

**PhD IN NURSING SCIENCE PROGRAM
HANDBOOK 2026**

NOTICE

This handbook generally establishes the program requirements and procedures applicable to each entering cohort and consolidates information concerning common practices in the Ph.D. in Nursing program. Newly developed or revised University, College, or Ph.D. Program policies, procedures, and guidelines may supersede those found in this handbook. The Ph.D. Program Director will inform all doctoral students, candidates, and faculty of policy changes in advance whenever practicable and state whether policy changes apply to current students and candidates. Requests for exceptions to program policies must be submitted to the PhD Program Director in advance. Exception requests are the responsibility of the student or candidate and should be submitted in consultation with the educational advisor or major professor.

Students will be asked to acknowledge receipt of or electronic access to the PhD Program Handbook upon entering the program and following substantial revisions. The acknowledgment confirms that the student has been informed of the handbook and is responsible for reviewing applicable program, College, and University requirements. It does not create additional sanctions, modify governing policies, or waive any rights or procedures available to the student.

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Ph.D. Program Description

The Ph.D. program will include a single major area of study, Nursing Science. It includes a total of 85 credit hours of study for nurses entering with baccalaureate degrees, and 76 credit hours for nurses who hold a master's degree in nursing (M.S.N. or M.N.) or a Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) degree. The emphasis of the program is on health disparities and health equity for a range of populations. We have a particular focus on rural populations given our location in the State of Florida.

Currently, the FSU College of Nursing includes three major research centers focused on populations experiencing health disparities. Most major professors within the program are affiliated with these Centers. Thus, they reflect the focus of health disparities inherent to the program. These include:

1. **Center of Population Sciences for Health Empowerment** is a chartered center by the Board of Governors of the Florida State University System. Its mission is to lead and implement community-engaged, scientific, operational research and practice using principles and tools of population sciences that promote health and address the root causes of health disparities for all people regardless of their demographic. The Center's Florida First Health Science Brigade works to recruit new tenure-track assistant professors from different backgrounds using a cohort-based model and invests in the development, mentorship, advancement, and retention of new faculty in two broad domains of research excellence: (1) chronic disease prevention and management; and (2) mental health. Florida First aims to transform institutional culture at Florida State University to generate a self-sustaining scientific community dedicated to inclusive excellence.
2. **Institute on Digital Health and Innovation** to advance digital health science, technologies, and tools focused on solving real world needs of patients, providers, and populations through research, training, and innovation to maximize health. The ultimate goal of the Institute on Digital Health and Innovation is to promote individual and public health through collaborative and synergistic partnerships for the development, evaluation and dissemination of digital health tools, technologies and innovations.
3. **Interventions and Implementation Science Hub (IIS) Lab.** The IIS Hub's mission is to enhance health outcomes by developing and testing biobehavioral interventions that engage community partners throughout the scientific process, while concurrently leveraging the rigorous methods of Dissemination and Implementation Science.

In addition to the aforementioned centers, the College has a large group of researchers focused on cardiovascular health in diverse populations. Much of this work includes rural populations including low-income individuals. Students should check the FSU College of Nursing webpage for up-to-date information on research centers. Faculty research biographies are available through the College of Nursing's website.

Mission Statements

Florida State University, College of Nursing educates clinicians, leaders, scholars, and advanced practitioners who can enhance the quality of life for people of all cultures, economic levels, and geographic locations. The CON integrates the liberal arts and sciences with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for lifelong learning, personal responsibility, and sustained achievement in the nursing profession and the communities in which our graduates reside.

Doctoral Program Mission and Goals

The mission of the Ph.D. in Nursing program is to prepare nurse scholars and academic faculty who will contribute significant new knowledge to nursing science. This knowledge will improve our understanding, generate theory, and lay the foundation for culturally sensitive interventions to address a broad range of phenomena that influence the health of diverse populations. The program will prepare nurses for faculty roles that include research-intensive work and teaching in post-secondary, practice-based programs. While the program's primary focus is on the training of nurse scientists, students will receive advanced training in nursing which will facilitate their teaching endeavors in addition to their scholarly work. All students may elect to take coursework in various educational disciplines (see our collaboration with the College of

Education). Students who receive funding will serve in teaching roles in the undergraduate nursing program, which will further prepare them for teaching roles in clinically focused programs. The program is vital to the workforce needs of Florida, as the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the potential adverse effects of the nursing shortage on the health of Floridians. Ensuring an adequate supply of Ph.D. prepared nurses is essential to maintaining the nursing workforce in our state. The goals of the program fall under the following content areas:

Research and Knowledge Development:

- Integrate nursing and other healthcare theories into the student's program of research.
- Conduct original research.
- Critique and integrate different scientific perspectives in the conduct of original research.
- Lead research teams and participate in team science in collaboration with other disciplines.

Leadership

- State the evolving roles and responsibilities of a nurse scholar.
- Assume leadership in the conduct of culturally appropriate scholarship that integrates Social Determinants of Health.
- Lead in advancing the discipline through scholarly contributions and science.
- Provide career and research mentorship to others.

Research Dissemination and Grantsmanship

- Communicate research through publications and presentations for professional, interdisciplinary, and lay audiences.

Health Policy

- Generate and disseminate knowledge and theory relevant to health policy.
- State the influence of politics and policy on knowledge generation.

Values

- Apply the history and philosophy of science during the development of research deliverables.
- Structure research deliverables that include the evolving nature of the nursing discipline.
- Utilize professional and research ethics and judgment in the conduct of research.

Admission to the Ph.D. Program in Nursing

The application for admission to the Ph.D. Program in Nursing is completed online. The admission standards for the program are as follows (check FSU CoN Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing [webpage](#) for updates):

- 1) A Bachelor of Science degree in nursing with a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.2.
- 2) M.S.N./ D.N.P. with a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0. All transfer courses require a grade of B or greater. Students will complete, in collaboration with their major professor, a plan of study. As the Ph.D. in Nursing exceeds the 32-credit threshold, courses may be applied to the study plan as appropriate (e.g. courses are either duplicated in the required courses delineated in the curricular plan, or directly support the area of study selected for the Ph.D.). These courses may not have been used to meet the requirements for another FSU degree. Students must complete the majority of coursework at FSU (51%). The Ph.D. committee will approve each student's plan of study including transfer credit. Further, all changes to the study plan will be approved in a similar manner.
- 3) There will be no GRE/GMAT requirement. A GRE waiver application is pending with the Graduate School/GPC.
- 4) Unencumbered RN licensure prior to candidacy. Florida RN licensure would be required if only a student is engaged in an intervention or clinical work requiring a Florida RN license.

- 5) Evidence of writing skill based on the applicant's admission essay reflecting on the student's reasons for seeking a Ph.D. in Nursing and their associated aspirations related to contributions to nursing science.
- 6) Evidence of skill in oral communication based on an interview by the potential major professor and Ph.D. committee.
- 7) Three professional letters of reference⁶ which reflect the applicant's potential for a career as a Nurse Scientist.

Admission of International Students

FSU College of Nursing's PhD program is currently a 100% online program, so international students may not currently enroll since they will not be able to meet the statutory requirements of their visa. Prospective students should check College of Nursing [Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing](#) and FSU [Center for Global Engagement](#) webpages for updates.

Required Materials for All Applicants

1. Transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate academic work
2. Resume/Curriculum Vitae that documents the applicant's:
 - a. Education
 - b. Substantive areas of expertise or interest
 - c. Professional positions, publications and presentations
 - d. Research experience, grant awards, etc.
 - e. Teaching or training experience
 - f. Professional affiliations, honors, awards
 - g. Service
3. A personal statement describing:
 - a. The applicant's professional goals
 - b. Previous professional/academic experience that provides evidence of the applicant's potential for engaging in doctoral-level scholarship
 - c. The factors related to the applicant's decision to apply to the FSU College of Nursing Ph.D. program
 - d. The research interests the applicant would like to pursue in the doctoral program and a tentative plan to conduct this research
4. Three letters of reference (minimum) – Letters from three academic references or two academic references and one professional reference that, at a minimum, provide an evaluation of the applicant's overall academic and/or professional performance, professional characteristics that support their potential for success in doctoral-level study, and intellectual/academic capacity for doctoral-level work. The applicants will be asked to enter contact information for recommenders into the "Recommendors" section of the online application. The Recommenders will receive an email with directions to upload their letter. A maximum of five letters may be requested. We suggest that applicants create and save these documents on their personal computer prior to completing this part of the online application.

Application Deadline, Review, and Admission Decision

The College of Nursing's Ph.D. Program Committee reviews only completed application files that meet the minimum admission requirements. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. All portions of the application must be completed by June 1st for fall admission; however, admissions decisions are made on a rolling basis. Applicants are notified either electronically or by mail of the admissions decision by the FSU College of Nursing Student Services Office.

Transfer Credits

Transfer credit decisions will depend on when the coursework was completed and on its relevance to the student's program. **The College may not transfer in graduate credits that have been used to obtain**

another degree or certificate. A maximum of 9 graduate credit hours may be transferred from an accredited institution or program. Only those credit hours that resulted in a grade of “B” or better will be considered. The Ph.D. Program Director and the FSU Office of Records and Registration will be responsible for determining whether the credit hours can be transferred.

Readmission Process

Applicants who have received degrees from Florida State University within the last seven years should apply for readmission to the university when seeking admission to the Ph.D. program. To apply for readmission, students should open the online application for admission, and when prompted, indicate that they have received a degree from Florida State University.

Readmission application submissions must include:

1. College of Nursing Department Application
2. A master’s or DNP degree with a Grade Point Average of at least 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) from a graduate school of nursing accredited by the AACN.
3. Foreign applicants must have completed degree work that makes them eligible to sit for the US NCLEX examination during their first year of study.
4. “Good standing” status at the last school attended
5. Transcripts from all previous undergraduate and graduate academic work. Applicants who received their undergraduate or other degree from Florida State University only need to send transcripts from any other university attended after they received their degree from FSU.
6. Resume/Curriculum Vitae*
7. A personal statement*
8. A representative writing sample*
9. Three letters of reference*

Application Process Questions

For further information about the application process, contact the Ph.D. Program Director. The current contact information for the Program Director can be found at FSU CoN Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing [webpage](#).

Academic Standards

The program offers a Doctor of Philosophy degree. This is a research degree designed to produce a critical scholar. The degree is granted only to students who: 1) have mastered definite fields of knowledge so that they are familiar not only with what has been done in their specific fields but also with the potential and opportunity for further advances; 2) have demonstrated capacity to engage in original and independent scholarly investigation or creative work in their selected fields; and 3) have the ability to integrate their selected fields of specialization with the larger domains of knowledge and understanding ([Graduate Bulletin](#)).

Credit Hours

Because the Doctor of Philosophy degree represents the attainment of independent and comprehensive scholarship in a selected field rather than the earning of a specific amount of credit, there is no University-wide minimum course requirement beyond that implied by the residence requirement (Graduate Bulletin).

The College of Nursing requires students to complete courses in the College of Education (stats core). These courses constitute the “program of studies,” which is described in the section entitled “Program of Studies” of this handbook.

Minimum Credit Hours and Underload

University policy generally requires doctoral students to enroll in a minimum of three credit hours. All CON doctoral students must comply with the three-hour requirement. NOTE however, that students are required to maintain full-time status if they are being funded by the CON through assistantships, waivers, etc. Please see the “Research/Teaching Assistantships” section of the handbook for more information.

To maintain full-time status, students are required to enroll in the following minimum of 9 credits per semester during coursework and continual enrollment thereafter in dissertation credits.

Students may be permitted to enroll in a reduced “underload” status of two hours in the semester in which they are defending their dissertations. Underload enrollment status requires advance permission of the PhD Program Director. Note that students are only granted underload status once. To request underload status, students should email the PhD Program Director confirming the following requirements:

1. The student must have already satisfied the 24-hour dissertation rule. This means the student has previously completed 24 credit hours of dissertation work.
2. The student must be in good standing such that they were “retained” without probation during the student’s most recent annual review.

