



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

College of Public Health

Health Policy & Management

*Doctor of Public Health -
Gwinnett Campus*

Student Handbook 2025-2026

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Department of Health Policy and Management

Doctor of Public Health Student Handbook

2025-2026

University of Georgia Policy Statement

The University of Georgia, College of Public Health and the Department of Health Policy and Management reserve the right to change policies, curricula, or any matter in this handbook. Students will be notified of major changes as soon as practicable after they are decided. Students will have the option either to remain under the policies and curricula in place at the time of matriculation or to accept new policies and curricula adopted by the program.

**I. Doctor of Public Health Program Administration
(Updated and Approved on October 16, 2025)***

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***Students will be notified of changes in the names and titles of the program administrators, if any.**

II. The College of Public Health

The College of Public Health (CPH) at the University of Georgia (UGA) promotes health in human populations through innovative research, exemplary education, and is engaged in service dedicated to preventing disease and injury within the state and around the world.

CPH is composed of four academic departments (Epidemiology and Biostatistics (EPID & BIOS), Environmental Health Sciences (EHS), Health Promotion and Behavior (HPB), and Health Policy and Management (HPAM)), and three institutes: Global Health Institute, Institute for Disaster Management, and Institute of Gerontology.

III. The Department of Health Policy and Management

A. Mission, Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The mission of the Department of Health Policy and Management (HPAM) is to advance the health of the public by developing leadership expertise and promoting an evidence-based approach to public and private policy making in health and medicine.

IV. Student Responsibilities and Code of Ethics

A. Academic Honesty and Codes of Conduct

Students at the University of Georgia are responsible for maintaining and adhering to the strictest standards of honesty and integrity in every aspect of their lives. Honesty in academic matters is a large part of this obligation. Specific regulations governing student academic conduct are contained in the UGA Student Handbook and in the UGA culture of honesty policy:

<http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/procedures.html>.

The Office of Student Conduct, located in Memorial Hall, maintains and publishes the Code of Conduct for the University. The Code of Conduct can be found at <https://conduct.uga.edu>.

No student shall perform, attempt to perform, or assist another in performing any act of dishonesty on academic work to be submitted for academic credit or advancement. A violation of the honesty policy does not rest upon intent. Accordingly, a violation of the honesty policy for any reason is subject to disciplinary action.

B. Academic Standards in DrPH Coursework

Students in this program must average at least a B (3.0 on a 4-point system) over all graduate courses attempted. Doctor of Public Health students must maintain “Satisfactory” performance or at least a grade of a B in all DrPH core courses. Two

grades of “Unsatisfactory”, or two grades of “B- (B minus)” and below, or one “unsatisfactory” or one B- and below will result in dismissal from the DrPH Program. Please see section 0.I Program Dismissals (page 9).

V. Administration of the Doctor of Public Health Program

A. Doctor of Public Health Program Director and Academic Advisor

Advising for coursework will take place each semester. The Doctor of Public Health Program Director or a member of DrPH program committee will serve as the advisor for DrPH students regarding core coursework and electives. DrPH students are encouraged to reach out to program committee members to discuss their research ideas and/or to identify their academic advisor.

B. Doctoral Dissertation Committee

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee is selected in consultation with the doctoral student, Academic Advisor, and DrPH Program Director. The committee consists of **no less than two** Graduate Program faculty members from the College of Public Health, the University of Georgia, and **an additional** outside, non-UGA committee member. The committee may be expanded to include additional members. If there are more than three voting members, more than 50% must be members of the UGA Graduate Program Faculty. See section X. Doctor of Public Health Dissertation Research for additional information.

VI. Doctor of Public Health General Information

The Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) program at the University of Georgia is an advanced professional degree program for professionals working in the fields of public health and health care. The program is congruent with the Institute of Medicine’s (IOM) recommendations for linkages of academic and field experiences in public health. The program curriculum is competency-based and is designed to prepare public health professionals with the tools necessary for successful leadership in addressing complex public health problems at the local, state, national, and international levels.

