DOCTORAL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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Urban Studies Doctoral Program Handbook
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND URBAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

The University of New Orleans, a publicly-supported institution of higher education, is the Research II urban university of the University of Louisiana System. It is situated on a 300-acre campus on the southern shore of Lake Pontchartrain, a short distance from the Vieux Carré and downtown New Orleans. UNO opened in 1958 with 1,500 students. The Graduate School was founded in 1963. Close to 10,000 students now attend UNO.

The Department of Planning and Urban Studies (PLUS), housed in the School of Urban Planning and Regional Studies (SUPRS) and the College of Liberal Arts (COLA), offers a bachelor's degree program in urban studies and planning, master's degree programs in urban and regional planning and urban studies, and a Ph.D. degree program in urban studies with majors in urban affairs, urban anthropology, urban history, and urban planning. The doctoral program faculty, which includes members with advanced degrees in anthropology, urban and regional planning, history, sociology, and geography, highlights the interdisciplinary character of urban studies as a field of endeavor. A favorable student-to-faculty ratio allows doctoral students to work closely with faculty members on a collaborative basis and to develop individual plans of study. The department enjoys a widely acknowledged reputation for excellence in urban research and public service.

Scholarly research and teaching on the theory and practice of planning, urban studies and urban affairs provide the core of the department's educational efforts. The teaching and research specializations of the faculty are diverse, spanning the breadth of urban concerns in a wide variety of field specialties. The theoretical orientations informing faculty research and teaching are equally diverse, providing a number of perspectives from which to address urban research questions. Support for faculty research is provided by the extensive holdings in the University's Long Library, which contains over 12,000 serial titles, state-of-the-art computer facilities, and faculty- and staff-generated grant and contract research projects.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The program of study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Urban Studies enables students of exceptional ability to undertake advanced study and original research in the fields of urban affairs, urban anthropology, urban history, and urban and regional planning. The program's goal is to prepare people for careers in scholarly activity, applied research, and high caliber policy analysis, rather than professional practice. Although many graduates do applied research and policy analysis outside of academic settings, the program provides a sound foundation for teaching and research in colleges and universities. Consequently, the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program emphasizes mastery
of the literature and theory in a particular area of scholarship, known as the *area of specialization*, and mastery of research skills necessary to make original contributions to that field.

After adequate preparation in core courses of urban studies and research design and methods, and elective courses in an area of specialization, doctoral candidates complete an incisive and authoritative investigation in their chosen fields of study, culminating in the presentation and defense of a written dissertation. The dissertation must be either an addition to the fundamental knowledge of the field, or a new and substantially better interpretation of facts already known. It must demonstrate that candidates possess powers of original thought, talent for research, and an ability to organize and present research findings.

The University of Louisiana System, the University of New Orleans, the College of Liberal Arts, and the Department of Planning and Urban Studies have established requirements for the Ph.D. degree in Urban Studies. The Doctoral Program Handbook sets out the general requirements. Specific fields of study within the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program may require additional work, depending on students’ previous training and experience.

The Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator, who is appointed by the Chair of the Department of Planning and Urban Studies, and the Ph.D. Executive Committee, whose members are collectively responsible for decisions on admissions, curriculum, and other program policy matters, administer the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program. The Ph.D. in Urban Studies program faculty consists of the Department’s faculty plus cooperating faculty from the College of Liberal Arts. The Ph.D. Executive Committee currently consists of the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator, five faculty members, and a Ph.D. in Urban Studies student. All interested parties should submit questions of policy pertaining to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program through the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator, or the PhD Student Representative to the Ph.D. Executive Committee for consideration. The Ph.D. Executive Committee reports its decisions on policy matters to the faculty. Membership on the Ph.D. Executive Committee is renewed annually.

The Chair of the Department of Planning and Urban Studies appoints the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator of the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program to a three-year term, with annual review and renewal. The Coordinator serves at the pleasure of the Chair. The Coordinator’s tasks are to see that both faculty and students follow the rules and procedures of the program, to advise the Chair concerning doctoral student aid and other administrative matters affecting doctoral students, to chair the Ph.D. Executive Committee, and to process applications to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program. The PLUS Manager of Student Services and Communications and the Ph.D. Executive Committee, whose members in effect also serve collectively as an admissions committee, assist the Coordinator in processing applications. Appeals of any administrative actions
by the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator are directed to the Chair of the Department of Planning and Urban Studies and to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Most guidance for individual students will come from their faculty advisors and from members of students’ advisory committees. Advisory committees evaluate the dissertation proposal and advise on and evaluate the dissertation.

ADMISSION

Students must submit both a University of New Orleans graduate application for admission, [http://admissions.uno.edu/app.cfm](http://admissions.uno.edu/app.cfm) as well as the Department of Urban Planning and Urban Studies application forms. The procedure for applying to the PhD Program in Urban Studies can be found on the PLUS website at: http://planning.uno.edu/PLUSPhDProgram.cfm.

Prerequisites

Students admitted to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program in the Department of Planning and Urban Studies normally will have completed the requirements for the master’s degree in urban planning, urban studies, or a related discipline. In addition, the Ph.D. Executive Committee members may require students admitted to the program to have additional preparation appropriate to their field of study.