Additionally, students must submit a clear work plan showing how they will defend the dissertation during the semester. The Sr. Academic Program Specialist must be copied on this email.

Scholarly Engagement

We are conscious of the need for intense scholarly engagement as required by the University. More importantly, we realize that interaction with faculty and students is a key component of the socialization of Nurse Scientists. Thus, our approach is heavily focused on fully engaging learners in this regard. Our plan for ensuring scholarly engagement includes:

- 1) Students will be required to attend a two-day, on-campus orientation at the beginning of the program. During this orientation, students will be heavily oriented to the academic and research resources that they will access throughout the program.
- 2) The Associate Dean for Research currently holds monthly research presentations designed to broaden faculty and graduate student knowledge of interdisciplinary research topics. The Ph.D. students will be required to attend these sessions.
- 3) The College of Nursing will facilitate student attendance at research conferences across the state and nationally. This will include conference attendance with the major professor.
- 4) Each student will work to select a major professor (with mutual approval). Following selection of a major professor, the students will be members of the major professor’s laboratory and/or research team. Major professors will hold a minimum of one lab meeting per month to ensure scholarly engagement. This will facilitate the student’s engagement with their major professor’s work and will facilitate interactions and collaboration with their student colleagues. This experience, whether local or completed at a distance, will be negotiated with the major professor.

Intensives:

Summer intensive sessions will be structured as follows. Each will span five days and will include extensive class work, presentations, research seminars and opportunities for direct faculty and student contact. Full-time students begin attending intensives in their first year of the program. Part-time students begin attending intensives in their second year.

- 1) Admission: There will be an online intensive that will provide a broad range of programmatic topics. It is meant to orient the students.
- 2) First in-person Intensive: This session will center around the course entitled “Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science”. The goal will be for students to receive classroom sessions and direct interactions with faculty to facilitate the compilation of the beginning stages of the literature review that will eventually support the dissertation.
- 3) Second in-person Intensive: This session will focus on the course entitled “Preliminary Exam Preparation”. During this intensive session, students will receive classroom sessions and guided faculty support as they prepare for their preliminary examination.

Program Milestones for Academic Engagement:

- 1) Each student will develop a CV prior to their preliminary examinations. This document will be updated and provided to faculty prior to each step in the dissertation process.

- 2) Each student will complete Collaborative Institute Training Initiative (CITI) training prior to preliminary examinations. CITI training may have to be engaged earlier if students are working actively on research projects as members of the academic community in the College.
- 3) Students will attend each of three intensive sessions including the online intensive at the beginning of the program.
- 4) Students will attend a minimum of one academic conference annually during coursework. The conference should focus on their area of scientific inquiry or general methodologic approaches to research. The major professor will approve these conferences.
- 5) Students will present the dissertation prospectus during the course of study. Students are encouraged to make at least one more academic or practice-based research presentation prior to graduation.
- 6) Students are required to submit one paper for publication prior to graduation. The major professor will approve the journal and topic for the publication. The student may co-publish with the major professor to meet this requirement. Students are encouraged to seek publication in high-quality journals in nursing or related fields.
- 7) Candidacy will occur after completion of the preliminary examination.

Leave of Absence

Under special circumstances, graduate students may apply for a leave of absence from the University for a specific period of up to three consecutive semesters (includes summer term). The circumstances justifying a leave include but are not limited to personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in immediate family, or completion of an off-campus internship. The student must provide appropriate documentation and a rationale for the leave request. Please contact the College of Nursing Office of Student Services for more information.

Medical Withdrawal

In cases of serious illness or injury that prevent completion of a term, the College of Nursing will assist the student in initiating the applicable FSU medical-withdrawal process. The student may also request a tuition refund or adjustment, subject to separate review and approval under University policy.

Continuous Enrollment

Continuous enrollment at Florida State University is defined as enrollment without an interruption of two or more consecutive semesters (including summer term). Credits earned at other institutions during any semester while not registered at Florida State University will not constitute continuous enrollment at the University. Students who are not enrolled at the University for two or more consecutive semesters (or consecutive semester and summer term), and who are not on approved leave of absence, must apply for readmission before resuming their studies (Graduate Bulletin).

Student Loan Requirements

Students who take out loans are responsible for ensuring that they meet the minimum credit hour requirements of their lender. In many instances, students are required to maintain full-time status. The student is responsible for signing up for the correct number of credit hours.

Grades

At FSU, a graduate student is not eligible for conferral of a degree unless the cumulative grade point average is at least 3.0 in formal graduate courses. No course hours with a grade below "C-" will be credited on the graduate degree; all grades in graduate courses except those for which grades of "S" or "U" are given or those conferred under the provision for repeating a course will be included in computation of the average (Graduate Bulletin). Additionally, doctoral students at the College of Nursing must earn a grade of "B" or better in every course and maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 in all doctoral level classes to be retained in the program. "Incompletes" must be completed successfully by the end of the following semester in which the student is registered. If a student enrolls in a defense course and is unable to defend, the course must be dropped from the student's transcript. Students should only be enrolled in the defense courses during the semester they defend; they cannot have a defense course with an "Incomplete" grade on his or her transcript.

Class Attendance Policy

University-wide policy requires all students to attend the first day of class meeting of all classes for which they are registered. Students who do not attend the first class meeting of a course for which they are registered will be dropped from the course by the academic department that offers the course. This policy applies to all levels of courses and to all campuses and study centers. It remains the student's responsibility to verify course drops and check that fees are adjusted.

Please refer to 'Class Attendance' in the "Academic Regulations and Procedures" chapter in the Graduate Bulletin for additional information.

Advising and Faculty Supervision

Upon admission, each student will be assigned an educational advisor who will serve as a resource as the student develops a program of studies. The educational advisor will work with the student until the student identifies a major professor, which must occur no later than the end of the final semester of the first year (summer) for full-time students and the end of the second year (summer) for part-time students. The major professor must indicate his or her agreement to fulfill this role by signing the Doctoral Supervisory Committee form. The student is responsible for obtaining the MP's signature. The student should then submit the completed major professor section of the form in accordance with the process described in the "Supervisory Committee Approval Process" section below. Additional information about the major professor's role is provided in the following section.

The student must identify the members of the supervisory committee and submit the completed Doctoral Supervisory Committee form with all required signatures no later than one month before the end of the spring semester of the second year of full-time study or the third year of part-time study. The supervisory committee must be officially approved by the end of that spring semester. The student is responsible for obtaining the required signatures and submitting the form in accordance with the process described in the "Supervisory Committee Approval Process" section below. A student whose supervisory committee has not been officially approved may not begin committee-dependent preliminary examination or other academic milestones, as described in that section. Additional information about the composition, responsibilities, and functioning of the supervisory committee is provided in the "Supervisory Committee" section below.

Major Professor

Determining a major professor is an important decision in one's doctoral education, as the major professor has primary responsibility for guiding the student through all phases of doctoral work until the requirements of the Ph.D. have been completed. The selection of major professor is driven by the doctoral student with consultation with the director of the PhD program and graduate faculty. During their first year in the program, doctoral students should consult with members of the doctoral faculty with Graduate Faculty Status whose areas of competency and expertise are congruent with the student's dissertation interests. These informal conversations are an opportunity for students to determine who might be a good choice for their major professor.

The major professor:

- Approves and regularly reviews the program of studies;
- Prepares the student's annual review;
- Serves as the chairperson of the student's supervisory (i.e., dissertation) committee;
- Directs the student's preparation for the preliminary examinations;
- Advises the student in developing a prospectus;
- Guides the student's work in the design and development of a dissertation.

Points to consider when selecting the major professor:

- Does the faculty member have expertise in the student's substantive, methodological, or statistical areas of interest?

- Does the faculty member have Graduate Faculty Status and enough experience to guide the student's work?
- Does the faculty member have the ability to ensure harmonious committee functioning?
- Will the faculty member have enough time to mentor the student's work? What are the faculty's obligations to other students, grant work, journal editorship, book contracts, etc.?
- Will the faculty member be available during summers? Is the faculty member planning a sabbatical, appointment to an administrative post, or retirement?
- Does the faculty member have a compatible conversational and working style?
- What are the faculty's beliefs about the dissertation process, i.e., hands-on or simply advisory? Are multiple drafts of each chapter expected and approved before the defense? Is the defense a discussion among colleagues or a test of knowledge?
- What do advanced students and other faculty members say about working with this faculty?
- Does this faculty member have a record of success with doctoral students? Timely graduations? Are there opportunities for collaborative work on publications and presentations?

The major professor may or may not be the faculty member initially assigned as the educational advisor. After a faculty member has agreed to serve as the major professor, the student must complete that portion of the Doctoral Supervisory Committee form (available from the Sr. Academic Program Specialist) by the end of the fall semester of the second year of full-time study (or of the third year of part-time study) and submit it to the Ph.D. Program Director and Dean for their approval.

College of Nursing Major Professor Requirements

The major professor serves as the chair of the student's supervisory committee. At the time of committee appointment, the faculty member chairing the supervisory committee must have:

1. Graduate Faculty Status.
 2. Served on at least one completed dissertation committee, whether at the College of Nursing, another FSU academic unit, or another institution, or have a co-major professor who has done so; and
 3. Successfully completed the second-year review by the College of Nursing Promotion and Tenure Committee
- Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Dean of the College of Nursing with the advice of the PhD Program Director.

Supervisory Committee

In the College of Nursing, the doctoral supervisory committee serves as the written/oral preliminary examination and dissertation supervisory committee. Doctoral supervisory committees shall consist of a minimum of four members with Graduate Faculty Status. One of the minimum four members must be a voting member from outside the College of Nursing who serves as the University Representative and is tenured and has Graduate Faculty Status. Because the conferred degree is a PhD in Nursing Science, a minimum of two committee members will be nurses. Under special circumstances, a person external to Florida State University may serve on a doctoral supervisory committee if the individual receives the appropriate Courtesy Faculty appointment and Graduate Faculty status required by the University. The composition of all supervisory committees is subject to approval by the PhD Program Director.

Student progress is assessed annually as described in the "Academic Annual Review" section of this handbook. The Dean of the Graduate School, as well as the CON Dean and PhD Program Director, may attend committee meetings as nonvoting members. Notification of the supervisory committee membership will be reported to the Dean of the Graduate School in a timely manner after its formation. Only members of the supervisory committee may vote and sign the dissertation (adapted from the Graduate Bulletin).

University Representative

The university representative is drawn from outside the student's department, as well as outside the student's degree program for interdisciplinary programs. The university representative must be a tenured member of the faculty with Graduate Faculty status and should be free of conflicts of interest with other members of the

supervisory committee. The university representative is responsible for ensuring that the student is treated fairly and equitably in accordance with University, College, and Departmental guidelines and policies, and that decisions made by the supervisory committee reflect the collective judgment of the committee (Graduate Bulletin).

This responsibility begins with appointment to the supervisory committee and ends with the defense of the dissertation. The university representative should verify that the defense is conducted appropriately. Content knowledge in the subject of the dissertation is valuable for the university representative but not required. In addition, the university representative represents the University's interest and is responsible for ensuring that our doctoral graduates are of high quality. If questions or irregularities arise that cannot be resolved within the college, the university representative should contact the Dean of the Graduate School for resolution (Graduate Bulletin).

In the College of Nursing, students should seek supervisory committee members who cover the breadth and depth of their needs to complete a successful dissertation. At a minimum, this means that members must cover the student's needs for substantive, methodological, and statistical expertise. Therefore, it is sometimes necessary to select five or more committee members. In addition, it is useful to choose members who are compatible, available to meet and to contribute, and who agree on the level of expertise that is required for a doctoral student to be successful in completing the program. Students should interview potential committee members in the same way they interview potential major professors.

