

# **Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education School of Public Health and Information Sciences University of Louisville**

Approved by SPHIS Academic Affairs

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## **School of Public Health & Information Sciences Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education**

To ensure high quality graduate education programs, the School of Public Health & Information Sciences (SPHIS) sets the minimum guidelines for admission and performance of graduate students, for faculty involvement in graduate education, and for proper academic administration. The Faculty of the School of Public Health & Information Sciences has the academic authority and responsibility to establish rigorous and effective admission requirements, curricula, instruction, examinations, and recommendations to the Board of Trustees for granting of degrees for programs within the SPHIS (Redbook Article 3.3.2.), which are not less stringent than those set forth in the approved Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education that have been established by the Graduate Council and maintained in the Graduate School.

### **I. Academic Standards for Students in Graduate Programs**

#### **A. Admissions Standards**

1. All applications for graduate program admissions must include: a completed application; an application fee; results from any standard test required by the enrolling program; official transcripts for all previous post-secondary coursework; and at least two letters of recommendation. All transcripts not in English must be certified as authentic and translated verbatim into English.
2. The minimum requirement for admission into a graduate program is the baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from a regionally accredited institution. Each program shall establish and publish in the university catalog a minimum grade point average requirement to be considered for acceptance and admission. No applicant with a grade-point average of less than 2.75 will be admitted to a program of graduate study in the SPHIS without permission from the program director and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
3. Unconditional admission in good standing to degree seeking status shall be made only if all application materials have been received, and all admission credentials meet the program's published standards.
4. Any provisional or special conditions acceptance will be made on an individual basis and require a statement of the rationale for the exception, plans for monitoring progress and performance and stated success criteria. Such justification must be provided in writing and must be accepted by the faculty and Dean of the School of Public Health & Information Sciences and approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs. This will allow consideration of special circumstances in which the potential for high quality graduate performance has been clearly demonstrated by other means.

#### **B. Academic Performance**

1. Current curricular and program offerings, including all requirements for degrees, are published in the Graduate Catalog, which is available at the following website (<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/programs-study/>).
2. The minimum grade point average requirement (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) and other performance criteria for maintenance of good standing and progress toward degrees in the SPHIS and its academic programs are published in the Graduate Catalog.

3. Any student who does not satisfy the published performance criteria will be placed in probationary status. Any student who remains in probationary status for two consecutive terms may be considered for dismissal from the program.
4. Students receiving graduate assistantships (teaching, research or service) will be provided adequate training and will be required to understand and adhere to University policies related to these areas. The performance of teaching, research and service duties by such students will be periodically evaluated. Students with teaching assistantships shall be evaluated annually.
5. Students who fail to meet performance goals or who do not meet other requirements as outlined in the admission letter, program requirements, or the university's catalog may be subject to academic dismissal from their programs.

#### C. International Students

1. All international students must comply with regulations of the U.S. Department of Immigrations and Customs, its Student and Exchange Visitor Program, and all related policies of the University of Louisville International Center.
2. All international students must be registered with the University of Louisville International Center and must present evidence of financial resources adequate to support their educational and living expenses in the United States for the duration of their studies.
3. International students for whom English is not their primary language must show English language proficiency by demonstration of a program's specified level of proficiency on the TOEFL or IELTS examination or by demonstration of a degree award from an acceptable English language institution.

#### D. Academic Program Administration

1. Policies for administration of academic programs will be promulgated by the Dean of the Graduate School following appropriate consultation with: (1) an advisory body of deans or their designees, (2) directors of graduate programs, (3) representatives of the Graduate Student Council and/or (4) the Graduate Council. Final approval of these guidelines shall be made by the University Provost.
2. These administrative policies will be published in the university catalog and will include policies and procedures for the academic calendar and catalog maintenance, requirements for maintenance of good academic standing, course, credit and degree requirements, grades and grading policies, honors and awards, requirements for theses and dissertations, residency policies, and policies for award of stipends, benefits, tuition and fee remission.