Initiating the Admission Process

Applicants from outside the Department of Planning and Urban Studies should file the application materials listed in the application checklist (see page 6). Students enrolled in one of the Department’s master degree programs need only provide the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator with written notice that they wish to be considered for admission to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program, recommendations from two PLUS faculty members, and a statement of research interests. Students may, at their own discretion, supplement their permanent files with supportive documents that, in their judgment, will provide the Ph.D. Executive Committee members with additional insights relative to their potential for doctoral-level work. The Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator refers all doctoral program applications to the Ph.D. Executive Committee for recommendations on admission.

After reviewing an application, the faculty members on the Ph.D. Executive Committee make admission and financial aid recommendations to the Graduate School. Normally, when the Committee makes recommendations for admission, it identifies relevant faculty members who can potentially serve as advisors and refers applicants’ folders to them for supplemental evaluation.
In the case of applicants with no prior graduate-level work or with graduate work in fields other than urban planning or urban studies, the Executive Committee members may recommend admission to one of the Department’s master’s degree programs. If admitted to a master's program, applicants will receive a letter indicating they must begin at the master’s level and apply to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program during the first or second year of study.

Admissions to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program are for the fall semester of the academic year only. The application deadline for admission to the program and financial aid is currently February 15. Admission applications are reviewed only once per academic year.

**Application Checklist**

The following documents must be submitted before the Ph.D. Executive Committee will consider an application:

- The Department of Planning and Urban Studies application for admission.
- The University of New Orleans's Graduate application for admission.
- Statement of personal goals and interest in doctoral studies.
- Three letters of recommendation, at least two of which are from professors who can judge applicants' potential for doctoral work.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores (official score report to the University).
- Official transcripts from all previously attended institutions of higher education (official transcripts to the University).
- Examples of previous research and written work.
- Scores of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for students from non-English-speaking countries (official score report to the University).
- International students must also submit additional information. Details can be found at http://admissions.uno.edu/factsinternat.cfm.
- Students submit the Graduate School scholarship application to the Program. The Program submits recommendations for available Graduate Assistantships and Scholarships but does not have approval authority. See the section on “Financial Aid & Scholarships” for application requirements.

Admission requirements for the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program include a minimum graduate school grade point average of 3.0, an undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 or higher, a score of 600 or higher on the verbal and quantitative portions of the GRE, and a score of at 5.0 or higher on the writing portion of the GRE. The Ph.D. Executive Committee members may relax all or some of the admissions requirements if a student's record documents substantial professional or scholarly achievement. Minimum TOEFL scores required for graduate admission to the University of New Orleans are 550 on the
paper-based test (with a minimum listening comprehensive score of 55), a composite score of 225 on the computer-based test, and a score of 79 on the internet-based test. The urban studies doctoral program typically does not admit students with TOEFL scores lower than 600 on the paper-based test, 250 on the computer-based test, and 85 on the internet-based test.

The statement of interest that accompanies the application to the Department is a very important part of the application. It should reflect applicants’ best thinking about an area of specialization. It also is used to help decide whether there is a constructive fit between applicants' interests and the doctoral program faculty members’ ability to help them develop a command of knowledge and skills in a specific area or areas of interest. In their statements of interest, applicants should outline a proposed area of specialization, including an appropriate theoretical foundation, suitable scholarly research skills, and even illustrative topics for dissertation research. They should suggest course topics, remembering that many of the courses may be outside of the Department of Planning and Urban Studies. Since we are aware that applicants’ knowledge of the UNO campus and PLUS is often limited, admitted students will be able to change and refine the proposed program after arrival to reflect personal growth and understanding of the area of interest. Nevertheless, applicants should devote careful attention to the statement of interest.

Re-admission

In order to meet UNO PhD Program residency requirements, students are encouraged to maintain continuous enrollment until program completion. Students must enroll in at least three credit hours each semester, excluding summer. Students who fail to meet this requirement and do not enroll for two consecutive semesters must re-apply to the UNO Graduate School and to the PhD program.

Outlined is the process for re-application to the program for students who were previously admitted in the UNO PhD Program but have not maintained continuous enrollment:

1 - Submit an "Application for Admission" to the UNO Graduate School. The online form can be found on: http://admissions.uno.edu/app.cfm.

2 - Submit the following information in hard copy, to the Phd Graduate Coordinator:

(a) A department personal information sheet, which can be found at http://planning.uno.edu/studentforms.cfm;

(b) A personal statement of no more than 1000 words outlining your reasons for re-applying to the program; describe your intended area of research, faculty who you will work with and provide a timeline for program completion; However, if you have a draft
of the dissertation, submit this and a timeline for completion in lieu of the statement;

(c) If you have taken any courses that will be considered for transfer, please provide the Office of Admissions with an updated official transcript and provide a copy to the PhD Program.

(d) There may be other documents required after a review of the students’ program file has been completed.