Fully retired faculty (includes Emerita/Emeritus status) may continue to serve as major professors for those students who have already begun their thesis/dissertation at the time of the professor's retirement. Fully retired faculty, however, may not accept additional students in this capacity. Fully retired faculty may serve as an additional member beyond the minimum number required on Master's and Doctoral committees of new students if they choose. Appointment to courtesy is not necessary, but department chairs must send a memo to The Graduate School indicating the names of the student committees on which the professor serves and the approval of this continued service.

For faculty who depart the University for any reason other than retirement, the department or program that wishes to continue the faculty member in some or all of these roles may provide a courtesy appointment and nominate the faculty member for master's or doctoral co-directive status, as needed, so the faculty member may continue as co-chair or an additional member for those students who have already begun their thesis/dissertation at the time of the faculty member's departure. If the faculty member is serving as committee chair, the department will then designate a current or new member of the committee with appropriate directive status as co-chair of the committee. Faculty members who depart the University may not accept additional students in this capacity, nor may they serve as the University Representative on committees.

Supervisory Committee Approval Process

After faculty have agreed to serve as members of the supervisory committee, the student must submit the completed Doctoral Supervisory Committee form with all required signatures to the Sr. Academic Program Specialist no later than one month before the end of the spring semester of the second year of full-time study or the third year of part-time study. The Sr. Academic Program Specialist will route the form for the required approvals. The supervisory committee must be officially approved by the end of that spring semester. The student can obtain a form from the Sr. Academic Program Specialist. The committee is not officially formed until the required approvals have been obtained.

A student whose supervisory committee has not been officially approved may not register for or begin the committee-administered written or oral components of the preliminary examination or complete another academic milestone requiring supervisory committee approval. If the committee form has not been submitted by the applicable deadline (see the section above), the PhD Program Director will provide written notice to the student and major professor. The student must submit the completed form or request an extension from the PhD Program Director within 10 business days. Continued failure to submit the required committee form or otherwise satisfy committee-formation requirements after written notice, in the absence of an approved

extension, constitutes unsatisfactory academic progress and may be addressed under the Academic Progress provisions of this handbook.

Once committee members are approved, changes in the major professor or supervisory committee members are expected to be rare and must be enacted according to established policy (see below). Students may not request changes in committee membership during the written/oral preliminary examination process except when a change is necessary because of exceptional circumstances and is approved in accordance with applicable procedures. Students should discuss any concerns that arise about the functioning of the supervisory committee after it is appointed with the Ph.D. Program Director.

Conflict of Interest Policy

A supervisory committee's judgments on the quality of a student's thesis or dissertation should be based solely on the academic merits of the work before them. Any other standard risks a breach of professional ethics or law and undermines the integrity of the process and those involved. Any personal or financial relationships (e.g., involving the major professor, committee members, and/or student) that may create the perception of bias in that process must be avoided. This would not include the typical practice of hiring a student on a university assistantship in the home unit but would include the student being hired by the major professor's private company. If any such conflicts of interest could exist, they should be reported to the administrative head of the student's academic unit, who will evaluate same for potential harm and take appropriate action (Graduate Bulletin).

The following policy concerning conflicts of interest applies to graduate students who are being supervised or evaluated by faculty. The applicability of this policy to graduate students who are serving as teaching assistants is subject to the terminology of the UFF Collective Bargaining Agreement. Sexual relationships between faculty members and students where a direct supervisory or evaluative relationship exists are fraught with the potential for exploitation. The respect and trust accorded a faculty member by a student, as well as the power exercised by the faculty member in a direct supervisory or evaluative role, make voluntary consent by the student suspect. In their relationships with students, faculty members are expected to be aware of their professional responsibilities and to avoid conflict of interest, favoritism, or bias.

1. When any direct supervisory or evaluative role exists, a consensual sexual relationship between a student and a faculty member is a conflict of interest.
2. Any situation of direct supervision or evaluation will be ended immediately when a consensual sexual relationship between a student and a faculty member exists.
3. Any such relationship must be disclosed to the faculty member's supervisor immediately.

Direct supervision includes any type of evaluative role. Examples of direct supervision of the student include teaching the student's class and serving as one of the following: thesis or dissertation director, instructor of record, member of the student's thesis or dissertation committee, member of the student's comprehensive or doctoral exam committee, member of other committees where the focus is evaluation or supervision of the student's academic competence or the student's assistantship.

Changes in Supervisory Committee Membership

With careful consideration and under specifically delineated circumstances, the student may request a change in the supervisory committee membership (including the major professor). Generally, the student should carefully study why they are considering removing faculty members they sought out to be on their committee. The question they must answer is, what events have changed to make them reconsider their original choice of committee members? Committee members should both be reasonably available to the student and be equipped to hold the student to appropriate scientific standards necessary to reach the student's stated dissertation goals. Good reasons for reconsideration are professors' increased work demands leading to unavailability, relocation, personal emergency, or capricious actions that are not in keeping with the letter and the spirit of the provisions of this document. It may also be appropriate to reconfigure a committee if a student has a considerable change in dissertation project that requires different expertise. Unacceptable reasons include lack of progress on the dissertation, committee members' high expectations, or committee members' unwillingness to approve dissertations that are problematic, inconvenient time frames, and conflicts with major professors.

The procedure for pursuing a change in supervisory committee membership is as follows:

Step 1: The student or major professor may initiate a request to change supervisory committee membership. When the request involves a committee member other than the major professor, the student and major professor should discuss the proposed change and the reasons for it. If the requested change involves replacing the major professor, the student should discuss the request directly with the PhD Program Director.

Step 2: The PhD Program Director reviews the stated reason for the proposed change and, when necessary, facilitates discussion among the individuals involved to address concerns or conflicts and determine whether the proposed change should proceed.

Step 3: If the change proceeds, the required committee-change documentation must be completed with the required signatures of the student, major professor, incoming committee member, and PhD Program Director. The approved change will then be processed in accordance with Graduate School procedures.

Note: If the student and major professor do not agree on changes to the supervisory committee membership, the student can bring concerns directly to the PhD Program Director.

Program of Studies

Curricular Outline for B.S.N.-Ph.D. Students:

The curricular outline for students with an earned B.S.N. includes a total of 85 credit hours. The outline of the program is as follows.

Nursing Science

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6115	Philosophical Foundations, Theories, Models and Frameworks of Nursing Science	3
NGR 6663	Special Populations Research /Social Determinants of Health	3
NGR 6806	Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science	3
NGR 6796	The Nurse Leader in Research and Health Policy	3
NGR 7919	Proposal Development	3
		15

Research Methods

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6811	Responsible Conduct of Research	3
NGR 6810	Quantitative Research Methods	3
NGR 6815	Qualitative Research Methods	3
NGR 7816	Mixed Research Methods	3
NGR 7126	Intervention Development and Analysis	3
NGR 7911L	Nursing Research Practicum (Beginning in year 2. A total of 6 practicum hours are required prior to candidacy)	1-3 (6 total)
		21

Statistics

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
EDF 5400	Descriptive/Inferential Statistics Applications	4
EDF 5401	General Linear Models Applications	3
TBD	Statistics Elective	3
TBD	Statistics Elective	3
		13

Electives-Contracted with Advisor to Support Dissertation (9 credits required)

Course Number	Title	Credit Hours
TBD	TBD	3
TBD	TBD	3
TBD	TBD	3
		9

Candidacy and Dissertation

Course Number	Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6960	Preliminary Exam Preparation	2
NGR 7961	Preliminary Exam (Oral and Written components)	1
TBD	Dissertation Preparation	24
TBD	Dissertation Defense	0
		27

Total Program Credits: 85

Curricular Outline for M.S.N./D.N.P.-Ph.D. Students:

The curricular outline for students with an earned M.S.N./D.N.P. includes a total of 76 credit hours. The outline of the program is as follows.

Nursing Science

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6115	Philosophical Foundations, Theories, Models and Frameworks of Nursing Science	3
NGR 6663	Special Populations Research /Social Determinants of Health	3
NGR 6806	Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science	3
NGR 6796	The Nurse Leader in Research and Health Policy	3

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NGR 7919	Proposal Development	3
		15

Research Methods

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6811	Responsible Conduct of Research	3
NGR 6810	Quantitative Research Methods	3
NGR 6815	Qualitative Research Methods	3
NGR 7816	Mixed Research Methods	3
NGR 7126	Intervention Development and Analysis	3
NGR 7911L	Nursing Research Practicum (Beginning in year 2. A total of 6 practicum hours are required prior to candidacy)	1-3 (6 total)
		21

Statistics

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
EDF 5400	Descriptive/Inferential Statistics Applications	4
EDF 5401	General Linear Models Applications	3
TBD	Statistics Elective	3
TBD	Statistics Elective	3
		13

Candidacy and Dissertation

Course Number	Title	Credit Hours
NGR 6960	Preliminary Exam Preparation (Written component)	2
NGR 7961	Preliminary Exam (Oral and Written components)	1
TBD	Dissertation Preparation	24
TBD	Dissertation Defense	0
		27

Total Program Credits: 76

PhD Program Full-Time Course of Study

YEAR-1 FALL

Course
NGR 6115-Philosophical Foundations, Theories, Models and Frameworks of Nursing Science (3 Cr)
NGR 6796-The Nurse Leader in Research and Health Policy (3 Cr)
EDF 5400-Descriptive/Inferential Statistics Applications (4Cr)

YEAR 1 SPRING

Course
NGR 6810-Quantitative Research Methods (3 Cr)
NGR 6811-Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (3 Cr)
NGR 6663-Special Populations Research /Social Determinants of Health (3 Cr)

YEAR 1 SUMMER

Course
NGR 6815-Qualitative Research Methods (3 Cr)
EDF 5401 General Linear Models Applications (3 Cr)
NGR 6806-Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science (3Cr) (Summer Seminar Course)

YEAR-2 FALL

Course
NGR 7816-Mixed Research Methods (3 Cr)
NGR 7919-Proposal Development (Grant Writing)(3Cr)
NGR 7911L -Nursing Research Practicum (3 Cr)

YEAR-2 SPRING

Course
Stats Elective (3 Cr)
NGR 7911L -Nursing Research Practicum (3 Cr)

YEAR 2 SUMMER

Course
Stats Elective (3 Cr)
NGR 6960-Preliminary Exam Preparation (2 Cr) (Summer Seminar Course)

YEAR 3 FALL

Course
NGR-7961-Preliminary Exam (1 Cr)
NGR 7983-Dissertation Preparation (TBD)

YEAR 4 SPRING THROUGH PROGRAM END

Course
NGR 7983-Dissertation Preparation (x credits)

PhD Program Part-Time Course of Study**YEAR-1 FALL**

Course
NGR 6115-Philosophical Foundations, Theories, Models and Frameworks of Nursing Science (3 Cr)
EDF 5400 Descriptive/Inferential Statistics Applications (4Cr)

YEAR-1 SPRING

Course
NGR 6810-Quantitative Research Methods (3 Cr)
NGR 6663-Special Populations Research /Social Determinants of Health (3 Cr)

YEAR-1 SUMMER

Course
NGR 6815-Qualitative Research Methods (3 Cr)
EDF 5401 General Linear Models Applications (3 Cr)

YEAR-2 FALL

Course
NGR 7816-Mixed Research Methods (3 Cr)
NGR 6796-The Nurse Leader in Research and Health Policy (3 Cr)

YEAR-2 SPRING

Course
Stats Elective (3 Cr)
NGR 6811-Ethics and the Responsible Conduct of Research (3 Cr)

YEAR-2 SUMMER

Course
NGR 6806-Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science (3Cr) (Summer Seminar Course)
Stats Elective (3 Cr)

YEAR-3 FALL

Course
NGR 7919-Proposal Development (Grant Writing)(3Cr)
NGR 7911L -Nursing Research Practicum (3 Cr)

YEAR-3 SPRING

Course
NGR 7911L -Nursing Research Practicum (3 Cr)

YEAR-3 SUMMER

Course
NGR 6960-Preliminary Exam Preparation (2 Cr) (Summer Seminar Course)

YEAR 4 FALL

Course
NGR-7961-Preliminary Exam (1 Cr)

YEAR 4 SPRING THROUGH PROGRAM END

Course
NGR 7983-Dissertation Preparation (x credits)

Preliminary Examination and Admission to Candidacy: Following completion of required coursework, students complete the written and oral preliminary examination in accordance with the procedures described in the Preliminary Examination and Examination Procedures section of this handbook. Successful completion of the preliminary examination is required for admission to candidacy.