#### E. Conflict resolution

1. Any student who believes that he or she has been treated unfairly, discriminated against, or has had rights abridged may seek resolution of this conflict. Students, faculty and administrators should first seek to resolve the matter through informal discussion and through administrative channels, and through the University Student Complaint Process. Should the complaint result in an academic grievance, a student may initiate a grievance at the unit level within one year of the event that gave rise to the complaint. All

grievance procedures will be conducted in accord with Redbook Section 6.8. [Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities \(CSRR\)](#)

## II. Faculty Participation in Graduate Education

### A. Certification for teaching graduate level courses.

1. Faculty who participate in teaching graduate level courses will meet the requirements of the University of Louisville Faculty Credentials Policy. This policy is consistent with the guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools which state that faculty who teach graduate and post-baccalaureate coursework should have an earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline. However, units may consider other qualifications (e.g., work experience, research) when determining whether a person is qualified to teach graduate level courses. Such exceptions must be documented and approved by the Dean of the School of Public Health & Information Sciences. Documentation of faculty-teaching credentials is maintained by the Office of the Dean of the School of Public Health & Information Sciences.
2. Certified graduate teachers may teach outside of their unit with approval of the program within that unit.

### B. Certification for membership to the Graduate Faculty

1. Membership to the Graduate Faculty requires certification for teaching graduate level courses as described above, as well as certification to serve as a member of a thesis or dissertation committee member or as a committee chair.
2. Faculty who serve as members of a thesis or dissertation committee must have experience in independent research, scholarship or creative activity that is of value to the student's field of study. Exceptions may be made in accordance with Graduate School policy.
3. Faculty who serve as the chair of a student's committee must be currently active in research, scholarship or creative activity, as defined by the faculty of the academic unit, and must be an active full-time member of the department. The faculty member must also make provisions for continuous availability of student mentoring.
4. Doctoral dissertation committees shall be composed of a minimum of four graduate faculty members and masters' thesis committees a minimum of three members. One of the members of the doctoral committee must be from outside the program; a committee member from another institution may fulfill this requirement. All dissertation and theses committees will provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance.
5. Members of the SPHIS Graduate Faculty may serve as committee chairs or committee members for graduate students outside of the school with approval of the student's enrollment unit.
6. If a prospective committee member does not meet the standards for a graduate faculty appointment in the student's enrollment unit but brings professional expertise or value to a student's program, this person may be granted ad-hoc membership to the Graduate

Faculty by the Dean of the SPHIS. This pertains to persons from outside the university, as well as faculty and staff employed by the university.

7. In order to be nominated and approved for Graduate Faculty status, a SPHIS faculty member must meet any of the following:
  - Doctoral degree (Dr.P.H., Ph.D., D.Sc., or equivalent) from a regionally accredited institution in a field of study offered by the SPHIS.
  - Terminal degree (M.D., DMD, DDS, Ph.D., D.Sc., J.D., Ed.D., or equivalent) from an institution or in a field not cited above; and recommendations by the department's chair and executive faculty and approval by the dean, both of which are based on one or more of the following considerations, as appropriate:
    - Terminal degree in area of study, research, and other educational activities
    - Scholarship in a field cited above or considered relevant to SPHIS
    - Experience in a field considered relevant to SPHIS
8. Exceptions to these guidelines for involvement with graduate education at the masters' and doctoral level must be documented and approved by the Dean of the SPHIS and approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs

In keeping with the Graduate School's requirement that all units will publish the criteria for participation in graduate education and the process for periodic evaluation for continuation of such status, the SPHIS requires that faculty teaching graduate courses or serving as chairs or members of dissertation or thesis committees are evaluated annually for continuation in this status as part of the annual faculty review and work plan. The school will forward the graduate faculty list to the Dean of the Graduate School annually for publication in the Graduate Catalog.