The DrPH curriculum provides students with practical training in management, leadership, policy development, and policy analysis specifically applicable to health sector. Components of the program will include the acquisition of core as well as specialized knowledge through coursework, interdisciplinary seminars, special studies, an Applied Practice Experience (APE) and the development of a doctoral dissertation relevant to the research and practice of public health and health care delivery.

A. Graduates of the Doctor of Public Health program are expected to:

- Act as public health leaders;

- Comprehend and integrate knowledge across traditional academic disciplines;
- Provide sound recommendations and advice to national and international agencies in public health;
- Communicate effectively with governments, academia, non-governmental organizations, and the public.

B. General Degree Requirements

Students in the Doctor of Public Health program must complete 57 graduate credit hours: 30 hours of Core courses, 12 hours of Elective courses, 3 hours of Applied Practice Experience, and a minimum of 12 hours of Dissertation research and preparation.

C. Annual Progress Report

The DrPH Annual Progress Report documents the overall progress the student has made during the past academic year and must be completed by the end of each summer term while in the program. Each student provides a summary of the progress made within the year pertaining to course completion, Applied Practice Experience, and the dissertation product (where applicable). Failure to complete an Annual Progress Report will cause a hold to be placed on registration until the Annual Progress Report has been completed and accepted by the Research Advisor or Academic Advisor and the Program Director.

Students will receive written feedback based on the annual evaluation. The written feedback will indicate if satisfactory progress is/is not being made and recommendations for improvement will be provided to each student.

D. Continuous Enrollment/Residence

A student must be continuously enrolled for a minimum of 2 of the 3 semesters each year (Fall, Spring, and Summer). Students who do not enroll in at least 2 out of 3 semesters each academic year must apply for readmission to the program. If a student is accepted after applying for readmission, the academic rules and standards in effect at the time of readmission will supersede those in effect at the time of initial admission. Additional information can be found at the University of Georgia Graduate School.

[UGA Policies – Policy Library – University of Georgia](#)

E. Doctoral Time Limits

The Department of Health Policy and Management requires that Doctor of Public Health students complete the required and elective coursework and be admitted into candidacy within **six** years of matriculation or risk having to repeat course work and comprehensive exams. Transferred credits must be within the six-year period as well. This time requirement dates from the first registration for graduate courses on a student's program of study. See section IX.D for time limit post candidacy.

Per UGA Graduate School policy, doctoral students must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree and the degree must be awarded within **eight (8) calendar years** after initial enrollment/registration in the program. For example, if the date of first registration for a doctoral student is the fall semester of 2024, the eight-year time limit expires in summer semester of 2032. The student's time-to-degree clock starts with the first course approved for inclusion in their doctoral Program of Study, or the date of matriculation into the program, whichever occurred earlier. Individual colleges/schools or academic programs may have more restrictive requirements than the above stated Graduate School policy. The eight-year time limit does not include approved periods of leave. Additionally, doctoral time to degree is calculated separately for degrees obtained in each academic program.

Students who fail to complete their degrees within eight years after initial enrollment will be considered as not making satisfactory progress to degree completion and will be dismissed from Graduate School. The Graduate School will notify all doctoral students when they have reached the 7-year mark to warn them about the impending 8-year degree time limit.

Doctoral students in good academic standing who experience extenuating circumstances that prevent them from completing their degrees within the requisite 8 years may petition for an extension of the degree time limit to the Vice Provost/Dean of the Graduate School. Such circumstances include military obligations, family and medical challenges, and other life events. A petition for an extension of the degree time limit requires support from the major professor, DrPH Program Director, and academic unit head. The maximum extension of the degree time limit that may be granted is 24 months and **the total time to degree shall not exceed 10 years**. Please refer to UGA Graduate School policy on <https://grad.uga.edu/policy-update-doctoral-time-limits/> for details on how to request an extension.

F. Satisfactory Progress Towards Degree Completion

Doctor of Public Health students must maintain "Satisfactory" performance in HPAM 9300: Doctoral Dissertation. Two (2) "Unsatisfactory" grades in HPAM 9300 will result in dismissal from the DrPH program. Please see Section VI.I program dismissal policy on page 9.

