University of Missouri-St Louis
College of Nursing
Ph.D. Program
Student Handbook
2022-2023
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Greetings!

Welcome to the University of Missouri- St. Louis (UMSL) and to the College of Nursing (CON). The faculty and staff at the CON would like to congratulate you on reaching this amazing milestone in your life and future career. We hope your time at UMSL and academic studies within the CON will provide you with the knowledge, skills, and life-changing experiences that will best prepare you for your next career goal.

This handbook was created to assist you through your academic journey, as well as provide resources to a variety of UMSL policies and procedures to be aware of. Please utilize this handbook throughout the academic year to help navigate through your academic program and assist with any questions you may have.

To assist in this transition, below are some key individuals to be aware of:

**College of Nursing Dean and Professor:**
Roxanne Vandermause, Ph.D., RN
Email: vandermauserk@umsl.edu
Phone: 314-516-7067
Office: 150 Nursing Administration Building

**Associate Dean of Research:**
Kim Werner, Ph.D.
Email: wernerk@umsl.edu
Phone: 314-516-8421
Office: 211 Seton Hall

**Ph.D. Program Director and Professor:**
Anne F. Fish, Ph.D., RN, FAHA, FAAN
Email: fisha@umsl.edu
Phone: 314-516-7077
Office: 231 Nursing Administration Building

**College Student Services Academic Advisor:**
Name: Stacy Pearson, M.Ed.
Email: pearsonsr@umsl.edu
Phone: 314-516-7028
Office: 118 Nursing Administration Building

Our dedicated faculty and staff are here to help you succeed throughout your nursing education. Please reach out to them if you need further information, assistance, or clarification.

Best of luck during this academic year!
Overview

Introduction
This handbook contains material specific to the College of Nursing (CON), including policies regarding progression and retention. It is meant to supplement the information contained in the University Bulletin (http://bulletin.umsl.edu/collegeofnursing/) and the Triton Manual (aka Student Planner) (https://issuu.com/umslcampuslife). You are encouraged to review all of these manuals to obtain important information that will assist you in planning and implementing your program of study. Please feel free to contact your College Student Services Academic Advisor, Stacy Pearson, by e-mail at pearsonsr@umsl.edu or by phone at 314-516-7028 if you have any further questions.

History
The University of Missouri–St. Louis (UMSL) is one of four campuses that constitute the University of Missouri, the ninth largest university system in the United States. Founded in 1839, the University of Missouri became a land-grant institution in 1862. The St. Louis campus was established in 1963, becoming the largest university serving St. Louis and third largest in the state.

For more specific information on the CON’s history, please visit the CON website: http://www.umsl.edu/~nursingweb/About%20the%20College/index.html

Mission
The mission of the College of Nursing at the University of Missouri-St. Louis is to transform lives by fostering a vibrant community of compassionate and inspired nurses. We develop nurses from diverse backgrounds who are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence and leadership through innovative baccalaureate and graduate programs. We engage community partners to respond to the needs of the communities we serve. We generate, translate, and disseminate new knowledge into practice that advances healthcare globally.

In accordance with its most recent Strategic Plan (approved recently), the CON at UMSL has also adopted its own Vision Statement, Strategic Priorities and Core Values, all of which can be viewed on our website: http://www.umsl.edu/~nursingweb/About%20the%20College/Mission%20Statement.html

Student Participation in College Committees
Students are encouraged to participate on college committees. The CON offers two committees on which Ph.D. students can serve:

1. Scholarship, Research and Evidence-Based Practice Committee:
   a. Provides leadership for nursing research and scholarship.

2. Graduate Committee:
   a. Provides leadership for graduate curriculum, certification, program evaluation, and student relations.
Committees meet monthly. Students may address concerns to specific committees by contacting the chair of the committee. Those who are interested in serving on one of these committees should contact the graduate academic advisor, Stacy Pearson, by e-mail at pearson@umsl.edu or by phone at 314-516-7028 if you have any further questions.

**Essential Abilities**
Students must be aware of the Essential Abilities Requirements set forth by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc., which includes cognitive, sensory, and psychomotor competencies that are necessary to practice nursing. A student must, with or without reasonable accommodation, satisfy these requirements, which can be found by clicking on the following link:

If a student has a physical, mental or any other disability that requires special accommodation to meet the nursing program requirements, the student must provide the Disabilities Access Services Office with the proper documentation (http://www.umsl.edu/services/disability/). The CON will endeavor to make reasonable modifications and otherwise reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Any requests for accommodations will be evaluated by UMSL's Disabilities Access Services Office in collaboration with the CON as appropriate.

**Non-Discrimination**
It is the policy of the University of Missouri to provide equal opportunity for all enrolled students and applicants for admission to the University on the basis of merit without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age or disability, or Vietnam era veteran status. Sexual harassment shall be considered discrimination because of sex. This policy shall not be interpreted in such a way as to violate the legal rights of religious organizations or military organizations associated with the Armed Forces of the United States of America.

**UMSL Graduate School**

**Overview**
Your doctoral education is guided by policies of the UMSL Graduate School. Graduate School policies must be followed because the UMSL Graduate School awards your doctoral degree. Many of these policies and procedures are tailored to meet the need of doctoral students in CON.

All doctoral students in nursing will first complete their program-specific coursework. This is followed by a comprehensive examination that is designed to assess your readiness to complete your doctoral research project. You will prepare a written proposal and present it to your dissertation committee. Your dissertation research, after receipt of approval from your
The doctoral committee, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and the Graduate School, is implemented. Your findings are presented in a public meeting to your peers and faculty. Your doctoral studies are completed after your dissertation is approved by your dissertation committee and the graduate school. Your doctoral degree will be awarded by the Chancellor during graduation.

**Doctoral Enrollment**
Full-time status is defined as 9-credit hours per semester and part-time status is defined as 6-credit hours per semester. Some funders require full-time enrollment. The CON offers part-time and full-time programs of study.

After students complete their coursework, achieve candidacy, and complete the UMSL residence requirement, they must remain enrolled during the fall and spring semesters until the degree is completed. Failure to register in any regular semester will result in termination from the Graduate School. If students who are terminated decide to reapply and are readmitted, they will be subject to all regulations in effect at the time of readmission and will be required to enroll for at least 1-credit hour in each semester since their last enrollment.

When doctoral students are enrolled for research credit, the credit amount may vary, but the student must register for all work required, and the credit total may exceed the minimum requirements.

**Doctoral Residency Requirement**
The majority of credits used to satisfy requirements for a doctoral degree must be completed in residence at UMSL. The residence requirement may be satisfied with dissertation credit hours, graduate institutes, and credit courses taken through Continuing Education, as well as regular courses.

Residency normally requires that doctoral students successfully complete a minimum of 15 hours over three consecutive terms, which may include summer. The Dean of the Graduate School may grant exceptions upon recommendation by the program.

**Doctoral Time Limitation**
The maximum amount of time allowed for completion of a doctoral degree will be 8-years after the first course enrollment.

A maximum of 12 hours of graduate credit, completed as a post-master's-degree student prior to admission to a doctoral program, may apply towards a doctoral degree. Inclusion of such course work is subject to unit approval and must have been completed within 8-years of the time the doctoral degree is awarded. Exceptions to this regulation shall be justified on academically defensible grounds and approved by the Graduate Dean prior to filing the program of study.
When doctoral students have earned an MSN at any institution, appropriate credits may be applied towards meeting the requirement for the doctoral degree, subject to CON approval. Such credits shall constitute less than half of the total credits required for the doctorate. For example, for a doctoral degree requiring 90 hours of work beyond the bachelor's degree, no more than 44 credits from a master's degree may apply to the doctoral degree. Credit for courses taken for a master's degree is exempt from the 8-year time limitation.

From Candidacy to Doctoral 'Hood'
You become a doctoral candidate once you have successfully passed your comprehensive exams. Now that you are a candidate, your remaining education and the time until degree completion is largely in your hands. Working with your faculty advisor, you will need to finalize your dissertation committee by submitting the appropriate doctoral form(s) (“D” Form).

Working with your dissertation committee is a time to finalize your proposal using the degree specific guidelines found in this handbook (refer to Page 27). When all of your committee members have agreed to the plans in your proposal, you need to seek IRB approval using the guidelines in this handbook (refer to Page 22). You are required to be continuously enrolled in the Graduate School between candidacy and graduation. When you have received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval(s), the Graduate Dean must approve your proposal. To do this, you will submit “D” Form (D5), along with the proposal that your committee approved and the IRB approval memo. When this approval is complete, you may begin your research. At this point, you will be working closely with your dissertation committee to complete the work and write the final dissertation.

At this phase of a student’s doctoral study, students often feel isolated because they are no longer routinely meeting with their faculty and student colleagues. It is important to continue to progress towards completing your degree. Some students arrange to have regular contact with their faculty advisor during this period, as they find it helps them to sustain the energy to complete their doctoral degree. Other students maintain regular contact with their student colleagues.

When your committee is satisfied with the completed dissertation document, “D” Form (D6) is signed and sent to the Graduate Dean, along with your nearly done written dissertation. Next, you will plan a date and location for your dissertation presentation, including your project abstract. You will want to submit these to the Graduate Dean. The Graduate School will invite the entire campus community to your dissertation presentation, but it is unusual for there to be more than a dozen nursing faculty and students in attendance. Following your presentation, the audience has the opportunity to ask questions. The audience is then excused and you will continue to meet with your committee, who will vote to determine if your dissertation is complete. It is important to abide by the graduation schedule for the term in which you plan to graduate, as these deadlines are strictly enforced. At this point, you may need to make some changes to your dissertation provided by your committee and chair. When those are
completed, you will present your dissertation to the Graduate School and it will be published either electronically.

Generally, graduates who are being awarded doctoral degrees are introduced individually at the graduation ceremony and are hooded by their dissertation advisor. The hood is an academic tradition that indicates the colors of your school and discipline and signifies completion of the highest academic degree.

**Doctoral Degree Student Forms**

You are responsible for processing the important Doctoral Level Forms ("D" Forms) (see below). Copies of these forms are filed in your student file in the CON’s Office of Student Services.

**What is a “D” form?**

- The “D” Forms are indicators of successful completion of the required steps comprising the dissertation process;
- The “D” Forms are located on the Graduate School website;
- There are student and faculty responsibilities for the “D” Forms, as noted below.

**Student’s Responsibility for “D” Forms**

It is the student’s responsibility to:

- Review the “D” Forms required at the Graduate School website;
- Review the timeline for completing the “D” Forms in the Ph.D. student handbook;
- Complete the “D” Forms [http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/forms.html](http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/forms.html);
- Obtain the necessary signatures on the “D” Forms;
- Keep a copy of ALL signed “D” Forms;
- The Ph.D. Program Director will submit the completed forms to the Graduate School.

