



Doctoral Program
in
Public Affairs

Student Handbook

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WELCOME!!

This handbook has been developed to provide the information that you will need regarding the specific policies and procedures in the doctoral program in Public Affairs (PAF). It is expected that you familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and adhere to the policies described herein. This handbook does not substitute for other documents provided by the College of Health and Public Affairs (COHPA) and/or the University of Central Florida (UCF). Some important reminders are listed below:

Academic Integrity

We value honesty, integrity, and responsibility in the PAF program. Cheating, plagiarism, and other types of academic dishonesty will be referred to the University for appropriate sanctions. Professors have the right to fail a student that they believe has been involved in any aspect of academic misconduct. A full discussion of students' rights and responsibilities on this issue can be found in the Golden Rule at <http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu>

Students are expected to read the Golden Rule prior to starting the program to ensure that they understand and will not be involved in any aspect of academic dishonesty. Students should also refer to the UCF Graduate Catalog, as they will be responsible for following all policies from Graduate Studies as well as those of the University.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarizing materials, using information from notes, books or the internet during on-line exams, or working with other students in classroom or on-line exams to secure information or answers. When in doubt, ask before you assume that you can work with other student(s) on exams or projects, or use information from other sources. APA citation is required for all information taken from an outside source (including the internet, books, journals, articles, and published and non-published materials).

Professionalism

The PAF program is an interdisciplinary program celebrating the diversity of our students, materials, faculty and staff. It is expected that all students, faculty, and staff conduct themselves in a professional manner while in the program.

Some of the criteria by which a student's professional demeanor is measured includes but is not limited to:

1. Knowing and following the rules: Adherence to the rules and regulations as stipulated by the UCF and the PAF program.
2. Timeliness: Students are expected to be on time for classes and to meet all deadlines in class and in the program.
3. Respectfulness: Being respectful and courteous to others is central to creating a learning environment where individuals can comfortably express ideas.
4. Guest Speakers / Presentations: Students in the program must demonstrate professional conduct, respect, and appreciation for these professionals' donation of their time to further the educational experience. Professional attire and conduct are required when guest speakers are present.
5. Class participation: Students are encouraged to ask questions at appropriate times to expand their knowledge of the material. Pertinent student-to-student interaction is considered a valuable part of the learning process and appropriate articulation of critical-thinking during class time will be viewed as making an effort to developing deeper understanding of the materials.
6. Electronic devices: Use of cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices is determined by the instructor.
7. Appropriate behavior: Appropriate non-distracting behavior while on campus, in hallways and in classrooms is expected of all students.
8. Honesty: Honesty and veracity are expected of all students in terms of both how they conduct themselves and approach their work.
9. Demonstrating interest: Exhibiting interest in understanding and growing the knowledge base in the discipline is critical to the doctoral process.
10. Accepting constructive criticism offered by instructors and others in an appropriate manner.
11. Practicing the ethical principles guiding the PAF Doctoral Program: These include:
 - Beneficence or Doing Good
 - Justice or Fairness
 - Integrity or Honesty
 - Respect or Inclusiveness

Safety and Security

While UCF is as safe as any college campus, students should always be concerned for their personal safety and security. University police can be reached by dialing 911 in an emergency and 3-5555 (on-campus phones) / 407-823-5555 for all other matters. Students may call the university escort service to be escorted to their vehicle.

Students should keep personal effects with them at all times and should not leave any personal items in a hallway or conference room. If unfamiliar or suspicious persons are seen in the building, students should not confront them, but instead should contact faculty, staff, or campus police immediately.

Students should not provide any other person with the access code to the labs.

E-Mail

The official mode of communication used by faculty and staff to contact students is e-mail. Students are required to create a Knights email account and provide their email address to the PAF office and to their Track Coordinators. This is the email to which the PAF program distributes official information. Students are responsible and will be held accountable for all information disseminated by email. This will be the only email address to which the program or university will send information.

- To set up your account go to <https://extranet.cst.ucf.edu/kmailselfsvc>
The PAF program email is PAFPHD@UCF.EDU

Mailing Address and Telephone Number

The student is responsible for maintaining updated information on both local and permanent addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses as well as the address and telephone number of an emergency contact person.

- The student should update this information in “myUCF.”
- The student may contact the program for any changes in contact information after graduation for program mailings.

Contacting Faculty Members

Faculty members can be contacted regarding class or program information and discussion via e-mail or phone as listed on course syllabus. All faculty have posted office hours and contact information on their course syllabus.

Questions or Concerns

Students are welcome and encouraged to meet with their Track Coordinator, PAF Academic Coordinator, and the PAF Director when they have questions or concerns regarding their program of study, courses, or other issues that may affect their educational goals. Students should meet each semester with their Track Coordinator for guidance and required to meet once per year for an update to ensure timely and effective progression through to obtaining candidacy.

PROGRAM PROGRESSION

Doctoral education requires dedication and diligence and the ability to work independently.

Core PAF courses are provided by an interdisciplinary team of professors. Upon successful completion of the core classes, students are required to take their Research Proficiency and Qualifying Exams.

Inherent in a doctoral program is completing a dissertation under the mentorship of a dissertation chair on a specific research question.

Students must be able to prioritize competing obligations (personal and work life and academics) so as to be able to meet deadlines and reach milestones in completing their doctorate. While part-time study in the program is allowed, all students must complete the degree within the seven year time frame as required by university graduate policy. The Seven Year Rule at UCF means that all students must complete the requirements for the doctorate within seven years as required by UCF Graduate School regulations.

Proposed Full-Time Progression of Learning

Students are to be aware that there is a proposed progression of learning, however, course schedules may change and it is the students' responsibility to check the schedule each semester. Students will be provided a **3-Year Course Progression Table**.

The program reserves the right to change course offerings or schedules as needed. Please refer to myUCF for up-to-date course schedules. Course substitutions may be approved by the PAF office and/or COHPA Graduate Services office.

Academic Progress Policy

Satisfactory Academic Progress toward Core Courses and Course Completion

Students are expected to complete all core courses within two to three academic years. Track specializations electives and other electives can be taken after the RPE and IQE, but must be completed prior to obtaining candidacy status.

Satisfactory Academic Progress toward Exams

Once the Methodological Core Courses are complete, students may take the Research Proficiency Exam. All core courses (except for the Practicum) must be completed before taking the Integrative Qualifying Exam.

All students are expected to take the RPE (if not yet taken) and the IQE at the end of the semester in which they complete the last core course with the exception of the Practicum, which is taken after the IQE. Students may take the RPE and IQE at the same sitting. However, students may have one additional semester to prepare and take the RPE and IQE after the last core course is completed. If a student cannot take the RPE and IQE within the required timeframe, they must provide the Program Director with a valid reason supported by the student's Track Coordinator. If a student does not take the RPE or the IQE during the allowed timeframe, they will meet with their Track Coordinator and the PAF Program Director to review their academic progress. The purpose of the meeting is to determine if the student should be allowed to continue in the program. If the student is not dismissed for Unsatisfactory Academic Progress, they will be placed on academic probation and given a specified date by which they must complete the exams. Failure to complete the exams by that date will result in dismissal from the program.

Students who take the RPE or IQE within the allowed timeframe but fail one or both exams must retake the failed exam at the next sitting. Students who do not re-take the failed exam at the next sitting will meet with their Track Coordinator and the PAF Program Director to determine if they should be allowed to continue in the program. The student will either be dismissed or placed on academic probation and allowed one more semester to complete the exams. Failure to complete the exams by that time will result in dismissal from the program. The COHPA Graduate Services Office and the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs may oversee the academic progress review at any time in order to ensure that the College of Graduate Studies policies are fully implemented.

Satisfactory Academic Progress toward Prospectus Defense

Once a student passes both exams, they have one year (if full time) or 18 months (if part time) to defend their dissertation prospectus. During this time, the student may enroll in PAF 7919 Doctoral Research, Practicum and/or electives. Students must be enrolled in each semester they are working with faculty and for at least one credit of Doctoral Research in the semester they defend their prospectus.

Students who do not defend their Prospectus and do not obtain candidacy within their allotted time will meet with their dissertation chair and the PAF Program Director to review the student's academic progress and determine their status. The student must provide a draft of their prospectus work to date to all parties for review prior to the meeting. If the student is allowed to continue in the program, they will be placed on academic probation and given a date not to exceed two semesters to satisfactorily defend the prospectus and obtain candidacy.

Satisfactory Academic Progress toward Dissertation Defense

After obtaining candidacy status, students should expect to complete their dissertation and defend it within two years (six academic semesters) and meet the seven year limit as required by the College of Graduate Studies. During this time, students must have continuous enrollment and are expected to enroll in three credit hours of dissertation every semester until they defend. Students are expected to defend by the deadlines posted by UCF Academic calendar and the PAF Program.