Upon receipt of the complete application, the PhD Executive Committee will review the materials and will forward their recommendation to the Graduate School who, in turn, will forward this to the Admissions Office. Admission decisions are considered final and may not be appealed by prospective or returning students.

Please note that if a student is granted re-admission, the student will follow the PhD Program Policy Guidelines that would be in effect in the year that you return.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Program Requirements

Students must earn a minimum of 72 semester credits beyond the Baccalaureate degree with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, including a maximum of six credits for dissertation research, in courses approved for the degree by the Department of Planning and Urban Studies and the Graduate School. Students are required to achieve a B or higher in all required courses: DURB 6850 Seminar in Urban Studies, DURB 6830 Urban Theory, ANTH 6801 Seminar in Cultural and Social Theory, HIST 4543G United States Urban History, DURB 7020 Research Design Seminar and DURB 7030 Research Design Practicum OR HIST 6803 Proseminar in Urban History: Social & Cultural Change and HIST 6804 Seminar in Urban History for urban history majors, and methods courses.

- For their other courses, students will be allowed two course grades of C or lower. Students who receive a third C while in the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program will not be able to continue in the program. Admission from the Program will be revoked prior to the beginning of the next semester.

- Students may count up to twenty-four credits earned as part of a master’s degree program and no more than 9 additional credits earned after receiving the master’s degree toward Ph.D. in Urban Studies program requirements. Courses proposed for transfer must be approved as part of a student’s program of study by both the Department and the Graduate School.
• Students must complete sixty-six credit hours of course work, including pre-doctoral graduate-level course work, in three areas: the urban studies core, research design and methods, and the major field of study/area of specialization. Students, at their own option, may wish to identify a minor field of study. In addition, students must complete six credit hours of DURB 7050 Dissertation Research. Each student selects courses for her or his major and minor fields in consultation with her or his advisor.

**Required Courses**

*Urban Studies Core*  
(12 credit hours)

DURB 6850 Seminar in Urban Studies  
DURB 6830 Urban Theory  
HIST 4543G United States Urban History  
ANTH 6801 Advanced Seminar in Cultural and Social Theory

*Research Design and Methods for the General Track*

**Research Design**  
(Six credit hours)

DURB 7020 Research Design Seminar  
DURB 7030 Research Design Practicum

**Research Method Competence**  
One intermediate-level statistics course and one qualitative methods course  
(Six credit hours)

Intermediate-Level Statistics, choose one from one of the following:  
(Note that most intermediate level statistics courses have an undergraduate statistics prerequisite. You must take the prerequisite or get permission from the instructor to take the course without a prerequisite)  
URBN 6005 Statistics for Urban Analysis  
EDFR 6710 Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Hypothesis Testing

Qualitative Methods, choose one from one of the following  
ANTH 4070G Qualitative Research  
EDFR 6715 Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods  
SOC 6788 Qualitative Methods in Sociology

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Research Method Proficiency

Complete two of the following three options:

Option 1: Advanced Quantitative Methods, choose one of the following
EDFR 6720 Applied Regression and Analysis of Covariance
EDFR 6725 Multivariate Statistics and Covariance Structure Analysis
MATH 6303 Multivariate Statistical Analysis
MATH 6304 Regression Analysis

Option 2: Qualitative Methods, choose one from the following
EDFR 6721 Advanced Qualitative Research Data Analysis
HIST 6002 Historical Methodologies and Research Design
ANTH 4075G Life History, Identity & Autonomy
Other qualitative research courses can be substituted

Option 3: Foreign Language
Passage of proficiency test with score of 450 or higher, or passage of UNO foreign language course numbered 2002 with a grade of B or higher. If students wish to audit the course, a letter from the instructor testifying to performance in the course at a grade level of B or higher may substitute for a formal letter grade. The foreign language option is open only to students who can demonstrate applicability of the language or languages to their area or areas of specialization. Students must pass a placement test that is administered by the Department of Romance Languages. Not all languages can be tested.

If a course substitution is desired, please talk the PhD Program Coordinator. Independent Study courses cannot be used to fulfill methods requirements.
Research Design and Methods for the Urban History Track (recommended)

Research Design
(Six credit hours)

HIST 6803 Proseminar in Urban History: Social and Cultural Change
HIST 6804 Seminar in Urban History: Social and Cultural Change

Research Method Competence
One intermediate-level statistics course and one qualitative methods course
(Six credit hours)

Intermediate-Level Statistics, choose one from one of the following:
URBN 6005 Statistics for Urban Analysis
EDFR 6710 Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Hypothesis Testing

Qualitative Methods
HIST 6001 Historical Research and Thought
HIST 6002 Historical Methodologies and Research Design

Research Method Proficiency

Complete the two following options:

Option 1: Qualitative Methods, choose one from the following
ANTH 4070G Introduction to Qualitative Research
ANTH 4075G Life History, Identity & Autonomy
SOC 6788 Qualitative Methods in Sociology

Option 2: Foreign Language
Passage of proficiency test with score of 450 or higher, or passage of UNO foreign language course numbered 2002 with a grade of B or higher. If students wish to audit the course, a letter from the instructor testifying to performance in the course at a grade level of B or higher may substitute for a formal letter grade. The foreign language option is open only to students who can demonstrate applicability of the language or languages to their area or areas of specialization. Students must pass a placement test that is administered by the Department of Romance Languages. Not all languages can be tested.

