

PhD Program Handbook



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Disclaimer

The Handbook is applicable to students who enroll in the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work Program beginning Summer 2023 through Spring 2024.

This Handbook documents policies and procedures set by the Graduate Council, the Kent School of Social Work and Family Science, and the Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work Program and is updated each academic year to reflect changes and updates to policy. While every effort has been made to make the Handbook accurate as of the date of publication, Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work Program reserves the right to change programs of study, academic policies, academic requirements, fees, course information, procedures for the confirmation of degrees, or the announced academic calendar and related deadlines without prior notice.

**Message from the Interim
Director
Anita P. Barbee, Ph.D., MSSW**

Welcome to the PhD Program at the Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work & Family Science! Congratulations, you have chosen to join a community of scholars committed to addressing complex social problems through education, research and service to create a just and better world. Our PhD program is designed to develop scholars prepared to create knowledge through research that informs interventions and policies as well as the education of future social workers to address critical social problems and pursue social justice. Upon graduation, you will be prepared for positions in academic and related research settings.

Throughout your time here, you will collaborate with a diverse group of nationally recognized faculty within the school and university with expertise in the areas of promoting anti-racism, behavioral health interventions, child and family well-being, child welfare, gerontology, intimate partner violence prevention and intervention, health disparities, human trafficking prevention and intervention, oncology social work, refugees/immigrants, relationships, trauma-informed care and organizations and youth empowerment, development and interventions. You will be guided in developing expertise in an area of social sciences research. Finally, you will be mentored and supported on becoming a faculty member and balancing research, teaching, and service as you prepare for your future career.

We are honored to have you here at the University of Louisville for your training. We welcome you to become involved in the research of our faculty who can all contribute to make your educational experience an outstanding one.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

CODE OF ETHICS

Participants of the Ph.D. in Social Work Program respect and fully commit to abiding by the NASW (SocialWorkers.Org) Code of Ethics and Ethical Principles. This includes but is not limited to the following:

[NASW Home \(socialworkers.org\)](https://www.socialworkers.org) notes, “The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics is a set of standards that guide the professional conduct of social workers. The 2021 update includes language that addresses the importance of professional self-care. Moreover, revisions to the Cultural Competence standard provide more explicit guidance to social workers. All social workers should review the new text and affirm their commitment to abide by the Code of Ethics. Also available in Spanish.

- The first Section, "Preamble," summarizes the social work profession's mission and core values.
- The second section, [Purpose of the NASW Code of Ethics](#), provides an overview of the Code's main functions and a brief guide for dealing with ethical issues or dilemmas in social work practice.
- The third section, [Ethical Principles](#), presents broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values, that inform social work practice.
- The final section, [Ethical Standards](#), includes specific ethical standards to guide social workers' conduct and to provide a basis for adjudication.”

Ethical Standards

The following ethical standards are relevant to the professional activities of all social workers. These standards concern (1) social workers’ ethical responsibilities to clients, (2) social workers’ ethical responsibilities to colleagues, (3) social workers’ ethical responsibilities in practice settings, (4) social workers’ ethical responsibilities as professionals, (5) social workers’ ethical responsibilities to the social work profession, and (6) social workers’ ethical responsibilities to the broader society. Some of the standards that follow are enforceable guidelines for professional conduct, and some are aspirational. The extent to which each standard is enforceable is a matter of professional judgment to be exercised by those responsible for reviewing alleged violations of ethical standards.

1. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Clients >>](#)
2. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues >>](#)
3. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities in Practice Settings >>](#)
4. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities as Professionals >>](#)
5. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Social Work Profession >>](#)
6. [Social Workers' Ethical Responsibilities to the Broader Society >>](#)

Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook has been designed to be a resource for students, candidates, and faculty, particularly regarding understanding the components of the PhD program, as well as the expectations, policies, and procedures that guide our collaborative efforts to help students matriculate through the program successfully. The faculty and staff of the Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work & Family Science provide education, leadership, mentoring, and guidance to assist students in obtaining the maximum possible benefit from graduate education. For additional advice and/or clarification of expectations, policies, and procedures; students should consult with their mentor, comprehensive exam/dissertation chair, the PhD program director, or program coordinator.

Tips and Resources for Efficient and Effective Navigation to Graduation

Know Your Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the students and candidates to become familiar with and observe all policies and requirements of the program. It is imperative that students and candidates respond to official notices issued by administrative offices and instructors, whether these notices are posted on official sites or sent through email.

Stay in Contact

When questions or concerns arise, check with the doctoral program office first. We like to know what is going on, and if we cannot assist you directly, we will help you find the answers you seek. There are a couple of exceptions. If you were awarded an assistantship and have questions about payroll, you should email the Kent School Business Service Center at kentserv@louisville.edu. If you were awarded a fellowship, minority assistantship or another type of award, you need to contact the Graduate School at 502-852-5882. If you have questions or problems with your student insurance, please contact Camille Smith at 502-852-6519 or camille.smith@louisville.edu.

Use your UofL Email for all University-related Correspondence

Kent School administration, faculty, and staff as well as the University Bursar's Office, Registrar's Office, and Financial Aid Office ONLY communicate with students via their university email accounts. It is imperative that students use their university accounts and check email on a regular basis as it is the best way to stay connected with the school and informed of any important issues.

Become Familiar with ULINK

ULink is the website portal for all information access. This [page](#) will answer almost any question regarding classes and academic progress along with payments and financial aid.

Change of Contact Information

If your contact information changes, change this information online through ULink and email the program coordinator to update your information on the program side.

Become Familiar with your BLACKBOARD Page

Your BLACKBOARD link has information regarding doctoral courses and registration procedures.

Become Familiar with the Graduate School Website

UofL's [Graduate School web pages](#) contain helpful information for students.

Become Familiar with the Resources at the Back of this Handbook

The tables near the end of the handbook provide an overview of the University and Graduate School Policies and Resources and forms that are most commonly utilized by students and candidates.

Organizational Overview

University of Louisville

The University of Louisville is a state-supported research university located in Kentucky's largest metropolitan area. It was a municipally supported public institution for many decades prior to joining the university system in 1970. The University has three campuses. The 287-acre Belknap Campus is three miles from downtown Louisville and houses eight of the university's 12 colleges and schools. The Health Sciences Center is situated in downtown Louisville's medical complex and houses the university's health-related programs and the University of Louisville Hospital. The 243-acre Shelby Campus is located in eastern Jefferson County. The University of Louisville will be ubiquitously recognized as a great place to learn, a great place to work, and a great place in which to invest because we will celebrate diversity, foster equity, and strive for inclusion. The University of Louisville is committed to achieving preeminence as a nationally recognized metropolitan research university. For additional information, click [here](#).

Mission statement. The University of Louisville pursues excellence and inclusiveness in its work to educate and serve its community through:

1. teaching diverse undergraduate, graduate, and professional students in order to develop engaged citizens, leaders, and scholars
2. practicing and applying research, scholarship and creative activity
3. providing engaged service and outreach that improve the quality of life for local and global communities

The Kent School of Social Work & Family Science

The Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work & Family Science has its roots in Louisville, Kentucky, beginning with social welfare activity in the early 1900s. For 87 years, the Kent School of Social Work and Family Science has undergone many transformations, but during that time it has always maintained a close working relationship with the practice community and the region's human service needs.

Mission statement. The Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work & Family Science addresses complex social problems through education, research and service to create a just and better world.

For additional information about the Kent School, click [here](#).

PhD Program

The PhD program's origins date back to 1996 and 1997, when a team of faculty members from the University of Louisville and University of Kentucky worked together to plan the curriculum for a joint program that consisted of core courses including research competence and theoretical aspects of social work along with individualized study (e.g., child welfare, substance abuse, gerontology, urban issues). The program was approved at each institution, and the first class matriculated in the fall of 1997. In 2020, the formal relationship between the two institutions was terminated. Kent School graduates have gone on to work as faculty members in schools of social work nationally and internationally as well as in a variety of other research, administrative and policy positions.

Mission statement. The program develops scholars prepared to create knowledge through research that informs interventions and policies and to educate future social workers to address critical social problems and pursue social justice. The program also prepares its graduates for positions in academic and related research settings.

Goals

Graduates will demonstrate advanced critical thinking skills and knowledge necessary to be leaders in the social work profession as researchers, academicians and advocates for social justice. Graduates will demonstrate mastery of an area of theoretical and methodological expertise to address specific social problems.

Graduates will demonstrate mastery of research methodology and advanced statistics, including both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Graduates will demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare future social workers to address complex social problems.

For additional information about the PhD Program in the Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work and Family Science, click [here](#).

Program Faculty and Staff

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All Kent School faculty support doctoral education through teaching core courses, independent studies, and research practica, and also serving as advisors/mentors to students. The [research directory](#) profiles the scholarship of each faculty member and summarizes their activities.

Program Address

110 Patterson Hall
 Kent School of Social Work
 2313 S. 3rd Street
 University of Louisville
 Louisville, KY 40208

Program Components

The components of the program include: (a) coursework, (b) comprehensive examination, (c) dissertation, and (d) mentoring and professional development. The program requires a total of 50 credit hours of coursework and 6 credit hours from Dissertation Preparation. A revised curriculum has recently been completed, so minor adjustments are possible.

Coursework

The coursework consists of 50 credit hours including 38 credit hours of core curriculum and 12 hours of individualized curriculum (independent studies and electives). Six of the 12 individualized credits must be in research methods or statistics. Individualized coursework is tailored to each student's educational goals. Six credit hours are electives and six are focused individualized studies. The electives may include PhD-level courses inside or outside the Kent School; in general, 700 level courses from any unit are acceptable provided they are consistent with student's professional development plan. Six hundred level courses require a more detailed vetting of the syllabus.