**Your faculty serving as Faculty Advisors and Chairs will:**

- Review the Graduate School policies regarding D” Forms;
- Remind advisees/mentees to update their “D” Forms;
- Review “D” Forms for completeness;
- Provide you with a signed “D” Form to send to the Ph.D. Program Director, who will then submit the “D” Form to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School’s representative will return approved “D” Forms to the student and their faculty advisor. It is the student’s responsibility to check online to be sure that the required forms were approved.

**Please note:**

- Failure to get approval on one or more forms could delay graduation;
- The Graduate School does not allow proposal defense (D5) and dissertation defense (D7) to occur in the same semester.

*Policy Approved by the Ph.D. Faculty Group, 3/3/2017*

*Approved by Graduate Curriculum Committee, 3 2017*
**Timeline for Ph.D. Students & Candidates**

It is the student’s responsibility to acquire required signatures on the D forms and to submit the forms to the Ph.D. Program Director. **Be sure to keep a copy of all signed forms for your files.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Estimated Time or Due Date</th>
<th>Form(s) Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Begin doctoral studies</td>
<td>Plan your program of study with your faculty advisor. Meet a minimum of once per semester with your faculty advisor.</td>
<td>None needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify a chair for your comprehensive exams; work with this chair to identify 2 additional committee members</td>
<td>By the completion of 24 credit hours of coursework</td>
<td>D1 (Part A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete coursework and pass comprehensive examination; apply for Candidacy</td>
<td>File form as soon as you are eligible. Stacy Pearson works with you and signs D3.</td>
<td>D3 D1 (Part B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify dissertation committee; your dissertation chair may be the same or different faculty member as the chair for your comprehensive exam</td>
<td>By first semester of Candidacy</td>
<td>D4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain continuously enrolled, fall and spring semesters (at least 1 credit of N7499)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write dissertation proposal while working with advice from your chair and committee as needed; communicate a minimum of monthly with your chair</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend proposal</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>D5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for IRB approval if using human participants</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td>IRB forms on web site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Time Frame</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit dissertation proposal, DS, and IRB approval letter to the Ph.D. Program Director who will forward it to the Graduate School. Submit curriculum vitae for any faculty member who is off-campus (UMSL).</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive approval from Graduate Dean</td>
<td>Approximately 2 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong> The process from the proposal defense to Graduate Dean’s approval normally takes 2-3 months for motivated students when it includes the IRB process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct your study/collect data while remaining in contact with your committee as needed</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct data analysis while remaining in contact with your committee as needed; consult Senior RA if needed, keeping your dissertation chair informed</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write final chapters and seek feedback from your committee</td>
<td>Self-Determined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit dissertation draft to chair</td>
<td>2-3 weeks for chair to critique</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit revised dissertation draft to committee upon Chair’s recommendation</td>
<td>2-3 weeks for committee to read</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan a pre-defense meeting with your committee (optional but strongly recommended)</td>
<td>At least 1 month prior to desired oral defense date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>By:</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| When committee members are satisfied the dissertation is ready for defense and indicate so by their signature, identify possible dissertation defense dates 3 weeks after submission below | • October 1\textsuperscript{st} for December graduation;  
• March 1\textsuperscript{st} for May graduation;  
• June 1\textsuperscript{st} for August graduation | D6                                                                |
| Submit an essentially final copy of the abstract for your dissertation to the Ph.D. Program Director; make changes based on feedback | At least 4 weeks prior to submitting to the Graduate School |                                                                    |
| After obtaining approval for your abstract, submit an essentially final copy of the dissertation with the D6 and D9 (proposing a dissertation defense date at least 3 weeks later) to the Graduate School | At least 3 weeks before the proposed dissertation defense date; defense date should be at least 3 weeks before commencement | D6, D9                                                            |
| Receive approval of Graduate Dean                                      | Within 3 weeks                                                       |                                                                    |
| Defend dissertation during a 2-hour defense                            | By:  
• Mid-November for December graduation;  
• Mid-April for May graduation;  
• Mid-July for August graduation  
(Consult calendar on Graduate School web site for exact dates: [http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/index.html](http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/index.html)) | D7                                                                |
| Revise dissertation                                                    | See final submission guidelines in Appendix 2 of Graduate School Rules and Regulations or on Graduate School web site |                                                                    |
| Register for any remaining dissertation                                |                                                                    |                                                                    |
| credits (N7499; must have at least 12) | Obtain advisor approval. Submit dissertation, D7 to Graduate School in Woods Hall. Complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates and the ProQuest documents online. Student account must have a zero balance. | By Noon Friday before commencement (absolute); earlier is better | D7 |
Curriculum

Ph.D. Program Outcomes
At the end of the program, the graduate will have the expertise and knowledge to:
1. Develop expertise and knowledge to establish a program of research and scholarship.
2. Translate nursing research into practice and policy to improve health and healthcare systems.
3. Provide leadership to effect change in healthcare practice, policy, and education issues by collaboration and partnerships.
4. Collaborate effectively with interdisciplinary teams.
5. Improve the healthcare quality of life, individuals/families/communities regionally, nationally & internationally.

Outcomes of the Ph.D. Program
- Integrate professional values and ethics into the nurse scientist role.
- Advance the discipline of nursing through the generation of new knowledge and theory.
  - Publishing
  - Presenting
- Demonstrate excellence as a clinical researcher in the health sciences in a focal area of nursing.
  - Identified area of clinical practice expertise
  - Identified program of research
  - Plan for continued funding to support program of research
  - Publications
  - Abstracts
- Synthesize theories from nursing, natural, or behavioral sciences for application to a specific area of nursing.
  - Program of research
- Advance theory and evidence-based clinical practice.
  - Publications
  - Presentations
  - Teaching
  - Influencing practice
- Assume nurse scientist roles in health sciences centers, educational institutions, and other settings.
  - Program of research
  - Influencing practice
  - Influencing policy
- Proficiencies/competencies to be accomplished during doctoral program:
  - Critical analysis of philosophical and ethical underpinnings of various theoretical and methodological approaches to research problem areas
  - Development of logical and consistent argument to support need for study of problem area
  - Concept clarification/synthesis
  - Oral presentation, poster presentation
  - Research question, design, data analysis techniques and interpretation of findings

Approved by the Ph.D. committee 5/12/2014
Critique of research articles
Publication
Meta-analysis
IRB, HIPAA
Integrative review
State of science paper
Pilot studies
Completion of IRB approval for pilot studies, proposed study

Programs of Study
The CON offers the BSN-Ph.D. and MSN-Ph.D. programs of study. There are a minimum of 72 hours of credits required for Ph.D. students. Students with a MSN degree are able to apply some of their MSN coursework credits towards the Ph.D. degree credits. BSN-Ph.D. students have 72 credit hours in their programs of study. The minimum number of credit hours per semester is 6.

Both of these programs of study can be taken as full-time or part-time students. The programs of study can be found in the appendix of this handbook. The Ph.D. program offers primarily asynchronous online courses, while some courses do have synchronous online office hours or discussions. Some of the synchronous sessions are required, while others are not. Always check during registration for the next semester to see if there are required sessions that you will need to set time aside to attend online.

From Admission to Candidacy
Advisor versus Chair: What is the difference?
When students are admitted to the program, they are assigned a faculty advisor, whose areas of expertise are matched with the student’s area or methods of interest. The faculty advisor will help the student select:
1. Courses in line with their program of study
2. Potential electives
3. Relevant cognates

The faculty advisor will meet monthly with the student (or more often as needed) to provide guidance as the student develops depth in their area of focus. Faculty advisors often suggest scholarship and research activities in which the student might consider participating in to enrich their program of study and academic experience.

As the student completes 24 hours of coursework, the faculty advisor may become the student’s chair or another suitable chair may be chosen to direct the comprehensive exam committee and the dissertation study. Students may confer with the Ph.D. Program Director, if needed, to discuss potential choices.

To formalize the choice of chair, the student is responsible for circulating and acquiring needed signatures on the “D” Forms. Once all needed signatures are obtained, the student will forward
the completed form(s) to the Ph.D. Program Director, who will then submit the completed forms to the Graduate School.

The faculty advisor can be changed at any time during the student’s first 24 credit hours in their program of study. The change of faculty advisor can be initiated by the faculty advisor or the student. The Ph.D. Program Director may be enlisted to assist in considering whether and/or how to change advisors.

A Comprehensive Examination or Dissertation Chair can be changed, if circumstances warrant, and should only be initiated in consultation with the Ph.D. Program Director.

Advisor/Chair descriptions approved by Ph.D. Faculty 4/7/2017

Please understand that faculty can only advise 3-4 students at a time during preparation for dissertation and dissertation phases. Advisors and committee chairs are regular members of the UMSL Graduate Faculty. These are faculty who have earned Ph.D.’s and who are appointed as tenured or tenure track faculty. You can find a list of approved graduate faculty on the Graduate School website: http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/. You will need to discriminate between regular graduate faculty and those who have term appointments. For questions, please consult the Ph.D. Program Director.

After you have successfully completed your comprehensive exam and the Graduate Dean has signed “D” Form (D3), you will become an official candidate for your doctoral degree.

**Cognates**

All Ph.D. students (BSN-Ph.D. and MSN-Ph.D.) are required to take a minimum of 9 credit hours of cognates related to their area of research. With faculty advisor approval, students can take any graduate-level course within the University system within the guidelines specified below. Only one course can be taken from a university other than the University of Missouri according to the UMSL Graduate School to count towards the doctoral degree. See the CON graduate academic advisor for more information.

**What is a cognate?**

- A cognate is a graduate-level course that directly applies to the dissertation. Of the 9 credit hours of cognates required, a student is encouraged to select:
  1. No more than one 3-credit hour methods course, and
  2. A minimum of one 3-credit hour course from a non-nursing discipline.

Any deviation from this plan must be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director before registering for a course.
Electives
BSN-Ph.D. students must take a minimum of 6 credit hours of electives. MSN-Ph.D. students may choose to take electives that are above the minimum required credits and courses required in the program of study.

What is an elective?
- An elective is any graduate-level course that broadly applies to the student’s interests and may be targeted towards anticipated roles after graduation. Electives include courses focused on:
  1. Professional development;
  2. Educational area of specialization;
  3. Knowledge of the nursing discipline;
  4. Development as a teacher or leader; or
  5. Additional knowledge and skills in an area of curiosity.