G. Transfer of Credits

No courses taken prior to a doctoral student's admission to their degree program at The University of Georgia are eligible for transfer. Doctoral students who have matriculated and are active in the Doctor of Public Health program may take courses at other accredited institutions and have up to **nine** semester hours of credit transferred to the UGA program of study with the prior approval of the

DrPH Program Director.

H. Electives

Students may select their electives from a list of preapproved courses or choose courses not appearing on this list based on a discussion with their academic or dissertation advisor. Advisors should report all non-preapproved elective selections to the DrPH Program Director in writing. The DrPH Program Director will provide a list of preapproved courses at the start of the Fall semester or as appropriate.

Students may use HPAM 9000 (Special Topics) to fulfill the requirement of **one** but **no more than one** elective course. Students who intend to use HPAM 9000 to fulfill **one** of the elective requirements must, after consultation with the instructor, submit a draft syllabus to the DrPH Program Director for approval.

Note: The five MPH core courses within the College of Public Health will **not** apply to the DrPH degree as they are considered as prerequisite for DrPH program admission. The five courses are: BIOS 7010 – Introduction to Biostatistics I; EHSC 7010 – Fundamentals of Environmental Health; EPID 7010 – Introduction to Epidemiology I; HPAM 7010 – Introduction to Health Policy and Management; HPRB 7010 – Social and Behavioral Foundations of Public Health. In addition, **HPAM 7410** cannot be used as one of the electives as its doctoral equivalent, HPAM 8410, is a core course required for DrPH students.

I. Program Dismissals

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior while enrolled in the graduate program and to act in a manner that demonstrates integrity and respect for others and the campus environment. Students are expected to adhere to all UGA policies governing research and academic conduct, non-discrimination and anti-harassment, and workplace violence. See the following links for detailed information:

- UGA Academic Honesty: <https://honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/>
- UGA Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy: <https://eoo.uga.edu/laws-policies-and-regulations/civil-rights-and-ndah/non-discrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy/>
- UGA Workplace Violence Policy: <http://safeandsecure.uga.edu/workplace.html>

A student who has not made satisfactory and sufficient progress towards the completion of the degree will be dismissed from the program at the end of the semester in which failure to progress occurs. A lack of satisfactory progress towards the degree is defined as: 1) Two consecutive semesters with a semester GPA lower than 3.0, 2) Two failed attempts at the comprehensive examination, 3) Receipt of a grade of “Unsatisfactory” in two semesters of HPAM 9300, 4) Failure to comply with degree program time limitations, 5) Failure to comply with

Program, Department, Graduate School, and University policies and procedures (i.e., continuous enrollment and Academic Honesty).

J. Appeals

Students may appeal the decision of dismissal from the Doctor of Public Health program to the Department of Health Policy and Management, College of Public Health Curriculum and Academic Programs Committee (CAPC), and the Dean of the College of Public Health within 30 days of being notified of the decision.

Additional information can be found at:

<https://grad.uga.edu/development/academic/research-scholarship/academic-regulations-procedures/>

