



University of Michigan School of Public Health

Office of Academic Affairs: Registrar's Office

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Requirements for the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) Degree

Draft prepared by the SPH Curricular Committee

The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) degree is administered and awarded by the School of Public Health (SPH) as a professional degree. The DrPH is oriented towards applied research in various areas of Public Health rather than in basic research. The DrPH is often appropriate for students who already hold other professional degrees.

The requirements for the DrPH described here apply to students in all Departments of the School of Public Health. Individual departments may have further requirements in addition to those described here.

It is the student's responsibility to see that all departmental (and/or program) and School requirements are fulfilled.

The SPH requirements for the Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) are patterned after those of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies requirements for the Ph.D. (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html) The following are modifications of the Rackham doctoral guidelines applicable for administering DrPH degrees through the University of Michigan School of Public Health. In most respects, the SPH requirements are similar to Rackham's. Notable exceptions are the absence of cognate course requirements for the DrPH degree and the requirement of an MPH degree or equivalent degree for admission.

The following summarizes the requirements for the DrPH degree and are grouped below in five sections indicative of the progress toward the DrPH: admission to a DrPH program, general requirements, pre-candidacy requirements, candidacy requirements, and the conferral of the DrPH degree.

I. Admission to a DrPH Program:

In order to be admitted to a DrPH program in the School of Public Health, the student must:

- A. Demonstrate evidence of capacity to undertake work for a doctoral degree.

- B. Have an MPH or equivalent degree. The assessment of equivalency of the degree is made by the department or program to which the student applies, with the concurrence of the Dean.

II. General Requirements for DrPH

A. Previous Academic Experience.

If not already fulfilled, the student must fulfill the Requirements of Public Health (RIPH) as defined by the School at the time of admission. A copy of the current RIPH Guidelines for the MPH degree are available in the Office of Academic Affairs. An MPH from a school accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health will fulfill the RIPH requirement.

B. Doctoral Fee Requirements (School of Public Health Fee Total-SPHFT)

In order to be recommend for Candidacy or to receive the doctoral degree, each doctoral student enrolled in the School of Public Health must accumulate a minimum number of credits, for which SPH fees have been assessed, These accumulated credits are call the School of Public Health Fee Total (SPHFT). Since tuition is assessed for no more than nine credit hours in a full term (five in a half term), no more than nine credits may be counted toward a full term (five in a half term), regardless of the number of academic hours elected.

Each DrPH student enrolled in the School of Public Health must have an MPH or equivalent degree and must accumulate at least fifty (50) SPHFT beyond the latter degree, consisting of course and dissertation work. At least 18 SPHFT must be accumulated prior to admission to Candidacy.

Undergraduate and visited courses which are approved for graduate credit and taken as a School of Public Health student generated fee hours, but free courses elected with Candidacy enrollment do not (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html). Pre-Candidate dissertation enrollment (course number 990) will be counted toward the Pre-Candidacy fee hour minimum and will count toward the overall fee hour requirement. Candidate dissertation enrollment (course number 995) will count toward the overall fee hour requirement.

III. Pre-Candidacy Requirements

The SPH Candidacy Requirements are the same as those of Rackham policies, except that there are no cognate course requirements for the DrPH. The Pre-Candidacy requirements are outlined below:

A. Admission

A student must be regularly admitted to the doctoral program in which the degree is sought (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html). Applicants who satisfy all admission requirements of the PSH and the department or program or specialization to which they have applied will be granted regular admission. The SPH requires official transcripts be submitted which indicate the award of degrees from all colleges, graduate and professional schools attended.

B. Residency Requirements

Students seeking to earn the DrPH degree must complete at least eighteen (18) SPHFT on the Ann Arbor Campus. Although individual departments and programs may vary, the School will not require that these campus credits be concentrated in a minimum number of terms. OJ/OC (On Job on Campus) program enrollment is considered to be on the Ann Arbor Campus for residence requirements. Courses elected for visitor status and 990 or 995 will **NOT** be used to fulfill the residence requirement.

