



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

2017-2018

**PhD
Student
Handbook**

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WELCOME FROM THE INTERIM PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Welcome to the PhD program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville!

You are about to embark on a challenging – perhaps the most challenging of your life - and exciting experience. Few persons ever have the opportunity to pursue a doctoral degree and go through the experience of doctoral level education. You were selected to be in this program because faculty members believe you have great promise and will one day make important contributions to the field of Social Work. Each year we look forward to getting to know and work with the incoming Ph.D. class. The College faculty members are here to help you, answer your questions, and mentor you along the way.

I hope that you take advantage of the wonderful resources you will have in not only our outstanding College faculty but also The University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Our responsibility is to help mentor you on your way to being a researcher, scholar, and educator. You will have many opportunities in the next three years to learn, grow, and develop.

Ph.D. level education is, quite frankly, like nothing you have ever experienced. You will be asked to become a critical thinker, an independent learner, and eventually someone who is committed to the development and dissemination of new knowledge. You will probably work harder and more thoughtfully in the next three years than you ever have before. The rewards at the end of this journey are, however, well worth it! There is, in my opinion, no better or fulfilling career than that of a researcher, scholar, and educator. As Interim Program Director I will do all that I can to be supportive of you while you are at the College. My door is almost always open and I hope that you will feel free to drop by often. Again, welcome to the College of Social Work and my very best wishes for you here at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William R. Nugent".

Dr. Bill Nugent
Interim PhD Program Director

College Mission

Grounded in social justice, we equip professional social workers with the skills needed to serve diverse and vulnerable populations. We build knowledge by conducting groundbreaking research that focuses on solving social problems. We engage with our communities through meaningful service.

College Vision

We envision a socially just world that prioritizes the needs of the most vulnerable.

College Values

Human Dignity: Commitment to promote social and economic equity

Responsive Education and Research: Critically informed and practice-relevant professional formation

Engagement: Collaboration with communities to achieve and sustain well-being

INTRODUCTION FROM THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

The purpose of this manual is to provide information concerning the Ph.D. program in Social Work. While an attempt has been made to be thorough, the manual is neither exhaustive nor is the accuracy of information in this handbook assured since policies can change between revisions of this handbook. The definitive guide for graduate students is the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog.

Graduate students are expected to be aware of all regulations governing their work and study at the university. This means that it is the student's responsibility to become familiar not only with this manual but with the current University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog as well.

The student should always verify any information regarding college and university policy with the current handbook and the current catalog. If information is unavailable or lacks clarity, the student should ask his/her advisor, dissertation committee chair, or Ph.D. Program Director.

Many rules and regulations govern a student's progress through the Ph.D. program. For the most part, requirements and deadlines are firm with few if any exceptions allowed. However, there may be extenuating circumstances which might justify modification of these requirements and deadlines. If a student feels that special consideration should be given to his/her situation, s/he should discuss the matter with the dissertation/comprehensive committee chair or Ph.D. program director, who can determine whether or not the Ph.D. program committee or the Graduate School should be petitioned.

The PhD Program

The purpose of social work education at the Ph.D. level is to develop an understanding and appreciation of the scientific method so that graduates can improve and extend the knowledge base of social work practice, and inform social policy, through empirical research. Graduates of Ph.D. programs assume leadership roles in social work education, research, and practice.

The Ph.D. program in social work provides training in social and behavioral science research methods

and the opportunity for students to apply these methods to social problems and social work practice areas. Ph.D. research is directed toward developing knowledge that can be used by social work educators, practitioners, administrators, and policy makers. Graduates of the Ph.D. program are prepared to contribute to the improvement of the design and implementation of social services and to develop and disseminate social work knowledge through research and teaching.

Upon completion of the Ph.D. program, students are expected to meet the following program competencies:

Demonstrate expert knowledge in a focused substantive area relevant to social work.

Conduct independent and original scientific research that advances knowledge in a substantive area.

Communicate scientific findings in an effective way to a range of audiences (from lay persons to other scientists).

Secure funding for a substantive research agenda.

Teach students the knowledge, skills, and values they need to be proficient social workers in a substantive area.

Student Responsibilities

Students are expected to be familiar with and follow the regulations and requirements outlined in this manual and in the current University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog. Though program staff may periodically notify students of deadlines, etc., **it is ultimately the student's responsibility to fulfill requirements and meet deadlines.**

Students are expected to attend classes, to complete assignments on time, and to participate actively in class discussions.

Students receiving research assistantships are expected to diligently fulfill the work expectations of their award. Assistantships are granted for periods of one academic year and will be renewed assuming funds are available and the student's performance meets the expectations required of graduate education. Each student will be assigned a faculty supervisor to whom the student will report for assignments. The student should request a copy of the university's policy on the administration of graduate assistantships. Additional information is provided in the current University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog.

Students have the responsibility of being informed of UTK policies and procedures as described in the current University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog, Hilltopics, and other periodic official updates from the Graduate School and the Ph.D. program office. The **scheduling of examinations (particularly comprehensive examinations and dissertation defenses) is the student's responsibility, as is registration and reporting to the Graduate School.**

Ethical, Academic, and Professional Conduct

Students in a graduate program in social work are simultaneously participating in both academic and professional worlds. This means that the students' behavior must be governed by the norms of

academia and professional social work practice, including the NASW Code of Ethics and the behavioral guidelines in Hilltopics.

Academic Conduct

The purpose of the academic environment is to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and the ability to develop and disseminate knowledge. A degree, such as the Ph.D., is in part an assessment by the faculty that these purposes have been accomplished. Such an assessment means that a student is committed to the pursuit of knowledge and to an understanding of its meaning. Consequently, plagiarism, or any other form of cheating, is inimical to this purpose and is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. Graduate students are expected to understand the proper use and referencing of the material of others in their own written work and to comply with academic standards in this regard. Guidelines for proper referencing and citations can be found in the current Style Guide of the American Psychological Association.

Professional Conduct

In addition to maintaining acceptable academic standards, students must conduct themselves in a professionally ethical manner towards their student colleagues, faculty, and all other persons. Because membership in a profession implies an encompassing set of values, professional conduct is expected at all times, on-campus and off-campus. The college subscribes to the NASW Code of Ethics. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with its provisions. **Any act by the student that would constitute unethical practice or a violation of law, whether committed in college-related activities or not, is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.**

Advising

Each new student will be advised by the program director until such time as the student is ready to choose a chair for the Dissertation and Comprehensive Examination Committees. The same faculty members serve on the student's Comprehensive Examination Committee and Ph.D. dissertation committee. All tenured College of Social Work faculty are approved by the University and the College of Social Work to chair dissertations. Moreover, a one-time request may be made for a non-tenure track faculty member to be given special approval to chair a dissertation. If a student wants to consider requesting a non-tenure track faculty member of the College to chair his/her dissertation, s/he must seek permission from the Ph.D. program director. Students who wish to have someone from outside the University of Tennessee serve on their comprehensive examination and dissertation committees should consult the Ph.D. program director and the University's Graduate Catalog.

