

Doctoral Degree Requirements

The doctoral degree is granted in recognition of high attainment in a specific field of knowledge. It is a research degree and is not conferred solely upon the earning of credit, the completion of courses, or the acquiring of a number of terms of residency, but also the successful completion of scholarly work. The length of residency and the requirements below are minimums; programs/colleges may elect to establish more rigorous requirements. The degree will be granted after the student has shown proficiency and distinctive achievement in a specified field, has demonstrated the ability to do original, independent investigation, and has presented these findings with a high degree of literary skill in a dissertation. A major professor will be appointed as soon as possible but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. The advisor will advise on any specific subject matter deficiencies and assist in the choice of a major professor and area of research

Minimum Hours

Because the doctoral degree is earned on the basis of advancement to doctoral candidacy status and satisfactory completion of the dissertation, the Graduate School does not specify any minimum number of courses or credit hours that must be completed for award of the degree. However, programs with formally approved concentrations must have core major requirements that all students must successfully complete. Students must comply with general enrollment requirements and also institutional residency requirements. All doctoral students must have at least one gradable (A-F) graduate course taken at USF to satisfy the GPA minimum requirements. No undergraduate courses may be used for the doctoral course requirements with the exception of courses included in the master's degree.

Time Limitations

Doctoral degrees must be completed within eight (8) years from the student's original date of admission for doctoral study. All courses applied to the doctoral degree, including courses taken 1) prior to admission to the USF doctoral program, 2) taken as non-degree seeking, or 3) transferred in from other institutions, must be completed within eight (8) years. There is no time limitation for courses from a completed master's degree used toward a doctoral degree. For students who are readmitted, see Readmission Policy. Typically a student will reach candidacy within four years, but this may vary per discipline.

Time Limit Extensions

In the event that a student nears the end of the time limitation as specified above, but the student needs more time to complete the degree, the student may submit a request for an extension using the *Time Limit Extension Request Form*, available on the Graduate School website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.asp>. Requests must include

- the reasons for the delay in completion,
- the anticipated time needed for completion,
- and endorsements from the graduate faculty advisor, graduate program, and College Dean or designee,
- a detailed plan of study and timeline for the remaining requirements for the degree

prior to submission to the Graduate School for approval. If approved, the time limit extension also applies to courses applied toward the degree. However, programs may require additional or repeat coursework as part of the condition of the time limit extension. Students who exceed the time limitations may have their registration placed on hold until a request for extension has been approved. Only one time limit extension request is permitted. Students who are temporarily unable to continue the program should submit a Leave of Absence Request, which extends the time limit for the duration of the approved Leave (see Leave of Absence in the Enrollment Requirements section for information; the *Leave of Absence Request Form* is available online at: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.asp>)

Enrollment Requirements

See Academic Policies Section

Institutional Enrollment Requirement

The majority of credits toward a graduate degree must be earned through instruction offered by the institution (e.g. USF Tampa, USF St. Petersburg, USF Polytechnic, USF Sarasota-Manatee) granting the degree. For information about the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree refer to the degree requirements in the program listing and the Transfer of Credit Policy.

Major Professor

The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the department to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. If a Major Professor cannot be identified or in the event a Major Professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another Major Professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement Major Professor should confer with the Program Director for available options. If no other options exist the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and Major Professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, should be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

- Be active in scholarly pursuits as evidenced by at least one referred publication in the last three years.
- Be graduate faculty, as defined by the University. Faculty who do not meet this definition may serve as Co-Major Professor with faculty who do
- Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities and have met departmental (or equivalent) requirements
- Have been approved by the Department Chair (or equivalent) to serve as a Major Professor or Co-Major Professor

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School.

In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e. for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the committee and another faculty is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. It is important that one of the Co-Major Professors be accessible on the university campus for the student to make satisfactory progress on the thesis/dissertation. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.); the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as "Co-Major Professors" and jointly serve in that role. Consequently both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e. committee form, change of committee form, admission to candidacy, etc.)

(Co-) Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities

Available on the Graduate School Website: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.asp>

Doctoral Committee

As soon as an area of research is determined and a major professor is selected, a Doctoral Supervisory Committee will be appointed and approved for the student. The department will request approval of the Doctoral Committee from the Dean of the College and, as needed, the Dean of the Graduate School. The Doctoral Committee will approve the student's course of study and plan for research, supervise the research, grade the written comprehensive qualifying examination, read and approve the dissertation, and conduct the dissertation defense.