Course Descriptions**Nursing Science**

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
NGR 6115	Philosophical Foundations, Theories, Models and Frameworks of Nursing Science	This course focuses on the philosophical and theoretical bases underlying concepts and operations inherent to nursing. Synthesis of theories from behavioral, natural, social, and applied sciences is emphasized as it relates to nursing and practice. There is an investigation of the intersections between system science and organizational science. Nursing, ethical, and scientific theories are used to analyze clinical problems, illness prevention, and health promotion.

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
NGR 6663	Special Populations Research /Social Determinants of Health	Students will explore social, psychological, and cultural determinants of health behavior and consider their meaning for health professionals in rural and urban community settings during this course. The course addresses conditions and phenomena that affect people's understanding, acceptance, and use of health information and, therefore, the design, implementation, and evaluation of health interventions.
NGR 6806	Literature Synthesis for Nursing Science	This course integrates the dynamic elements of clinical practice, theory, and research to prepare doctoral students to function effectively synthesizing and applying knowledge. This course provides guided direction to develop a synthesis of the literature used for dissertation development and grant application proposals.
NGR 6796	The Nurse Leader in Research and Health Policy	Focus on principles of leadership, change management, health care policy, and systems theory to improve health care outcomes within complex systems. The role of the nurse scientist in a variety of settings will be included.
NGR 7919	Proposal Development	This course explores the current innovation in nursing research, as well as other significant research and funding trends in nursing and health care. Emphasis is placed on preparing a fundable grant application for dissertation study. A variety of pre-doctoral funding sources are explored. NIH-NINR mechanisms are addressed. Importance is also placed on developing a fundable program of research and understanding ethical issues related to research.

Research Methods

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
NGR 6811	Responsible Conduct of Research	Topics covered through the course include good practices and dilemmas/issues of data fabrication, data falsification, and plagiarism, confidentiality and data protection, responsible authorship, publication and mentorship practices, conflicts of interest, data management, and the use of human and animal subjects in research.
NGR 6810	Quantitative Research Methods	Provides an overview of quantitative methods that researchers widely use. Students will have an opportunity to understand and apply sophisticated statistical techniques to formulate and test relevant research hypotheses; conduct rigorous data analysis; interpret results; report and present research findings; and evaluate existing quantitative research.
NGR 6815	Qualitative Research Methods	The purpose of this course is to introduce doctoral students to the field of qualitative research and prepare them in the skills, techniques, and knowledge necessary to undertake independent research using this methodology.

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
NGR 7126	Intervention Development and Analysis	This course builds on the content and skills related to critical inquiry, theories, and research design, methodology, and dissemination. This course will focus on in-depth exploration and critical analysis of current intervention research, including conceptual and methodological issues. In addition, this course will focus on designing research to evaluate the outcomes of nursing interventions targeting the promotion, protection, or restoration of health in individuals or community groups.
NGR 7816	Mixed Research Methods	This course is designed to introduce the benefits, and limitations, of mixed methods research and includes appropriate research problems for the application of a mixed methods approaches to research, designs for data collection, and integration within the broader field of basic and applied social science research.
NGR 7822	Measurement and Instrument Development	Selecting, developing and using valid and reliable measures are integral components of sound research and evaluation. This course will present theory and methods to develop and validate measurement instruments used in nursing research and evaluation
NGR 7911L	Nursing Research Practicum (Beginning in year 2. A total of 6 practicum hours are required prior to candidacy)	The research practicum integrates the student into the research team in the faculty mentor's lab. The primary purpose is to build skills in engaging in the research team to broaden the individual student's skill set.

Statistics Courses

The statistics courses for the program will be offered by the FSU College of Education as a component of their online EdD program. Other statistics courses can be added to the plan of study consistent with the demands of the selected area of inquiry.

Course Number	Course Title	Course Description
EDF 5400	Descriptive/Inferential Statistics Applications	This course prepares students to read and write papers covering fundamental statistical analyses. Topics covered include descriptive statistics, basic plots and graphing, hypothesis testing, confidence intervals, correlational techniques, and introduction to the general linear model.
EDF 5401	General Linear Models Applications	In this course, general linear model applications including multiple regression, ANOVA, ANCOVA, aptitude-treatment-interaction analysis, and other techniques are introduced.
EDF 5402	Advanced Topics in ANOVA	This course explores multiway ANOVA, covariance, repeated measures designs, nested designs, and generalizability theory.
EDF 5406	Multivariate Analysis	This course examines the design and analysis of research studies with multiple independent and dependent variables, including path analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and exploratory factor analysis.

Candidacy and Dissertation

Course Number	Title	Course Description
NGR 6960	Preliminary Exam Preparation	Preparation includes literature review, reading and writing exercises in preparation for the preliminary examination, supervised by the major professor.
TBD	Preliminary Exam (Oral component)	The oral examination component of the preliminary exam; will follow the required written component.
TBD	Dissertation Preparation	Dissertation preparation is focused on the development, execution, evaluation, and write up of student's dissertation project.
TBD	Dissertation Defense	The oral presentation and defense of student's written manuscript.

Program of Studies Approval

Each Ph.D. student follows a program of study that includes the required courses and is developed to meet the student's particular needs and interests. The program of study is developed with the advice and approval of the educational advisor or major professor and the Ph.D. Program Director. The Program of Studies provides the basis for each student's annual review and charts the projected path for the student through completion of all degree requirements. The Program of Studies becomes a provisional agreement between the student and the College of Nursing regarding minimum requirements that the student must complete in order to take the preliminary examination. The Program of Studies, along with all other pertinent materials, is included in the student's academic annual review.

Research/Teaching Assistantships

As a condition for receiving a stipend and tuition waiver from the College of Nursing, selected full-time students will work with a faculty member for 10 hours per week (.25 FTE) in their first and second years in the program as teaching or research assistants. Before the first semester begins, students will be asked to provide a brief statement of their clinical, research, and teaching experience and interests; faculty will be asked to provide a brief statement describing their current research and need for assistance. In consultation with faculty, the Ph.D. Program Director will match each student with a faculty member. Most students remain with their assigned faculty for the duration of their assistantships. Requests for change are honored when possible. The availability of funding will determine the number of assistantships available to Ph.D. students.

At the beginning of each appointment period, the faculty supervisor will provide the student with a written assignment description that includes, as applicable, the student's duties and responsibilities, expected hours, deliverables, work schedule, and timeline. The faculty supervisor will review the assignment description with the student, and both will acknowledge it in writing. The assignment description supplements but does not replace or modify the official appointment letter or applicable University and collective bargaining requirements.

In addition, we require all teaching assistants to attend FSU's Program for Instructional Excellence (PIE) training, which is provided immediately prior to the beginning of the fall semester. Teaching Assistant – Instructors are also strongly encouraged to attend university-wide training opportunities offered throughout the year. Assistantships are assigned on an annual basis. Thus, students are expected to work 10 hours per week in their assistantships throughout the calendar year. There are two exceptions. Students are not expected to work during the university-wide winter break (between the Christmas and New Year holidays) and during spring break. Research assistantship assignments begin on the first day of fall semester classes for incoming students and run continuously throughout the first and second years of students' programs. Research assistantship assignments end on the last day of the summer semester, at the end of the student's second year. Teaching

assistantship assignments for rising third-year students begin on the first day of the fall contract, which is two weeks before classes start. Teaching assistantship assignments end on the last day of the summer semester.

Academic Annual Review

The Ph.D. Program recognizes the importance of providing structured opportunities for students to receive feedback regarding their academic progress through the program. The Academic Annual Review is a collaborative process in which students and their educational advisors or major professors discuss the student's academic status in the program and potential for successful completion of the Ph.D.

Academic Annual Review Procedure

1. In the spring semester of each academic year, the Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist will send a request to all doctoral faculty members to provide a brief evaluation of doctoral students' academic performance with whom they have had contact since the last evaluation period. Faculty members may have taught a student in class, supervised a teaching assistant or research assistant, served on a student's dissertation committee, etc. The Sr. Academic Program Specialist will assemble the results and provide them to each student's Major Professor or Educational Advisor (if a Major Professor has not been appointed yet) for review and inclusion in the student's file.
2. Students will receive an annual review evaluation form that is specific to their Program of Studies. Students must complete their portion of the written annual evaluation form, including a statement that summarizes their progress toward fulfilling their program requirements, as well as major accomplishments. After that, students should schedule an appointment to meet with their major professor (or educational advisor, if major professor has not been approved yet) to complete the evaluation by the due date.
3. The major professor (or educational advisor if the major professor has not been appointed yet) and student discuss the student's academic progress and together develop goals for the upcoming academic year. The major professor/educational advisor then adds the annual evaluation forms to the student file and forwards a recommendation to the Sr. Academic Program Specialist, who coordinates a review with the PhD Committee.
4. The PhD Committee reviews each student's overall academic performance during the preceding year. If the committee is in unanimous agreement during discussion, the student will be retained in good standing, retained with an academic improvement plan, placed on probation when applicable under University or program policy, or recommended for dismissal in accordance with applicable College and University procedures. Academic improvement plans and procedures for addressing more serious academic or programmatic deficiencies are described in the "Academic Progress" section below. If the PhD Committee does not reach unanimous agreement, each member will recommend retention, probation, or dismissal on a written, private ballot, including a brief description of reasons for the vote. If the vote does not result in a majority opinion, the student will be placed on one-year probation, and the major professor/educational advisor and the PhD Committee will re-evaluate the student's progress after that year. During the probation period, the major professor/educational advisor will meet regularly with the student and implement remedial interventions, as necessary. The PhD Program Director will send annual review letters to all students and inform the Dean of all actions of the PhD Committee. NOTE: The PhD Committee review meeting typically occurs during the last month of the academic year. Because final grades for the spring semester have not been determined yet, it may be necessary to modify the PhD Committee decisions once final grades become available. If this is necessary, the PhD Program Director will coordinate any necessary modifications with the PhD Committee members.
5. The Sr. Academic Program Specialist will notify the Graduate School (through GST) of the Annual Review outcomes.

Academic Progress, Professional Conduct and Misconduct

PhD students are expected to meet the academic requirements of the program and comply with all applicable Florida State University and College of Nursing policies, including the FSU Academic Honor Policy, the FSU

Student Conduct Code, and College of Nursing Policy S-16, Required Professional Behaviors. Accordingly, concerns will be addressed under the policy and procedure applicable to the nature of the concern.

Academic Progress

Concerns involving grades, completion of required coursework, examinations, scholarly milestones, annual progress, or other academic program requirements will be addressed under applicable PhD Program and Graduate School policies governing academic progress and standing. The PhD Program Committee may review a student's documented academic progress and recommend retention, an academic improvement plan, probation when applicable, or dismissal in accordance with applicable University and College policies. An academic improvement plan may be used to address identified concerns before they rise to the level of formal academic or programmatic jeopardy. When a student is determined to be in academic or programmatic jeopardy for reasons other than GPA, the formal remediation and dismissal procedures required by applicable University and College policies will apply. When an academic improvement or formal remediation plan is required, the student will receive written notice of identified deficiencies, required corrective actions, applicable timelines, and the consequences of failing to demonstrate satisfactory improvement.

The PhD Program Committee does not independently investigate or adjudicate alleged violations of the FSU Student Conduct Code, the Academic Honor Policy, or College professional-behavior policies.