Independent Study (also known as Individualized Study)

Individualized study projects are identified in consultation between the student and the student's mentor or other faculty member. While it is common for students to have an Independent Study with their mentor, if they would like to seek other faculty due to correlation with their specific topic or area of expertise, it is the student's responsibility to seek that faculty person if it is not their mentor. The student should also discuss their plans regardless of instructor with their mentor as well.

Independent Studies must be approved by the faculty member serving as the instructor of record and the student's mentor (if the mentor is serving as both they would note this on the form). The form outlines what is needed as a syllabus/proposal or guide for the student and instructor's agreement and expectations. Once projects are confirmed and syllabi (or proposal) designed, the student submits the Independent Study form with required signatures ([Individualized Study Form](#)) to the Ph.D. Program Office. The Program Director will sign off in approval or may request further detail before signing. PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM PRIOR TO THE SEMESTER START IN WHICH THE INDEPENDENT STUDY TAKES PLACE.

The coordinator will facilitate automatic registration through the Registrar.

1st Year: Fall

- Pro Seminar I: Foundations of Scholarly Writing (1)
- Theory I: Philosophy of Science and the Development and Application of Theory in Social

Work Research and Interventions (3)

- Foundation Research Methods (3)
- Introduction to Social Statistics and Data Analysis (3)

1st Year: Spring

- Systematic Change: Identifying and Intervening in Issues of Social Justice (3)
- Theory II: Theory-Driven Analysis of Social Problems to Inform Practice & Social Welfare Policy (3)
- Advanced Research Methods (3)
- Applied Regression Analysis (3)

1st Year: Summer

- Individualized Study: [Examination of Scholarly Literature] (3)
- or Individualized Study: [Mentored Research Experience] (3)
- Qualitative Methods: Design, Data Collection and Analysis (3)

2nd Year: Fall

- Advanced Scholarly Writing to Fund and Disseminate Research to Diverse Audiences (3)
- Advanced Qualitative Methods: Design, Data Collection, and Analysis (3)
- Teaching in Social Work (3)
- Elective*(3)

2nd Year: Spring

- Pro Seminar II: Comprehensive Examination Preparation (1)
- Teaching Practicum (3)
- Elective (3) or Individualized Study
- Elective (3)

2nd Year: Summer

- Dissertation Preparation (6)

Course Descriptions

Course Descriptions and Schedules

The program requires a total of 56 credit hours, 50 of which are doctoral-level course credit hours plus six dissertation prep hours in which the student completes their comprehensive exam. The core curriculum consists of required courses that include advanced research design and analysis, theory development, policy analysis, change theories, ethics, teaching in social work, and professional seminars.

Students will successfully complete the core curriculum (38 credit hours), an Individualized Plan of Study (12 credit hours), the Comprehensive Examination/Dissertation Prep Course (six credit hours).

The course descriptions below include the credit hours in parentheses.

SW 729/Pro Seminar I: Foundations of Scholarly Writing (1)

This is the 1st of 2 Professional Seminar courses, which bookend the PhD coursework. This course is also aligned with SW 761: Advanced Scholarly Writing to Fund and Disseminate Research to Diverse Audiences, which is taken in the fall of your second year. The goals of this course are to improve your understanding of the process and mechanics of writing within academia and provide

a foundation for you to become leaders in the social work profession as researchers, academicians, and advocates for social justice. Students will infuse aspects of anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices into their professional development plan and encouraged to frame the introduction of their manuscript from an equity lens.

SW 732/Theory I: Philosophy of Science and the Development and Application of Theory in Social Work Research and Interventions (3)

This course explores the nature of knowledge and how it is generated and acquired. We will be focusing on the nature and role of theory in contemporary social welfare scholarship informed by a central commitment to social justice. This is the first of two theory classes that students will take and builds on the skills you will be introduced to in your methods courses. Doctoral students will be introduced to key constructs in the philosophy of social science and how various theories of knowledge inform our work as social scientists. We will explore the nature and role of theory in contemporary social science scholarship; examine a range of epistemologies through examples of associated research products; and evaluate issues of equity, anti-racism, and social justice within these frames. The course provides a platform for understanding the underlying assumptions of research methods including analysis of “Big Data,” randomized controlled trials (RCTs), ethnographies, and a variety of other qualitative and quantitative methods. Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on critical thinking, collegial engagement, and the conventions of formal scholarly practice.

SW 733/Foundation Research Methods (3)

Research methods will be taught in two sequential courses, Foundational and Advanced. In designing these courses, Dr. Barbee (who is the instructor of record for Advanced Research Methods) and I explored syllabi from many R1 institutions. Syllabi from the University of Maryland, School of Social Work program were chosen as a guide for the design and development of the Kent School of Social Work sequence of methods courses.

The goals of this course are to teach students: (1) to implement the most appropriate research strategies in the pursuit of knowledge pertinent to social work-relevant topics, (2) to understand and critically assess reports of experimental and observational research studies, (3) to develop methodological strategies for testing important hypotheses and answering salient social work research questions. The course examines the four types of experimental validity [statistical conclusion, internal, construct, and external] and how to minimize threats to each. Issues regarding the selection and evaluation of measures including the various types of reliability and validity, sampling strategies, experimental and quasi-experimental study designs (including their underlying assumptions), and subsequent data analysis strategies are discussed.

SW 734/Introduction to Social Statistics and Data Analysis (3)

This is the first of two required PhD courses that focuses on quantitative data analysis. This course will focus on how to apply statistical approaches and ethical principles to all dimensions of diversity including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender identity/gender expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. At the end of this course, students will be able to apply univariate and bivariate statistics, as well as analysis of variance, to a social science data set. They will also learn how to choose appropriate statistical analyses that answer research questions and hypotheses, conduct these analyses using STATA, interpret their findings, and communicate their results clearly and effectively.

SW 741/Systematic Change: Identifying and Intervening in Issues of Social Justice (3)

This course will allow students to learn and develop skills in effecting systems-level change to further anti-oppression, with a focus on anti-racism as an example to both illustrate system processes but also as core content needed to understand systemic oppression. Current manifestations of systematic change, such as the calls for reparations, police reform, and truth and reconciliation commissions for atrocities suffered by Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) will be covered. Students will also learn concrete strategies for engaging in anti-racism and de-centering Whiteness in teaching, research, and community collaboration and advocacy.

SW 742/Theory II: Theory-Driven Analysis of Social Problems to Inform Practice & Social Welfare Policy (3)

SW 742 is the second of two theory courses in the program, building on the foundation provided in SW 732. The goal of this course is for students to obtain a theoretical and conceptual framework for analyzing and understanding social problems and their implications for macro social work practice and social policy. Students will examine what the empirical literature tells us about a social problem, and compare and contrast the contribution of sociological, sociocultural, philosophical, political, and economic theories to our understanding of it. Another goal is for students to learn how decentering whiteness and colonial perspectives enable an antiracist analysis of social problems and potential macro solutions which may promote equity. Students will analyze current social policy and macro practice designed to address social problems and propose alternatives based on the application of theory.

SW 743/Advanced Research Methods (3)

This course is the second of two courses focused on quantitative methods, compliments the two data analysis courses, and prepares students for future independent studies and advanced scholarly writing to fund and disseminate research to diverse audiences. The course focuses on applying research approaches and ethical principles to all dimensions of diversity including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender identity/gender expression, marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. The major goals of this course are to teach students quantitative and mixed methods research designs, how each design addresses threats to validity, when each is most appropriate to answer various types of research questions, and how to execute each type of study ethically.

SW 744/Applied Regression Analysis (3)

This is the second of two required PhD courses focusing on quantitative data analysis. This course covers and introduces a broad class of models often referred to as generalized linear models (GLM). We will discuss five major models within this class: models for continuous outcomes, binary outcomes, categorical outcomes, ordered outcomes, and count outcomes. Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to: (a) read and evaluate published or presented research that uses regression techniques; (b) use STATA to create your own results from secondary data; (c) translate the results into more useful summaries through tables and figures of predicted outcomes; and (d) use statistics to evaluate practice and policy and promote social justice.

***For the Individualized Plan of Study**, students can either complete independent studies with faculty (in or outside the Kent School) or take doctoral-level (elective) courses in another department. To have the individualized plan of study credit hours approved, the student must submit a proposal form to the Ph.D. Program Office. After director approval, the form is submitted to the UofL Registrar who then adds an independent study course to the online catalog prior to student registration.*

SW 750 Examination of Scholarly Literature (3) – Independent Study

Students will focus on a specific topic area for future research by conducting thorough literature

reviews on the topics related to the area of pregnancy and motherhood and the role spirituality plays in the lives of pregnant and parenting young women. The end result will be several tables summarizing the literature read and an integrative summary of the literature and potential gaps. This will set the student up to continue delving into the area over the next year so that by next summer, the topic is narrowed for the doctoral exams and the dissertation.

SW 751 Mentored Research Experience (3) – Independent Study

Students focus on a specific area of research and create research questions based on data in an existing dataset to prepare the dataset to facilitate answering the research questions, analyze data, write up the results and disseminate results via presentations and publications.

SW 752 Qualitative Methods: Design, Data Collection, and Analysis (3)

SW 752 examines the philosophical foundations and epistemological perspectives involved in qualitative research. This course is the first part of a two-part series in which students embark on an IRB-approved qualitative study which culminates into an analytic memo, which is the beginning of a publishable paper. This course includes the study of traditions and methods (e.g., narrative inquiry, case studies, phenomenology, grounded theory, and ethnography); scientific and ethical issues; and techniques of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Emphasis is given to the contribution of qualitative studies in expanding social work knowledge and anti-racist scholarship. Students will expand upon one of the five qualitative approaches by learning and applying Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) techniques to the analysis of data. This process will lead to the development of a conceptual formulation, and analytic memos, and set the foundation for further analysis, interpretation, and writing.