Special Topics Courses (CARMA Courses)
There may be times in your program of study when you will take a special topics course. The purpose of this course is to explore special topics related to Ph.D. dissertations. This course can be used for a cognate, an elective, or for students who are enrolling in one of the shared courses available through the UM-funded Collaborations for Advanced Research Methods and Analysis initiative (CARMA).

The number and name of the course is: Nurse 7870: Special Topics in Scientific Foundations of Research. The course is for 1-3 credit hours and may require the consent of the instructor. The actual title of the course may change to reflect the specific content to be covered. An example of this with course number and name is: N7870: Special Topics in Scientific Foundations of Research – Comparative Effectiveness Research.

CARMA Courses
Throughout your program of study, you will hear faculty and staff refer to CARMA courses. CARMA stands for Collaborations for Advanced Research Methods and Analysis. This collaboration is an effort funded by the University of Missouri System, whereby we share courses across institutions (e.g., University of Missouri campuses in Kansas City, Rolla, Columbia, and St. Louis). Because there are three Schools/Colleges of Nursing within the Missouri system – we are sharing some courses with our colleagues in Columbia and Kansas City. When you are in a shared course, the faculty member(s) teaching the course may be on the UMSL campus or they may be in Columbia or Kansas City.

What does this mean for you as a student?
There are a number of benefits from the CARMA courses:
1. These courses have advanced content in methods and statistics that often requires specialized training and real-life experience that is not uniformly available across all Ph.D. prepared faculty. By sharing courses across the University of Missouri system, we can capitalize on these unique areas of specialization that will provide a deeper level of training for you as scientists.
2. You have a larger selection of online advanced methods and statistics classes available to you for your program of study to support your dissertation research and expand your skill set. The CARMA initiative has allowed us to add courses in:
   - Structural Equation Modeling
   - Hierarchical Linear Regression
   - Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Health Interventions
   - Advanced Qualitative Inquiry
   - Qualitative Systematic Reviews
   - Participatory Research Methods
   - Psychometrics

3. You will have a larger cohort of students in your class – some of whom may not be nurses, so you will benefit from discussions that look at issues through various professional viewpoints. This experience will provide a deep foundation for you as you share courses in:
   - Design & Methods
   - Qualitative Methods
   - Biostatistics 2
   - Mixed Methods

4. You will have a larger cadre of faculty colleagues who may become members of your comprehensive exam or dissertation committees or be resources to you as you complete your degree and build your program of research.

Please note: These remain UMSL courses for UMSL students. You will register for the UMSL course number as shown on your program of study or as shown on a flyer you receive prior to registration.

If the course is taught by a faculty member at one of the other campuses, then they are considered the primary Instructor of the course. A primary Instructor is the main Instructor of the course and will lead the course. You will have an UMSL faculty member designated for the course who you can contact, should you have difficulty acquiring the readings or gaining access to the Canvas site for the course. This instructor is the secondary Instructor and they are responsible for submitting grades for the Primary Instructor for UMSL students. Please review to your syllabus for details of who is assigned as the Primary and Secondary Instructor.

Faculty at all of the campuses have worked together for the past three years to make sure that your educational foundations are strong for all of the shared courses and to agree on content that is presented in each course, regardless of what campus teaches the course. CARMA faculty continue to meet face-to-face to evaluate the quality of the course offerings and to refine content, if needed.
Each semester you will receive a flyer about CARMA courses that are available in the next semester, so that you can discuss them with your faculty advisor/chair to see if they will augment your program of study.

**Education Requirements of Specific Funders**
Students needing to meet the requirements of specific funders may be required to take more than the minimum number of cognates or electives to do so, unless the requirements of the funder are aligned with the focus of their dissertation. MSN-Ph.D. students may take electives to fulfill the requirements of specific funders.

**Research Statement**
Any research conducted as part of the student's formal studies at the University must be reviewed and approved by the CON. Approval by both the CON's and the University's IRB must be obtained prior to initiation of data collection. Specific information may be obtained through UMSL’s Office of Research.

**Independent Study Guidelines and Process**
An independent study is available as an elective means of increasing knowledge within a student’s content area. Students who wish to pursue an independent study must follow these guidelines:
- The student is responsible for identifying and initiating contact with a faculty member whose content area is of interest to the student.
- The student and faculty member must establish mutually agreed upon course objectives and evaluation criteria. The agreement is to be recorded on the Independent Study Approval Form, which may be obtained from the graduate academic advisor (See Appendix in this handbook for a copy of the Independent Study Approval Form). This form must be completed **PRIOR** to registering for the course.
- The faculty member provides guidance as needed throughout the course; the degree of independence will vary with student learning objectives.
- Credit allocation can vary from 1-3 credits per semester depending on the nature of the objectives and content requirements. No more than 6 independent study credits may be used to meet graduation requirements.
- Submit one to your faculty member, one to the Ph.D. program director, and keep one for yourself.

**Evaluation**
**Grading Procedure**
Course requirements and methodology for assigning grades are the prerogative of the faculty of each course. Examinations and other graded assignments may be scheduled periodically, with or without notice, and at the end of the semester at the discretion of the faculty.
The Ph.D. program is a considerable investment of time and resources, and the CON faculty and staff are here to facilitate your success. Students who are not making satisfactory progress in courses are encouraged to confer with their course faculty regularly and with the Office of Student Services personnel in the Nursing Administration Building. Resources are available throughout UMSL that may be helpful in helping you to reach your goals.

### Grading Scale

The CON has adopted the following grading scale. The Graduate School does not recognize “D” grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentile score</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-94</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91-92</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-90</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-86</td>
<td>B-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82-84</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76-81</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 76</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students often take classes from other departments, colleges at UMSL, or from other universities in the area. You will receive the grade using the grading scale that is in place in that institution.

Students often take CARMA courses through course heads at UMSL, MU, or UMKC. You will receive the grade using the grading scale of the course head’s institution (the teaching institution). Grading scales at MU and UMKC are likely to differ from the CON grading scale. Be sure to check your syllabus and with your course head at the teaching institution if you have any questions. Examinations and other graded assignments are scheduled at the discretion of the faculty.

### Posting Grades

In respect for student privacy, students’ grades are not posted in a way that would allow for individuals scores to be identified by others. Faculty are required to only post grades on the Canvas course gradebook.

### Assessment of Institutional Effectiveness

UMSL has implemented a continuing program to assess institutional effectiveness. A vital part of that effort is the component dealing with student learning outcomes. During the time students are enrolled at the College and later, as alumni, they will be asked to participate in various activities designed to determine how well the College and the University are meeting the stated purposes to provide a positive learning environment where students can create enriched and meaningful lives for themselves.
Student feedback is important to the CON. During their final semester of courses, graduating students will be asked to participate in an electronic survey hosted by Educational Benchmarking, Inc. (EBI). This survey gives students the opportunity to express their opinions about the CON and the Ph.D. program.

**UMSL Institutional Research Board (IRB)**

**CON IRB Policies**
The university uses the eCompliance system for all IRB related tasks. Information on the Ecompliance system can be found in the CON Research Office Team Page and in the Compliance section of the UMSL Research and Economic and Community Development webpage.

All IRB forms and protocols must be reviewed and approved by the CON Research office Prior to submission to the IRB for review. The CON Research Office can assist you in determining the correct forms for your research as well as developing consent documents and other required material. So please feel free to contact the Research Office at any time during the process.

Questions can be addressed to the College Research Associate, Keri Jupka at kjzf@umsl.edu. The amount and timing of student IRB CITI training have been determined, are up to date, and are stated in the next section.

**UMSL CON Doctoral (Ph.D.) CITI Training Protocol**
You are required to complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Human Subjects Research training modules if you conduct studies that obtain data through intervention or interaction with a living individual or their identifiable private information. Training is needed prior to approval of your study or the addition of study personnel. CITI training must be completed prior to contact with participants or accessing any data. The earlier training can be completed the better as the training may help guide your recruitment and data collection methods while planning your study. Please note that IRB protocols cannot be submitted without up-to-date training for all those involved in the research.

When you complete all of the required modules successfully, you may print or save a copy of your completion report through the "Print" link on the learner’s menu. It is good to keep a copy of your completion report in your records. The PI on the study should keep a copy of the study researchers’ training for their records.

Courses must be renewed every 3 years.

CITI Registration and Course Completion
eCompliance Login and CITI Certification

- Login to eCompliance: [https://umsl.ecompliance.umsystem.edu/login](https://umsl.ecompliance.umsystem.edu/login) (Links to an external site.)
  1. If you do not yet have an account, please click “Create an Account”
  2. Use your university provided email address.
- Click on Institutional Review Board tab
- Click on Take IRB Training
  1. "Sign-in to CITI program"
  2. When registering you will want to affiliate with the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Make sure you use your UMSL email address when setting up your CITI account.
  3. After logging in, click on “View Courses”
  4. Under “Learner Tools”, select “Add a Course” and respond to the questions
  5. Click “no” or “not at this time” for questions 1, 2, 4, and 5.
  6. Question 3 is where you will select either the Biomedical Research Investigator training or Social & Behavioral Research Investigator training. (Ph.D. students, please consult with your advisor to choose the correct training for your project.)
  7. Once complete, a copy of your CITI training certificate should be indicated in your eCompliance profile (sync can take up to 24 hours)

All doctoral students: complete the Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research course (indicated Question 1). To be completed in your first semester of first year of the program.

Ph.D. students (conducting research): complete the Human Subjects Research: Social and Behavioral Research (indicated in Question 3) right after the submission of your Comprehensive to the Chair for grading (Ph.D.)

If you have completed your CITI training through another Institution, please compare the list above with the training you have completed. It might be necessary for you to complete additional training if you have not completed the above. Please provide your supervisor with a copy of your certificate and ensure it is Linked with the eCompliance site for IRB documentation.

Presentations of Students’ Work

Reflection Day
Annual Reflection Day is about your doctoral journey. All Ph.D. students and faculty come together to share progress, successes, and encouragements. It is scheduled for the second Friday of January each year. **It is an expectation that all Ph.D. students attend.**

In the fall semester, the Ph.D. Program Director will email a template for a brief slide presentation that is needed by each student. These 3 slides allow you to highlight your
successes in the past year and to share any significant findings to date. In addition, students often use these slides and their brief 10- to 15-minute oral presentation to identify challenges and help needed from the attendees. We celebrate presentations and share information on funding for Ph.D. student presentations or dissertation work. It is a time of connecting and rejuvenation.

**Ph.D. Student Presentations of their Dissertation Work-in-Process**
While you are a student, we will be encouraging you to submit an abstract of your work for consideration of presentation at a professional meeting, such as the Midwest Nursing Research Conference (https://mnrs.org/). You will have the opportunity to use the abstracts developed during your course work for the program submissions. Do not hesitate when the call for abstracts is out. Work with your faculty advisor or a faculty member to hone your abstract and submit for a presentation.