K. Doctor of Public Health Program Competencies

Doctor of Public Health Program Competency	Course #	Course Name
Foundational Competencies		
Data & Analysis		
1. Explain qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods and policy analysis research and evaluation methods to address health issues at multiple (individual, group, organization, community or population) levels.	HPAM 8300	Research Methods
	HPAM 8850	Economic Evaluation Methods in Health
	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
2. Design a qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, policy analysis or evaluation project to address a public health issue.	HPAM 8300	Research Methods
	HPAM 8850	Economic Evaluation Methods in Health
3. Explain the use and limitations of surveillance systems and national surveys in assessing, monitoring and evaluating policies and program and to address a population's health.	HPAM 8410	Informatics and Analytics in Health
	HPAM 8840	Managerial Epidemiology
Leadership, Management & Governance		
4. Propose strategies for health improvement and elimination of health inequities by organizing stakeholders, including researchers, practitioners, community leaders and other partners.	HPAM 8840	Managerial Epidemiology
	HPAM 9100	Doctor of Public Health Seminar I
	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
5. Communicate public health science to diverse stakeholders, including individuals at all levels of health literacy, for purposes of influencing behavior and policies.	HPAM 8450	Policy Evaluation in Public Health
	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
	HPAM 9100	Doctor of Public Health Seminar I
6. Integrate knowledge, approaches, methods, values and potential contributions from multiple professions and systems in addressing public health problems.	HPAM 8840	Managerial Epidemiology
	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
	HPAM 8450	Policy Evaluation in Public Health
7. Create a strategic plan.	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
8. Facilitate shared decision making through negotiation and consensus-building methods.	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
9. Create organizational change strategies.	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
10. Propose strategies to promote inclusion and equity within public health programs, policies and systems.	HPAM 8670	Law and Ethics for Public Health Practitioners
11. Assess one's own strengths and weaknesses in leadership capacities, including cultural proficiency.	HPAM 9100	Doctor of Public Health Seminar I
	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health

12. Propose human, fiscal and other resources to achieve a strategic goal.	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
13. Cultivate new resources and revenue streams to achieve a strategic goal.	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
	HPAM 8850	Economic Evaluation Methods in Health
Policy & Programs		
14. Design a system-level intervention to address a public health issue.	HPAM 8840	Managerial Epidemiology
	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
	HPAM 9300	Doctor of Public Health Dissertation Research
15. Integrate knowledge of cultural values and practices in the design of public health policies and programs.	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
16. Integrate scientific information, legal and regulatory approaches, ethical frameworks and varied stakeholder interests in policy development and analysis.	HPAM 8760	Law and Ethics for Public Health Practitioners
	HPAM 9100	Doctor of Public Health Seminar I
17. Propose interprofessional team approaches to improving public health.	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
Education & Workforce Development		
18. Assess an audience's knowledge and learning needs.	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
19. Deliver training or educational experiences that promote learning in academic, organizational or community settings.	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
20. Use best practice modalities in pedagogical practices.	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
Additional Competencies: Health Management and Policy		
1. Design an economic evaluation of a public health intervention, program, or policy	HPAM 8850	Economic Evaluation Methods in Health
2. Evaluate critical needs in health information systems and data systems of a healthcare or public health organization	HPAM 8410	Informatics and Analytics in Health
3. Develop proficiency in data science and analytics to address research and practical questions related to population health and management	HPAM 8410	Informatics and Analytics in Health
	HPAM 8300	Research Methods
4. Apply and then critically critique relevant ethical and legal principles to decision-making in public health settings	HPAM 8760	Law and Ethics for Public Health Practitioners
5. Develop financial and business plans for public health programs and services	HPAM 8700	Management of Public Health Organizations

VII. Doctor of Public Health Curriculum

Students in the Doctor of Public Health program must complete the credit hours in four categories: (1) Doctor of Public Health Core (2) Elective Coursework (3) Public Health Practicum and (4) Doctoral Dissertation Research. The Doctor of Public Health Program Committee has general oversight of the academic aspects of all students and candidates.

Doctor of Public Health Requirements and Electives			
Semester	Hours	Course #	Course Name
Fall 1	3	HPAM 8840	Managerial Epidemiology
Fall 1	3	HPAM 8760	Law and Ethics for Public Health Practitioners
Spring 1	3	HPAM 8850	Economic Evaluation Methods in Health
Spring 1	3	HPAM 8700	Management of Healthcare Organizations
Spring 1			Optional Electives *
Summer 1	3	HPAM 9100	Doctor of Public Health Seminar I
Summer 1			Optional Electives *
Fall 2	3	HPAM 8450	Policy Evaluation in Public Health
Fall 2	3	HPAM 8410	Informatics and Analytics in Health
Fall 2			Optional Electives *
Spring 2	3	HPAM 8300	Research Methods
Spring 2	3	HPAM 9200	Doctor of Public Health Seminar II
Spring 2			Optional Electives *
Summer 2	3	HPAM 8800	Leadership in Public Health
Fall 3/Summer 2	3	PBHL 9560	Applied Practice Experience
Fall 3			Optional Electives *
Fall 3	0		Comprehensive Examination
Spring 3			Elective*/ and/or Doctoral Research (HPAM 9300)^
Summer 3			Elective*/ and/or Doctoral Research (HPAM 9300)^
Fall 4 graduation			Doctoral research (HPAM 9300) ^
	<p>* Total credit hours for electives: 12 (up to 9 credit hours can be transferred). Students can choose to take elective courses starting from the spring semester of Year 1 or later but the total number of credits must satisfy program requirements. A minimum of <u>four</u> electives are required.</p> <p>^ Minimum total credit hours required for Doctoral Research: 12</p>		
57 Hours	Minimum Required for Degree Completion		