Students who do not defend their dissertation after completion of 15 dissertation hours must meet with their dissertation chair and the PAF Program Director to provide a timeline for completion of the defense. The student must provide a draft of their dissertation work for review prior to the meeting. During this meeting, it will be determined if the student will be allowed to continue in the program and, if so, a timeline will be developed for completion of the dissertation. If the student is allowed to continue, they will be recommended for academic probation and given a time frame for completion by the PAF Program Director.

If the student is placed on academic probation, the extension shall not exceed the 7 year maximum for completion. If the student does not defend the dissertation by the agreed upon date, they will be dismissed from the program.

Only in the most extenuating circumstances will the College of Health and Public Affairs support requests for extensions to the seven year rule.

MILESTONES FOR A STUDENT'S PROGRESS TO DEGREE COMPLETION

	Task or Milestone	Official Deadline	Responsible Person
1	Introduction into Program (Receive student handbook)	Beginning of the first semester	PAF Director/Track Coordinator
2	Sign Graduate Plan of Study given to student at Orientation	No later than third week of first fall semester	Student/Track Coordinator
3	Complete and pass Substantive and Methodological interdisciplinary courses.	2 years (full time students).	Student
4	Pass RPE and IQE	Exams are offered every Fall & Spring semester, following the final exam period. Must be core course complete (except Practicum) to be eligible to take the exams.	Student
5	Complete and pass track specializations, open electives, and Practicum	3 years (full time students)	Student/Approval by Track Coordinator
6	File Request to form Ph.D. Dissertation Committee Formation Form with PAF office	May be done immediately after passing IQE.	Student files with consent of Chair and Committee
7	Request to schedule prospectus defense. Completed Prospectus Defense Scheduling Request Form submitted to PAF office. Deliver two copies of prospectus & Prospectus Defense Assessment Form to PAF office. An electronic copy of prospectus to be sent to PAF office.	4 weeks prior to defense date	Student/Dissertation Committee Chair
8	File Approval of Dissertation Prospectus Defense form upon successful defense of the prospectus and candidacy papers	Immediately following prospectus defense (or when prospectus is completed to committee satisfaction)	Chair and Committee members.
9	File Doctoral Committee/Candidacy Status Form – now eligible for dissertation credits	Following prospectus defense	PAF Office
10	Dissertation research and writing/IRB approval (if needed)	Complete within 2 years (meet 7 year total limit of College of Graduate Studies)	Student
11	File Intent to Graduate	Meet Graduate Studies deadlines as described in Academic Calendar and online through Graduate Studies website	Student
12	Submit dissertation to Graduate Studies – Format Review	See Academic Calendar	Student
13	Deliver two copies of Dissertation & Dissertation Defense Assessment Form to PAF office. An electronic copy of Dissertation to be sent to PAF office. Submit Announcement to PAF office. Request tentative defense date	Required to meet Program and Graduate Studies guidelines and deadlines as posted for that particular semester. Dissertation materials to be received by PAF office no later than 4 weeks prior to defense date.	Chair and committee approve dissertation ready for defense. Student provides announcement to PAF office.
14	Final Defense Date Scheduled	Once all forms and dissertation copies have been submitted and authenticate score is approved by committee chair, PAF PD and Associate Dean.	PAF office
15	Defense	Required to meet Program and Graduate Studies guidelines and deadlines as posted in the Academic Calendar. Submit final approval forms to PAF office after successful defense and/or completion of revisions.	Student, Chair and Committee

16	Final Dissertation Submission	Submit final copy (after any revisions required by committee at defense) to College of Graduate Studies	Student
17	Graduate	Enjoy the moment!	Student, Family, Friends, PAF Staff and Faculty

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Public Affairs PhD program curriculum comprises an interdisciplinary core with advanced studies offered in four tracks: Criminal Justice (CJ), Health Services Management and Research (HSM), Public Administration (PAD), and Social Work (SOW). The PAF program is community-based with a focus on problem solving strongly founded upon collaborative relationships cutting across disciplinary and professional affiliations.

Students will receive a copy of the **PAF Core Domains and Competencies Matrix**. This identifies the significant skills and knowledge areas students will acquire and develop in core courses. In each core course syllabus there is a table identifying which domains and competencies are covered in that course, which course objectives cover those, and how it is measured in course assignments. This educational plan culminates in the Research and Integrative Exams that students must pass before taking the Practicum course and defending a dissertation proposal.

Students must complete 60 credit hours beyond the master's degree distributed in the following manner:

- a three-course, 9-credit hour required Public Affairs substantive core
- a six-course, 18-credit hour required Public Affairs methodological and statistical core
- a one course, 3-credit hour required Public Affairs practicum
- a three-course, 9- credit hour Track Specialization
- a two-course, 6-credit hour electives selection
- 15 credit hours of dissertation (minimum)

Students' electives must be approved by their Track Coordinator prior to enrolling in a course.

Students also must pass a Research Proficiency Exam (RPE), an Integrative Qualifying Exam (IQE), defend a Dissertation Prospectus, obtain candidacy status and defend their Dissertation. Students must meet all requirements in the program to graduate.

Grade Requirements:

Students receiving a grade of "C+" or lower in a required *substantive or methodological core course*, will be required to repeat the course and earn a grade of B- or better prior to being allowed to take their required Research Proficiency Exam and Integrative Qualifying Exam. Any student who receives more than one "C+" or lower grade in their doctoral course work may be dismissed from the program. Additionally, any student receiving an "F" grade in their doctoral course work will be dismissed from the program. A minimum of 3.0 in the PAF doctoral program is required to maintain graduate student status.

Required Course Work

The Public Affairs program is distinctive in its focus on community-based interdisciplinary problems and their solutions. Students completing the program can expect to achieve significant expertise in the conceptualization and implementation of research and the analysis and interpretation of empirical findings. Students will also be expected to have solid grounding in the political and organizational realities that impact the conduct of research and its utilization. Students can pursue an enhanced focus in community-based research by including more research and methodology electives in their program of study. PAF Course Descriptions can be found online in the UCF Graduate Catalog.

Public Affairs Substantive Core—9 Credit Hours

- PAF 7000 Foundations of Public Affairs: People, Places, Policies and Paradigms (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7230 Strategic Change and Management for Public Affairs (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7317 Social Inquiry and Public Policy (3 credit hours)

Methodological and Statistical Core—18 Credit Hours

- PAF 7802 Advanced Research Methodology for Public Affairs (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7804 Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs I: Multivariate Analysis (3 credit hours)

- PAF 7805 Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs II: Survey of Statistical Methods (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7820 Qualitative Methods for Public Affairs (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7325 Policy and Program Evaluation for Public Affairs (3 credit hours)

Advanced Methodology - Choose one of the following courses:

- PAF 7868 Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs III: Continued Survey of Statistical Methods (3 credit hours)
- PAF 7856 Structural Equation Modeling in Public Affairs (3 credit hours)
- Pre-approved methodological or statistical course (3 credit hours)

Practicum – 3 Credit Hours

- PAF 7947 Practicum in Community Based Research (3 credit hours)

Doctoral Dissertation - 15 Credit Hours

Students will register for PAF 7980 Doctoral Dissertation once they have obtained candidacy status.

Track Specializations and Electives - 15 Credit Hours

Criminal Justice (CJ)

Required Track Courses (9 Credit hours) Choose one area of 3 courses (note these courses will be available in **2016**):

Policing Theory and Research

- CJE 6320 Seminar in Police Administration (3 credit hours)
- CJE 6456 Seminar in Policing Urban Communities (3 credit hours)
- CJE 6706 Seminar in Police Socialization and Culture (3 credit hours)

Correctional Theory and Research

- CJC 6135 Seminar in Institutional Corrections (3 credit hours)
- CJC 6165 Seminar in Community Corrections (3 credit hours)
- CJC 6486 Seminar in Correctional Effectiveness (3 credit hours)

Juvenile Justice Theory and Research

- CJJ 6124 Seminar in Prosecuting Juvenile Offenders (3 credit hours)
- CJJ 6126 Seminar in Juvenile Corrections (3 credit hours)
- CJJ 6546 Seminar in Policing and Prevention in the Juvenile Justice System (3 credit hours)

Methodological Electives

- CCJ 6702 Advanced Research Methods in Criminal Justice (3 credit hours)
- CCJ 6714 Advanced Quantitative Methods in Criminal Justice (3 credit hours)
- CCJ 7747 Hierarchical Linear Modeling in Criminal Justice Research (3 credit hours)
- CCJ 7752 Structural Equation Modeling in Criminal Justice Research (3 credit hours)
- CCJ 7725 The Geography of Crime: Theory and Methods (3 credit hours)
 - o Students selecting this option must complete CCJ 6073 Data Management for Crime Analysis and CCJ 6079 Crime Mapping and Analysis in Criminal Justice

