

**ACADEMIC POLICIES
FOR
THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM**

Guidelines and Procedures

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL**

2008-2009 Academic Year

The *Guidelines & Procedures* contains many of the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures of the PhD program, as established by the department faculty and by the actions of the Administrative Board of the Graduate School. Each student should become familiar with the material pertaining to his or her degree program, and, together with a faculty advisor, make certain that the selected plan of study complies with the pertinent requirements. The most current Guidelines and Procedures manual is posted on the HPAA departmental Web site (<http://www.sph.unc.edu/hpaa/academic/doctoral.htm>). Students are responsible for being aware of the current policies.

In instances of discrepancy between these guidelines and the Graduate School Handbook, the Graduate School Handbook takes precedence.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Doctoral Program Governance | 1 |
| Director of the PhD Program..... | 1 |
| Advisory Committee | 1 |
| Graduate School Handbook..... | 1 |
| Degree Requirements | |
| Overview | 1 |
| Core Competencies | 2 |
| Prerequisites | 2 |
| Course Requirements | 2 |
| Health Services Research/Research Methods | 2 |
| Analytical Methods | 3 |
| Professional Development | 3 |
| Minor Area/Health Policy Elective | 3 |
| Health Policy Requirement..... | 3 |
| Structure of the Program | 4 |
| Table: Achieving Core Competencies through Required Courses..... | 5 |
| Minor Areas..... | 6 |
| Decision Sciences..... | 6 |
| Economics..... | 6 |
| Epidemiology..... | 6 |
| Finance | 6 |
| Health Politics and Policy | 6 |
| Quality and Access | 7 |
| Sociology and Organizational Studies | 7 |
| Earning Degrees from Other Departments | 7 |
| Teaching | 7 |
| Shadowing | 8 |
| Writing Skills..... | 8 |
| Dissertation | 8 |
| Three-paper Dissertation Option..... | 8 |
| Required Examinations | 9 |
| Comprehensive Written Examinations | 9 |
| Dissertation Proposal Defense..... | 10 |
| Dissertation Defense (Final Oral Examination) | 11 |
| HPAA 994 (Doctoral Dissertation Hours)..... | 11 |
| Advisor and Dissertation Committee | |
| Advisor | 11 |
| Structure of the Dissertation Committee | 12 |
| Operation of the Dissertation Committee | 12 |
| Transfer of Credits, Registration, and Time Limits | |
| Transfer of Credit | 12 |
| Registration | 13 |
| Time Limit..... | 13 |

Funding and Research Environment

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Funding | 13 |
| Affiliations..... | 13 |
| UNC-CH Campus..... | 13 |
| Duke University | 14 |
| Research Triangle..... | 14 |
| Health Economics | 14 |
| Student Offices..... | 14 |
| Student Awards..... | 15 |

Ethics, Institutional Review Board, and HIPAA

| | |
|--|----|
| Ethics and Honor Code | 15 |
| Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Research Involving Human Subjects | 15 |
| Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)..... | 15 |
| Dissertation Research..... | 16 |

Forms

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| Required Forms | 16 |
| Additional Forms | 18 |

Appendices

| | |
|---|----|
| Appendix 1: PhD Program Checklist..... | 19 |
| Appendix 2: Annual Progress Report (for students in HPA 994 | 20 |
| Appendix 3: Performance Standards for PhD Advisors and Students | 21 |

Doctoral Program Governance

All responsibility for the academic conduct, standards, and requirements of the doctoral program rests with the faculty of the Department through its duly appointed and elected officers and representatives, in accordance with other school and university policies.

Director of the PhD Program

The Director of the PhD Program is responsible for all administrative affairs of the PhD program, including administration of academic conduct, standards, and requirements. In addition, the Director is responsible for recommending admissions and financial support, assigning advisors to incoming students, approving the PhD committee chair and members, advising PhD committees on the interpretation of policies and requirements, ruling on all petitions in accordance with School of Public Health and Graduate School guidelines, and fulfilling any other administrative duties or responsibilities delegated by the Department Chair.

Advisory Committee

The PhD Advisory Committee includes one representative for each existing minor, 2-3 student representatives, and alumni. This committee will advise the Chair with regard to all issues related to the PhD Program (e.g., admissions, curriculum).

Graduate School Handbook

Additional information on the governance of and regulations for doctoral study are contained in the Graduate School Handbook, published each year by the Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with its contents, and comply with, rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and deadlines. The core regulations have been incorporated in part in these Guidelines and Procedures, but additional, essential regulations are given only in the Graduate School Handbook. In instances of discrepancy between these Guidelines and Procedures and the Graduate School Handbook, the Graduate School Handbook takes precedence.

Degree Requirements

Overview

The PhD program in Health Policy and Administration is designed to provide students with the competencies, academic foundation and research experience to become independent and creative health services/health policy researchers. All students take required courses in health services research, research design, quantitative methods, and health policy. In addition, students develop expertise in a minor area. Current minors include decision sciences, economics, epidemiology, finance, health policy and politics, quality and access, and sociology and organization studies. Students must pass a written comprehensive examination upon completion of course work, then present and defend a dissertation proposal and the final dissertation based on original research. The PhD program is designed to be completed in four years.

Core Competencies

The curriculum is designed to provide students with the following core competencies necessary for a career in health services/health policy research:

1. Understand critical issues related to health policy in the United States
2. Develop expertise in a substantive area (a minor)
3. Review and synthesize a body of research literature
4. Identify and appropriately apply theoretical knowledge and conceptual models in support of health services/health policy research
5. Develop hypotheses that can be tested in a research project
6. Select appropriate research designs and methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) for health services/health policy research
7. Understand and appropriately apply analytical strategies used in health services/health policy research
8. Identify the ethical implications of research methods
9. Interpret and explain the results of research
10. Critically evaluate articles from scholarly journals and research presentations
11. Write articles for submission to scholarly journals
12. Understand the grant writing process and write grant proposals
13. Make oral presentations to scientific audiences
14. Participate in teaching a course in health policy or health administration
15. Explain research to various audiences (e.g., policymakers, health care professionals, general public, journalists).