There may be funds available from the Graduate School or the College of Nursing for student travel. Don’t let the cost discourage you from participating, but do acknowledge the source of your funding on your presentation materials, your resume, and/or curriculum vitae.

**Comprehensive Examination Guidelines**

**Preparing for the Comprehensive Examination**
The Comprehensive Examination, described below, is taken upon successful completion of all coursework. The questions to be addressed in the examination include those relevant to a student’s dissertation focus. Students may have gathered literature, resources, and coursework that will be useful at the time of the examination. Some students have begun preparing their dissertation proposal, a document that resembles or may be used as the first three chapters of their dissertation. Students may enroll in N7498, Doctoral Seminar, during the semester following coursework to prepare for the written examination. The number of credits for N7498 should be based upon the time you expect to spend performing this work under the guidance of your advisor, usually 1-3 credits. If you are also developing your dissertation proposal (See Dissertation Proposal, below), you may enroll in N7499, Dissertation Research, for up to 4 credits to complete the Comprehensive Examination preparation and dissertation proposal development. Dissertation credits for proposal development may be taken one semester only; if a proposal is not approved following one semester, students may enroll in N7498 credits in subsequent semesters until the proposal is approved.

**Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination Committee**
Graduate School policies describe the expectations for comprehensive examinations and the comprehensive examination committee. This committee oversees the administration of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination. The UMSL Graduate School policy indicates that “The Comprehensive Examination Committee will consist of no fewer than three members of the
UMSL graduate faculty appointed by the Graduate Dean upon recommendation of the unit (CON).

Working with your faculty advisor, identify at least three members of the regular graduate faculty (Ph.D. prepared tenured and tenure-track faculty; list is on the Graduate School website) to serve on this committee. Invite these faculties to serve on your comprehensive exam committee. This committee is formalized using the appropriate D form, which must be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director and the Dean of the Graduate School. This committee typically becomes your dissertation committee.

The signed “D” Form (D1), appointment of comprehensive examination committee, must be submitted by the student to the Ph.D. Program Director and then to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

**Purpose of the Comprehensive Examination**

The examination is taken upon completion of all coursework and immediately precedes admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree program. The comprehensive examination is a synthesis experience designed to validate the student’s mastery of the Ph.D. program curriculum and readiness to conduct independent research within the student’s area of research emphasis. There is a written and an oral component to the comprehensive examination.

**Comprehensive Examination Process**

The comprehensive examination shall consist of three questions selected by the committee chair with input from the faculty members serving on the committee. The three questions will be related to the student’s program of study and dissertation work. The written examination may not include work completed as a part of the student’s program of study or a prepared manuscript.

The three main questions may have subparts and will include:

1. A theoretical question
2. A methodological question
3. A nursing science question

The written response will be submitted electronically as a Word file that adheres to the most recent edition of the American Psychological Association’s guidelines. The written exam must be double-spaced using size 12 font and 1 inch margins. The written exam will be between 25 and 30 pages in length or approximately 10 pages per answer excluding the title page, references, or appendices. The student must support their comments with appropriate citations.

The Ph.D. faculty members strongly recommend that a student clears their schedule for a 2-week period to accomplish the exam. This is an intensive time of thinking, writing, and researching the literature.

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of the written comprehensive examination:
• **Responsiveness:** The paper addresses each of the three questions as applied to the student’s identified program of research.

• **Clarity:** Writing style is clear, consistent, and concise.

• **Logic:** The development of answers to each question flows smoothly from point to point throughout the paper.

• **Accuracy:** Information is correctly presented and appropriately referenced. Research and theoretical terminology are used appropriately.

• **Breadth:** An appropriate variety of information from the literature is integrated in the answers to examine questions to show comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

• **Depth:** Specific evidence from research studies or other peer-reviewed sources is included to illustrate or otherwise support the point being made and to show a depth of understanding.

• **Analysis:** The student demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate the theoretical and empirical literature, demonstrate gaps, prioritize information, and come to warranted conclusions. The comprehensive examination responses provide a critical analysis of the several possible conclusions that can be drawn from the theoretical and empirical literature.

• **Synthesis:** The student’s responses demonstrate an independent synthesis of the literature including insights, patterns, meanings, and implications that are relevant to the student’s area of research emphasis. Conclusions about the need for additional research and evaluation are included.

The dissertation proposal can be completed concurrently with or after the comps defense.

**Timeline:**

• Comprehensive examination questions are emailed to the student by the chairperson on the agreed-upon day at 9:00am CST.

• The student returns their written responses to the chairperson via email no more than 14 days later at 5:00pm CST.

• Upon receipt of the comprehensive examination, the committee members have up to two weeks to complete their evaluation of the written work.

• An oral discussion is scheduled after the two week (or one week if committee members agree) period of reading following the receipt of the written work. This scholarly discussion allows the student to articulate their grasp of content areas covered in the comprehensive examination and clear up any inconsistencies or vague areas noted in the written comprehensive examination.

**Ph.D. in Nursing Dissertation Policies & Guidelines**

**Dissertation Research**

Dissertations represent original contributions to the scholarship of the field. The doctoral dissertation is based on original research conducted by the student and is conducted under the guidance of the UMSL graduate faculty in accordance with Graduate School policies and procedures. The dissertation research should demonstrate the candidate’s mastery of research
and scholarly methodologies, theory, and tools of the discipline. The dissertation should
demonstrate the candidate’s ability to address a major intellectual problem and to propose
meaningful questions, identify appropriate methods, and draw conclusions related to the
proposed research.

**Funding Dissertation Research**

- **Nurse Faculty Loan Program (NFLP):**
  - NFLP supports students interested in obtaining a full-time faculty position after
    graduation. The loan covers tuition, fees and books (not living expenses) and is
    available to any graduate students while funds are available. The loan is up to 5
    years and requires students to be registered nurses, U.S. citizens, in good
    academic standing and requires six credits (or the equivalent) in educational
    training. Those obtaining full time faculty employment after graduation will
    receive up to 85% of their loan forgiven. Keri Jupka (kjzvf@umsl.edu) administers
    the NFLP program. Please contact her for further information.

- **Jonas Scholars Program:**
  - The Jonas Scholars program is a competitive national program the supports full-
    time Ph.D. students working on veterans' health, environmental health, vision
    health or psychiatric-mental health. Jonas Scholars are provided with financial
    assistance, leadership development and networking support. Jonas Scholars are
    nominated every two years by the College of Nursing. Jonas is most interested in
    supporting diverse scholars as well as those committed to becoming a
    researcher, faculty member or leader in primary care. Student Jonas Scholars
    must work closely with a faculty advisor. For additional information on Jonas
    Scholars please contact Keri Jupka (kjzvf@umsl.edu).

**Ph.D. Dissertation Committee**
The Ph.D. Dissertation Committee oversees the implementation and completion of the
dissertation. The UMSL Graduate School policy dictates that “the doctoral dissertation
committee shall consist of at least four members of the graduate faculty who can contribute
their expertise to the dissertation study: the committee chair, and at least one other [regular
graduate faculty] member from the CON”. A recognized scholar from outside the University
may serve as a member of the Ph.D. dissertation committee upon the recommendation of the
college and approval of the Graduate Dean. The Graduate Dean shall approve the committee
membership and any changes in the committee membership. This committee is appointed by
submitting the “D” Form (D4). If an outside member is proposed, the curriculum vitae of this
individual must be included at the time the “D” Form (D4) is submitted.
**Dissertation Proposal**

After the written and oral comprehensive exams have been successfully completed, the student must present a dissertation proposal and have it approved by their dissertation committee. Preparation of a dissertation proposal is the first step in the process of conducting dissertation research. The proposal is a formal Word document that adheres to the most recent addition of the American Psychological Association format recommendations, detailing the process for completing the dissertation research and the scientific underpinnings of the student’s choices. The student will complete the dissertation proposal for the traditional dissertation or the alternative dissertation, as determined in discussions with the dissertation chair and their dissertation committee. Format guidelines for these two choices appear in the appendices of this handbook.

The dissertation chair heads the student’s dissertation committee and is the faculty member with the primary responsibility of guiding and approving each phase of proposal development and the conduct of the research. Ordinarily, the dissertation chair reads and makes suggestions about any preliminary drafts of the proposal before a more refined version of the proposal is distributed to members of the dissertation committee for review. It is expected that the entire dissertation committee meets at least once prior to the formal dissertation proposal defense. The student may review IRB documentation prior to the proposal defense and may begin filling in the required documentation, but final documents will not be submitted for IRB approval until the proposal is approved by their dissertation committee. The student may complete applications and submit proposals for external funding of dissertation research prior to the proposal meeting under the guidance of the dissertation chair.

**Pilot Study Prior to Dissertation Research**

In certain circumstances, the student may need to conduct a pilot study prior to the dissertation proposal. The pilot study may be conducted for purposes such as identifying questions for interviews, preferences of participants, testing instruments, establishing feasibility, etc. These activities are often conducted under the N7499: Dissertation Research registration and credit hours required will be negotiated with the faculty member supervising the work. These activities, expected outcomes, and grading will be formalized with completion of an Independent Study Approval Form (See Appendix) to be filed with the responsible faculty member, student, and CON graduate academic advisor.

The pilot study activities and associated N7499 credits may begin prior to the dissertation proposal defense, with agreement of the dissertation committee members and after obtaining approval through the IRB (if appropriate).

A minimum of 12 N7499 credits are required for dissertation work. A minimum of 8 N7499 credits need to be earned after completing the dissertation proposal defense, gaining formal IRB approval for the dissertation plan, and receiving approval from the Graduate College for proceeding with the dissertation plan. As a result, lengthy or involved pilot studies may require the student take more than the minimum of 12 N7499 credits.
Data collected with appropriate IRB approvals and prior to the successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense and receipt of approval from the Graduate School may or may not be appropriate to include with the dissertation data. The appropriateness is dependent on the design of the study, rationale for including pre-defense pilot data, and approvals from the dissertation committee members and the Graduate School.

Pilot Study Policy approved by Ph.D. Program Faculty, April 2017
Pilot Study Policy approved by Graduate Committee, April 2017

Dissertation Proposal Defense

The dissertation proposal defense is a formal meeting of the dissertation committee during which the student is examined face-to-face about the proposal and an agreement is reached about the specific nature of the proposed dissertation research. Ordinarily the dissertation proposal defense will not exceed two hours in length.