Professional Behavior

Students must comply with College of Nursing Policy S-16, Required Professional Behaviors, and all other applicable professional, ethical, research, teaching, and practice standards.

When a faculty member observes, or receives credible information about conduct that may violate professional-behavior standards, the faculty member should document the observed or reported concern and promptly report it to the PhD Program Director. The referring faculty member may be the student's major professor, course instructor, research supervisor, assistantship supervisor, or another faculty member with relevant knowledge of the concern.

The referring faculty member and the PhD Program Director will consult with the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs to determine the applicable policy and appropriate next steps. If the concern involves the PhD Program Director or presents another potential conflict of interest, the matter should be reported directly to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs.

Referral of a professional-behavior concern does not require prior review or a vote by the PhD Program Committee. The Committee may subsequently consider academic implications of findings made through the applicable process when doing so falls within its authority, but it will not investigate or adjudicate alleged violations of College professional-behavior policies or the FSU Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature and seriousness of the concern, the response may include informal guidance, a written notice of concern and remediation plan, action under College of Nursing Policy S-14, referral under the FSU Student Conduct Code, or another applicable College or University process.

When appropriate, the student may receive a written notice of concern and remediation plan describing:

1. the behavior or performance requiring improvement;
2. the applicable professional or College expectation;
3. the actions required to address the concern;
4. the evidence that will demonstrate satisfactory improvement;
5. the timeline for completion; and
6. the potential consequences of failure to improve.

A written notice of concern or remediation plan is a program-level educational or remedial measure and does not, by itself, constitute a disciplinary outcome under the FSU Student Conduct Code.

A pattern of unsafe or unethical conduct, failure to complete required remediation, or a single sufficiently serious incident may be addressed under College of Nursing Policy S-14, Dismissal of Students from the

Nursing Major for Reasons Other than Poor Grades. The authority, notice, review, and appeal procedures stated in the current version of Policy S-14 will govern.

Concerns limited to a student's graduate assistant employment performance, including completion of assigned work, responsiveness to supervision, workload, or employment deliverables, will ordinarily be handled under the student's appointment letter, written employment evaluation, applicable collective bargaining agreement, and applicable Human Resources and Graduate School procedures. Such concerns will not be treated as academic probation or professional misconduct solely because the student is also enrolled in the PhD Program. Separate action under academic or professional-behavior policies may be appropriate when the same conduct independently implicates an academic requirement, ethical standard, professional expectation, or University policy.

University Misconduct

Behavior that may constitute a violation of FSU Regulation 3.004, Student Conduct Code, will be referred to Student Conduct and Community Standards or another appropriate University office. The College and PhD Program Committee will not substitute their own procedures for the University conduct process.

The College may separately address academic or professional implications of the same behavior when authorized by applicable College or University policy. When parallel processes may apply, the PhD Program Director and the Assistant Dean for Graduate Programs will consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the appropriate University office to coordinate the processes and avoid inconsistent findings or procedures.

Academic Integrity

Allegations of academic dishonesty will be addressed under the current FSU Academic Honor Policy. Students must comply with the FSU Academic Honor Policy and with written artificial-intelligence requirements established for each course, examination, research activity, dissertation milestone, or other academic assignment. Because permitted uses may differ across activities, students are responsible for reviewing the applicable instructions and seeking clarification before using an artificial-intelligence tool. The PhD Program Committee may subsequently consider the implications of a final academic-integrity determination for the student's academic progress, consistent with applicable University and College policies.

Controlling Policies

The current versions of applicable Florida State University and College of Nursing regulations and policies control in case of inconsistency between those policies and this handbook.

Suspension, Dismissal, and Reinstatement (Graduate Bulletin)

The University reserves the right to exclude at any time a student whose conduct is deemed improper or prejudicial to the interest of the University community or whose academic performance is substandard. A graduate student whose cumulative grade point average for courses taken at Florida State University falls below 3.0 at the end of a term (not counting courses for which "S" or "U" grades may be given) will be considered not in good standing by the University and will be placed on academic probation. If a 3.0 cumulative grade point average is not attained by the end of the next full semester of enrollment, the student will not be permitted to register for graduate study, including registering as a special student.

However, at the time of dismissal the major professor may petition the academic dean and the Dean of the Graduate School for consideration of special circumstances which the professor thinks constitute justification for an exception to this regulation, but under no circumstances will a student be allowed more than one additional semester of probation. Owing to the differential uses of the designation, "academic probation" shall not appear on permanent records of regular graduate students. After one probationary period, however, a student whose average falls within the probationary range will receive automatic dismissal.

Time Limit for Completion of Degree Requirements.

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five calendar years from the time the student passes the written and oral portions of the preliminary examination, or the student's supervisory committee will require that a new preliminary examination be passed (Graduate Bulletin). In the College of

Nursing, students renewing their doctoral candidacy by retaking their preliminary exams after the five-year period for completion of a dissertation has expired may do so a maximum of one time. After passing all components of the preliminary examination a second time, students who have not successfully defended a dissertation within five years will be dismissed from the program.

Preliminary Examination.

Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree. The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student's subsequent formal or informal study (Graduate Bulletin).

The preliminary examination consists of two components: a written examination and an oral examination/defense. The purpose of these components is to test students' independent ability to integrate what they have learned in their coursework and to determine whether they are prepared to progress toward the independent scholarship required for a dissertation. The written and oral components follow a standardized framework established by the PhD Program Committee that identifies the general content areas, expectations, and evaluation criteria for the examination. Within this framework, the student's supervisory committee develops examination questions appropriate to the student's substantive area and evaluates the student's performance. Details about each component are described in the following section.

Typically, the examining committee will be identical with the supervisory committee. The examining committee must meet the requirements described in the "Supervisory Committee" section of this handbook. Students must have the signed approval from all members of the examining committee prior to beginning the written and oral components of the exam process. Before students begin the written or oral section of their preliminary exam, they must have all of their committee members sign the Committee Form, and it must be approved by the Ph.D. Program Director.

Examination Procedures

Ideally, the student will take the preliminary examination at the end of their coursework. Students must complete all required prior coursework with a grade point average of at least 3.0 before taking the preliminary examination. The course NGR 6960: Preliminary Examination Preparation will be offered during the summer preceding the preliminary examination. The course will cover the process and will include students using the program preliminary examination materials to write a truncated version of an examination. They will then answer the examination they wrote and do a brief oral defense with the faculty member to prepare them for the rigor of the actual examination. Additionally, students must have an approved supervisory committee before negotiating the actual examination. The committee form, once complete, will be entered into the Graduate Student Tracking System prior to the exam by the PhD Program Director or the Graduate Program Manager.

The preliminary examination is NGR 7961: Preliminary Exam Written and Oral Components, a 1-credit hour course delivered online. Serving as a critical milestone in the PhD program, this course is designed to evaluate a candidate's mastery of nursing science, research methodologies, and their capacity to synthesize and apply knowledge within their specific area of specialization. The course includes the written examination and oral defense described below.

The written component of the course focuses heavily on scholarly evaluation, research design, and formal writing skills. Upon completing this portion, candidates are expected to synthesize theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence, design a rigorous research proposal addressing a significant gap in nursing science, and conduct a comprehensive literature review. Additionally, students must establish a clear theoretical or conceptual framework tailored to their research questions and produce a well-organized, professionally written document adhering to academic standards.

The written examination must integrate relevant learning from the student's completed coursework within the context of the student's substantive area. The examination must include theoretical conceptualization and research methodology, including, as applicable, research design, sampling, measurement, and data analysis, and must be sufficient to assess the student's competency in the required content areas.

The written component should be completed solely by the individual student. This means that the student may not gain assistance from the supervisory committee, any faculty member, or any other person while completing the written examination. Committee members, including the major professor, may not review examination documents or provide verbal or written feedback before the committee has evaluated the written component and determined whether the student has passed or failed. Students may use scholarly literature, course materials, and other sources permitted by the examination instructions, but the analysis, synthesis, and written response must be the student's own work. If the student passes the written component, the major professor may provide assistance with planning and formatting the oral defense presentation.

Students must follow all written artificial intelligence requirements established for the preliminary examination. Simply put, the thoughts contained in the examination should be those of the student undergoing examination. Any permitted use of digital platforms for editorial assistance must be consistent with the written examination instructions and the FSU Academic Honor Policy.

The oral component emphasizes the candidate's ability to communicate, justify, and defend their work before an examination committee. The oral examination builds on the written examination but is not limited to a presentation or restatement of the written response. It provides the examining committee an opportunity to seek clarification, probe the student's reasoning and depth of understanding, and ask related questions within the substantive, theoretical, and methodological areas addressed by the examination. Key objectives include explaining and defending the written examination and the research proposal developed within it, including its significance, feasibility, and methodological rigor. Students are evaluated on their ability to articulate the rationale behind their chosen theoretical models and analytical approaches, engage in scholarly dialogue by responding confidently to critical feedback and questions, and showcase a seamless integration of nursing science with related disciplines.

All required members of the examining committee and the student must participate in the entire oral examination in real time, either in person or through approved distance technology. If exceptional emergency circumstances prevent a required committee member from participating, the major professor should work with the PhD Program Director to identify an appropriately qualified replacement consistent with applicable University and College requirements before proceeding with the examination.

The written examination will be developed by the PhD supervisory committee within the standardized framework, content areas, and expectations established by the PhD Program Committee and reflected in the Preliminary Examination materials and grading rubric. The supervisory committee develops questions appropriate to the student's substantive area within these established domains. The written examination should be approved by all members of the committee. All members of the examining committee must participate in the development and evaluation of both the written and oral components of the examination.

The following forms and materials will guide this process (completed required forms will be retained in the student's program record):

1. The PhD Contract. A shell for the contract is contained in Attachment 1. The student and participating supervisory committee members must acknowledge the agreed examination plan before the examination begins.
2. The PhD Preliminary Examination outline. A shell for this is contained in Attachment 2.
3. The Preliminary Examination grading rubric is contained in Attachment 3.

The supervisory committee collaborates with the student to establish the examination format within the program-approved framework and the examination timeline in the PhD Contract. The Contract may not be completed until the student's supervisory committee has been officially approved. There is no program-wide specified page minimum or maximum for the written examination; however, the examination must be sufficient to assess competency in the required content areas.

The student will have a maximum of 12 weeks to write the examination and will forward the completed examination to the chairperson of the supervisory committee at that time. Full-time students are required to complete the written preliminary examination by the end of the spring semester of their third year. Part-time

students are required to complete the written preliminary examination by the end of the fall semester of their fourth year. An alternative timeline may be approved by the PhD Program Director in accordance with program requirements.

The chairperson of the committee will distribute the written examination to the committee members for evaluation. Possible grades for each component of the preliminary examination are “Pass” and “Fail.” Committee members must vote unanimously to pass the student on each component of the examination.

The student may proceed to the oral defense only after all committee members have voted Pass on the written component. If the committee does not unanimously vote Pass on the written examination, this constitutes the student’s first failure of the written component, and the oral defense will not proceed. Students who proceed to the oral defense must receive a unanimous vote of Pass from all committee members to earn a passing score on the oral component.

A student who receives a Fail on either the written or oral component is permitted one re-examination total across both components of the preliminary examination. Following a first failure, the examining committee will provide the student with feedback and determine: (1) the areas in which the student must be re-examined; (2) whether remedial coursework or other preparation is needed before re-examination; and (3) the nature and timing of the re-examination. A student who passes a re-examination of the written component may then proceed to the oral component. No additional re-examination is permitted after the student has used the single re-examination opportunity. Accordingly, a student who fails the permitted re-examination, or who subsequently fails the other component after passing the re-examination, will be dismissed from the PhD program in accordance with applicable College and University policies.

Using the Preliminary Examination Results form, the examining committee will report the outcome of the examination (Pass or Fail) to the PhD Program Director. The student and all supervisory committee members participating in the examination must sign the form. If a student is re-examined, a second Preliminary Examination Results form will be completed and submitted to the PhD Program Director following the re-examination. Following successful completion of both components of the preliminary examination, the results will be processed as required for admission to candidacy and inclusion in the student’s University record.