Electives (6 credit hours - may be taken outside the discipline). See Track Coordinator for appropriate electives (REQUIRES REGISTRATION/ELECTIVE APPROVAL FORM)

Health Services Management and Research (HSM)

Required Track Courses (9 Credit hours):

- HSA 7116 Theories in Healthcare Management (3 credit hours)
- HSA 7936 Advanced Seminar in Health Economics (3 credit hours)
- HSA 7938 Advanced Seminar in Health Services Research (3 credit hours)

Electives (6 credit hours - may be taken outside the discipline). See Track Coordinator for appropriate electives (REQUIRES REGISTRATION/ELECTIVE APPROVAL FORM)

Public Administration (PAD)

Required Track Courses (9 Credit hours):

- PAD 7026 Advanced Seminar in Public Administration (3 credit hours)
- PAD 7057 Advanced Public Management (3 credit hours)
- PAD 7827 Network Governance (3 credit hours)

Electives (6 credit hours - may be taken outside the discipline). See Track Coordinator for appropriate electives (REQUIRES REGISTRATION/ELECTIVE APPROVAL FORM)

Social Work (SOW)

Required Track Courses (9 Credit hours):

- SOW 6383 Social Work Administration (3 credit hours)
- SOW 7492 Theory Development in Social Work and Applied Social Science Research (3 credit hours)
- SOW 7494 Conducting Evidence-based Research in Social Work and Allied Fields (3 credit hours)

Electives (6 credit hours – may be taken outside the discipline). See Track Coordinator for appropriate electives (REQUIRES REGISTRATION/ELECTIVE APPROVAL FORM)

Electives

Electives may be any non-required graduate course in the four PAF discipline departments or graduate courses outside of COHPA as approved by the student's track coordinator with a course/elective approval form.

In addition to any of the required track courses (taken by out of track students), the following may be used as electives by any student:

- PAF 7908 Independent Study – variable credits, (maximum of 6 credit hours may counted as electives - Requires Registration/Elective Approval Form)
- PAF 7981 Dissertation Prospectus (course)
- PAF 7055 State and Local Government
- PAF 7858 Advanced Seminar in Government and Policy Research
- PAD 6834 Comparative Public Administration
- PAD 7317 Program Design and Management
- PAD 7707 Advanced Research in Public Administration
- HSA 6108 Healthcare Strategic Management
- HSA 6128 Services Management
- HSA 6342 Healthcare Human Resources Management
- PHC 6000 Epidemiology
- PHC 6146 Health Planning and Policy
- PHC 6160 Healthcare Finance and Insurance
- HSA 7125 Globalization and Health
- SOW 7397 Social Entrepreneurship in Public and Social Sectors
- PAF 6938 Special Topics
- PAF 7925 Symposium on Public Affairs Issues

PAF 7919 Doctoral Research – available only after passing IQE and RPE. This course should not be used as an elective. It is designed for students to use as a means to prepare their prospectus as needed.

Practicum

At the end of the required coursework and upon completion of the Research Proficiency and Integrative Qualifying Exams, students will take Practicum in Community-Based Research (PAF 7947). The Practicum is a classroom based course, not an internship, and provides the student with the opportunity to work within an interdisciplinary student team to apply their substantive learning and methodological and statistical tools to a real community problem. This experiential learning brings the student out to the community while bringing the community into the university.

Transfer Work

Transfer work will only be accepted by the Public Affairs PhD program if taken as part of an approved plan of study for a doctoral program at UCF or elsewhere. A maximum of 6 credit hours taken at the doctoral level may be considered for transfer. The acceptance of transfer credit into the track for Public Affairs specialization or general elective component is dependent upon the approval of the Track Coordinator in consultation with the PAF Director. Transfer work will not be accepted into the PAF substantive or methodological core components.

Advising

New students attend an initial orientation and a general advising session prior to the start of fall classes. Students will be advised by their Track Coordinator until they have an approved Dissertation Chair. The Track Coordinator in conjunction with the PAF Director helps the student throughout the foundation stage of the program, assisting in the clarification of interests and goals. The Track Coordinator, with help of the PAF Academic Coordinator, assists the students in selecting elective courses, finalizing the Graduate Plan of Study, and facilitating discussion with faculty members who have similar research interests that can advance the student's program of study. Students must meet at least once a year with the Track Coordinator to review of the student's academic progress to date and will submit this to the Program Director.

Students should begin looking for a Dissertation Advisor/Chair in their second year and prior to taking the Qualifying Exam. Once a student has confirmed a Dissertation Chair, discussion and review of dissertation topics should begin.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students must make continuous progress towards the academic milestones as established in the PAF program. Failure to meet the identified timeframes of these milestones may result in students being placed on academic probation. Students may be placed on probation or dismissed if they have 2 or more courses less than B-. When on probation, a hold is placed on registration and records by the College of Graduate Studies. Probation status also may prohibit a student from holding a Graduate Assistantship. Students will be notified by the PAF Director and/or their Track Coordinator if they are facing probation. Students will be dismissed from the program if they receive an "F" grade in a PAF course, if their GPA falls below 3.0, or if they fail either their RPE or IQE twice. Please check the Graduate Catalog for any other conditions of probation and dismissal as outlined by the College of Graduate Studies and UCF.

Switching Tracks

Once a student is accepted into a track, they are not typically allowed to change tracks. Requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The request to change must be done within the first two semesters a student is in the program. It must be done in consultation with both the track the student is leaving as well as the track the student wishes to join. The student must have permission and support of the Department Chair and the Track Coordinator of the track they intend to enter in order for the request to be reviewed by the PAF Director. This process does not guarantee switching tracks.

Graduate Plan of Study

Students will be required to create their Graduate Plan of Study (GPS) no later than the third week of the first semester of their first year with their Track Coordinator and the PAF Academic Coordinator. The GPS can be found online and progress is tracked each semester. The PAF office will submit all forms turned in for electives and committee formation, update results of the RPE and IQE, obtaining candidacy, and defense results. All Graduate School requirements regarding the GPS must be followed or a hold will be placed on registration.

Time Limitation and Continuous Enrollment (7 Year Rule)

A student has seven years from the date of admission to the doctoral program to complete the dissertation and the doctoral degree. No courses used in a program of study can be older than seven years at the time of graduation.

Students who anticipate being out for more than 2 consecutive semesters should apply for a Special Leave of Absence no later than the end of the add/drop period of their second semester of non-enrollment. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment without a Special Leave of Absence (see Continuous Attendance and Special Leave of Absence in the General Graduate Policies) must file for readmission to the university. A leave of absence does not affect the 7 year rule as those seven years are measured from when the student was first took classes in the program.

After entering candidacy, students must enroll every semester in at least 1 credit hour of PAF 7980 Dissertation.

RESEARCH PROFICIENCY EXAM AND INTEGRATIVE QUALIFYING EXAM

Upon successful completion of the substantive and methodological required courses (with the exception of Practicum), students are required to take a Research Proficiency Exam (RPE) and Integrative Qualifying Exam (IQE). These exams assess a student's ability to integrate the curriculum knowledge and apply it in the realm of community problem solving as it relates to policy, administration, governance, and organizations. Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in the PAF Core Competencies. Every core course contributes to these competencies as articulated in the PAF Core Competencies Matrix.

The Research Proficiency Exam may be taken within one semester after the completion of the Methodological Core Courses. The Integrative Qualifying Exam must be taken either at the end of the semester in which courses are completed or within one semester after the completion of the required substantive core courses (not including Practicum). Students who fail to take the exam within one semester of completing their core courses will be placed on probation for not meeting satisfactory academic progress. Students who fail to take the required exam within two semesters from the date the required courses are complete for the given exam may be dismissed from the program. Students who feel that they have a legitimate reason for not scheduling to take or missing the exam should promptly notify the PAF Director to request an extension. Students must notify the PAF office in writing no later than two weeks prior to the exam that they intend to take the exam. Notices of testing dates and requests for responses will be sent to all students by the PAF office.

Both the RPE and the IQE normally are offered following the university-designated final exam week each fall and spring semester. These exams are not offered during the summer. The dates for these exams will be set by the PAF office and are not negotiable.

The Research Proficiency Exam tests the student's knowledge of the methodological core classes and the student's ability to apply this information to real-world examples. The Integrative Qualifying Exam tests the student's knowledge and ability to integrate and apply course material from the required substantive courses to answer specific case questions.