The student may be asked to answer questions about and defend any aspect of the proposal, including their choice of problem to be studied, the theoretical and empirical background for the study, the methodology chosen (including instrumentation, design, statistics, etc.), and anticipated difficulties and ways to handle them. Because the proposed research reflects the students understanding of the area of specialization and the integration of knowledge of various aspects of the science of nursing, as well as knowledge from disciplines relevant to the research topic, the proposal defense provides an opportunity for the dissertation committee to assess mastery of these areas.

The dissertation committee evaluates the student’s performance in the dissertation proposal defense by taking into account the student’s evidence of familiarity with and ability to assess the most important literature (classic and current) in the field, ability to cite the work of authorities in the field, ability to articulate and take defensible positions on key conceptual, theoretical, substantive, and methodological issues regarding the area of research, evidence of critical and creative thinking about the area of science, and an ability to present and defend plans for research that advances the field of study. The dissertation committee also assesses the quality and feasibility of the proposed research.

Following completion of the defense, the committee confers to determine grading and any specific recommendations for revision of the dissertation proposal. The student is then informed of the committee’s decision. Grading options for the dissertation proposal defense include pass and fail.

- A passing grade signifies an acceptable performance by the student in answering questions posed during the defense and an acceptable proposal for the dissertation research.
- A grade of fail signifies unacceptable performance by the student in answering questions posed during the defense or an unacceptable proposal requiring major revision.
  - Students who fail the dissertation proposal defense on first attempt are permitted to submit a revised copy of the dissertation proposal and to repeat the defense no sooner than one month and no longer than six months after the initial defense.
A student who fails the dissertation proposal defense a second time or who does not make the required changes and re-defends the proposal within the designated time frame will be terminated from the Ph.D. program.

For students selecting the alternative dissertation format, the proposal defense will conclude with a discussion among dissertation committee members and the student about:

- Expectations for types of papers that will fulfill the requirements;
- Roles of committee members in guiding the dissemination of dissertation research results;
- Agreement for order of authorship; and
- Targeted journals.

These decisions will be documented on a research agreement form that will be signed by all members of the dissertation committee and the student and then filed with the Ph.D. Program Director. No changes will be allowed to the document unless all members agree to the changes. An inability to reach an agreement regarding format, manuscript expectations, authorship, or any other issues will result in the student completing the traditional dissertation format. The results of the dissertation proposal defense are reported to the Ph.D. Program Director. The approved proposal constitutes a ‘contract’ with the student about what will be required for dissertation research. Any unanticipated major modifications to the proposal must be approved in writing by the entire committee.

Upon receiving approval of the dissertation proposal, the student will then submit the required IRB forms. Upon receipt of IRB approval, the dissertation proposal, a turn-it-in evaluation of the proposal, the IRB approval, and the required “D” Forms are submitted to the Ph.D. Program Director for signing. The criteria that the Graduate Dean uses to review proposals for quality are found the following link: [http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/graduatehandbook.html](http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/graduatehandbook.html)

No research can be conducted until receipt of approval from the Graduate Dean. Please see the timeline table for help in planning how long these activities may take.

**Choosing a Traditional or Alternative Dissertation**

The student has a choice of whether to complete a traditional or an alternative (manuscript) dissertation (See Appendix for examples of traditional and alternative outlines). This decision is made collaboratively with the student and their dissertation committee before research begins. This section details guidance regarding the alternative dissertation as informed by a review of the literature and a review of protocols and processes at other CON. These points may help students make a decision about which type of dissertation they will complete.

- The product from the alternative dissertation will be three publishable quality full-length manuscripts developed and submitted to peer-reviewed journals.
- At least one of the manuscripts is to be data-based from the dissertation research and one will be an integrative review of the literature. The third manuscript can be data-based from the dissertation research or another type of manuscript as agreed upon with the dissertation committee.
• The manuscripts should be cohesive and demonstrate a logical building of the dissertation work. Each should stand on its own as a non-duplicative scholarly contribution. Each article or manuscript can refer to the other, as one would when publishing different works that refer to prior methods, findings, etc., but the articles must be discrete. For example, each should have a unique literature review, methods section, findings, discussion, tables, figures, and references, as appropriate.

• All manuscripts, whether data-based or not, must be prepared from start to finish under the supervision of the dissertation committee. Planned content for the three manuscripts, including titles, authorship, and potential journals for submission, must be agreed upon by the dissertation committee members. Committee members must be available to the student for guidance while the dissertation research is in progress.

• Students must be the primary author on these manuscripts and must be able to defend how they are based on the student’s own work.

• The dissertation committee must approve submission of each manuscript for publication prior to it being submitted by the student.

• One of the manuscripts should be submitted for review prior to the student’s dissertation defense. The other two manuscripts need to be submitted for review prior to graduation sign-off by faculty.

We acknowledge that the quality of journals is an important consideration, but leave the determination for selection of quality journals up to the dissertation committee. When the three journals have been selected, the dissertation chair will notify the Ph.D. Program Director of the focus of the manuscript, identified target journal, and rationale for selection.

The choice of journal may be influenced by Journal copyright policy. It is the student’s responsibility to determine any journal restrictions for publishing alternative dissertation manuscripts and to notify their dissertation committee members.

**Dissertation Defense**

The student will follow the guidance on the UMSL Graduate School website to schedule the dissertation defense: [https://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/graduation.html#DOC](https://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/graduation.html#DOC)

Students will need to schedule a date with sufficient time to ensure attendance of all dissertation committee members and to reserve an available space. It is recommended that students begin scheduling their dissertation defense, after receiving approval to do so from the dissertation chair. It is the student’s responsibility to plan in accordance with graduation deadlines and to allow sufficient time for any changes to the dissertation after the defense. Please allow **at least one month** for your committee members to review the dissertation manuscript, unless all dissertation committee members agree to a briefer period. Appropriate updates and suitable notice should be sent to all dissertation committee members by the student.
A pre-defense practice session may be recommended by any member of the dissertation committee. This informal session should be scheduled at least 1 month prior to the final defense. The purpose of this session is to familiarize the student with what to expect during the final defense and provide the opportunity for the student to practice answering questions. The dissertation committee members can offer suggestions, strategies, and encouragement to the student as they prepare for the final public defense.

The final oral examination (dissertation defense) is mandatory. In general, it is expected that oral defenses will be held on campus and during regular business hours in order to facilitate student, faculty, and public accessibility. Defenses must be scheduled with the Graduate School at least 3 weeks in advance of the defense date. Dissertation defenses are open to all members of the university community and the general public.

The dissertation defense will take approximately 2 hours, including 20-30 minutes for the student’s formal presentation of their dissertation research, followed by questions from the dissertation committee. Questions will be opened up to the public at the conclusion of committee members’ questioning. The question and answer part of the dissertation defense concludes when the dissertation committee members have no further questions. At that time, everyone will be excused from the room and the dissertation committee members will deliberate on the student’s work.

If the student passes the dissertation defense, the remaining time might be spent discussing needed edits to the final dissertation to obtain dissertation committee approvals. If the student does not pass the dissertation defense, the dissertation committee will discuss with the student whether they have an option for a repeat examination.

Approved by the Ph.D. Program Faculty 2/26/2014
Approved by the CON Graduate Committee 3/6/2014

IRL/ProQuest Submission
Submitting your dissertation to IRL/ProQuest is a requirement of the UMSL Graduate School. Please refer to the Graduate Policies found at the following link for additional instructions: http://www.umsl.edu/gradschool/admitted/dissertation.html

UMSL Accreditation
UMSL, including the Graduate School and The College of Nursing, are fully accredited and have been continuously accredited through the Higher Learning Commission. The review is every 10 years, the last one taking place in 2018.

National Guidelines for Quality in Ph.D. Education
There are guidelines for quality that guide our curriculum and inform the learning activities woven into the program of study. Some of the relevant documents are listed below:

Office of Student Services

The Office of Student Services can assist you in a variety of ways, such as advising regarding and signing the D3 form, verification of credit hour forms, GI bill and veteran’s forms, registration, and referrals to campus resources. Questions about the curriculum, prerequisites, and course requirements should always be directed to your faculty advisor in the CON. Academic support services, such as tutoring, study groups, workshops, etc. are coordinated by the CON’s Student Success & Retention Coordinator.

The Office of Student Services is located on the 1st floor of the Nursing Administration Building on South Campus. You may schedule an appointment by calling the CON front desk during normal business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm) at 314-516-6066. One day throughout the week during the academic year, the Office of Student Services will be open until 6pm. Direct contact information for each of our staff members can be found on our website: https://www.umsl.edu/divisions/nursing/About%20the%20College/our-faculty-and-staff.html

Current Students

We hope to make the registration process as easy as possible for you. Shortly before registration time, you will receive two emails to your UMSL email account: one from the Office of the Registrar and one from the CON.

The email from the Office of the Registrar will include your registration date, which is assigned by class standing (graduate students and seniors first, juniors next, etc.). Be aware that it is not an appointment. It is simply the first day that you will be eligible to register for courses.

All Ph.D. students must meet with their Faculty Advisor to plan their course schedule. Meetings can be scheduled via email or phone.

Academic Advising

The graduate academic advisor for graduate students will assist you in registering for your courses after you and your faculty advisor develop a plan of study, including cognates and electives. The plan of study needs to be updated yearly, with a copy provided to your faculty advisor, the Ph.D. Program Director, and the CON’s Office of Student Services. The plan of study
may be changed by mutual agreement with your faculty advisor and approval of the Ph.D. Program Director. You can find a copy of the plan of study in the Appendix of this handbook. The following graduate courses must have department consent. Please reach out to the graduate academic advisor to register for these courses:

- N7498- Doctoral Seminar
- N7499- Dissertation Research
- N7870- Special Topics in Scientific Foundations of Research

It is essential that you communicate with the graduate academic advisor in a timely manner about enrollment in courses.

**International and Permanent Resident Students**

International students must meet all requirements of UMSL Global first. [https://www.umsl.edu/global/](https://www.umsl.edu/global/)

All students with international coursework (whether they are classified as an international student, as a citizen, or as a permanent resident of the United States) must submit official transcripts from the international school(s). International Admissions and Transcript information is available from International Student and Scholar Services [https://www.umsl.edu/global/isss/index.html](https://www.umsl.edu/global/isss/index.html).

**Add and/or Drop Course(s)**

To add and/or drop a course after you initially register for courses, you must still contact the graduate academic advisor in the CON (the “Advising Hold” is not removed after your initial advising/registration meeting). Students may call the CON front desk to schedule a follow-up appointment to make changes to their schedule, or they may contact the graduate academic advisor (if it is a minor change). The graduate academic advisor will discuss how dropping a course may impact your progression in the Nursing major and your overall study plan. Students must be aware of the add/drop deadlines set forth by the Office of the Registrar, as well as the reassessment schedule set forth by the Cashier’s Office.