Student Records

Any student wishing to see his/her records may request to do so through the Ph.D. program director. Exceptions to this right are reference letters if the student has previously waived his/her right to read the letters.

Student Appeal Process

Students are expected to adhere to the University of Tennessee's Standards of Conduct. These standards prohibit all forms of academic dishonesty and other misconduct. The process for handling

alleged violations of the University's standards of conduct, the range of possible penalties, and the related appeal process are published in Hilltopics, the University of Tennessee's student handbook.

The College of Social Work maintains additional Standards of Professional Conduct. These standards address the cognitive, emotional, and character requirements that are necessary for the professional practice of social work. These standards are described in the College's Professional Conduct Policy (see Appendix D). This policy also outlines the process when violations of these standards are alleged as well as the appeal process after decisions are made concerning the allegations.

Grade Appeals

Students with grievances concerning grades should file a formal complaint with the Graduate Council through the Graduate Council Appeals Committee, but only after grievances have been duly processed, without resolution, through the College of Social

Work's appeals procedure (outlined below). As described in Hilltopics, students may appeal grades only on the basis of one or more of the following allowable grounds:

A clearly unfair decision (such as lack of consideration of circumstances clearly beyond the control of the student, e.g., a death in the family, illness, or accident);

Unacceptable instruction/evaluation procedures (such as deviation from stated policies on grading criteria, incompletes, late paper examinations, or class attendance);

Inability of the instructor to deal with course responsibilities; or

An exam setting which makes concentration extremely difficult.

An appeal based solely on a difference of opinion regarding the substance or quality of the student's performance is not a sufficient basis. The initial grade appeal must be filed no later than 30 days after the final grade has been issued. To appeal a grade in the College of Social Work, students must follow these steps:

A student is instructed to begin the process by first appealing in writing directly to the course instructor regarding the final grade. The written appeal should articulate the allowable grounds by which the grade is being appealed (see list above).

If no resolution is reached, then the student may initiate the formal appeal process through a letter to the program director. The course instructor should respond in writing to the student appeal and this response must be included with the student's letter to the program director. This appeal must be submitted to the program director no later than 14 days after receiving a written response from the course instructor.

If the matter is not resolved at the Program Director level, the student may then appeal in writing to the associate dean of the College of Social Work.

If the matter is not resolved with the associate dean, the student may then appeal in writing to the dean of the College of Social Work. Appeals to the associate dean and dean must be submitted no later than

14 days after receiving a written response from the program director and associate dean, respectively.

If the matter is not resolved at the college level, the student may write an appeal letter to the Graduate Council Appeal Committee. Please consult the university's Graduate Catalog or the Graduate School's Graduate Council Appeal Procedure for more information:

<http://gradschool.utk.edu/GraduateCouncil/AppComm/AppealProcedureApproved2009>

Student Representative

Ph.D. students annually elect one representative and one alternate to serve on the Ph.D. program committee. This committee is the academic policy setting body for the Ph.D. program. The student representative is a voting member.

Overview of the UTK College of Social Work

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville is the official land-grant institution for the state. It is a comprehensive institution offering a wide variety of graduate and undergraduate programs. The UTK College of Social Work has four academic programs (BSW, MSSW, DSW and Ph.D.) as well as a Social Work Office of Research and Public Service and a Children's Mental Health Service Research Center. The MSSW is also obtainable at the Nashville campus of the UTK College of Social Work and online.

Though a Ph.D. student's foundation coursework and electives must be completed at the Knoxville campus, the student's dissertation research may be done with faculty at the Nashville campus.

Student Offices

Students have access to a common doctoral student office which is on a daily first come available basis. By university policy, students may not have any personal appliances, including refrigerators, coffeepots, or heaters in any office. If you have questions about this policy, ask the Ph.D. program support staff or the Ph.D. program director.

STUDENT TRAVEL PROCEDURES

The Ph.D. program occasionally has funds available to support students in their first three years of the program for travel to major social work conferences (i.e. CSWE, SSWR and BPD) at which they are going to present, co-present or conduct workshops. **It is important to note that students MUST adhere to the following procedures in order to obtain funds supporting travel:**

Travel Requirements

Step 1

Any PhD student accepted to present at CSWE, SSWR or BPD must immediately upon acceptance (within 24 hours) notify Ph.D. program support staff and apply for UTK Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Travel Support. Students must also immediately (within 24 hours) apply to be a volunteer at the conference to waive or reduce the registration fee. Failure to do so will result in no funding or reduced funding to support attendance at the conference. Each student must exhaust any funds they can get from the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Travel Fund BEFORE coming to the Ph.D. Program Director.

Students may receive one GSS travel award per academic year. If a student has not received a GSS travel award during the current academic year, he/she is to provide proof of applying for the GSS Travel Fund when requesting travel assistance from the College of Social Work Ph.D. program (students must submit a copy of the GSS form electronically to the GSS and provide a copy of the completed application to the Ph.D. program staff member along with proof of applying to volunteer at the conference).

Note: Please see web site for application, deadlines, procedures, etc.

<http://gss.utk.edu/travel-awards/information/>

Travel funds are set aside for students presenting at national social work conferences when the budget allows for extra funding. There is no guarantee that funds will be available for a given conference. Funds are limited so students are encouraged to cut costs through things such as sharing lodging and making travel plans early to get lowest possible air fares.

Step 2

The Ph.D. Program Director and PhD program support staff member will review that student's successfully completed Step 1 then verify students' eligibility to receive travel funds from the College of Social Work. Students must be presenting at the conference and in their first three years of the PhD program to be eligible for college travel funds. The PhD Program Director will consult with the college's dean to determine the amount of travel funds available to students.

Step 3

The student is then required to provide the PhD staff support person with the following information for the travel request form:

Where the student is going.

Why they are going. Ex: presenting a paper, facilitating a roundtable, etc.

Travel dates

Any funding the student has received. Ex. GSS Travel Award, grant, etc.

Step 4

The traveler will be required to return from the trip with the appropriate receipts.

Below are examples of receipts the traveler must provide:

Itemized lodging receipt with a balance of \$00.00 (the receipt must include the hotel name and address).

Airline Ticket receipt (coach only). If the student flies out of a location other than Knoxville, the student must provide a comparison quote of the same trip but departing from Knoxville.

Itemized rental car receipt (the receipt must be in the traveler's name)

Cab fare, trolley, etc. receipt

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Expenses

The fees and tuition can be found in the current University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog. Fees and tuition are a significant part of the cost of a student's education. While these fees and/or tuition may be waived for graduate assistants on a 25% FTE or higher appointment, the length of time that the program can support a particular graduate student is limited to a maximum of three years.

Financial Assistance

Graduate students may request financial aid from the central university Financial Aid Office and the Graduate School.