Each fall and spring semester the PAF program will hold an informational meeting about the Research Proficiency and Qualifying Exam process as well as the format of the exams. Attendance at this meeting is HIGHLY recommended, but is not required.

A committee made up of faculty will be responsible for creating, reading, and grading exams. The final grading for the exam will consist of a score of "Pass" or "Fail." The PAF Director will notify students of their exam results through email. All students will have two opportunities to pass the Research Proficiency Exam and the Integrative Qualifying Exam. Any student failing either exam twice will be dismissed from the program with no opportunity for re-admittance to the PAF program.

This policy includes all tracks within the PAF program. Please note that there are no exceptions to this dismissal policy.

DISSERTATION

The College of Graduate Studies has a listing of policies and procedures for the dissertation here:

<http://graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/content/Policies.aspx?id=5696>. COHPA and the PAF Program have the option to modify those policies and all college and program policies are included in the following sections.

DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

Purpose

The purpose of the Ph.D. program in Public Affairs is to train students to conceptualize, understand, and address the complexities of real world concerns through an interdisciplinary perspective. Towards those ends, the dissertation provides evidence of the student's ability to independently conduct scholarly research on meaningful social issues resulting in findings that have both applied and theoretical importance. While the former might answer to a specific agency or community concern, the latter represents a clear contribution to knowledge and should include material worthy of publication. Once a student defends the Prospectus, they will obtain candidacy status.

Dissertation Committee and Chair Selection

The subject chosen by students for study should reflect their interests while making an independent contribution to the body of knowledge. Once students have chosen their topic, they should look for a faculty member within their track who can serve as the Chair of their dissertation committee. The Dissertation Chair is the person who will provide the primary intellectual leadership on the committee as well as be responsible for overseeing the prospectus as it proceeds to defense.

Students may elect to work with faculty based on the similarity of research interests, current research projects, methodological expertise, or other areas of compatibility. Any graduate faculty in the PAF departments are eligible to serve as a Dissertation Chair. The student's Track Coordinator

will assist students in identifying an appropriate and willing Chair. Students should recognize that faculty members are limited to serve on no more than ten dissertation committees (chairing a maximum of four) at any one time. Students must submit their committee formation form by the end of the semester immediately following the completion of their RPE and IQE in order to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

Once selected, the student, in conjunction with the Dissertation Chair, will assemble the dissertation committee. Committee members should be chosen to maximize the ability to provide a meaningful contribution on substantive and/or methodological areas related to the proposed study while ensuring interdisciplinary representation amongst committee members. While the student is the author of the prospectus and dissertation, the committee is expected to provide guidance in shaping this work. In this sense, the prospectus and dissertation are both a learning opportunity for the student as well as a demonstration, by its successful completion, that the student can independently engage in meaningful original research.

The committee must be composed of a Dissertation Chair and two additional committee members who are listed as graduate faculty from the discipline-based track. The fourth member must be outside of the student's track discipline to ensure the interdisciplinary nature of the study. Note: "Discipline" includes persons outside the faculty department who are representing the same discipline as the track department. "Discipline" includes all cognate areas within a field (such as using a lawyer on a criminal justice dissertation or a medical doctor on a health service management and research dissertation). Where a decision is made to include someone not listed in the Graduate Faculty register, the Chair can nominate that person to be included as a Graduate Faculty Scholar by completing and submitting the necessary paperwork to the PAF program. Students may review a list of approved dissertation faculty from the Graduate Studies website (<http://www.graduatecatalog.ucf.edu/GradFaculty/>).

It is important for students to realize that as their study evolves or faculty staffing changes, it may be appropriate to add or drop members from the dissertation committee including, at times, the Dissertation Chair. Students should seek guidance from their committee members, Chair and/or their track coordinator and PAF Director. If there is any change in the committee membership, a formal request has to be submitted to the PAF office for approval by the PAF Director via a change of committee form which must be completed and turned into the PAF office.

Prospectus Components

Once successfully defended and approved by the student's committee, the prospectus in the Public Affairs doctoral program serves as a "contract" between the student and the faculty to conduct research and write the dissertation. A successful prospectus must meet three criteria before it can be approved. First, it must demonstrate that the proposed study will significantly add to the knowledge base in the candidate's discipline. Second, it must show the student's capability to conduct this research through the theoretical foundation and research design. Finally, the prospectus must provide evidence that the study is feasible and can be successfully completed in the manner and under the time constraints noted in the proposal.

A prospectus should provide a theoretically informed framework to guide the empirical study that will make this a significant and substantive contribution to the body of scientific knowledge in public affairs. At a minimum, a satisfactory prospectus contains six basic components outlined below. Students are advised to take PAF 7981 Dissertation Prospectus as an elective in their GPS and/or PAF 7919 Doctoral Research as credits during semesters they prepare their prospectus.

1. Abstract

An abstract is a short summary of the study including the research question that is under investigation as well as the procedures that will be used to answer that question. The abstract should be short, clear, and concise. Because an abstract is a description of the entire prospectus, many students find it easier to compose once they have completed writing this document.

2. Introduction

What is the dissertation about? The prospectus should begin by stating the central research question(s) that is to be addressed in the dissertation. The question(s) should be phrased precisely since it will determine what is or is not germane to the dissertation. Whether the query is, "How does participation in a network affect performance within a health center?", "Does electronic participation increase citizen trust in local government?", "What is the impact of abstinence only intervention programs on adolescent drinking?", "Do state adolescent reproductive health policies affect teen pregnancy outcomes?", or "Are mentally disturbed offenders more violent than non-disturbed offenders?" the central research question(s) should be stated clearly and succinctly. This is also the appropriate place to identify the general approach that will be adopted by this study including a brief discussion on the research methods that will be implemented to answer this question (e.g., sample that will be used, research design implemented, time period covered, outcomes collected, etc.). Students should think of this section as akin to an abstract.

3. Literature Review

This part of the prospectus addresses the question, "So, what?" In other words, why should one devote a dissertation to the question set out in the preceding section? An effective answer requires two distinct arguments. First, the student must build a logical argument for the need of this study. This must be done through the existing literature. A thorough review of the literature is therefore essential in making a convincing argument that the subject has not yet been researched (or that there remains significant gaps in the research) but needs to be in order to continue to build our understanding in this area. The literature review should include all pertinent literature, conceptual and research, that relates to the student's interest. It is important at this point not to cherry pick the research literature by including only those studies supporting the research endeavor. Instead, the student should be thorough and, where existing research points to a conclusion other than the student's, be prepared to make a persuasive argument for why their perspective is the more appropriate one in these circumstances.

In this section students will tie their study to a theoretical/conceptual perspective. Students should think of this as the explanatory framework guiding the research and providing predictions regarding later results. This includes making a clear and convincing argument for the choice of the selected theory along with identifying the strengths and weaknesses associated with this perspective as grounded in the relevant literature. Students must make sure that the theory is appropriate to the research question(s) and clearly specify the contribution that this research will make to their discipline. When the Literature Review has been completed, it must clearly demonstrate the need for answering the research question(s) posed.

4. Research Design

By providing specific information on how the question(s) defined in the Introduction will be answered in this study, the student will demonstrate that they are capable of conducting this research. As such, this section provides specifics on the process that will be used to examine the research question(s). Depending on the subject, this part will cover different elements but all will need to address the following: What specifically will be done and what does each step contribute to the project as a whole? If the investigation is empirical, what sort of evidence will be considered? If theoretical, what material will be covered and what will be done with it?

A review of relevant research literature must be included to support each of the steps taken in the process including the choice of variables, outcomes, models, measures, and such. Knowing what has been done previously and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of these studies can provide important clues for better ways to proceed in defining and selecting the sample, setting up the research design, choosing specific measurement instruments and such.

This section of the prospectus should therefore provide the following information:

Research Hypotheses: This should contain the specific research hypotheses being tested. It must also include the rationale for developing these hypotheses.

Proposed Research Design: The student should provide specific information on the design that will be implemented along with the reasoning for its use.

Population and Sample Selection: The student will need to clearly specify the population being targeted along with how, why, and when individuals, agencies, or other entities being sampled would be included or excluded (as well as the reasons for these criteria) in the study. The student should provide information on the method of sampling along with the size of the sample including, again, a justification for each of the steps being implemented.

Data Collection: What is the raw material for the analysis? How will it be obtained? All information that can be provided pertaining to interviewing, observing, surveying, coding, etc. strengthens the prospectus. If the student is using a database, a thorough discussion of this database and the variables that will be used in the study must be included. A clear connection must be made between the variables needed to answer to the research question(s) and those being used in the database, survey, or interview.