- **Add/Drop Deadlines:** [http://www.umsl.edu/~registration/students/add-drop-change.html](http://www.umsl.edu/~registration/students/add-drop-change.html)
- **Reassessment Schedule:** [http://www.umsl.edu/cashiers/tuition-fees/fee-reassessment.html](http://www.umsl.edu/cashiers/tuition-fees/fee-reassessment.html)

**Graduation**

**Applying for Graduation**

Your graduation is not automatic, even after you’ve met all the requirements. You must notify the university that you intend to graduate by submitting “D” forms throughout your degree program of study.

The Ph.D. Program Director submits a list of graduating doctoral students soon after the start of their last semester. If the Ph.D. Program Director is not aware that you plan to graduate, it may
be too late to include your name in the commencement bulletin. Good communication with faculty will help assure that your graduation is successful. Students must be enrolled on campus in their final semester.

**Graduation Awards**
A select number of awards are presented to graduating students each semester, which recognizes student excellence in nursing research, professional nursing practice, and College leadership. Nominations for each award are generated by faculty and/or students and are submitted to the Graduate Committee for consideration and selection. Award recipients are recognized each semester at the CON’s Graduation Awards and Recognition Ceremony.

- **Innovations in Clinical Practice Award**
  - This award is presented to a student in the RN to BSN Program or a Graduate Nursing Program who is breaking new ground in nursing science and practice. This is a nurse who visualizes and actively pursues a non-traditional nursing role. By their professional activity, this is a nurse who expands professional horizons and advances the nursing profession.

- **Mary Reardon Castles Award:**
  - This award is presented to a graduate student who has expressed interest and involvement in a research effort. The individual will have contributed substantially to some effort, showing growth toward and interest in research activity.

- **Nancy Sue Claypool Award:**
  - This award is presented to a graduate student who will be or has been involved in research or projects involving the prevention or intervention of cancer, particularly breast cancer, or other chronic disease or terminal health condition.

- **Shirley A. Martin Distinguished Nurse Award:**
  - This award is presented to a student who has demonstrated outstanding personal and professional growth. This growth is reflected in voluntary participation in or contribution to programs in the CON.
Student Academic Policies

Probation
Student’s failure to make adequate progress jeopardizes students' potential to complete the Ph.D. degree and puts their financial aid at risk. Students with a cumulative GPA below 3.0 will be notified by the Graduate School at the end of a semester and will be placed on probation. Graduate school rules will be used regarding coming off probation.

The CON may also recommend placing a student on probation if faculty regard the student's progress as unsatisfactory. The Graduate School shall inform students of their probation by a letter, with copies sent to the Ph.D. Program Director, the Graduate Admissions Office, and the Financial Aid Office.

Dismissal
A student who is on probation for two consecutive semesters during their program of study will be dismissed, unless the Dean of the Graduate School approves an exceptional request for continuation from the faculty advisor/chair and the Ph.D. Program Director. Upon recommendation of the CON, the Graduate School may dismiss any student who does not make adequate progress. The Graduate School is responsible for sending dismissal letters to students, with copies sent to the graduate academic advisor, the Ph.D. Program director, the Graduate Admissions Office, and the Financial Aid Office.

Grade Appeal Procedure
On each campus of the University of Missouri, it is the Chancellor who is ultimately responsible to the President and the Board of Curators for all campus programs, policies, and activities. On the UMSL campus, the Chancellor has delegated responsibility for the overseeing the grade appeal process to the Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost. The Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs/Provost is therefore responsible for assuring that grade appeals are handled in a fair and timely manner. More specifically, an officer is responsible for seeing that the procedures are appropriately followed.

The CON endorses the grade appeal procedures of UMSL and has only changed terminology to reflect the administrative positions and faculty committees of the CON. The CON Graduate Committee is charged with hearing student appeals at the graduate level. For the entire grade appeal process, please refer to the following website: http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/policy/grade-appeal.html

Leave of Absence
Graduate students who interrupt their studies for a period of one or more years should request a leave of absence from UMSL. There is no form for requesting a leave of absence. Instead, the student should submit a letter to the Ph.D. Program Director for approval. If the Ph.D. Program Director approves, the request will be forwarded to the Dean and the Dean of the Graduate
School. The student is expected to work with their faculty advisor or chair to revise the plan of
study, due to the leave of absence. If the student has stopped out for medical reasons, the
CON may ask the student to provide a statement from their health care provider stating that
they will be unable to perform the task necessary to be successful.

The letter to the Ph.D. Program Director should cover the following topics:

- The program modifications that the leave of absence requires;
- Indicate the reason for leaving; and
- The expected date of return to the university.

If the student is not required to be continuously enrolled, they may still request a leave of
absence if they must interrupt their studies for more than one year. This will avoid the
requirement that the student must reapply to the university and will preserve their original
requirement term (the student will be able to graduate under the rules in effect when they
started their program).

A leave of absence does not affect the maximum time limitation set for a degree program.
Returning to the program is dependent on availability.

**Student Responsibilities**

**Statement of Scholarly Work**

All formal papers required in the program are to be written in a scholarly manner using the
following technical standards:

1. All work is to be properly documented within the body of the paper as well as reflected in a
   complete reference list.
2. Correct composition and grammar must be followed throughout the paper including correct
   sentence and paragraph structure, spelling, and punctuation.
3. Guidelines as listed in the latest edition of the publication manual of the *American Psychological
   Association (APA)* are to be followed for all formal papers. It is strongly recommended that
   students purchase a copy of the manual at the beginning of their enrollment in the program.

**Code for Academic and Professional Conduct**

Every student has unique talents and experiences that enrich the culture of learning in the
UMSL CON. Faculty and students share the responsibility for effective teaching and learning.
This relationship thus becomes a commitment to ethical principles in achieving academic and
professional goals within the classroom and clinical settings.

Each UMSL CON student is expected to understand and comply with the Code of Ethics for Nurses according to the American Nurses Association (2017):
**Statement of Academic Honesty**

UMSL encourages students to pursue excellence within a respectful and collegial environment and to assume responsibility for the consequences of personal actions. For that reason, the University requires students to reject any type of dishonest behavior. Conduct for which students are subject to sanctions falls into multiple categories and can be viewed in Section 200.010 Standard of Conduct ([https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected_rules/programs/ch200/200.010_standard_of_conduct](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/collected_rules/programs/ch200/200.010_standard_of_conduct)). Specifically, Academic Honesty precludes cheating, plagiarism, sabotage and/or forgery, alteration, or misuse of University and CON documents.

**UMSL Student Conduct Code and Discipline**

Apart from and in addition to these professional standards and requirement by which Nursing students will be graded and evaluated academically, all University of Missouri students are subject to the Standard of Conduct for students which appears in Section 200.010 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri and for which they may be disciplined in accordance with the procedures in Section 200.020.

**Civility**

Civility is defined as treating others, as well as ourselves, with respect, dignity, and care. Civility is apparent when we are sensitive to the impact that our communication, practices and behaviors have on others, and when we acknowledge each person’s self-worth and unique contributions to the community as a whole. Nursing students are expected to:

1. Address patients and hospital nursing staff appropriately; for example Dr., Mr., Ms. and their last name. Addressing a person by the first name can be disrespectful in some cultures.
2. Treat faculty, patients and other students with respect and courtesy.
3. Maintain an attitude of shared goals and intellectual openness with other students.
4. Be intolerant of injustice or bigotry of any kind, and strive to correct these issues on behalf of classmates, patients or community.
5. Speak the truth in all matters; do not propagate rumors or prematurely judge people or situations.
6. Conduct oneself appropriately when representing the University or CON, and especially when wearing a CON uniform that identifies you as a nursing student of UMSL.
7. Exercise good judgment and adhere to HIPPA laws when posting information on e-mail and social media, including, but not limited to Facebook, Twitter and Google.

**Social Media Policy**

**Social Media Definition:** Social media is defined as, but not limited, to web-based or mobile technologies used for interactive communication. Examples of social media include but are not limited to collaborative projects, blogs (WordPress, Blogger) and microblogs (e.g., Twitter, Snapchat), content communities (YouTube), social networking sites (Facebook, Google+), and
others as they evolve. Confidentiality and privacy issues may also involve the use of email and texting.

Social media tools and applications allow the University to reach many audiences including faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Social media is a powerful tool that when used inappropriately, can blur the lines between private, confidential, personal and the professional sharing of information in your role within the CON. Information shared on social media by faculty, staff, and/or students as individuals, actually reflects the CON and the profession of nursing collectively as a community.

This document serves as a policy to identify and direct the appropriate use of social media by students, faculty, and staff. Use of social media by CON faculty, staff and students presents special concerns for privacy and confidentiality.

The personal use of social media by UMSL CON faculty, staff and students outside their respective roles in the College is not affected by the following policy. This policy will apply to the sharing of any confidential information about the CON (including the faculty, staff, and/or students), patients and/or patient care situations, and/or UMSL CON-clinical affiliates (agencies with which the CON has a contractual relationship for students). This policy will be updated regularly as technology and social media applications evolve. It is the responsibility of every staff, faculty, and student member to check for updates each semester. Adherence to this policy is mandatory. If you accidentally violate it, please notify the Ph.D. Program Director immediately so problems can be quickly mitigated.

Violations that include the sharing of confidential information as listed above may result in clinical or course failure. Other violations will be handled through the appropriate disciplinary process. Please read https://www.ncsbn.org/Social_Media.pdf

Guidelines for Appropriate Social Media Use

1. Guarding Your Online Reputation:
   a. All information posted and shared online is public. It is not, and will never again be private or confidential. Even with the most robust privacy settings, screenshots of posted information can be reposted. Content contributed on these platforms is immediately searchable and shareable, regardless of whether that is the intention of the contributor. Once posted online, the content leaves the contributing individual’s control forever and may be traced back to the individual in perpetuity. It becomes part of your online reputation which in turn becomes part of your professional reputation. The following information should be reviewed:
2. Facebook Guidelines and Use of the GROUP Account Type:
   a. CON affiliated student groups must choose the “Group” account type when using Facebook.  [http://www.facebook.com/groups](http://www.facebook.com/groups). Facebook groups are like a message board; they are easy to manage and have several privacy options.
   c. CON affiliated Facebook Groups must add a member of the CON faculty as an Admin of their group. This allows the faculty to ensure that students are not bullying others.