Composition

The Doctoral Committee will consist of at least four members, three of whom must come from the academic area in which the major work for the degree will be done.

Member Definition

All graduate faculty, as defined by the University and the College/Department, and approved by their department and college, are assumed by the Graduate School as qualified to be a member of and/or supervise a doctoral committee. Persons desiring to serve on a committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (i.e. visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the University and the College/Department must submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the Department, College, and Graduate School, for each committee.

Approval

Once a committee has been determined, a Supervisory Committee Form needs to be completed by the student and submitted to the Committee Members for original signature. Check with the College for instructions and forms. To insure uniformity of excellence across the colleges, (Co-)Major Professor(s) of Ph.D. Dissertation Committees will need to submit a current curriculum vitae (equivalent to an NIH Bio, approximately two pages long with the last three [3] years of scholarly activity included) with the committee appointment form to the College Dean or designee. This approval is in addition to the approval from their department chairperson. (Colleges and departments may institute additional requirements for membership on Supervisory Committees.) Once approved, the original form and the approved Curriculum Vitae (CV) are placed in the student's file. An approved and current Committee Form must be on file in the program/college before graduation may be certified. Committee forms need to be processed as early in the program as possible, but no later than the semester prior to graduation.

Changes to Committee

Changes to a Supervisory Committee must be submitted on a Change of Committee Form. Check with the College for instructions and forms. Original signatures of faculty being added to the Committee, along with the approval signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s), must be on the form. Faxed signatures are acceptable. Faculty who are removed from the Committee are not required to sign the form, provided that the (Co-) Major Professor(s) has signed. In such instances the signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s) indicate(s) approval of the change, as well as acknowledgement and approval of the change by the removed member. Any non-faculty being added to a committee must submit a CV for approval. If a faculty member is being added as a Co-Major Professor, or if there is an appointment change to the Major Professor position, a CV must be included for the faculty member who is being added to that position. Change of Committee Forms should be submitted for approval as soon as the change takes place. Changes to a Committee are official only once approved and filed by the program and college. An approved and current Committee Form must be on file before graduation may be certified.

Doctoral Qualifying Examination

As soon as the substantial majority of the course work is completed, the student must pass a written qualifying examination covering the subject matter in the major and related fields. This examination may be supplemented by an oral examination. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in their discipline at the time they take the qualifying examination. If the exam is taken between semesters, students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in the semester before or following the exam.

Admission to Candidacy

In order to be admitted to doctoral candidacy, students must meet the following requirements at USF

1. admission to a doctoral program
2. appointment of a Doctoral Committee ,
3. attainment of an overall and degree program Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 at USF at the time of candidacy. (All "I" and "M" grades, including "IF" and "MF", must be cleared before candidacy may be finalized.)
4. successful completion of a qualifying examination
5. certification by the Doctoral Committee that the above qualifications have been successfully completed.

The Admission to Candidacy form should be submitted for approval during the semester that the qualifying exams were completed, but no later than the semester following the successful completion of the exam. The form will be approved by the Dean of the College and forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School for final approval. Doctoral Candidacy is effective as of the day that the Graduate School approves of the request and changes the student's status to 6C. For procedures and processing deadlines refer to the Graduate School website at www.grad.usf.edu

Once candidacy status is approved, students with approved candidacy are eligible to enroll in dissertation hours (7980) in the semester that immediately follows the last business day of the approval window. For example, students approved during the Fall approval window may enroll in the Spring. Students approved during the Spring approval window may enroll in the summer and students approved during the Summer approval window may enroll in the Fall. **Students may NOT enroll in dissertation hours prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy.**

Each degree program has a required number of dissertation hours for completion of the degree. Departments may, with College approval, apply Directed Research hours toward the total number of dissertation hours required. Directed Research hours shall not exceed 50% of the dissertation hour requirement. No directed research hours will be converted to dissertation hours (i.e. a directed research course dropped and a dissertation course added) prior to or during the approval window. *For more information refer to Enrollment Requirements in the Academic Policies section.*

Dissertation

Dissertation requirements are for the academic degrees of Ph.D. and Ed.D. For the professional degrees of Au.D. and D.P.T., contact the professional school for doctoral project requirements. The Dissertation must conform to the guidelines of the University. Refer to the Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines, available on the web at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.asp> for information about requirements, procedures, and deadlines. For enrollment requirements, refer to the Academic Policies section in the Catalog.