This is the recommended curriculum for the urban history track. Students in this track may take another quantitative course to fulfill the methods requirement. If a course or
requirement substitution is desired, please talk to the PhD Program Coordinator. DURB 7030 is not required but it is recommended.

**Major Field of Study/Area of Specialization**

Students declare a major field of study from among four options: urban affairs, urban history, urban planning and urban anthropology. Within the major field, students select a group of courses that provide a foundation in the theory and methods of that field of knowledge and a set of additional courses that constitute an area of specialization. Typically, foundation courses are completed as part of previous master's degree work and are transferred into the doctoral program. Students who do not have a master's degree in their major field should expect to take courses sufficient to demonstrate knowledge of the basic theory, concepts, and methods of that field.

Students select a group of courses that form an area of specialization within the major field of study. As a rough rule of thumb, students should expect to take at least 15 credits hours of courses in their areas of specialization. These courses may be offered in the Planning and Urban Studies Department or other departments or they may be independent studies. Students define their areas of specialization in consultation with a faculty advisor.

Students may, at their own option, define a minor field of study. Within the minor field, students must complete at least 15 credit hours (some of which may be transfer credits) in a set of courses approved in advance by the faculty advisor. Courses taken in the minor may constitute an independent body of knowledge, or they may support the area of specialization developed in the major.

**Sequence of Courses**

Each semester, students should look for relevant offerings and take courses that fulfill methods requirements and major field/specialization courses. The following courses must be taken in sequence and in the semester listed unless an exception has been made:

First Fall Semester:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DURB 6850</td>
<td>Seminar in Urban Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH 6801</td>
<td>Advanced Seminar in Cultural and Social Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURB 7020</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIST 4543G</td>
<td>U. S. Urban History (recommended)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*not offered every year, follow departmental recommendation*
First Spring Semester:
DURB 6830 Urban Theory

Second Fall Semester:
DURB 7020 Research Design Seminar (if not taken first year)
HIST 6803 Proseminar in Urban History: Social and Cultural Change

Second Spring Semester:
DURB 7030 Research Design Practicum
HIST 6804 Seminar in Urban History: Social and Cultural Change

Third Fall Semester:
Comprehensive Written Examination
Dissertation Proposal Defense
DURB 7050 Dissertation Research (can be taken after advancing to candidacy)

Third Spring Semester:
DURB 7050 Dissertation Research

NOTE: Students must be enrolled the semester they defend the dissertation and file the dissertation.

Independent Study

Ph.D. in Urban Studies students wishing to register for an independent study must complete the appropriate forms and have them approved by the faculty member directing the independent study then forwarded to the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator. The Coordinator certifies that the independent study is part of the student’s program of study and for compliance with Graduate School. The form must be included, or accompanied by, a contract between the student and faculty member overseeing the independent study project or dissertation research. The contract should include a short description of the topical materials covered, a reading list, the nature of product to be graded, date of work submission and a justification for its inclusion in the student's program of study. The independent study form is available at http://planning.uno.edu/studentforms.cfm.

Teaching Experience

An important objective of the doctoral program is to train top quality and highly motivated teachers. Students and their advisors should plan for at least one semester of teaching experience, unless a student comes to the program with substantial experience teaching at the college level. Although teaching experience may not be in the form of
sole responsibility for a course, students will share course planning, design of the syllabus, lecturing, and grading papers with a faculty member. Teaching experience should be part of every student’s program, even if the primary means of financial support is a fellowship, research grant or contract.

**Residency Requirement**

The Graduate School of the University of New Orleans requires doctoral students to complete two consecutive semesters of nine or more credit hours, or three consecutive or non-consecutive semesters of six or more credit hours.

Students must furnish a list of courses and semester equivalencies taken to fulfill the residency requirement for the Report on *General Examination/Application for Candidacy form*.

**Continuous Enrollment**

Students are encouraged to maintain continuous enrollment in order to retain status as a PhD student or candidate in the Graduate School and PhD Program. Students must enroll in at least three credit hours each semester, excluding summer. Students who fail to meet this requirement and do not enroll for two consecutive semesters must re-apply to the UNO Graduate School and to the PhD program. If students fail to enroll for 2 continuous semesters, a re-application must be submitted.

**Advising: Advisor or Major Professor**

In the fall semester, first year students are assigned to a faculty member for primary advising. By the end of the first year in the program, a student should either confirm or change her or his advisor. An advisor helps a student establish a course of study in the student’s major and minor fields, and guides and evaluates dissertation research.

**Major Milestones**

The following lists highlight key milestones in a program of doctoral study for a student with 24 hours of approved previous graduate work. Individual programs of study and milestones may vary depending upon the extent of preparatory work in the major field prior to entering the program.

Full time students are expected to take the general exam at the beginning of their third year. Part time students would take the exam after completing 36-42 credit hours.

