

3341-3-6 Doctoral Requirements - Graduate.

Applicability	All University Units – Graduate Students
Responsible Unit	Office of the Provost
Policy Administrator	Graduate College

(A) Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy describes requirements for the Ph.D., Ed.D., DMA, and DODC doctoral degrees.

This policy does not pertain to the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program. Refer to the DPT Program Handbook for policies specific to that program.

(B) Policy

(1) Credit Hours

A doctoral program must consist of at least sixty credit hours of graduate coursework beyond the master’s degree or ninety credit hours beyond the bachelor’s degree. These hours must include at least sixteen hours of dissertation research. No more than thirty hours of dissertation research credit hours are applicable to the degree.

Transfer of credit from other institutions into graduate degree programs is described in the [Credit Transfer-Graduate policy](#).

(2) Level of Work

The number of 5000-level credit hours that may be counted toward the minimum required credit hours will not exceed ten.

(3) Qualifying Examinations

Programs may require students to take qualifying examinations. Refer to individual program requirements for details.

If a student fails a qualifying examination, they may choose to take a second examination. Dismissal from the doctoral program will result if the second qualifying examination is failed.

(4) Preliminary Examination or Project

Students must successfully complete a preliminary examination or project administered by a preliminary examination or project committee. The preliminary examination or project is both written and oral.

(a) Preliminary Examination or Project Committee

Including the committee chair, a preliminary examination or project committee must have at least four members. In most cases the chair and two committee members come from the student's program of study; however, committee composition is left to the discretion of the program. The committee must include the graduate faculty representative (see Section 5 in this policy). All committee members typically assist in the preparation of the preliminary examination or project. Preliminary examinations or projects must be conducted with the participation of all committee members. All committee members are expected to participate actively in the evaluation of the written and oral components of the exam.

The preliminary examination or project committee chair must have Regular Level I Graduate Faculty Status. All other committee members must have Regular Level I or II, or

Provisional Level II status. Those with Adjunct and Ad Hoc appointments to the Graduate Faculty may serve on preliminary examination or project committees as appropriate to their appointment. Criteria and application process for the various graduate faculty appointments are described in the [Graduate Faculty Status policy](#).

(b) Preliminary Examination or Project Eligibility Criteria

A student may apply to complete the preliminary examination or project after having:

- (i) Removed any conditions of admission;
- (ii) Completed or approached completion of at least sixty hours in the approved course of study beyond the bachelor's degree; and
- (iii) Achieved a cumulative graduate grade point average of at least 3.0.

(c) Preliminary Examination or Project Application

A Preliminary Examination or Project Application must be submitted by the student to the Graduate College at least eight weeks prior to the due date of the examination or project. The application must include the signature of the committee chair and committee members. Upon receipt of the application, the Graduate College will appoint a graduate faculty representative to participate in the preliminary examination or project (see Section 5 in this policy). The graduate faculty representative will verify their agreement to serve on the student's committee by signing the Preliminary Examination or Project Application.

(d) Preliminary Examination or Project Results

Preliminary examination or project results are based on the preliminary examination or project committee's review of both the written portion and the oral defense. A student successfully completes a preliminary examination or project if they have no more than one vote for failure. If the committee stipulates conditions required for successful

completion, the conditions must be met before the examination or project is recorded as satisfactory. The results are reported to the Graduate College by submitting the Preliminary Examination or Project Report form.

(e) Second Attempt

If the student does not pass the preliminary examination or project, they may complete a second examination or project at least four months later. If the student fails the second attempt of the preliminary examination or project, they will be dismissed from the doctoral program.

(5) Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR)

(a) Appointment

When a student submits the Preliminary Examination or Project Application form (see Section 4(c) in this policy), the Graduate College appoints a Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) to the student's committee. The appointment of the GFR must be made before the preliminary examination or project is undertaken. The GFR may assist in the preparation of the examination or project.

Unless a change is requested and approved by the Graduate College, the GFR continues with the student through the preliminary examination or project and dissertation process.

(b) Expectations and Responsibilities

The GFR has two primary responsibilities. First, to assure that all minimum standards of the Graduate College have been met in all aspects of the preliminary examination or project and in the writing and final oral defense of the dissertation. Second, to ensure that the student is treated fairly and equitably in all aspects of the preliminary examination or project and dissertation process.

The GFR is a full member of the student's preliminary examination or project and dissertation committees and must participate in all committee deliberations and actions. The comments and suggestions of the GFR carry equal weight with those of all other committee members.