Measurement Instrument(s): Include the measurement instruments that will be used including all information on their reliability and validity. The prospectus is strengthened to the extent that it provides a justification for implementing these measures (e.g., Have they been used successfully in past studies?). In choosing measures, the student should make sure that the measures provide the necessary information to answer the research question(s).

Data Analysis: The student should provide a framework for how they intend to approach the data analyses indicating with as much specificity as possible the analytical model(s) that they will be using. Students must ensure that the analyses used are consistent with the objectives and design employed.

In the end, the student must ensure that the methodology implemented can answer to the research question(s) posed. As an example, if comparing the post-prison adjustment of mentally disturbed to non-disturbed offenders, a sample including only the latter will leave the student unable to answer the research question posed.

5. Feasibility

This part of the prospectus speaks to the student's ability to complete the study in the manner suggested and within the timelines provided. A student may have a great idea for a study and be able to demonstrate that they have the necessary skill set to conduct that study. Unfortunately, if the agency responsible for providing access to the population under study is unwilling to allow the research as designed, the student will never be able to successfully complete their dissertation. Therefore, establishing that the dissertation is feasible is just as important as every other step in this process.

Ethics: The student must address the issue of whether the study meets ethical standards by providing information on the provisions that will be implemented to ensure confidentiality to respondents and safety in the storage of the data. The student should also check that the research is free from bias. Finally, depending upon the nature of the study, IRB approval may or may not be needed. It is up to the student to investigate this and, if required, to have IRB approval prior to implementing the study.

Pipeline: The prospectus will need to provide information on how many individuals or other entities being sampled meeting the characteristics as noted in the sample selection section could be expected daily, weekly, or monthly. This is necessary to demonstrate that a

sufficient sample can be obtained in a reasonable time period. Please note that it is common in community level studies that the target population is smaller or more difficult to reach than as first anticipated. Providing documentation of the numbers of individuals meeting sample criteria will strengthen the prospectus.

Anticipated Response and Retention Rates: The student should have some way of estimating the response and retention rates based on either past research studies on similar populations or the agency or institution's expectations.

Agency Cooperation/Participation: If the student requires cooperation from an individual, agency, or group, then the prospectus should include documentation that these entities know what is expected of them and that they are willing to cooperate. Please note that a legal Letter of Agreement or Letter of Cooperation is not necessary. However, a letter from a person in authority giving their consent to participate in the ways set forth in the prospectus should be attached.

Costs: The prospectus should provide an itemized listing of all anticipated costs associated with completing the dissertation as well as how these costs will be covered.

Funding Sources: If appropriate, the prospectus should specify all granting/funding agencies which have been or will be applied to for funding as well as the outcomes on these proposals.

Timeline: The student will need to provide a realistic timeframe for completing the dissertation given the many factors involved in completing their particular study.

6. References

The student should provide a full reference section using APA style. The student should make sure that all citations included in the text are listed in this section and, conversely, that the reference section does not contain any materials not included in the text.

Even at this earliest of stages in the dissertation, the prospectus should be constructed using a chapter-by-chapter organization of the project. This will facilitate the committee's ability to ensure that the prospectus includes all the necessary components. Additionally, as the dissertation is organized in a similar manner, the student will find this format beneficial as they can build off this foundation when completing their dissertation.

In preparing the prospectus, the student should consult with their Dissertation Chair and other members of the committee for guidance. Additional guidance on the contents of a dissertation prospectus can be found in James E. Mauch and Namgi Park's *Guide to the Successful Thesis and Dissertation* or David R. Krathwohl and Nick L. Smith, *How to Prepare a Dissertation Proposal*. Students may want to consult Diana Ridley, *The Literature Review* for additional guidance.

Completing the Prospectus and Scheduling a Defense

While a student is working on the prospectus, they must be registered in at least one credit per semester. During this time, students can choose to register for PAF 7919 Doctoral Research and electives. Students will need to complete and submit a Registration/Elective Approval Form in order to register for PAF 7919. Students will not be eligible to defend their prospectus until they are course complete and have passed their RPE and IQE. Please note that course complete requires that the PAF core and track requirements have all been successfully passed.

While writing the prospectus, the student should work closely with their Dissertation Chair. When the Chair determines that the prospectus is ready, they will send it out to the committee members for their feedback. Once the feedback has been returned, the Chair will review the comments with the student or ask that the student speak directly with the committee member(s).

The student will revise the prospectus in compliance with the comments made by the members of the committee. Once the prospectus is completed to everyone's satisfaction (which may require several rounds of review), final feedback will be given by committee members. Only when all committee members have signed the Prospectus Defense Assessment Form will the PAF office schedule a firm date for the defense.

At least 4 weeks prior to the anticipated defense date, students will submit an electronic version of the prospectus to the PAF program office along with two hard copies and the completed and signed Prospectus Defense Scheduling Request Form. Students must defend their proposal in time to meet the enrollment deadline for the following semester. The PAF office will ensure all parties have the appropriate defense forms and reserve the room. The PAF Director and COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs must have the opportunity to read the completed prospectus before signing off on the prospectus defense approval form.

Ideally, the prospectus defense is held before the end of the semester while classes are in session in order to ensure that faculty are available to attend in person, and that the required documentation can be processed in time to allow for entering candidacy and enable enrollment in dissertation hours the following semester. Students must notify the PAF office if any committee members will be attending virtually so that technology arrangements can be made. Electronic participation needs to be done through University technology and not personal laptop computers to avoid crashes, outages, batter problems, software glitches, and poor connectivity.

If there are any substantial changes to the submitted prospectus copy before the defense, then the student must submit those changes to the PAF office. Significant changes after the defense will be accepted at the discretion of the committee. The PAF Director and COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs must have had the opportunity to read the completed prospectus before signing off on the prospectus defense approval form.

Prospectus Defense

The dissertation prospectus must be defended orally. Full Time students must submit and defend their Prospectus within twelve months after passing the Qualifying Exam. Part Time students must submit and defend their Prospectus within eighteen months after passing Qualifying Exam. Exceptions to this timeline must be approved by the dissertation committee and PAF Program Director. All committee members should be physically present at the prospectus defense unless extenuating circumstances prohibit attendance. When this occurs, members of the committee can participate by video link (such as Skype). The chair of the committee and student must always be present on the UCF campus at the defense. The PAF Director, along with the COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs may attend the prospectus defense.

A defense is typically 60-90 minutes and the format requires a presentation of the full work by the student and a question and answer session directed by the committee members. At the close of the question and answer period, the student and any guests will leave the room allowing for discussion and evaluation of the presentation in front of the committee. The PAF Director and Dean's representative also may make comments for consideration by the committee at this time. The committee, in their deliberation and by majority vote, will make a determination whether the defense is a Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail. Where a student is judged to pass, committee members can sign off on the forms at the time of the defense. Where there are minor revisions needed, the committee will give a Conditional Pass, indicating the conditions that must be met for the prospectus to pass and may sign the forms. Where a Fail is given, the committee members, through the Dissertation Chair, must indicate what the student must do to get the prospectus up to doctoral standards so that it can be approved by the committee at a later date. Students should be notified immediately of the determination of the committee.

In the cases of a fail, the chair, within no more than one week following the defense, will provide the determination and all conditions in writing to committee members for their review and approval. The Chair will then send out a revised memo to the student and PAF office. The student should expect to receive a written determination no more than two weeks from the date of the defense. The committee determines if the student should re-defend after revisions are made. If the committee does not agree to a re-defense, the student may be dismissed from the program. The committee must notify the PAF Program Director of their decision about a re-defense.

Approval of the prospectus is equivalent to passing the candidacy exam as required by the UCF College of Graduate Studies. Once all committee members have signed the form, and the PAF Director and Dean's office have approved, the Notification of Passing Candidacy Exam form will be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and students may register for dissertation credit hours. Failure to meet any Program, College, or University deadlines will prevent moving into candidacy and being allowed to register for dissertation hours.

Candidacy Status

Requirements

The university requires all doctoral students to participate in the Academic Integrity Training program. This training, along with all related components, must be completed prior to the student being admitted to candidacy. (Information will appear on the student's To Do" list in MYUCF.)

Students officially obtain candidacy status when they have successfully completed all course work, passed the research proficiency and qualifying exams, formed their Dissertation committee, successfully defended their Prospectus, and all required paperwork has been completed and submitted. Once they have obtained Candidacy status, students can register for dissertation hours.

Candidacy Status paperwork should be submitted 3 weeks prior to the first day of classes. This will allow time for Graduate Studies to change a student's status from Non-Candidacy, to Candidacy Status. Submitting paperwork too close to the start of the semester may result in a delay of candidacy and a restriction in registering for dissertation credits until the NEXT SEMESTER. Students must be admitted to candidacy prior to the first day of classes in any given semester in order to enroll in PAF 7980 Dissertation. There are no exceptions granted by the Graduate School.