Admission to Candidacy

A student who has passed the preliminary examination defense and has been certified to the Office of the University Registrar (on an Admission to Candidacy Form) is considered a candidate for the Ph.D. degree and is eligible to register for dissertation credits

Admission to Candidacy form: This form is required by the FSU Office of the Registrar as a part of becoming a doctoral candidate. The student should complete the form and submit it to the Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist, for approval of the PhD Program Director and submission to the Office of the Registrar. This form can be found on the Registrar’s page in the forms section. A copy is also available at the FSU CON Ph.D. Program Canvas site.

A student must be admitted to candidacy at least six months prior to the granting of the degree. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure a minimal lapse of time for effective work on the dissertation after acquisition of the basic competence and after delineation of the problem and method of attack. More realistically, the student should expect to spend a year or more of work on the dissertation (Graduate Bulletin).

Prospectus

After passing all components of the preliminary examination, the student is required to submit to the major professor, supervisory committee, and PhD Program Director a prospectus on a research project suitable for a doctoral dissertation (Graduate Bulletin).

The dissertation prospectus is the first major step in writing a dissertation. Students prepare the prospectus under the guidance of their major professor and with the assistance of committee members, as appropriate. Students shall not proceed with the formal development of a prospectus until after the successful completion of all components of the preliminary examination.

The Prospectus defines the scope of students' research, presents the details of the research design, implementation plans, and data analysis strategies, describes plans for presenting the implications of the findings, and suggests the timeline by which the work will be accomplished. The approved Prospectus may be viewed as a contract between the student and the supervisory committee. The final draft of a Prospectus commonly is reviewed by the major professor and then submitted to the other members of the supervisory committee and the Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist at least three weeks prior to scheduling the defense. The student will notify the Sr. Academic Program Specialist of the defense date as soon as the defense has been scheduled.

This defense is an open discussion of the student's ideas with their supervisory committee to gain final approval of the dissertation prospectus. Students must be enrolled for the minimum required hours during the semester of their prospectus defense.

All committee members and the student must attend the entire prospectus defense in real time, either by being physically present or by participating via distance technology. Individual departments may impose stricter requirements on physical attendance, e.g., all members must be physically present. Departments and other degree-granting programs must publicize their policy on defense attendance in their Graduate Student Handbook and in the relevant section of the Graduate Bulletin. If exceptional emergency circumstances, e.g., medical or other emergency situations prevent the participation of a committee member, then it may be necessary to arrange for an additional appropriately qualified colleague to attend the defense. A minimum of four members with Graduate Faculty Status must participate (Graduate Bulletin). If an emergency prohibits a committee member from attending the defense, the major professor should work with the PhD Program Director to find a suitable replacement.

A grade of PASS requires a unanimous vote by the oral examining committee. All members of the supervisory committee will sign the Prospectus Approval Signature Page when they agree it is an acceptable proposal for a doctoral dissertation and all modifications and corrections have been completed. Thereafter, any major changes in this prospectus will require the approval of every member of the supervisory committee. The major professor decides what constitutes a major change.

Following successful defense of the prospectus, the student must submit the "Prospectus Approval Signature Page" to the Sr. Academic Program Specialist, which has been signed by the supervisory committee, the Ph.D. Program Director, and the Dean, to be kept in the student's file.

Students should also keep an original copy for themselves,

Important note: after approval of the Prospectus, students must submit applications and receive approval from the University's Institutional Review Board ([Office for Human Subjects Protection](#)) before beginning to collect any data for the dissertation project. The student's name must appear on the approval form and/or applications as a PI or co-PI for the period of time during which the student's research was conducted. Failure to obtain the required approvals may result in the dissertation being permanently embargoed and not publishable in any form. Copies of this approval must be submitted to the student's major professor and Sr. Academic Program Specialist for inclusion with the prospectus in the student's file.

Review and Modification of the Preliminary Examination and Candidacy Procedures

The PhD Program Committee will review the preliminary examination and candidacy process periodically and may revise procedures based on that review. Students will receive written notice of approved changes as soon as practicable and before the changes take effect. Procedural changes may apply to currently enrolled students when appropriate, provided that they are implemented reasonably and do not materially disadvantage students who have already begun the applicable process. Any changes to substantive academic requirements will be implemented in accordance with applicable College and University policies.

Dissertation

A doctoral dissertation must be completed on some topic connected with the major field of study. To be acceptable, it must be an achievement in original research constituting a significant contribution to knowledge and represent a substantial scholarly effort on the part of the student (Graduate Bulletin). This includes a primary data collection requirement unless this is satisfied through other means (e.g., GRAsip) and approved by the dissertation committee and director of the PhD program by completing Live Data Collection and Research Support Activities Documentation form that should be signed by the Supervisory Committee Chair and PhD Program Director. In the College of Nursing, students choose their dissertation topic with the advice and approval of the major professor and members of the supervisory committee. All dissertations are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge relevant to nursing. Within these broad parameters, the candidate's personal interest, resources, and skills determine the choice of topic. Students must follow all written artificial-intelligence requirements established for dissertation research and writing, and for related scholarly products.

A dissertation is a major scholarly work. It includes critical reviews of the theoretical and conceptual literature, a conceptual model and its operationalization, a critical review of the research in the substantive area of interest, a completed and original research project, a report of the findings, and a description of the implications for nursing and the substantive area of interest. It is to be formatted according to the most recent guidelines for APA style, with exceptions only as required for electronic submission. NOTE also that approval from the FSU IRB must be received prior to engaging in dissertation-related data collection activities, as indicated previously in this manual.

Students should become familiar with the university's manuscript formatting and clearance requirements before writing their dissertation. Formatting and clearance guidelines for the final electronic submission copy may be accessed on The Graduate School's website. Templates for Microsoft Word and LaTeX, an annotated sample manuscript illustrating formatting criteria, and a PowerPoint about the manuscript clearance process are also available. Manuscript clearance workshops are also held during each semester. The Graduate School, along with the Sr. Academic Program Specialist, will announce the dates of these workshops.

Dissertation Credit Hours and Registration for Final Term

Students who have completed their required coursework, passed all components of the CON preliminary examination and submitted an Admission to Candidacy form to the Office of the Registrar are eligible to register for dissertation credit hours. The minimum number of dissertation credit hours for completion of a doctoral degree is twenty-four (24) semester hours (Graduate Bulletin). The number of dissertation credit hours for which a student registers each semester should be commensurate with the amount of faculty time and university resources utilized, but it should not be for fewer than three credit hours per semester, except as indicated in the next section.

During the semester in which students anticipate defense of their dissertation, those with underload permission can take a minimum of two (2) hours of dissertation credit. Underloads must be approved by the Ph.D. program director (see the "Minimum Credit Hours and Underload" section under "Academic Standards" for more information). Note that final approval of the dissertation by the entire supervisory committee is a prerequisite to the awarding of the degree. This is true no matter how many hours a student has completed in dissertation credit or what grades have been recorded for the dissertation hours (Graduate Bulletin). Note also that Ph.D. students must register in the final term in which a degree requiring a thesis, dissertation, or treatise is granted, in accordance with the policies stated in the 'Thesis' and 'Dissertation' sections of the FSU Graduate Bulletin.

Submission deadlines for each semester are posted in the Manuscript Clearance submenu of the Graduate School website; students not meeting those deadlines will be considered graduates of the following semester. The deadlines are as follows:

- Pre-Defense Format Review: Deadline by which students must submit their manuscript to the manuscript clearance adviser for an initial formatting review. Manuscripts will not

be reviewed and counted as an initial submission under the following conditions: not submitted via the ETD Web site; poorly formatted based on Graduate School guidelines, or otherwise appears "sloppy"; sections omitted; page numbers omitted.

- Post-Defense Format Review and all manuscript clearance forms received deadline: By this date, students must submit the final version of their manuscript, and all manuscript clearance forms must be submitted to the Manuscript Clearance Portal. Assuming all manuscript deadlines (initial, final, and forms deadlines) are met, this is the last day a student could possibly defend; otherwise the student will be considered for graduation in the following semester.
- 60-day deadline: All manuscripts must be cleared within 60 days of the defense. In cases when a student defends early in the semester of graduation, or after the final submission deadline of the previous semester, the manuscript clearance deadline that applies is the 60-day deadline. For example, a student that defends on August 27 would have to have her/his manuscript cleared by October 27, even though the fall semester deadline for submitting a manuscript is later in the semester.

Examination in Defense of Dissertation

The defense of the dissertation will be oral. Responsibility for suggesting the time, designating the place, and presiding at the examination rests with the major professor. Students must defend by no later than the Format Approval Deadline in the semester of intent to graduate. It is recommended that students defend no later than the eighth week of the semester in which the student intends to graduate. Consult the Graduate School Canvas site GradSpace for more information (Graduate Bulletin).

Dissertations are expected to reflect original work. The review of academic integrity should be completed prior to the defense. Faculty may choose to use appropriate plagiarism checkers and peer review tools with early drafts of these manuscripts as an instructional aid in advising students on matters relating to plagiarism. The signatures of all committee members appearing on the Manuscript Signature Approval Form constitute testimony from the committee that they are satisfied that the dissertation meets FSU's standards of academic integrity as described in the FSU Academic Honor Code and appropriate steps have been taken to assure that this is the case (Graduate Bulletin).

A supervisory committee's judgments on the quality of a student's thesis or dissertation should be based solely on the academic merits of the work before them. Any other standard risks a breach of professional ethics or law and undermines the integrity of the process and those involved. Any personal or financial relationships (e.g., involving the major professor, committee members, and/or student) that may create the perception of bias in that process must be avoided. This would not include the typical practice of hiring a student on a university assistantship in the home unit but would include the student being hired by the major professor's private company. If any such conflicts of interest could exist, they should be reported to the administrative head of the student's academic unit, who will evaluate same for potential harm and take appropriate action. Please see the "Supervisory Committee" section for a more detailed explanation of the University's conflict of interest policy (page 18).

Academic courtesy requires that a preliminary draft of the dissertation be submitted to each member of the supervisory committee at least FOUR weeks before the date of the oral examination. At the same time, the dissertation should be submitted electronically to the university manuscript clearance adviser in the Graduate School so that the clearance adviser can provide the student with a critique of the manuscript with respect to the Graduate School's formatting requirements. The supervisory committee, the chair of the major department, and other members of the faculty as may be appointed by the academic dean will conduct the examination. All members of the graduate faculty are invited to attend (Graduate Bulletin).

At least two weeks prior to the date of the examination, the student or major professor will present an announcement of the dissertation title and the date and place of the examination to the Dean of the Graduate School and notify the Doctoral Program Office. Failure to follow either of these steps is likely to result in delaying the student's graduation in the current semester as well as additional tuition costs. Consult the Registration Guide for the deadline dates (Graduate Bulletin). A link to this electronic form is available on the Ph.D. Program Canvas website.

In the College of Nursing, the examining committee determines the date by which the final dissertation manuscript is to be submitted to committee members. A final copy of the dissertation manuscript must be submitted electronically through the ProQuest ETD Administrator website at least one week (and preferably two weeks) before the dissertation defense, so interested graduate faculty have access to it. The manuscript submission process can be found at [FSU Graduate School webpage](#). Normally, major changes in a manuscript made 1-2 weeks prior to a defense require that the defense meeting be rescheduled to a time that is agreeable to all committee members.

In the College of Nursing, the dissertation defense is considered a formal academic occasion. The examining committee determines the format of the defense. Students must bring three copies of the Manuscript Signature Form and a black ink pen for committee members' signatures or create an electronic form for signatures via FSU DocuSign platform. The student should also ensure that his or her University Representative has an electronic copy of the University Representative Doctoral Defense Report.