Information regarding Graduate School Fellowships, Graduate School Fellowships, and Student Loans can be found here: <http://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/costs-funding/>

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all members of the academic community. An honor statement is included on the online application for admission and readmission. Submitting the application acknowledges that adherence is confirmed. The honor statement declares:

An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.

The university expects that all academic work will provide an honest reflection of the knowledge and abilities of both students and faculty. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication of data, providing unauthorized help, and other acts of academic dishonesty are abhorrent to the purposes for which the university exists.

GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Every graduate student should check his/her records periodically with the Office of Graduate Admissions to be sure that no errors have been incorporated into these official records and to determine that there are no deficiencies in the requirements for the degree being sought. For example, it is easy for a student to forget about an "I" (Incomplete) grade and then find during the semester in which candidacy is sought that work must be completed to remove that grade or that a professor must be located to affirm that work was completed. There are several requirements which must be satisfied by all graduate students. Please check the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog for a complete, up-to-date list of requirements.

Summary of Procedures for PhD in Social Work

Minimum GPA of 3.0

Minimum number of credit-hours and residency requirements. The student must complete 66 semester hours beyond the Master's degree. This includes 33 hours of required coursework, 9 hours of advanced electives, and a minimum of 24 hours of dissertation research (SW600).

The residency requirement for Ph.D. students is a minimum of two consecutive semesters of full-time registration. **Once a student begins taking SW600 (dissertation hours), he/she must continuously take SW600 until completion of the dissertation.**

Transfer of credit for an elective course taken at another university for graduate credit may be allowed provided that the final grade was "B" or better and prior approval is obtained from the program director and the vice provost and dean of the Graduate School. No more than two electives may be taken at another university.

No courses taken at other universities may be substituted for social work PhD foundation courses without approval of the PhD Program Committee.

Passing of the comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination should be completed only after all foundation coursework and research practice requirements have been completed

Appointment of Ph.D. dissertation committee. This must be done prior to completion of dissertation proposal and prior to admission to candidacy.

Committee appointments require the approval of the Graduate School. Since the comprehensive examination includes elements of the dissertation, the Ph.D. dissertation committee should include the same faculty members from a student's Comprehensive Examination Committee.

Admission to candidacy. Request for admission to candidacy must be submitted by each student working on a graduate degree. The request for admission to candidacy may be submitted simultaneously with the request for dissertation committee approval but may **not** be submitted until after the comprehensive examination has been passed. **Ph.D. students must apply for admission to candidacy at least one semester before graduation. Failure to do this could delay graduation.**

Acceptance and defense of dissertation. After the student's committee has received the written dissertation, the student must schedule an oral defense of the dissertation. The college requires acceptance and defense of the dissertation **proposal prior** to beginning actual work on the dissertation research itself. Presentation and defense of the dissertation proposal are required as part of the comprehensive examination. **The college and university require IRB approval of dissertation research prior to any data collection.**

Final oral defense of the dissertation must be scheduled with your Graduation Specialist at the Graduate School. The student should consult his/her advisor and the staff support each semester for the final dates for scheduling and holding such examinations.

(There are two deadlines. Meeting the first deadline will allow the student to graduate the semester that the dissertation is defended. Meeting the second deadline will allow the student to graduate the following semester without having to register for that semester. This can prevent the student from having to pay registration fees for that semester. Again, the student should consult the Graduate School calendar for dates.)

Applying to graduate.

Approval and acceptance of the final copy of the dissertation by the Graduate School. The final copy of the dissertation should be submitted after the final oral examination but not later than two weeks prior to Commencement (see the Graduate School deadline dates for each semester's specific deadlines). However, the student should begin working with the Thesis/Dissertation consultant much earlier (see DISSERTATION section for specific information). Specific information on the Approval Sheet and on the copies of the final version of the dissertation that need to be submitted to the university can be found at the link: web.utk.edu/~thesis/. All copies of the dissertation submitted to the university are electronic; the university no longer accepts paper copies of the dissertation.

Payment of all fees, fines, etc., and removal of any incompletes.

The following items are given in the order that they should or must be completed. Some forms are to be submitted only to the College of Social Work Ph.D. Program office. Others must also be submitted to the Graduate School or to the Office of Graduate Admissions and Records. Forms should be completed by the student and then given to the Ph.D. program staff for the gathering of signatures. All forms should be processed through the Ph.D. program office to assure that they are completed accurately and according to deadlines and that copies are placed in the student's file.

Committee hearings, defenses, etc., should similarly be arranged by the Ph.D. program staff support, who is also responsible for making room arrangements. (The student should give the Ph.D. program staff support a list of preferred dates and times and a list of all committee members.

He/She will then contact these persons to determine a best date and time for all concerned and will then make final arrangements for the meeting.)

Necessary forms should be completed by the student prior to meetings.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the Ph.D. program is based on the following requirements:

1. Admission by the Graduate School
2. Admission by the College of Social Work

Coursework, Examination, and Dissertation Requirements

Completion of foundation courses. The following required courses should be completed by the end of the spring semester of the first year for most full-time students: SW601, SW626, SW628, SW605,

SW602, SW603, SW606, and SW630. The following required courses should be completed by the end of the spring semester of the second year for most full-time students: SW675, SW676, SW631, SW680, SW632. However SW677 (Teaching Practicum I) and SW678 (Teaching Practicum II) may be completed after the student's second year. These required courses total 30 hours of required coursework.

Selection of Comprehensive Examination Committee. This committee includes the same faculty members from a student's Ph.D. dissertation committee. Please note that the two committees have separate approval processes (see #5 below).

Completion of 12 elective hours. Three hours must be an approved statistics course while the other 9 hours should relate the student's substantive research area. Any elective hours taken in social work must be at the 600 level; courses outside the college may be either 500 or 600 level courses.

Completion of comprehensive examination. By university policy, **the comprehensive examination must be completed and accepted within five years of initial enrollment in the Ph.D. program.**

Appointment and approval of Ph.D. dissertation committee. **Committee appointments require the approval of the Ph.D. Program Director and of the Graduate School.** Commencement of SW600. The student may begin taking SW600 (dissertation hours) when he/she is ready to start work on the comprehensive exam and the dissertation proposal. The student must begin taking SW600 the semester that he or she forms the Comprehensive Exam and Ph.D. dissertation committees and begins to work on the Comprehensive Exam. Once a student begins registering for SW600, registration must be continuous (for a minimum of 3 hours per semester), including summers, until the dissertation is completed unless the student requests a leave of absence. A leave of absence may be granted only for semesters during which the student will not be using university facilities.

A request for a leave of absence should indicate the reason for the leave and stipulate that the student will not be using university facilities. It must be submitted to the director of the Ph.D. program. If the director approves the request, he/she will submit the request to the dean of the Graduate School, who must also approve the leave. The request should be made in advance. **Approval is neither automatic nor guaranteed.**

The Graduate School limits the number of leaves of absence that a student may have during his/her Ph.D. program to six semesters. The fees for **any** un-enrolled semesters will be billed to the student retroactively and must be paid before the student will be allowed to graduate.

