credit for Doctoral Programs

The acceptance of transfer credit from another institution for a doctoral degree at OUHSC is determined in accordance with the following criteria:

- (1) A maximum of 44 semester hours from individual courses and/or a completed degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree. Exceptions can be made for additional non-OU coursework taken by electronic media, following enrollment in a OUHSC doctoral program.
- (2) The coursework transferred must represent valid graduate credit earned in graduate level courses from an accredited college or university.
- (3) The credit must carry a grade of A, B, or S.

- (4) The credit must be applicable to the degree program.
- (5) Individual courses applied must not be more than six years old at the time of admission to the degree program. In special cases, credit more than six years old may be transferred if recommended and validated by the department and approved by the Graduate Dean. The departmental procedures to validate the student's current knowledge and competency must have the approval of the Graduate Dean.
- (6) A completed master's degree, all of which is to be used, may be applied toward a doctoral degree regardless of age, if approved by the department/program and the Graduate Dean. The total number of credit hours transferred toward the Ph.D. degree can not exceed 44 semester hours.
- (7) Credit from a professional degree program such as the M.D., D.D.S., or D.V.M. degree may be applied toward a graduate degree as transfer credit, provided that such courses carry a grade of A, B, or S and have been approved for graduate credit by the academic institution of origin.
- (8) Graduate coursework completed in doctoral granting departments at the University of Oklahoma Norman Campus will be considered as residence credit, and upon approval of the department and the Graduate Dean, may be used without limitation as credit toward a doctoral degree.
- (9) Credit hours previously counted for one doctoral degree may not be applied toward a second doctoral degree. No more than six hours of transfer thesis research credit from a completed master's degree may be applied toward a doctoral degree.
- (10) Credit by correspondence or by advanced standing examination will not apply toward a graduate degree.
- (11) Graduate coursework taken in Tulsa from the University of Oklahoma is not considered transfer credit. OSU Tulsa consists of five cooperating universities that provide undergraduate and graduate level courses as well as some degree programs. Credit taken from the other cooperating universities through OSU Tulsa is considered transfer work and must comply with the transfer policies.
- (12) All transfer coursework must be approved by the department and by the Graduate Dean. Departments with transfer rules more stringent than those listed in this section have specified them in the departmental section of the bulletin. These more stringent rules take precedence over the general rules described in this section.

4.7.2 Grade Point Average Computation

Transfer credit is considered neutral in computing the University of Oklahoma grade point average for the purpose of determining academic status, probation, and graduation.

4.7.3 Time Limits For Completing Doctoral Degree

A doctoral student who enters the OUHSC Graduate College with a bachelor's degree is expected to pass the departmental general examination within five calendar years of the student's first graduate enrollment in the department and a student who enters with a master's degree is expected to pass the departmental general examination within four calendar years of the student's first graduate enrollment in the department.

A doctoral candidate is normally expected to complete all the degree requirements within five years after admission to candidacy. Departments with shorter time limits have so indicated in the section of this Bulletin that refers specifically to their program. Extensions greater than one year need the approval of the Graduate Dean and will require that the department or program unit involved certify that the student's knowledge will be current and appropriate to the degree at the time the degree is awarded. The procedure to be used for this determination must be approved by the Graduate Dean.

Individual graduate courses, not applied toward a previous graduate degree, taken at the University of Oklahoma or at another accredited university that is to be applied toward a doctoral degree must not be more than six years old at the time of admission or readmission to the Graduate College. No more than 23 credit hours (transfer credit and resident credit) applied toward a doctoral degree can be more than nine years old at the time of graduation for students entering with a master's degree or ten years old for students entering with a bachelor's degree.

4.7.4 Responsibilities of the Graduate Department or Academic Unit

Each department or academic unit offering the doctoral degree is responsible for its graduate program. The department determines how its program shall function and how it shall exercise the powers delegated to it. These determinations shall include how many hours of course work constitute a minimum for the degree, what proportion of the work toward the degree is to be devoted to research, and the role of the dissertation. Further, each department or unit shall make its own rules regarding the time its students may spend, or work they may do, other than toward the degree itself, in classroom, laboratory, research assistance, or instruction.

Research proficiency is based in part on the development of attitudes and skills which vary considerably from one field to another. The faculty for each program is responsible for requiring that their doctoral candidates demonstrate proficiency in those skills deemed necessary for successful research performance. For example, a faculty may require its students to demonstrate the ability to read, write, or speak one or more foreign languages; to employ statistics in analyzing data; or demonstrate computer competence.