SW 761/Advanced Scholarly Writing to Fund and Disseminate Research to Diverse Audiences (3)

SW 761 Advanced Scholarly Writing to Fund and Disseminate Research to Diverse Audiences (3 credit hours) is the last of a 3-course sequence and focuses on the funding and dissemination of research in the real world through a variety of methods, including grant proposals, program evaluation contracts, conference abstracts, peer-reviewed publications, data reports, and infographics. By the end of this course, students will have accumulated a number of critical areas of knowledge and skills for their professional development as research scholars.

SW 765: Advanced Qualitative Research: Design, Data Collection, and Analysis (3)

SW 765 focuses on analysis and interpretation in qualitative research. This course is the second part of a two-part series in which students embark on an IRB-approved qualitative study that culminates into a publishable paper and a conference presentation. Students will expand upon coding strategies learned in the previous semester by learning and applying Situational Analysis, Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), diagramming/visualization, and arts-based approaches to the analysis of data. This course introduces students to qualitatively driven mixed methods designs and includes learning strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry. This process will lead to the development of a conceptual formulation and analytic memos, which will set the foundation for the writing of qualitative findings in the form of a publishable paper. Teaching methods include lectures, discussions, labs focused on the use of software, individual critical self-reflection in relation to course content and phenomenon, and participation in group data analysis processes focused on the instructor and/or student team's data.

SW 764/Teaching in Social Work (3)

This course is the first of two designed to expose doctoral-level students to teaching and social work education. The goals of this course are to assist students in (1) examining and appraising theories of teaching and learning to develop their own teaching philosophy, (2) designing course materials and integrating evidence-supported teaching methods and strategies into their teaching practice, and (3) evaluating their own teaching practice. The course introduces students to social work curriculum standards; theoretical perspectives of adult learning, teaching, and curriculum development; and various teaching methods, tools, and technology to assist prospective teachers with designing and developing a course, teaching in both online and face-to-face formats, assessing student progress, and embracing anti-racist classroom practices that promote learning among diverse learners.

Elective- (3) Student and Program discretion and course availability

SW 780 Pro Seminar II: Comprehensive Examination Preparation (1)

This is the 2nd part of the pro-seminar series. This course emphasizes preparation for the comprehensive exam process as well as knowledge and skills necessary to become leaders in the social work profession as researchers, academicians, and advocates for social justice.

SW 781 Teaching Practicum (3)

This teaching practicum seminar is a structured opportunity for students who are teaching to engage in dialogue, structured activities, and reflection focused on teaching topics. There are two requirements for this course:

- 1. Weekly co-teaching with teaching mentor:** Students will be partnered with a teaching mentor to co-teach the assigned faculty member's course. Once assigned, it is expected that students meet weekly, outside of class time, with their teaching mentor to help support them to prepare for the upcoming class (discussing content, developing activities, preparing lectures/powerpoints, etc.). Students will attend each class with their teaching mentor and are expected to teach at least a portion of the course at least 4 times throughout the semester. The faculty mentor and students taking the course will provide written feedback to the student twice throughout the semester (at midterm and finals).

- 2. Teaching Practicum Seminar:** Students will attend and participate in this bi-weekly 2.5-hour seminar while also teaching their undergraduate or graduate class, weekly, under the mentorship of a faculty member. Additional focus will be around the knowledge and skills to prepare one to work with students around anti-racism and whose teaching skills are anti-racist. (Grading will be on a Pass-Fail basis).

SW 799 Dissertation Preparation (6)

After all core and individualized coursework is complete, students can move forward to take their comprehensive exam. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to provide a format in which students can demonstrate their abilities to apply and integrate the whole of their educational experiences by adequately addressing complex questions pertinent to the current and developing knowledge base of social work. Students are eligible to write their examinations upon successful completion of all required and individualized courses. The six credit hours are required for a student to remain enrolled for full-time status in order to use University resources and receive funding for tuition, health insurance, stipend, etc.

DOCT 600

Following the passing of the comprehensive exam, students are admitted to Candidacy status after the Program Director submits the results to the Graduate School. Once students are in candidacy, they must register their first semester for DOCT 600 (no credit hours, but considered full-time). After the initial semester registration, the Graduate School automatically enrolls students moving forward, provided there is not an account hold of any kind. (This is the candidacy

course students are enrolled in after completion of SW 799. Once enrolled in DOCT 600 students are referred to as “candidates” as they complete work and progress on their dissertation and research efforts. The dissertation includes the design and implementation of a major research project, the results of which are expected to contribute to the social work knowledge base. This is the course linked to student comprehensive examination preparation;

Elective (3) – Student and Program discretion and course availability – students can take 600-700 level courses (preferred) either in or outside of the areas of the Kent School (typically outside)

Course Schedule: (in class Spring and Fall Semester, Thursdays and Fridays 9AM-4PM); Summer subject to change pending the Independent Study

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination evaluates knowledge and skill deemed critical prior to beginning the dissertation component. Students are eligible to write their comprehensive examination upon successful completion of all required coursework. A thorough description of the comprehensive examination below details the following requirements: (a) eligibility, (b) students’ exam committees, (c) exam committee roles and responsibilities, (d) expected content of the exam, (e) length of exam and time allotments, and (f) evaluation of student performance.

Following the passage of the comprehensive examination, students are admitted to *Candidacy* status and proceed with their dissertation.

Kent School Guidelines for the Comprehensive Examination

Upon successful completion of the comprehensive exam students enter candidacy and proceed with their dissertations. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to demonstrate knowledge of the substantive issues, key research questions, theory, policy, empirical evidence, and implications related to a specific area of interest to the student. For some students the exam is an extension of the work that they have conducted during the previous four quarters in the doctoral program. For other students the first year may have been an exploration of areas that they have determined is not a good match for their exam and future career. In both cases, knowledge gained and summarized for papers from coursework are typically useful in defining the scope and content of this exam both in content and/or in the development of doctoral level skills in writing, research, and inquiry. Ultimately, the comprehensive examination provides an opportunity for the student to demonstrate that they are prepared to pursue work on their dissertation.

The comprehensive exam consists of the following phases: preparation, written, oral, and evaluation phase.

Preparation Phase

Preparation for the written phase of the comprehensive examination will occur during Proseminar, during the spring semester of the second year. The purpose of Proseminar is to help students understand the comprehensive examination expectations and to frame their examination topic by developing a concept paper with the guidance of the Proseminar instructor and their comprehensive examination chair. Comprehensive examination topics can be a specific substantive area, social problem, or area of interest – hereafter referred to as “the topic”.

The concept paper is a draft of the comprehensive examination that includes approximately 1 page on each the following areas (not including references) related to the topic. The purpose of the concept paper is to ensure that the student understands the expectations for each section of the exam and the topic is clearly framed and appropriately scaled.

- Significance. Describe the significance of the topic including, (1) the prevalence and nature of the topic, (2) implications if the topic is not addressed, and (3) limitations and social justice and/or equity implications of current conceptualizations.
- Research Review. Synthesize the available empirical research related to your topic and identify gaps in the knowledge and needs to advance the field and address critical issues of social justice and/or equity.
- Theoretical analysis. Describe, compare, and contrast two theories and how they relate to, or inform the causes and potential solutions for, addressing the topic.
- Policy. Describe and critique one relevant state or federal policy impacting the topic.
- Research Plan. Design a study to advance the knowledge base related your topic. Specifically, describe the research plan, including research questions, design and timeline, measures, recruitment and screening procedures, intervention and data collection procedures, process and outcome measures, data analysis procedures, and study limitations. The research plan should also include (a) a brief analysis of an ethical issue related to the research topic and/or proposed design and how it may be mitigated and (b) a statement describing which aspects of your plan address social justice and/or equity issues.

At the conclusion of the Preparation Phase (i.e., outside the context of the Proseminar), the student will distribute the concept paper to their committee chair and solicit feedback for improvement. Also, during the preparation phase, the doctoral office will confirm student eligibility by reviewing their transcripts and their curriculum monitoring form to ensure all course requirements have been met and grades recorded. Finally, students will secure the Comprehensive Exam Committee Signature Form signed by the student and faculty members agreeing to be on the student's comprehensive exam committee.

After the student starts the comprehensive exam, the established/agreed upon dates and time allowances for completing the comprehensive exams may only be modified by the committee in consultation with the doctoral program director if extraordinary circumstances arise that are out of the committee's or student's control and prevent/interfere with the student and the committee being able to meet the established time allowances for completing the comprehensive exam.

Written Phase

Students may begin the written phase of their comprehensive exams only after the required coursework is complete, the Comprehensive Exam Committee Form is signed, and the committee members provide feedback on the concept paper. Students may use all materials and resources from their doctoral coursework and substantive area of research but may not receive any other help from the committee or from others after the preparation phase while completing the written exam and preparing for the oral portion other than the feedback received from the chair and committee. The comprehensive

exam committee is responsible for guiding students' comprehensive exam preparations, providing feedback and grading during the Evaluation Phase.

The exam should address the same areas as the concept paper, and be 40-50 pages in length, including title page, figures, and tables; appendices and references are not applied to the page limit. Approximate length of each section is as follows: Significance 5 pages, Research Review 10 pages, Theory 10 pages, Policy 5-10 pages, and Research Plan 10-15 pages. The exam is due four weeks after the concept paper is approved by the committee.

The written portion of the exam is submitted to the chair who in turn distributes it to all committee members at the same time with instructions on the deadline for providing feedback to the chair on whether the student has passed or failed the written portion of the exam. Committee members should also submit any additional questions or concerns for which the student needs to be prepare responses during the oral portion of the exam. Committee members will have approximately two weeks to send their feedback to the Chair who then summarizes and assists the student in prioritizing the suggestions, particularly if there are any discrepancies among committee members.

