

# Rehabilitation Science PhD Program

# Student Handbook

2024-2025

[www.rehabsci.phhp.ufl.edu](http://www.rehabsci.phhp.ufl.edu)



College of Public Health  
and Health Professions

*Rehabilitation Science*

UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

# Rehabilitation Science PhD Program

## Program Administration

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## Table of Contents

<b>Rehabilitation Science PhD Program</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
Program Administration .....	ii
<b>Program Overview</b> .....	<b>v</b>
Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy: .....	vi
Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism .....	vi
A note to international students:.....	vi
<b>Rehabilitation Science PhD Student Milestones</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>I. How to Use this Manual</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Rehabilitation Science Program: <i>Introduction &amp; Rationale</i></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>III. Rehabilitation Science Program: <i>Mission Statement</i></b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>IV. Student Mentors and the Rehabilitation Science Student Organization</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>V. Expectation of the faculty mentor</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>VI. Yearly Evaluations</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>VII. Travel Awards</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>VIII. Degree Progression and Monitoring</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Initial Advisor/Mentor/Chair of Supervisory Committee .....	3
Formation of the Supervisory Committee .....	3
Special appointments to supervisory committee .....	3
Changes to the supervisory committee .....	4
Adding a Graduate Minor.....	4
Qualifying Exam .....	5
Dissertation Proposal.....	6
Admission to Candidacy .....	7
Dissertation.....	7
Publication Requirement.....	8
Monitoring of Progress towards the Degree .....	8
Enrollment Requirement .....	8
Residential Program Requirement .....	8
Courses and Credits .....	8
<b>IX. Course Requirements</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Courses related to Rehabilitation Science Application (10 credits).....	9
Courses related to Rehabilitation Science teaching (6 credits) .....	10
Courses related to Research Methods and Statistics (13 credits) .....	10
Research Courses (31 credits) .....	11
Communication and Swallowing Sciences and Disorders (CSSD) Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits) .....	12
Disability, Health, and Participation Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits).....	13
Neuromuscular Plasticity Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits) .....	14
RSD 6920: Rehabilitation Science Journal Clubs .....	15
Public Health Requirement .....	15
Elective Course Work (12 credits).....	16
Maximum Enrollment .....	16
Clinical and Translational Science Interdisciplinary Concentration.....	16
PhD Program Example Course Sequence .....	17
<b>X. Previous Graduate Study and Credit Transfer</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>XI. Minor in Rehabilitation Science</b> .....	<b>18</b>

<b>XIII. Registration .....</b>	<b>19</b>
Course Registration Form .....	19
Registration Deadlines.....	19
Students on paid appointments:.....	19
Final term registration: .....	19
Grades.....	19
<b>XIV. Student Resources .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Computer Requirements.....	20
Graduate Student Council.....	20
Student Grievance Procedure.....	20
Additional Resources:.....	21
<b>XV. Responsible Conduct of Research.....</b>	<b>22</b>
Fraud.....	22
Plagiarism.....	22
Cheating.....	23
Abuses of Confidentiality .....	23
Conflict of Interest.....	24
HIPAA & Privacy: General Awareness.....	24
Health Information Confidentiality Statement .....	25
Blood Borne Pathogens.....	25
FERPA .....	25
<b>XVI. Exit Survey and Alumni.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix A .....</b>	<b>27</b>
Typical RSD Student Path .....	28
<b>Appendix B .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Program & University Forms.....	30
Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form .....	31
Course Registration Form.....	31
Supervisory Committee Form .....	31
Graduate Credit Transfer Form.....	31
Admission to Candidacy Paperwork .....	31
Degree Application .....	31
Dissertation Checklist .....	32
Transmittal Letter.....	32
Final Exam Form .....	32
Publishing Agreement.....	32
Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Signature Page .....	32
<b>Appendix C .....</b>	<b>33</b>
Qualifying Exam Guidelines.....	33
<b>Appendix D .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Dissertation Proposal Guidelines .....	38
<b>Appendix E.....</b>	<b>42</b>
Dissertation Defense Guidelines.....	42

## Program Overview

Welcome to the University of Florida's [Rehabilitation Science PhD](#) program. We are pleased you have chosen to join our program.

The program embraces a broad view of the field of Rehabilitation Science and has faculty and students working in a wide range of disciplines. While the program has required course work dependent on your chosen concentration, the majority of the student's coursework will be decided through consultation with the primary mentor and supervisory committee in order to tailor a course of study best suited to the student's research project and future goals. The following milestones apply to all Rehabilitation Science students and are provided to give an overview of the program structure. Note: *specific information on these milestones will be discussed later in the handbook.*

- The program requires a minimum of 90 semester credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree level
- A minimum of a 3.0 grade point average is required to be maintained by all students
- The **supervisory committee** consists of four members. With the help of the primary mentor, the student should form the supervisory committee as soon as possible after the student starts doctoral work and no later than the end of the second term of equivalent full-time study. The supervisory committee should convene at least once per year and review student progress. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form must be completed at each meeting.
- All incoming students will be assigned a "senior student" to serve as a peer mentor.
- All new students are required to attend the **program orientation** prior to the start of the fall semester.
- All students are required to attend the annual **fall social**. This serves as an opportunity to welcome our new students, meet faculty, and highlight accomplishments from the past year.
- A **qualifying exam** is required of all students. The primary mentor and supervisory committee will prepare and evaluate the exam. The qualifying exam should be completed by the end of the student's second academic year in the program. However, it must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of the student's third year.
- A **proposal of dissertation topic** and approval of the topic by the supervisory committee is required. It should be completed within 1 calendar year of the time the student passed the PhD qualifying exam. Students may complete both the qualifying exam and dissertation proposal in the same semester.
- Admission to **PhD candidacy** is based on the student's academic record, satisfactory performance on written and oral qualifying exams and approval of his/her dissertation topic. It occurs only after both the qualifying exam is passed and dissertation proposal approved.
- All students are required to complete a written **dissertation** in accordance with the guidelines of the Graduate School. This document must be presented to the supervisory committee in advance of the final PhD defense.
- The student is strongly advised to check the required deadlines for all items related to the PhD defense. These deadlines are provided by the [Graduate School](#), and are not the same from year to year.

Students are responsible for their progression in the program, this includes an awareness of policies and procedures that govern the University of Florida, the Graduate School, the College of Public Health and Health Professions, and the Rehabilitation Science program. The Program Director and Program Coordinator will regularly provide information to students via email. Students are expected to read these emails and respond, or take action, when requested. The program handbook is updated annually. Students will be informed of these updates via email. The most recent version of the [handbook](#) can be found on the Rehabilitation Science website. Finally, the [Graduate School catalog](#) contains information on the rules that govern the granting of all graduate degrees and is a useful reference tool.

As they navigate the requirements, it is common for students to have questions of their mentor, the program, and the Graduate School. The following resources are available:

- This handbook
- Your fellow students

- [The Rehabilitation Science website](#)
- [The Graduate School Catalog](#)
- [The Graduate School Student Handbook](#)
- [Counseling and Wellness Center](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
- [Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Compliance and Ethics- Title IX Compliance](#)
- [Disability Resource Center](#)
- Graduate Assistants United [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) (applies to all students on a graduate assistant appointment)

### **Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy:**

The University of Florida is committed to providing a safe educational, working, and residential environment that is free from sexual harassment or misconduct directed towards any and all members of the community. To achieve this goal, no behavior of this nature will be tolerated and, if discovered, the procedure for investigation and potential adjudication, as outlined in this policy, will be followed. Similarly, retaliation against an individual who has filed a complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment or misconduct is also against University policy and may result in disciplinary action. Students, faculty, staff, contracted workers and visitors are urged to promptly report any such behavior to the [Office for Compliance and Ethics](#).

### **Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism**

The Rehabilitation Science PhD program is committed to using our platform to advance and address issues related to equality, inclusion, diversity and social justice. We acknowledge that social injustice is real and ongoing and that actions, not words, are required. We acknowledge the leadership of the Black activists and other Black, Indigenous, and people of color, who have done so much to bring these issues to the nation's consciousness.

Our number one priority is to provide a safe and welcoming environment that champions empathy, diversity, compassion, justice, and equality. The program is committed to listening, critical self-reflection and learning so that we may be an agent of positive change.

### **A note to international students:**

The Rehabilitation Science PhD program does not qualify for the Optional Practical Training (OPT) STEM extension. The [US Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#) division of the Department of Homeland Security maintains a [list](#) of programs of study which qualify for the STEM field OPT extension. The list is based on the Department of Education's [Classification of Instructional Programs](#) (CIP) codes.

Students on an F-1 visa must maintain full-time enrollment (9 credits in the fall and spring semesters, 6 credits in the summer semester) and may only count one online/distance education/correspondence study/EDGE course (3 credit maximum) toward their full time enrollment requirement, per semester.

More detailed information is available on the UF International Center website:

<https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/f-1-student/f-1-status-requirements/maintaining-f-1-status>

International students should reach out to their international student advisor with any questions related to their visa status and compliance: <https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/f-1-student/contact-advisor>.

# Rehabilitation Science PhD Student Milestones

Please note: The student is responsible for fulfilling all requirements and meeting all deadlines

Task	When & Where
<b>New Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the required forms in the orientation packet and send to Program Coordinator</li> <li>Attend orientation sessions for the Graduate School and Program</li> <li>Complete payroll and appointment forms for Graduate Assistantship, if appropriate</li> <li>Conditionally admitted students: Review probationary language in letter of offer and comply with requirements</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> By published deadline; prior to Rehabilitation Science orientation</p> <p><b>Where:</b> As notified of location</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students are <b>required</b> by the university to complete an Individual Development Plan (IDP).</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> Within the first month of first semester; then annually reviewed and updated in June of each year</p> <p><b>Where:</b> <a href="https://internal.phphp.ufl.edu/php/idp/">https://internal.phphp.ufl.edu/php/idp/</a></p>
<b>Transfer of Credits (New &amp; Continuing Students)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contact mentor for possible approval of transfer of up to 30 credits from previous graduate degree;</li> <li>Complete <a href="#">Transfer of Credit</a> form</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> First semester of PhD program</p> <p><b>Submit to:</b> Submit completed Transfer of Credit Form and course syllabi to Program Coordinator.</p>
<b>New &amp; Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete <b>Course Registration Form</b> to register for courses</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> Each semester, by published deadline</p> <p><b>Submit to:</b> Program Coordinator</p>
<b>Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete required Public Health courses: PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health and PHC 6001: Principles of Epidemiology</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> Before admission to PhD candidacy</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Online courses offered most semesters</p>
<b>Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Review Degree Audit in One.UF</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> Each semester</p> <p><b>Where:</b> <a href="#">One.UF</a></p>
<b>Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appoint Supervisory Committee - Complete <a href="#">Supervisory Committee Form</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> No later than the end of the second term of equivalent full-time study</p> <p><b>Submit to:</b> Program Coordinator who will update information in GIMS</p>
<b>Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete annual PPHP Student Monitoring Plan</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> June of each year</p> <p><b>Where:</b> <a href="https://internal.phphp.ufl.edu/php/monitoring-plan/">https://internal.phphp.ufl.edu/php/monitoring-plan/</a></p>
<b>Continuing Students:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete PhD Qualifying Exam (Written, Oral); Review <a href="#">Qualifying Exam Guidelines</a> together with mentor prior to scheduling the exam; Contact Program Coordinator for qualifying exam paperwork two weeks prior to oral exam date.</li> </ul>	<p><b>When:</b> By the end of the second academic year</p> <p><b>Where:</b> Student should schedule a room under guidance of the mentor</p>

- Complete Dissertation Proposal; Review [Dissertation Proposal Guidelines](#) together with mentor prior to scheduling the proposal; Contact Program Coordinator for proposal paperwork two weeks ahead of proposal defense

**When:** Within 1 calendar year of qualifying exam  
**Where:** Student should schedule a room under guidance of the mentor

**Continuing Students:**

- Admission to PhD Candidacy: Requires a satisfactory academic record, satisfactory performance on written and oral qualifying exams, and approval of students dissertation topic.
- Public Health courses must be completed

**When:** Does not occur until after dissertation proposal

**Continuing Students:**

- Review guide for preparing theses and dissertations
- Download UF dissertation template
- Attend a template workshop or schedule a one-on-one appointment with the UFIT Help Desk's Thesis and Dissertation Support Center

**When:** After Qualifying Exam is completed  
**Where:** <https://it.ufl.edu/helpdesk/graduate-resources/>

**Ahead of Final Term:**

- Review graduate transcript and degree audit in [One.UF](#). Confirm program requirements have been met; ensure grades have posted correctly and there are no incompletes; verify transfer of credits as applicable.

**When:** At least one semester prior to the term you intend to graduate.  
**Where:** [One.UF](#)

**Final Term:**

- Complete your degree application in [One.UF Student < Academics < Degree/Certificate Application](#)

**When:** The term you plan to graduate by [published deadline](#) in academic calendar  
**Where:** [One.UF](#)

**Final Term:**

- First submission dissertation to the Graduate School
- Contact Program Coordinator at least one week prior to published deadline for **Transmittal Letter**

**When:** The term you plan to graduate by [published deadline](#) in academic calendar  
**Where:** [Thesis, Dissertation, and Publication](#) office  
 See [Dissertation Checklist](#) for all dissertation deadlines

**Final Term:**

- Dissertation defense; Review [Dissertation Defense Guidelines](#) with mentor.
- Contact the Program Coordinator as soon as date is scheduled (6 weeks prior to defense date)

**When:** By [published deadline](#) in academic calendar  
**Where:** As advised by mentor

See [Dissertation Checklist](#) for all dissertation deadlines

**Final Term:**

- **Submit UF Publishing Agreement**
  - Complete appropriate ProQuest publication agreement (Publication Agreement or Abstract-Only Publication Agreement)

**When:** Prior to final dissertation submission  
**Where:** [GIMS](#)



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**Final Term:**

- Submit final copy of dissertation

**When:** By [published deadline](#) in academic calendar  
**Where:** [Thesis, Dissertation, and Publication office](#)  
See [Dissertation Checklist](#) for all dissertation deadlines

**Final Term:**

- If you plan on attending commencement, notify your mentor & order your academic regalia
- Notify Program Coordinator four weeks prior to commencement of your faculty escort.