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Doctoral Dissertation Registration

Students wishing to take dissertation credit hours (PAF 7980) must have obtained Candidacy Status. Doctoral candidates must enroll in PAF 7980 Dissertation continuously (including summers) until they defend their Dissertation. Students will need to complete and submit a Registration/Elective Approval Form in order to register for PAF 7980. Candidates are not permitted to register in excess of 9 dissertation credit hours in any given semester and must take at least 1 credit hour. Candidates who have met the 15 credit hour dissertation requirement and have not defended their Dissertation must continue to register in subsequent semesters in order to meet the UCF College of Graduate Studies requirement of continuous enrollment. Candidates should speak with the PAF Academic Coordinator for additional guidance about the option to register for less than 3 credit hours in their graduating semester. Candidates need to remember that they must graduate within seven years from the date of admission into the doctoral program.

Doctoral Dissertation Formatting and Resources

The College of Graduate Studies produces the *UCF Thesis and Dissertation Handbook*. The *Thesis and Dissertation Handbook* must be used as the guide for the preparation, submission and acceptance of electronic theses and doctoral dissertations (ETDs). Candidates can contact the College of Graduate Studies' Thesis and Dissertation office by emailing editor@ucf.edu.

Although the *Thesis and Dissertation Handbook* sets the requirements for proper document format, it is not the sole source of information on thesis and dissertation requirements and resources. Candidates should access the College of Graduate Studies webpages (http://ww2.graduate.ucf.edu/ETD_Student_Services/) and (<http://www.students.graduate.ucf.edu/etd/>) for information about policies, deadlines, processes, formatting resources, workshops and campus resources, copyright, binding vendors, and a final semester checklist. Final acceptance of dissertations is made by the College of Graduate Studies.

Use of Human Subjects

All dissertations that use research involving human subjects, including surveys, interviews, experiments, and such must obtain approval from UCF's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to starting the research. Students must have an approved prospectus before submitting for IRB approval. Students, not their advisors, must submit this approval request as part of their independent research work. Again, it is up to the student to investigate whether their study needs to receive IRB review and, if required, to have the Board's approval prior to implementing the study.

The IRB approval process includes a number of steps and people prior to getting to the stage of IRB review. The IRB generally meets the third Wednesday of every month. Candidates should consider the IRB review schedule when developing timelines for their dissertation research. Information on the IRB process can be obtained on-line from the Office of Research at <http://www.research.ucf.edu>.

Completing the Dissertation and Scheduling a Defense

It is only after being admitted to candidacy that the Dissertation can be completed and written. Again, the dissertation demonstrates the candidate's ability to select and masterfully approach an issue in their respective field by conducting independent research, analyzing and interpreting results, and placing the study and its findings into a larger context. The defense also establishes the candidate's capability to skillfully communicate this process and its results.

As with the prospectus, candidates will continue to work with their Dissertation Chair and committee members to complete the Dissertation. When finished, it should reflect the format of the Prospectus and include chapters reflecting these items and headings: 1) An introduction with a statement of the problem; 2) A thorough review of the literature, once again indicating the specific contribution that the study makes as well as providing a theoretical framework for interpreting the results; 3) A thorough discussion of the research methodology including research design, sample specification and selection, data collection, measurement instruments, and such; 4) Discussion of the collected results and their implications in terms of both their theoretical context as well as its fit in the larger research literature; and 5) A conclusion discussing the major findings and their importance, including the study's limitations and prospects for future research. (Students are referred to the earlier section on the dissertation prospectus.) Dissertations are prepared in APA style.

Candidates should expect to follow a similar collaborative process as was done with the prospectus. That is, they will work with their Dissertation Chair and committee members in completing their dissertation. Their Chair will provide them with feedback and consultation. Committee members will then provide their feedback to the Chair who will share it with the candidate or direct the candidate to speak directly with the member.

Once the Chair determines that the dissertation can be successfully defended, the following PAF process is observed. Additional steps are required by the College of Graduate Studies and are noted in the Milestones table.

- 1) The most recent version of the dissertation, along with the Dissertation Defense Scheduling Request Form will be sent to each member on the committee.
- 2) Once the chair and at least 2 of 3 committee members approve, the signed Dissertation Defense Scheduling Request Form will be forwarded to the PAF office.
- 3) At that time, the PAF Office will schedule a defense.
- 4) Two hard copies (3-hole punched and format reviewed by the Graduate School) and an electronic copy of the dissertation will be submitted to the PAF office at least 4 weeks before the defense date.
- 5) Students will submit a notice of their defense to the PAF office which includes the title and abstract for distribution by the PAF office to students and faculty.
- 6) One copy of the dissertation will be forwarded to the PAF Program Director and the second copy is sent to the COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs. Both must have sufficient time to read in order to sign the approval forms after the defense.
- 7) The electronic copy will be submitted to iThenticate.com and the resulting score will be given to the PAF Program Director, the dissertation committee chair, and the COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs for review.
- 8) The COHPA Graduate Services office will send out a college-wide notice of the defense 2 weeks prior to the defense date. This is the official notice on behalf of the College of Graduate Studies that the dissertation has been deemed by all parties as ready to defend.

Dissertation Defense

Candidates cannot defend their dissertation until all program requirements have been met, including the minimum requirement of 15 credit hours of PAF 7980 Doctoral Dissertation.

The College of Graduate Studies policy on defenses can be found here:

http://www.graduatemanager.ucf.edu/content/policies.aspx?id=5696#Dissertation_Requirements

The dissertation defense is an oral presentation and defense of the written dissertation describing the student's research. The advisory committee will evaluate and judge the dissertation defense. Successful students must demonstrate that they are able to conduct and report original independent research that contributes substantially to the discipline in which they study. The defense is a formal academic requirement and should be accorded respect and dignity, and thus, no refreshments or other distractions should be served during the defense.

The dean of the college or his/her designee will normally attend all dissertation defenses. Dissertations will be approved by a majority vote of the dissertation advisory committee. Further approval is required from the Dean or Dean designee and the UCF College of Graduate Studies before final acceptance of the dissertation in fulfilling degree requirements.

The candidate and Chair must be present at the defense. Graduate Studies allows for a virtual defense and the policy can be found at the link above. Current COHPA and PAF Program policy requires that even in a virtual defense the Chair and student must be present on the UCF campus for the defense. Additional policy modifications may be made on this subject. The PAF Director and COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs will attend the dissertation defense. Students, faculty, staff and other interested parties may attend as silent visitors unless discussion is permitted by the Chair

Deliberations will be conducted by the committee members, led by the Chair. Dissertations must be approved by the majority of the committee members. The PAF Director and COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs will also be allowed to provide comments to the committee regarding their approval of the defense. The determination is by vote of the committee. Where a determination is made that revisions are necessary, members can withhold signing the dissertation until additional modifications have been completed. The PAF Director and the COHPA Associate Dean, Academic Affairs will not sign off on the Dissertation Approval Form until a final approved version of the dissertation, along with a copy of the Dissertation Defense Assessment Form signed by the Dissertation Chair and all committee members has been submitted into the PAF office. Once this has been completed and the Dean of COHPA will be asked to approve the dissertation. It will further be approved by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies before the dissertation can be accepted as fulfilling degree requirements.

Guidelines for Review of Doctoral Dissertation

These guidelines are designed to assist doctoral candidates

Please note that these guidelines are merely a list providing an overview of what should be checked as the candidate proceeds with their study and, later, writes their dissertation. Faculty can also use this list to identify areas of particular strength and weakness as the candidate completes their dissertation.

1. ABSTRACT

- a. Clearly summarizes the topic area and objective of the study.
- b. Does not include abbreviations without first explaining their meaning.
- c. Clearly states the research question(s), methodology, sample size, and findings.
- d. Ends with a brief statement regarding how the research fits into the larger research study area.

