

Department of Behavioral and Community Health
School of Public Health
University of Maryland College Park

Ph.D. Degree

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The University of Maryland at College Park (UMCP) is located in Prince George's County, eight miles from the National Capitol Building in downtown Washington, D. C., and thirty miles from Baltimore. It is located in the midst of one of the greatest concentrations of research facilities and intellectual talent in the nation.

Area resources of particular interest to graduate students of the Department of Behavioral and Community Health include the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, the National Agricultural Library, the Health Services Research Library, specific libraries of the various National Institutes of Health, the libraries of five major Universities and three medical schools in Washington, as well as the libraries of the University of Maryland Medical School, the National Center for Health Statistics, and Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

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I. The UMCP School of Public Health

The UMCP School of Public Health is one of 13 colleges and schools on the University of Maryland at College Park campus. The mission of the College is to promote and protect the health and well being of citizens of Maryland, the nation and the world through interdisciplinary education, research, public policy and practice. This mission is carried out through the different departments and institutes that compose the School of Public Health including: Epidemiology and Biostatistics, Family Science, Health Services Administration, Kinesiology, Behavioral and Community Health, and the Maryland Institute of Environmental Health. Additionally, the School has several centers and laboratories including the Center for Health Behavior Research, the Health Behavior Assessment and Intervention Laboratory, The Center for Health Literacy, The Center for Health Equity, and The Prevention Research Center (the full list of centers is available at www.sph.umd.edu).

II. The Department of Behavioral and Community Health

The Department of Behavioral & Community Health is an autonomous department within the UMCP School of Public Health. The department conducts professional preparation programs at both graduate and undergraduate levels. The graduate programs are designed to prepare professional health educators with specific research skills and the ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical setting.

Resources within the department include the Center for Health Behavior Research, The Center for Young Adult Health and Development, the Community Health Awareness, Messages Prevention Program, the Tobacco Center for Regulatory Science and the Health Behavior Assessment and Intervention Laboratory.

The faculty of the DBCH is made up of individuals from diverse disciplines with multi-faceted interests. This diversity is a unique strength of the department and enhances the education graduate students receive. The faculty supports course work, research and practice experiences in many areas including health communication, stress management, health behavior, health policy, adolescent health, women's health, and minority health.

III. Admission Requirements

To be considered for admission into the doctoral program in Behavioral and Community Health applicants are reviewed with regard to the following criteria:

1. Quality of previous undergraduate and graduate course work (GPA)
2. Strength of GRE scores (taken within the previous five years)
3. Letters of recommendation from 3 persons competent to judge your probability of success in graduate school and that address your academic capabilities and potential

4. Congruence of professional goals with those of the program, as described in your statement of goals and interests
5. Relevance of work and research experience
6. Admission pre-requisites
 - Six (6) credits in Psychology, Sociology or Anthropology

We primarily admit full-time students; however, we do admit a limited number of outstanding part-time students who are able to maintain a high level of commitment and determination to obtain their degree through all phases of their program including the dissertation phase. All students must complete their degree in nine (9) years in accordance with University of Maryland Graduate School policy. Students must advance to candidacy within 5 years of enrolling in the program and then complete their dissertation within 4 years of advancing to candidacy.

Submit on-line (www.sophas.org) to the Schools of Public Health Application System. A **COMPLETE** application includes the following:

- On-line application for admission
- GRE scores, submitted electronically to UMD (DO NOT select a department code)
- Official undergraduate degree transcripts, with undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 and graduate GPA of at least 3.5
- Three letters of recommendation
- A statement of goals and interests
- A resume or curriculum vitae

Complete applications must be submitted by November 15th for best consideration for funding. The final deadline for all others is **February 15th**. We offer fall admission only; there is no spring admission.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Apply early! Applications not submitted by February 15th will not be considered.