Criteria for grading exams include:

1. The quantity and quality of the substantive content (significance, theoretical analysis, policy, research and applied research).
2. The ability to think critically about the topic.
3. Preparedness for independent and systematic scholarship.
4. The ability to articulate content from the written exam.
5. The ability to answer questions posed by committee members.

If the written exam is deemed *Passed* by two of the three exam committee members, students shall have approximately two weeks⁴ to prepare for the oral exam during which students respond to committee members' submitted comments/questions as well as any additional questions posed during the exam itself.

If the written exam is determined to be *Incomplete* by two of the three exam committee members, one full or partial rewrite may be recommended by the committee and undertaken by the student in the time allowed by the committee for the revision/addition.

If the rewrite is deemed to be *Passed* by two of the three exam committee members, the student may proceed to the oral exam. Chairs will not convene oral exams until students have passed the written exam according to two of the three exam committee members.

If the rewrite is still deemed unworthy of a *Passing* grade by two of the three exam committee members, the exam is deemed *Failed* and the student is dismissed from the program.

Oral Phase

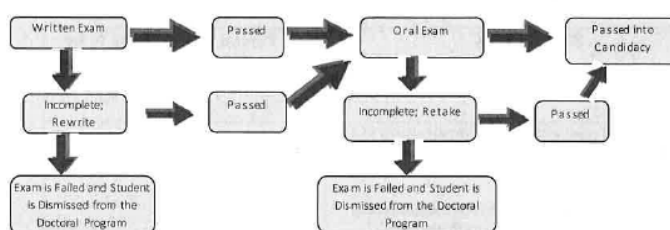
During the oral examination, the student will address questions or concerns the committee members provided in their written feedback.

If the oral exam is deemed *Passed* by the three exam committee members, the Comprehensive Examination is deemed *Passed* and the student is admitted into Candidacy.

If the oral exam is evaluated as *Incomplete* by two of the three exam committee members, the student may retake all or part of it once within the time frame assigned by the Committee.

If the retake of the oral exam is deemed *Passed* by two of the three exam committee members, the student is advanced into Candidacy.

If the retake of the oral exam is still not acceptable to any two of the three exam committee members, the student is deemed to have *Failed* the comprehensive exam and is dismissed from the program.



Comprehensive Exam Flow Chart

Revised November 18, 2021

2nd Year: Summer

- Dissertation Preparation (6 credit hours) – Comprehensive Examination period

Process: Comprehensive Exams

Population: Second Year Cohort or part time students in final semester of coursework

| Month | Student Role | Advisor Role | Program Office | Graduate School |
|----------|--|--|---|-----------------|
| January | Register for final semester of coursework or holding course* | | Curriculum plan audit. | |
| February | | Discuss committee membership with student. | Notify chair to include committee confirmation in annual review and verify chair plans to continue; if not, seek replacement. | |
| March | Contact program office if issues with required completion of courses and/or committee (3 | | Coursework completion form verified. Confirm committee composition. | |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|--|--|---|
| | members) composition. | | | |
| April | Register for comps class (6 summer hours; 799) | | | |
| May | Confirm timeline for written and oral with advisor and committee. | | | |
| June | Schedule oral exam date/time with committee members; notify program office. | | Send doctoral outcomes tool (DOT form) to chair. | |
| July | Written/oral exams completed; student becomes doctoral candidate. | Complete DOT form (Doctoral Outcomes Tool) and send to director. | Announce completion in Eblast; director submits Graduate School form with date. | Approves and confirms that candidate can register for Doct 600 class. Automatic registration occurs thereafter until candidate defends dissertation. |
| August | If candidacy exam not completed, student requests enrolling in holding course* | | If holding course needed contact Graduate School for approval. Class | Approves holding course if student needs extension to study. |
| September | | | | |
| October | | | | |
| November | | | | |
| December | If exams passed, July procedure. | If exams passed, July procedure. | Process holding course or pass. | Process holding course or pass. |

*For those students who do not complete their exams within this timeframe and need an extension to study, the Graduate School offers a “holding” course (**GS 799**). The program office must request Graduate School Dean approval in August; student is permitted to take this class twice and agrees to *only three* additional credit hours in any semester that they take the holding course. Taking any credit amount with the holding course needs to be relayed to the Graduate School when making the request for the holding course. The program office would repeat this request in January if needed; otherwise, the process above begins.

A dissertation, based on original research conducted by the student, is required of a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Social Work & Family Science. The dissertation is a scholarly achievement that demonstrates the student's ability to conduct independent research and a thorough understanding of research principles, concepts, and methods in the fields of social work and family science. Dissertation committees have at least four members and must include one member outside of the Kent School. If the outside member does not have a primary appointment as UofL faculty but is otherwise qualified, they may be granted ad hoc approval to participate.

The Chair of the Dissertation Committee oversees the dissertation process, but the student is responsible for completing the dissertation. Dissertation information such as deadlines and preparation guidelines dictated by the University must be followed and are located on the [Graduate School website](#). Please note semester deadlines must be completed by the student. A summary of steps to complete the dissertation at the Kent School can be found on page 20 in this Handbook.

Upon admission to candidacy, students proceed to propose, complete, and defend their dissertations. Candidates are required to complete a dissertation in their area of specialization. The dissertation is designed to contribute to social work scholarship by presenting competent research that furthers theory as well as knowledge of social problems. A PhD degree student must have been admitted to candidacy no later than the end of the ninth month prior to the awarding of the degree ([Graduate School Degree Requirements](#)) that is:

- May graduation - August 31 of preceding year
- August graduation - November 30 of preceding year
- December graduation - March 31 of same year

If a student is to present their final oral defense in less than nine months after entering candidacy, a *Variance Request* is required. This would need to be approved by the PhD Program Director and submitted for Graduate School Approval.

There is a time limit for completing the dissertation. The candidate must complete all other requirements for the doctoral degree **within four calendar years after passing the qualifying examination**. In exceptional cases, the Vice Provost for Graduate Affairs is empowered to grant limited extensions of this four-year period.

Dissertation Process

Once entering candidacy, the student proceeds with the dissertation process, as outlined below. A more detailed description of each step follows.

1. Selecting the dissertation Committee Chair
2. Determining the dissertation topic and format
3. Selecting the Dissertation Committee Members
4. Preparing for and defending the proposal
5. Completing the dissertation
6. Engaging in the final dissertation defense
7. Submitting the dissertation to the Graduate School

1. Selecting the Dissertation Committee Chair

The student identifies a faculty member within the Kent School of Social Work & Family Science with relevant expertise who is willing to be a mentor through the dissertation process and asks the faculty member to serve as the Committee Chair. The Chair must be within the Kent School of Social Work & Family Science. It is allowable to have co-chairs, in which case one of the co-chairs must be from the Kent School of Social Work & Family Science.

2. Determining the Dissertation Topic and Format

In consultation with the Committee Chair, the student should determine an appropriate dissertation topic and format (i.e., traditional or 2-paper) that aligns with their substantive area. The initial discussions with the Dissertation Committee Chair should focus on identifying the research topic and developing a concept paper that outlines the research topic, the theoretical framework, the methodology and the format of the dissertation.

For a dissertation topic to be acceptable there should be a reasonable expectation that the proposed investigation can be satisfactorily completed. This process involves appraisal of the data source, methods of investigation proposed, and candidate's qualifications to carry out the proposed investigation. Additionally, the topic should be designed to address a gap in knowledge and contribute to the literature based on a thorough analysis of the current evidence base. **The dissertation represents work undertaken while the candidate is enrolled in the program and not contain work previously submitted for publication.**

The *concept paper* is comprised of many of the same items found in a dissertation. These specific elements of the concept paper typically provide an overview that serves as an outline for the required components of the dissertation. The concept paper forms the basis for the conversations with potential Committee Members.

- Title (Can be tentative)
- Background
- A definition or statement of the problem
- The importance of the problem
- An overview of the important literature to support the selection of the problem for study
- The theoretical foundation supporting the problem or the issue
- Research questions and/or hypotheses being tested
- Methodology to be used to answer the questions (study design, population, data collection approach)

3. Selecting the Dissertation Committee Members

The student's dissertation research is guided by and the final product approved by a Dissertation Committee. In consultation with the Committee Chair, the student should identify additional Dissertation Committee members. The concept paper that was developed with the help of the Committee Chair is used as the basis for discussion with other faculty members who are approached to serve on the committee and mentor the student throughout the process.

The Dissertation Committee must consist of four members. The chair of the Committee and two other Committee member must be from the Kent School. At least one committee member must be from outside the Kent School. Additional members can be from outside of the department or school. Only one committee member can be from outside of the University. A committee member must have a doctoral degree, have credentials to teach graduate-level courses relevant to the degree, and have recent involvement in research. Students with a member outside of the university are required to submit that member's curriculum vitae to their program's PhD Coordinator to keep in their dissertation file within the PhD Program. If there are ever changes within the committee, the student is responsible for notifying the PhD Program Coordinator and program director right away.

The following are considerations for forming your committee:

- Members of the committee should include two additional Kent School faculty and at least one faculty member from outside the Kent School. Faculty from other institutions are allowed but must meet the specified criteria and be approved.
- Members of the committee should be content or research experts and be engaged in research, scholarship, or creative activity in the previous 5 years.
- Members should be able to include appropriate effort in their work assignment and have the approval of their supervisor.
- At least one committee member should have expertise in research methodology that matches the research approach selected for the dissertation study.

Once the prospective Committee members have been identified, have agreed to serve, and are confirmed by the Committee Chair and Program Director, the student submits their names with department/school, title, contact information, to the PhD Program Coordinator and Program Director of the Department. For a committee member outside of the University, the department will additionally require their CV to be submitted to the PhD Program Coordinator. Once the committee is formed, the PhD Coordinator will initiate the [Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee Appointment form](#) to be signed by all members of the Committee. The PhD Coordinator then submits the names of the Committee members to the Graduate School for final approval.