There is an eight-year time limit for finishing the program from initial enrollment to graduation. Leaves of absence do not extend this eight-year limit.

Submission and approval of application for admission to candidacy. The Admission to Candidacy Application form is submitted by the student with the signatures of his/her Ph.D. dissertation committee to the Director of the Ph.D. Program and to the Graduate School for approval. The advancement to candidacy form indicates that the student has passed the comprehensive examination and specifies the courses he/she has taken. **It must be submitted at least one semester prior to graduation.**

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Completion and approval of dissertation proposal. The appropriate form complete with committee signatures indicating that the committee has approved the dissertation proposal must be submitted to the Program director. (At this point or sometime in the very near future, the student should contact the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant web.utk.edu/~thesis/ .)

Completion of dissertation research and the dissertation document under the direction of dissertation committee.

Placement of student's name on the graduation list. The student should indicate this on the registration material for the semester s/he plans to graduate. All requirements for progress through the Ph.D. program and for graduation must be completed within eight years of initial enrollment in the Ph.D. program.

Apply to graduate and pay the graduation fee.

Submission of final draft of dissertation to members of Ph.D. committee. This must occur at least two weeks prior to the final oral defense of the dissertation.

Scheduling of final oral defense of dissertation with the Graduate School by notifying your Graduation Specialist. The student must schedule the final oral defense of his/her dissertation at least one week prior to the actual date of the final oral defense.

Final oral defense of dissertation with Ph.D. committee. The defense must be scheduled to occur not later than four weeks prior to Commencement. The actual deadline is available at registration.

Approval and acceptance of final copy of dissertation, Ph.D. forms, and thesis card by the Ph.D. committee and the Graduate School. Approval and acceptance follow the final oral examination. The final copy must be completed no later than two weeks prior to Commencement.

A Pass/Fail Form for the oral defense will be sent to the chair of the student's dissertation committee prior to the oral defense after the request to schedule the defense has been submitted. This form should be signed and dated **immediately** after completion of the oral defense assuming the defense is successful.

Pass/Fail Forms for the written dissertation itself will be prepared by the student according to instructions (in multiple, original copies). These should be signed and dated immediately after completion of the oral defense **if possible**. If the committee chooses to withhold signatures until changes are made (which should be minor at this point), then the student should be sure to ascertain when and where committee members can be reached for obtaining the final signatures.

Removal of incompletes. Incompletes must be removed by the instructor not later than one week prior to commencement.

REGISTRATION FOR COURSES

All students are required to register online within their respective MyUTK accounts. Registration instructions can be found here: <http://onestop.utk.edu/class-registration/>.

Except for first-semester graduate students, all students are expected to pre-register for courses during the period reserved for that purpose. The university imposes a penalty fee for failure to pre-register. The reason for pre-registration is to allow sufficient time for the department to adjust its teaching loads and course offerings in the event that certain courses do not have large enough enrollments to justify their being offered.

The normal maximum course load for graduate students is 15 hours per semester with 9 hours considered a full load. Students who have at least a 3.6 grade-point average in 9 or more hours of graduate coursework may petition the Graduate School to take up to 18 hours. For summer terms, the course load limits apply to the combined number of hours taken during the various summer sessions.

Students should be aware that the Graduate School requires them to register continuously for at least 3 credit-hours of **SW600** once they begin their dissertation research. This continuous registration is required even if the student leaves the campus, and it can be a significant financial burden, especially for out-of-state students. Permission may be obtained from the vice provost and dean of the Graduate School to waive this requirement for a period of time, but this is limited to a total of six semesters. The program director should be consulted about any requests for a waiver (see above, page 8, 9). If students on approved leave of absence need to use faculty time and/or university facilities, they must terminate their leave by registering for a minimum of 3 dissertation hours for that semester. **All Ph.D. students are advised to complete all other requirements for their Ph.D. degree before leaving the campus.** It will then only be necessary to register for 3 credit-hours of SW600 each semester.

Change of Registration

The permanent record will show all courses for which the student has registered except those audited and those from which s/he has withdrawn before the drop/add period has expired.

Students who fail to attend the first class meeting without prior arrangement with the department may be dropped from the course to make space available to other students. When students drop a course, they have the responsibility to assure that they have actually been dropped; otherwise, they may receive a grade of "F" in the course.

There are two deadlines for change of registration, withdrawal, etc. The first deadline is about two weeks after classes begin each semester. Before this deadline, the student may drop without a "W," change from credit to audit, or add without an instructor's signature (unless the class is closed). Course registration may not be changed from credit to audit after this deadline. If the student withdraws from a course or from the university after this deadline but before the second deadline, a grade of "W" will be recorded on the permanent record. The second deadline is approximately 35 calendar days after the first day of classes each semester. A student may change registration for a course at any time prior to and including this date by executing a change of registration form and submitting it to the Graduate

Admissions and Records Office. The signature of the advisor or department director may be required on the change of registration form. The instructor's signature is required.

After the second change of registration deadline, a student withdrawing from a course or from the university will receive a grade of "F" unless the student can demonstrate to the Graduate School that the request for withdrawal is based on circumstances beyond the student's control. In the latter case, a grade of "W" will be entered on the permanent record.

To change registration in any way after the deadline, a student must present the request, together with documentary evidence of extenuating circumstances, to the Graduate Admissions and Records Office. In addition, he/she must complete a change of registration form and questionnaire signed by the instructor(s) and advisor as evidence of their knowledge of the request. If the request is approved, the Office of Graduate Admissions and Records will instruct the Registrar's Office to enter the change on the student's record.

Course Requirements

Course requirements for the Ph.D. degree as specified in the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Graduate Catalog must be satisfied. A student must choose courses in consultation with the program director. Also, the faculty may recommend or require one or more courses for a student, on the basis of his/her performance on the Ph.D. comprehensive examination (see Comprehensive Examination section). All coursework must ultimately be approved by the student's committee and the Director of the Ph.D. Program.

Independent Study

Students wishing to pursue study or conduct research in an area of individual interest may seek a faculty member to provide an independent study course. As is true with the selection of any course, the program director must approve the selection prior to registration in order for the course to count toward the Ph.D. degree. In addition, there are procedural requirements that must be fulfilled prior to registration:

A written proposal, developed by the student, must be prepared which describes course topic, learning objectives, credit-hours, readings, assignments, and method of evaluation and bibliography.

This proposal must be approved by the instructor, the student's major professor (or committee chair), and the director of the Ph.D. program before registration.

A copy of the approved proposal and completed Independent Study Course Approval Form must be submitted to the Ph.D. program office to be placed in the student's file.

Curriculum Design

The curriculum consists of foundation courses, advanced seminars both in Social Work and in other departments of the university, and dissertation research. The curriculum enables a student to develop a strong foundation in the history and philosophy of social work, in the methods of science, and in the application of these methods to improving the knowledge bases of direct practice with individuals, families, and small groups and of social administration, social planning, and community practice.