*During the first two years (or credit hour equivalent)*
- Submit and receive approval for a program of study
• Complete coursework
• Identify a dissertation advisor (if different than initial advisor)
• Identify dissertation committee members
• Complete foreign language proficiency test, if applicable

*During the third year (or credit hour equivalent)*
• Take comprehensive written exam
• Submit dissertation proposal to advisor and committee
• Defend dissertation proposal
• Submit Report on General Exam/Request form after dissertation proposal defense is successfully completed
• Begin dissertation research
• Enroll at least 6 credit hours of DURB 7050

*During the subsequent semesters (as needed)*
• Submit dissertation chapters and draft to dissertation advisor, as agreed upon between advisor and student
• Submit revised dissertation to full committee
• Enroll DURB 7050, as needed

*During the final semester*
• Enroll in at least 3 credit hours of DURB 7050
• Schedule dissertation defense (if not previously done)
• Make final revisions to dissertation
• File dissertation
• Graduate

**Program of Study**

At the end of the first year of study, a student should review the proposed program of study with her or his advisor and submit a plan of study to the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator. Each student is responsible for seeing that a copy of their proposed program of study is placed in their file, after review by their Advisor/Major Professor and the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator with approval from the Graduate School. The Doctoral Program of Study form is available online at http://grad.uno.edu/forms/.

The PhD courses checklist must include all courses that were transferred, substituted or taken while at UNO. Download the form: http://planning.uno.edu/studentforms.cfm

The plan of study should contain the following elements:
• Brief description of the major field of study and areas of specialization. The description will provide a basis for judging the adequacy of proposed courses to build competence in the major areas of specialization;
• List of required courses and courses taken or to be taken in the major field and areas of specialization;
• List of courses from previous graduate work organized by major field and areas of specialization. The list of pre-doctoral courses should include university, semester and year taken, course number and title, name of instructor, and grade received. Students cannot transfer courses with a grade of C or below. Students may be required to provide the course syllabus, text, and major paper to their advisors, the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator, and committee members for transfer courses that constitute key components of the doctoral program of study;
• Schedule of previous, current, and future courses by semester and year;
• Outline of plans for developing teaching skills. Ordinarily this plan should specify at least one course in which students will participate as teaching assistants;
• Brief description of any tentative plans for a dissertation project;
• List of important concepts and key readings for which students will be responsible in the general examination. Students will refine the list during subsequent semesters and will be provided recommendations from the Major Professor.

Annual Evaluation

The Ph.D. Executive Committee members and the relevant advisor will evaluate doctoral student each year (or after 18 and 36 credit hours for part time students). The purpose of the annual evaluation is to ensure that all students have established effective advising relationships with Ph.D. in Urban Studies program faculty members and are making satisfactory academic progress.

After obtaining a review and approval from their advisor, students should submit the annual report and courses checklist to the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator no later than Friday of the last week of classes in the spring semester. The Ph.D Annual Report form and PhD Courses Checklist are located here: http://planning.uno.edu/studentforms.cfm.

The annual report form is an update from the Program of Study that was completed during their first semester of study along with any subsequent amendments or additions. The report should also include a written statement detailing the progress they have made in furthering their professional development and in meeting their educational goals. Students should include as part of their written statements a plan for meeting UNO residency requirements.

Based on a student's program of study, written statement, and other relevant information, the Ph.D. Executive Committee members and the student's advisor will either inform the student that they are proceeding in a satisfactory manner or else may provide them with a set of conditions they must meet in order to achieve satisfactory academic performance.
Please note that a student may not be able to register for additional courses if the Ph.D. Executive Committee members and the student’s advisor or Major Professor determine that the student is not making demonstrable progress in the program.

**Comprehensive Written Examination**

Each person will take a written comprehensive examination that covers major readings in urban studies. The exam is offered once each fall and spring term. The comprehensive exam will be based upon the reading list that is found in the appendix of this handbook. Each student chooses two of the three subsections in the core curriculum section, and is responsible for both theory and methods. In addition, students choose an major field area—urban planning, urban history, urban anthropology or urban affairs—and develop a major field reading list, approved by their advisors. The major field includes history and precedents in the field, theory and its evolution, current issues and debates, and methods of inquiry.

The PhD Graduate Coordinator will post the examination date at the beginning of the fall term. The exam takes 1.5 days, and is divided into 3 four hour blocks (core curriculum, major field, theory/methods). Students will be able to bring a limited number of note sheets to the exam.

Student responses to examination questions will be evaluated by faculty members of the Ph.D. Executive Committee. The major field questions will be written and evaluated by the student’s advisor.

Each question will be scored out of four possible outcomes as described below (pass with honors, pass, conditional pass, and fail), and translated into a numerical score (10 highest; 7 lowest). The questions in each block (core curriculum; major field; theory and methods) will be averaged, and the exam will be averaged.