Prerequisites

A master's degree, or equivalent experience, is required. Students must have a strong background in statistics, linear (matrix) algebra, calculus, and computer programming. Students who need to review this material must take HPAA 470 (Statistical Methods for Health Policy and Administration) during their first semester. This course is designed to prepare students for the subsequent required analytical methods courses. The other two prerequisite courses are Evolution, Organization and Financing of the U.S. Health System (HPAA 564), and Principles of Epidemiology (EPID 600 or equivalent). Although these courses (or their equivalents) should be taken prior to admission, students can take the prerequisites during the first two years but credits earned will not count towards the required 41 credit hours. The prerequisites must be taken before the written comprehensive examination.

Course Requirements

A total of 41 credit hours of course work, excluding credits for prerequisites and the dissertation (minimum of six credits), is required for the degree. The PhD Program Checklist (Appendix 1) is intended to help students insure that they have completed all requirements. Students must register as full-time students (at least nine credit hours) during the fall and spring semesters of the first and second years. The required courses, grouped by category, are:

Health Services Research/Research Methods [9 credit hours]

- HPAA 870: Seminar on Health Services and Policy Research (3 credits)
- HPAA 885: Methods in Health Services Research (3 credits)
- HPAA 886: Qualitative Research Methods (3 credits)

Analytical Methods [9 credit hours]

- HPAA 881: Linear Regression Models (3 credits)
- HPAA 882: Analysis of Panel Data (3 credits)
- HPAA 883: Analysis of Categorical Data (3 credits)

Professional Development [5 credit hours]

- HPAA 871: Seminar in Teaching Health Policy and Administration (1 credit)
- ¹HPAA 994: Developing Proposals for Health Services and Policy Research (3 credits)
- ²HPAA 873: Research Seminar in Health Policy and Administration (1 credit per semester for first year students)
- ²HPAA 874: Advanced Research Seminar in Health Policy and Administration (1 credit per semester for second year students)

¹Students will register for this course under HPAA 994 (Dissertation Hours). This course will not count towards the 41 hours required for graduation

²HPAA 873 and HPAA 874 are Core Departmental Seminars. First year students will receive one credit per semester for HPAA 873, and second year students will receive one credit per semester for HPAA 874. **Notably, all students are strongly encouraged to participate throughout their training.**

Minor Area/Health Policy Elective [18 credit hours]

In addition to the requirements above, all students must take an additional 18 credit hours that include both the requirements for their minor area (typically five 3-credit courses—see section on minors) plus one 3-hour health policy elective (described below).

Health Policy Requirement

PhD students must take at least one course that provides an understanding of one or more of the following general areas: (1) health policy development (including how and why health policies are made); (2) the content of health policy that addresses a particular public health issue; and/or (3) frameworks for understanding or making health policy choices. Although critical for the development of health policy and health policy research, this requirement cannot be fulfilled with courses that primarily focus on understanding research methods or statistics. Rather, for this requirement, policy is defined as a purposive course of actions (e.g., programs, regulations, services management practices) set by government or organizations (e.g., hospitals, insurance companies) that deal with health-related concerns. Relevant courses may be offered in HPAA or through various Departments at UNC or other universities. For some students, this requirement may be fulfilled by a course taken as part of the minor requirement. The decision of whether a particular course is appropriate should be made by the student's advisor, who may consult with faculty on the PhD Advisory Committee. Some suggested courses are listed on our Web site.

Structure of the Program

Students take courses on a full-time basis for two years (a typical schedule is presented below), after which they take comprehensive examinations in the spring of their second year. In the fall of Year 3, students take Developing Proposals for Health Services and Policy Research. This course should be used by students to develop their dissertation proposal. The student's dissertation chair will work closely with the student in this course. The Department expects most students to defend their dissertation proposals during their third year, which will enhance the possibility of completing the PhD in four years. Occasionally, students may feel that they are ready to write their proposal during the fall of their second year. With the approval of the dissertation advisor and Director of the PhD Program, these students may request to take HPAA 872 in the fall of their second year. We wish to emphasize that this would be a highly unusual situation.

| Fall, Year 1 | Spring, Year 1 | Fall, Year 2 | Spring, Year 2 | Fall, Year 3 |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| HPAA 470 HPAA 870 | HPAA 881 HPAA 885 | HPAA 882 HPAA 886 | HPAA 883 | HPAA 994 |
| HPAA 873 HPAA 874 | HPAA 873 HPAA 874 | HPAA 873 HPAA 874 | HPAA 873 HPAA 874 | |
| Minor | Minor | Minor | Minor | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HPAA 470, HPAA 564 and EPID 600 are prerequisites for which students may place out; students who must take these courses will do so in the semester that best fits their schedules. • HPAA 873 and HPAA 874 are core Departmental seminars. First year students will receive one credit per semester for HPAA 873, and second year students will receive one credit per semester for HPAA 874. Notably, all students are strongly encouraged to participate throughout their training. • HPAA 871 (Seminar in Teaching Health Policy and Administration) will be taken in the semester the student is a Teaching Assistant. | | | | |

Table: Achieving Core Competencies through Required Courses

| Competency | Course Number | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|-----|-----|-----|---------------|
| | 870 | 885 | 886 | 881 | 882 | 883 | 872 J | 873 | 874 | 871 | Minor Courses |
| Understand critical issues related to health policy in the United States | X | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Develop expertise in a substantive area (a minor) | | | | | | | | | | | X |
| Review and synthesize a body of research literature | | X | | | | | | | | | X |
| Identify and appropriately apply theoretical knowledge and conceptual models in support of health services/health policy research | X | | | | | | X | | | | X |
| Develop hypotheses that can be tested in a research project | X | X | X | | | | X | | | | X |
| Select appropriate research designs and methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) for health services/health policy research | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X |
| Understand and appropriately apply analytical strategies used in health services/health policy research | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X | | X |
| Identify the ethical implications of research methods | | X | X | | | | X | X | X | | |
| Interpret and explain the results of research | X | | | X | X | X | X | | X | | X |
| Critically evaluate articles from scholarly journals and research presentations | X | | | X | X | X | X | X | X | | X |
| Write articles for submission to scholarly journals | | | | X | X | X | | | X | | X |
| Understand the grant writing process and write grant proposals | | | | | | | X | | | | |
| Make oral presentations to scientific audiences | | | | | | | | X | X | | |
| Participate in teaching a course in health policy or health administration | | | | | | | | | | X | |
| Explain your research to various audiences (e.g., policymakers, health care professionals, general public, journalists) | | | | | | | | | X | | X |