2. INTRODUCTION

- a. Significance of Research
 - i. Topic is related to a body of knowledge recognized as broadly relevant to public affairs (practice, policy or research).
- b. Originality
 - ii. Contribution is different from work previously done, is clearly stated, and is the product of the candidate's own thinking.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

- a. Literature Review
 - i. Demonstrates a mastery of the literature in the field.
 - ii. Clearly defines all terms and, where controversial, justifies the particular way in which they are being defined
 - iii. Reviews all pertinent literature, conceptual and research, with the most important studies included
 1. Provides a clear summary of each study, highlighting the similarities and differences as it relates to the focus of this research
 1. If there is no literature on the problem, the candidate has reviewed research close to the problem and provides a logical bridge to this literature

- iv. Clearly outlines the statement of the problem and then uses the literature to provide a clear and convincing need for the focus of their particular study
 - 1. Provides recent statistics (where applicable) justifying the need for this study
 - 2. Includes scope and background of the problem and previous and/or current efforts to address it
- v. Literature relates and makes a clear connection to the research question(s) and/or hypotheses
- b. Theoretical Foundation
 - i. Outlines existing theoretical/conceptual perspective closely related to the research question(s) and/or hypotheses, providing a convincing rationale for the choice of the theory(ies) being selected
 - 1. Clearly links the theoretical framework to the research question(s) and/or hypotheses
 - 2. Provides the strengths and weaknesses of this theoretical perspective overall as well as its fit to the study underway

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

- a. Research Question(s) and Hypotheses
 - i. The research question(s) and hypotheses are clearly stated and any sub-question(s) just as clearly articulated
 - 1. All concepts included in the research question(s) and hypotheses are defined and, where controversial, these definitions are justified
 - ii. Research question(s) and hypotheses flow clearly from the problem statement
 - iii. Research question(s) build on the review of the research and practice literature
 - v. The rationale and assumptions that underlie the research question(s) and hypotheses are made explicit
- b. Design, Concepts and Measures
 - i. Design of the study answers to the research questions(s) asked
 - ii. Provides justification for the chosen design
 - 1. All issues relevant to the adequate implementation of the design are fully addressed (Remember - Transparency is the obligation of a good researcher)
 - iii. Clearly specifies and justifies all indicators of concepts being investigated
 - iv. Justifies all measures used including their fit to the research question(s) as well as their validity and reliability
- c. Population and Sample
 - i. Provides justification for the sample size drawn (power analysis) and ensures that the sample selected will answer the research question(s) asked
 - ii. Clearly specifies the method of sampling and the rationale for the sampling methods chosen
 - 1. Adequately describes the who, what, where, when, and the recruitment process
 - 1. Include problems, if any, with the way in which the sample was eventually obtained (e.g., difficulty in gaining necessary subjects meeting sample criteria, difficulty in using the methods originally specified in recruiting sample, etc.)
 - iii. Provides sample size obtained as well as the rate of attrition and, where unexpected, all reasons for difficulties in retention
 - iv. Provides an assessment of whether the sample obtained (either in terms of numbers or characteristics) was adequate to address research question(s)
- d. Procedures and Data Collection
 - i. All variables are clearly described and relate logically to the research question(s)
 - ii. Provides justification for choice of instruments including their fit in assessing variables under study (including reliability and validity issues)
 - iii. Methods of data collection are appropriate for the population (including relevance to gender, ethnicity, educational level, and such)
 - iv. Procedures of data collection are described with sufficient detail to understand relevance for practice and allow future replication
 - v. Procedures (if any) to enhance access to and cooperation of subjects are specified
 - vi. If appropriate, a pretest or a pilot test was conducted
- e. Data Analysis
 - i. Analyses are consistent with the objectives, design, sampling, methods and assumption of the statistical models employed
 - ii. The analysis is clear, complete and meaningful

5. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

- a. Findings are provided such that they clearly answer to the research question(s) originally proposed
- b. All findings are discussed including those which run counter to expectations
- c. Findings are tied to the theoretical perspective(s) provided
- d. Findings are tied to the larger literature and implications for future research are noted
- e. The limitations of the findings (i.e., generalizability, validity, etc.) are fully discussed along with their implications
- f. The strengths and weaknesses of the study's methods are identified
- g. Ways to address the research's methodological weaknesses are included

6. ETHICS

- a. The research is free from obvious error and bias.
- b. IRB approval, where needed, was obtained and all consent forms are included

- c. The research was approved by all organizations involved in the study
- d. The researcher made adequate provisions to ensure continued confidentiality of data
- e. The researcher made adequate provisions to ensure collected data is stored in compliance with IRB rules, including noting how long the data will be kept and how it will be safely destroyed

7. DISSERTATION PRESENTATION

- a. The dissertation has been carefully proof read and is free from typos and spelling errors
- b. The study is well edited with adequate attention to grammar, sentence structure, logic, and non-sexist language
- c. The dissertation is written in APA style
- d. All citations noted in the dissertation are included in the reference section
- e. The reference section does not include any references not included in the text
- f. Major topics are separated under appropriately devised subheadings
- g. Format is tailored to meet demands of the topic
- h. Copies of relevant materials such as test instruments, interview schedules, consent forms, directions to subjects, criteria for selection of experts, and pilot test data are appended
- i. Letters of cooperation or permission are appended
 - i. For datasets not in the public domain, permission to use is documented
 - ii. For instruments not in the public domain, permission to use is documented
 - iii. Letters of cooperation from agency(ies) used for the study are included

8. ORAL PRESENTATION

- a. Candidate is able to demonstrate that the study has a logical, easily understandable sequence from initial statement of the problem to findings and conclusions
- b. Candidate understands all aspects of their research and its findings
- c. Candidate demonstrates mastery over their subject area and is able to comfortably answer questions

PAF PROGRAM CONTACT INFO

Interim Program Director

- Dr. Robyne Stevenson HPA 1 Rm. 220A (407) 823-0170

Criminal Justice (CJ)

- Chair – Catherine Kaukinen HPA1 Rm. 311B (407) 823-2603
- Coordinator Dr. Matt Nobles HPA1 Rm. 220C (407) 823-0712

Health Services Management and Research (HSM)

- Chair – Dr. Reid Oetjen HPA2 Rm. 210C (407) 823-3729
- Coordinator - Dr. Su-I Hou HPA1 Rm. 217 (407) 823-3344

Public Administration (PAD)

- Chair –Dr. Naim Kapucu HPA2 Rm. 238H (407) 823-3693
- Coordinator – Dr. Tom Bryer HPA2 Rm. 238E (407) 823-0410

Social Work (SOW)

- Chair – Dr. Bonnie Yegidis HPA1 Rm. 204A (407) 823-2114
- Coordinator – Dr. Kim Anderson HPA1 Rm. 204C (407) 823-6167

PAF Program Office

Academic Coordinator: Jesica Metellus – HPA1 Rm. 220D (407) 823-0170

Advising, processing all academic forms, defense process, graduate assistantships, enrollment, orientation, GPS

Administrative Assistant: Denise Oliver – HPA1 Rm. 220B (407) 823-0774

Payroll, timesheets, purchasing, supplies, printing posters, equipment, lab access, room scheduling

PAF Ph.D. Student Study Rooms

HPA I – Room 211A is available for any doctoral student to use. No reservation is required. Single sign on computers are available to use as is a printer. Room access can be obtained in the PAF office.

HPA I – Room 211B is available for any doctoral student who is a Graduate Research/Teaching Assistant on a first come-first reserved basis. Locked study carrels are assigned and computers/printer are available for student use. Please obtain your space reservation at the PAF office.

Students should not give access codes to these rooms to anyone other than PAF doctoral students.

GRADUATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Students with qualifying assistantships or university-wide fellowships will receive financial packages that include an assistantship or fellowship stipend, tuition remission, and health insurance. Qualifying fellowships are accompanied by tuition waivers.

For additional information about funding for graduate school, please visit the Student Finances section of the College of Graduate Studies student website at <http://www.students.graduate.ucf.edu/>.

If you are interested in applying for loans or externally funded need-based awards, visit the Office of Student Financial Assistance website at <http://finaid.ucf.edu> and complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is available January 1 each year.

Other Special Fellowships

Students seeking alternative funding for scholarships are advised to look at the UCF Alumni Association. This group awards more than \$40,000 in scholarships each year to undergraduate and graduate students. See www.ucfalumni.com for information on how to apply.

When scholarship or award monies are announced throughout the semester, the PAF office will send this information out to students.

Assistantships

Graduate Student Assistantships

Qualifying assistantships include single appointments of at least .50 FTE (20 hrs. /week) or two appointments of at least .25 FTE (10 hrs. /week) per semester. Tuition remission is in the form of either tuition waivers or tuition payments that cover in-state (resident) tuition. Non-resident students with financial packages are not charged out-of-state tuition or the non-resident financial aid fee.

Graduate Student Assistantships pay students to teach or otherwise facilitate instruction (these are graduate teaching assistants, or “GTAs”), or to work on funded research projects (these are referred to as graduate research assistants, or “GRAs”). Students who are receiving tuition waivers must be attending fulltime (9 credit hours fall and spring with the exception of students in candidacy who must take a minimum of 3 credit hours). Students receiving a tuition waiver are paid a stipend and must work 20 hours per week. GTAs and GRAs may be contracted throughout the fall and spring semesters or departments may contract for one semester at a time. Students would be wise to make sure they understand whether their assistantship is for a semester or the entire academic year.