**When:** [By published deadline](#)  
**Where:** [UF Bookstore](#)

**Final Term:**

- Complete Rehabilitation Science [Exit Survey](#)
- Provide copy of updated CV and copy of dissertation to Program Coordinator
- Completed Exit Interview with Program Director

**When:** Prior to graduation  
**Where:** Various

**Final Term:**

- Return all keys issued by the Department

**When:** Prior to graduation  
**Where:** Department of issue

**Final Term:**

- [Graduation Checklist](#) for Graduating Students

**When:** By published deadlines  
**Where:** Various

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# I. How to Use this Manual

This manual has been developed to assist admitted students in meeting the requirements for the Rehabilitation Science PhD Program. We encourage all readers to refer to the [UF Graduate Catalog](#), which supersedes this manual if a conflict of information occurs. Students will be held to the terms and rules outlined in the handbook published in the academic year they begin the program.

## II. Rehabilitation Science Program: *Introduction & Rationale*

The Rehabilitation Science PhD program provides comprehensive graduate training to future rehabilitation scholars, building skills in research, teaching, and interdisciplinary teamwork. Our students take a series of core courses designed to teach the fundamentals of rehabilitation science and courses to enhance teaching skills. Following the core course sequence, each student customizes their degree with courses based on research interests in one of three concentrations: Communication and Swallowing Sciences and Disorders (CSSD), Disability, Health, and Participation (DHP), and Neuromuscular Plasticity. Upon successful completion of this 90-credit post-baccalaureate program, a student receives a PhD in Rehabilitation Science and is well-positioned for opportunities in research and higher education.

Most graduates go on to post-doctoral positions or faculty positions at major research universities. The PhD program was designed with several considerations in mind. In recent decades, life-saving medical intervention has extended the lives of the population, thereby increasing the elder population and saving the lives of individuals of all ages who, heretofore, would have succumbed to disease or injury. At the same time, these medical advances have resulted in an increased need for rehabilitation services for persons who survive but have temporary or chronic disabling conditions which interfere with their ability to function. Consequently, the demand for training of rehabilitation personnel has dramatically increased in recent decades as therapies have been needed to assist individuals recover, adjust, and adapt to health changes. The expanded role of rehabilitation personnel has increased the demand for theoretical rationale and research examination of rehabilitation outcomes and, therefore, has increased the need for PhD programs in rehabilitation science.

## III. Rehabilitation Science Program: *Mission Statement*

Our definition of **Rehabilitation Science** is adapted from the seminal 1997 report from the Institute of Medicine<sup>1</sup>. We view rehabilitation science to describe those disciplines which focus on both basic and applied aspects of health science and services, the social sciences, and engineering *as they relate to restoring human functional capacity and improving a person's interaction with the surrounding environment*. An important point of emphasis is that we believe rehabilitation science should encompass research ranging from molecular biology through population health. Thus, we embrace a wide range of disciplines, and support the view that by working together we can best advance human health.

The Rehabilitation Science PhD Program at the University of Florida follows the [mission](#) of the College of Public Health and Health Professions. Our specific mission is to educate future investigators in the area of rehabilitation science. The faculty of the program are charged with training future rehabilitation scientists who will be capable of engaging in translational research and sustaining independently funded research programs.

The Rehabilitation Science program is part of the College of Public Health and Health Professions (PHHP).

<sup>1</sup>Brandt, E. N., Pope, A. M., & Institute of Medicine (U.S.). Committee on Assessing Rehabilitation Science and Engineering. (1997). *Enabling America: assessing the role of rehabilitation science and engineering*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

## **IV. Student Mentors and the Rehabilitation Science Student Organization**

Each incoming student will be assigned a senior student who will serve as a peer mentor. This relationship is often particularly important during the initial 1-2 semesters in the program. The senior student will be responsible for scheduling a meeting during the initial weeks of the fall semester. The purpose of this meeting will be to provide a student's perspective on the program, an overview of how to successfully navigate graduate school, and to give the incoming student a chance to ask questions. Additional meetings are strongly encouraged, as needed, but are not a strict requirement.

## **V. Expectation of the faculty mentor**

This section is provided to give incoming students an idea of what can reasonably be expected from a faculty mentor. Please note that each research group or laboratory functions differently. Some mentors will meet with their students on a day-to-day basis, and other mentors may take a more "hands off" approach encouraging students to work independently from the beginning of the training program. Both approaches can be highly successful.

Some mentors are actively involved with data collection, and others are not. However, both mentoring styles can be highly effective. At a minimum, the primary mentor should:

1. Review coursework and progression towards graduation at least once per semester.
2. Meet with the student to review progress at least twice per month.
3. Work with the student to form a supervisory committee during the first year.
4. Provide extensive mentoring and guidance as the student develops a research proposal.
5. Provide detailed guidance regarding how to organize and write the PhD dissertation.
6. Provide opportunities for interactions with visiting scholars and presentation of data at local and/or national meetings.
7. Provide career guidance and advice as the student moves through the program.

In our program, the student-mentor relationship is almost always productive and successful. However, if the student has any concerns in this regard, the Program Director and Steering Committee are always available to discuss any issues that may arise.

## **VI. Yearly Evaluations**

Students are required to complete an annual [Individual Development Plan \(IDP\)](#). It should be evaluated and revised on a yearly basis. The IDP plan should be reviewed by the student and mentor, and submitted at the end of each spring semester.

In addition, students required to complete the [PHHP Student Monitoring Plan](#) at the end of each spring semester. The link for the plan will be emailed to students when the system is open. This report will provide the student an opportunity to list achievements from the previous year such as coursework completed, presentations, publications, and milestones (e.g., formation of a supervisory committee, passing qualifying exam, etc.). This report will be evaluated by the Steering Committee, and if any concerns regarding the progress towards completion of the degree are identified a meeting with the student and faculty mentor will be scheduled.

## VII. Travel Awards

The PhD program has funding available each year to support the research activities of students. A call for applications for program support to travel, attend, and present research at national and international conferences usually occurs twice a year, in the fall and spring semesters. The Rehabilitation Science steering committee will review all applications submitted. In the event there are funds remaining, applications will continue to be evaluated on a rolling basis.

Travel awards are usually \$250 though the amount can vary based on availability of funds and strength of application.

### Eligibility criteria

- 1) Student must have filled out the online [PHHP Student Monitoring Plan](#) (first year students do not need to have completed the monitoring plan to apply).
- 2) Students must have attended at least 50% of the Rehabilitation Science Seminars.
- 3) The student's mentor must have attended at least one third of the Rehabilitation Science Seminars
- 4) Significant priority will be given to students presenting data (oral presentation or poster presentation) at a national or international meeting.

### Review Criteria

1. Quality of the abstract, including:
  - i. Rationale and/or hypothesis clearly stated
  - ii. Results and conclusions clearly stated
  - iii. Preliminary/pilot study vs. completed study
2. Seniority of the student

### Application Procedure

Complete the [Travel Grant Application Cover Sheet](#) and submit to the Program Coordinator along with abstract.

## **VIII. Degree Progression and Monitoring**

### **Initial Advisor/Mentor/Chair of Supervisory Committee**

Graduate School requirements regarding composition and appointment of doctoral supervisory committees apply to the Rehabilitation Science program. The faculty advisor serves as the student's primary mentor until the supervisor committee is established. The student, in consultation with the chair of their supervisory committee, will determine appropriate faculty members for the supervisory committee.

### **Formation of the Supervisory Committee**

Students should form a supervisory committee, and have their first committee meeting, by the end of their first academic year. The initial faculty advisor/mentor typically serves as the chair of the supervisory committee. However, a student may select, in collaboration with faculty, a different Rehabilitation Science Graduate Faculty member to serve as the chair.

The supervisory committee must have a minimum of four faculty members, including the committee chair. At least two of the committee members must have Graduate Faculty status as part of the Rehabilitation Science program. The committee must include one member (the external member) who does not hold graduate faculty status in the Rehabilitation Science graduate program but holds graduate faculty status in another University of Florida program. The external committee member 1) represents the interests of the Graduate School and UF, 2) knows Graduate Council policies, and 3) serves as an advocate for the student at doctoral committee activities.

Students may elect to have more than the minimum four committee members.

If a minor is chosen, the supervisory committee must include at least one Graduate Faculty member representing the student's minor. If the student elects more than one minor, each minor area must be represented on the supervisory committee. Therefore, committees for students with two minors must have a minimum of five members. Note: please see below for details regarding the number of credits required for a minor.

### **Special appointments to supervisory committee**

Special appointment status allows qualified UF or non-UF personnel who do not have UF graduate faculty status to serve on graduate students' supervisory committees as guest experts who bring unique, specialized expertise to the student's research.

Special appointments are made individually, case by case, student by student.

Special appointees can serve on supervisory committees only as members — not as chairs, co-chairs, or externals. They do not count toward the minimum needed for a valid committee — only UF graduate faculty do.

Special appointments may be made by one of two methods:

- 1) With a UFID number and included in GIMS (Graduate Information Management System) as a formal UF appointment through the Graduate School.
- 2) Without a formal UF appointment through the Graduate School, by direct invitation, with approval from the student and the supervisory committee chair.

Any access to UF research beyond what will be available publicly in the student's dissertation requires a courtesy appointment in line with UF's policy on courtesy faculty.

Special appointees are not considered UF officials. Committee members who have UF graduate faculty status must maintain confidentiality of student records in line with the provisions of FERPA and federal, state, and university regulations.

#### Special Appointment with Graduate School Approval and Tracking via GIMS

Students should contact Program Coordinator for information about this process. Special appointments added in this manner will appear on student's supervisory committee and be required to sign all committee paperwork.

#### Special Appointment without Graduate School Approval and Tracking via GIMS

Guest experts are invited to serve on supervisory committees by invitation from the supervisory committee chair and with approval from the student. Special appointee's name will not be recorded in GIMS and their committee participation or participation in exams will not be tracked by the Rehabilitation Science program or Graduate School.

**To establish a committee in the [Graduate Information Management System \(GIMS\)](#), student should complete the [Rehabilitation Science Supervisory Committee Form](#) and submit to Program Coordinator. Program Coordinator will send to committee members for signatures via DocuSign. A supervisory committee has not been established until it is posted in [GIMS](#).**

To summarize the requirements for a supervisory committee:

- Students are required to have a minimum of four committee members, not including special appointments
- At least two of the committee members must have Rehabilitation Science Graduate Faculty status. The Chair of the committee counts as one of these two.
- At least one committee member (external member) must not hold Graduate Faculty Status in the Rehabilitation Science program but must have Graduate Faculty status in another program at UF.
- The fourth committee member must have Graduate Faculty status at UF and can hold Graduate Faculty Status in Rehabilitation Science or another UF department/program. Most students have three Rehabilitation Science faculty members on their committee but it is perfectly acceptable for the committee to have two Rehabilitation Science UF faculty, and two outside of the Rehabilitation Science faculty.
- It is permissible to have a member of the committee who is from outside UF or does not have Graduate Faculty status serve as a special appointment. Special appointments do not count toward the minimum four required committee members.

**The supervisory committee should meet at least once per year to review student progress.** The first committee meeting should take place at the end of the student's first academic year, and the second prior to taking the qualifying exam. Please contact the Program Director if you have concerns about this.

#### **Changes to the supervisory committee**

Students may add or remove a member of their supervisory committee by submitting an updated [Rehabilitation Science Supervisory Committee Form](#) to the Program Coordinator.

In the event that two or more of the original PhD advisory committee are removed, then the new committee must be reviewed and approved by the Program Director. In addition, changing the primary mentor requires approval of the Program Director. In either event, the student should schedule a meeting with the Program Director to discuss the situation.

#### **Adding a Graduate Minor**

A minor is a block of coursework completed in an academic unit outside the major. If an academic unit contributes more than one course (as specified in the curriculum inventory and/or the Graduate Catalog) to the

major, the student is not eligible to earn a minor from the contributing academic unit. A 3.00 (truncated) GPA is required for minor credit.

The minor must be approved by the student's supervisory committee and the academic unit offering the minor. If a minor is chosen, the supervisory committee must include a representative from the minor field. The requirements of the minor are set by the academic unit offering the minor and is comprised of 12-24 credits of coursework.

Competency in the minor is demonstrated in the qualifying examination.

Students must complete the [Rehabilitation Science Minor Form](#) to officially declare the minor. Please provide the completed form to Program Coordinator. Additional paperwork may be required from the academic unit offering the minor.

Minors must be established prior to PhD qualifying examination.

## Qualifying Exam

**See appendix C for full qualifying exam guidelines.**

Successful completion of a written and oral qualifying examination is required of all doctoral students.

The qualifying exam *should* be completed by the end of the student's second academic year in the program. However, it must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of the student's third year.

It may be taken no sooner than the third semester of graduate study. The student should have completed most of their didactic coursework prior to taking the exam. There must be at least two terms between the oral portion of the qualifying examination and date of the degree. The term the qualifying examination is passed is counted as one of the semesters if the examination occurs before the published midpoint of the term, and the graduating term is counted as the second semester. Thus, the oral qualifying exam and date of the degree can be consecutive semesters, but only if the oral examination occurs before the published midpoint of the term. All work for the doctorate must be completed within 5 calendar years after the qualifying examination, or this examination must be repeated.

Prior to scheduling the qualifying exam, the student must have a full committee meeting (in person or via video) during which the committee agrees that the student is ready to take the exam.

