UNLV School of Community Health Sciences

Ph.D. in Public Health Degree Program

Student Handbook

Fall 2013
PHD Student Handbook

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this handbook is as up-to-date as possible. However, since requirements and procedures may change over time, students must check with their advisor regarding any questions or clarification. Further, students should regularly check the Graduate College website for updated information.
Welcome from the Dean

Welcome to the School of Community Health Sciences at UNLV. Our mission is to improve quality of life and to eliminate health disparities by providing quality education, research, service and leadership.

The work of public health is to create conditions where people can be healthy. Because we focus on population health rather than on individual health, public health workers require unique education, skills and research opportunities. Our degree programs provide a variety of study concentrations in the Ph.D. and Master of Public Health degrees as well as the Master of Education in Health Promotion degree that will prepare students for a public health career.

I am very excited to help shape the core and future of the new UNLV School of Community Health Sciences. Come join us and become part of the public health community working for a better world.

Mary Guinan, M.D., Ph.D
Dean, UNLV School of Community Health Sciences
ABOUT UNLV

In its 50-year history, UNLV has undergone an amazing transformation from a small branch college into a thriving urban research institution of 28,000 students and 3,300 faculty and staff. Along the way, the urban land-grant university has become a dynamic resource for one of the country's fastest-growing and most enterprising cities. UNLV's 350-acre main campus, located on the Southern tip of Nevada in a desert valley surrounded by mountains, is home to more than 220 undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs, all accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

The School of Community Health Sciences (SCHS), formerly known as the School of Public Health, was established in 2004 and is dedicated to improving the health and well being of people worldwide. Our departments, programs, and research units work to provide a diverse education, practical training experience and numerous community involvement opportunities to prepare students to become leaders and professionals in the field of public health.

SCHS students and faculty come from diverse backgrounds and represent a broad spectrum of interdisciplinary academic and research interests. We foster a collegial and supportive environment in which students work closely with faculty, staff, practitioners and other students. The quality of our educational programs reflects our deep commitment to our students.

The School of Community Health Sciences is committed to preparing students to meet the critical need for public health professionals in Nevada, the nation, and the world. We provide excellent academic programs with a variety of areas for concentration and the opportunity for applied research. The School of Community Health Sciences has a special interest in community-based participatory research.

Degree Programs

The SCHS currently offers an undergraduate degree and three graduate degrees in various disciplines of public health. The graduate degrees offered are Master of Public Health (MPH), the Master of Health Care Administration (MHA) and the Ph.D. in Public Health. The Ph.D. degree is a joint program with the University of Nevada Reno. Students can take classes and incorporate faculty into their committees from either institution. The Ph.D. in Public Health currently includes three concentration options: environmental and occupational health; health services management and policy; and, social and behavioral health.
Departments, Programs and Research Units

The School of Community Health Sciences houses several departments and programs including: the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health including the Epidemiology and Biostatistics Program and the Social Behavioral Health Program, and the Department of Health Care Administration and Policy.

In addition to a world class education, the School includes a number of research centers and laboratories: Center for Health Information Analysis, American Indian Research and Education Center; Center for Health Disparities Research; Nevada Institute for Children’s Research and Policy; Environmental and Occupational Health Laboratory; and Emerging Diseases Research Laboratory. These centers and laboratories within the school offer students specialized research and real-world training opportunities.

PHD Degree Program Contact information:

**PHD Graduate Coordinator:** Dr. Michelle Chino  
4505 Maryland Parkway Box 453064  
Las Vegas Nevada, 89154-3064  
Email: Michelle.chino@unlv.edu  
Phone: 702-895-2649  Fax: 702-895-5573

**Executive Associate Dean:** Dr. Shawn Gerstenberger  
4505 Maryland Parkway Box 453064  
Las Vegas Nevada, 89154-3064  
Phone: 702-895-1565  Fax: 702-895-5573

**Graduate College:** Graduate College  
4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451017  
Las Vegas, NV 89154-1017  
Flora Dungan Humanities (FDH), 3rd Floor  
Phone: 702-895-3320  Fax: 702-895-4180

**TWO WEBSITES YOU SHOULD BE VERY FAMILIAR WITH**

School of Community Health Sciences: [http://publichealth.unlv.edu/](http://publichealth.unlv.edu/)

Graduate College: [http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/](http://graduatecollege.unlv.edu/)

All the information, forms, and resources you will need to complete your PHD Degree Program are available on these two websites.