In the College of Health and Public Affairs, all students receiving fellowships must work in the program that is providing the funding. The purpose of this employment is to support the program and to provide teaching, research and administrative experiences benefitting the student. For PAF students, this may involve work for the doctoral program or in one of the contributing programs, departments or schools. Graduate assistantships may be funded by the PAF program or by a contributing track department.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The University of Central Florida and the College of Health and Public Affairs are dedicated to the development of skills that relate to the career goals of student's. A graduate student's professional development goes beyond completing course work, passing exams, conducting research for a thesis or dissertation, and meeting degree requirements. Professional development also involves developing the academic and non-academic skills needed to become successful in the field of choice. Students should speak with regularly with their faculty members for guidance in their professional development.

Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program

Sponsored by Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning: The Karen L. Smith Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning invites current and aspiring Graduate Teaching Assistants to enroll in our Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty (PTF) Program. Students will complete a series of online modules, assemble a first draft of their teaching portfolio, and engage in a learning community facilitated by Faculty Center staff. Texts will be provided, and the program is free to participants. See <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/Events/GTAPrograms/PreparingTomorrowsFaculty/>

GTA Certificate Program

Sponsored by Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning: The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning offers several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF. The two-day GTA Training is mandatory before any graduate student will be permitted to teach. Every semester the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning sponsors a noncredit program for 12 weeks to provide Graduate Teaching Assistants with advanced training in pedagogical theory, methods, and discussions. Participants who fulfill the course requirements are granted a Certificate and gain skills that can be utilized in careers in academia. See <http://www.fctl.ucf.edu/Events/GTAPrograms/>.

Conference Attendance

Participating in professional meetings is an important part of the doctoral student education. Students may present papers or posters and should consult the faculty on opportunities.

The PAF office can print posters for students who are attending a conference.

Student travel and conference registration costs can be supported with assistance from the Graduate Studies Student office and other sources. Please take advantage of these forms of assistance!

Graduate Research Forum

Sponsored by the College of Graduate Studies: The Research Forum features poster displays and oral presentations representing UCF's diverse colleges and disciplines. The Research Forum is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best poster and best oral presentation in each category will be given and all participants will receive recognition. The College of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association invite all UCF students, community, and employers to attend the Graduate Research Forum. See www.graduate.ucf.edu/ResearchForum.

Student Associations

Doctoral Students in Public Affairs/PAF PhD is a recognized UCF student group, run for and by PAF doctoral students. Information will be provided to all students about events and meetings.

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit www.gsa.ucf.edu.

GRADUATE AWARDS

Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant

UCF sponsors this award in order to recognize excellence by Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), who are not instructors of record, but who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. Excellence in serving as a GTA may be demonstrated by evidences such as (but not limited to): lead teacher evaluations, student letters attesting to teaching excellence (limited to no more than five pages), or a sample project and/or assignment that the GTA was responsible for grading. Each academic college may nominate one student for consideration for the university-level Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant.

Award for the Outstanding Dissertation

UCF sponsors the Award for the Outstanding Dissertation in order to recognize for excellence in the dissertation. The focus of this annual award is on the quality and contribution of the student's dissertation. Excellence of the dissertation may be demonstrated by evidences such as, but not limited to: publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. Each academic college may nominate one student for consideration for the university-level Award for the Outstanding Dissertation.

Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching

This award recognizes excellence in teaching by Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who have independent teaching responsibilities. It focuses on the quality of the student's teaching activities and the academic contributions to those activities. Each academic college may nominate one student for consideration for the university-level Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching.

Innovative Thesis or Dissertation Award

This award recognizes excellence in cutting-edge use of technology in theses and dissertations. The focus of this annual award is on the technical innovation of the student's thesis or dissertation through the application of renderings, photos, data sets, software code and other multimedia objects. Each academic college may nominate one student for consideration for the university-level Innovative Thesis or Dissertation Award.

GRADUATES/ALUMNI

The Public Affairs program has graduated over 100 PhD's since 2002. The majority of our graduates have careers in academic institutions either as faculty or as researchers or in nonprofit and government agencies as administrators or analysts.

The market for our graduates has been strong and current evidence indicates a continued high demand for those with a Ph.D. having strong research skills who can work across disciplinary boundaries.

Students are encouraged to continue participating with the PAF program and the College of Health and Public Affairs as UCF alumni. COHPA maintains an office of Alumni Relations in addition to the UCF main alumni office.

CORE COMPETENCIES MATRIX

PAF Curriculum Core Matrix														
CORE DOMAINS AND COMPETENCIES MATRIX	Course Title	Foundations of Public Affairs: People Places, and Power	Advanced Research Methodology for PAF	Social Inquiry & Public Policy	Strategic Change & Management for PAF	Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs I: Quantitative Methods for PAF	Qualitative Methods for PAF	Policy & Program Evaluation for PAF	Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs II: Survey Methods for PAF	Practicum in Community-Based Research	Electives	(1) Advanced Statistics for Public Affairs III: Regression Analysis	(2) Structural Equation Modeling	Total
	I. CRITICAL & ANALYTICAL THINKING DOMAIN: Demonstrate an ability to critically analyze existing bodies of knowledge and core areas of public affairs practice, research, and theory.													
Analyze and critique public affairs as a network, assess its ability to respond to complex problems, and identify ways to improve it	1			1						2				0
Pose innovative and important research questions, informed by systematic and critical reviews of the literature, by stakeholder needs, and by relevant theoretical and conceptual models			1			1		1		3			1	1
Identify ways of improving the network's ability to respond to the community and to underserved populations by integrating and applying theory and research that reaches across disciplinary boundaries	1							1		2				0
Critique research design, execution, and analysis		1				1	1	1		4				0
Situate individual research endeavors within a larger context, considering impacts on competing stakeholders and identifying ethical implications			1					1		2				0
	2	1	2	1	0	2	3	2	0	13		0	1	14
RESEARCH, METHODS, STATISTICS, & THEORY DOMAIN: Demonstrate an ability to develop theoretically based research with appropriate design and rigorous methods and analysis to address community-based issues.														
Integrate and apply interdisciplinary theories and research findings to solve community problems			1							1	2		1	1
Work collaboratively with community partners in the design and implementation of research										1	1			0
Translate theory into testable hypotheses		1						1		2			1	1
Use conceptual models to specify study constructs and develop variables that reliably and validly measure these constructs		1						1		2			1	1

Select appropriate interventional (experimental or quasi-experimental) or observational (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods) study designs to address specific community research questions		1						1			2					0
Design research protocols that ensure replicability and consider issues of generalizability and application						1					1					0
Adhere to ethical principles of responsible research		1								1	2					0
Be knowledgeable of primary and secondary data acquisition and management					1				1		2		1	1		2
Develop expertise in statistics					1				1		2		1	1		2
Develop expertise in qualitative data analysis						1					1					0
	0	4	1	0	2	2	1	4	3		17		2	5		24

III. LEADERSHIP & ENGAGEMENT DOMAIN: Demonstrate leadership capabilities in designing and implementing change strategies to collaboratively strengthen communities.

Practices guiding principles of the Public Affairs program – beneficence (doing good); justice (fairness); integrity (honesty); and respect (inclusiveness)										1	1					0
Collaborate with policymakers, organizations, and communities to transparently plan, conduct, and translate community-based research into policy and practice										1	1					0
Demonstrate an understanding of translational community-based research and how it guides the assessment of, and solutions to, complex public problems and issues	1		1								2					0
Work collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams	1						1		1		3					0
Value research collaborations intended to answer specific community concerns while building the knowledge base										1	1					0
Identify and analyze political, cultural, social, and economic factors influencing the development of, and changes to, programs and policies	1									1	2					0
Assess and synthesize information from a variety of sources to inform evidence-based decisions							1				1			1		1
	3	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	5		11		0	1		12

IV. COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION DOMAIN - Demonstrate the ability to translate and communicate research to the specific audience targeted.

Communicate evidence-based policy information for use in collaborative negotiations with diverse stakeholders										1	1					0
Organize large amounts of materials and communicate it to others cogently and persuasively	1					1	1	1			4					0
Translate scientific knowledge into meaningful programs and policies			1					1			2					0
Effectively communicate the findings and implications of research through multiple modalities to research, professional, and lay audiences							1			1	2					0
Produce grant proposals as well as written reports suitable for publication in policy outlets and in academic journals									1		1					0

Generate and communicate findings in an honest and ethical manner		1		1		1		1		4				0	
Demonstrate skills and understanding of teaching							1			1				0	
	1	1	1	1	0	2	4	3	2	15			0	0	15
	6	6	5	2	2	6	10	9	10	56			2	7	65