The qualifying exam consists of a written portion (taken first) followed by an oral examination. Together, the written and oral exam will assess the student's: 1. Understanding of the application of their work to rehabilitation science; 2. Mastery of course work; and 3. Readiness to successfully complete a dissertation. The student's supervisory committee will develop challenging questions that broadly cover these three areas. The student will be expected to display "foundational knowledge" in their discipline as well as in relation to their specialized course work, including research methodology. In this context, foundational knowledge refers to the principles, theories and terminology that are essential to proceed with advanced study in a particular discipline. The student must pass both the written and oral components of the exam to complete the milestone.

Students will only proceed to the oral portion of the qualifying exam once the supervisory committee agree that the student has passed the written portion. The oral portion of the qualifying exam should be a minimum of two hours and is generally no longer than three hours.

Required content: The written qualifying exam must include a question designed to test the student's foundational knowledge of public health and rehabilitation as covered in *RSD6110: Rehabilitation Science Theory and Application 1*. This question can be tailored to the student's particular area of interest. If the primary mentor has questions about this, they are encouraged to communicate with the program director.

The content of the qualifying exam will necessarily differ between students. We have a diverse program and accordingly the areas of emphasis for the exam will vary between different mentors and research areas. It is the job of the primary mentor and supervisory committee to design the exam within the guidelines set forth by the program.

Paperwork required to document milestone: It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator when a qualifying exam is scheduled. Students should contact the Program Coordinator one or two weeks prior to the oral portion of the qualifying exam for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form will be completed by the committee chair and signed by all committee members to document the milestone. The Program Coordinator will provide the form to the supervisory committee via DocuSign. The milestone is not considered complete until the signed form is returned.

**Exam failure (written and/or oral):**

To pass the qualifying exam, the student must first pass the written portion and then also pass the oral portion. If the student fails the written portion they will not proceed to the oral portion and it is considered a failed exam. If the student passes the written portion but then fails the oral portion, it is considered a failed exam. The Program Director should be notified of failed exams, in writing, by the primary mentor. A re-examination may be requested, but it must be recommended by the supervisory committee. At least one semester of additional preparation is required before a re-examination can occur. If the student fails the second attempt, they are dismissed from the program.

## **Dissertation Proposal**

***See appendix D for full dissertation proposal guidelines***

Successful completion of the dissertation proposal is required for all doctoral students. It is completed only after the student has passed the qualifying examination.

The dissertation proposal is a written plan outlining the student's intended dissertation work. **It consists of a two-step process. First, the student completes a written document, followed by an oral presentation to the supervisory committee.** The dissertation proposal addresses 1) why the research is relevant, 2) the focus of the research, and 3) how the research will be conducted. The written proposal may contain preliminary data but this is not a requirement. The proposal is presented to the entire supervisory committee for approval, and an in-person committee meeting is conducted in which the student presents a summary of the proposed work. It should be completed within 1 calendar year of the time the student passed the PhD qualifying exam.

The program has developed a PowerPoint template to serve as a general outline for information Rehabilitation Science students should cover in their proposal. Students are encouraged to customize the template to best suite their individual needs. [Dissertation Proposal Template](#)

Paperwork required to document milestone: It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator when the proposal is scheduled. Students should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to the proposal meeting for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form will be completed by the committee chair and signed by all committee members to document the milestone. The Program Coordinator will provide the form to the supervisory committee via DocuSign. The milestone is not complete until the signed form is returned to the Program Coordinator and recorded with the Graduate School.



## Admission to Candidacy

Approval for admission to candidacy is based on: (1) the academic record of the student; (2) the opinion of the supervisory committee concerning the overall fitness for candidacy; (3) successful completion of the qualifying examination; and (4) an approved dissertation topic (dissertation proposal).

Please note, the two required public health courses, *PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health (3 credits or 0 credits)* and *PHC 6001: Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3 credits)* must be completed prior to admission to candidacy.

## Dissertation

**See appendix E for full dissertation defense guidelines.**

Each doctoral candidate must prepare and present a dissertation that shows independent investigation, and that is acceptable in form and content to the supervisory committee and to the Graduate School. The work must be of publishable quality and must be in a form suitable for publication, using the Graduate School's format requirements. The student and supervisory committee are responsible for the level of quality and scholarship.

Assistance in preparing the written dissertation (e.g., dissertation template, formatting, one-on-one appointments ) can be found at the [UFIT Help Desk's Thesis and Dissertation Support Center](#). Critical editorial deadlines are posted in the UF Graduate School [academic calendar](#) and Thesis, Dissertation and Publication office.

An oral dissertation defense must be satisfactorily completed before the student's supervisory committee. The student should provide a copy of their dissertation to the Program Director along with the scheduled date and time information of oral defense for announcement. Students are responsible for scheduling their defense and a meeting room for the oral defense and providing the Program Director with these details.

Students must be registered for RSD7980: Dissertation Research in their final term. The minimum enrollment of RSD7980 for fall and spring final term semesters is three credits. For the summer semester the student must be enrolled in at least two credits of RSD7980.

Note: Students on a fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship must be registered appropriately for their appointments.

All members of the supervisory committee must attend the dissertation defense. The student and chair or co-chair must be in the same physical location. With approval of the entire committee, other committee members may attend remotely using modern technology.

### Paperwork required to document this milestone:

Students should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to the defense for the necessary paperwork. Paperwork required includes:

- 1) Final Exam Form. Indicates the student has successfully passed their final exam(dissertation defense). This is signed by all members of the committee.
- 2) Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Signature Page. This indicates that the written dissertation is ready for final submission.
- 3) UF Publishing Agreement. Submitted by the student in [GIMS](#). This should be done after the final exam form is submitted but before the final dissertation submission. This form requires mentor input and approval.

## **Publication Requirement**

Reporting research findings in peer-reviewed journals is an essential component of the scientific process and a fundamental part of the graduate school experience. Accordingly, publishing research findings should be a very high priority for all PhD students. Most students submit at least one manuscript prior to graduation, and it is not uncommon for a student to graduate with multiple first author publications. At this time, publication of the doctoral thesis work is not a formal requirement prior to graduation. However, the student is strongly encouraged to be proactive and work with their primary mentor and committee to ensure publication of their results. Evaluation of potential manuscript submissions will be part of the yearly assessment of student progress completed by the Steering Committee (see below).

Please note that “ownership” of data collected during the thesis resides with the University of Florida. Final decisions regarding data are at the discretion of the sponsoring laboratory and institution.

## **Monitoring of Progress towards the Degree**

The responsibility for achieving the necessary milestones for graduation lies first with the student and second with the primary mentor. It is expected that the student will regularly (e.g., monthly at the minimum) communicate with the primary mentor regarding progress towards the degree as well as create, and annually update, their online Student Monitoring Plan and Individual Development Plan.

In addition, the Steering Committee will review progress of all students on a yearly basis using these systems. Our program is evaluated, in part, based on students graduating in a timely manner. Thus, the annual review by the Steering Committee is intended to ensure that students are progressing towards graduation, and are meeting the various milestones (e.g., qualifying exam, formation of a committee, etc.). At the discretion of the committee, students and primary mentors may be contacted to discuss the academic progression.

## **Enrollment Requirement**

The total number of credits (including 30 for a prior master’s degree) that may be transferred cannot exceed 45, which means doctoral students must complete a minimum of 45 of 90 total credits required for the doctoral degree at the University of Florida. Please see section X. Previous Graduate Study and Credit Transfer, for information on the Rehabilitation Science transfer of credit policy.

## **Residential Program Requirement**

The Rehabilitation Science Doctoral program is an on-campus, residential program. As such, the physical presence of students is required in Gainesville, Florida for the duration of the academic year, including fall, spring, and summer terms.

Students may petition the Program Director if they have a documented accommodation, or situation that prevents their physical presence. Petitions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## **Courses and Credits**

Undergraduate courses (1000-2999) may not be used as any part of the graduate degree requirements. All 1000- and 2000-level courses may be taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) basis. Six credits of higher-level undergraduate courses (3000-4999) outside the major may count when taken as part of an approved graduate program.

RSD 6930 is a “special topics” course number that covers a broad array of rotating subjects and can be taken more than once.

## IX. Course Requirements

The PhD program includes 90 semester credits of study at the doctoral level beyond the bachelor's degree. Each student completes coursework pertaining to **Research Methods and Statistics** and **Rehabilitation Science Application & Teaching** as well as specialty coursework in one of three concentrations: **Communication and Swallowing Sciences and Disorders (CSSD)**, **Disability, Health, and Participation (DHP)**, and **Neuromuscular Plasticity**. More specific information on these course areas, as well as additional course requirements, is explained in this section. A brief summary of the required courses and credits as follows:

Rehabilitation Science Application = 10 credit hours  
Rehabilitation Science Teaching = 6 credit hours  
Research Methods and Statistics = 13 credit hours  
Research Courses = 31 credit hours  
Emphasis Area/Concentration Courses = 18 credit hours  
Elective Courses = 12 credit hours  
TOTAL = 90 credit hours

### **Courses related to Rehabilitation Science Application (10 credits)**

Students must complete the following required courses in rehabilitation science application:

#### *RSD 6110 – Rehabilitation Science Theory & Application I (3 credits)*

This course reviews the foundational theory and philosophical underpinnings of rehabilitation science, including analysis of the components, stages, and domains of the disabling-enabling process, and the ethical and social implications of rehabilitation science. The framework of the course is grounded in analysis of rehabilitation research domains and student interaction with current researchers and national and international thought leaders. This course is generally offered every fall semester, and it is recommended students take this their first fall semester in the program.

#### *RSD 6938: Doctoral Seminar in Rehabilitation Science (2 credits)*

This course reviews key professional issues and scientific topics related to rehabilitation science. The fundamental goal is to provide doctoral students with a foundation for professional success and leadership in rehabilitation science. This is a one credit course offered in the fall and spring semesters. Students required take this course twice for a total of two credits.

Note: As part of this course, students are required to attend the [Rehabilitation Science Seminars](#).

#### *RSD 6930: The Art of Scientific Dissemination (2 credits)*

The objectives of this course are to introduce the students to the various types of scientific communication and to help them develop the skills necessary to become proficient in this art. The types of communication to be covered in the class include oral presentations, posters, and manuscript preparation. The skills which will be emphasized are those which can lead to lucid, simple, logical, and organized presentations. This course is generally offered every other spring semester.

#### *ENC 5319: Writing for Rehabilitation Science (3 credits)*

In this course, students work with the instructor in a “writing group” format to draft a manuscript for publication. This course is intended for advanced PhD students who have already collected a dataset. This course is generally offered every other spring semester.

Note: ENC5319: Scholarly Writing for Publication is offered every semester and students from a variety of disciplines take the course. Rehabilitation Science students are expected to take a section that is specifically designed to build scientific writing and other writing skills appropriate for the program. This Rehabilitation Science-specific section is generally offered every other spring semester. Students who

have a schedule conflict, can request permission to take the non-Rehabilitation Science section of the course.

### **Courses related to Rehabilitation Science teaching (6 credits)**

It is the view of the PhD faculty that teaching will be an essential component of the vast majority or rehabilitation-related careers. Accordingly, we require that students have some formal training in the art of teaching as part of the graduate experience. All students must complete the following required courses in teaching:

1) *RSD 6900 – College Classroom: Teaching Process and Practice* (3 credits)

This course provides doctoral students with the information and skills required for successful teaching as faculty in the college classroom. This course is generally offered every fall semester.

AND

2) *RSD 6940 – Supervised Teaching in Rehabilitation* (3 credits)

This course provides hands-on, practical experience for students to develop teaching skills under the supervision of a faculty mentor. It is expected that the student, under the supervision of the course instructor, will present a minimum of three formal lectures and receive instruction regarding all aspects of managing a course (e.g., preparation of syllabus, preparing exams, etc.). Students must assist with a formal course of record. Course cannot be a PhD-level course.

Note: Students may petition to waive all or part of the teaching requirement based on past teaching experience. A petition should be forwarded to the Program Director for evaluation by the Steering Committee. The petition should include a description of past teaching experience as well as an evaluation of the student's teaching ability. The petition should be signed by the student and the primary mentor. Contact the Program Coordinator for more details.

### **Courses related to Research Methods and Statistics (13 credits)**

Students must complete 13 credits of approved coursework in research methods and statistics.

A one credit course on ethical research practices is required for all Rehabilitation Science students:

*GMS 7877 – Responsible Conduct of Biomedical Research* (1 credit)

Key issues in the responsible conduct of biomedical research, following the research process from inception to planning, conducting, reporting, and reviewing biomedical research. This course is most appropriate for students doing clinical research.

OR

*VME 6767 – Issues in the Responsible Conduct of Research* (1 credit)

Laws, policies, guidelines, and principles concerning the conduct of research in an ethical manner. This course is offered by the College of Veterinary Medicine and has an emphasis on animal research. This course is most appropriate for students doing basic science research.

The program will also accept other ethics courses that meet federal RCR requirements:

<https://research.ufl.edu/rcr/courses/>.

Other courses can be selected from any College but should be chosen with input from the student's mentor and **must be approved by the student's supervisory committee**. Examples of courses meeting these criteria include:

CLP 6527\* *Measurement, Research Design, and Statistical Analysis I (3 credits)*

CLP 6528\* *Measurement, Research Design and Statistical Analysis II (3 credits)*

\* *It is recommended that all students take CLP 6527 and CLP 6528*

PHC 6001 *Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3 credits)*

CLP 6529 *Applied Multivariate Methods in Psychology (3 credits)*

CLP 7525 *Studying Psychological Change (3 credits)*

EEX 7526 *Grant Writing Seminar (3 credits)*

PHC 7727 *Grant Writing for Population Health Research (2 credits)*

APK 6715 *Grant Writing in Health & Human Performance (3 credits)*

EDF 6475 *Qualitative Foundations of Educational Research (4 credits)*

EDF 6403 *Quantitative Research Methods in Education (6 credits)*

HLP 6535 *Research Methods in Health and Human Performance (3 credits)*

In addition to the [UF schedule of courses](#), [a list of statistical courses](#) categorized by method and program used is available.