School of Community Health Sciences
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

My UNLV

MyUNLV provides students with online information and self-service capabilities 24-hours a day. This new system allows students to access personal data, register for classes, check grades, apply for financial aid, and much more. Logging in and using the system requires an NSHE ID number and password. Students applying to UNLV receive their ID number and password during the application process. The ID numbers and passwords for current students are sent to their Rebelmail account. Your NSHE ID is also printed on your RebelCard. For more information about My UNLV go to: http://aboutmyunlv.unlv.edu/overview/.

Rebelmail

In accordance with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas policy and the U.S. Family Education Right and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), UNLV vigorously protects the privacy of student education records. Therefore, if you are an admitted UNLV Graduate Student seeking information regarding your status, enrollment, progression, etc. via email YOU MUST USE YOUR CURRENT UNLV EMAIL ADDRESS TO RECEIVE A RESPONSE. YOU MAY ACTIVATE YOUR UNLV EMAIL ADDRESS AT: HTTP://REBELMAIL.UNLV.EDU

In addition, LEARN YOUR NSHE ID. This is the personal identification number assigned to you. Use it instead of your Social Security Number when doing university business to safeguard your identity.

All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they've been admitted to the university. So, don't wait, activate your account now. With your Rebelmail account you can:

• Stay current on important deadlines, major campus events, and announcements from your college
• Receive a weekly, easy-to-read e-mail newsletter
• Get a professional e-mail address to use on your resume and employment applications
• Your UNLV e-mail account is one of the primary ways you will receive official university communication. Don’t miss out on important information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements.
• Official correspondence from the School of Community Health Sciences will only go to your Rebelmail address.
Computer labs

The UNLV Office of Information Technology (OIT) maintains over 50 computer labs with some 1,500 computers available for academic use. The labs provide access to the technology required by faculty and students in pursuit of teaching, learning and research. A Computer Lab Account is required for access. The School of Community Health Sciences has a student computer lab located in BHS 343. Access to this lab is limited to SCHS graduate students.

Wireless internet

The UNLV Wireless Network is available to currently enrolled UNLV students, faculty, and staff who have a valid UNLV RebelCard. Access is not available everywhere on campus. Wireless access is available in BHS - Rod Lee Bigelow Health Sciences in selected first and fourth floor locations. Refer to the Access Locations page for additional campus hotspots. The network name, or SSID, will display as UNLV. Occasionally, when you open your laptop you will see other wireless networks available under different names. These networks may be supported by other computing offices.

UNLV Library

The Leid Library is located in mid-campus. Information about hours and policies is available at http://www.library.unlv.edu. UNLV Libraries Special Collections is the largest repository of original historical material relating to Las Vegas. The collections includes manuscripts, photographs, newspapers and maps; topics cover the range of Las Vegas: history, architecture, planning, development, gaming, strip extravaganzas, costume design and more. The UNLV Libraries Microforms has several major collections of Nevada/Las Vegas materials on microfilm or microfiche, including Nevada newspapers and Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. The UNLV Libraries Government Publications has a collection of state and local documents.