Through the advanced seminars, students are expected to expand their knowledge in an area of practice and to contribute, through dissertation research, to the advancement of knowledge for direct practice, administration, planning, or community practice.

Curriculum Options

The curriculum for the Ph.D. degree in social work program allows students to concentrate their advanced seminar learning and dissertation research upon issues in direct practice, social administration, or social planning and in a substantive area of practice of the student's choice (i.e., mental health, family and children, rural social work, etc.). See below for the Ph.D. curriculum for three years of Ph.D. study.

CHANGES IN CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

This Handbook represents the offerings and requirements in effect at the time of publication, but there is no guarantee that they will not be changed or revoked. The course offerings and the requirements of the institution are continually under examination and revision. However, adequate and reasonable notice will be given to students affected by any changes.

Semester I	Credit Hrs.
SWK 605: Analysis of Social Work Data I	3
SWK 601: Research for Social Work Practice I	3
SWK 626: Critical Thinking for Science and Research	3
SWK 628: Critical Review of Research Literature	3
Semester II	Credit Hrs.
SWK 606: Analysis of Social Work Data II	3
SWK 602: Research for Social Work Practice II	3
SWK 603: Research III: Funded Research and Grant Writing	3
SWK 630: Research Practicum	1
Semester III	Credit Hrs.
Statistics Requirement (topics rotating annually)	3
SWK 675: Teaching Methods in Social Work	2
SWK 676: Social Work Pedagogy in Online Environments	1
Elective in Substantive Area	3
SWK 631: Research Practicum	1
Semester IV	Credit Hrs.
Advanced Statistics or Research Elective or Elective in Substantive Area	3
Elective in Substantive Area	3
SWK 680: Professional Development for Social Work Scholars	1
SWK 632: Research Practicum	1

End of Semester IV: Comprehensive Exam

Concurrent with, or after completing, SWK 675 and SWK 676, students will complete at least two “Teaching Practicums” (1 credit hour each). For each practicum, the student will work as a TA for one semester under the supervision of a faculty member. One practicum must be for a traditional, face-to-face course and one practicum must be for a distance education online course.

SWK 677: Teaching Practicum I
 SWK 678: Teaching Practicum II (online)

Semester V-VI	
Dissertation Hours	Credit Hrs. 24
Semester VII-VIII	
Dissertation Hours (if necessary)	Credit Hrs. 2-24

****IMPORTANT:** SWK 675 and SWK 676 MUST be taken and successfully completed before a student may teach classes in either the BSSW or the MSSW programs.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

There are several means by which students are evaluated. Before he/she is admitted into the program, the student's academic record and letters of recommendation are evaluated by the Ph.D. program Admissions Committee and the Office of Graduate Admissions and Records personnel.

Continued evaluation of a student's academic progress is based on performance (1) in coursework, (2) in research practica, (3) on the comprehensive examination, and (4) during dissertation research. In addition, as stated in the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*:

"Graduate education requires continuous evaluation of the student. This evaluation includes not only periodic objective evaluation, such as the cumulative grade-point average, performance on the comprehensive examinations and acceptance of the thesis or dissertation, but also judgments by the faculty of the student's progress and potential. Continuation in a program is determined by consideration of all these elements by the faculty and the head of the academic unit." (See "Academic Standards," in the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*.)

The University policy on academic probations is, "Upon completion of 9 hours of graduate course work, a graduate student will be placed on academic probation when his/her cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. A student will be allowed to continue graduate study in subsequent semesters if each semester's grade point average is 3.0 or greater. Upon achieving a cumulative GPA of 3.0, the student will be removed from probationary status." (See "Academic Standards," in the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*.)

The university policy on dismissal from the Graduate School, or from an academic program, is, "If a student is on academic probation, the degree or non-degree status will be terminated by the Dean of the Graduate School if the student's semester GPA falls below 3.0 in a subsequent semester. When the particular circumstances are deemed to justify continuation, and upon

recommendation of the appropriate academic unit and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, a student on probation whose semester GPA is below 3.0 may be allowed to continue on a semester-by-semester basis. Dismissal of a graduate student by a department or program is accomplished by written notice to the student, with a copy to the Graduate School. In those cases where the department's requirements for continuation are more stringent than university requirements for graduate programs, the Dean of the Graduate School will evaluate the student's record to determine whether the student is eligible to apply for a change of status and register in another area of study." (See "Academic Standards," in the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*.)

Every Ph.D. student is expected to maintain a minimum cumulative grade-point **average of 3.0**, although it is hoped that all students will exceed the minimum requirement of the Graduate School. **Individual grades below "B" in elective courses are tolerated as long as the student maintains a cumulative average of 3.0**, but if the student receives many grades below "B" his/her GPA will suffer and his/her assistantship, if he/she has one, may be discontinued. Consistent with University policy, the College of Social Work has a more stringent policy for continuation in the Ph.D. program subsequent to being placed on academic probation. **When a graduate student's GPA drops below a cumulative 3.0, he/she will have one semester in which to bring it back up to at least 3.0. Failure to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in that semester will result in termination from the program. Any grade below a "B" in a required course is likely to result in dismissal from the Ph.D. program.**

Students are expected to attend and actively participate in their courses. There may also be special opportunities for students to experience special activities to enrich their learning, such as special seminars and colloquia done by college faculty and other prominent scholars that students will be expected to attend and participate in.

Every student should keep track of "I" (incomplete) grades received in any courses. Incompletes are to be given ONLY in cases of extraordinary circumstances, and may not be used to enable a student to improve a grade in a course. A grade of "I" will not count in a student's grade-point average. However, as outlined in the *University of*

Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog, if the "I" is not removed within one calendar year it will automatically be converted to an "F" grade and counted in the student's grade-point average. **It is the student's responsibility to complete the incomplete in the one year period.**

Grades in the Graduate School have the following meanings:

- A (4.0 quality points per semester hour),
Superior performance.
- B+ (3.5 quality points per semester hour), Better than satisfactory performance.
- B (3.0 quality points per semester hour), Satisfactory performance.

- C+ (2.5 quality points per semester hour), Less than satisfactory performance.
- C (2.0 quality points per semester hour), Performance well below the standard expected of graduate students. (1.0 quality point per semester hour), Clearly unsatisfactory performance and cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.
- F (no quality points), Extremely unsatisfactory performance and cannot be used to satisfy degree requirements.
- I (no quality points),

A temporary grade indicating that the student has performed satisfactorily in the course but, due to unforeseen and extraordinary circumstances, has been unable to finish all requirements.

An “I” is NOT given to enable a student to do additional work to raise a deficient grade. All incompletes must be removed within one calendar year. If a supplementary grade report has not been received in the Office of Graduate Admissions and Records at the end of one year period, the “I” will be changed to an F. The course will not be counted in the cumulative grade average until a final grade is assigned. No student may graduate with an “I” on the record.