Minor Areas

The minor area may be either disciplinary (e.g., economics, epidemiology, finance, health politics and policy, sociology and organizational studies) or interdisciplinary (e.g., decision science, quality and access). Minors may not be a topic or disease (e.g., aging, AIDS, child health). Students who want to minor in areas other those listed above must get approval from the Director of the PhD Program. Students must register for at least 15 credit hours in their minor area, and at least one course must be in theory. A list of faculty and more in-depth information on each minor can be found at our Web site (<http://www.sph.unc.edu/hpaa/academic/doctoral.htm>).

Decision Sciences: The HPAA minor in Decision Sciences is an interdisciplinary program that prepares PhD students to focus on policy issues and methods in analyzing potential benefits, harms, and costs of health technologies and interventions. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the minor, students must take HPAA 772 and four other courses from at least three departments (including Health Policy and Administration).

Economics: The economics minor has three required courses: ECON 710, either ECON 850 or ECON 357 (taught at Duke), and ECON 356 (taught at Duke), plus two electives. In addition, virtually all students will need to take ECON 700, a prerequisite for ECON 710 to refresh their math skills. ECON 700 begins in early August.

Epidemiology: The epidemiology minor has two required courses: EPID 710 (4 credits) and EPID 715 (5 credits). EPID 705 is a pre-requisite for EPID 715, but does not count toward completion of the minor. Two additional three-credit courses, not including EPID 600 or independent study, are required to complete the 15-credit hour requirement. EPID 705 waitlists non-major so students should sign up early (in April for EPID 705); students should enroll directly in EPID 710, section 002. Students must complete a Graduate School Minor Declaration form in epidemiology before registering for EPID 705. Ideally, to gain the best position on the waiting list, this activity should be done as soon as the student commits to attend UNC. See Nancy Colvin, Assistant to the Chair for Graduate Studies, (966-7459; ncolvin@unc.edu) or Carmen Woody (966-7458; Carmen_Woody@unc.edu) for the requisite form.

Finance: The financial management minor has three required courses and two electives. Required courses include ECON 700 Basic Quantitative Techniques (3 hours); ECON 710 Advanced Microeconomic Theory (3 hours); and BUSI 881 Theory of Financial Management II (3 hours). In addition, students must select two or more accounting and / or finance courses offered by the Kenan-Flagler School of Business or the Fuqua School of Business at Duke. In order to assure adequate preparation for these courses, students admitted to the healthcare financial management minor usually have completed courses in finance, microeconomics, and calculus.

Health Politics and Policy: The health politics and policy minor introduces students to theories and practices of policymaking, policy analysis, and political science, with the goal of understanding how and why governments and private institutions create and change health policy. Students explore a wide range of issues in health politics and policy, including health care reform, evaluation of public programs, and developments in private insurance. Students are encouraged to concentrate their coursework on political behavior, public opinion, political communication, political psychology, or other aspects of political science that particularly affect health policy. Students may take courses that will fulfill this

requirement in several departments or schools other than Political Science, including Public Policy, Journalism and Mass Communication, or Sociology.

Quality and Access: Access to, and quality of health care in the United States are often the focus of important health policy discussions at the local, state, and national levels. The HPAA minor in Quality and Access is an interdisciplinary program that prepares PhD students to obtain the substantive, methodological and statistical skills required to conduct research in this area. HPAA 762 (Quality of Care) is required of all students who minor in quality and access. In addition, students must take courses from at least three departments (including Health Policy and Administration).

Sociology and Organizational Studies: The sociology and organizational studies minor offers several foci including organizational, community, national and global studies; gender and race, demography, medical sociology, stratification, and labor markets. All students minoring in sociology and organizational studies are required to take a graduate level course in sociological theory (SOC1 700 or its equivalent) and a Doctoral Seminar in Organization Theory and Health Services Research Organizations- (HPAA 930). Students who focus on organizational studies must also take SOC1 860 and BUSI 851. Other electives may be taken to meet the credit hour requirement. Students interested in other foci can consult with faculty within the minor.

Earning Degrees from Other Departments

Although taking courses and having minors in other Departments is required for our PhD Program, earning a graduate degree from another department is **strongly discouraged**. A second degree rarely benefits the student beyond what can be achieved through a minor. Beyond the extra time that is required, students pursuing a second degree must formally matriculate in the other department for a minimum of two semesters. While enrolled in another department, the student would **not** be in HPAA; thus, HPAA would not provide financial support (i.e., tuition, stipend). If you nevertheless consider this option, HPAA requires approval from the student's adviser, PhD Program Director, and Department Chair **in advance of applying to another department**.

Teaching

A core competency of the PhD Program is to prepare students to be effective classroom teachers. To fulfill this competency, students must complete HPAA 871 and be a paid teaching assistant (TA) at some point during their training. HPAA 871 is a 1-credit hour seminar that PhD students take during their first semester as a TA. The seminar is designed to: (1) facilitate the development of a contract identifying mutual expectations for the TA and course instructor; (2) help prepare students to develop and deliver a lecture (or equivalent activity) in the course for which they are a TA--giving this lecture is required for TAs (as is the faculty member providing feedback to the TA) and is intended to provide students with the skills and confidence to be effective teachers; (3) identify and resolve common TA issues using a key incidents/discussion approach; and (4) identify resources on campus (e.g., Center for Teaching and Learning) or the internet to aid students achieve their TA and long-term teaching goals. Students who wish to teach their own course may be encouraged by their advisor to take EDUC 757, which is designed specifically to provide graduate students with the skills to plan all aspects of a course of their choosing.