4. Dissertation Format

The dissertation follows the standard dissertation format as described by the Graduate School in the document, *Guidelines for the preparation and processing of theses and dissertations* (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1>).

Kent School dissertations must conform to these guidelines. Copyright issues frequently arise with previously published material. Candidates must obtain permission to duplicate copyrighted material (and possibly with multiple author releases). Candidates should check with the Graduate School to verify they are in compliance with University dissertation guidelines and copyright regulations.

As a general rule, dissertations have a title page, table of contents, list of tables and figures,

acknowledgements, abstract, and specific/separate chapters that cover the problem statement, literature review, methodology, results, and discussion. They also include the references cited in each chapter and appendices consisting of the data collection instruments, consent form, the student's biography and Curriculum Vitae, and any other pertinent documents related to conducting the study.

For either the traditional or the 2-paper format, students are required to develop and submit one manuscript for publication to a journal approved by the Dissertation Committee. It does not have to be published before the final defense. All manuscripts for review must be in Microsoft Word® to allow for feedback using *Track Changes*.

Traditional Dissertation Guidelines

The traditional dissertation has five chapters (Chapter 1-5). The introduction (Chapter 1) should include:

- An overview of the important literature
- A definition or statement of the problem
- The importance of the problem
- The theoretical foundation supporting the problem or the issue
- The research questions and/or hypotheses being tested

Chapter 2 is the detailed literature review; Chapter 3 is the methodology of the study; Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analysis; and Chapter 5 is the limitations, discussion, and recommendations as well as the social work and family science impact for the work. It should include insights into the findings and discuss future research opportunities.

Two-Paper Dissertation Guidelines

The 2-paper dissertation will include a brief introduction to the two papers that shows how they fit together. The articles should form a cohesive body of work that support a theme or themes that are expressed clearly in the introduction (Chapter 1). The research questions submitted and approved within the dissertation proposal process define the subject matter for each of the papers in the dissertation. The articles may be of a conceptual nature, a synthesis of the literature, or based on the data that is analyzed by the student. Self-plagiarism reusing one's own previously written work in a new written product without letting the reader know that this material had appeared elsewhere is prohibited. Co-authors must be identified at the proposal defense and their roles clearly stated and approved of by the members of the Dissertation Committee. The Committee must also approve changes to authorship. The student is the lead author, and no other students may be co-authors. Once the student graduates, authorship is the prerogative of the lead author.

Papers must be of high enough quality that the dissertation committee feels that they can be submitted to a reputable journal, although they do not need to be submitted prior to the dissertation defense.

The dissertation must include abstracts that synthesize the articles, as well as the introduction (Chapter 1) and the discussion or conclusion (Chapter 5).

The introduction includes:

- An overview of the literature
- A definition or statement of the problem (i.e. why it is worth researching and why it matters to the field of social work).
- The importance of the problem
- The theoretical foundation supporting the problem or the issue
- The research questions and/or hypotheses being tested
- The methodology to be used to answer the questions
- The contribution of each article to the research topic

The conclusion summarizes the major findings, limitations, discussion, and recommendations. It includes the linkages between the separate manuscripts as one cohesive body of work and shows how the various manuscripts together contribute to the knowledge base and the social work impact of the work. It should include additional insights and discuss future research opportunities.

The manuscripts should fit together in the dissertation as chapters would normally fit together in any dissertation and each manuscript should contribute to the overall aims of the research project. There needs to be a clear and logical progression from one chapter to the next, so that the dissertation functions as a complete and unified whole with a clear singular research study as its focus. It may be useful to have short transition sections at either the beginning or the end of appropriate manuscripts that explain the progression from one manuscript to the next. Each manuscript should have its own chapter. The manuscript must be formatted so that it conforms to the requirements of the journal guidelines. The manuscript may also differ from the published version, and may include additional tables, figures, or text, as required to ensure clarity.

The content and format of each paper included in the dissertation may be the same, as what you submit to the journal/proceedings, except the content must comply with the formatting requirements outlined in the dissertation formatting guidelines. The bibliography or reference section of each article must become part of the final Reference Section as stipulated in the guidelines. There should be only one abstract and one list of acknowledgments for the dissertation.

If the manuscript has been published and the publisher grants permission for the publication to be used in the dissertation, the publisher will give instructions on how the approval should be documented. The publisher's official notice of approval for the manuscript to be included must be formatted accordingly and added as an appendix. Permission to use previously published material in a dissertation does not necessarily give the student permission to sell that material. The student may need to put a restriction on the sale and availability of their work according to the publisher's guidelines.

Two-paper Dissertation Outline

1. Cover Page
2. Acknowledgments
3. Abstract
4. Table of Contents
5. Chapter 1: Introduction - Statement of the problem
6. Chapter 2: Manuscript #1
7. Chapter 3: Manuscript #2

8. Chapter 4: Conclusion/Discussion
9. References (each dissertation chapter will also have its own reference list)
10. Tables
11. Figures
12. Appendices

In the event the guidelines conflict with those of the targeted journal, the University of Louisville guidelines should be followed. At a minimum, Chapters 2 and 3 should be framed for the targeted journal's readership, include their requested structure with regard to major headings, and conform to their page limit requirements. As a general rule, dissertation appendices consist of the data collection instruments, consent form, the candidate's biography and Curriculum Vitae, and any other pertinent documents related to conducting the study.

5. Preparing for the Proposal Defense of the Dissertation (also called a Preliminary Oral)

Prior to a candidate's commencement of research activity, they must submit a proposal and orally defend their argument for the project to their Dissertation Committee. Typically, for a dissertation in the traditional format, the proposal defense includes a presentation summarizing Chapters 1-3, while for a 2-paper format the presentation includes a summary of Chapter 1, an overview of the two components, and the thread that ties all the papers together.

Once the dissertation proposal is ready for review, it is sent to members of the committee for their review and feedback. The student edits the proposal based on their feedback. The process of developing the dissertation and getting it approved may take several months. In general, students must allow at least 2 weeks between submitting a draft of the dissertation for review and getting feedback.

The dissertation proposal defense is a formal presentation of the proposal to the committee.

The student works with their Chair to schedule a meeting date and time of the full committee. Once this is known the student should relay this information to the PhD Coordinator and request a room reservation. The PhD Coordinator will then confirm a room for the requested date and time. Approval to proceed with data collection and complete the dissertation process is sought from the Dissertation Committee following the presentation.

Once the PhD Coordinator is aware of the proposal date, the PhD Coordinator will send an Approval of Dissertation Proposal form to be signed by the student and their dissertation committee upon official approval of the proposal. This form needs to be completed and returned to the PhD Coordinator.

6. Completing the Dissertation

After the Committee approves the dissertation proposal, the student obtains permission to proceed with the research from the IRB. Once approval is granted, the student can begin data collection. After data collection, the student analyzes the data and compiles the results of their study into the final draft document for review. The student must defend the dissertation within four years of entering candidacy.

Candidates must submit their dissertation to the committee two weeks prior to their tentatively scheduled defense and committee members are encouraged to provide written feedback to the student one week prior to the tentatively scheduled defense. If a committee member has any concerns about the candidate moving forward with the oral defense, those concerns should be communicated to the chair one week prior to the tentatively scheduled defense. Once the chair and candidate have reviewed each committee member's written feedback, the chair notifies the candidate if they can proceed with the tentatively scheduled defense date or if another tentative date is to be set.

The candidate is not eligible for final defense until the Committee and the Department Chair have reviewed and accepted the dissertation. Any delays in the process must be discussed with the Committee Chair.

7. The Final Dissertation Defense

Students are responsible for completing the application for degree online through ULink (<http://ulink.louisville.edu/>) at the beginning of the semester in which they will defend their dissertation. As the student nears completion of work on the dissertation, the student schedules a date with their Dissertation Committee for the final oral presentation, during which the student will defend the dissertation. The defense presentation is a public event to which members of the University community and those with whom the student worked on the project are invited. Please note the university policy for "Final Oral Examination", [here](#). Visitors for the defense are present during the student's presentation. They are invited to ask questions at the end of the presentation. Then visitors are asked to leave the meeting so that the Committee members can ask questions. After the second question and answer period, the student leaves the meeting while the Committee deliberates about whether the student passed or failed the defense. When the deliberation is completed, the student is invited back into the meeting and given the news of the decision.

The student should notify the PhD Program Coordinator of the date of the defense at least two weeks prior to the date agreed to by the Chair and members of the Committee, to reserve a room and send out appropriate notifications to the faculty and students of the School. The PhD Program Coordinator will submit the required form to schedule the student's final oral defense, collect signatures for the Dissertation Advisory Committee Appointment form and prepare copies of the signature page or electronic signature page and send to the student. If all Committee will attend the defense, the student should bring the signature page for the Committee signatures. If all Committee members are not attending, the PhD Program Coordinator will send the electronic signature page to committee for signatures.

The student should schedule their dissertation defense leaving enough time before the Graduate School deadline to make any necessary corrections or changes to the dissertation prior to submission of the final document to the Graduate School. The student should anticipate approximately two hours for the dissertation defense meeting. Students must not present for a dissertation defense without the dissertation being complete and assurance from the Committee Chair that they are adequately prepared. The Committee Chair helps the student prepare and make the decision of when they are ready for the defense. If the student has done the necessary preparation, the final defense should be a formality.

The defense is a formal meeting between the candidate and dissertation committee. The candidate is responsible for giving an oral presentation of their full dissertation. The candidate is expected to articulate the rationale and purpose of the dissertation clearly and professionally. The candidate also should describe the methodology and interpret the results, identify limitations, and discuss implications for Social Work and recommendations from the research. The candidate should identify areas for future research and articulate a personal research agenda that builds upon the dissertation.