## Research Courses (31 credits)

A student must enroll in a total of at least 31 semester hours of research application. All courses are taken pass/fail. The courses listed below reflect progressive involvement in actual research working with the major professor:

1) *RSD 6910 – Supervised Research*

*No more than 5 credits may be applied to the degree requirements. This course is intended for students in their first year of PhD studies who have not yet declared a supervisory committee.*

2) *RSD 7979 – Advanced Rehabilitation Research*

*No more than 12 credits may be applied to the degree requirements. Appropriate for students who have not yet been admitted to PhD candidacy. Students must have a supervisory committee established in GIMS to enroll in this course.*

3) *RSD 7980 – Doctoral Dissertation (minimum 12 credits)*

*Appropriate for students who have been admitted to PhD candidacy. Students must take at least 12 credits of RSD 7980. Enrollment in RSD 7980 required in the student's final semester.*

Notes:

1) Only 31 research credits total will be counted towards the total 90 credits required for graduation unless a waiver has been granted by the Rehabilitation Science Steering Committee. Of those 31 credits, at least 12 credits must be RSD7980.

2) RSD6905: Independent Work (letter graded course)

*Up to four credits can count toward the elective course requirement. No more than four credits will count towards the 90-credit degree requirement. This course will not count towards the required research hours.*

## **Communication and Swallowing Sciences and Disorders (CSSD) Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits)**

Overview: The communication and swallowing sciences and disorders (CSSD) concentration requires 18 credit hours of coursework outside of other program requirements. This coursework focuses on the sciences investigating all aspects of communication and swallowing disorders and their rehabilitation. This concentration includes a range of interdisciplinary, conceptually broad subfields, unified by the anatomical and neurophysiological structures they share. Students may focus on the mechanisms and rehabilitation of swallowing and the upper aerodigestive tract, and/or speech, language, and hearing sciences and disorders. The required courses reflect the fact that CSSD is conceptually broad. Thus, graduate courses have been identified which encompass the wide range of science being conducted by the Graduate Faculty, and are selected from Departments and Institutes across the University of Florida. Students may choose from a variety of courses to fulfill their core requirements to create a unique program preparing them to do research in their field of interest.

### **CSSD Core (9 total credits)**

Students must take at least three graduate level SPA courses from those listed here. Because the various subfields in the CSSD concentration are so diverse, the core courses taken will vary among students. The 9 credits can be selected from the list below and must be approved by the Primary Mentor and PhD Supervisory Committee.

- SPA 5204: Phonological Disorders (3 credits)*
- SPA 5211: Voice Disorders (3 credits)*
- SPA 5254: Neurocognitive Disorders of Language (3 credits)*
- SPA 5401: Pediatric Language Disorders (3 credits)*
- SPA 6010: Basic Auditory Science (3 credits)*
- SPA 6233: Motor Speech Disorders (3 credits)*
- SPA 6270: Auditory Processing Disorders (3 credits)*
- SPA 6314: Clinical Auditory Electrophysiology (3 credits)*
- SPA 6324: Audiologic Rehabilitation for Children (3 credits)*
- SPA 6564: Communication and Aging (3 credits)*
- SPA 6581: Dysphagia Management (4 credits)*
- SPA 6936: Special Topics in Hearing Science (3 credits)*
- SPA 6936: Special Topics in Speech and Language (3 credits)*
- SPA 7354: Hearing Conservation and Noise Control (3 credits)*

### **Additional concentration coursework (9 total credits)**

CSSD students are required to take 9 additional credits of coursework that is not specific to SPA. This list provides a sampling of appropriate CSSD concentration courses but is not intended to be a comprehensive listing. Additional concentration coursework should be selected under the guidance of the primary mentor and supervisory committee and based on the student's research aims.

- RSD 6401: Skeletal Muscle in Aging & Disease, and Implications for Rehabilitation (3 credits)*
- RSD 6710: Motor Control: Translating from Fundamental Research to Rehabilitation Practice (3 credits)*
- RSD 6718: Neuroplasticity as a Foundation for Rehabilitation (3 credits)*
- RSD 6930: Control of Breathing and Airway Defense (3 credits)*
- APK 6116: Physiological Bases of Exercise & Sport Sciences (3 credits)*
- APK 6118: Neuromuscular Adaptations to Exercise (3 credits)*
- CLP 7934: Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior (3 credits)*
- CLP 6115: Clinical & Cognitive Neuroscience: Methods & Theory (3 credits)*
- GMS 6705: Functional Human Neuroanatomy (5 credits)*
- LIN 6707: Psycholinguistics (3 credits)*
- LIN 6796: Cognitive Neuroscience (3 credits)*

## **Disability, Health, and Participation Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits)**

The Disability, Health, & Participation concentration is a unique interdisciplinary field of study that advances the understanding of person, activity, and environmental factors contributing to disability, function, participation, and health. We adopt the World Health Organization's International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health conceptualization of participation, which is defined as meaningful engagement in all areas of life and in society. We recognize that function and disability results from the dynamic interaction between health conditions, environmental factors, and personal factors. Through research addressing these factors, our unified purpose is to optimize the participation and health of all people, including people with disabilities, impairments, and chronic health conditions, within their environments.

Students complete **core courses** that provide foundational theoretical knowledge to conduct disability, health, and participation research. Students also identify one **scholarly focus area** in which to develop advanced methodological skills: 1) Advanced methods to engage individuals and communities to inform the development of rehabilitation assessments and interventions; or 2) Advanced clinical trial designs and methodologies for health and participation interventions. Students will integrate knowledge and skills from their core and scholarly focus area courses to conduct innovative dissertation research to promote the health and participation of individuals, communities or society

### Concentration Requirements

Students are required to complete all **core courses** (6 credits) that provide foundational theoretical knowledge to conduct disability, health, and participation research.

#### **Core Courses:**

RSD 6920: Disability, Occupation, and Participation Journal Club (1 credit)

RSD 6410: Development and Evaluation of Rehabilitation Interventions to Promote Participation (3 credits)

RSD 7752 Instrument Development for Health and Rehabilitation (2 credits)

Students must complete at least 12 additional credits aligned with their scholarly focus area. At least 3 of the 12 total credits must be one of the listed courses in the "Scholarly Areas" listed below. The additional 12 credits may include: 1) other courses listed in the scholarly area (below), or 2) with approval from the student's mentor, other courses aligned with their scholarly focus area.

#### **Scholarly Area 1 Courses: Engaging individuals and communities**

PHC 6724: Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health and Health Sciences (3 credits)

PHC 6704 Community-Based Participatory Research (3 credits)

PHC 6937: Introduction to Mixed Methods Research (3 credits)

#### **Scholarly Area 2 Courses: Clinical trial methodology**

GMS 6851 Fundamentals of Dissemination and Implementation Research (3 credits)

GMS 6813 Pragmatic Clinical Trials (3 credits)

GMS 6885: Translational Health Research Design (3 credits)

## **Neuromuscular Plasticity Concentration: Typical Course Sequence (18 credits)**

Overview: The neuromuscular plasticity concentration requires 18 credit hours of coursework outside of other program requirements. This coursework provides students with a common background relative to movement science with emphasis on application to rehabilitation. Neuromuscular plasticity requires the coordinated interaction between neurons and muscles, and our program includes faculty studying all aspects of neuromuscular function. As such course content encompasses the spectrum of neuromuscular plasticity ranging from genes and molecules to biomechanics. The program offers a core set of required classes to be taken by all neuromuscular plasticity students. After the required core program, students are encouraged to tailor the remaining concentration coursework to match their research aims

### **Neuromuscular Plasticity Core (9 total credits)**

All neuromuscular plasticity students are required to take at least three of the following four courses prior to graduation. Courses should be selected with input from the primary mentor and supervisory committee.

*RSD 6718: Neuroplasticity as a Foundation for Rehabilitation (3 credits)*

*RSD 6401: Skeletal Muscle in Aging & Disease, and Implications for Rehabilitation (3 credits)*

*RSD 6710: Motor Control: Translating from Fundamental Research to Rehabilitation Practice (3 credits)*

*APK 6226C: Biomechanics of Human Motion (3 credits)*

*It may be appropriate for a student to substitute an equivalent PhD-level class with approval by both their mentor and the Rehabilitation Science Steering Committee. For example, a student may want a biomechanics course with a more orthopedic focus and petition to substitute EML 5598: Orthopedic Biomechanics for APK 6226: Biomechanics of Human Motion.*

*To request a substitution, a petition should be forwarded to the Program Director for evaluation by the Steering Committee. The petition should include substitute course name, number, and syllabus, plus a justification as to why the course is an appropriate substitute. The petition should be signed by the student and the primary mentor. The Steering Committee will not approve substitutions for non-equivalent courses.*

### **Additional concentration coursework (9 total credits)**

This list provides a sampling of appropriate neuromuscular plasticity concentration courses but is not intended to be comprehensive listing. Additional concentration coursework should be selected under the guidance of the Primary Mentor and PhD Supervisory Committee based on the student's research aims.

*RSD 6930: Control of Breathing and Airway Defense (3 credits)*

*APK 6116C: Physiological Bases of Exercise and Sport Sciences (3 credits)*

*GMS 6847: Translational Research & Therapeutics: Bench, Bedside, Community & Policy (3 credits)*

*APK 6118: Neuromuscular Adaptations to Exercise (3 credits)*

*GMS 5905: Biomechanics in Orthopedics and Rehabilitation (3 credits)*

*APK 7117: Exercise Metabolism (3 credits)*

*APK 7107: Cardiovascular Exercise Physiology (3 credits)*

*BCH 5413: Mammalian Molecular Biology and Genetics (3 credits)*

*RSD 6920: Rehabilitation Science Journal Clubs (1 credit)*

*GMS6476: Fundamentals of Skeletal Muscle*

Coursework related to [Implementation Science](#) is not applicable to 18-credit Neuromuscular Plasticity concentration.



## **RSD 6920: Rehabilitation Science Journal Clubs**

The Rehabilitation Science program offers several different 1-credit journal clubs. Journal clubs are a cornerstone of graduate education, and students are encouraged to actively participate. Students may enroll in up to three credits of journal clubs to be applied to their concentration/emphasis area requirement. Here are some of the journal clubs offered:

### *Respiratory Journal Club*

Each week this class will critically evaluate a published manuscript from the broad field of respiratory neuromuscular biology. Over the course of the semester, each student will present an overview of the assigned reading to the group including summary and rationale/background for the study, methodology, results, and implications of data.

### *Muscle Journal Club*

This course gives graduate students the opportunity to read, interpret, and present scientific literature critically to their fellow peers, post-docs, and faculty. This course is designed to help students (1) develop critical thinking skills, (2) develop presentation skills, and (3) stay up-to-date on the current knowledge in the field of muscle physiology.

### *Upper Aerodigestive Tract Function and Pathology Journal Club*

This course is designed to develop critical thinking skills in the design and evaluation of research relating to upper aerodigestive tract function. The class will incorporate interactive didactic formats aimed at facilitating students' ability to communicate research ideas in a scientifically rigorous fashion and practice providing and receiving constructive feedback.

### *Disability, Health, and Participation Journal Club*

The purpose of this course is to critically review research articles pertaining to disability, health and participation. Students will critique relevant, instructor-selected and student-selected articles, present, lead group discussions, and provide peer evaluations.

## **Public Health Requirement**

The College of Public Health and Health Professions requires the integration of two public health courses into the curriculum of all non-public health PhD programs. Rehabilitation Science students must take both courses prior to admission to PhD candidacy. Courses are offered online; on-campus offerings of these courses are generally reserved for MPH students.

### *PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health (3 credits or 0 credits)*

This course is designed to introduce students in professional and academic degree programs in the health professions to fundamental public health concepts and to identify and model ways in which health professions and public health disciplines can collaborate effectively. The course can be taken for three credits or as a non-credit course. The non-credit option does not include any tuition or fees, but students will not be assigned a grade nor receive credits to apply towards the 90-credit degree requirement.

AND

### *PHC 6001: Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3 credits)*

This course covers distribution and determinants of health-related states or events in specific populations and application to control of health problems

Satisfactory completion of both courses is required before admission to candidacy. *PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health (3 credits)* counts toward the elective course requirement and *PHC 6001- Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3 credits)* may be applied as an elective or toward the 13-credit research methods and statistics requirement.

Note: Students who hold an MPH, DrPH, or who have taken the five MPH core courses are exempt from this requirement.

### **Elective Course Work (12 credits)**

Twelve credits are elective/minor courses. Course descriptions and availabilities change frequently. For the most up-to-date offerings outside of the Rehabilitation Science program, please consult the University of Florida [schedule of courses](#) and your advisor. *PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health (3 credits)*, is applied to the elective credit requirement.

### **Maximum Enrollment**

A student's academic career maximum for enrollment in *RSD 6910 – Supervised Research* and *RSD 6940 – Supervised Teaching in Rehabilitation* is 5 credits. Maximum enrollment in *RSD 7979: Advanced Research* is 12 credits. Excess enrollment credits will not be applied to graduate degree requirements. Enrollment in *RSD 7980 – Doctoral Dissertation* is allowed for students who have a classification of "9" (students who have been admitted to PhD candidacy, meaning they have passed their qualifying exam and completed their dissertation proposal).

### **Clinical and Translational Science Interdisciplinary Concentration**

The [Clinical & Translational Science Predoctoral Training Program](#) uses a team-science approach and provides mentoring and didactic training for predoctoral students performing clinical and/or translational research in health-related fields at UF. Completion of program requirements results in the award of an interdisciplinary concentration in Clinical & Translational Science. See website for additional information and application.

Students who are not interested in the formal concentration may still benefit from taking:

- *GMS 6847: Translational Research and Therapeutics: Bench, Bedside, Community, and Policy* (3 credits)
- *GMS 6945: Team Science* (1 credit)

## PhD Program Example Course Sequence

*Note:* this is provided as a general example – please consult with your mentor before signing up for classes.