Shadowing

Many PhD students have little exposure to venues relevant to their research. Thus, we have established the opportunity for students to have a formal shadowing experience with a preceptor (e.g., clinician, policy analyst, senior manager). Benefits to the students include:

- Gaining an appreciation of a venue relevant to the dissertation (and subsequent research)
- Formulating a research question with greater policy and/or management relevance
- Learning to work with preceptors from different disciplines
- Establishing a relationship with a preceptor who may serve on the dissertation committee

Parameters of the shadowing experience are as follows:

- The shadowing experience is optional. Students do not receive academic credit and should not feel pressured to participate.
- This is not intended to be a one-time visit to a specific venue. Rather, it should be a sustained experience. The precise structure and time commitment will be established by the student, the students' advisor, and the preceptor.
- It is likely that the shadowing experience will occur either during the summer after students' first year or after completion of comprehensive examinations.

Students interested in this opportunity should begin by speaking to their advisor. If the advisor cannot identify a relevant preceptor, the PhD Program Director can help.

Writing Skills

Learning to write for scientific audience, including your dissertation, requires skills that differ from other types of writing. Several resources are available at UNC to assist students at no cost. The Writing Center (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/>) offers individual tutorials, either in person or on line. This is an outstanding resource for all students. The Writing Center also provides a listing of resources specifically for English as Second Language (ESL) students (<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/esl.html>). The International Scholar and Student Services Office (<http://oisss.unc.edu/resources/esl.html>) offers several classes through the English department, the Graduate School and the Writing Center itself intended to assist ESL students in acclimating to academic life in the U.S.

Dissertation

Each PhD student is required to write and defend a dissertation based on original research of a high scholarly standard that makes a significant contribution to knowledge in the field of health policy and administration. Students typically defend their dissertation proposal during the third year, and defend their final dissertation during the fourth year. The format of the dissertation should adhere to the guidelines specified in *A Guide to Theses and Dissertations* published by the Graduate School. **Notably, all dissertations must be submitted electronically.**

Three-paper Dissertation Option

Description: Students have the option of writing the dissertation in the form of three papers. The three-paper dissertation option has the benefit of directing the student's effort towards the ultimate goal of publishing. However, this option generally requires more effort than a traditional dissertation.

Approval: The three-paper dissertation option must be approved by the dissertation committee and the Director of the Doctoral Program. Typically, this approval is given when the proposal is defended. As students develop their research, they may decide that the three-paper dissertation option is not practical. Under such conditions, students may, with the approval of their committee, return to the traditional dissertation. Similarly students who initially chose a traditional dissertation may change to the three-paper option with permission of their dissertation committee.

Content: In general, the final dissertation will have five chapters:

- Chapter 1: An introduction describing the problem that the student proposes to study. This chapter would include the theoretical framework and literature review.
- Chapters 2-4: One manuscript per chapter.
- Chapter 5: A discussion that integrates all of the research. This chapter will include limitations of the study and future directions.

Defense: The defense will be identical to that of a traditional dissertation. At the defense, the student will indicate the targeted, peer-reviewed journal for each manuscript. A successful defense requires that all committee members believe that each paper will be ready to submit to the identified journal after the suggestions made by the committee are incorporated.

Required Examinations

A doctoral student must pass a written comprehensive exam, an oral defense of the dissertation proposal, and an oral defense of the dissertation. All examinations are given under the University Honor Code.

Comprehensive Written Examination: The comprehensive exam is a written exam administered by the Director of the PhD Program. It is given once per year during a one-week period after spring semester. Students may take the comprehensive exam only after completing all prerequisite and required courses, other than being a TA as part of HPAA 871, HPAA 873, or HPAA 874. Under no circumstance will the comprehensive exam be scheduled on a special basis. The comprehensive exam consists of three parts:

1. Health Services/Research Methods: HPAA 870, HPAA 885, HPAA 886.
2. Analytical Methods: HPAA 881, HPAA 883, HPAA 883
3. Minor Area (including Health Policy Elective).

Each part is scheduled for a different day (*e.g.*, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday), typically in late May or early June. Students will receive the exam at the beginning of the day and return their completed exam at a designated time before the end of the day. No part will extend overnight. The exam will be written by a committee of at least three full-time graduate faculty from the Department, the Director of the PhD Program, and representatives from each minor area. Students are expected to identify faculty who will write questions for their minor area. Questions in the two non-minor areas will be common for all students. Faculty writing the comprehensive exam will specify the number of hours available (up to a maximum of eight hours), as well as page limitations, whether the exam is on-site or take-home, open- or closed-book, typewritten or handwritten.

The grading policy for PhD written comprehensive exams in HPAA is as follows. The comprehensive exam will be graded blind by the faculty who wrote the exam. The exams are given one of three grades: **pass**, **incomplete**, and **fail**.

- **Pass** indicates that the student has sufficient command of the content to continue with graduate studies and write a dissertation.
- **Incomplete** indicates that the student is deficient in one or more areas included on the examination. The committee will make recommendations for correcting these deficiencies. These recommendations can vary depending on the nature of the deficiency, and might include any or all of the following: completing an independent study; successfully completing formal course(s) for credit; clarifying their answers in writing; or providing oral clarification.
- **Fail** indicates that the student must retake the comprehensive exam. Because comprehensive exams are offered only once per year, students who fail the exam must wait until the following spring to retake the examination.

A student who does not satisfactorily complete the recommended activities for removing a deficiency within the allotted time, or fails to pass the exam, will have a failure recorded with the Graduate School. A second failure to pass the examination leads automatically to the student's ineligibility to continue in the Program.

The outcome of the examination is reported to the student through a personal letter from the Director of the Doctoral Program and is made a part of the student's personal record. The final result of the written examination process described above will be reported as a **pass** or **fail** to the Graduate School using the *Report of the Doctoral Written Examination*.

Dissertation Proposal Defense: During an oral examination, the student must present to the dissertation committee a written research proposal for the dissertation. Although its format can vary, the organization, length, and level of methodological sophistication should resemble an R01 grant proposal. The student is expected to consult with committee members as the proposal is being developed.