Results of preliminary examinations or projects conducted without the participation of the GFR are not acceptable. The GFR is expected to contribute to the preliminary examination or project to ensure the Graduate College of the satisfactory quality of the student's performance.

The GFR is expected to read and evaluate the dissertation, and participate in the final oral examination (i.e., dissertation defense). The representative is not to approve the dissertation manuscript unless their suggestions have been considered, their questions have been answered, and there is evidence that the student has successfully completed the dissertation.

The procedures associated with the administration of the preliminary examination or project and the final oral examination (i.e., dissertation defense) are also the province of the GFR, including appropriate scheduling and notification of committee meetings, distribution of material in advance of committee meetings, and the protection of the student's rights.

(6) Dissertation

(a) Dissertation Committee

Including the committee chair, a dissertation committee must have at least four members. In most cases the chair and two committee members come from the student's program of study; however, committee composition is left to the discretion of the program. The committee must include the graduate faculty representative (see Section 5 in this policy). In some programs, the members of the student's preliminary examination or project committee continue to work with the student through the dissertation process. In other programs, some or all dissertation committee members may change. All committee members are expected to participate actively in the evaluation of the dissertation manuscript and final oral examination.

If a student wishes to change committee members after the dissertation topic has been approved, they must submit a Dissertation Committee Change form, which requires

approval of the committee chair, the Graduate Coordinator in the student's program, and the Graduate Dean or designate.

The dissertation committee chair must have Regular Level I Graduate Faculty status. All other committee members must have Regular Level I or II, or Provisional Level II status. Those with Adjunct and Ad Hoc appointments to the Graduate Faculty may serve on dissertation committees if approved by the program, line College, and the Graduate College. Criteria and application process for the various graduate faculty appointments are described in the [Graduate Faculty Status policy](#).

(b) Topic Approval

A student's dissertation topic must be proposed to the student's dissertation committee in writing and defended orally at a dissertation topic approval meeting. Students must submit a Dissertation Topic Approval form to document the dissertation committee's approval of the topic.

If the approved topic or research methodology changes substantially between the time of topic approval and the final defense of the manuscript, students must submit a new Topic Approval Form.

(c) Candidacy

Doctoral candidacy is conferred after successfully completing the preliminary examination or project and securing approval for the dissertation topic by the student's dissertation committee and the Graduate College.

To be eligible for candidacy, the student must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

(d) Dissertation Research Registration and Continuous Registration

Students must register for a minimum of sixteen credits of dissertation research (7990) as a degree requirement. Students are required to maintain continuous registration in dissertation research (7990) each fall and spring term until the dissertation is completed, the final oral exam (i.e., dissertation defense) has been passed, and the dissertation manuscript has been accepted by the Graduate College. Students are not required to register for dissertation research during summer sessions unless they use university services or graduate during that term.

The minimum continuous registration for a student completing a dissertation is one credit hour per semester. Students who do not maintain continuous registration will be required to make up for all terms they have missed. Tuition will be assessed at the current rates when the registration is processed.

(e) Dissertation Manuscript and Final Oral Examination

A degree candidate must submit a complete final draft of the dissertation manuscript to the dissertation committee sufficiently prior to the date set for the final oral examination.

Unless there are intellectual property issues involved, two weeks before the final oral examination is to be held, the program is required to publicize the date, time, and location of the final oral defense to the campus community.

The student must pass a final oral examination (i.e., dissertation defense) administered by the dissertation committee, and secure that committee's approval of the dissertation manuscript. For a student to pass the final oral examination and secure approval of the manuscript, the dissertation committee must either cast a unanimous positive vote or an overall affirming vote with one dissenter.

A Dissertation Defense and Manuscript Approval form, inclusive of all required signatures, must be received in the Graduate College by the published deadline.

Prior to the commencement at which the degree is to be conferred, the final, error-free, properly-formatted dissertation manuscript approved by the dissertation committee must be submitted to OhioLink by the published deadline. Details for this process may be found at the Graduate College's ["Theses & Dissertations" webpage](#).

(f) Re-examination

If a student does not pass the final oral examination, they may take a second examination, four months or more after the date of the first oral examination. Dismissal from the doctoral program will result if the second oral examination is failed.

Equity Impact Statement: The policy has been assessed for adverse differential impact on members of one or more protected groups

Registered Date: September 15, 2022