Each department or unit of the University offering the doctoral degree will decide the time and means of certifying prospective candidacy and will formally notify the Graduate College when a student has completed all the requirements to be nominated as a prospective candidate. The Graduate Dean will admit the student to candidacy.

4.8 THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Each department or program unit will establish a Departmental Advisory Committee in such a way that the related areas within the department are represented. The majority of the Committee members must be authorized to chair a doctoral committee, and the membership must be approved by the Graduate Dean. The responsibilities of this committee will be to:

- (a) Advise, encourage, and act as an advocate for students from the first day a student is in the program. This should include regularly scheduled meetings with the student through the completion of the general examination and until the dissertation advisor is selected;
- (b) Design an appropriate curriculum for each student;
- (c) Work with the student to complete and file with the Graduate College a plan of study (Report of the Doctoral Advisory Conference). This report should be filed no later than the end of the student's first year in the program. The Committee should be sure that the student understands that the program may need to be modified or additional work may be necessary, depending on the choice of the dissertation advisor and dissertation topic;
- (d) Coordinate the administration of the General Examination at the appropriate time;
- (e) Perform an annual evaluation of each student's progress toward the degree and communicate the results of the evaluation to the student and the Graduate Dean; and
- (f) Help the students select an appropriate dissertation advisor.

4.9 THE GENERAL EXAMINATION

Students should apply for the General Examination when the course work and any tools of research are almost complete, as described in the Report of the Doctoral Advisory Conference. The examination is intended to test the student's mastery of a number of related fields as well as, the student's ability to synthesize, integrate, generalize, and expand upon all knowledge gained prior to the examination. Students should expect that material included in this examination will go beyond the subject matter covered in any individual course.

The Department or program unit will develop clearly defined guidelines for the General Examination including:

- (a) When the examination will be administered within the student's outlined program;
- (b) The structure and format for the examination (must include a written portion);
- (c) The composition of the examination committee. If different from the Departmental Advisory Committee, the membership must be approved by the Graduate Dean;

(d) The procedure for evaluating the examination; and

(e) The procedure available for students to receive consultation and evaluation of their performance on the examination.

The student must apply for the examination at least two weeks before it is to be held. The student completes the application on a form available in the Graduate College office and the student and members of the General Examination Committee sign the application. The application is then examined by the Graduate Dean and is approved if it is in order.

Within one week following the completion of the General Examination, the chair of the General Examination Committee must submit to the Graduate Dean a written report signed by all members of the examination committee. The report indicates whether the student passed or failed the examination. If the student passed and upon recommendation of the examination committee, the Graduate Dean will admit the student to candidacy for the doctoral degree. If a student fails either the written or oral portion of the examination this is considered a failure and the Graduate Dean must be notified within 72 hours. A recommendation regarding dismissal or an option to be reexamined must be forwarded at this time. If the option is for re-examination, the student must make application to repeat the examination the following semester or later. The General Examination Committee may require the student to do further reading, course work, investigations, etc. The specific requirements must be stated and the proposed time for completion must be forwarded to the Graduate Dean. Failure of the General Examination for a second time will result in dismissal from the doctoral program.

When permitted by departmental policy, students who do not hold the master's degree in the doctoral discipline may apply for the master's degree if they have passed the General Examination for the doctoral degree, have met the departmental requirements for the degree, and have the recommendation of the major department. Upon approval by the Graduate Dean, the student will be awarded the appropriate master's degree. The request must be made no later than the next semester after passing the General Examination. The student must file an Admission to Candidacy form for the master's degree and pay the appropriate graduation fees. Transfer credit can only be applied once to a succeeding degree.

Students who have failed the general examination and do not hold the master's degree in the doctoral discipline may apply to take the master's comprehensive examination if they have otherwise met all of the departmental requirements for the master's degree, and have the recommendation of the major department. Courses taken prior to failing the general examination for the second time may count for no more than 50 percent of the credit hours required for a master's degree in a different discipline at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Furthermore, the courses must have been taken within six years of the student's admission to the master's degree being sought. The student must be admitted to the master's degree program and have permission from that department and the Graduate Dean to include the courses.

4.9.1 Enrollment Requirements During General Examination

A student must be enrolled for credit in at least two graduate credit hours at the University of Oklahoma in the semester the General Examination is held.