Before defending the dissertation proposal, the student must have completed all required courses, other than being a TA as part of HPAA 871, HPAA 873, and HPAA 874 and passed the written comprehensive exam. The student must be registered at the time of the defense, even if it is summer. The dissertation proposal must be defended in a meeting of the student's doctoral committee and is part of the oral examination. The dissertation committee has full responsibility for examining the doctoral proposal and evaluating performance on the oral examination. A pass will be based on the presentation of an acceptable proposal and on the demonstration of a satisfactory level of knowledge in the subject matter of the dissertation and related areas. The committee may decide to approve the proposal as presented, conditionally approve it subject to specified minor revision, or require that the student make major revisions and stand again for the qualifying oral examination. The committee may require additional course work. The results of the exam are reported to the Graduate School. The student must receive a passing grade from a majority of the members of the dissertation committee. A student who chooses to pursue dissertation research on a different topic must defend a new proposal before the doctoral committee. Students who pass the oral examination are eligible to be admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree upon formal written application to the Graduate School. IRB approval is required.

Dissertation Defense (Final Oral Examination): The student must defend the dissertation in an oral examination open to all members of the faculty, students, and the public. The dissertation committee has full responsibility for reviewing the completed dissertation, and deciding whether the PhD degree is to be awarded. The dissertation defense is held only after all members of the dissertation committee have had an adequate amount of time to review a draft of the dissertation. The dissertation must be in final form prior to the final defense. This implies that all pages, references, and appendices are in place and that a thoughtful discussion has been completed. Substantive changes in the document should be minimal after the defense. It is the responsibility of the chair of the dissertation committee to announce to the graduate faculty and students of the department the date and time of this final oral examination. The first portion of the defense, in which the candidate presents the research and responds to questions, is open. Following this open meeting, the committee meets in a closed session. The committee may require revisions to the dissertation. The student must be registered for a minimum of three credit hours in HPAA 994 during the semester in which the final oral exam is held, even if it is summer.

HPAA 994 (Doctoral Dissertation Hours): PhD students who have completed their comprehensive examinations should enroll in HPAA 994 and should remain continuously enrolled in HPAA 994 until they complete their PhD; these hours do not count towards the 41 required for graduation. During the semester in which they take “Developing Proposals for Health Services and Policy Research”, they will receive a grade from the instructor teaching that course. Otherwise, their dissertation advisor will be the Instructor for HPAA 994. Students who make satisfactory progress towards completing their dissertation will receive a temporary grade of S from the instructor of record. To assess progress, students enrolled in HPAA 994 must complete an annual progress report with their advisor (See Appendix 2). Once they have successfully passed their dissertation, students will receive a permanent grade (either P or H) for HPAA 994.

Advisor and Dissertation Committee

Advisor

Faculty advising is one of the most important factors to students’ successfully completing their doctoral studies. The faculty advisor serves in a number of roles including academic advisor, research mentor, career advisor, and professional colleague. Because advising is so important, the Department has developed performance standards for PhD advisors and students (Appendix 3).

Students are admitted to the program only if a faculty member with similar research interests agrees to advise the student. Each admitted student is assigned a faculty advisor for the first two years. The initial faculty advisor does not necessarily become the chair of the dissertation committee. There are many factors that contribute to an effective relationship between faculty advisors and students, not all of which can be determined in advance. Because the initial assignment may not prove to be the best for the student, faculty advisors can be changed at any time (including the first two years). The Department has a “no-fault” policy—when such a change is made, it does not reflect negatively on either the student or the advisor. When a change in advisor is made, a *Change of Advisor Request* form must be completed and submitted to the Department’s registrar. Please note that faculty advisors must have a doctoral degree, be regular members of the Graduate Faculty, and have a full faculty appointment in HPAA.

Structure of the Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee usually consists of a chair and four other members. The committee must be approved by the committee chair and the Director of the PhD Program (and also by the Director of the Doctoral Program in Pharmacy, if in the collaborative PhD program). The dissertation committee must be appointed prior to the dissertation proposal defense. After forming a committee, the student must complete the *Report of Doctoral Committee Composition* form, and then submit the form to the Graduate School through the HPAA Registrar's office for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School. If there is a change in the committee, this form must be resubmitted. The Dissertation Committee as a whole must have:

- at least five members (more are allowed, but strongly discouraged)
- a strict majority be members of the Graduate Faculty (e.g., 3 of 5, 4 of 6)
- a strict majority be members with their primary appointment in HPAA
- each committee member must have a doctoral degree
- at least one member represent the minor area.

The Dissertation Chair must:

- have a doctoral degree
- be a faculty member (either tenured, tenure track, or non-tenure track) with his or her primary appointment in HPAA.

Committee members who are not at UNC must be appointed to the Graduate School for the duration of the dissertation work. To do this, students must submit the individual's CV to HPAA Registrar's Office. Notably, this process may take up to six weeks, and it is the student's responsibility to initiate this process.

Operation of the Dissertation Committee

Students should stay in close contact with their advisor throughout the entire dissertation process. As soon as possible after their proposal defense, students should circulate a document to all committee members that: (1) summarizes issues raised and their resolution; (2) describes the roles of individual committee members prior to the final defense; and (3) discusses authorship issues, if this is the appropriate time. Once all committee members concur, that document will serve to clarify the committee's expectations regarding the dissertation. After this document is accepted by all committee members, students are expected to regularly (at least once per semester) inform all committee members about their progress, even when progress is slow. This may be done via mail, meetings, or less formal conversations. Students are also responsible for notifying committee members when there are substantive changes in their dissertation (e.g., conceptual model, research design, analysis). Students should consider using each committee member differently, relying on the strengths that each member brings to the team.

Transfer of Credits, Registration, and Time Limits

Transfer of Credit

Although students may transfer credits from relevant graduate courses from approved institutions or from other graduate programs within this institution, this is rarely done. A maximum of 22 credits (half the total credits required for graduation) may be transferred. Transfer of credit must be approved by the Director of the PhD Program, and transferred credits will not be included in the residence credit calculation.

Registration

Students must be continuously registered in the fall and spring semesters unless a formal leave of absence is requested and granted. This rule applies even after all course work has been completed. Students must register in the summer only if they are taking courses, defending their dissertation proposal or final dissertation, or are otherwise engaged in academic activity that requires faculty involvement. Registration for the prior term will cover events that occur during a break between semesters. Failure to register will compromise academic status within the Department and will result in the need to apply for readmission. A consequence for international students includes loss of visa status and deportation. Failure to register will also prevent employment as a research assistant, teaching assistant, or graduate assistant anywhere on the UNC campus, disqualify a student from health insurance eligibility, and force student loans to become due.