All committee members and the student must attend the entire defense in real time, either by being present or by participating via distance technology. Individual departments may impose stricter requirements on physical attendance, e.g., all members must be physically present.

Departments and other degree-granting programs must publicize their policy on defense attendance in their Graduate Student Handbook and in the relevant section of the Graduate Bulletin. If exceptional emergency circumstances, e.g., medical or other emergency situations prevent the participation of a committee member, then it may be necessary to arrange for an additional appropriately qualified colleague to attend the defense. A minimum of four members with Graduate Faculty Status must participate (Graduate Bulletin). If an emergency prohibits a committee member from attending the defense, the major professor should work with the Ph.D. Program Director to find a suitable replacement.

The oral examining committee will certify in writing to the Ph.D. Program Director and Academic Dean of the major department the results of the examination: passed, failed, or to be reexamined. The report of results following a reexamination must indicate whether the student passed or failed. To receive a passing grade, the written dissertation must be in final form or require only minor revisions at the time of the defense. A grade of PASS requires a unanimous vote by the oral examining committee. If the student passes, each member must sign all three copies of the Manuscript Signature Form (or the electronic version of the form) to substantiate the results of the defense. It is the responsibility of the major professor to submit this completed form (two original paper copies or the electronic version) to the Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist, who will ensure that the form is delivered to the university manuscript clearance advisor.

A written critique of conduct of the examination in defense of the dissertation should be submitted by the university representative from the graduate faculty to the Ph.D. Program Director, Academic Dean, and the Dean of the Graduate School within one week after the date of defense. The University Representative Report is available on the Graduate School's blackboard page for faculty and staff.

In the College of Nursing, under no circumstances shall the major professor sign the Final Degree Clearance Form before all corrections and modifications are completed. After the defense and changes to the dissertation (if any) have been made, the doctoral candidate submits one copy of the dissertation to the Ph.D. Program Director and Dean for review and approval. The major professor's signature on the "Final Clearance Form" represents the last step in the approval process in the College of Nursing.

After approval by the oral examining committee, the student should submit the final manuscript electronically to the manuscript clearance advisor. A manuscript processing fee is charged (Graduate Bulletin). A student's manuscript must be cleared in order to graduate. A manuscript is considered cleared if the manuscript clearance adviser has approved the formatting of the manuscript AND all forms have been received and verified by the manuscript clearance adviser.

Important Note: Students must submit their final manuscript and all forms by the Final Manuscript Submission and Forms Deadline. Students must also have their manuscript cleared* within 60 days of a successful defense,

or the student must be re-examined. In some cases, the 60-day deadline may occur before the semester deadlines; in those cases, the 60-day deadline takes precedence over the semester deadlines.

*A Cleared manuscript is one that has formatting approved by the Manuscript Clearance Adviser AND all forms received by the Manuscript Clearance Adviser.

Fees

Students are responsible for paying all fees as required by the Office of Graduate Studies. If the student wishes University Microfilms International, Inc. to register the copyright, an additional fee must be paid.

Publication of the Dissertation

As a condition of undertaking a dissertation program, the student agrees that the completed dissertation will be archived in the University Libraries system. The student will make the electronic dissertation available for review by other scholars and the public by selecting an access condition provided by the Office of Graduate Studies. For answers to questions regarding publication of his or her dissertation, students should contact their Manuscript Clearance Advisor at the Graduate School.

Guidelines for Restrictions on the Release of Theses and Dissertations

The free and open dissemination of the results of research conducted at Florida State University is required if the University is to contribute effectively to the education of its students and to the body of human knowledge. Conflicts can develop among the interests of research sponsors, research directors, and students conducting the research. To ensure that the interests of all parties are protected, the following guidelines should be observed. An Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) must be made available in its complete and original format. It cannot be subdivided into chapters and disseminated under different distribution options.

Worldwide Distribution. This option makes the ETD freely available worldwide via the FSU ETD Digital Library. Some publishers may see a conflict with this level of distribution prior to publication.

Embargoed Access (24 Months). Recommended to students who have a patent application in process or who want to restrict access to the ETD for a limited amount of time in order to pursue commercial interests or other publications. After the restricted time period, the document will be made freely available through worldwide distribution (option above).

The maximum delay in the release of a thesis, treatise, or dissertation to the university libraries and ProQuest Information and Learning (UMI/PQIL) shall not exceed twenty-four (24) months from the date the thesis, treatise, or dissertation is approved by the FSU Office of Graduate Studies. In special circumstances, the Dean of the Graduate School may grant an additional delay of twenty-four (24) months upon request if the case is made that the delay is in the best interests of all parties or if publication or commercial interest in the document is still ongoing. Such a request must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration of the original period of delay. It should be recognized that adherence to this policy does not constitute a guarantee that information in the sequestered thesis or dissertation will not be disseminated by means other than the written thesis or dissertation. Information about particular access issues related to electronic theses, treatises, and dissertations may be obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies. A request for such a delay must be presented in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School and carry the endorsement of the student, the major professor, the department or program chair, and the dean of the relevant college or school.

Note: Students should not suffer delays in their normal academic progress, including the final defense of the thesis or dissertation, as a result of a desire to delay release of the thesis or dissertation to the library. Students will find a comprehensive dissertation Checklist, along with samples of all the forms and other guidelines, on the Ph.D. Program Canvas website.

Applying for Graduation

A student's manuscript must be cleared in order to graduate; however, students also must meet all other departmental and university requirements. During the first two weeks of the term in which a candidate expects to receive a degree, an application should be made for a diploma at the

Office of the University Registrar. If a candidate previously filed for a diploma but did not receive the degree, the application procedure must be repeated. Information can be found at the [registrar's website](#).

The Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist must be notified when the student turns in their application as they are required to run a graduation check and provide proof that the student is eligible. If the student decides for any reason to delay graduation after submitting an application, they must go to the Registrar's office to fill out paperwork to withdraw their application. They must also notify the Ph.D. Sr. Academic Program Specialist, so their name is not included on the graduation program.

Attachment 1

PhD Preliminary Examination Contract Florida State University College of Nursing

This contract outlines the agreement between the PhD student and their Preliminary Examination Committee regarding the scope and expectations of the preliminary examination.

1. Student Information

- **Student Name:** [Full Name of Student]
- **Student ID:** [University Student ID]
- **Student Email:** [Student Email Address]
- **Program:** PhD in Nursing Science
- **Academic Year:** [e.g., 2024-2025]

2. Preliminary Examination Committee

Please list the members of your Preliminary Examination Committee, including their roles and affiliations.

- **Committee Chair (Major Professor):** [Name and Title, Affiliation]
- **Committee Member 1:** [Name and Title, Affiliation]
- **Committee Member 2:** [Name and Title, Affiliation]
- **Committee Member 3 (if applicable):** [Name and Title, Affiliation]
- **University Representative:** [Name and Title, Affiliation]

3. Examination Details

- **Proposed Examination Topic/Area(s):** [Briefly describe the primary topic(s) or areas of focus for the preliminary examination. This should align with the student's research interests and program requirements.]
 - **Examination Format:** [Describe the format of the written and oral examination within the program-approved preliminary examination framework, including the organization of the written component, permitted resources, oral defense format, and other relevant logistics]
- **Expected Date of Oral Examination (Defense):** [YYYY-MM-DD]
- **Written Component Submission Deadline:** [YYYY-MM-DD]
- **Agreed-Upon Reading List/Bibliography (or method of development):** [Describe how the reading list will be developed (e.g., "Developed collaboratively with the committee chair by [Date]") or state "See attached reading list" if it will be a separate document. If included here, list key texts or thematic areas.]

4. Student Responsibilities

- Adhere to all university and program policies regarding preliminary examinations.
- Prepare thoroughly for both written and oral components of the examination.
- Communicate regularly and proactively with the committee chair regarding progress and any challenges.
- Submit all required examination materials (e.g., written responses) by the specified deadlines.
- Be available for scheduled examination dates and meetings.

5. Committee Responsibilities

- Provide clear and timely expectations for the scope, content, and format of the examination.
- Develop and administer fair, comprehensive, and relevant examination questions.
- Provide timely and constructive feedback on written components.
- Conduct the oral defense in a professional, supportive, and constructive manner.
- Evaluate the student's performance based on established criteria and provide a clear decision regarding the outcome of the examination.

6. Signatures

By signing below, all parties agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this preliminary examination contract.

Name	Role	Date	Signature
	Student		
	Major Professor		
	Committee Member		
	Committee Member		
	Outside Committee Member		

Attachment 2

Preliminary Examination Outline: PhD in Nursing Science

This document outlines the structure and content for the preliminary examination for PhD students in Nursing Science. The examination is designed to assess the student's comprehensive knowledge, critical thinking skills, and ability to synthesize information within the broader context of nursing science and their specific substantive area of study. The exam will consist of both a written and an oral component.

Integration of Substantive Area of Study

A core principle of this examination is the seamless integration of the student's chosen substantive area of study throughout all sections. Students are expected to demonstrate how foundational theories, research methodologies, and translation science principles apply directly to their specific research interests. This approach ensures that the examination is highly relevant to the student's doctoral work and future research trajectory.

Part 1: Written Examination

The written examination will consist of four sections, each focusing on a critical aspect of doctoral-level nursing science. Students will be expected to demonstrate depth of knowledge, critical analysis, and the ability to apply concepts to their substantive area.

Section A: Theoretical Foundations

Topical Area Description: This section assesses the student's understanding of diverse theoretical perspectives relevant to nursing science. It requires students to demonstrate knowledge of grand, mid-range, and practice theories, not limited to nursing, but extending to theories from other disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology, public health, organizational science) that underpin their substantive area of research. Students must be able to critically analyze, compare, and contrast theories, and articulate their applicability to specific phenomena within their field.

Section B: Research Methodology and Design

Topical Area Description: This section evaluates the student's mastery of research methodologies, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches. It requires an in-depth understanding of research design principles, sampling strategies, data collection techniques, measurement, data analysis methods, and ethical considerations. Students must demonstrate the ability to critically appraise research, justify methodological choices, and propose rigorous designs relevant to their substantive area.

Section C: Substantive Area of Study

Topical Area Description: This section requires students to demonstrate profound expertise in their chosen substantive area. This includes a historical overview, current state of the science, identification of critical gaps in knowledge, key controversies or debates, and future directions for

research and practice. Students must synthesize existing literature, identify conceptual and empirical challenges, and articulate their unique contribution to the field.

Section D: Translation Science and Dissemination

Topical Area Description: This section focuses on the student's understanding of how research findings are translated into clinical practice, health policy, and public health initiatives. It requires knowledge of implementation science frameworks, strategies for knowledge dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and the challenges inherent in moving evidence from research to real-world impact. Students must demonstrate the ability to consider the broader implications of their research for health outcomes and healthcare systems.

Part 2: Oral Examination

Purpose: The oral examination provides an opportunity for the student to defend their written responses, elaborate on complex concepts, engage in scholarly dialogue with the faculty committee, and articulate their vision for future research. It assesses the student's ability to think critically on their feet, synthesize information, and communicate their ideas effectively.

Evaluation Criteria

The student's performance on both the written and oral components will be evaluated based on:

- **Depth and Breadth of Knowledge:** Comprehensive understanding of theoretical, methodological, and substantive content.
- **Critical Thinking and Analysis:** Ability to analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate information.
- **Integration and Application:** Skill in connecting diverse concepts and applying them to their substantive area.
- **Scholarly Communication:** Clarity, coherence, and rigor in written and oral expression.
- **Originality and Innovation:** Ability to identify gaps, propose novel research questions, and articulate a unique research trajectory.