C. Time Limits for Degree

A student should achieve Candidacy with four (4) years from the date of first enrollment in the School of Public Health degree program and must complete all doctoral work with seven (7) years from the date of first enrollment in the DrPH degree program. A student who exceeds the maximum time limit, or who needs additional time beyond the expected term of completion should:

1. Get a petition form from the Office of Academic Affairs
2. Communicate with the dissertation committee chair and/or the graduate chair and obtain a written statement from them indicating strong support for the requested extension.
3. Submit a petition to the Director of Academic Affairs requesting an extension of the time limit (petition form). The petition should specify the amount of work that remains to be completed for the degree and should also specify the month and year that he/she plans to defend the dissertation. The decision will be communicated to the student, the chair of the committee, and the department chair.

D. Preliminary Examinations

Preliminary Examinations must be completed successfully before the student will be admitted to Candidacy for the DrPH. Some departments or

programs require a qualifying examination prior to the preliminary examination. Check with your department or program concerning the qualifying exam. Following the completion of course work required in the doctoral program, students will take the preliminary examinations as specified by their department in their major fields of specialization to test their knowledge of each primary field and all supporting fields. Students must be registered for the term during which they take the preliminary examination, or otherwise be eligible for campus privileges.

1. Eligibility for Campus Privileges.

Students must be enrolled to be eligible to receive faculty consultation, to use the library, computing, and laboratory facilities, or to prepare for and take preliminary examinations required for the DrPH program (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html). Students who are not actively enrolled (example; during summer session) may occasionally be eligible for receiving these services if they were enrolled full-time during the academic year as follows:

- a) Nine-month campus privileges. Students who register full time in the Fall and Winter Terms have use of the services listed above for the month of May as well.
- b) Twelve-month campus privileges. Students who register full time in the Fall and Winter Terms *and* in one of the half terms (Spring or Summer) have use of all services listed above for a twelve-month or full-year period ending one week before Fall Term classes begin. Students wishing to confirm their eligibility should check with the Office of Academic Affairs.
- c) Library privileges. In order to borrow books from University Library, students must be registered and currently enrolled. Doctoral candidates who are not currently enrolled, but who have completed all University requirements except the dissertation may have borrowing privileges in the University Library for a period of up to one year from their most recent enrollment or until receipt of their degree, whichever ever comes first. To extend borrowing privileges, a form must be completed and returned to the Circulation Services (104 Hatcher North). Borrowing privileges can be extended up to one year from the end of the last term registered.

E. Additional Program Requirements

Additional requirements which may be specified by the department (contact department or program office for specific requirements) of specialization include the following:

1. Cognate course
2. Residence during particular terms
3. Work experience
4. Qualifying examination-often required at the end of the first year of post-baccalaureate study or intermediate in graduate study toward a doctorate: *and*
5. Research paper or essay-often attendant to the process of preliminary examinations before recommendation to the status of Candidate

F. Use of Human Subjects in Pre-Candidacy or Candidacy Doctoral Research

Federal regulations and University policy require that all investigations using human beings as subjects of research must be reviewed and approved by an appropriately constituted faculty committee charged with this responsibility BEFORE such investigations may begin. Students should call the Division of Research Development and Administration (DRDA) at 764-7242, to contact the appropriate DRDA representative regarding information about the particular committee to which they should apply for review. No dissertation resting on or involving the use of human subjects can be accepted without such review and approval.

The critical element in determining the necessity for such review and approval is not the investigative technique, but the role of the person(s) being investigated. A voluntary respondent to a questionnaire, even if such a respondent is anonymous from the outset, is not less a human subject than a patient in medical research involving the administration of a variety of chemotherapeutic substances. The doctoral student, by assuming the role of investigator, casts respondents, interviewees and all others being investigated into the role of human subjects.

It is the student's responsibility to see that all human subject regulations are met.