### Year I (24 credits)

Fall (9 credits)	Spring (9 credits)	Summer (6 credits)
RSD 6110 Rehab Science Theory and Application(3)	RSD 6930 The Art of Scientific Dissemination (2)	PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health(3)
RSD 6938: Doctoral Seminar in Rehabilitation (1)	GMS 7877 - Responsible Conduct of Biomedical Research (1)	Research Methods and Statistics Course (3)
CLP 6527 Measurement, Research Design, and Statistical Analysis I (3)	CLP 6528 Measurement, Research Design, and Statistical Analysis II (3)	
RSD 6910: Supervised Research (2)	Concentration Course (3)	

### Year II (24 credits)

Fall (9 credits)	Spring (9 credits)	Summer (6 credits)
Concentration Course (6)	Concentration Courses (6)	PHC 6001- Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3)
Research Methods and Statistics Course (3)	RSD 7979: Advanced Rehabilitation Research (2)	RSD 7979: Advanced Rehabilitation Research (3)
	RSD 6938: Doctoral Seminar in Rehabilitation (1)	

### Year III (24 credits)

Fall (9 credits)	Spring (9 credits)	Summer (6 credits)
RSD 6900: College Classroom- Teaching Process and Practice (3)	ENC 5319: Writing for Rehabilitation Science (3)	RSD 7979/7980 Research (3)
Concentration Course (3)	RSD 6940: Supervised Teaching in Rehabilitation (3)	Elective (3)
RSD 7979: Advanced Research (3)	Elective (3)	

### Year IV (18 credits)

Fall (9 credits)	Spring (9 credits)
RSD 7980: Doctoral Dissertation (9)	RSD 7980 Doctoral Dissertation (9)

## X. Previous Graduate Study and Credit Transfer

Note: there are no “guaranteed” transfer credits. All requests are considered on a case-by-case basis based on the student’s previous graduate work and current plan of study.

Transfer of credit requests should be made in the student’s first semester in the Rehabilitation Science PhD program and no later than the third term of PhD study. No more than 30 credits of a master’s degree from another institution will be transferred to the doctoral program. Any courses beyond the master’s degree must be taken at an institution offering doctoral degrees to be considered for credit transfer. The total number of credits that may be transferred cannot exceed 45 (including 30 from a prior master’s degree).

All transferred courses must be graduate-level, letter-graded with a grade of B or better, and demonstrated to relate directly to the degree being sought. Practice-oriented and clinically-based courses typically do not qualify. However, we do accept transfer credits from appropriate coursework from clinical doctorate programs (e.g. DPT, OTD).

Coursework eligible for credit transfer must be completed within the last seven years. This time period is tracked from date of degree conferment to first semester enrolled in the Rehabilitation Science PhD program. For example, if a student completed a master of science in April 2018, the seven-year transfer window would close April 2025.

Credit transfer requests must be approved by the student’s primary mentor and Rehabilitation Science Program Director. Final approval lies with the UF Graduate School.

To request a transfer of credit, students should discuss previous coursework, and review syllabi with primary mentor. Complete the [Rehabilitation Science Graduate Transfer of Credit form](#) and submit form and course syllabi to Program Coordinator.

## XI. Minor in Rehabilitation Science

Students from other UF PhD programs may elect to minor in the Rehabilitation Science PhD Program. Students must take *RSD 6110 – Rehabilitation Science Theory & Application I*, *RSD 6930 – The Art of Scientific Dissemination*, and some combination of supervised research, independent study, and courses listed under the three program emphasis areas. Students must also identify a Rehabilitation Science faculty member willing to serve on their dissertation committee and as an advisor for the minor.

## XIII. Registration

### Course Registration Form

Students are required to submit a registration before the stated deadline each semester to the program coordinator.

To be considered full-time, students are expected to register for 9 hours in the fall and spring semesters and 6 hours in the summer term.

### Registration Deadlines

University of Florida registration deadlines can be found in the [Graduate Catalog](#) under Academic Calendar.

Students are required to receive approval from their mentor regarding registration of courses prior to registration each semester.

Students will be registered for program-controlled RSD courses and unless otherwise stated, are expected to self-register for all other courses.

Students are responsible for meeting course requirements, as defined by the instructor, for all courses in which they enroll.

### Students on paid appointments:

It is the responsibility of students on paid appointments (i.e. Graduate Assistantship, fellowship, traineeship) to ensure that they are registered appropriately for their appointments. Students on 0.5 FTE (20 hours per week) Graduate Assistant appointments are required to take 9 credits in the fall and spring semesters and 6 hours in the summer semester. Please see Graduate Catalog for more information on registration requirements.

<https://gradcatalog.ufl.edu/graduate/regulations/>

### Final term registration:

In their final term, students are required to register for at least 3 credits of RSD 7980: Dissertation Research for a fall or spring semester and at least 2 credits for a summer semester. Students on paid appointments (i.e. fellowship, Graduate Assistantship, traineeship) must be registered appropriately for their appointments.

Students on 0.5 FTE Graduate Assistant appointments (20 hours/week) are required to enroll in 9 credit hours in the fall and spring and 6 hours in the summer. Students should confirm with their funding administrator to ensure they are registered for the required number of credits to maintain funding.

### Grades

The Graduate Catalog outlines the grading scale used by the University. All students are required to maintain a 3.0 overall GPA. Students with less than a 3.0 GPA are not considered to be in good standing and may not hold assistantships or fellowships. Students cannot graduate with grades of "I" (incomplete) on their record.

The only passing grades for graduate students are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, and S. Grades of B-, C+ or C count toward a graduate degree if an equal number of credits in courses numbered 5000 or higher have been earned with grades of B+, A- and A, respectively. Grade points are not given for S and U grades; S and U grades are not used to calculate grade point averages. Letter grades of C-, D+, D, D- or E are not considered passing at the graduate level, although the grade points associated with these letter grades are included in grade point average calculations. If a student receives a grade below a "C", they should notify the Program Director and Program Coordinator.

Students must check their grades each semester to ensure they have been properly graded.

## XIV. Student Resources

### Computer Requirements

Rehabilitation Science students must be in compliance with both the [College of Public Health and Health Professions](#) and [University of Florida](#) computer requirements.

Please see the [PHHP IT website](#) for information on remote access to your PHHP desktop or access to the terminal server.

### Graduate Student Council

The [Graduate Student Council \(GSC\)](#) at UF is the official liaison between graduate students and the UF governing bodies including the Graduate School, University Administration, Student Government, and Faculty Senate. The GSC provides a forum for students to address ideas, needs, and concerns that are unique to the University of Florida Graduate students. The budget, funded by Student Government, is used to provide services to graduate students such as travel grants. Invitations to apply for travel awards will be sent over the UF Graduate Student listserv with eligible dates of travel.

A representative (or an alternate representative) is required to attend the monthly GSC meetings for students to remain eligible for travel and other awards. The annual term of a Departmental Representative and alternate shall be from September 1 to the following August 31. Students are asked to volunteer to represent their department. The duties of the Department Representative are outlined in the [GSC Constitution](#).

### Student Grievance Procedure

The following is the grievance procedure from the [Graduate School Student Handbook](#). The Rehabilitation Science program uses the Graduate School's procedure for handling student grievances.

The University of Florida is committed to treating all members of the campus community fairly and considerately when it comes to conflict resolution.

UF has mechanisms in place to ensure that you are given adequate opportunity to raise concerns (aside from grades) before university administrators if you feel that you have experienced unfair treatment or undue hardship, such as academic issues, discrimination, employment problems, scholarly misconduct, or sexual harassment.

If academic conflicts arise, here are the steps you can take to address and resolve them:

1. Communicating promptly and proactively is key. As soon as you become aware of activity or circumstances that cause you concern, speak to the individuals involved and/or your supervisory committee chair, to see if you can resolve the conflict informally. You may wish to present your concerns in writing to the individuals alleged to have caused a conflict. Those individuals must respond either orally or in writing.
2. If Step 1 does not resolve the conflict to your satisfaction, submit a written grievance and supporting documentation to the Program Director, who should respond to you in writing in a timely fashion.
3. If Step 2 does not resolve the conflict to your satisfaction, submit your written grievance and support documentation to your college's graduate associate dean, who will investigate the matter and respond to you in writing within a reasonable period.
4. If Step 3 does not resolve the conflict to your satisfaction and the issue includes questions of fairness, justice, discrimination, or similar concerns, submit your written grievance and support documentation to the UF Office of the Ombuds. You can only take this step after you have gone through Steps 1 through 3. Appeals to and decisions of the Ombuds are final. For more information, click this online link to the Ombuds website: [UF Ombuds](#).

For Graduate Assistants, most employment-related grievances are covered by Article 22 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Florida Board of Education of the State University System and Graduate Assistants United (GAU). In such cases, call the GAU office at 352-392-0274 or UF Human Resources at 352-392-2477 for information and instructions.

In cases of research misconduct, consult UF Research Integrity before lodging a formal complaint, by clicking on this online link: [UF Research Integrity](#). Any follow-up formal complaints would go to the administrator (department chair or dean, for example) to whom the accused party reports.

If you have questions, problems, or complaints with other aspects of student life, consult the UF Dean of Students Office: [UF Dean of Students Office](#).

**Additional Resources:**

University of Florida Student Health Care Center  
<https://shcc.ufl.edu/>  
352-392-1161

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER  
<https://disability.ufl.edu/>  
352-392-8565

Employee Relations:  
<http://hr.ufl.edu/manager-resources/employee-relations/>

Counseling Resources:  
Employee Assistance Program  
<http://eap.ufl.edu/>  
352-392-5787 (No cost to the GA)

Counseling & Wellness  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>  
Phone: 352-392-1575

Dean of Students Office  
<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/>  
Phone: 352-392-1261

Graduate Assistants United Collective Bargaining Agreement  
<https://www.ufgau.org/cba.html>



## **XV. Responsible Conduct of Research**

Integrity in scholarly work has received considerable attention in recent years both in academic circles and in the news. Some notorious cases of fraud have made those in higher education sensitive to this issue. Some of these instances, especially in the sciences, have surfaced when attempts to replicate work failed. In the humanities and social sciences, plagiarism assumes greater prominence. Cheating, the bane of many high school and undergraduate teachers, resurfaces at the graduate level, as well. Moreover, in our increasingly complex professional world, graduate students may find themselves embroiled in abuses of confidentiality or conflicts of interest. All five of these problems are of major concern to graduate students, faculty, and other graduate educators.

Although many graduate students will have few problems with the ethical decisions involved in maintaining integrity in their work, others may not see the issues so clearly. Some may even be unaware of the potential for problems with integrity in graduate study. The Graduate School has prepared these guidelines for units to be consistent should fraud, plagiarism, cheating, abuses of confidentiality, or conflicts of interest arise.

### **Fraud**

Fraud usually involves the intentional and deliberate misuse of data in order to draw conclusions that may not be warranted by the evidence. Falsification of results may take one of two forms: (1) fabrication of data or (2) omission or concealment of conflicting data for the purpose of misleading other scholars. An intermediate form, difficult to detect especially in quantitative analyses, occurs when students are sloppy about categorization. All researchers, irrespective of discipline, can agree that the fabrication of data is fraudulent, and most will agree that the deliberate omission of conflicting data is also fraudulent. But a few scholars might argue that one person's conflicting data is another person's irrelevant data. In general, the best researchers are those who come to terms with any piece of evidence which others may regard as conflicting. Strong support for a given hypothesis involves disposing of or dealing with alternative hypotheses.

The best insurance against fraud in graduate student research is careful and close supervision by the faculty advisor and exemplary behavior by other members of the academic community. The student should communicate regularly and frequently with his or her major professor. He or she can do so in a variety of ways, such as by submitting laboratory notebooks for frequent faculty review, by having faculty monitor the student's reading in the field, by regular progress reports to the faculty advisor, and so forth. Faculty should normally expect such communication, and in the absence of faculty initiative, graduate students should initiate dialogues with faculty. Such communication will help the student develop intellectually and will lessen the possibility of fraud. If a student is suspected of fraud, the academic community should handle the matter forthrightly and with a clear regard to the rights of the graduate student such that the career of a student researcher who may be innocent is not damaged. Similarly, if graduate student fraud is verified, it must be adjudicated in accordance with established University procedures. The Graduate School will provide information on those procedures to any interested party.

### **Plagiarism**

Unlike fraud, which is usually the deliberate creation of false data or results, plagiarism is the use of another's words, ideas, or creative productions or omission of pertinent material without proper attribution (i.e., without giving due credit to the original source). Flagrant cases of plagiarism may involve extensive borrowing of material from articles, books, or creative productions with perhaps only slight modifications. In such cases, penalties are usually severe for the student and would likely result in expulsion from Graduate School or, if a degree has already been earned, the rescinding of that degree. Less extensive cases of plagiarism may be either intentional or unintentional (e.g., carelessness or ignorance of the commonly accepted rules) but may also have severe repercussions. In using other people's work, one must cite that work in the text or, more commonly, in footnotes, and use either direct quotations or skillful paraphrasing for all ideas that are not one's own. Since much of the basic information about our disciplines comes from outside ourselves through a variety of sources common to all work in a discipline, it is unnecessary to footnote those facts and ideas, which are, so to speak, in the common domain of the discipline. Otherwise, we would be footnoting everything we know. But



an intimate familiarity with the literature of the discipline, or a sub-discipline thereof, lets one know when the distinctive words or ideas of another researcher should be given proper attribution. The fairly common practice among scientists of citing the previous significant literature relating to the subjects of their articles or books serves as something of a safeguard against plagiarism, but such reviews of the pertinent literature are less usual in the humanities.