Services for Graduate Students Accessing Library Collections include: Course Reserves; Checking Out Books; RebelCard; Online Book Renewal; View Your Circulation Record; Document Delivery/Interlibrary Loan; Standard Library Workstations; Electronic Resources; Binding Personal Copies of UNLV Theses & Dissertations; Research Assistance; Library Instruction; Printing/Copying; Laptop Computers; Group Study Rooms; Graduate and Professional Student Association Lounge

Academic Calendars and Schedules

Calendars are available through the UNLV website, http://www.unlv.edu/main/calendars.html and include: Academic and term calendars, class schedules by term, final exam schedules, registration schedule, and the UNLV events calendar.
Registration/course schedules

Registration for all PHD program classes is available at http://register.unlv.edu/.
The online registration information includes the following information and services:
• How to Register Online
• Check Financial Aid Status
• Pay Tuition and Fees
• UNLV Regulations and Policies
• Student Directory Information (PDF)

Distance Education

Many classes are now available through Distance Education using WebCampus. Distance Education is a perfect fit for students with demanding schedules who wish to choose when and where to advance their education. Help is available around the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The new WebCampus Support Center provides a number of alternatives for reaching support with WebCampus issues.

NOTE: Although some classes are available through distance education, the Master of Public Health degree is not currently available as an online/distance education program.
THE DOCTORATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE PROGRAM

Public health emphasizes disease and injury prevention and health promotion in communities rather than individual health care. However, public health also has a major role in ensuring access to health care for all, examining the quality of our health care delivery systems and the formation of health policy. Schools of Public Health prepare professionals for a wide range of careers addressing these major responsibilities.

Our vision is to be a vibrant center of excellence for public health teaching, research and community action and a magnet for state, national and international students. Our mission is to improve the health and quality of life of people in our communities and to eliminate health disparities in Nevada, the nation and the world.

Admissions

Admission to the PHD Degree Program requires approval from the Graduate College and the School of Community Health Sciences. Based on the combined criteria there are three categories of admission for graduate students.

1. Full Graduate Standing – this is regular admission status. All international students must meet the criteria for Graduate Standing.
2. Provisional status – Only under special circumstances, students may be admitted with provisional status. This status is reserved for special students whose academic record is not strong enough at the time of admission to merit graduate standing. The student must complete a minimum of nine credits in specified graduate courses with a B (3.0) or better in order to receive full graduate status.
3. Contingency admission – Students must submit additional material or meet additional requirements before admission is finalized.

Graduate Non-Admitted Students are students who have completed an undergraduate degree and want to take a limited number of graduate courses without necessarily pursuing a degree program. This option is also available for students who have been denied admission and want to position themselves for re-application.

Doctorate of Public Health Program of study

The Doctorate of Public Health degree program at UNLV offers three areas of emphasis. Requirements for each area include a set of core classes, additional area required classes, one or more elective options, and a dissertation.

Social and Behavioral Health – Social and behavioral health is the aggregate of several purposeful activities including, but not limited to program planning, evaluation, and administration designed to improve personal and public health through a combination of strategies, including the competent implementation of health education, risk factor detection, behavioral change strategies, health enhancement, and health maintenance.
Health Services Management and Policy - Students in the Department of Health Care Administration and Policy gain a broad view of the health care delivery system and develop an understanding of health and disease. They develop analytical skills through the curriculum and internships to prepare them for leadership positions in the organization, financing, and delivery of health care services.

Environmental and Occupational Health - The EOH department emphasizes the role of air, water, the home environment, the community environment, and the workplace as critical determinants of health. The EOH concentration specifically addresses the environmental factors affecting human health.

Epidemiology and Biostatistics - Epidemiology and biostatistics are challenging and fascinating fields of study. Both require a high level of scientific interest and quantitative abilities, and promote active student involvement in data-based research and application.

Orientation

Every semester a student orientation session is held to introduce students to the program and to meet the faculty. We encourage you to attend this important event. Check the School website for orientation dates.