G. Admission to Candidacy

The normal time limit to achieve Candidacy is four (4) years from the date of first enrollment in the DrPH program. A doctoral student may be admitted to Candidacy by the School of Public Health for the following term upon the written recommendation of his or her program, if all requirements will be completed before the first day of classes of that term.

- a. The Candidacy Recommendation Form

This form documents all of the pre-candidate requirements necessary for advancing to candidacy. This form is available from the SPH Registrar's Office and must be completed and returned to the SPH Registrar when the student has completed all pre-candidate requirements, including a research proposal. The written recommendation must be received at the SPH Registrar's office *at least 14 days before the last day of classes in the term preceding the term for which Candidacy is requested*. A schedule of deadline dates for the submission of recommendations is available through the SPH Registrar's Office. Upon successful completion of the above steps, the Chair of the Preliminary Examination Committee will notify the Chair of the department who will request that the SPH Registrar advance the student to candidacy.

b. Candidate Certificate

This certificate will be issued when it is determined that the student has completed all requirements for the doctorate except the dissertation, has met the minimum fee requirements and has been approved for subsequent dissertation work. The Candidacy Certificate is a statement of prior accomplishments, not of status in a program. It will not lapse, and imposes neither limitations of time, nor conditions under which a dissertation may be prepared. The Certificate does not imply Candidacy standing for an intermediate period since active Candidacy depends upon tangible progress toward completion of a student's program.

It is the student's responsibility to see that all requirements are met

IV. Candidacy Regulations

A. Appointment of Dissertation Committee

After achieving candidacy, and with advice of the chair, a student should form the dissertation committee. A Dissertation Committee is nominated by the chair of the Candidate's department or interdepartmental program and appointed by the Associate Dean of Curriculum and Academic Affairs. *This committee must be formally established well in advance of the defense*. The department submits the DrPH Dissertation Committee Nomination form to the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs. If the committee membership changes, the procedure described above must be repeated. It is the student's responsibility to keep members of the Dissertation Committee informed of the progress each semester on the dissertation research.

The doctoral dissertation committee must consist of a minimum of four members. At least two members must be from the student's home department (or interdepartmental program). Each committee must have:

1. A chair or two co-chairs
2. A member chosen from outside the Department who is a regular Graduate Faculty member, who is familiar with the standards for doctoral research and who, preferably, holds an appointment in a collateral or related field; and
3. Include a minimum of three (3) regular members of the Graduate Faculty

Please note:

For purposes of service on Dissertation Committees, a regular member of the Graduate Faculty is defined as any person holding an unmodified appointment (Not adjunct or visiting etc.) at the University of Michigan as a Professor, Associate Professor or Assistant Professor with an earned doctorate from an accredited institution (see website at

www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html)

Provisions can be made for special membership on the Dissertation Committees. University faculty and staff not falling in any of the classes outlined above or qualified people outside the University of Michigan whose service on the dissertation would contribute significantly may be nominated for special membership (see website at

www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html)

B. Function of the Dissertation Committee

The Dissertation Committee is charged with the supervision of the Candidate's dissertation activities. The entire committee is intended to be a resource upon which the Candidate may draw throughout the dissertation-oriented research. All members of the Committee must read the dissertation and return their written evaluations on the Dissertation Evaluation Form. (see Appendix I), to the Office of the Associate Dean for Curriculum and Academic Affairs two working days before the scheduled defense. At least four members of the Committee must be present for the oral defense of the dissertation and certify that the student has satisfactorily passed the oral examination and produced a dissertation satisfactory to the Committee in every way. Should there be a disagreement over the acceptability of the dissertation the Associate Dean will consult with members of the Dissertation Committee and will act as the final arbiter.

C. Minimum Fees

Each Candidate must accumulate the required School of Public Health Fee Total (See Section II-2)

D. Registration

All students must be registered for any term during which they draw University services, including faculty consultation and guidance in research (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html). Candidates who register must elect the Candidacy enrollment, which consist of eight (8) hours of course 995 in full term or four (4) hours of course 995 in a half term.