3. Live the CON Core Values:
   a. The CON core values include caring (nurturing and mentoring), professionalism (following the ethical standards of nursing) and mutual care/support (respect for one another). Content associated with you must be consistent with these values. Social media is used to build relationships. Do not use social media to harm another’s reputation. Never impersonate someone else or purposely obscure your identity as a representative of the CON.

4. Build Your Own Reputation:
   a. Care about what you are posting. Write what you know. Stick to your area of expertise and provide unique, individual perspectives on what’s going on at the CON and in the world. Do not share secrets. Respect proprietary information, confidentiality, brand, trademark, copyright, and fair use.

5. Remember Everything Online is Discoverable:
   a. There is no such thing as a private social media site. Search engines may retrieve posts years after they were published. Comments can be forwarded, copied, and printed. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post.

6. Keep It Legal:
   a. Have all the facts before you post. It is better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your source. Keep your links up to date and make sure they work.

7. Be Respectful and Professional:
   a. CON students should always keep in mind our principles of respect for others and the civil and thoughtful discussion of ideas. The freedom and speed of online conversations can often prompt people to behave in ways they may otherwise would not. Your reputation and the CON are best served when you express yourself professionally. Do not spam.

8. Give Credit Where Credit is Due:
   a. Always cite when quoting someone else. Make sure images are shareable through Creative Commons, as well as make sure to attribute them. Never use copyrighted material without permission.
   b. UMSL CON students, faculty, and staff are prohibited from disclosing through social media the following:
i. Protected Health Information, as defined by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) – For example, individuals may not disclose patient names or otherwise refer to patients in any way that identifies them individually, including by their initials or by location (e.g., hospital name or unit).

ii. Education Record Information, as defined by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – Employees may not disclose FERPA protected information regarding students.

iii. Confidential Personnel Information – Employees may not disclose confidential personnel information regarding other employees.

iv. Confidential, non-public or proprietary information about families, clinical facility staff or clinical institutions.

The use of social media for clinical discussions that include any identifiable information related to patients or our affiliated clinical facilities is prohibited.

Last updated: January 4, 2018


**General Information**

**Computer Proficiency Requirement**

The CON requires all students to be computer proficient prior to entering any Nursing courses. Students must indicate proficiency in the following skills:

**Required Skills:**

- Logging on to UMSL’s Online Course Management System Canvas
- Logging on to UMSL’s Student Information Management System MyView
- Send, receive, and respond to web-based email on and off campus
- Attach a document/file to an email message
- Familiar with using a graphical interface to access programs (use of icons on the Desktop)
- Start up and switch between multiple programs/windows
- Copy, move, rename and delete files
- Create, move, rename and delete folders
- Able to use a web browser to access the Internet
- Able to create and organize bookmarks in web browser
- Be familiar with several different search engines to find information
- Use the Internet to collect and print information
- Able to download programs from the Internet to their computer (e.g. Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash)
- Able to save, copy, and incorporate Internet information into a word processor
- Create a document using a word processor
- Able to save, edit, and print a document in a word processor
• Able to create PowerPoint presentations (including adding video clips, sounds, and links to other presentations)

Preferred, but not required:
• Able to create, edit, enter formulae for calculations, and create graphs using a spreadsheet

The College of Nursing has adopted:
• Windows as its operating system (Apple is fully supported by the campus help desk)
• Microsoft Office products (Word, Excel & PowerPoint) as its primary application software
• APA, the latest edition, as the standard manuscript style

The University has adopted:
• Canvas as its course management software

Resources for Computer Literacy Learning:
• Computer course
• Computer lab training

Computer Technology/Student Laboratories
The CON is committed to integrating technology into your academic experience. All information relative to the use of Canvas, a course management package, and your student emails will be outlined in Student Technology Guides prepared each fall by Information Technology Services (ITS) (http://www.umsl.edu/technology/).
• Computer Help Desk Phone Number/email: 314-516-6034/ helpdesk@umsl.edu
• Computer Help Desk Phone Support Hours of Operation: Monday – Thursday 7:30 am - 7:00 pm, Friday 7:30 am - 5:00 pm and Sunday 12:00 pm – 8:00 pm.
  o Monday - Friday during Operating Hours in-person appointments are available in 190 MSC
  o Call or text 314-516-6034 to schedule an appointment. Walk-ins are not accepted.

A number of student computer laboratories are available on campus. See the “Student Labs” page on the Instructional Support Services website for further information: http://www.umsl.edu/technology/iss/Student%20Labs/index.html

UMSL Writing Lab
UMSL has a writing center that offers consultations for any part of the writing process. The writing center is located at the Social Sciences and Business building in room 222 and also offers online appointments. While the Writing Center does see walk-ins, scheduled appointments always have priority. Make an appointment here: https://www.umsl.edu/~umslenglish/Writing%20Center/appointment.html
• Writing Center Hours of Operation are Monday – Thursday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm
There is a person at the writing lab designated to work with doctoral students.

**Communication**
The CON’s faculty and staff communicate with students in a variety of ways, including the use of Canvas bulletin boards and university email. Students are responsible for all communication regarding program information/changes relayed through such campus communication systems. Students are responsible for reading their UMSL email or for taking appropriate steps to forward that email to another account. Faculty and staff will only use the UMSL email address for the student.

**Faculty and Staff Offices and Mailboxes**
Nursing faculty and staff offices and mailboxes are located in Seton Hall and the Nursing Administrative Building. The buildings are open Monday - Friday 7:30 am - 9:00 pm and 7:30 am-5:00 pm on Saturdays.

**Student Organizations**
- **Sigma Theta Tau**
  - The Nu Chi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau was officially established in April 1984. Membership is offered by invitation to those students graduating in the upper third of their class and to those recognized as outstanding community nursing leaders. Professional presentations are held twice each year and feature leaders in the nursing profession.
  - Sigma Theta Tau International is a funder of dissertation research. The Nu Chi Chapter is a resource for its support of Ph.D. students’ research interests, professional development, and professional presentations.
- **Minority Student Nurses' Association (MSNA)**
  - The Minority Student Nurses’ Association (MSNA) was developed to function as an academic support and networking group. The focus of MSNA is to provide service, knowledge, and sense of awareness through community and university service; and to create a bond between minority nursing students. MSNA is all about support, academics and community outreach. Membership is open to all students from the CON regardless of race, culture, religion, or ethnic background.
Appendices

1. Plans of Study for Full and Part-time BSN-Ph.D. and MSN-Ph.D. Students:
   a. Full-time BSN-Ph.D.
   b. Part-time BSN-Ph.D.
   c. Full-time MSN-Ph.D.
   d. Part-time MSN-Ph.D.

2. Independent Study Approval Form

   a. Traditional Dissertation Proposal
   b. Alternative Dissertation Proposal

4. Suggested Formats for Final Dissertations at Completion of Program
   a. Traditional Dissertation Format
   b. Alternative Dissertation Format

5. Ph.D. student Annual Review Form & Biosketch
# Recommended Part-Time Plan of Study for BSN to Ph.D. Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester &amp; Year</th>
<th>Course Number &amp; Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<th>Comments</th>
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<td>N6130: Research, Interventions, and Evidence Based Practice</td>
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<td>N6111: Healthcare Systems</td>
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<td>N7403: Development of the Nurse Scientist</td>
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<td>N7212: Biostats 2</td>
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<td><strong>Spring Year 3</strong></td>
<td>N7200: State of the Science</td>
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<td>N7491: Advanced Theory Development</td>
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<td>Select One (offered every odd-numbered year)</td>
<td>N7497: Design, Implementation, and Evaluation of Health Interventions</td>
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<td>N7213: Structural Equation Modeling</td>
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<td>OR Fall Course N7496: Seminar in Advanced Qualitative Methods</td>
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# Recommended Full-Time Plan of Study for BSN to Ph.D. Students

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# Recommended Part-Time Plan of Study for MSN to Ph.D. Students

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# Recommended Full-Time Plan of Study for MSN to Ph.D. Students

**Student:** _____________________________________  
**Advisor:** __________________

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Note. *Can take cognates at other times to keep summer free. **Can spread out dissertation hours across more semesters. To obtain full time credit, must enroll in 1 credit of dissertation research and can supplement with up to 8 hours of doctoral candidacy credit hours for up to 8 years. Additional Note: Check with International Studies for advising international students as full time status will vary with each visa.
Independent Study Approval Form

Student: _______________________________ Date: ____________
Faculty: _______________________________ Semester: _________
Course Title and Number and Credits: ______________________________________

Topical Focus of Requested Hours:

Rationale for Requested Hours:

Learning Objectives:

Learning Activities to be completed during the course:

Evaluation: What will be graded? Describe product(s) expected and the due date for submission. What will be used as the grading Scale (e.g., letter grades, letter grades with +/−, percentage grades, or pass/fail)?

Note: Consider the workload effort for these credits to have two components. First, there is the workload equivalent that you would have for the 'in class' time, calculated as approximately 1 hour of time for every 1 credit of class per week. In addition, at the graduate level we aim for 3 hours of homework for every 1 credit hour of class for the average student. In this doctoral level independent study class, that equates to 9 hours of reading, writing, thinking and interacting per week. In total, the average student will need to plan to spend approximately 11.5 to 12 hours every week on activities related to this course.

Signature of Faculty Accepting Responsibility: ________________________________

Signature of Student Agreeing to Stipulations Specified: _________________________
Suggested Format for a Traditional Dissertation Proposal

Chapter 1:
A. Introduction
   • Background (background to the problem)
   • The study (briefly introducing the study and research questions)
   • Significance (briefly explaining who your study will be of value to and why)

Chapter 2:
B. Literature Review (Situates your work within the body of literature for your topic, including describing the conceptual framework that will guide your work, defining key constructs, introducing or clarifying any contemporary disagreements in the literature. Begin with an introductory paragraph introducing the major topic, include scientific underpinnings from relevant empirical and theoretical literature, describe the conceptual framework that will guide your study, and conclude with research questions/hypotheses. End the chapter with a summation that helps review the need for your study and thus transitions to the methodology)

Chapter 3-5:
C. Methodology
   • Overall Research Approach (with justification and citations of other research using that approach or to theorists of that approach) [usually needed for qualitative, possibly for quantitative]
   • Research Sites/Population/Sampling/Subjects/Participants
   • Instruments/Measures/Sources of Data
   • Procedures
   • Data Analysis
   • Trustworthiness and Credibility [usually needed for qualitative, not quantitative]

D. Timeline (for proposal defense, completion of the dissertation, and dissertation defense)

E. References
Suggested Format for Alternative Dissertation Proposal

Chapter 1:
A. Introduction
   • Background (background to the problem)
   • The studies (briefly introducing the collection of studies and your overall research questions)
   • Significance (briefly explaining who your dissertation will be of value to and why)

B. Literature Review
   • Scientific underpinnings from relevant empirical and theoretical literature
   • Conceptual framework that will guide your study,
   • Research questions/hypotheses.