Possible Outcomes

Following the completion of both the written and oral components of the preliminary examination, the faculty committee will convene to evaluate the student's performance and determine one of the following outcomes:

- **Pass:** The student has demonstrated comprehensive knowledge, critical thinking, and scholarly communication skills across all areas of the examination, indicating readiness to proceed with dissertation research.
- **Fail:** The student has not demonstrated the required level of comprehensive knowledge, critical thinking, or scholarly communication to pass the examination component. A student who receives a Fail on either the written or oral component is permitted one re-examination total across both components of the preliminary examination. Following a first failure, the

examining committee will provide feedback and determine the areas to be re-examined, any required remediation or preparation, and the nature and timing of the re-examination. If the student fails the permitted re-examination, or subsequently fails the other component after using the single re-examination opportunity, the student will be dismissed from the PhD program in accordance with applicable College and University policies.

This preliminary examination is designed to be a rigorous yet supportive process, preparing students for the challenges and rewards of independent doctoral research and a career as a nurse scientist.

Attachment 3

Preliminary Exam Grading Rubric

The rubric is used to evaluate performance in the major areas listed below. Each major section will receive an overall rating of Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Does Not Meet Expectations. Ratings of the individual items within each section inform the committee's overall rating for that section; individual items are not independently graded Pass/Fail. To pass the written component of the preliminary examination, the student must receive an overall rating of Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations in each written-examination section. To pass the oral component, the student must receive an overall rating of Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations for the Oral Defense section. The official examination outcome for each component is Pass or Fail.

Expectation	Evaluation		
	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
<i>Theory Performance Expectations:</i> Students will: (a) select and accurately describe theories appropriate for their area of research; and (b) demonstrate critical thinking by presenting a compelling description of the strengths and limitations of the selected theories or frameworks in relation to their program of research.			
Theory Performance Rating: ____ Exceeds Expectations ____ Meets Expectations ____ Does not Meet Expectations			
Select and accurately describe theories appropriate for their area of research	Justification for the appropriateness of the theories is well developed, central aspects of the theories are described, and application to their research area is appropriate and adequate.	Justification is developed, central aspects of the theories are present but there are omissions or minor inaccuracies, application to their research area is appropriate with minor inadequacy.	Justification and/or aspects of the theories are underdeveloped or inaccurate, or application is not appropriate.
Demonstrate critical thinking by presenting a compelling justification and description of the strengths and limitations of the selected theories or frameworks	Compelling justification and description of the strengths and limitations of the selected theories or frameworks	Adequate justification and description of the strengths and limitations of the selected theories or frameworks but there are omissions or minor inaccuracies	Description of the justification or strengths and limitations of the selected theories or frameworks is underdeveloped or inaccurate

Content Performance Expectations: Students will: (a) present and describe a conceptual model; (b) demonstrate the ability to critically review extant research; (c) synthesize extant research in their content area; (d) describe the current state of knowledge and recommendations for future research.

Content Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Present and describe the conceptual model	The conceptual model is appropriate, and associations are clearly described	The conceptual model is appropriate, with minor issues or need for clarification	The conceptual model is not appropriate, or the description is not clear
Demonstrate the ability to critically review extant research	Critical review depicts a comprehensive understanding of research methods and analyses	Critical review depicts an understanding of research methods and analyses but the critique(s) are not adequately supported	Critical review is underdeveloped or inaccurate
Synthesis of extant research in their content area	Synthesis of extant research is well developed and reflective of the literature	Synthesis of extant research is well developed but there are key omissions or minor inaccuracies	Synthesis of extant research is underdeveloped or there are key omissions or inaccuracies
Describe the current state of knowledge and recommendations for future research	Description is thoroughly developed and recommendations well supported	Description is developed and recommendations supported but there are key omissions or minor inaccuracies	Description is underdeveloped or there are key omissions or inaccuracies

Methods Performance Expectations: Students will demonstrate the ability to design a study by: (a) diagramming a conceptual model and writing sound research question(s); (b) designing a methodologically sound study; (c) identifying limitations of the proposed design.

Methods Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Describe model and research question(s)	The model is appropriate, and research question(s) are well conceptualized and clear	The model is appropriate, and research question(s) are well conceptualized but are in need of refining	The conceptual model and/or research question(s) are underdeveloped or inappropriate
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Design a methodologically sound study	Methods are congruent with the research question and feasible, and clearly described	Methods are congruent and feasible but there are areas that need of refining	Methods are underdeveloped and/or inappropriate
Identify limitations of the proposed design.	Limitations are clearly described and accurate	Limitations are clearly described but there are some omissions	Limitations are not clearly described

Translation and Dissemination Performance Expectations: Students will demonstrate the ability to: (a) apply appropriate translation or implementation science concepts/frameworks; (b) develop appropriate dissemination strategies for relevant stakeholders; and (c) identify factors affecting translation of research into practice, policy, or other real-world settings.

Translation and Dissemination Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Apply translation or implementation science concepts/frameworks	Application of relevant concepts or frameworks is well justified, clearly developed, and appropriately linked to the substantive area and proposed research.	Application of relevant concepts or frameworks is appropriate but includes minor omissions or areas needing clarification or refinement.	Application of concepts or frameworks is underdeveloped, inappropriate, or insufficiently connected to the substantive area or proposed research.
Identify factors affecting translation into practice, policy, or other real-world settings	Relevant barriers, facilitators, and implications are identified comprehensively and critically analyzed, with appropriate strategies for addressing them.	Relevant barriers, facilitators, and implications are identified appropriately, but analysis or proposed strategies include minor omissions or need further development.	Relevant barriers, facilitators, or implications are inadequately identified, inaccurately analyzed, or lack appropriate strategies for addressing them.
Develop dissemination strategies for relevant stakeholders	Dissemination strategies are well developed, appropriately tailored to multiple relevant audiences or	Dissemination strategies are appropriate and address relevant audiences or stakeholders but include minor	Dissemination strategies are underdeveloped, inappropriate, or insufficiently tailored

	stakeholders, and clearly justified.	omissions or need further refinement.	to relevant audiences or stakeholders.
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Integration Expectations: Students will demonstrate integration of ideas across responses to theory, content and methods.

Integration Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Demonstrate integration of ideas	Sophisticated integration of ideas across theory, content, and methods	Integration is well developed but there are minor inconsistencies or omissions	Integration is underdeveloped
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Writing Style Performance Expectations: Students will demonstrate: (a) the ability to write at a scholarly level comparable to expectations of ISI ranked, peer-reviewed journals; and (b) use APA writing style.

Writing Style Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Ability to write at a scholarly level comparable to expectations of ISI ranked, peer-reviewed journals	Writing ability is comparable to expectations of ISI ranked, peer-reviewed journals	Writing ability comparable to expectations of ISI ranked, peer-reviewed journals with the exception of minor areas that warrant additional clarification	Writing ability is below standards of ISI ranked, peer-reviewed journals
APA writing style	APA format is accurately followed	APA format is mostly followed but there are minor errors	APA format is not followed

Oral Defense Performance Expectations: Students will demonstrate the ability to orally explain and defend their written work and related questions posed by the committee.

Oral Defense Performance Rating:

___ Exceeds Expectations ___ Meets Expectations ___ Does not Meet Expectations

Orally explain and defend their written work and related questions	Oral explanations are focused and accurate. Responses demonstrate an understanding of the doctoral exam content	Oral explanations are focused and accurate but there are areas in which the communicated	Oral explanations are unfocused and/or inaccurate
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	equivalent to a doctoral level of understanding	understanding is unclear or inaccurate	
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**Florida State University
College of Nursing
Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program**

PhD Graduate Assistant Assignment Description

This form supplements, but does not replace the FSU Graduate Assistant Appointment Letter

1. Appointment Information

Student name: _____

Appointment type:

☐ Research Assistant

☐ Teaching Assistant

☐ Teaching Assistant–Instructor

☐ Other: _____

Faculty supervisor: _____

Appointment period: _____

Assigned FTE: _____

Expected average hours per week: _____

Course, research project, laboratory, or program:

2. Purpose of the Assignment

(briefly describe the purpose of the assistantship and how the student's work will support the course, research project, laboratory, or College activity).

3. Duties and Responsibilities

The student's anticipated duties and responsibilities include, as applicable:

☐ Literature searches or reviews

☐ Data collection

☐ Data entry, cleaning, or management

☐ Quantitative or qualitative data analysis

☐ Preparation of reports, manuscripts, presentations, or grant materials

☐ Participant recruitment or communication

☐ Regulatory or research-compliance activities

☐ Preparation of instructional materials

☐ Grading or providing feedback on assignments

☐ Holding office hours or responding to student questions

☐ Assisting with course administration

☐ Attending research-team, laboratory, course, or supervisory meetings

☐ Other duties described below

Specific duties and responsibilities:

1.

2.

- 3.
- 4.

Duties must remain consistent with the student’s appointment classification, assigned FTE, official appointment letter, and applicable University requirements.

4. Expected Deliverables

Deliverable or responsibility	Expected completion date or frequency	Expected format or standard
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Deliverables and timelines may be adjusted by mutual discussion when research, teaching, or program needs change. Material changes will be communicated to the student in writing.

5. Work Schedule and Availability

Expected work arrangement:

- ☐ Primarily in person
- ☐ Primarily remote
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ Varies by assignment

Expected workdays or time periods, if applicable:

Required meetings, office hours, class sessions, or other scheduled activities:

Expected communication and response practices:

The work schedule may vary according to assignment needs, provided that workload expectations remain consistent with the assigned FTE and applicable University and collective bargaining requirements.

6. Supervision and Feedback

Frequency of supervisory meetings:

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Biweekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Other: _____

The faculty supervisor will provide timely instructions, access to necessary materials, and feedback on the student’s work. The student is expected to communicate promptly about questions, barriers, competing deadlines, or concerns about workload.

Questions concerning duties, workload, or assignment expectations should first be discussed with the faculty supervisor. Unresolved concerns may be brought to the PhD Program Director or another appropriate University office.

7. Training and Compliance Requirements

The student must complete or maintain the following, as applicable:

- ☐ Program for Instructional Excellence training
- ☐ Human-subjects research training

- ☐ Research security training
- ☐ Data-security or confidentiality training
- ☐ Laboratory or safety training
- ☐ FERPA training
- ☐ HIPAA training
- ☐ Other: _____

Required completion dates:

The student must comply with all applicable University, College, course, research, confidentiality, data-security, and professional requirements.

8. Acknowledgment

The faculty supervisor and student have reviewed this assignment description and had an opportunity to discuss the duties, expected workload, deliverables, schedule, timelines, communication practices, and supervision arrangements.

This assignment description supplements but does not replace or modify the student's official appointment letter, assigned FTE, applicable University policies, collective bargaining requirements, or other rights and procedures available to the student. It is not a separate employment contract.

Student signature: _____

Date: _____

Faculty supervisor signature: _____

Date: _____

Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing Science Program Handbook Acknowledgment Form

Florida State University College of Nursing Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program

Student Acknowledgment

I acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the information contained in the **2026 Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program Handbook** for the Florida State University College of Nursing.

By signing below, I confirm that I understand my responsibility to comply with the policies, procedures, academic standards, professional expectations, and program requirements described in the handbook, including but not limited to expectations related to academic progress, advising and faculty supervision, major professor and supervisory committee requirements, annual review, probation and dismissal procedures, academic integrity, professional conduct, preliminary examinations, candidacy, prospectus, dissertation requirements, and time limits for degree completion.

I understand that the handbook is intended to provide guidance on program policies and procedures, and that newly developed University, College, or program policies may supersede the information in the handbook. I also understand that any request for an exception to program policies must be submitted in advance to the PhD Program Director, and that it is the student's responsibility to initiate consultation with the faculty advisor or major professor.

I understand that failure to follow program, College, or University policies may result in corrective action, probation, suspension, dismissal, or other consequences consistent with applicable Florida State University and College of Nursing policies.

Student Information

Student Name: _____

FSU ID: _____

Program Entry Term/Year: _____

Faculty Advisor or Major Professor: _____

Signature

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understand the information contained in the 2026 Ph.D. in Nursing Science Program Handbook and agree to follow the policies, procedures, expectations, and requirements described therein.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Printed Name: _____