Format

The Dissertation must conform one of two available formats

Option 1 - traditional format¹ inclusive of:

- Part I: Preliminary Pages
 - Title Page
 - Dedication (optional page)
 - Acknowledgments (optional page)
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables (if applicable)
 - List of Figures (if applicable)
 - Abstract

- Part II: Text (divided by chapter or section headings)

- Part III: References / Bibliography²
 - Appendices Title Page
 - Appendix Sections (if applicable)

- Part IV: About the Author (required for dissertations)

Option 2 — collection of articles/papers instead of chapters. References may be at the end of each section or at the end of the entire document. Copyright permissions (if applicable) must be noted on the Acknowledgements page

- Part I: Preliminary Pages
 - Title Page
 - Dedication (optional page)
 - Acknowledgments and copyright permission (if applicable)
 - Table of Contents
 - Abstract

- Part II: Collection of Articles/Papers

- Part III: References / Bibliography³
 - Appendices Title Page
 - Appendix Sections (if applicable)

Directed Research

Directed Research hours may satisfy up to 50% of the dissertation hour requirement.

Manuscript Processing Fee

USF Regulation USF4-0107, <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf4.0107.pdf>
Students participating in the thesis/dissertation process are required to pay a processing fee. More information is available on the website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.asp>.

Dissertation Defense

¹ Deviations from the two available formats are acceptable if approved in advance by the Supervisory Committee and Graduate School

² Include either References or a Bibliography, as specified by your style guide

³ Include either References or a Bibliography, as specified by your style guide

After the Doctoral Committee has determined that the final draft of the dissertation is suitable for presentation; the Committee will request the scheduling and announcement of the Dissertation Defense (also called Final Oral Examination or Oral Defense.) Check with the College and program for college and program specific procedures for this process. A copy of the announcement should be sent to the Graduate School, preferably two weeks in advance of the defense date. The announcement must also be posted in a public forum for a minimum of twenty-four hours to comply with statute requirements for a public meeting. A student must successfully defend the dissertation in order to be able to proceed and complete the final submission process.

Outside Chair of the Dissertation Defense

The Dissertation Defense (or Final Oral Examination) shall be presided by a senior and distinguished scholar from outside the department, nominated by the Major Professor. If the chair is from another institution, this individual should have the equivalent qualifications necessary to chair a dissertation in the subject area at the University of South Florida. Note that the Major Professor may not serve as the "Outside Chair."

Procedures for Conducting the Oral Defense

1. The oral defense should be conducted to allow for the student to make any necessary corrections following the defense and still meet the final copy deadline for turning in the dissertation to the Office of Graduate School.
2. It is required that all members of the Dissertation Committee be present for the examination unless an absence is approved prior to the defense taking place by the Graduate School Dean. In the event that a member cannot attend in person, participation is permissible via speakerphone or video conference. A minimum of three members, including the Major Professor is required to proceed with the defense. The Outside Chair is not considered as part of the Committee.
3. The presentation should be considered an important function in the department and all graduate students and faculty be encouraged to attend.
4. The presentation and defense are open to the public and as such, must meet the requirements of the Sunshine Laws for the State of Florida. The voting is not public.
5. The room selected for the examination should have adequate seating with an alternate room selected in case of problems.
6. The Outside Chair should open the proceedings by introducing the candidate and the Dissertation Committee.
7. The examination should begin with a presentation by the candidate designed to summarize the dissertation.
8. The remainder of the examination may take place in a different setting and will consist of questions about the research by the Outside Chair and the Dissertation Committee and by other interested persons. It is suggested that questioning should be limited to about 15 minutes for each person with subsequent rounds of questioning as necessary.
9. Questions from the faculty-at-large and/or the public may be allowed at the end of the committee's questioning.
10. The length of the examination period will generally not exceed three hours. Throughout this time the Outside Chair is to be in charge of all proceedings and, ideally, is expected

to play a balancing role between advocacy and contention. The Outside Chair, at anytime during the course of the examination, may request all visitors to leave.