S/NC (carries credit-hours, but no quality points),

“S” is equivalent to a grade of “B” or better, and “NC” means no credit earned. Courses where “NC” is received may be repeated for a grade of “S”. A grade of “S” or “NC” is allowed only where indicated in the course description in the *University of Tennessee*,

Knoxville Graduate Catalog. The number of “S” or “NC” courses in a student’s program is limited to one-fourth of the total credit-hours required.

P/NP (carries credit-hours, but no quality points),

“P” indicates progress toward completion of a thesis or dissertation.

“NP” indicates no progress or inadequate progress.

W (carries no credit-hours or quality points), indicates that the student officially withdrew from the course.

No graduate student may repeat a course for the purpose of raising a grade already received, with the exception of “NC”. A graduate student may not do additional work nor repeat an examination to raise a final grade. (See the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*.)

Students in field practice can be sued for malpractice. Therefore, participation in a group plan for professional liability insurance is required by the College for all students enrolled in field practice courses. The cost of this insurance varies according to the charges made by the University's insurance carrier. An effort is made to obtain the most economical coverage possible. An explanation of specific coverage is available from the coordinator of field services at the respective campus. Students are required to make payment for liability insurance; the charge is billed on the VOLXpress statement when due.

Research Practicum Guidelines

All Ph.D. students are required to participate in a research practicum every semester of their first two years in the program. The research practicum is a critical component of the Ph.D. program. Students and faculty mentors work together to advance students' research skills, produce publishable research articles, and make presentations at major social work conferences.

At the beginning of the academic year, each first- and second -year Ph.D. student will be paired with a faculty mentor. Faculty members in the College of Social Work who wish to partner with a Ph.D. student will be asked to submit in writing a statement describing the research project and planned activities.

On or before September 15, each student in consultation with their faculty mentor will prepare and submit a brief plan stating his/her activities, goals, and planned outcomes from the research practicums for the coming academic year. The Ph.D. program committee must approve this plan by majority vote. The committee may request changes to ensure that students are involved in appropriate activities, being productive with writing articles and making presentations, and meeting expectations for students' professional development.

Before the start of the second year, students are expected to have authored or co-authored at least one research article submitted to a scholarly journal and one abstract submitted for presentation at a major social work conference. By the start of year three, students are expected to have authored or co-authored at least two articles submitted to scholarly journals and three abstracts submitted for presentations. One article should be a systematic review related to the student's substantive area or dissertation topic.

Students will submit a brief progress report to the faculty mentor and Ph.D. program committee at the conclusion of each fall and spring semester during the first two years.

The progress report will detail the student's progress toward achieving the learning goals and outcomes outlined on the student's plan. The faculty mentor and committee will review each

student's progress during the preceding semester and determine if the student is making satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress toward the learning objectives outlined in the research practicum plan. If the faculty mentor in consultation with the committee determines that a student is not meeting the expectations outlined in the plan, the student will not receive a passing grade for the research practicum. The faculty mentor is responsible for entering the student's practicum grade. Students who receive an unsatisfactory evaluation will receive feedback from the mentor and committee with specific guidelines for making improvements. Students who receive subsequent failing grades are likely to lose their stipend (when applicable) and may be dismissed from the PhD program. In situations when the committee determines that the student is not receiving adequate opportunities for research and scholarship from the faculty mentor, the student will be assigned to a new faculty mentor at the committee's discretion. The committee may request additional progress reports and mid-semester updates from students to ensure that students are engaging in appropriate and meaningful research and scholarly activities.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

As stated in the current *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Graduate Catalog*, successful completion of the comprehensive examination "indicates that, in the judgment of the faculty, the doctoral student can think analytically and creatively, has a comprehensive knowledge of the field and the specialty, knows how to use academic resources, and is deemed capable of completing the dissertation. The comprehensive examination must be passed prior to admission to candidacy".

The comprehensive examination consists of three components—a scholarly paper, the dissertation proposal, and a professional presentation. The paper and proposal must be approved by the student's comprehensive examination and Ph.D. dissertation committee. The presentation is a defense of these two documents. The content, organization, and length of the presentation should be consistent with professional presentations made at major social work conferences. The presentation is open to the public and any audience member may ask questions; however only members of the student's comprehensive examination committee are responsible for determining if the student passes or not. Decisions of the committee are based on a majority vote. The comprehensive examination typically occurs before the start of the third year and after the student has completed the research practicums and required coursework.

Scholarly Paper

The scholarly paper should be a publishable systematic review related to the student's dissertation topic. This paper is expected to be the first paper of the student's three-paper dissertation. The paper should be prepared under the supervision of a faculty mentor and done as part of the student's research practicums. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate the student's thorough knowledge of the relevant literature, the ability to methodologically critique research studies, the ability to synthesize and integrate key concepts and topics, and identify

specific gaps or neglected areas in the research literature. The paper should conform to the current issue of the APA-style manual.

The systematic review should relate logically to the statement of the problem, hypotheses, definition and operationalization of variables, methodology and data analysis that will be done for the dissertation study. It should summarize the results of previous studies that have reported relationships, or the lack thereof, among the variables included in the proposed research.

An important function of the review is to provide a sound methodological critique of the studies in the systematic review. An equally important function is to provide a theoretical explanation of the relationships among the variables of interest, and the absence of relationships with other important variables. It is most important that the review explain what mechanisms link the variables. The review can also provide descriptive information about similar programs or target populations. The review should cover material directly related to the problem being studied as well as relevant theories that relate to these problem areas.

In agreement with the faculty mentor, the paper should be distributed to members of the comprehensive examination committee for review and feedback. All comments and feedback from committee members should be directed to the student, who then is responsible for discussing the feedback with the faculty mentor. In the event that committee members disagree about content or revisions to the paper, the faculty mentor has final approval.

Dissertation Proposal

The purpose of the dissertation proposal is to demonstrate that the student has completed the conceptual work, and has the methodological knowledge and skills, necessary to begin work on the dissertation. The proposal includes a statement of the research problem or question, including hypotheses if appropriate, an explication of the proposed methodology, a discussion of the proposed data analysis, and a realistic timetable.

A. Statement of the Problem

The problem statement is the guiding theme of the proposal. This section should include a statement of the **purpose** of the study and should specify its **objectives**.

a. Purpose of the Study

This section explains why the research is being conducted. It should establish the importance of the problem and explain why the research is needed. For example, it could document the

seriousness of juvenile antisocial behavior nationally and describe the gaps that exist in the knowledge about this behavior.

It might also explain why the specific knowledge gap chosen is of particular importance. It could also include a statement of methodological problems in previous research that will be addressed in the proposed dissertation research.

b. Objectives

This section describes what the student hopes to accomplish with the research. This includes answering specific research questions about relationships among variables of interest. After reading this section, the reader should be clear about the questions to be asked, the kinds of answers expected, and the information expected to be provided by the results of the proposed research. For example, one might propose to test a drug abuse treatment approach to determine the intervention characteristics that contribute differentially to the success of women and men who participate in the program. Related outcomes could also include the provision of descriptive information not currently available. An example might be a comparison of arrest rates for participants in the years prior to and following participation in the program.