Time Limit

All requirements for the degree must be completed within eight years from the date of first registration in the Graduate School. Only under extenuating circumstances can an extension of the time limit be granted, upon petition to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Funding and Research Environment

Funding

Doctoral students receive funding from a variety of sources. HPAA typically grants PhD students full financial support (including stipend, tuition, and health insurance) for at least the first two years of study through department research and teaching assistantships, federal traineeships, and Graduate School awards. (This support is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress and availability of sufficient funds.) Most students work with faculty on research projects, for experience and income. Our students have been extremely successful in winning dissertation funding from the federal government and UNC research centers. The following is a brief list of types of funding.

- Research Assistantship with faculty, paid by faculty grants or HPAA
- Teaching Assistantship, required
- Graduate School Fellowships and Minority Fellowships
- Collaborative PhD Program funding
- Dissertation funding from UNC research centers
- Dissertation funding from federal government agencies
- International awards
- Local employers (e.g., contract research organizations, consulting firms)
- Student loans available through the UNC Office of Scholarships and Student Aid

Affiliations

HPAA has strong affiliations that benefit students in their courses, dissertations, funding, and research experience. These include:

UNC-CH Campus: On campus, HPAA has close ties with researchers at the Schools of Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry, and Business, as well as at various Departments across campus. Several research centers also provide important resources for graduate students, including funding, office space, computing facilities, seminars, data, and help writing grants. These research centers include the Sheps Center for Health Services Research www.shepscenter.unc.edu, the Carolina Population Center www.cpc.unc.edu (demography

and international studies), the Institute on Aging www.aging.unc.edu, the Lineberger Cancer Center cancer.med.unc.edu/, the Odum Institute for Research in Social Sciences www.irss.unc.edu, and the University Center for International Studies www.unc.edu/depts/ucis.

Duke University: UNC's close geographical proximity to Duke University facilitates many joint research projects, and allows students to take courses at Duke via inter-institutional registration. The Robertson Scholars Program provides express buses (<http://www.robertsonscholars.org/index.php?type=static&source=68>) that run between UNC and Duke campuses during the fall and spring semesters. The express bus has allowed students, researchers, faculty and staff to take advantage of the resources at both universities. PhD students may enroll in courses at Duke University without incurring extra tuition.

Research Triangle: In recent years the Research Triangle area (Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill) has become one of the leading health research areas in the nation. Faculty and students also frequently collaborate with researchers at local research organizations such as RTI International (RTI) www.rti.org, Family Health International www.fhi.org, GlaxoSmithKline www.gsk.org, Quintiles, Medical Review of North Carolina, American Institutes for Research, US Environmental Protection Agency, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

Health Economics: There is a strong and rapidly growing group of health economists in the Triangle in addition to the health economists in HPAA. The Triangle Health Economics Seminar, jointly sponsored by HPAA, draws faculty and students from UNC, Duke, RTI, North Carolina State, and UNC-Greensboro. The UNC economics department www.unc.edu/depts/econ/ offers health economics as a field, headed by John Akin (Department Chair) and Donna Gilleskie (1999 winner of the Arrow Award for the best paper in health economics). The Duke Economics Department includes Frank Sloan (Director of the Center for Health Policy, Law and Management www.hpolicy.duke.edu) and Henry Grabowski (Director of the Program in Pharmaceuticals and Health Economics). Several other health economists are found in Duke's Sanford Institute of Public Policy www.pubpol.duke.edu. RTI also employs many health economists www.rti.org/units/ssid/cer/healthecon.cfm.

Student Offices

Two offices (1103A, 1103B) equipped with computers are reserved for PhD students to conduct research. Each PhD student will be given a key that will open either of the two offices. Rooms 1102E and 1106 (Career Services Area) offer space to all HPAA students (Bachelors, Masters, and Doctoral). Although these offices do not have computers, McGavran Greenberg offers a wireless environment. The School of Public Health computer room on the second floor of Rosenau Hall is open to all students.

Student Awards

Each year HPAA awards the Jean G. Yates Award to the outstanding HPAA doctoral student, and the Harry T. Phillips Award for outstanding teaching by a doctoral student.

| Year | Jean G. Yates Doctoral Award | Harry T. Phillips Award for Outstanding Teaching by a Doctoral Student |
|------|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1997 | Michelle Mayer | |
| 1998 | Glen Mays | Simone Cummings |
| 1999 | Kathleen Dalton | Ying-Chun Li |
| 2000 | Courtney Van Houtven | Laurie Goldsmith |
| 2001 | Laurie Goldsmith and Zhimei Liu | Deokhee Yi |
| 2002 | Jessica Lee | Scott Stewart |
| 2003 | Tamara Hodlewsky | Bill Carpenter |
| 2004 | Bill Carpenter and Melanie Wasserman | Rachel DiSantostefano |
| 2005 | Asheley Skinner | John Staley and Julie Siebert |
| 2006 | Jeongyoung Park | Asheley Skinner and Virginia Wang |
| 2007 | Elizabeth Wiley | Young Do |
| 2008 | Bhavna Talekar Pahel | Leah Masselink |

Ethics, Institutional Review Board, and HIPAA

Ethics and Honor Code

The *Policies and Procedures* chapter of the Graduate School Handbook contains detailed information about amorous relationships, illegal drugs, ethics, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Honor Code, non-discrimination, racial and sexual harassment, and the alcohol policy.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Research Involving Human Subjects

The Office of Human Research Ethics (<http://www.ohre.unc.edu>) must review all research involving human subjects (including dissertations). Students must submit to the IRB, even if they believe that their research may be exempt as defined for certain human subjects research by the Code of Federal Regulations. *Only* the IRB can determine whether research is exempt.