4.10 THE DOCTORAL COMMITTEE

The student's Doctoral Committee will be established by the Advisory Committee in coordination with the student and the dissertation advisor and with approval by the Graduate Dean. This committee will consist of at least five members with the majority from the department and with at least one member from outside the department. The committee must be constituted so that no more than two members do not have authority to chair doctoral committees. This committee must be appointed no later than the time that the General Examination is successfully completed. Any changes in the membership of the Doctoral Committee must be done in consultation with the student and approved by the remaining members of the Committee and the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean may exercise the prerogative of appointing an additional voting representative of the Graduate College. If the representative is appointed later than one semester prior to the time of the General Examination, he or she will serve as a non-voting member of the Committee. The functions of this committee will be to :

- (a) Guide the student in the selection of an appropriate dissertation topic and in the research design and methodology for the dissertation;
- (b) Approve the student's research plan or prospectus;
- (c) Advise and assist the student with specialty information necessary to design and complete the dissertation research project;
- (d) Perform an annual evaluation of the student's progress toward the degree and communicate the results of the evaluation to the student and the Graduate Dean;
- (e) Read and correct the drafts of the dissertation to insure that appropriate standards are met; and,
- (f) Administer the dissertation defense.

4.11 THE DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

The doctoral dissertation is the final and most important component of the series of academic experiences which culminates in the awarding of the doctoral degree. Three major functions are fulfilled by the dissertation experience: (1) it is a work of original research/scholarship that makes a contribution to existing knowledge; (2) it demonstrates the candidate's mastery of research methods and tools of the special field; and (3) it demonstrates the student's ability to address a significant intellectual problem and to arrive at a successful conclusion.

Aided by the dissertation advisor, the student should promptly select a dissertation topic. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that approval, if appropriate, has been

granted from all regulatory offices, i.e., IRB, IACUC, etc. After the General Examination, most of the student's time will be devoted to research and writing the dissertation. The student must enroll in enough hours of Research for Doctor's Dissertation (course 6980) to satisfy the requirement of the major department and to meet the minimum 90 hour requirement of the Graduate College.

4.11.1 Requirements for Enrolling in Dissertation Research

The initial enrollment in 6980 (Research for Doctoral Dissertation) must be for at least two hours and only students who have completed the General Examination and have been admitted to candidacy may enroll in 6980. Subsequently, each graduate student must maintain continuous enrollment during each semester in at least two hours of 6980 until the requirements for the degree are completed or candidacy for the degree is terminated. Enrollment in 6980 during the summer session is required if work is being done on the dissertation.

The continuous enrollment requirement will be waived for a student who is not working on the dissertation but enrolled in full-time course work. However, if dissertation work is being done a student must enroll in 6980 regardless of the number of other hours of enrollment. Exceptions to the continuous enrollment requirement will be considered on an individual basis by petition to the Graduate Dean.

The faculty advisor will determine the number of 6980 credit hours for each enrollment on the basis of the amount of faculty and University resources and services required by the individual student but each enrollment will be for two or more hours. A student working full-time on the dissertation and using University facilities must be enrolled as a full time student during regular semesters and the summer session (See Enrollment section for information on full-time enrollment requirements.) Such enrollments must be completed during the regular registration period.

An enrollment of less than full time requires the signature of the student's major department chair person as well as the faculty advisor.

A graduate student who does not comply with the above provisions, must enroll during the semester in which graduation is expected for the exact number of hours of 6980 which would have been completed with continuous enrollment. In addition, a late enrollment fee must be paid for each of those semesters. The Graduate College and the Office of Admissions and Records will determine the number of hours of 6980 in which the student must enroll in the final semester of the degree program.

4.11.2 Dissertation Reading Copy

The doctoral candidate should prepare and distribute reading copies of the dissertation to each doctoral committee member. The reading copy should be in an acceptable dissertation format and must include all figures and tables, numbered pages, and a complete bibliography. It is the responsibility of the student to assure that the dissertation format complies with the Graduate College standards as defined in the "Instructions for the Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation." When the copy has received preliminary

approval of the major professor, it should be submitted to the Graduate College along with a memorandum from the major professor indicating approval of the reading copy and listing the members of the reading committee. Reading copy deadlines are printed in the Class Schedule Bulletin for each semester. Students who wish to file an electronic dissertation must submit their reading copy as a PDF document using Adobe Acrobat (4.0). Approval to submit in this format must be indicated by the major professor in a memorandum.

The Graduate Dean will direct the committee to read and determine whether the dissertation demonstrates the student's discipline. They may accept or reject it. If they reject it, the student will be given another opportunity to submit an acceptable dissertation to the committee and the Graduate College. If they accept it, they may require changes and corrections. When the dissertation is in an acceptable format to the Graduate College and a degree check indicates the student has completed all course work with acceptable grades, the student may schedule the final oral examination.

4.11.3 Final Oral Examination-Dissertation Defense

The final oral examination is a defense of the dissertation and is open to the public. At least 10 days before the defense, the candidate must submit to the Graduate College an *Announcement for the Final Exam* and a double spaced abstract of no more than 350 words.