10 STEPS TOWARDS A DOCTORATE OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

1. Complete core requirements
2. PHD Comprehensive Exam
3. Dissertation Committee Formation
4. Area of Emphasis Coursework
5. Qualifying Exam
6. Prospectus
7. Advancement to Candidacy
8. Dissertation
10. Graduation
Complete core requirements (1)

Completion of the Ph.D. demonstrates that the graduate has the advanced research skills and competencies necessary to succeed in high level research and academic careers.

All students are required to successfully complete coursework that provides a public health foundation, and an Area of Emphasis in one of the four public health disciplines, and a minimum of 18 dissertation credits. Students with an MPH from UNLV SCHS must complete 48 credits beyond the Masters. Students with an MPH from another institution must complete 54 credits beyond the Masters. Students with a Master’s degree in a related field must complete 63 credits beyond the Masters.

Upon admission each student will be assigned an academic (not dissertation) advisor who will help the student begin planning a program of study. Students are expected to identify a dissertation committee before the end of their second semester in the program.

Core courses are generally offered every semester. Electives are offered alternate semesters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses for the 27 credit core</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biostatistical Methods for Health Sciences</td>
<td>EAB 703</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Health</td>
<td>EOH 740</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epidemiology and Public Health</td>
<td>EAB 705</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics in Public Health</td>
<td>EAB 704</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US Health Care System: Programs and Policies</td>
<td>HCA 701</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Foundations of Health Promotion</td>
<td>HED 705</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission of Infectious Disease</td>
<td>EOH 747</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Student Seminar I</td>
<td>EOH/EAB 795</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Student Seminar II</td>
<td>EOH/EAB 795</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Students who do not have an MPH degree may be required to take additional core classes.

*Students may take the PHD Qualifying Exam before completing the required 6 hours of EOH/EAB 795 Doctoral Student Seminar as all other required core coursework is completed.

Proposed plan of study (**FORM ALERT**) – Towards the end of your first semester, and before you complete 16 credit hours, you and your advisor should work together to plan a course of study including your dissertation. The plan of study consists of two forms – Part I and Part II – both of which must be approved by the graduate college. Part I is available on the Graduate College website. Part II is available on the SCHS website. NOTE: Part II is different for each concentration area. Check with your Advisor to be sure you are using the correct form.
Note on course cancellation – Courses may be cancelled due to low enrollment. Be sure to register early and check with your advisor if a class is cancelled. Be sure to plan your schedule carefully.

Course overload – (**FORM ALERT**) – A student who requests to take more than 12 credit hours in a semester must have prior approval from the Department, the School, and the Graduate College.
The PHD Comprehensive Exam (2)
All students are required to complete a written/oral Comprehensive Examination upon completion of the core courses of the program. The examination is designed to assess the student's ability to synthesize knowledge, as demonstrated by the selection and integration of information from several doctoral courses and is evaluated by written discussion in response to examination questions.

The Comprehensive Examination may only be repeated once and must be repeated within a year of the initial attempt. Students unable to pass the Comprehensive Examination after a second attempt will be separated from the program.

A student who is ready to take the qualifying exam should contact the Graduate Coordinator to schedule the exam. (**FORM ALERT**)  

Dissertation Committee Formation (3)**FORM ALERT**

Upon successful completion of the Comprehensive Exam the student must form a dissertation committee and commit to an area of emphasis. The committee will include at minimum:

- A chairperson with expertise in the student’s Area of Emphasis;
- Two additional committee members from the School of Community Health Sciences
- A Graduate College Representative (preferably with expertise in the student’s selected area of emphasis)

In your first semester you should become acquainted with the faculty and select an advisor in your area of interest. Your advisor will then help you select the remainder of your committee.

It is your responsibility to put together a committee. You will not be able to complete the degree program requirements without an approved graduate committee.

Students should approach their choice for Chair to discuss additional membership. A brief outline of the student’s proposed plan of study and dissertation research must be provided to prospective committee members.