During the defense, members of the Dissertation Committee meet, and the Chair provides guidance and oversees the proceedings. The student gives a formal presentation on their dissertation research, lasting approximately 45 minutes. After the presentation, the audience can be offered the opportunity to ask questions for an additional 15 minutes. Once the audience is dismissed, the Committee meets with the student to ask any additional questions and provide feedback. Following this period, the student is asked to step out of the room while the Committee deliberates. The Committee Chair calls the student back into the room to discuss next steps. Next steps may include addressing problems identified during the final review or the presentation or finalizing the manuscript for submission to the Graduate School. The full Dissertation Committee and the PhD Program Director must approve the dissertation before it is submitted to the Graduate School.

8. Submitting the Dissertation to the Graduate School

Careful attention must be paid to deadlines for completing the defense and for submitting the final manuscript to the Graduate School. The date for submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School is posted on their website (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information>).

A candidate must make an appointment with the Graduate School staff for review of the final document, allowing sufficient time to make any edits that might be recommended. The guidelines for the preparation and processing of dissertations published by the Graduate School must be followed and can be found at <http://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1>.

In addition to the electronic submission of the student's dissertation to the Graduate School, the PhD Program requires students to submit an electronic copy of their dissertation for the department's records. This should be sent to the Department's PhD Coordinator.

Summary of Procedures

(Procedures may vary at the discretion of the Committee Chair)

1. Meet with dissertation Chair to identify your dissertation (a) topic, (b) dissertation format (multi-paper or traditional), and (c) committee membership (potential).
2. Generate a one-page description of your dissertation topic for review by your Chair. Once topic area is approved, contact potential dissertation committee members to discuss being on the committee. Once faculty have agreed to serve, solicit and send a list of committee members, and for those who are not members of the Kent School their CV, to the PhD Program Coordinator.

3. Write a short concept paper (10 pages) that provides an abbreviated version of your proposal. Once your Chair approves this concept paper, circulate to your dissertation committee members for feedback.
4. Revise your concept paper based on committee feedback.
5. Expand your concept paper into a proposal.
6. Once your Chair approves the proposal, set a proposal defense date, and circulate the proposal to your committee members.
7. Contact the PhD Program Coordinator to get the appropriate forms to be signed at the dissertation proposal approval meeting.
8. Revise your proposal based on feedback from Chair and committee members.
9. Secure IRB approval for study/data to be used in your study (if required).
10. Execute the plan you proposed.
11. Complete your dissertation draft.
12. Once the Chair believes the likelihood of a sound final dissertation draft will be ready, a tentative defense date can be set, and the student can notify the PhD Coordinator.
13. The dissertation is circulated to the committee two weeks from the defense date.
14. Contact the Graduate School to set up a meeting to review required formatting guidelines for dissertations.
15. Contact the PhD program coordinator to coordinate logistics and receive forms to be completed at the oral defense.
16. Apply for graduation. Students should apply within the first six weeks of the semester they intend to complete their program. This will allow them to be eligible for commencement awards, the Graduate School will have names and degrees for hooding/commencement, and students can cancel their degree application if they end up having an extended graduation expectancy.
17. Discuss with your Chair the process for the oral defense.
18. Defend your dissertation.
19. Complete required forms with signatures that accompany the final dissertation submitted to the Graduate School and PhD Program Office.

Mentoring and Professional Development System

The mentoring and professional development system supplements the coursework, comprehensive examination, and dissertation. A large component of this system is to prepare and support candidates or recent graduates to obtain employment. Because many of the activities associated with this system are optional, the responsibility is largely on the student to take advantage of them. If they do not participate, they will likely enter the job market at a disadvantage. This short [video](#) summarizes the mentoring and professional development system.



Annual academic and professional development review. Students that have not identified a mentor prior to starting the program are required to identify one during their first semester¹. The student and mentor should have similar areas of substantive or methodological interest. Agreeing to be a mentor involves a commitment to guide the student through the first two years, including the annual academic and professional development review process. The

¹ Student mentorship is ideally considered during the admissions process and established the summer before the students begins coursework

transition to candidacy involves renegotiating whether the mentor will continue to be the candidate's primary faculty support, which typically involves chairing the comprehensive exam and the dissertation. A critical role of the mentor in the first two years is to facilitate the annual academic and professional development review procedures ([Annual Review Summary Example](#)).

Peer mentoring program. The purpose of the peer mentoring program is to provide support through peer advising, encourage positive academic and social interactions, and promote a unified community among students and candidates. The program focuses on impacting student retention as well as promoting high academic standards and leadership development. As part of the peer mentoring program, the program coordinator will assign three or four students to a peer system that includes: (a) a student in their 1st year, (b) a student in their 2nd year, and (c) a candidate. It is recommended that students meet at least every other month. Gathering in the doctoral student lounge (Patterson 108) is encouraged. The candidate is expected to coordinate the group unless other arrangements are made. If a team is inactive, students/candidates should notify the doctoral program coordinator to reconfigure the group. Examples of activities for peer mentoring groups include: (a) sharing completed papers with feedback so recently admitted students know what type of work is expected, (b) co-authoring manuscripts, and (c) providing an audience for class or conference presentations.


PLAN seminars. [PLAN workshops](#), offered through the graduate school, address retirement, teaching, Endnote, dissertation writing, research presentations, mentoring, and publishing.

Brown bag lunches. Brown bag lunch sessions are scheduled periodically during the semester. They provide an opportunity for faculty and students to assemble to share and discuss current and future research with one another. Students will be notified once these begin to occur and an updated schedule will be provided.

Professional service experiences. Candidates are encouraged to participate in professional service activities. Optional experiences include but are not limited to committee involvement at the school or university, leadership or volunteer roles in professional associations, and service as an editor for a journal. At the Kent School and University, committee involvement is guided by the [Kent School bylaws](#). Students should notify the program coordinator about their interest in committee work upon completion of their comprehensive examinations. The doctoral program office will coordinate their involvement for the following year. For professional service and editorial options, students should notify their mentors/chairs as they are best suited to facilitate these experiences.

Other Department Funded Support Opportunities. The PhD Program strives to support students with additional professional development opportunities such as these mentioned below.

Instructional Resources and Materials: Students/Candidates will want to refer to and complete the Funding Request Form. This request must be approved by mentor and clearly linked to professional development plan/goals. The request cannot exceed \$200 per student for the academic year.

Conferences and Networking (and funding support). Students/Candidates will want to refer to and complete the [Funding Request Form](#).  Students and candidates are encouraged to submit posters/presentations to related conferences and attend for professional development and networking purposes. These funds are to assist with registration to support doctoral students presenting at local, state, regional, and national conferences, or meetings. A product must be accepted (e.g., presentation, poster, or symposium) to receive these funds. Priority is given to those who demonstrate they will also use the event to interview for a job or meet with an external mentor. If presenting with their mentor, the student/candidate is required to include a letter of support. Please refer to the note under **Travel** for limitations.

Travel. Students/Candidates will want to refer to and complete the Funding Request Form. These funds are to assist with travel to conferences or meetings. Priority is given to those who demonstrate they will also use the event to interview for a job or meet with an external mentor. If a student is still completing coursework (not in candidacy), they are required to include a plan from their instructors for courses being taught during dates they will be absent. This should note how the student will make up or attend the class, complete in-class assignments, or include permissible deadlines individualized to their travel arrangements.

Note: *Student presentations and networking and Travel categories will likely combine in some cases pending the requests. If requesting conference funding from the Ph.D. Department, students and candidates are limited to funding support not to exceed \$2000 per academic year based on availability of funds for the conference requests.* Students/Candidates may not require travel arrangements with their student presentations and networking endeavors, however, if travel is requested, funding will only be approved for the duration of the conference dates. Any additional night of lodging outside of the conference dates will not be supported with department funding. However students/candidates are welcome to make personal arrangements if desiring an extended stay. Please note funding maximums can decrease contingent on department funding availability or with an increase in participant requests. Program students/candidates will be notified in a timely manner if this occurs.

IMPORTANT: All students/candidates who submit a funding request for travel accommodations must use Concur (the university travel system). This includes hotel/lodging, airfare, car rental, train rides. In addition, if requesting registration, then utilizing the ProCard will be required. Reimbursement should typically ONLY be granted for small expenses that are approved by the Program Director. Examples of these expenses are miscellaneous items such as meals, parking, short transportation (taxi, Uber, Lyft). Students must complete the university driver's training modules to be permitted to rent a vehicle. If the conference trip is within 200 miles or less round-trip, this is the only case where reimbursement for mileage could take place on a case-by-case basis if the student/candidate plans to use their personal vehicle. The preference of the business office will be required for approval.

First and Second Year Students (or non-candidates) requesting travel: Should your conference dates interfere with regular class time, please include an academic plan (brief summary) regarding any coursework deadlines or class attendance that will be missed, and what arrangement(s) has been approved by your instructor(s) to ensure your conference leave will not negatively impact your current academic progress.

Procedures for Course Withdrawal, Program Withdrawal, Time Extension or Leave of Absence

Course Withdrawal. Students who are in coursework in their first or second year are required to consult with their instructor of the course intended to be withdrawn from *prior* to the withdraw. It is highly encouraged for students to also have a counseled meeting with the Program Director and PhD coordinator for recommendations that may alleviate barriers or challenges that could be leading to the withdrawn course. Immediate course-withdraw without consultation of the instructor or program could affect the ability to be funded by the department, affect assistantship eligibility, and extend time in the program. Additionally, students will want to communicate to their instructor thoughts of withdraw in advancement of the final withdraw deadline for that individual semester.