The student must be enrolled in at least two hours the semester he/she is to take the final oral examination. *Authority for the Defense of the Doctoral Dissertation* and other forms are mailed to the student's major professor before the final oral exam. All members of the committee must sign the form and signify whether the examination was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. At least four members of the doctoral committee, including the major professor and outside member, must be present to conduct the examination. Any changes in the doctoral committee must be approved by the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean may exercise a prerogative and appoint an observer for the Graduate College who would not be a voting member.

The results of the dissertation defense must be reported to the Graduate College within 72 hours. A unanimous report from the doctoral committee is expected; however, on occasion some dissenting reports are received. If one member dissents, the dissent is recognized as a minority report. If two members of the doctoral committee dissent, a minority report must be filed and the Graduate Dean will investigate and make the final decision. If more than two members vote unsatisfactory, the defense is judged to be a failure. Only one attempt is granted in defending the dissertation. If the defense is determined to be unsatisfactory (failure), the decision is final and the defense cannot be repeated. Furthermore, the student will be dropped from the rolls of the Graduate College and candidacy for the doctoral degree will terminate.

Nothing herein shall prohibit such a student from reapplying for admission to the Graduate College and if readmitted, pursuing a doctoral degree in some other major field so long as the student satisfies all necessary degree requirements under the rules and

regulations of the admitting department, Graduate College and University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

4.11.4 Depositing a Dissertation in the Library

Students may elect to submit their dissertation in electronic format or cotton bond paper. Students submitting electronically must submit two copies of the PDF document on two CD-ROM's or disks and a paper copy of the dissertation signature page containing original signatures of the Dissertation Committee. All other students must submit three final copies of the dissertation on 100 percent cotton bond paper with original signatures of the committee. The dissertation must be delivered to the Graduate College within 60 days of the final defense. If all is in order, the copies of the dissertation are given to the student to be deposited with the library.

If a student fails to do this, the results of the defense will be set aside and the student must present to the Graduate College a new reading copy of the dissertation that received preliminary approval of the major professor. When the doctoral committee accepts this new reading copy, the student can then schedule the final oral examination, which shall constitute the defense of the dissertation.

It is essential that all doctoral candidates make themselves responsible for the complete and accurate collation of their dissertations before turning them in to the Library. Students are also reminded that if they are utilizing copyrighted material in the dissertation, they must obtain permission from the holder of the copyright for such reproduction; without such permission, the author of the dissertation is liable to prosecution once the dissertation has been made a published document.

4.12 GRADUATION DEADLINES

The date of graduation for each term shall be the last day of final examination in the fall, the date of commencement in the spring, and the last day of classes in the summer. To entitle a student to graduate as of that date, all work required for the degree (this includes the depositing the thesis/dissertation in the library and payment of tuition and fees) must be completed satisfactorily prior to the first day of classes of the next semester or summer session. It is the student's responsibility to make sure all degree requirements have been met. If the student has not completed all the requirements, the student will become a graduate the following semester.

4.13 DIPLOMA AND FEES

During the candidate's last semester, the candidate must file an official Application for Graduation, pay a graduation fee, and pay all tuition and fee charges before the degree will be conferred and a diploma issued. Doctoral students must also pay a microfilm fee at this time. The student who plans to participate in the commencement ceremony must pay a cap and gown rental fee.

4.14 CHECKLIST FOR DOCTORAL DEGREE

	No later than the end of the first year of graduate study, submit an <i>Advisory</i>
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	Conference Report to the Graduate College.
	When nearing completion of course work and research tools, file an Application for the General Examination in the Graduate College. The student must apply for the General Examination at least 2 weeks before the exam is held.
	Within one week after the General Examination is completed, a report signed by the entire committee must be submitted to the Graduate Dean. The report indicates satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance.
	Establish the Doctoral Committee no later than the time the General Examination is successfully completed.
	Enroll in a minimum of two credit hours of 6980 each semester following your initial enrollment. (consult the Continuous Enrollment Requirement Section for detailed information).
	Prepare and distribute a reading copy of your dissertation to each committee member and the Graduate College. The reading copy deadlines are printed in the class schedule.
	Arrange with the members of the Doctoral Committee the date, hour, and place of the Final Oral Examination. Submit to the Graduate College an announcement and an abstract.
	Within 72 hours after the defense, submit the report form with the results signed by all committee members to the Graduate College.
	Within 60 days after passing the dissertation defense, submit your dissertation to the Graduate College (Deadlines to graduate in a specific semester are listed in the Graduation Deadline section of the Bulletin).