VIII. Doctor of Public Health Applied Practice Experience Requirement

The Applied Practice Experience (APE) provides students with an opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired through their coursework and further develop and demonstrate attainment of program competencies. All Doctor of Public Health students are required to engage in one or more applied practice experiences in which they are required to complete at least one project that is meaningful for an organization and to advance public health practice. Relevant organizations include governmental, non-governmental, non-profit, industrial, or for-profit settings. ***The student's own work setting may be used; however, the selected project must not be in the realm of the day-to-day work responsibilities of the student.*** The work product may be a single project or a set of related projects that demonstrate depth of competence. The applied practice experience must be approved, in advance, by the Doctor of Public Health Program Director and DrPH Practice Coordinator.

Students will be eligible to sign up for the three-credit hour course to complete the Applied Practice experience if the following conditions are met:

1. The student is in good academic standing as outlined by the DrPH program and Graduate school with a GPA of 3.0 or better and no grade less than B in core courses.
2. The student has demonstrated professionalism during coursework.
3. The student has completed at least two semesters in the DrPH program and completed all core courses, however, the final core course and the APE course may be taken concurrently.
4. The student has met all departmental requirements, completed APE Advisement, submitted all required documentation, and received approval from the DrPH Program Director and DrPH Practice Coordinator.

IX. Comprehensive Doctoral Examination

All Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) students will be required to pass a formal, comprehensive examination consisting of written and oral components that address the DrPH program competencies before being admitted into doctoral candidacy. To be eligible to sit for the examination, a student must have completed all DrPH core coursework, or must be enrolled in the remaining, not yet completed courses in the semester of the examination. This does not include the DrPH Applied Practice Experience or elective requirements, which may be completed following the examination. Some additional details on comprehensive examination are provided in Annex A of the handbook.

A. Examination Content

The written examination will consist of broad integrative case studies addressing the breadth of competencies on the following Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) domains: Data & Analysis; Policy & Programs; Leadership, Management & Governance; and Education and Workforce Development.

B. Examination Format

The comprehensive exam has a written and an oral component. Students who pass the written component will be invited to take the oral comprehensive exam. The written part will evaluate students' grasp on the three broad areas: data analysis; leadership, management and workforce; and policy and programs. The oral exam may include topics related to the coursework and written comprehensive exam. Moreover, one part of the oral comprehensive will be dedicated to presenting the student's dissertation prospectus. The candidate can expect questions based on the proposed research project. See more detail on the comprehensive exam in Annex A

C. Admission to Candidacy

Admission to candidacy for a doctoral student is requested immediately after the successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The following is a complete list of requirements for admission to candidacy:

1. All prerequisites set as a condition to admission have been satisfactorily completed;
2. Completed all coursework and the public health practicum requirement;
3. The final program of study has been approved by the Doctor of Public Health Program Director and the HPAM Director of Graduate Studies;
4. An average grade point of 3.0 (B) has been maintained on all graduate courses taken and on all completed courses on the program of study (no course with a grade below "B-" may be included in the final program of study);
5. Comprehensive doctoral examinations have been passed.