Students interested in doing research which is not oriented toward theory verification or intervention testing (e.g. grounded-theory, historical research) will have research objectives that differ somewhat in format, but the principle is essentially the same. One might, for example, wish to study the ways professional caregivers such as social workers, physicians and nurses in high stress medical settings conceptualize their work to keep themselves from "burn-out." The objective might be to discover how different cognitive coping styles develop and work.

B. Methodology

a. Subjects

Subjects can be individuals, families, groups, organizations, states, or countries, depending on the unit of analysis. This section will describe how the subjects to be included in the study will be chosen. For example, will every subject who volunteers be included? If not, what criteria will be used to choose those to be included? Will there be a comparison group? How will the subjects in that group be chosen? In addition to describing how subjects will be chosen, this section should provide a rationale for the selection approach taken. This rationale usually includes external validity requirements (i.e., the conditions necessary to generalize the findings to a particular target

population). After reading this section, the reader should have a clear understanding of how subjects will be selected for the proposed research and of why they will be selected in that particular manner. The reader should also have a clear idea of the characteristics of the intended subjects, including age, sex, ethnicity, education, SES, and other related variables.

b. Design

This section will describe the type of research design to be used. For example, it may be an ideographic, survey, quasi-experimental, or experimental design. It may be cross-sectional or longitudinal. It may be a retrospective or a prospective design. The design should also describe the sequence of events that will occur in conducting the research. This would include how the subjects will be divided up, what the subjects are expected to experience during the research, and when and how often they will be observed or asked for information. After reading this section, the reader should have a clear understanding of the overall design of the study.

c. Data Collection

This section will operationalize the variables to be included in the proposed study. In many proposals, it is helpful to divide the variables into dependent or criterion variables, independent or predictor variables, and covariates. A description of how each variable will be operationalized and measured should be included in this section. Ideally, one should plan estimates of measurement reliability and validity. After reading this section, the reader will know the specific variables that will be included in the proposed study and, most important, how they will be measured.

d. Data Analysis

This section will explain how the data will be analyzed once they are collected.

In most cases, more than one analysis will be conducted. Each analysis that will be used to meet each objective listed above should be described. Also a description of the specific effects to be examined in each analysis, such as main effects, interaction effects, or simple main effects, should be included.

The unit of analysis to be used should be specified and the reason for choosing that unit should be explained. After reading this section, the reader should know on which effects the dissertation will concentrate and in exactly what way the data are to be analyzed to meet each objective of the proposed evaluation.

C. Reference List

The reference list should include full reference documentation for all articles and texts mentioned in the proposal. It is important that the student fully review relevant previous work in developing the proposal.

D. Timetable

This section will describe the sequence of activities necessary to conduct the research. It will include the time necessary to complete each activity. After reading this section, the reader will have a clear understanding of what steps will be taken, the order in which they will occur, and the time each step will require.

Composition of the Comprehensive Examination and Dissertation Committees and Procedural Requirements

As described in the University of Tennessee's Graduate Catalog, the Comprehensive Examination and Ph.D. dissertation committees consist of a chair and at least three other faculty members holding the rank of assistant professor or above, three of whom, including the chair, must be approved by the Graduate Council to direct Ph.D. research. At least one member must be from an academic unit other than the College of Social Work. Students are encouraged where appropriate to seek a fifth member in the field of specialization from outside the university to serve on their dissertation committee. Students who wish to include a fifth member from outside the university should consult with the Ph.D. program director. All members of the student's committees, including the chair, must be approved by the director of the Ph.D. program.

After the committee is selected, it is the responsibility of the student to file with the program office an approval form listing the systematic review and proposed dissertation topics and the committee composition with the appropriate signatures. By their signatures, the proposed committee members indicate that they agree to serve on the committees as well as that they approve the topics. The Topic and Committee Approval Form must then be submitted to the Ph.D. program staff. The student will submit the form to the Ph.D. program director, who must approve both the examination topic and the committee. The staff member will place the approval form in the student's file.

The student is responsible for distributing all documents and materials to the committee prior to the examination date. The examination presentation cannot be scheduled until the appropriate committees have approved the systematic review paper and dissertation proposal.

Upon satisfactory completion of all three components of the comprehensive examination, the student is responsible for obtaining signatures on the

Comprehensive Examination Completion Form indicating pass/fail. This form must then be submitted to the Ph.D. program secretary for inclusion in the student's file. Providing all other requirements have been met, the student may then request admission to candidacy.

Furthermore, the Recommended Ph.D. Committee Appointment form should be submitted to the Ph.D. program support staff who will forward the form to the director of the Ph.D. program for his/her approval signature. The staff will then place a copy in the student's file and will submit the original to the Graduate School.

The Recommended Ph.D. Committee Appointment form must be submitted for approval prior to or simultaneously with the Admission to Candidacy Application form **after** the student has passed the comprehensive examination. **Any changes in the committee must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval using the appropriate form.**

All members of the committee must be physically **present** at the final dissertation defense. Should a professor on the committee leave the University before the student's defense and the student choose to keep that professor on his/her committee, certain steps must be taken:

- a. The faculty person in question should seek and receive approval from the Director of the Ph.D. Program and from the Dean of the College of Social Work to continue to serve on the committee.
- b. The director of the Ph.D. program must request approval from the dean of the Graduate School for the faculty person to continue to serve on the committee.
- c. The dean of the College of Social Work must appoint the faculty person as an adjunct professor for up to two years. (At the end of the two years, a continuation must be requested and approved.)

DISSERTATION

Procedural Requirements

The relevant Graduate School requirements and deadlines are nonnegotiable. The Graduate School seldom makes exceptions. There are deadlines for **scheduling** a dissertation defense as well as for actually **defending** the dissertation. These dates are given in the *Graduate School News* each semester. The College of Social Work Ph.D. program operates within these guidelines.

1. The Ph.D. dissertation committee must be formed and approved (see above).

2. A Dissertation Proposal Approval Form must be completed, including signatures of committee members, and submitted to the Ph.D. program director for a signature and for the student's file.

(At this point or sometime in the very near future, the student should contact the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant.)

3. The dissertation itself is completed under the guidance of the committee.
4. When the committee has determined that the dissertation is complete, the student should consult with the Ph.D. program support staff member to schedule the oral defense. The student should give the staff member a list of preferred dates and times and the names of committee members.

He/She will then contact these persons to determine a best date for all concerned and will then make final arrangements for the meeting, assuring that the scheduled time is within the deadline set by the Graduate School. Approval signatures should then be obtained on the Recommended Arrangements for Final Examination to the Graduate School, the form for scheduling the oral defense of the dissertation. The original form should then be submitted to the Graduate School and a copy placed in the student's file.