There are four possible score for each question:

- 10-Pass with honors indicates exemplary responses to the examination questions
- 9-Pass indicates adequate responses to the examination questions
- 8-Conditional pass indicates that the student’s responses demonstrate an adequate foundation in a field and area of specialization but one or more of the responses show important weaknesses in the way the student interpreted the question or questions, interpreted or applied the literature or methods of inquiry applicable to the question or questions, or otherwise did not offer a compelling argument or thorough discussion.
- 7-Fail means the student has not demonstrated sufficient mastery of material and/or ability to offer a compelling argument or thorough discussion.
Any student who receives an overall score between 7 and 8 will retake the entire exam. A student who receives an overall score between 8 and 9 will retake the weaker sections of the exam. If a student receives a 7 on any question or block, the question or block will be retaken (regardless of the overall score). Students who fail the exam will be allowed to retake the exam during the following term. If a student fails the exam twice, he or she must petition to attempt a third time. The petition must include a strategy to ensure the students success on the exam and dissertation work. A student who does not pass the comprehensive exam after the third attempt cannot continue in the doctoral program.

**General Examination/Dissertation Proposal Defense**

Upon submission of a formal dissertation proposal, the advisor in consultation with members of the dissertation committee will schedule an oral examination of the proposal. The oral examination provides an opportunity for committee members to judge the significance and feasibility of the dissertation project. After presentation by the doctoral student, the committee members will ask questions concerning any or all aspects of the underlying theory and research design. On completion of the oral examination, the committee reviews the student’s performance and approves the proposal, approves the proposal with specific changes, or does not approve the proposal. If the proposal is not approved, the student will submit a new proposal and participate in the oral examination a second time.

The student in conjunction with his or her advisor can make the dissertation proposal defense open to the public. If they decide to do so, at least two weeks prior to the defense, the student will provide an ‘Announcement of the Dissertation Research Proposal’ to the PhD Program Coordinator to be posted. The announcement must be submitted in electronic format and include the student’s name; the date, day, time and location (specify building and room number) of the defense; and the title and abstract of the dissertation.

**Admission to Candidacy**

When the student successfully completes the dissertation proposal defense, the committee signs the Report on General Examination/Request for Candidacy form. Approval of this form allows students to formally petition the Graduate School for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. in Urban Studies degree. Students must indicate the expected date of completion of the dissertation and graduation from the University. The Report on General Examination form can be found here: http://grad.uno.edu/forms/index.cfm.

The committee signs the Report on General Exam form when the dissertation proposal defense has been successfully completed. However, the Report on General Examination paperwork is not submitted to the Graduate School until 1) all coursework has been completed, 2) the comprehensive exam has been successfully completed, and 3) the
proposal defense has been successfully completed. At that point, the student can advance to candidacy.

The Dissertation

The typical steps in developing a dissertation are presented below.

Preliminary Proposal

Students typically begin exploring dissertation research topics in DURB 6850. The dissertation should be a scholarly contribution to the major field of study. It must be an original piece of work, accomplished and reported in a careful and convincing manner, and it usually, though not always, involves collection and analysis of empirical data. The application of knowledge to a particular professional practice situation generally is not acceptable unless students can demonstrate that the conclusions are generalizable.

Qualitative and quantitative research methods are both acceptable. Students should discuss the preliminary proposal with faculty members who have an interest in the subject area, or who may otherwise be able to advise students on the merit and feasibility of the project.

Selection of a Dissertation Advisor

Selection of a dissertation advisor (or major professor or chair) is initiated by students and is determined by mutual agreement of the student, the faculty member, and the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator. Any member of the urban studies doctoral faculty may serve as a dissertation advisor and a student may have more than one dissertation advisor (co-advisors). A list of doctoral faculty members is provided in Appendix I. A student’s program advisor is often a logical choice for the dissertation advisor, but there is no requirement that students continue with the same advisor for their dissertation. Faculty members agreeing to serve commit themselves to do everything reasonable to see students through their dissertation projects from project proposal to dissertation defense.

Formal Dissertation Proposal

Students, in consultation with their dissertation advisors and other faculty members as needed, prepare a formal proposal of the dissertation project. The exact format will be determined in considerable measure by their advisors, but it should include at a minimum description of the research problem; significance of the dissertation to a recognized body of knowledge; review of existing literature on the problem; research questions; statement of relevant theoretical base for researching the problem; preliminary statement of hypotheses to be tested, if relevant; data sources; research methods; expected results; and
a working reference list. Some advisors and students also find it useful to develop a list of chapters of the dissertation with a summary of what will be covered in each chapter.

Selection of the Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee consists of no fewer than four persons. In addition to the dissertation advisor or co-advisors, at least two additional UNO urban studies faculty members associated with the doctoral program must be on the dissertation committee (see Appendix 1). In addition, students and their advisors may invite faculty members from other departments or scholars from outside the University of New Orleans to serve on their dissertation committees. If the dissertation involves the minor field, at least one of the committee members must have expertise in the minor field. Students and their dissertation advisors propose the committee and obtain agreements from members to serve on it. At least two members of the dissertation committee must be full members of the UNO graduate faculty.

Non-UNO faculty members must receive an administrative appointment and be approved by the Graduate School. The student or advisor must send the Graduate Coordinator a copy of the committee member’s CV and a brief explanation about why this person was asked to serve on the committee.