C. Methodology
   • Design
   • Overall Research Site, Population, Sampling, Subjects/Participants
   • Instruments/Measures/Sources of Data
   • Procedures
   • Data Analysis
   • Trustworthiness and credibility (for qualitative data)

Chapter 2:
A. Manuscript 1 (Recommend an integrative review of the literature)
   • One sentence describing the topic for this future manuscript
   • Research Question(s)
   • Method (1 or 2 sentences if it differs from III, above)
   • Targeted Journal – where will you submit first?
   • Proposed Authorship order for yourself and your committee members
   • Timeline for submission – when do you anticipate it will be submitted

Chapter 3:
A. Manuscript 2 (May be data-based or non-data-based such as: policy paper, theory, measurement, historical development of the concept)
   • One sentence describing the topic for this future manuscript
   • Research Question(s)
   • Method (1 or 2 sentences if it differs from III, above)
   • Targeted Journal – where will you submit first?
   • Proposed Authorship order for yourself and your committee members
   • Timeline for submission – when do you anticipate it will be submitted

Chapter 4:
A. Manuscript 3 (Must be data-based findings from the dissertation study)
   • One sentence describing the topic for this future manuscript
   • Research Question(s)
   • Method (1 or 2 sentences if it differs from III, above)
   • Targeted Journal – where will you submit first?
• Proposed Authorship order for yourself and your committee members
• Timeline for submission – when do you anticipate it will be submitted

Chapter 5:
  A. Timeline (for proposal defense, completion of the dissertation, and dissertation defense)
  B. References
Traditional Dissertation Format

The traditional dissertation format consists of 5 chapters.

A. Chapter 1: Introduction
   a. General description of the area of concern
   b. It is suggested that this section be brief, three to four paragraphs maximum. Draw ideas together to result in a purpose statement.
   c. Problem to be Studied/Purpose of the Proposed Research Project.
   d. State explicitly and succinctly.
   e. Introduction should lead up to and provide support for the problem statement.
   f. Formulation of the scientific problem is a creative endeavor.
   g. Merely replicating the identical procedure of an earlier research study (i.e., direct replication) is not sufficient for a doctoral dissertation. A replication involving substantive variation from previous work (i.e., systematic replication or replication "with cause") is appropriate as dissertation research (see Johnston & Pennypacker, 1993).
   h. Major Research Questions and/or Research Hypotheses.
   i. Some committee/chairs prefer either research questions or hypotheses. Some may wish for you to include both.
   j. Hypotheses and research questions should be written using constructs (not tests/measurements--indicators or definitions of variables [see Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991]).
   k. Hypothesis statements and research questions do not include reference to statistical significance. "A statistical test of significance is used for the purpose of determining whether or not to reject a null hypothesis at a given probability level, reference to the test does not belong in the hypothesis" (Pedhazur & Schmelkin, 1991, p. 195).
   l. Definition of Important Terms.
   m. May include theoretical as well as operational definitions of important terms. (Operational definitions may also appear in the methods section.) Operational definitions of all important variables must be provided.
   n. Always include definitions for terms or uses of terms not generally found in this type of research, as well as those for which confusion may arise.
   o. Significance of the Problem and Justification for Investigating It.
   p. This section will probably not be long, but should be very powerful!
   q. What theoretical/practical reasons are there for wanting to know the answers to your questions?
   r. Why is it important to conduct the study?
   s. Include explicit statement of significance specific to the topic studied.
   t. Basic Assumptions.
   u. An assumption is something that is taken to be true even though the direct evidence of its truth is either absent or very limited (Pyrczak & Bruce, 1992).
   v. Include descriptions of information that are not available to you, but that are important in explaining the outcome of the study.
   w. For example, must you assume that tests were administered in standardized fashion? If you are doing this yourself or have control over the examiners, then you DO NOT have to make this assumption. You write this into your procedure.
x. Basic Limitations.
y. A weakness or handicap that potentially limits the validity of the results.
z. A boundary to which the study is confined (often called a delimitation) (Pyrczak & Bruce, 1992).

aa. Often limitations include a statement about generalizability of results or other controls, etc., that may be impossible to meet. For example, if you must use intact groups rather than randomized selection, what impact is this likely to have on your results?
bb. Summary and Transition to Chapter 2.

B. Chapter 2: Literature Review
   a. Historical Background
   b. What are the major issues, controversies, etc., that impact on your study?
   c. Include background on all relevant variables. This background can be brief or longer depending on your study and the wishes of your committee.
   d. Theory or Discipline Relevant to Research Questions and Hypotheses
   e. What theory or discipline forms the basis for your problem?
   f. Current Literature Relevant to Research Questions and Hypotheses.
   g. Literature relating to specific variables
   h. Literature relating to your combination of variables
   i. What common thread holds these studies together?
   j. Incorporate discussion of strengths/weaknesses of methodology in previous studies which you are building on/hoping to avoid in your study.
   k. Summary and Transition to Chapter 3

C. Chapter 3: Methodology
   a. Restatement of Purpose
   b. Design
   c. Include general description, along with possible threats to internal/external validity
   d. Include operational definitions of all variables -- independent and dependent
   e. It is often useful to include a diagram/figure of the design (especially for experimental studies).
   f. Setting
   g. Sample
   h. Power analysis
   i. Inclusion and exclusion criteria
   j. Recruitment and sampling strategy
   k. Human subjects
   l. Attrition (number who dropped out, reasons for drop outs, description of drop out group)
   m. Measurement
   n. Instruments used
   o. Traits measured, format, scores, administration
   p. Evidence of reliability and for indirect measures, validity should be stated explicitly. For direct measures, describe the reliability and accuracy of the measurements. If this information is not available from prior studies, piloting of the instrument/procedure should be conducted
q. If a survey is used, the rate of the return should be stated along with a description of procedures used to follow-up and a description of non-responders
r. Description of Procedures.
s. Procedures should be described in complete detail so they may be replicated by any future researcher.
t. Data Analysis and Display Procedure
u. Including (where appropriate) Choice of Analysis and Computer Program(s)
v. Rationale should be provided for choice of statistical/other analysis
w. State alpha level(s) chosen for statistical comparisons
x. Describe analyses for each of your research questions/hypotheses

D. Chapter 4: Results and Discussion
a. Restatement of research questions (hypotheses)
b. Each question/hypothesis is restated in BOLD followed by the results of the data analysis (es) which provide(s) answers to that question/hypothesis.
c. Suggested order of presentation of results (may vary depending on nature of analyses):
d. Descriptive statistics (includes means, standard deviations, etc.)
e. Where appropriate, primary statistical analyses (includes correlation matrix, t tests, Summary of ANOVA, MANOVA, results of factor analyses, etc., see specific technique for examples)
f. Post hoc and other secondary analyses
g. Organize data into tables or graphs (see APA Manual for examples) where appropriate. Each table/graph must be referenced in the text. All tables should be complete, that is, self-explanatory.
h. Discussion (May be done as separate section or for each question/hypothesis).
i. Summarize results briefly
j. Discuss the results in non-statistical terms. Answer the question. If a hypothesis was stated, was the hypothesis rejected?
k. Integrate your results with the literature reviewed in chapter 2

E. Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions
a. Summarize the study succinctly
b. Report the results briefly
c. Explicitly discuss the implications for the results
d. Relate the study findings to the literature review and point out consistencies and inconsistencies with those reported in the literature cited earlier
e. It is appropriate to speculate on the meaning of the results; however, care must be taken not to go outside the parameters established in the first four chapters.
f. Recommendations for future research
g. Provide specific guidance - Why is the proposed research needed and what form should such research take?

F. References and Appendices
Alternative Dissertation Format

The alternative (manuscript) dissertation consists of 5 chapters.

A. Chapter 1: Introduction
   a. Introduces the dissertation study
   b. Includes:
      c. Aims
      d. Methods
      e. Logical connections between the 3 manuscripts
      f. Overview of the 3 manuscripts

B. Chapter 2 is the first manuscript
   a. This can be a non-data-based manuscript such as an integrative review of the literature
   b. State of the Science examination of the topic

C. Chapter 3 is the second manuscript
   a. Choice of a data-based OR a non-databased manuscript
   b. Data-based would be from the dissertation findings
   c. Non-data-based manuscript must be related to the dissertation topic, to include, but not limited to these examples:
      d. Policy paper
      e. Theory paper
      f. Methods paper
      g. Historical development of the concept

D. Chapter 4 is the third manuscript
   a. This manuscript must be data-based from the dissertation study

E. Chapter 5: Summary
   a. Summarizes the conclusions and implications of the dissertation research
   b. Provide a broader summary than is presented in each article
   c. Should discuss what has been learned as a result of this body of work
   d. Include the implications for nursing education, research, practice, and/or policy, as relevant.
   e. The overall contribution to science should be discussed.

Additional References and Appendices as appropriate from Chapters 1 & 5
**Ph.D. Student Annual Review Form & Biosketch**

(To be completed by student every January, monitored by chair, and submitted electronically to the Ph.D. Program Director)

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**DISSERTATION TITLE/ TOPIC:** Click here to enter text.

- **Keywords:** Click here to enter text.
- **Methodologies used:** Click here to enter text.

**APA CITED LIST OF PUBLICATIONS (PUBLISHED, IN REVIEW, IN PREPARATION)**

**This year:**

1. Click here to enter text.
   
   Choose an item.
2. Click here to enter text.
   
   Choose an item.

**To date:**

1. Click here to enter text.
   
   Choose an item.
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**APA CITED LIST OF PRESENTATION (NATIONAL/ INTERNATIONAL OR REGIONAL/ LOCAL)**

**This year:**

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To date:
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REQUESTS FOR FUNDING (RECEIVED, IN REVIEW, NOT FUNDED)
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   Choose an item.

AWARDS
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RA/TA RESPONSIBILITY
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DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC OR LEADERSHIP ROLES
Click here to enter text.

**Please attach your program of study and course progression to date. (Forms available in Ph.D. handbook)**
Approved by Ph.D. committee and director October 2017
Ph.D. 2022-2023 Agreement

I _______________________ , as a new student, have received the Ph.D. Handbook. I understand this handbook contains information and policies that may be important during my time at UMSL. By signing this document, I understand that I am held responsible to the policies and all information presented in this handbook. I also understand that I should have my own health insurance coverage and am financially responsible for all health care associated with any injuries or illness which may occur on or off campus, including clinical agencies.

Student Signature: ________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________________