5. The Office of Graduate Admissions and Records will forward a Final Examination Pass/Fail form to the student's committee chair to be signed and returned to The Graduate School after the oral defense.
6. The dissertation will then be defended. Once the dissertation has been successfully defended and final corrections have been made, the four original pass/fail forms for the written dissertation must be submitted with the dissertation itself to the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant who must also approve the dissertation on behalf of the Graduate School after it has been approved by the committee and successfully defended by the student.

These forms may be signed at the time of the oral defense if the committee has no further recommendations.

The instructions for preparation of the final document, both its content and its format, are very specific. The student should familiarize him/herself with these instructions before beginning work on his/her dissertation (see below).

Admission to Candidacy

Request for admission to candidacy must be submitted by each student working on a graduate degree. The request for admission to candidacy after the comprehensive examination has been passed.

1. The form should be completed by the student. (Additional copies needed for submission will be made after coursework has been verified and signatures have been obtained.)

The student should be sure to obtain a current copy of his/her transcript to aid him/her in listing coursework. Coursework listed should include that done for the Master's degree and must include all that the student has completed or expects to complete for the Ph.D. degree.

2. The Admission to Candidacy Application form **must be submitted to the secretary of the Ph.D. program for verification of coursework before** any faculty persons are asked to sign it. (A checklist is maintained in the student's file indicating courses completed, examinations taken, etc.)
3. All committee members **as well as** the student and the director of the Ph.D. Program must sign this form. The signatures of the committee members and the director indicate their approval and acceptance of all of the information that is on the form including coursework offered for the degree. **Any changes in this information must be submitted to the Graduate School.**
4. The form must be submitted in triplicate to the Graduate School (two of the "forms" may be copies of the original). An additional copy will be placed in the student's file.
5. The student must be admitted to candidacy one full semester prior to Commencement.

Dissertation and Oral Defense

- a) The dissertation should be comprised of three scholarly papers plus introduction and concluding chapters that are focused on a single theme or substantive area of research. Each of the three papers should make a distinct contribution to the knowledge base on the substantive area and be of appropriate quality to be published in a scholarly journal. One paper should be a systematic review of existing research on the substantive topic while the other two papers should be based on data analyzed by the student as part of the dissertation process.

- b) The introduction chapter should present the overall theme or focus of the dissertation and thoroughly describe how the three scholarly papers fit together.

It also should identify the key research questions being addressed in the papers and the methodology used to answer these questions. The concluding chapter should summarize and synthesize the three scholarly papers. This includes identifying key findings from the papers, themes or patterns from the three papers, limitations, and recommendations derived from the research.

- c) All three scholarly papers should represent work undertaken while the student is enrolled in the PhD program.
- d) The student should be first author on all papers. For each paper, the student is expected to be responsible for the paper's development, the research design and data analysis used in the paper, interpreting the results, and writing the majority of the paper. Any co-authors must be approved by the dissertation committee prior to the start of the paper and acknowledged at the dissertation proposal defense. No other students in the Ph.D. program may be co-authors on any of the papers.
- e) All papers must be suitable to be published in a refereed journal prior to the dissertation defense.

After the dissertation committee approves all sections of the dissertation and the three scholarly papers have been determined to be appropriate for publication in refereed journals, the student may schedule their dissertation defense. The defense is a formal meeting between the student and dissertation committee. The student is responsible for giving an oral presentation of their full dissertation. The student is expected to clearly and professionally articulate the rationale and purpose of the dissertation. The student also should describe the methodology and interpret the results, identify limitations, and discuss recommendations from the research. The student should identify areas for future research and articulate a personal research agenda that builds upon the dissertation. The student should also articulate feedback he or she may have received from journal editorial reviews and describe in detail how he or she has responded to this feedback. The dissertation committee is responsible for challenging the student to defend their choices and conclusions, testing the student's knowledge about the topic, and confirming that the student is well-positioned to meet the stated research goals.

The defense is open to the public. All visitors and members of the dissertation committee will be present for the oral presentation. Visitors then will have the opportunity to ask questions and participate in a discussion about the student's presentation and dissertation topic. After this, visitors will be asked to leave so the dissertation committee may question the student. The

student then will be dismissed from the room so the committee may convene a confidential discussion and vote concerning the outcome of the dissertation defense. The student will be notified about the results of the voting as soon as the committee completes its deliberation.

Formatting Notes

To ensure acceptance by the Graduate School, the dissertation **must** be prepared in exact conformity with the *University of Tennessee, Knoxville Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations (current edition)*, which may be purchased at the UTK Bookstore.

Contact the university thesis and dissertation consultant at

111 Student Services Bldg
Knoxville, TN 37996-0211
Phone: (865) 974-1337
Email (preferred): thesis@utk.edu

The student should contact the consultant early in the dissertation writing process to make sure that he/she is writing the dissertation in the appropriate format. The student should also work closely with the consultant as he/she prepares the final version of the dissertation after a successful defense. Important dates for dissertation deadlines, forms, etc., can be found at: web.utk.edu/~thesis/.

The university only accepts electronic versions of the dissertation. As stated on the university web site, web.utk.edu/~thesis/.

All theses and dissertations accepted by the university as partial fulfillment of master's and Ph.D. degrees must conform to certain formatting standards. Therefore, it is required that all graduating theses and Ph.D. students be in contact with the Graduate School's thesis/dissertation consultant to discuss how formatting guidelines apply to their document.

At the end of the review and approval process, students will upload the final, official copy of their **ETDs (electronic theses and dissertations)** to the Graduate School's collection in trace, the university's electronic repository. The Graduate School will post students' ETDs to the internet after graduation.

The steps to submitting the dissertation can be found at the link: web.utk.edu/~thesis/steps.shtml. The steps, as given on this web page, are:

1. Consult the relevant deadline dates.
2. Submit your Admission to Candidacy Form by the published deadline date.
3. Review the Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations and other thesis resources.
4. Using or even looking at a template may be helpful.
5. Follow the formatting checklist.
6. Take a Graduate School workshop to familiarize yourself with Graduate School requirements.
7. Consider taking one of the technology workshops offered on a regular schedule by OIT), including the Electronic Thesis/Dissertation workshop focusing on converting documents to PDF.
8. If you have questions, contact the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant about a preliminary review early in the process.

Further, from the web page, web.utk.edu/~thesis/steps.shtml, the semester of the defense and submission, the student must:

1. Submit the Graduation Application to the Graduate School.
2. **Ph.D. students** - Schedule your defense by submitting the Report of Final Examination Form to the Graduate School by the published deadline date.
3. Be sure to have the format of your approval sheet checked before the defense.
4. Defend your thesis/dissertation by published deadline date and have your committee sign your Approval Sheet.
5. Submit your Pass/Fail form to the Graduate School by the published deadline date.
6. Make changes to your thesis or dissertation as your committee requests.
7. Work with the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant until your ETD passes review.

Further details can be found on the university webpage at web.utk.edu/~thesis/steps.shtml .

**APPENDIX I: College of Social Work Ph.D. Program
Forms: <http://www.csw.utk.edu/phd/resources.htm>**

**APPENDIX II: Graduate School Forms:
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/>**