D. Time Limit on Candidacy

The dissertation must be completed within **five** years following admission to candidacy. Student should carefully select the scope of the dissertation so that the work can be completed within the time limit. *Student must complete all doctoral degree requirements in **eight** years.* See Section VI.E for time limit on coursework.

In exceptional circumstances, a student may request extension of time limit by providing a detailed timeline and plan for completing the dissertation with supporting letters from the chair of the dissertation committee, the DrPH Program Director and the Graduate Director of HPAM Department. This request for an extension of time must include the specific reasons that the student did not complete the requirements in the time allotted. The student must include a specific timeline for the completion of degree requirements. The student's major professor must review the student's request and write a letter to the Vice Provost and Dean of the UGA Graduate School stating approval or disapproval of the petition. The DrPH Program Director and department head must review the major professor's recommendation and indicate their concurrence by writing an additional letter. If they do not concur with the recommendation, further information should be provided by them in the letter. An extension of time may be granted only on conditions beyond the control of the student.

X. Doctor of Public Health Dissertation Research

The University of Georgia Doctor of Public Health integrates foundational knowledge, such as public health theories and methods; competencies of leadership, management, communication and innovation to enable change and field engagements to translate knowledge into practice. The culminating experience will provide the candidate with an opportunity to practice and develop their personal leadership skills while engaging in a project that contributes substantively to public health results. The dissertation is expected to analyze and propose solutions to health policy, management or leadership issues by applying new theoretical or analytic approaches to current problems in health care.

Additional guidelines are in UGA DrPH Dissertation Guide.

A. Selection of Dissertation Topic and Format

Each candidate will prepare a dissertation demonstrating the ability to analyze and solve complex, practice-based problems in public health policy, management and leadership. The dissertation should reflect a variety of perspectives needed to meet major public health challenges and should include explicit solutions, strategies and implications for high-level public health and health care leadership officials. Students will apply DrPH foundational and additional competencies in the process of developing and executing their dissertation projects. Thus, an acceptable DrPH dissertation will:

- Address a complex public health problem of strategic importance to public health;

- Advance or contribute to the evidence base of public health practice;
- Utilize an explicit methodology and study design that clearly specified and specifically designed to address the problem selected for investigation, as effectively addressing complex problems often requires an integration of analytic methods;
- Draw upon and be grounded in both the scholarly and practice literature in an effort to establish a conceptual framework for the dissertation;
- Contain clear public health leadership implications;
- Must be publishable findings or research.

The format will be determined largely by the nature of the public health problem addressed. Appropriate dissertation formats may include:

- Case studies and policy, management, and leadership analyses;
- Development of new practice interventions;
- Design and implementation of public health programs;
- Program or policy evaluations;
- Historical program or policy analyses;
- Substantial legislative proposals.

The Doctor of Public Health dissertation could be based on original and/or outside data collection by the student. Use of secondary data for Doctor of Public Health dissertation is also acceptable, if appropriate for the dissertation topic selected.

B. Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee will consist of at least 3 members: at least 2 UGA Graduate Program Faculty members (1 must be from the Department of Health Policy and Management), and 1 outside practitioner in the related field of research. Chair of the dissertation committee must be a regular Graduate Program Faculty at College of Public Health, UGA. A regular Graduate Program Faculty at other colleges and units of UGA may serve as a Chair of the DrPH dissertation committee with strong justifications.

To ensure an objective evaluation of the dissertation, no immediate family member (spouse, parents, siblings, children, and in-laws of the same) of the student nor anyone who is in romantic relationship with the student can serve on the student's dissertation committee.

Outside committee members must:

- hold a terminal degree in their field or have a high level of expertise,
- be approved by the DrPH Program Director and the Graduate School.

C. Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation proposal should provide a clear and thorough plan of the proposed research. The proposal should include the first three chapters of what will become the dissertation. The three chapters are: Chapter 1: Introduction and Background;

Chapter 2: Literature Review; Chapter 3: Methods.

The students should request approval of the proposal using “Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) Program Dissertation Proposal Defense Form” from their committee and file the signed form with the DrPH Program for record.

Students must be registered for at least 3 credit hours during the semester they defend their dissertation proposal.