Students may *withdraw* from courses after the drop/add period up until the withdrawal deadline. A grade of W (withdrawal) will be posted to students' transcripts. The hours count as attempted hours but do not count as earned hours, and the grade will have no effect on the students' grade point averages. Students withdraw by using the registration link of the ULink online portal. No signature or other authorization is required if the change is made by the withdrawal deadline, but students should consult with academic and/or financial aid advisors to understand how withdrawing from a course will affect their academic plan status, their progress toward their degree, and their financial aid eligibility.

The withdrawal deadline for each semester is specified in the official registration calendar. The deadline typically occurs shortly after mid-term. Students who stop attending class without withdrawing will be given the grade of F for the course, [refer here](#) for the full policy.

Students should be mindful of important related dates on the registrar's page [here](#).

Semester Withdraw (of all courses). Students who make a *complete withdrawal* from all courses for a particular semester should contact their instructor within each course first, to seek alternative solutions. If no solutions can be agreed upon, students should consult with their mentor and the Program Director to be counselled on what available options there may be to withdraw and return to the program at a later date.

In exceptional circumstances, students may petition for a *late withdrawal* after the withdrawal deadline. Students who intend to continue in other courses during the semester must petition the course *instructional unit* (the academic unit in which the course is taught).

Students who intend to withdraw from all courses for which they are registered (*late complete withdrawal*) must petition their *enrollment unit* (the academic unit in which they are enrolled for their degree work). Proper documentation of the exceptional circumstances must accompany the petition for a late complete withdrawal. The enrollment unit shall request and consider all

instructors' recommendations in deciding on the petition for a late complete withdrawal. [Refer here](#) for the full policy.

Program Withdraw. Students should first consult with their mentor and Program Director regarding the decision to withdraw from the program. If a student meets the requirements of a compassionate withdraw please see *Compassionate Withdrawal* below. Students should submit a formal request in writing (via email works fine) for their program withdrawal if that is the final decision and send it to the Program Director. The request should note what date they would like for it to take effect. To officially withdraw the student should complete the Graduate School Form <https://louisville.edu/graduate/forms/request-to-withdraw-from-graduate-program> (requires login). They will also want to be sure to note any current courses (including candidacy courses) they are registered for (current and future) within the form and the Graduate School with withdraw them.

If necessary, students completing a full program withdraw may need to consult with the Program Director to submit a Variance Request. This is only required if the Graduate School suggests it for a particular circumstance. See the [Variance Request Form](#). If it is needed, the Graduate School will file the request for the student record. *As a note: If withdrawing after the "W" deadline, should the student be actively in courses, this would result in a grade of an "F" in those courses.*

Compassionate Withdraw. Compassionate Withdraws are processed within the Dean of Student's Office and the Graduate School. Students may request and be considered for a *compassionate withdrawal* when extraordinary circumstances prevent students from continuing in classes or completing academic requirements. It is the student's responsibility to notify minimally their mentor, and Program Director if considering a Compassionate Withdraw for reasons of highly impacted circumstances.

The student is not required to submit personal explicit information to the program department but would be required to submit supportive documentation to the Dean of Student's Office and the Graduate School to support the request. It may be helpful for the department to understand the student's circumstances somewhat to see if there are opportunities for solutions. However, if students are gravely incapacitated, the request may come from the student's partner, family, or legal surrogate. The office of the dean of students will gather necessary documentation to show that the situation is incapacitating.

To the Student/Candidate: There are Two Parts to a Compassionate Withdraw Process in total.

PART I : THE WITHDRAWAL (Graduate School)

There are three steps to the Compassionate Withdrawal process for the Graduate School. The Office of the Dean of Students will help to coordinate this process.

1. **PETITION** – Requires a [Variance Request Form](#) - Please note, you will need to select "other" under type of variance requested and then put compassionate withdrawal in the box next to it.

2. WRITTEN STATEMENT – Your statement should explain why you seek a compassionate withdrawal, information on your extenuating circumstances, and how they impacted your academics.
3. DOCUMENTATION – Your documentation needs to support the situation(s) described in your statement. Examples include a note from a doctor or therapist, legal documents, receipts, etc., and will depend on your situation.

PART II: TUITION PETITION (Registrar)

After reviewing your financial account, you will want to petition for a *PETRD*, essentially a tuition refund petition. This process is separate from the withdrawal process and is reviewed by the Registrar's Office. **You can use the same statement and documentation for the withdrawal and PETRD processes.**

1. PETITION – This form is attached to this email and titled *PETRD*
2. WRITTEN STATEMENT – Your statement should provide information on your extenuating circumstances and how they impacted your academics.
3. DOCUMENTATION – Your documentation needs to support the situation(s) described in your statement. Examples include a note from a doctor or therapist, legal documents, receipts, etc., and will depend on your situation.

All required paperwork in PART I and PART II needs to be submitted directly to the Dean of Student's Office at dos@louisville.edu OR the direct contact below.

Samantha E. MacKenzie, M.Ed
 Student Advocate
(she/her/hers) [what's this?](#)

[Dean of Students Office](#)
[Student Activities Center, Room W301](#)
 University of Louisville
 Louisville, KY 40292
 (502) 852-5787 Office
 (502) 852-1429 Fax
Sam.MacKenzie@louisville.edu

Leave of Absence. The policy states, "If a leave of absence is granted to a doctoral student in candidacy, the time limitation of completing all other requirements within four years after passing the qualifying examination shall be extended by the same time as the length of the leave." Read full policy [here](#). The amount of time they are approved for a leave would extend their completion deadline. As an example, if the student passed their comprehensive exam Spring 2019, they should complete their degree requirements by Spring 2023. If the student was granted a semester leave, this would extend the deadline for completion by an additional

semester for completion. They can also request a time extension if needed. A [Variance Request Form](#) is required for this request. Students should notify their mentor, and the Program Director, if they are considering a Leave of Absence. Variance Request forms are always required to be signed off by the enrollment unit.

Extended Time. The candidate must complete all other requirements for the doctoral degree within four calendar years after passing the qualifying examination as seen [here](#) (this includes successful completion of their dissertation defense and submission of their dissertation.) However, students can request extended time if impeding circumstances prevent program completion from four years of their comprehensive exam passing semester. The matter should be consulted with the student's mentor and have the mentor's support for the reason of extended time being requested. Additionally, the Program Director will need to know the reason for extension, and the mentor and student will want to comprise a plan for completion. Please note, procrastination would not be a permissible means to extend time. A [Variance Request Form](#) is required for this request.

Procedures for Review and Dismissal from the Program

The director will appoint an ad hoc Academic and Professional Standards Review Committee consisting of three faculty members, one of which is the student's faculty mentor/chair, to make a recommendation regarding dismissal of the student/candidate from the program when he/she receives an unsatisfactory annual review, has exceeded the time allowed for completion of the doctoral degree², has engaged in academic misconduct and/or dishonesty (i.e. cheating, plagiarism), or is in poor academic standing³ and/or on academic probation⁴. The committee will make its recommendation to the director within a month of being appointed based on a review of the student's academic and professional development record. A majority of the faculty present at the review must vote to accept the committee's recommendation for the student to be dismissed from the program. The committee's recommendation will be reviewed by the director and a recommendation will be made to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Dean for final action. If a student/candidate would like to appeal a dismissal, they should submit a letter to the Dean within 14 days of being recommended for dismissal.

² Doctoral students have four (4) years after passing the qualifying exams to finish all other degree requirements. ³ A graduate student is in poor standing when his/her graduate grade point average is below 3.0 on a 4-point scale or higher.

⁴ Any student with a semester GPA below 3.0 will receive an academic warning from the Graduate School. A notification will be sent to the student as well the student's graduate program. Should a student's cumulative GPA fall below 3.0, the student will be placed on probation until the student regains a 3.0 average (which is required to graduate). Ordinarily students are not permitted to continue on academic probation for more than one semester.

University and Graduate School Policies and Resources

Several general academic policies and procedures drawn from the University Graduate Catalog are applicable to graduate students and candidates. Table 1 highlights those most applicable.

| Policy | Summary |
|--|---|
| Graduate Catalog | The Graduate Catalog is the official listing of the policies governing graduate education at the University of Louisville. |
| The Redbook | <i>The Redbook</i> is the official statement of the organizational structure, the rules of governance and procedures, and university-wide policies of the University of Louisville. If there is any conflict between the policies, procedures or other statements contained within this catalog, <i>The Redbook</i> shall govern. |
| Student Handbook | The University of Louisville student handbook includes additional policies and information covering students. |
| Academic Dishonesty | (requires login) In addition to University student conduct policies, PhD students are governed by Kent School Academic Performance Policies including academic dishonesty. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious violations of academic conduct and may result in permanent dismissal. A plea of ignorance is not a defense against academic dishonesty charges. |
| Student Code of Conduct | The Code of Student Conduct ("The Code") is the University's policy regarding non-academic misconduct of students and student organizations. Academic dishonesty is not covered by this Code, but rather falls within the authority of the individual academic units of the University. Students have the responsibility to follow all regulations outlined in this policy. (Not yet updated for 23-24) |
| Leave of Absence | A student who has been accepted into a graduate program is expected to remain in continuous enrollment throughout matriculation. However, if circumstances arise that may cause an interruption in graduate study a student may apply for a leave of absence by requesting such a leave from the unit dean. |
| Leave Recommendation for Graduate Students on Assistantships | Graduate students do not accumulate vacation, personal, or sick leave, and the provisions of FMLA do not apply to them. |
| Parental, Family, and Medical Leave for Graduate Students | The process for these policies is outlined at this link. |
| Full-Time Study | Full-time study for graduate students is defined as enrollment in Nine (9) credit hours during the Fall semester, OR Nine (9) credit hours during the Spring semester, OR Six (6) credit hours during the Summer semester, OR In degree candidacy status. |