E. Augmented Candidacy

(“Free” course for enrolled Candidates.) Candidates may “bank” the “free” course that they can elect with their Candidacy enrollment (See 4d below). In addition to the Candidacy enrollment (995), a Candidate may elect one course per full term without payment of additional fees. The augmented Candidate policy is administered as follows.

1. A candidate may elect this “free” course concurrent with either a full term or half term 995 enrollment. No more than one free course may be taken during one spring-summer period (i.e., one free course for either spring, spring-summer or summer term). Each free course must be tied to a concurrent 995 enrollment.
2. This privilege applies to courses elected for credit or visit.
3. This privilege applies to any course regardless of its level or credit hours.
4. A Candidate who does not elect a “Free” course during a term of 995 enrollment may “bank” that course entitlement and elect two free courses during a subsequent term of 995 enrollment.
 - a) No more than one course may be “banked” at any given time and, therefore, no more than two “free” courses may be elected in any term
 - b) A “banked” course must be tied to a concurrent 995 enrollment.
 - c) Course may not be elected in anticipation of future “banking” In other words, a Candidate may not elect two “free courses in one term planning to take one the following term.

- d) Students taking a “banked” course initially will be assessed tuition for the course, The fee adjustment will be made after the records are audited.
- e) With the exception of a “banked” course, if a Candidate elects more than one course in addition to Candidacy enrollment, he/she will be assessed the appropriate fee per credit hour for that course and any additional course.

F. Defense of Dissertation

The defense of the dissertation (that is, the final oral examination) must be held under a full term Candidacy enrollment. If a student is enrolled and does not complete all degree requirements by the final deadline of a particular term, and if the following full term enrollment is not needed to accumulate fee units the student may finish under the grace period without enrolling again, If the final Grace Period (same as used by Rackham) deadline is not met, the student must register and pay tuition for an eight hour enrollment in the term the final degree requirements are completed, Do not schedule the defense of the dissertation late in the Grace Period, as this usually does not permit adequate time for revisions that are often called for after the defense. The degree will be awarded during the appropriate subsequent term. Specific deadlines are available in the Registrar’s Office.

G. Format Requirements

The School requires that dissertations and dissertation abstracts be published. The dissertation abstract should not exceed 300 words. Most students meet this requirement by publication in University Microfilms. The format regulations are listed in the Rackham Dissertation Handbook (see website at www.rackham.umich.edu/StudentInfo/Publications/GSH/html/doctoral.html)

The student must prepare final copies of the dissertation following the format guidelines of the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies and the satisfaction of the Dissertation Committee. The student must provide one unbound copy (for microfilming) and two bound copies of the dissertation, one for the school and one for the department.

H. Dissertation Evaluation and Scheduling of Oral Exam

The student must schedule the final oral defense at a time when the required members of the Dissertation Committee can participate in the examination. The dissertation must be distributed 2-3 weeks in advance of the scheduled exam to allow Dissertation Committee members time to evaluate the work. The Dissertation Evaluation Form

should accompany the Dissertation at the time it is given to the committee members for evaluation. The completed evaluation forms are due in the Offices of the Associate Dean for curriculum at least two (2) working days before the final exam is scheduled. The Associate Dean will examine the completed Dissertation Evaluation Forms., If the work is considered unsatisfactory by two or more members of the Dissertation Committee, the defense may be canceled by the Associate Dean and rescheduled at a later time, If a decision is made that the exam should not take place as scheduled, the Associate Dean will communicate the information to the Dissertation chair (or co-chairs) and to the student. Should there be disagreement among the Dissertation Committee members over the acceptability of the dissertation and/or the quality of the final defense the Associate Dean will consult with members of the Dissertation Committee and will act as the final arbiter.

A checklist of the requirements for submitting your dissertation is available in the SPH Registrar's Office.

V. Conferral of Degree

After successful completion of the above steps, the doctoral committee will recommend the candidate, through the Chair of the Department, to the Dean for award of the DrPH degree.