Every graduate student should have a comprehensive knowledge of what constitutes plagiarism. Ignorance of the concept of plagiarism on the part of the student is no excuse for resorting to it at the graduate level, if indeed ignorance is an acceptable excuse at the undergraduate level. Graduate students who have any confusion about the concept should discuss plagiarism with faculty members. Students should expect faculty members to demand that they know what constitutes plagiarism. There are problems, however, not always associated with traditional perceptions of plagiarism. One of these is the danger, when borrowing from the works of others, of quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing the material in such a way as to misrepresent what the author is trying to say. A second problem arises when a student is overly dependent on the work of another, even if it is cited meticulously. Still another problem is plagiarizing oneself by submitting the same data or findings in more than one article or by reviewing the same book in two different journals. And, finally, there is the problem of a graduate student's findings being used by his or her mentor without proper attribution to the student either in the article or book, indeed of not giving credit for joint or co-authorship in articles or books where a substantial amount of the work is done by the student. The student should discuss any perceived problem of this nature with the faculty member involved, the chair of the department, or, if need be, with the Graduate School.

In nearly all of these instances of plagiarism, or variations therein, the best preventive is the example and consultation of the faculty advisor and the rest of the academic community, who should be sensitive to all of these nuances. Again, as with cases of fraud, University of Florida faculty should handle any suspicion of plagiarism with due regard to the student's rights, and any detection of plagiarism should be adjudicated in accordance with established [University procedures](#). The Graduate School will provide procedural information on request.

Learn more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it here:

[Plagiarism and Copyright](#)

[Writing/Publishing: Copyright, Plagiarism, and Paraphrasing](#)

### **Cheating**

Cheating at the graduate level may not differ morally from the same action on the undergraduate level, but many find graduate cheating more reprehensible and the consequences, understandably, are more severe. Academic dishonesty for one whose presence in graduate school declares he or she has opted for the intellectual life is a serious matter indeed. While cheating in the classroom is covered by regulations emanating from other parts of the University, cheating on qualifying or preliminary examinations is not. Such dishonesty, once proven, will at the very least result in failure of the examination and may mean termination of the student's enrollment.

### **Abuses of Confidentiality**

Abuses of confidentiality by graduate students can take various forms. Students often have access to thesis and grant proposals, data, or unpublished papers of other graduate students or faculty members. Some students use this privileged material in their own research without permission, even though proper attribution may be made. Such an abuse of confidentiality would include the adaptation into one's own research of a thesis or dissertation proposal or any unpublished work that one has opportunity to read or indeed of adopting ideas first floated, and not yet relinquished, by someone else. Another example of an abuse of confidentiality is when the graduate student gains archival or library materials about living or recently-living subjects and uses them in his or her research without permission from the library or archive or, in some cases, from the individual. Any research on live subjects can present similar dilemmas. Confidentiality is one of the forms of integrity, which is relatively easy to abuse and relatively difficult to detect. Once again, as with fraud and

plagiarism, the example of the graduate student's mentor and that of the rest of the academic community is the best preventive.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Conflicts of interest between graduate students and faculty members may arise in a variety of ways. We have already alluded to the problems that can occur when the research of a graduate student is inadequately acknowledged by faculty, either by failure to footnote properly or to give co-authorship credit. But another set of professional interpersonal relationships must be handled with great care if the integrity of graduate study is to be preserved. As continuing formal education becomes more common and as academics begin to become involved in the world of business, the possibility of a business relationship between student and teacher becomes greater. All of us are familiar with the kind of conflict of interest which may arise through nepotism, that is, when a person serves in an administrative or supervisory relationship to those who are related to him or her by blood or marriage. Most universities have rules that try to regulate professional relationships in such cases. Many faculty members are reluctant to have their own sons, daughters, or spouses take their courses for credit on the grounds that such students may be perceived by others to have an unfair advantage. A business relationship including a consulting one must evoke the same kind of caution. And a student should be careful about working for a company owned or administered by faculty involved in the student's degree work.

REGULATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA 1.0065 Prohibited Consensual Relationships. (1) It is the policy of the University that faculty adhere to the proper role as teacher, researcher, intellectual mentor and counselor and not engage in conduct that calls into question the integrity of the evaluative or other academic processes related to students. It is also the policy of the University that faculty refrain from exploiting or coercing students or creating the appearance of exploitation or coercion. Consistent with these policies, the following romantic or sexual relationships between faculty and students are prohibited: (a) Sexual or romantic relationships between faculty and undergraduate students, regardless of academic discipline, department, or college affiliation; and (b) Sexual or romantic relationships between faculty and graduate or professional students when both parties are affiliated with the same field, degree program or department, and under any circumstances in which the faculty member directly or indirectly exercises academic, evaluative, or supervisory authority over the student, or may be reasonably expected to do so in the foreseeable future. (2) Faculty who have, or have had, a sexual or romantic relationship with a student are prohibited from directly or indirectly exercising academic, evaluative, or supervisory authority over that student. Relationships that pre-date one or both parties' affiliation with the University and that would otherwise be prohibited under this regulation shall be promptly disclosed by the faculty member to his or her dean or designee. (3) Violations of this regulation by faculty will result in disciplinary action up through dismissal. Authority: BOG Regulation 1.001 History: New 06-06-19 (BOT approved).

### **HIPAA & Privacy: General Awareness**

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) is a broad federal law that is in part designed to provide national standards for protection of certain health information. As required by HIPAA, the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) promulgated complex regulations known as the Privacy Rule, which implement the federal law.

All faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and business associates who work in or for a University of Florida medical component or an affiliated entity are required to complete specialized training about privacy and security on an annual basis. The program maintains records of training compliance for the Rehabilitation Science students. Training certification expires on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, regardless of when the training was taken.

Information about HIPAA training can be found here: <https://training.it.ufl.edu/training/items/uf-hipaa-trainings.html>

## **Health Information Confidentiality Statement**

All UF workforce members in any of its healthcare components or affiliated entities are required to complete the Confidentiality Statement attestation. This is included in the HIPAA & Privacy: General Awareness (PRV800) training module, upon hire or enrollment, and annually thereafter.

## **Blood Borne Pathogens**

All Rehabilitation Science students are required to complete an annual online Bloodborne Pathogens training through [myTraining](#). The certificate of completion must be placed in your student record.

## **FERPA**

The 1974 [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#), also known as the Buckley Amendment, is a federal law (20 U.S.C. 1232g) that protects the privacy of a student's educational record. FERPA applies to all educational institutions receiving funds from the United States Department of Education, from kindergarten through university level.

FERPA training is required annually for UF faculty, staff, and graduate assistants. When working with student records, a graduate assistant should work cooperatively with their supervisor to ensure FERPA compliance.

## **XVI. Exit Survey and Alumni**

Prior to graduation, all students are required to complete an [exit survey](#) and exit interview with the Program Director. It is the student's responsibility to complete the exit survey and schedule an exit interview in their final term, prior to graduation.

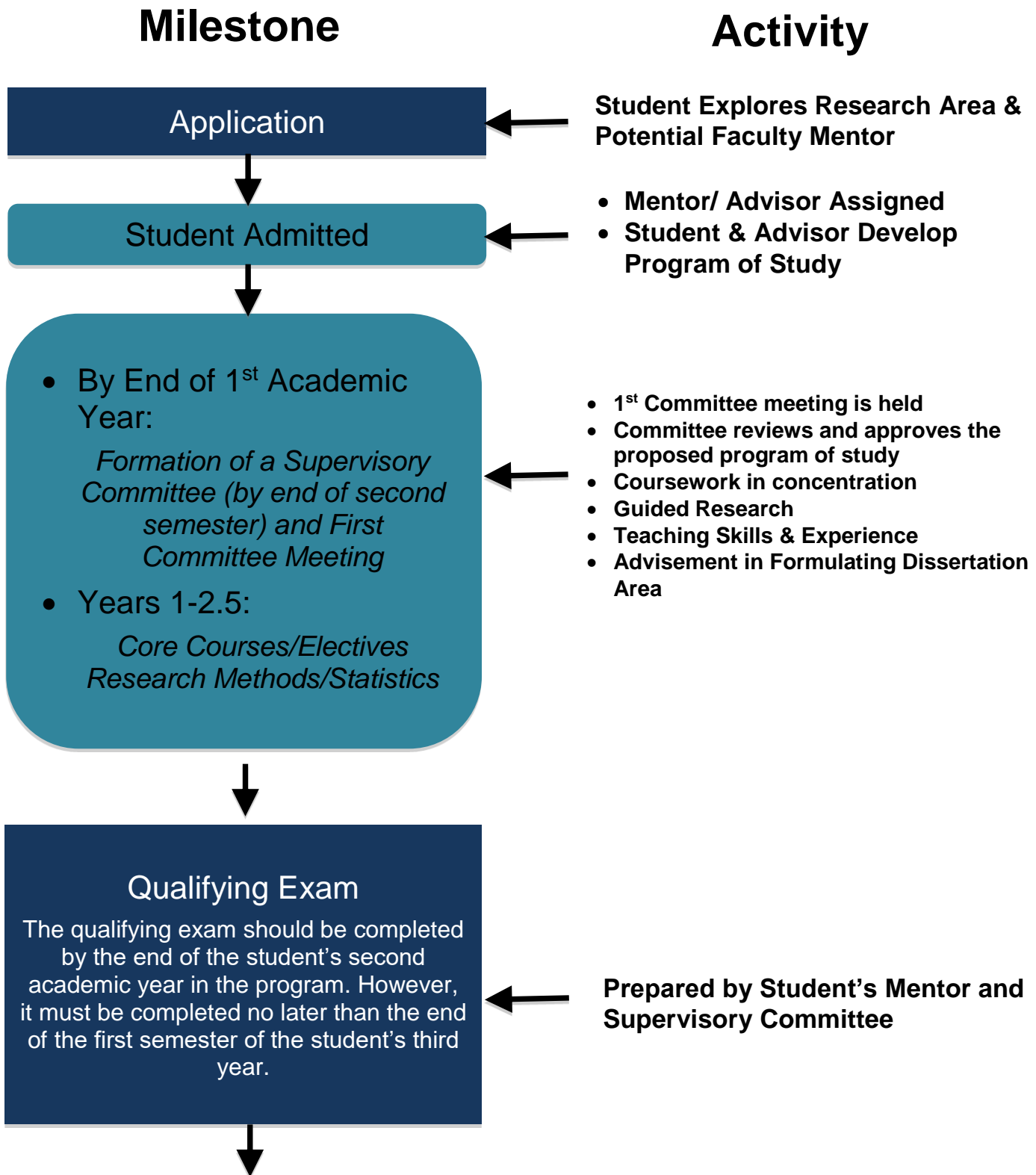
Students should also submit a copy of updated CV and a PDF version of final dissertation to the Program Coordinator.

After graduation, alumni are encouraged to keep in touch with the department. Alumni can contact the Program Director or staff to update contact information, current position, and share success stories.

# **Appendix A**

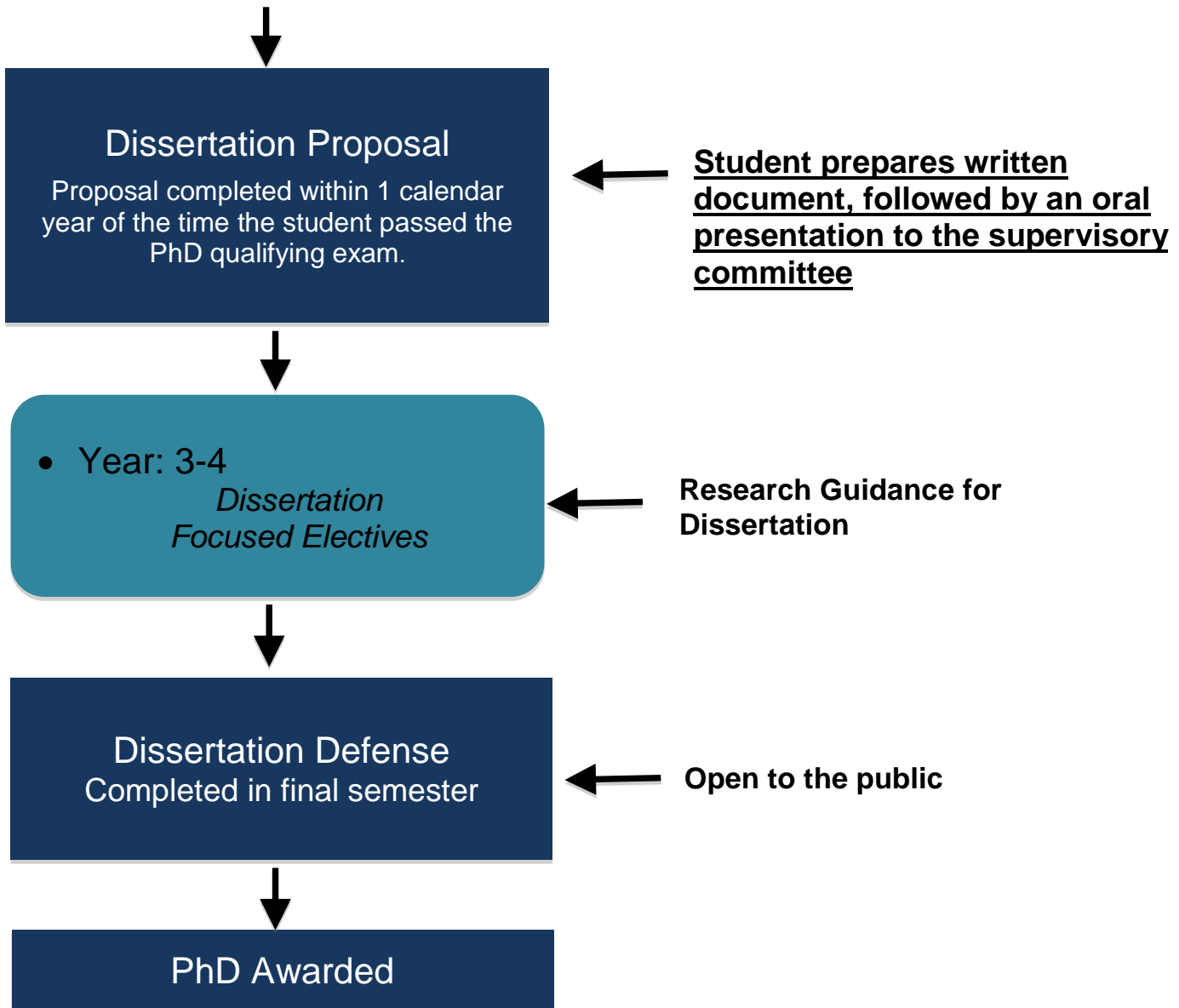
## **Typical RSD Student Path**

## Typical RSD Student Path



## Milestone

## Activity



# **Appendix B**

## **Program & University Forms**



## Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form

The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form is required a minimum of four times during the student's academic program. It should be completed following: 1) each committee meeting; 2) oral portion of qualifying exam; 3) oral portion of dissertation proposal; 4) dissertation defense. Form should be signed within 1 week of meeting/milestone.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the form is provided to the committee chair. Students should contact Program Coordinator two weeks ahead of scheduled meeting. Form will be sent to the committee via DocuSign. The student will be provided a copy of the evaluation once complete and signed.