Dissertation committee members advise students on their research. They are expected to provide timely feedback on chapter drafts, evaluate the results, and participate in the defense of the dissertation proposal and the final oral examination of the dissertation.

Dissertation Hours

After advancing to candidacy, students must complete at least six credit hours of dissertation work through registration in DURB 7050 Dissertation Research. Students should register for DURB 7050 during any semester in which they are working on the dissertation and actively seeking the advice of the dissertation advisor and committee members. DURB 7050 cannot be taken until students have advanced to candidacy or after they have both completed the comprehensive exam and successfully defended their proposal. Prior to that time, students may enroll in DURB 6900 to work on their proposals or prepare for comprehensive exams. Students may enroll in more than six hours of DURB 7050 but only six hours may count as part of a program of study. Students must coordinate taking this course through their advisors. The agreement form is located here: http://grad.uno.edu/forms/.

Dissertation Preparation and Feedback from Committee Members

Doctoral students are expected to consult with members of their dissertation committees at frequent intervals. Advisors and students jointly decide whether draft chapters should
be distributed to other committee members as students complete them, or else wait to
distribute complete or nearly complete drafts to committee members. In any case,
students should expect their advisors and committee members to provide timely
feedback. In extreme cases when students feel that they are not receiving timely
feedback, they should inform the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator, who will discuss the
situation with the relevant parties. At the same time, students should not expect faculty
to provide feedback within unreasonable time constraints. Students, under normal
circumstances, must provide faculty members at least three weeks to review and
comment on the dissertation materials provided.

**Collaborative Dissertation Research and Co-Authorship**

The Department of Planning and Urban Studies and School of Planning and Regional
Studies encourages students to conduct dissertation research, where practicable, as part of
larger externally-funded faculty research grants or contracts. While there are many
benefits to such an arrangement, it also raises a number of issues, including: (1)
protection of doctoral students' rights and responsibilities of authorship of their
dissertation; (2) provision of a means for faculty members to judge whether the
dissertation represents students' ability to conceive and carry out independent research;
and (3) provision of a milieu that maximizes opportunities for students to participate in
funded research and mentoring by faculty researchers, while also fostering doctoral
students' intellectual growth and creativity.

All chapters and major chapter sections included in a dissertation are expected to be
primarily the written work of Ph.D. candidates. Students may include work co-authored
with faculty principal investigators in a dissertation through summaries of the work and
appropriate citation in a manner similar to the use of other published sources, which will
help ensure proper attribution for all work students include in their dissertations.
Verbatim inclusion of co-authored work in dissertations is permissible only with
unanimous approval of the dissertation committee.

Advice normally expected from and provided by dissertation advisors and committee
members on research design, analytic strategies, editing style, and the like should not
constitute an expectation of faculty co-authorship of any articles or other publications that
come out of students' dissertation research.

Securing funding for, or designing and constructing databases used in, a dissertation does
not automatically constitute grounds for faculty co-authorship of the dissertation
research. In such cases, however, students must demonstrate that they have added an
extra dimension to the research that goes significantly beyond the faculty-conceived
research, and that satisfies the committee members' and Department's standards for
independence and originality.
When students use faculty-initiated research projects as the basis for their own dissertation research, their faculty advisors and/or principal investigators should actively assist them in identifying pieces of the larger research project upon which students can base their dissertation research. The pieces of dissertation research might be significant enhancements or extensions of work already done collaboratively, or central parts of larger research projects that principal investigators have asked students to design and carry out. Ultimately, the dissertation research must be able to stand on its own and must be judged in terms of the scope and quality of students' contributions to the final research design, assembly of evidence, and valid and defensible interpretations of results.

**Final Doctoral Examination/Dissertation Defense**

Dissertation advisors are responsible to members of dissertation committees for determining that drafts are in an appropriate form prior to their distribution to committee members. The final oral examination of the dissertation, or the dissertation defense, should be held only after all committee members have had at least three weeks to review the draft of the doctoral dissertation and a majority of committee members have deemed it defendable. The final oral examination is primarily a defense of the dissertation research and report, but it may include questions that relate the dissertation to the major field of study. It is conducted by the dissertation committee members but is open to all students and faculty. Students are responsible for posting a sign announcing the date and time of the dissertation defense, and inviting attendance by interested students and faculty.

Students and their dissertation advisors are jointly responsible for filing the Request for Doctoral Examination form with the Graduate School at least one month before the scheduled date of the examination. The Request for Doctoral Examination form is available online at [http://grad.uno.edu/forms/](http://grad.uno.edu/forms/). Students must be registered in the semester in which they submit and defend their dissertations. Semester-specific deadlines for setting and holding dissertation defenses, and bringing dissertations to the Graduate School for format checking are in the UNO Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog. Students must check the Graduate School website for the Dissertation submission format requirements on this site: [http://grad.uno.edu/td/index.cfm](http://grad.uno.edu/td/index.cfm)

Students must post notice of the examination in the Department at least three working days before their examinations are to be held, and place one copy of the dissertation in the Department's administrative offices for review by any faculty member who may wish to participate in the examination. That copy of the dissertation remains the property of the Department and must be provided by the student in addition to the copies the student provides to members of the Dissertation Committee and the Graduate School.