It is essential to receive approval prior to beginning research. Approval will not be given retroactively for any research and most journals will not accept manuscripts on research that has not received approval. **Working as a research assistant under a faculty member's IRB-approved research does not exempt students from seeking separate IRB approval for their dissertation research, even if related to that project.**

Early in the first semester, students should obtain training from an approved ethics training course. The Office of Human Research Ethics (<http://www.ohre.unc.edu>) provides instructions about how to obtain ethics training and certification. After completing the online course, print a copy of the certificate of completion and keep it in a safe place (e.g., student's permanent file in the department).

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

HIPAA, which regulates the exchange of health information that is often critical to research, became law in 1996. HIPAA privacy regulations do not replace existing human research participant protections. Rather, HIPAA presents additional requirements. The regulations apply to personal, health and demographic information in the records of health care providers, health

plans and health care clearinghouses (so-called "covered entities)" which include the UNC Health Care System, School of Medicine and other health care providers such as private clinics and hospitals. These entities will refuse to share health records without demonstrated HIPAA conformity, such as a patient's signed authorization or a waiver of authorization from the researcher's IRB. All researchers should know the HIPAA regulations. Online training is available at <http://www.unc.edu/hipaa/>.

For questions about the HIPAA, the IRB process or how to complete particular aspects of the application, please review the IRB web site (<http://ohre.unc.edu>).

Dissertation Research

The length of the IRB approval process depends on the type of dissertation research. For example, approval of secondary data analysis or a study involving minimal risk to human subjects may be approved relatively quickly (e.g., within a week or two). Approval for collecting sensitive data about human subjects may require several revisions before IRB approval is granted (e.g., 1-2 months). Therefore, plan ahead so that the research is not delayed. In general, the process is:

1. Complete the proposal—either immediately after successfully defending the proposal, or after it is in relatively final form. If significant modifications are made to the proposal, then IRB approval of the modification is required.
2. Submit completed IRB forms with the advisor's and department Chair's signatures and the proposal. Include the proper number of copies and follow all instructions to the letter.

Forms

Required Forms

There are a number of forms that must be completed and submitted to the Graduate School during the doctoral program. All required forms are available from the HPAA Student Services Office. Students should check with the Student Services Staff to ensure that the appropriate forms are filed on their behalf and at the appropriate times. **ALL FORMS SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE HPAA STUDENT SERVICES OFFICE. STUDENTS SHOULD NEVER SUBMIT ANY FORM DIRECTLY TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL.**

1. *Curriculum Vitae (Filed by February 1 of each year)*: Students must provide a copy of their current curriculum vitae to their advisor and to the PhD Program Director. The curriculum vitae should describe students' research, teaching, and service activities. Having this form on file is essential for assigning students' activities (research/teaching assistantships), identifying potential funding sources, and making decisions about student awards.
2. *Report of Preliminary Doctoral Written Examination—Part I: Doctoral Exam Report Form (Filed after taking written comprehensive exams)*: This form reports the results of the written comprehensive exam and is filed regardless of whether the outcome of the examination is a pass or fail. The Director of the PhD Program is responsible for filing this form for PhD students.

| | Report | Filed after | Responsible party |
|---|---|---|--------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Curriculum vitae</i> | Each year | Student |
| 2 | <i>Preliminary Doctoral Written Examination</i> | Taking written comprehensive exams | Program Director |
| 3 | <i>Doctoral Committee Composition</i> <i>Note: When applicable, students are responsible for submitting forms to have non-UNC faculty appointed to the Graduate School to serve on their committees.</i> | Assembling a dissertation committee | Student |
| 4 | <i>Approved Dissertation Project</i> | Defending the dissertation proposal (first oral examination) | Student |
| 5 | <i>Oral Examination</i> | Defending the dissertation proposal (first oral examination) | Committee Chair |
| 6 | <i>IRB Approval (Initial and Annual, if Required)</i> | Receiving IRB approval | Student |
| 7 | <i>Application for Graduation</i> | Completing all requirements (except dissertation defense), about 3 months before graduation | Student |
| 8 | <i>Final Oral Examination</i> | Defending the final dissertation | Committee Chair |

3. *Report of Doctoral Committee Composition—Part I: Report of Doctoral Committee Composition & Report of Approved Dissertation Project (Filed after assembling a dissertation committee):* The doctoral dissertation committee must be approved by the Director of the PhD Program, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the Graduate School. The student is responsible for filing this form with the HPAA Student Services Office.
4. *Report of Approved Dissertation Project—Part II: Report of Doctoral Committee Composition & Report of Approved Dissertation Project (Filed after defending the dissertation proposal—first oral examination):* The dissertation committee signs this form indicating approval of the proposed dissertation project. The working title of the dissertation is filed with the Graduate School. The student is responsible for filing this form with the HPAA Student Services Office..
5. *Report of Oral Examination—Part II: Doctoral Exam Report Form (Filed after defending the dissertation proposal—first oral examination):* This form reports the results of the dissertation proposal defense, and is filed regardless of whether the student passes or fails the examination. The Graduate School does not consider a student to have passed the oral examination, and therefore to be eligible for doctoral candidacy, until it receives this report. The dissertation committee chair is responsible for filing this form.
6. *IRB Approval (Filed after receiving final approval from the IRB):* See section on IRB. If your research receives approval, you will need to submit the project for review annually. Please provide copies of renewed approvals to your faculty advisor and the Student Services Office.

7. *Application for Graduation* (**Filed after completing all requirements except dissertation defense, about 3 months before graduation—please check University calendar for the exact filing date**): Degrees are awarded three times a year; May, August, and December. A student who expects to finish soon must notify the department and the Graduate School of their intention to graduate by submitting an application for graduation on a specific date. In order to have the degree awarded at the desired time, all degree requirements must be completed (except the dissertation defense) no later than the deadline specified in the University Registrar's Calendar (2nd Friday in October for December graduation; 2nd Friday in February for May graduation; 2nd Friday in June for August graduation.) for the relevant commencement. The Graduate School cannot make exceptions to this rule. The student is responsible for filing this form.
8. *Report of the Final Oral Examination—Part III: Doctoral Exam Report Form* (**Filed after defending the final dissertation**): The final oral examination takes place at the time of the dissertation defense. The dissertation committee chair is responsible for filing this form.