11. Following the completion of these proceedings, the Outside Chair will ask all visitors and the candidate to leave and will re-convene the Dissertation Committee only. The Outside Chair may share his/her impressions and opinions of the candidate and the dissertation. The Outside Chair will preside over the deliberations and voting of the committee, but is not to participate in the voting. The voting is to be limited to "pass" and "fail" votes. The Outside Chair has the responsibility of tallying the votes and of informing the candidate of the final decision. ***The vote of the Dissertation Committee must be unanimous and recorded on the Successful Defense form.*** The College Graduate Dean will resolve substitutions and disagreements within the committee.
12. The Outside chair will convey the decision of the Dissertation Committee (Successful Defense form) to the Department/College Graduate office to be kept in the student's file.

Suggested Guide for Dissertation Defense Proceedings

1. Introduction of Candidate and Committee Members.
2. Presentation by Candidate.
3. Questions by Committee Members.
4. Questions from other faculty and/or other observers.
5. Candidate and observers leave the examination room.
6. Deliberation and voting by the committee, only; Sign documentation (to be determined by College/Department) if defense is successful.
7. The candidate shall be informed of the vote.
8. The record of the successful defense (to be determined by the College or Department) is forwarded to the College/Department for the student's file.

Dissertation Final Submission Guidelines

Information on requirements for submission of the finished and approved manuscript copies is available online at the Thesis and Dissertation website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.asp> . Students who fail to submit the final copy of a dissertation by the posted submission deadline will not be considered for graduation. The student may be considered for graduation in the following semester and must therefore apply for the degree (graduation) by the posted deadline, enroll in a minimum of two (2) dissertation hours for that subsequent semester, and meet the submission requirements as posted on the Thesis/Dissertation website. Only after the Graduate School has approved the manuscript can the student be certified for the degree.

Mandatory Electronic Submission

Students are required to submit the dissertation in an electronic format (ETD). Requirements and procedures are available at the Graduate School website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/thesis.asp>

Submission to Pro-Quest

All dissertations are submitted to Pro-Quest for microfilming and archiving.

Changes after Publication

Once a dissertation is approved and accepted by the Graduate School for publication, it cannot be changed.

Release of Dissertation Publications

The University recognizes the benefits from collaboration with sponsors on research projects but also recognizes the possibility of conflicts of interest in the disclosure of the results of the collaborations. While the sponsor's economic interests in the restriction of disclosure should be considered, the University has a primary mission to extend knowledge and disseminate it to the public and the broader academic community. The University's "Statement of Policy Regarding Inventions and Works" acknowledges the possible need for delays in publication of sponsored research to protect the sponsor's interests, but it provides no definite guidelines for the restrictions of publication beyond the statement: "Disclosure delays mutually acceptable to the Inventor, the Vice President for Research, and the sponsor, if any, are authorized in order to allow patent applications to be filled prior to publication, thereby preserving patent rights..."⁴

To protect the University's primary goal from un-due compromise, the University has adopted the following guidelines:

1. The recommendations of sponsors, regarding publication of research results should be considered advisory rather than mandatory.
2. In support of academic discourse and the mission to promote and share academic works, Dissertations will be released for worldwide access once submitted to and approved by the USF Graduate School. In the event that a patent or copyright application provides reason to delay the release of the Dissertation, a petition to request a one year delay may be submitted to the Graduate School for consideration. Such requests must be received by the format check of the dissertation.
3. Students should not be delayed in the final defense of their dissertations by agreements involving publication delays.

Duty to Disclose New Inventions and Works

USF 0-300 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-300.pdf> and USF 12.003 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf12.003.pdf> For information about the requirements of this policy contact the Division of Patents and Licensing at (813) 974-0994.

Dissertation Change of Grade

In the semester in which the final manuscript has been received, reviewed, and certified for permanent filing in the University Library, the Graduate School submits the change of grade from "Z" to "S" for the last registration of dissertation courses to the office of the registrar when all grades are due at the end of the semester.

The Use of "Ph.D." in Credentials and Publication

Students may only use the credential of "Ph.D." after degree conferral is granted. It is inappropriate to use the credential until it is officially and formally granted. The use of the abbreviation "Ph.D." in university publications, correspondence, etc., including websites and other electronic media, shall be upper case "P", lower case "h" followed by a period, an upper case "D" and another period. It shall not be used in the format of all upper case letters without periods, as in "PHD"

⁴ April Burke, "University Policies on Conflict of Interest and Delay of Publications," Report of the Clearinghouse on University-Industry Relations, Association of American Universities, February, 1985.