The candidate for degree must be physically present at the defense of the manuscript. In
the case of extreme and unusual hardship the examining committee, with permission of
the PhD Coordinator, may make alternative arrangements.

After the oral examination, committee members evaluate the student's overall
performance, inform the student of their judgment (pass, conditional pass, or fail), sign
the dissertation if it is acceptable, and complete the Thesis and Dissertation Approval
form, which is filed with the Graduate School. The Thesis and Dissertation Approval
form is available online at http://grad.uno.edu/forms/. At least three of the four
dissertation committee members must approve the dissertation for a passing grade at the
final oral examination.

Application for Degree

During the registration period of the semester in which the final oral examination or
dissertation defense will be scheduled, students must file an application for the degree
at the Registrar's Office. Students are required to make this formal application and to state
the name to appear on the diploma. In addition, students must pay the diploma fee and at
this last registration. Students must check the deadline for submission with the Registrar.

If a student files an application for degree for a particular semester but does not graduate
in that semester, he/she must file a new application for degree for his/her next expected
term of graduation and pay any related fees.

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

The Graduate School offers a variety of financial aid opportunities to its students. Most
types of financial assistance at the graduate level are merit-based rather than need-based.
Review the following site for additional information: http://grad.uno.edu/fin.cfm.

Students must submit the following documents to the PhD Program Coordinator when
applying for either the Graduate Assistantship or Scholarship:

- UNO Graduate Scholarship application;
- CV;
- Personal statement that describes how the scholarship relates to the intended program
  of study

BORSF Doctoral Fellowships

These four-year fellowships are available periodically to students entering the
Department of Planning and Urban Studies doctoral program. The fellowships are
awarded on a competitive basis and require a distinguished record of previous
undergraduate and graduate work. Review the following site for additional information:  
http://grad.uno.edu/fin.cfm.

University of New Orleans Graduate Scholarships and Fellowships

The University of New Orleans offers graduate scholarships and fellowships on a competitive basis to exceptional domestic and international applicants. For information about the types of awards available, visit the UNO Graduate Scholarships web page at  
http://grad.uno.edu/Scholarships/index.cfm or contact the PhD Program of Urban Studies.

Doctoral Graduate Assistantships

Each year the Department of Planning and Urban Studies has a select number of doctoral graduate research assistantships funded by the on-going sponsored research activities of the faculty available to doctoral students. Students holding graduate assistantships work 20 hours per week on sponsored and other research under the direction of a member of the doctoral faculty and staff. Stipends vary depending upon students' duties, qualifications, and experience. Assistantships also allow out-of-state students to pay tuition at the in-state rate. Graduate assistants are eligible for exemption from most summer session fees if they hold a full-time assistantship during the spring semester.

The Department awards doctoral graduate assistantships on a competitive basis. Students apply for an appointment as a graduate assistant through the regular application form to the Ph.D. in Urban Studies program and, after admission, by applying to the Ph.D. Graduate Coordinator. In addition, individual faculty and staff members who are seeking assistance on sponsored research projects may contact students directly.

Grants and Loans

The University of New Orleans Office of Student Financial Aid assists students in applying for other sources of financial aid, including various grant and loan programs and part-time work. Students interested in these sources of aid should contact the Financial Aid office directly well in advance of their expected date of enrollment. Information about student aid and application forms for grants, loans, scholarships, and part-time campus employment is available at  

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
For additional information about the doctoral program, please contact:

Dr. Renia Ehrenfeucht  
Ph.D. Program Coordinator  
Department of Planning and Urban Studies  
Telephone: 504-280-6517; Email: renia.ehrenfeucht@uno.edu
APPENDIX I: PH.D. IN URBAN STUDIES PROGRAM FACULTY

Anna Livia Brand, Planning and Urban Studies

David I. Beriss, Anthropology

Jane S. Brooks, Planning and Urban Studies

Ana Croegaert, Anthropology

Renia Ehrenfeucht, Planning and Urban Studies

Jeffrey David Ehrenreich, Anthropology

David Gladstone, Planning and Urban Studies

D. Ryan Gray, Anthropology

Patrick M. Haughey, Planning and Urban Studies

Pamela J. Jenkins, Sociology

Kate Lowe, Planning and Urban Studies/Transportation Studies

Mary Niall Mitchell, History

Michael Mizell-Nelson, History

Earthea Nance, Planning and Urban Studies

Marla Nelson, Planning and Urban Studies

John L. Renne, Planning and Urban Studies/Transportation Studies

Bethany Stich, Planning and Urban Studies/Transportation Studies

Michelle M. Thompson, Planning and Urban Studies
APPENDIX II: URBAN STUDIES COMPREHENSIVE EXAM READING LIST

CORE CURRICULUM (Choose 2 of 3)

*Urbanization, De-industrialization, Globalization*


**Urban Culture, Urban Life, Neighborhood Change**


**Urban Development, Planning and Politics**


**THEORY**


RESEARCH DESIGN / METHODS

Research Design


OR


AND


AND


Methods and Analysis


**Literature Reviews**


**Writing**