## Course Registration Form

Use the Rehabilitation Science Course Registration Form to register for courses each semester. The Program Coordinator distributes the form each semester. After you have discussed with your mentor and filled out the form, return to Program Coordinator.

## Supervisory Committee Form

The Program Coordinator enters all supervisory committees into the Graduate Information Management System (GIMS) website. You can find the Rehabilitation Science Supervisory Committee Form [here](#). Submit completed form to the Program Coordinator for your supervisory committee to be entered into GIMS.

## Graduate Credit Transfer Form

Complete the Rehabilitation Science Graduate Transfer of Credit form (available [here](#)) to request a transfer of graduate credits from a prior graduate degree (elsewhere or at UF) and apply them to the program's degree requirements. Student should submit transfer of credit request in their first semester in the program. Submit the form to the Program Coordinator for review by the Program Director. The final decision lies with the Graduate School.

## Admission to Candidacy Paperwork

Approval for admission to candidacy is based on: (1) the academic record of the student; (2) the opinion of the supervisory committee concerning the overall fitness for candidacy; (3) successful completion of the qualifying examination; and (4) an approved dissertation topic (dissertation proposal).

1. Qualifying Examination: Student should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to oral portion of qualifying exam for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form must be completed to document the student has successfully completed the examination.
2. Dissertation Proposal: Student should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to proposal for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form must be completed to document the student has successfully completed the proposal.

Note, the two required public health courses, *PHC 6600: Foundations of Public Health (3 credits or 0 credits)* and *PHC 6001: Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health (3 credits)* must be completed prior to admission to candidacy.

## Degree Application

The degree application is completed online in [One.UF](#) by the published deadline. (Select Academics < Degree/Certificate Application from the Student menu on the left). Students must apply in the term in which they expect to graduate, regardless if they have submitted an application in a previous term.

If a student misses the degree application deadline, they must contact the Program Coordinator as soon as possible to determine if a late application can be submitted. For summer terms, there is no late degree application process.

## **Final Term Checklist**

Consult this checklist to help you with your graduation: [Graduation Checklist](#)

## **Dissertation Checklist**

There are many critical academic dates through the final semester. The [Doctoral Dissertation Submission Checklist](#) walks students through the dissertation submission process and [UF Thesis, Dissertation, and Publication](#) requirements.

## **Transmittal Letter**

The transmittal letter is signed by your primary mentor is required before the first submission of your dissertation. Please see the Program Coordinator prior to the [published deadline](#) to obtain the necessary form- make sure to leave enough time to obtain mentor signature and return to the Program coordinator by the deadline.

## **Final Exam Form**

All members of your supervisory committee sign the final exam form after the dissertation defense. Please see the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to defense to obtain the necessary paperwork.

## **Publishing Agreement**

This form is completed in [GIMS](#) by the student and requires mentor approval. It should be submitted prior to final dissertation submission but after the final exam form has been submitted to Graduate School by the program coordinator. It will also allows the student to print the appropriate ProQuest Publication Agreement which is then submitted with the final dissertation submission.

## **Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Signature Page**

Your supervisory committee signs this form at your defense. If your committee wants revisions made to the dissertation, your chair may hold this form until all stipulations are met. Please see the program coordinator at least one week prior to defense to obtain the necessary paperwork.

# **Appendix C**

## **Qualifying Exam Guidelines**

# Rehabilitation Science PhD Program

## Qualifying Exam Guidelines

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Successful completion of a written and oral qualifying examination is required of all doctoral students as they near the completion of their course work. This document provides details regarding the structure, timing, and format of the proposal.

The qualifying exam should be completed by the end of the student's second academic year in the program. However, it must be completed no later than the end of the first semester of the student's third year. The qualifying examination may be taken no sooner than the third semester of graduate study. The student should have completed the majority of their didactic coursework prior to taking the exam. There must be at least two terms between the oral portion of the qualifying examination and date of the degree. The term the qualifying examination is passed is counted as one of the semesters if the examination occurs before the midpoint of the term, and the graduating term is counted as the second semester. Thus, the oral qualifying exam and date of the degree can be consecutive semesters, but only if the oral examination occurs before the published midpoint of the term. All work for the doctorate must be completed within 5 calendar years after the qualifying examination, or this examination must be repeated.

Prior to scheduling the qualifying exam, the student must have a full committee meeting (in person or via video) during which the committee agrees that the student is ready to take the exam.

It is highly recommended that the student has individual meetings with each committee member to review their expectations for the exam. Students should inquire if there are specific readings or content area that the committee members expect the student to review prior to the exam.

The qualifying exam consists of a written portion, which must be taken first and passed, followed by an oral examination. Together, the written and oral exam will assess the student's: **1.** Understanding of the application of their work to rehabilitation science; **2.** Mastery of course work; and **3.** Readiness to successfully complete a dissertation. The student's supervisory committee will develop challenging questions that broadly cover these three areas. The student will be expected to display "foundational knowledge" in their discipline as well as in relation to their specialized course work, including research methodology. In this context, foundational knowledge refers to the principles, theories and terminology that are essential to proceed with advanced study in a particular discipline. **The student must first pass the written portion and then also pass the oral portion of the qualifying exam to complete the milestone.**

Required content: The written qualifying exam must include a question designed to test the student's foundational knowledge of public health and rehabilitation as covered in *RSD 6110: Rehabilitation Science Theory and Application 1*. This question can be tailored to the student's particular area of interest. If the primary mentor has questions about this, they are encouraged to communicate with the Program Director.

### **Format of the written exam:**

The student will be given three questions prepared by their primary advisor and supervisory committee. The student will write a comprehensive answer in response to each question. Prior to starting the exam, the student should agree with their mentor on a three week "time block" during which the student can focus primarily on the writing of the exam. The mentor and supervisory committee should set requirements for all aspects of the written document so that there is no ambiguity for the student. Details such as due date, font, page limits, margins etc. will be specified before the exam commences. As a general guideline, an answer will typically require 8-10 pages of written text (single spaced, 12-pt font, 1-inch page margins; may include figures or diagrams, as appropriate).

**Option A:**

The student is given one week (5 working days plus 1 weekend) per question to develop a written document. The questions should be designed to test the student's mastery of the required Rehabilitation Science coursework as well as the scientific basis and foundational knowledge of their emphasis area/concentration. The questions should be of sufficient depth such that the committee feels it will take 1 week of work for the student to prepare an adequate answer. The exam is "open book" format and the student is permitted to consult the scientific literature or textbooks, etc. during the exam. However, using the honor system the student is not permitted to seek help from any other individuals including students, faculty or other colleagues.

Written answers should be "scholarly" in all regards. It is appropriate to choose a citation style consistent with journals in the student's area of research.

Most commonly, the student receives 1 question per week. Upon submitting the answer to question 1, the student will be provided question 2. Upon submitting the answer to question 2, the student will be provided question 3. At the end of the third week, the student will submit the response to question 3. The student works on one question at a time and is not permitted to move between questions.

**Option B:**

Alternatively, the mentor and committee may decide for the student to receive all 3 questions simultaneously. In this situation, the student has the three-week period to work on all of the questions and may move between questions as they feel is appropriate. All three questions are submitted at the end of the exam period.

If the student has a graduate minor, they will have one additional week (7 days) and one additional question for a total of four questions. The fourth question should be specific to the subject area of the graduate minor.

Note: The content of the qualifying exam will necessarily differ between students. We have a diverse program and accordingly the areas of emphasis for the exam will vary between different mentors and research areas. It is the job of the primary mentor and supervisory committee to design the exam within the guidelines set forth in this document.

**Option C:**

A mentor and student may petition the steering committee to request a "one day" format for the qualifying examination. In this format, the student takes a "closed book" exam over a 1 day (8 hour) with no outside resources consulted. The required content on public health (discussed above) must still be included. The questions should be designed to test the student's mastery of the required Rehabilitation Science coursework as well as the scientific basis of their emphasis area/concentration. The mentor must present the questions in advance to the Program Director for approval.

**Review of written exam:** The student will turn in each paper to the primary mentor at the end of the week (date and time should be specified in advance, at the time the assignment is given). The mentor will then distribute the paper to the supervisory committee. The student will be graded based on the totality of the answers to questions 1-3. No interim feedback is to be provided to the student during the three week writing period.

Questions 1-3 will be reviewed by the supervisory committee and judged to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If aspects of the work are unsatisfactory, the committee must decide if: **1)** this is considered a failed exam, or **2)** if the student will be given an opportunity to rewrite aspects of the exam.

If an answer is deemed by the committee to be lacking depth or scholarship in certain aspects, but the committee feels that the overall answer will be satisfactory upon revision, then the student should be given the opportunity to rewrite the given question(s). If the committee agrees that revisions are needed, the student will be given written guidelines regarding how to improve the paper. These guidelines will include specific areas for the student

to address prior to committee re-review as well as a hard deadline for completing the revisions. No more than 1 week is permitted for all revisions. Failure to meet the deadline will result in a failed qualifying exam.

If the written answers lack evidence of scholarship throughout and the expected foundational knowledge is absent, this is considered grounds for failure and the exam will not proceed to the oral portion. This is then considered a failed qualifying exam (see “Exam failure” at the end of this document).

### ***Format of the oral examination***

If the three written papers are judged satisfactory, the student can proceed to the oral examination. The oral exam ideally should commence within 1 week of completing the written exam, but no later than 1 month. At the opening of the meeting, the committee should ask the student to leave and spend approximately 10 minutes reviewing the procedure and any other relevant information. The guidelines for the oral exam are as follows:

- The primary mentor should appoint a committee member to serve as the Chair of the meeting.
- The Chair of the meeting is tasked with ensuring that each committee member has the opportunity to ask questions, and that the primary mentor does not insert any bias into the proceedings.
- The External member of the committee should pay particular attention to ensuring the process is conducted in accordance with graduate school guidelines, and that the student is treated fairly.
- The committee will ask questions in turn until each committee member is satisfied that they can determine a grade of pass or fail.
- Content of the questions should pertain to the content of the three written papers as well as any other content deemed necessary to decide whether the student is qualified to continue work toward a PhD degree.
- A “whiteboard” or similar technology should be available for use, if needed.
- Typically, oral exams take 2-3 hours.
- All members of the supervisory committee must attend the oral portion of the qualifying exam. The student and chair or co-chair must be in the same physical location. With approval of the entire committee, other committee members may attend remotely using modern technology. If a supervisory committee member cannot be present, a Graduate Faculty member in the same academic area may substitute for the absent committee member. The student is responsible for securing an appropriate substitute. The chair of the student’s committee must indicate the reason for the absence and state that the absent member agreed to this substitution at the qualifying examination. No substitutes are allowed for the chair, external member, or special appointments to the committee.

### **Review of oral exam:**

Once committee members are satisfied that they have enough information to reach a decision, the student should be excused from the room. The Chair of the committee should then ask each committee member, in turn, to provide a vote of “pass” or “fail” and to provide the reasons for their vote. A vote of pass indicates that the student has mastered the required content at a level required for a PhD student. A vote of fail indicates that the student did not display sufficient mastery of the content. The committee should allow sufficient discussion so that a majority vote can be agreed upon. The committee must choose either pass or fail, there is no option for a “pass with conditions”.

### **Exam failure (written and/or oral):**

To pass the qualifying exam, the student must first pass the written portion and then also pass the oral portion. If the student fails the written portion they will not proceed to the oral portion and it is considered a failed exam. If the student passes the written portion but then fails the oral portion, it is considered a failed exam. The Program Director should be notified of failed exams, in writing, by the primary mentor. A re-examination may be requested, but it must be recommended by the supervisory committee. At least one semester of additional preparation is required before a re-examination can occur. If the student fails the second attempt, they are dismissed from the program.

*Failure of the oral portion of the exam:*

If the student has passed the written exam, but fails the oral portion of the exam, they are permitted to retake the oral exam with approval from the primary mentor and advisory committee. However, at least one semester of additional preparation is required before a re-examination can occur. They do not need to retake the written portion of the exam as long as the oral portion is successfully completed by the next semester.

**Graduate School paperwork required:**

It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator when a qualifying exam is scheduled. Students should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to the oral portion of the qualifying exam for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form will be completed by the committee chair and signed by all committee members to document the milestone. The Program Coordinator will provide the form to the supervisory committee via DocuSign. The milestone is not considered complete until the signed form is returned.

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# **Appendix D**

## **Dissertation Proposal Guidelines**



# Rehabilitation Science PhD Program

## Dissertation Proposal Guidelines

Written document and formal presentation to supervisory committee

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Program Coordinator: Laura Quintana ([lauraq@phhp.ufl.edu](mailto:lauraq@phhp.ufl.edu))

Successful completion of the dissertation proposal is required for all doctoral students. It is completed only after the student has passed the qualifying examination. This document provides details regarding the structure, timing and format of the proposal.

### Overview:

The dissertation proposal is a written plan outlining the student's intended dissertation work. **It consists of a two-step process. First, the student completes a written document, followed by an oral presentation to the supervisory committee.** The dissertation proposal addresses 1) why the research is relevant, 2) the focus of the research, and 3) how the research will be conducted. The written proposal may contain preliminary data but this is not a requirement.