Additional Forms

- *Change of Advisor Request*: This form is filed whenever the student requests a change in either advisor or committee member.
- *Application for Admission to Candidacy for a Doctoral Degree* (**Optional: for students who are “all but dissertation”**): A student who has completed all course work, passed the comprehensive exam, and defended the dissertation proposal may submit an application for a Certificate of Candidacy.
- *UNC General Alumni Association Personal Data Summary for Graduate Degree Candidates, a Survey of Earned Doctorates*: Filed when the student delivers the final copy of the approved dissertation to the Graduate School.
- *University Microfilms' Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form*: Filed when the student delivers the final copy of the approved dissertation to the Graduate School.

PhD Checklist

| <i>Requirement</i> | | _____ | | |
|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------|---|
| | | <i>Student's Name</i> | | |
| <i>Course Number</i> | <i>Course Title</i> | <i>Semester(s) Completed</i> | <i>Credits</i> | <i>Pertinent notes: all substitutions and exemptions.</i> |
| Prerequisites¹ | | | | |
| HPAA 470 | Statistical Methods for Health Policy and Administration | | 3 | |
| HPAA 564 | Health Care in the United States: Administrative and Policy Issues | | 3 | |
| EPID 600 | Principles of Epidemiology | | 3 | |
| HSR/HSR Methods | | | | |
| HPAA 870 | Seminar on Health Services and Policy Research | | 3 | |
| HPAA 885 | Methods in Health Services Research | | 3 | |
| HPAA 886 | Qualitative Research Methods | | 3 | |
| Analytical Methods | | | | |
| HPAA 881 | Linear Regression Models | | 3 | |
| HPAA 882 | Analysis of Panel Data | | 3 | |
| HPAA 883 | Analysis of Categorical Data | | 3 | |
| Minor Requirements | All students must take an 18 credit hours that include both the requirements for their minor area (typically five 3-credit courses—see section on minors) plus one 3-hour health policy elective (described below). Specific courses vary with the students' interests. _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ | _____ | 18 | |
| Minor | | _____ | | |
| | | _____ | | |
| | | _____ | | |
| | | _____ | | |
| | | _____ | | |
| Professional Development¹ | | | | |
| HPAA 871 | Seminar in Teaching Health Policy and Administration Date served as Teaching Assistant | | 1 | |
| HPAA 994 | Developing Proposals for Health Services and Policy Research | | 3 | |
| HPAA 873 | Research Seminar in Health Policy and Administration | | 2 | |
| HPAA 874 | Advanced Research Seminar in Health Policy and Administration | | 2 | |
| Dissertation Hours | | | | |
| HPAA 994 | Doctoral Dissertation Hours (Does not count towards 41 hours) | | Variable | |
| Total Credit Hours (Minimum of 41 Hours, not Including Dissertation Hours) | | | | |
| | | Date passed/completed | | |
| Comprehensive exam (Doctoral Exam Report Form Part I) | | | | |
| Dissertation Proposal Defense (Doctoral Exam Report Form Part II) | | | | |
| Final Dissertation Defense (Doctoral Exam Report Form Part III) | | | | |
| ¹ Neither prerequisites nor HPAA 994 (Doctoral Dissertation Hours) count towards the required 41 credit hours. HPAA 871 is taken during the semester in which the student is a teaching assistant. All students are required to take <u>both</u> HPAA 873 and HPAA 874 for 2 semesters each (1 credit hour/semester). | | | | |

**Annual Progress Report for Students Enrolled in Dissertation Hours
HPAA 994**

Name: _____ Advisor: _____
Year Entered PhD Program: _____

Please provide a copy of the signed progress report to the Registrar and PhD Program Director by June 30. Faculty are encouraged to make comments on the back of this form.

If you have not defended your dissertation proposal:

Please describe your progress during past year and anticipated date of proposal defense.

If you have defended your dissertation proposal:

Date passed: _____
Committee Members: _____

Please describe your progress during the past year, goals for the next year, and anticipated timeline for completion. Also, please attach the abstract from your dissertation proposal; if your topic has changed substantially, please attach a revised abstract.

Other Activities:

Please describe teaching and other research activities (including manuscripts and publications).

Signature of Faculty Advisor: _____

_____ Date

Signature of Student: _____

_____ Date

Department of Health Policy and Administration
Performance Standards for PhD Advisors and Students

Advisor Performance Standards

Advisors are responsible for helping their students with critical aspects of their students' development, including: selecting courses; offering career advice; developing professional skills; identifying research and funding opportunities; preparing manuscripts and grants; encouraging progress on the dissertation (including helping prepare for their proposal and dissertation defenses); networking with investigators (both locally and nationally); and searching for jobs. With this in mind, specific performance standards include:

- Hold regular meetings with each advisee (in-person or by phone): at least twice/semester while students are enrolled in courses full-time; more frequently after comprehensive examinations, when students begin work on their dissertation.
- Hold additional meetings requested by students, as reasonable and appropriate in a timely fashion.
- Discuss expectations for students and faculty
- Provide timely feedback (usually within 2-3 weeks) on draft manuscripts and dissertation chapters.
- Review graduation check list annually.
- Sign off on formal progress reports for students in HPAA 994 (Doctoral Dissertation Hours) annually.

Students' Performance Standards:

Students are responsible for consulting with the advisor about their dissertation; regularly updating the advisor about their progress in the PhD program; and informing the advisor of any personal or professional situations that may affect their progress (e.g., jobs, teaching activities, non-HPAA degrees, funding received). With this in mind, specific performance standards include:

- Participate in regular meetings with his/her advisor (as described above).
- Provide an updated copy of their CV to the advisor and the Director of the PhD Program annually.
- Satisfy all IRB requirements and remain current on all required research training.
- Insure that they are meeting all Departmental and Graduate School requirements (e.g., forms, documents) by completing the graduation check list and reviewing it with their advisor annually.
- Provide the advisor with their final paper in HPAA 872 (Developing Proposals for Health Services and Health Policy Research), as well as comments from the instructor.
- Provide the PhD committee with sufficient time to read thoughtfully and comment on their dissertation proposal (at least 2 weeks in advance of proposal defense) or dissertation (at least one month in advance of the final dissertation defense).