During your graduate study, you may elect to change your advisor and/or your committee (**FORM ALERT**). Depending on the timing or cause for this change, you may also have to change your course of study and your capstone option. A change of advisor or any member of your committee must be approved by the Graduate College. No changes may occur during the final semester of your program.

Area of Emphasis Coursework (4) (**FORM ALERT**)  
The student and committee will agree on a final program of study for completion of Area of Emphasis coursework that will prepare the student for dissertation research. The student will meet with their committee to present their proposed plan of study and an outline of their dissertation research. Students should use the worksheet to map out their proposed program timeline.
The Qualifying Exam (5) (**FORM ALERT**) 
Upon completion of all required coursework other than dissertation hours, each student must take an oral Qualifying Examination that will focus on those areas of knowledge most relevant to the student’s dissertation topic. Qualifying examinations may only be repeated once and must be repeated within a year of the initial attempt. If a student fails a second attempt, the student will be separated from the program.

Prospectus (6) (**FORM ALERT**) 
Upon successful completion of the Qualifying examination, the student will, orally and in writing, submit a dissertation prospectus to his/her committee for approval. The written prospectus must include a draft Introduction, Background and Significance (literature review), and a complete Methods section. The oral presentation will consist of a 15-20 minute powerpoint presentation open to all students and faculty.

The prospectus must be approved by the Committee Chair prior to distribution to the rest of the committee.

Advancement to Candidacy (7) (**FORM ALERT**) 
Upon approval of the prospectus, the student applies to advance to candidacy and can then register for dissertation credits and begin their independent research.

Advancement to candidacy will only be approved when student has successfully completed:
  _____ All required coursework
  _____ Qualifying Exam
  _____ Prospectus

The Dissertation (8)

All candidates will finish their PHD degree with 21 credit dissertation resulting in a 72-credit Doctorate of Public Health degree. Academic rigor and a high quality manuscript is required to complete the dissertation. Every dissertation requires a prospectus presentation and a final defense. You must work with your advisor to select the best option. The final paper must meet the approval of all committee members prior to scheduling the final oral defense. The final draft must be distributed to the committee a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the final oral defense. The student is responsible for meeting the Graduate College deadlines and requirements.

Dissertation Manuscript
Every dissertation experience includes a high quality manuscript. The specific format and content requirements may vary depending on your selected dissertation. Sections usually include an introduction, background and significance, methods, results, and discussion. Dissertation manuscripts may also include sections on the implications of the study and recommendations for public health practice.
Final Oral Defense of Dissertation (9) (**FORM ALERT**)

Upon completion of the dissertation, the student must pass a final oral examination that involves the successful defense of their dissertation study. All advisory committee members must be present for this examination and may question the student following presentation of the study. The defense will be scheduled and conducted in accordance with the Graduate College/School’s policies for thesis and dissertation completion. Notice must be given two (2) weeks in advance and scheduled with the Program Administrative Assistant.

The defense is a public presentation and students are urged to attend defense presentations whenever possible. At the defense, you will present the findings of your research and your experience through a PowerPoint presentation in a public forum. This is your chance to demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have gained in the PHD program and your readiness to be a public health professional.

Graduation

Upon completion of all requirements and successful final oral defense of their dissertation, the student is eligible for graduation. Students must:

- Meet with the Associate Dean for Graduate Student Services for an initial format check of your dissertation. The Graduate College suggests completing this step by the eighth (8) week of the semester in which you anticipate graduating.
- Obtain permission to print dissertation. Contact the Associate Dean for Graduate Student Services.
- Submit final copies of dissertation to the Graduate College. Complete this step at least two (2) weeks prior to the last day of instruction in the semester in which you anticipate graduating.

Deadline dates are available in semester class schedules and on the Graduate College website. You must be registered for the term in which you intend to graduate. Your application will not be processed if you are not registered.

PROFESSIONALISM AND STUDENT CONDUCT

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and to maintain high ethical standards.