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|---|---|
| <u>Full-Time Study for University Fellows and Graduate Assistants</u> | All University Fellows and Graduate Assistants receiving financial support must be enrolled as full-time students during the period for which they are receiving support. |
| <u>Continuous Enrollment</u> | Continuous enrollment is defined as being registered in both Fall and Spring if registering for course work. If a student has been admitted to doctoral degree candidacy, continuous enrollment in candidacy status is required for the Fall, Spring and Summer terms (only one term of registration is required in summer terms). Students must be enrolled during the semester in which they wish to graduate. |
| <u>Course Loads</u> | Normally, the maximum number of credit hours that may be taken in a regular semester is twelve (12). The maximum number of credit hours that may be taken in the Summer session (both terms) is twelve (12), including research hours. The Graduate School must approve a Variance if a student wants to exceed these maximums. |
| <u>Graduate Student Academic Grievance Procedure</u> | This procedure is designed to provide fair means of dealing with student complaints regarding a specific action or decision made by the faculty or a faculty member. For additional information on student rights click <u>here</u> . |
| <u>Thesis/Dissertation Information</u> | Students can refer to this page to see information regarding dissertation formatting and submission as well as forms required. |
| <u>Severe Weather</u> | When weather conditions warrant a decision to remain on regular opening schedules or to deviate, UofL administration, when possible, will announce schedule changes for morning classes by 6 a.m. and for evening classes by 3 p.m. For the purpose of severe weather announcements, evening classes are those that begin at or after 4:15 p.m. |
| <u>Grades and Grading Policies</u> | The GPA appearing on the University transcript at the end of each semester of enrollment will be the official GPA for determining academic standing. The program director may approve up to six credit hours in which a grade of C+, C, or C- is received to count towards completion of degree requirements. An additional three credit hours in which a grade of C+, C, or C- is received may count towards completion of degree requirements pending approval from the director and Vice Provost of Graduate Academic Affairs. |

Table 1. University Policies and Procedures (partial list)

Table 2 highlights University resources for students and candidates.

| Resource | Summary |
|--|--|
| Academic resources | A variety of resources are available for students including information related to academic calendars, the Career Center, libraries, the Registrar's Office, and the Writing Center. |
| Schedule of Classes | Students may register during priority early registration before the beginning of the semester. A student's first opportunity is based on classification and alphabetic rotation. Initial registration must be completed by the date announced by the Registrar. |
| Disability Resource Center | The Disability Resource Center fosters an inclusive campus climate through education, service, collaboration, and outreach to the University community, providing support for students with documented disabilities by promoting equal access. |
| Dean of Students Office | Students can report a concern, apply for emergency funding, and view upcoming events. |
| The Concern Center | Students can search a concern or select from the available categories and specific university resources will automatically populate to assist with that specific concern, including, but not limited to (financial, emotional, physical, academic, and personal support). |
| EndNote Training | EndNote is a citation management software commonly used by graduate students. The library offers multiple workshops each year for how to make the best use of EndNote for student need. |
| Assistive Technology Resources | Consider using Read & Write, a resource that can read text out loud. Students can download the free trial of the Read & Write software from the Texthelp website. Once they install the free trial, log in using your UofL email and password to have full access to the software through our license. |
| Student Parent Association — Women's Center (louisville.edu) | Students/Candidates who may want to connect with moms, dads, single-parents, married, while being a student at the same time to find means of support, resources, and other outlets to assist with the academic journey. |
| UofL Trager Institute Caregiver Program | This program is funded by a grant through KIPDA. This is a supportive service for those who are familial or non-professional caregivers supporting loved ones who are 60 years of age or older. Please complete a Caregiver Program Interest Survey . For more information, email Misty Kupka , program manager. |
| Caregiver Hotline | Caregiver Hotline at 502-588-3322 or send us an email at tragerinstitute@louisville.edu |
| Office of the Bursar | For tuition and fee information. |
| Office of Research and Innovation | Various grants, funding, and postdoc opportunities can be found on this page |

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| <u>Financial Aid</u> | Individual advisors are assigned alphabetically by the first letter of a student's last name. |
| <u>Counseling Center</u> | For information about UofL resources as well as those available in the community. |
| <u>Student Health Services</u> | For campus health service information. |
| <u>Career Development Center</u> | For Career Center services, please see designated Kent School staff for assistance. |
| <u>Information Technology Help Desk</u> | The IT help desk is dedicated to supporting technology experience at UofL whether working online, remotely, or with applications and core systems. |
| <u>International Center</u> | The International Center is comprised of two offices, the Office of Study Abroad and International Travel, and the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office. |
| <u>Parking</u> | Please note that there are different parking rules and regulations associated with the Belknap and Health Sciences campuses. |
| <u>Human Subjects Protection Program</u> | The Human Subjects Protection Program Office (HSPPO) helps to ensure that all University of Louisville research involving human participants is conducted in accordance with Federal and State regulations and University and sponsoring agency policies and procedures instituted to protect their rights and welfare. HSPPO upholds this commitment to the protection of human participants involved in research regardless of the funding source and regardless of the location of the research. HSPPO supports two duly established and independent Institutional Review Boards (hereby referred to as IRBs) that review and approve protocols for all research involving human participants. The IRBs also serve as the University's institutional Privacy Board. |

Table 2. Commonly utilized or recommended resources to students and candidates

Forms

Table 3 highlights the forms that are most commonly utilized by students and candidates, including required signatures and purpose of the form.

| Form Name | Who Completes Form | Purpose of Form |
|---|---|---|
| Drop/Add Form | Student | Dropping/Adding a course after registration. This form is in ULink. Students can also withdraw from a course after consulting with the faculty instructor, PhD Program Director, and Program Coordinator prior to the final withdrawal deadline. |
| Variance Request Form | Student (requires sign-in) | This form is used for multiple purposes i.e. taking more courses than permitted in the semester, requesting medical leave, etc. After download and completed, it must be submitted at the Graduate School portal. |
| Graduate Assistant Workload Waiver Request Form | Student Completes PDF/Director submits webform | Graduate students on an assistantship are limited to 20 hours of work. If eligible to work an additional 9 hours per week, the director must submit this form (login required). |
| Request for Travel | Student | This form must be completed when student travel under University auspices. |
| Funding Request Form | Student completes and submits to the PhD Coordinator and Program Director for approval. | Students requesting any instructional materials, conference/networking, travel related funding will need to complete this form. |
| Individualized Study Form | Student and Faculty | Students must complete this form and have it signed by their mentor, supervising faculty, and Dean prior to enrolling in an Independent Study. Forms are sent to Susan Pierce in the Registrar's Office who will register the student. Faculty upload syllabi to Blackboard after registration process. |
| Completed Coursework Form | Student, Professor, and Director | This form must be completed before students take comprehensive exams to affirm coursework has been completed and final grades are reflected on the transcript. |
| Dissertation Committee Appointment | Dissertation Committee | A form indicating the appointment of the five-member dissertation committee that the student must verify. |
| Approval of Dissertation Proposal | Dissertation Committee | This form is completed by the dissertation committee when it approves the student's dissertation proposal. |

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| Schedule Final Oral Defense | PhD Coordinator (requires sign-in) | This form is completed notifying the Graduate School that the date and time for the oral defense of the dissertation is scheduled |
| Signature Page Dissertation | PhD Coordinator can initiate | Student or Coordinator submits this form to the Graduate School and copy to doctoral office. Coordinator will typically send to student and committee. |
| Progress to Degree | Student and Mentor | Mentors and students submit this form to the PhD Program office as part of the annual review process. |
| Request to Withdraw | Student | This form is submitted to the Graduate School by the student requesting withdrawal from the doctoral program and University (student login required). Student should notify their mentor and the program Director of decision prior to submitting official withdrawal. |
| Qualifying Exam Results | Director | This form is submitted to the Graduate School by the program director regarding qualifying exams results (log in required). Submission required to confirm candidacy status before Graduate School enrolls them in DOCT 600. Enrollment is then automatic until dissertation defense. |

Table 3. Forms that are most commonly utilized by students and candidates

Scholarships

Graduate Research Assistantships, Teaching Assistantships, and Fellowships are available to support fulltime students. Stipend amounts are the same for both assistantships and fellowships. Assistantships are awarded by the program for four years and cover a monthly stipend, full tuition, and health insurance. Assistantships require recipients to work up to 20 hours a week with a faculty member for the duration of the funding period.

University Fellowships, Diversity Fellowships and Scholarships are awarded by the Graduate School to PhD students nominated by the program director and selected by the Graduate School. Fellowships do not require recipients to work during the two years of funding. Fellowship recipients receive an additional two years of assistantship from the Program where they are required to work while funded with the assistantships.

The Graduate School also offers dissertation completion awards and other support to students to complete their PhD degree in a timely manner. For more information on university fellowships please see their [website](#).

Information about available funding regarding the Kueber Family Foundation Assistantship application can be found here: This assistantship covers three years of tuition and fees. It is a 10-month award with a preference for students pursuing research in child welfare (residential care, foster care, adoption, etc.) This award may include collaboration with residential services at Seven Counties/Bellewood and Brooklawn. Applicants for the Kueber Assistantship must hold a master's degree in social work and remain in good standing. This award is available contingent on existing funds.

University Diversity Vision Statement

The University of Louisville strives to foster and sustain an environment of inclusiveness that empowers us all to achieve our highest potential without fear of prejudice or bias. We commit ourselves to building an exemplary educational community that offers a nurturing and challenging intellectual climate, a respect for the spectrum of human diversity, and a genuine understanding of the many differences-including race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion, diversity of thought and political ideology-that enrich a vibrant metropolitan research university. We expect every member of our academic family to embrace the underlying values of this vision and to demonstrate a strong commitment to attracting, retaining, and supporting students, faculty, and staff who reflect the diversity of our larger society.