D. Doctor of Public Health Final Dissertation Defense

Candidates must be registered during the semester they have their final oral defense of their dissertation. If the student plans to defend during the summer, he or she must be registered for dissertation credit hours during the summer session.

Annex A: Comprehensive Examination

All students eligible to take the comprehensive examination should contact the DrPH Program Director of their intention to take the examination at least three months prior to the scheduled examination start date. The examination will be made accessible via eLC beginning at 12:01 am on the start date of the examination. There will be two offerings of the comprehensive examination in an academic year: around mid-October and around mid-March. Students can select any of these two offerings to sit for the examination.

The comprehensive examination is divided into three sections. The sections are listed below:

1. Data and Analysis,
2. Leadership, Management and Workforce, and
3. Policy and Programs.

Each section will include a multi-part question or case study that is reflective of the programmatic competencies and the relevant content covered in the DrPH core courses. Students will have an opportunity to attend an information session to ask questions about the format of the examination and/or any other examination related issues. The faculty members writing the questions will be present in the information session to provide general guidelines on the examination and type of questions to expect.

Each exam will be deidentified and graded blindly. Students should not mention their names or any other form of personal identification in their responses to the questions. Full examination instructions will be sent to students via email and/or placed on the eLC Doctor of Public Health Comprehensive Examination webpage. The faculty members writing the examination questions will grade the questions and the grades will be sent to the DrPH Program Director of the Department within three weeks after the final comprehensive examination date.

A grade of 75% or higher must be achieved in order to successfully pass each section of the exam. DrPH Program Director of the Department will notify students on the examination results within five weeks from the final day of the comprehensive examination. After successful completion of all three sections of the written comprehensive examination, the student can proceed to the oral comprehensive examination.

In the oral portion of the comprehensive examination, student may present a potential dissertation prospectus, explaining the problem being addressed by the proposed dissertation research, methodology to be used (including feasibility), analytical or statistical approaches, preliminary results if available and policy relevance. All students passing the written examination are required to take the oral comprehensive

examination in the same semester the written examination was successfully completed.

In case a student fails one or more sections of the comprehensive examination, the sections in which the student failed will be graded by second readers selected by the DrPH Program Director of the Department. The second readers will evaluate the examination questions independently. DrPH Program Director will receive the grades from the first and second graders. If the second grader's grade agrees with the first grader, the final grade on that question will be "Fail". In case of disagreement on the grade by first and second grader (first grader grading the section as "fail" but the second grader grading the section as "pass"), the DrPH Program Director will arrange a meeting of the two graders to come up with a consensus grade and the consensus grade will be the final grade for the section. If a student fails one section out of three sections of the examination, the student will be permitted to retake that section in the next offering of the comprehensive examination. If a student fails two or more sections of the examination in the first attempt, she/he will have to retake the entire comprehensive examination (all three sections) in a future offering of the comprehensive examination, preferably the next offering of the comprehensive examination.

A student may request reevaluation of grades assigned on the comprehensive examination by notifying the Director of Graduate Studies in writing within 10 days after the receipt of the results via e-mail. The Director of Graduate Studies will review the request based on the information provided in the request and, if needed, will request the graders to reevaluate the sections based on the specific issues and concerns raised in the reevaluation request. The graders will provide their reevaluation results within a week after the start of the reevaluation process.

If a student fails one or more sections of the comprehensive examination in the second attempt, the student will immediately be dismissed from the Doctor of Public Health Program.

Annex B: Dissertation Proposal Defense Form

UGA DrPH Dissertation Proposal Defense Form (available via MS Forms)

Student Name: _____ UGA ID Number_

Date (Semester/Year) of Comprehensive Exam Completion: _____

Approved Program of Study Attached: Yes ☐ No ☐

Date of Proposal Defense: _____

Proposal Title: _____

Student Signature: _____

Vote of Student's Advisory Committee:

Print Name	Signature	Date	Pass	Fail
_____ (chair)	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ (member)	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
_____ (ext. member)	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Approvals

Program Director Date

Department Head Date