Professionalism

- Address faculty with the title of doctor, especially in the classroom setting.
- If you need to meet with your professor, do not show up unannounced and expect faculty to be free to meet with you. Call or email in advance to schedule an appointment if you cannot come to the scheduled office hours.
- Wear appropriate attire. Clothing should not be distracting to others in the classroom.
- Workplace attire is appropriate for prospectus and defense presentations.
Conduct
• Address faculty and your committee with a respectful tone and be prepared when meeting with your advisor.
• All work must be original. Plagiarism and cheating are grounds for immediate separation from the program.
• Show up for class on time and notify your instructor if you will be absent.

Courses
• Course reading and assignments are the minimum work required. Students should expect to do additional work (e.g. learn software programs, outside reading, additional research) in order to master the work.
• Written work should be free from errors and at a level appropriate for doctorate students. Faculty are not obligated to edit grammar or correct spelling. Please seek assistance through the UNLV Writing Center if English is not your first language or if you need help with writing skills.
• Classrooms are considered ‘no phone zones.’ Please turn off your cell phones while in class.

Other
• Follow requirements of the Graduate College and the School of Community Health Sciences in a timely manner.

GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES

The Doctorate of Public Health degree program adheres to the academic policies outlined in the Graduate Catalog at the time you were admitted, and you should be thoroughly familiar with these. In addition, every semester the Graduate Coordinating Committee will evaluate the progress of each student in the program. Students and their advisors will receive a letter from the graduate coordinator after the end of each year evaluating their progress. Any remarks indicating unsatisfactory or questionable progress must be addressed.

Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory Progress of Graduate Students in the Doctorate of Public Health degree program (PHD).

Our policy on evaluation of your progress and the resulting actions are as follows:

1. The Graduate Coordinating Committee will review each graduate student's progress at the end of each semester. All students will be notified individually regarding their satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress in the graduate program on an annual basis. Students should be familiar with both the Graduate College and the Doctorate of Public Health degree program policies guiding evaluations by the Graduate Coordinating Committee.

2. Evaluation of a student's progress will be in the following areas: (A) contingencies noted at the time of matriculation; (B) filing of required forms with the Graduate College: appointment of examination committee, degree program, thesis/dissertation prospectus; (C) course grades; (D) progress and quality of work on the thesis or dissertation; and,
(E) if funded, performance as a Graduate Assistant. Doctoral students will also be evaluated on their performance on Qualifying exams.

3. If, using the criteria listed above, a student is making unsatisfactory progress the student may be separated from the program or put on probation. The problems or requirements stated in the letter to the student must be corrected or fulfilled during the first semester of probation. If they are not, or if there is further unsatisfactory progress during any subsequent semester, the student will be placed on a second semester of probation during which time the student is not eligible for an assistantship or scholarship from the department or university. If, at the end of that second semester of probation, the Graduate Coordinating Committee still considers progress to be unsatisfactory, the student will be separated from the program.

4. If a student regards the Graduate Coordinating Committee’s evaluation to be unjust, a request for reconsideration during a meeting of the School of Public Health graduate faculty may be made of one’s advisor, the chair of the Graduate Coordinating Committee, or the graduate coordinator. The plaintiff will present the case in writing to the graduate faculty one week prior to the meeting and may choose to be present at the beginning of the meeting for discussion of the situation. The graduate faculty will deliberate the case without the student being present and, within one week, render its decision in writing. If a student remains unsatisfied with the faculty's findings, a grievance may be pursued through university channels. Please see the current graduate catalog for details.

All students enrolled in the Graduate Program in the School of Community Health Sciences are expected to uphold high standards of academic rigor. Failure to do so will result in separation or probation. Policies regarding separation and probation are set out below.

Academic Probation

Students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA. Any grade below a “B” will not qualify for graduate credit. A student who receives a B- or lower will be placed on academic probation. The Graduate Coordination Committee will determine the criteria by which the student will be removed from academic probation on a case-by-case. Failure to fulfill the prescribed requirements will result in separation from the program. A student will be placed on academic probation if any of the following conditions apply:

A) Any student who earns a cumulative GPA below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. The student will have one semester to raise this average above 3.0 or be separated from the program.