The proposal is presented to the entire supervisory committee for approval, and a committee meeting is conducted in which the student presents a summary of the proposed work (see Rehabilitation Science website for template of the oral presentation). The supervisory committee will then take turns asking questions about the proposal. Once the supervisory committee and student have discussed the proposal in depth, the supervisory committee will decide if the proposal is approved.

One essential role of the primary mentor is to provide guidance on developing the proposal. Thus, students typically work with the primary mentor, and supervisory committee as appropriate, to create the general framework for the proposal. Once the framework is agreed upon, the student prepares the written document on their own without further input from the primary mentor or supervisory committee.

#### I. Timeline

- A. The dissertation proposal cannot take place until the student has passed the PhD qualifying exam.
- B. The dissertation proposal should take place within 1 calendar year of the time that the candidate passed the PhD qualifying exam.

#### II. Role of the primary mentor and supervisory committee in developing the “overall framework” of the proposal. We define “overall framework” as the scientific rationale underpinning the project as well as the research methods needed to complete the project.

- A. The student should work closely with their primary mentor to develop the overall framework, hypotheses, or expectations for the proposal.
- B. The student is free to consult the supervisory committee for input during the development of the proposal framework, but this not a requirement.
- C. Once a framework has been discussed and agreed upon with the primary mentor, the student is responsible for preparing the formal written proposal. This should be done without further consultation with the primary mentor or supervisory committee.

#### III. Format of the written dissertation proposal.

- A. The document must:
  1. Represent a scholarly document in all regards.
  2. Include specific aims and/or research questions, background, rationale, methods, and appropriate literature citations.
  3. Specific formatting requirements (e.g., length, order of text, etc.) are at the discretion of the primary mentor and based on what is appropriate for the student's research aims and design. For example, some primary mentors require that the proposal is done in the format of an NIH F31 research grant while other proposals might use the same format as the final dissertation document required by the graduate school.

#### IV. Grading the proposal.

A. The written document is due to the supervisory committee at least 10 days prior to the evaluation meeting. A decision regarding the acceptability written document will be made by the supervisory committee during the evaluation meeting.

#### B. Grading

1. Pass and/or Pass with minor revisions: The supervisory committee agrees with the proposed research project. There may be minor adjustments needed to the study plan, but the supervisory committee agrees that the proposal is appropriate for a Rehabilitation Science dissertation, and that the written document shows the level of scholarship that is expected of a PhD candidate.
  - a) *If minor edits are needed, the mentor may verify that the minor edits have been completed without review by the entire supervisory committee, but the supervisory committee should be given the opportunity to see the revised document.*
2. Major revision: The supervisory committee has significant concerns with the scholarship of the document, or the proposed experiments.
  - a) The primary mentor will email the Program Director and detail:
    1. Why the committee determined major revisions of the dissertation proposal were given
    2. A copy of the written feedback provided to the student
    3. The due date of the written revisions and date of the evaluation meeting.
    4. Any other concerns about the student's progress.
  - b) Student is allowed one opportunity to revise the document and re-present their proposal to the supervisory committee.
    1. Student will receive written feedback on their dissertation proposal that includes clear instructions for what is expected for the revision. This will be provided by the primary mentor.  
Student will have an opportunity to clarify feedback and expectations.
    2. A due date for the written revisions will be agreed upon by the supervisory committee.
    3. A second evaluation meeting with the supervisory committee will be scheduled by the student. At the meeting, the student will present their revisions.
    4. After reviewing the student's revisions and presentation, if the supervisory committee does not agree the student has earned a "pass" or "pass with minor revisions," the student has failed the dissertation proposal.
3. Failure: If a student fails the dissertation proposal, they will be dismissed from the Rehabilitation Science PhD program.

A failing grade may be given based on the following considerations.

1. Evidence of academic dishonesty or plagiarism
2. Upon revision, the document is not consistent with the expectations of the graduate school's requirements for a PhD-level dissertation, as assessed by the supervisory committee.

In the event the student fails the dissertation proposal, the primary mentor should email the Program Director and detail:

1. Why the committee determined the student failed the dissertation proposal.
2. How the committee voted. (e.g. was it unanimous?)
3. The Program Director will inform the student of dismissal.

## **V. Format of the evaluation meeting**

- A. The student is responsible for scheduling the meeting
- B. All members of the supervisory committee must attend the dissertation proposal meeting. The student and chair or co-chair must be in the same physical location. With approval of the entire committee, other committee members may attend remotely using modern technology.
- C. The student will commence the meeting by providing a short presentation, typically this is 20-30 minutes, but the length can be at the discretion of the mentor. The presentation should address:
  - a) Background/introduction/theoretical framework
  - b) The aim or aims of the proposed work
    - Note - the formatting of this section may vary across students, but should include at least one of the following. Students should discuss with the primary mentor to determine which is appropriate.
    - i. Hypothesis or hypotheses
    - ii. Expectations or predictions
    - iii. Research questions
  - c) Methods
  - d) Preliminary data (if applicable)
  - e) Timeline
  - f) Anticipated results, challenges, and how to manage those
- D. The primary mentor will then ask each supervisory committee member, in turn, to discuss their evaluation of the written document. This may include questions for the student.

## **VI. Paperwork required to document milestone**

- A. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator when a dissertation proposal is scheduled. Students should contact the Program Coordinator two weeks prior to the proposal for the necessary paperwork. The Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form will be completed by the committee chair and signed by all committee members to document the milestone. The Program Coordinator will provide the form to the supervisory committee via DocuSign. The milestone is not considered complete until the signed form is returned to the Program Coordinator and recorded with the Graduate School.
- B. Admission to PhD candidacy: Approval for admission to PhD candidacy is based on: the student's academic record, satisfactory performance on written and oral qualifying exams, and approval of dissertation topic.

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# **Appendix E**

## **Dissertation Defense Guidelines**

# Rehabilitation Science PhD Program

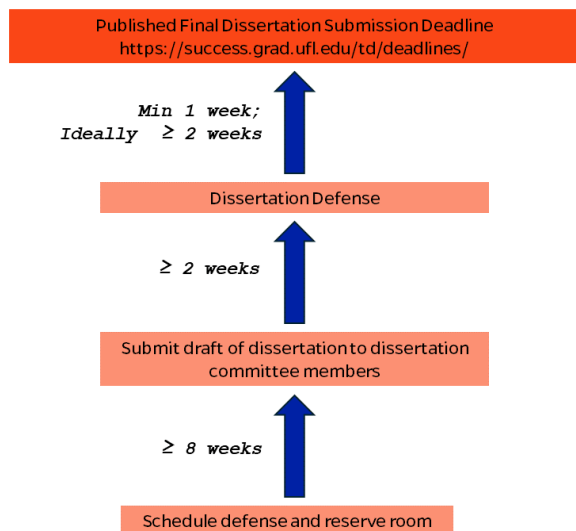
## Dissertation Oral Defense Guidelines

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Program Coordinator: Laura Quintana ([lauraq@phhp.ufl.edu](mailto:lauraq@phhp.ufl.edu))

All Rehabilitation Science PhD candidates are required to take and pass an oral dissertation defense (hereafter referred to as the “defense”) to fulfill the degree requirement. This document provides general guidelines regarding the structure of the defense. It outlines the expected structure of a defense with the understanding that PhD candidate (“candidate”) and supervisory committee chair may reasonably adapt the recommended guidelines to better suite individual projects.

Note: This document does not address all critical deadlines during the final semester. For additional information on milestones, see the Rehabilitation Science Student Handbook and Graduate Student Catalog.

- Scheduling the defense:
  - a. The defense must take place at least one week prior to posted final dissertation submission deadline: <https://success.grad.ufl.edu/td/deadlines/>, but the candidate is strongly encouraged to schedule the defense at least 2 weeks prior to the posted deadline final dissertation submission deadline to allow enough time to edit the written dissertation as requested by the supervisory committee



It is the candidate’s responsibility to schedule the defense with the committee.

Other best practice recommendations include:

- Candidate schedules the defense date with their supervisory committee a minimum of 8 weeks ahead of target defense date. This is because faculty schedules fill up quickly.
- Room for defense is reserved at least six weeks in advance as space also books up quickly. Contact Program Coordinator if there are questions about room reservations.
- Dissertation committee members receive a draft of the dissertation at least 2 weeks prior to the defense date

- b. The candidate and the supervisory committee chair or co-chair (as applicable) must be physically present together at the same location. If necessary, and with approval of the entire committee, other committee members may attend the defense remotely, using modern communication technology.
- Online broadcasting (e.g. Zoom or similar technology):
    - a. When possible, the dissertation defense will be broadcast via appropriate online streaming platform.
    - b. The Program Coordinator will set up the meeting with appropriate security controls (i.e. password required). The candidate will be added as an alternate host of the meeting.

- Advertisement of the defense:
  - a. Candidate notifies Program Coordinator as soon as the defense is scheduled.
  - b. The Program Coordinator distributes public advertisements to program and college listservs and posts to PPHP Digital Signage on the ground floor of Health Profession, Nursing, and Pharmacy (HPNP) Building.
- Final examination forms
  - a. It is the candidate's responsibility to contact the Program Coordinator one or two weeks prior to the dissertation defense for required paperwork. Program Coordinator will provide the forms to the committee via DocuSign:
    - Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) Form: This form verifies that the written portion of the dissertation is complete and ready for final submission. This form should not be signed until the supervisory committee has determined that the written dissertation is complete.
    - Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form: Evaluation will be completed by the committee chair and signed by all committee members to document the milestone.
    - Student will not be able to make their final dissertation submission until both forms are signed and returned to Program Coordinator and submitted to the Graduate School.
- Food and drink policy:
  - a. The defense is a formal academic seminar followed by an oral examination. No food or drink are provided at dissertation defense. Candidates are encouraged to focus on preparing their presentation.
- Format and duration of the defense:
  - a. The Rehabilitation Science Steering Committee recommends that candidates and committee members reserve a 3-hr block of time.
  - b. The candidate should check the audio-visual equipment and verify that the presentation works properly before the start of the defense.
  - c. The candidate's presentation and general audience question and answer session is open to the public. The presentation is a formal scientific seminar and should last ~ 45 minutes. This is followed by a ~15 min Q&A session with the general audience. The PhD supervisory committee does not ask questions during this period.
  - d. A "Closed Door" question and answer session with the PhD committee occurs after the seminar and general audience Q&A session. This session generally lasts between 1-2 hours depending on the number and nature of committee questions. It ends when the committee chair determines that no further questions are required to decide the outcome of the exam. At the conclusion of the questioning, the candidate is asked to leave the room while the committee reaches a decision.
- Role of supervisory committee chair:
  - a. The supervisory committee chair acts as the moderator for the public portion of the defense. His or her duties are to a) introduce the candidate and the supervisory committee, b) explain the general defense process, b) moderate the audience question and answer session, and c) see that all attendees act in a civil manner. The chair is familiar with the procedures of the oral defense and has the authority to suspend proceedings should a situation arise that would not be conducive to a fair examination.
    - In the situation of committee co-chairs, these duties may be split between the faculty acting as chairs.
- Role of committee members:
  - a. Review the written dissertation ahead of defense
  - b. Attend the defense

- c. After the general audience has been excused, participate in the questioning of the candidate
- d. At the conclusion of questioning, vote as to whether the candidate has successfully defended their PhD dissertation
- Additional role of the external member:
  - a. The external member a) represents the interests of the Graduate School and UF, b) knows Graduate Council policies, and c) serves as an advocate for the student.
  - b. If the academic unit's committee activity conflicts with broader University policies or practices, the external member is responsible for bringing such conflicts to the attention of the appropriate governing body.

General structure:

- 1) Introductions
  - a. The chair will introduce the candidate and provide a brief overview of the scholarly work of the candidate.
  - b. Committee chair will introduce the supervisory committee and their roles.
  - c. The chair will provide an overview of the general structure of the defense.
- 2) Formal presentation
  - a. The candidate will give a full-length scientific seminar providing a comprehensive overview of the PhD thesis. (Recommended length: 45 minutes)  
Suggested format includes:
    - i. Rationale/Background
    - ii. Hypothesis/Purpose
    - iii. Methods
    - iv. Results
    - v. Interpretation/Discussion
    - vi. Implications for Policy, Practice and/or Research
    - vii. Conclusions
    - viii. Future research plans
    - ix. Acknowledgements
- 3) Audience Q&A
  - a. Supervisory committee chair will moderate public question and answer session ( ~ 15 minutes).
  - b. Supervisory committee chair will dismiss everyone but the candidate and the committee.
- 4) Closed Door Q&A
  - a. Note: Moderator of the committee question and answer session is usually someone other than the supervisory committee chair.
  - b. Designated committee member moderates the committee question and answer session.
  - c. All committee members have an opportunity to question the student. The recommended order of questioning is to start with the external committee member, and then move to other committee members.
- 5) Deliberation
  - a. Supervisory committee excuses the candidate and deliberate on a) the overall quality and significance of thesis, and b) the defense of his or her findings.
  - b. Each committee member will register a vote of "pass" or "fail"
    - i. Committee chair should cast the last vote to avoid bias (i.e., other committee members should vote first)
- 6) Decision
  - a. Pass: Via DocuSign, committee chair completes Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form, other committee members review evaluation and sign.

- i. If no changes to the written dissertation are requested, the supervisory committee signs the ETD form via DocuSign. If the changes are required, committee waits to sign the form until they are satisfied that the written document is ready for final submission.

Note: In order for the student to graduate in the planned term, Rehabilitation Science Committee Meeting and Milestone Evaluation Form and ETD forms must be completed prior to the posted final dissertation submission deadline: <https://success.grad.ufl.edu/td/deadlines/>

- b. Fail: Committee informs candidate and Rehabilitation Science Program Director. Program Director meets with candidate and committee chair to discuss options.

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