B) A student who receives one grade below a ”B” (B- or lower) will be placed on probation. The Graduate Coordination Committee will determine the criteria by which the student will be removed from academic probation on a case-by-case basis. Failure to fulfill the prescribed requirements will result in separation from the program.
C) Failure to make adequate progress towards degree requirements will also result in probation. This includes failure to complete 6 credits per academic year, failure to file appropriate forms with the Graduate College, failure to meet with their advisor upon request, or unsatisfactory grades including withdrawal or incomplete.

Separation

A student will be separated from the program for any of the following reasons:

A) The student receives two or more grades below a "B-" (C+- or lower) during their degree program will be separated from the program.

B) The student receives a grade of "B-" or lower in any core course. Core courses may only be repeated once.

C) Any student receiving two non-consecutive semester GPAs below 3.0 will be separated from the program.

D) Any student who fails the comprehensive examination, qualifying examination, or dissertation defense will be separated from the program.

E) Plagiarism on any assignment, professional paper, capstone experience, thesis or dissertation will not be tolerated and will result in the immediate separation of the student from the program. On cases involving plagiarism, the graduate coordinating committee will be convened to evaluate the work in question and vote on whether the student should be separated from the PHD program.

NOTE: A student who has been dismissed for academic reasons is not eligible for admission or reentry. A student must petition the Graduate College for academic reinstatement. (Graduate College Handbook).

Continuous Enrollment

Once admitted to the Graduate Program, the student is required to register for a minimum of six semester hours of credit each calendar year. Students who have not registered for academic work for a period of one calendar year will be separated from the Graduate College and will need to reapply should they wish to continue work on their degree.

Leave of absence (**FORM ALERT**)

A student may request a leave of absence for up to one academic year. While on leave, students retain their admitted student status; however, they are not registered and therefore do not have the rights and privileges of registered students. Failure to return as scheduled or to secure an extension of a prior leave of absence will result in separation from the university. A leave of absence must be approved by the student's
advisor, the Department Chair, the Graduate Coordinator, the Academic Dean and the Graduate College.

**Appeals/grievances (**FORM ALERT**)**

A student wishing to file an appeal or a grievance pertaining to his/her graduate education must follow the following procedures:

*Admissions* – If the student is not admitted to the graduate program and wishes to appeal a denial of admission, he/she should first direct the appeal in written form to the department or academic unit where the admission was denied. If the issue remains unresolved the appeal should then be directed to the dean of the academic college and finally to the Graduate Dean.

*Other Academic Issues* - The student with an academic grievance unrelated to admission (for example, course grades) should first direct the grievance in written form to his/her faculty advisor and the graduate coordinator. If the problem remains unresolved, the student should then direct the grievance to the academic dean. If the issue remains unresolved, the student may direct the written grievance to the Graduate Dean.

**Graduate Assistantships (**FORM ALERT**)**

Only students with full graduate standing are eligible for graduate assistantships. There are a limited number of assistantships available for students in the School of Community Health Sciences. Assistantships are awarded in the fall semester, usually for a one year period. Assistantships are highly competitive and are generally awarded based on academic merit to second year students. If you are interested in applying for an assistantship you must first complete and submit the application available on the graduate college website.
PHD HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I, ______________________________________ have received and read the PHD Handbook.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for completion of my degree program.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for meeting with my advisor early in my program.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for identifying and completing all required forms and paperwork.

✓ I understand that I am responsible for being aware of program policies and deadlines.

✓ I understand that the information contained in this guidebook and on the SCHS website are as accurate as possible but that changes may occur.

_____________________________________  ________________
Signature of Student                Date

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE
PHD GRADUATE COORDINATOR

School of Community Health Sciences