Students who are admitted without an MPH degree and wish to pursue an MPH degree in the Behavioral and Community Health within the DBCH may do so if they decide to pursue the master's degree within their first 30 credits (the core courses). However, students must formally apply through SOPHAS and understand that admission to the MPH program is not guaranteed nor is funding promised through their PhD application. The only credits that could be used for both the MPH and the PhD are the 30 core credits which are shared by both degree programs. Students must finish all MPH degree requirements before continuing with any PhD program coursework or independent studies.

If an admitted PhD student decides to pursue an MPH degree in Behavioral and Community Health further along in their program (after the first 30 credits), he/she must formally apply through SOPHAS and understand that admission to the MPH program is

not guaranteed nor is any additional funding. In addition, the student must finish all degree requirements for the PhD before starting any coursework for the MPH degree. If a student decides to apply to the MPH program five years or more after their received their PhD, he/she must repeat the 30 core credits.

III. Degree Requirements

General Information

Doctoral students are required to demonstrate competence over material included in 30 credits of core courses, 6 credits of advanced theory and application, and 12 credits of advanced research methods and statistics. Students must successfully complete a written qualifying examination before taking 15 credits in an area of concentration, part of which includes mentored research, and beginning a minimum of 12 credits of independent research to culminate in a doctoral dissertation.

All part-time and full-time students must advance to candidacy within five years of admission to the doctoral program. To be advanced to candidacy the student must have completed all coursework and have successfully completed the qualifying examination. Doctoral Candidates must then complete the dissertation requirements within a four year period following admission to candidacy. Thus, a student admitted to candidacy any time in the fall semester should be prepared to graduate no later than December four years later.

Doctoral Program Courses

Program Co-Requisites:

Nine (9) credits of coursework in a minimum of two different health topical areas (e.g., smoking, alcohol, nutrition, etc.) These courses may be completed either prior to or following admission and must be completed prior to qualifying examination. They do not count as doctoral curriculum credits, and do not have to be graduate level courses.

<u>Core Courses: (30 credits)</u>		<u>Credits</u>
HLTH 606*	Foundations of Public Health Education	3
HLTH 665*	Health Behavior I	3
HLTH 671*	Public Health Communication	3
-OR-		
HLTH 672*	Public Health Informatics	3
HLTH 710	Methods and Techniques of Research	3
HLTH 774	Community Health Program Planning	3
HLTH 776 ^P	Community Health Program Evaluation	3
EPIB 610*	Foundations of Epidemiology	3
EPIB 650*	Biostatistics I	3
HLSA 601*	Introduction to Health Systems	3

MIEH 600*	Foundations of Environmental Health	3
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PhD Advanced Theory & Applications: (6 credits)

HLTH 666 ^P	Health Behavior II	3
** , ***	Elective in Advanced Theory & Applications	3

PhD Advanced Research Methods & Statistics: (12 credits)

HLTH 652 ^P	Quantitative Research Methods I in Public Health	3
HLTH 653 ^P	Quantitative Research Methods II in Public Health	3
HLTH 711 ^P	Advanced Methods of Research	3
HLTH 712 ^P	Applied Research Methods in BCH	3

Key to Asterisk and Letter Codes:

*Core requirement that can be waived without substitution if this course or equivalent is already completed (in some instances students must earn a 80% or higher on a placement/waiver exam; in other instances, students must produce documentation of earning a B or higher in an equivalent course)

** Maximum of 9 credits of independent study including mentored research experience

*** Maximum of two 400-level courses in program. All electives must be taken subsequent to admission.

P = Has a pre-requisite requirement

HLTH 665 is a pre-requisite for HLTH 666.

EPIB 650 or equivalent is a pre-requisite for HLTH 652.

EPIB 650 or equivalent and HLTH 652 are pre-requisites for HLTH 653.

HLTH 652 is a pre-requisite for HLTH 711.

HLTH 710 is a pre-requisite for HLTH 711 and HLTH 776.

HLTH 774 is a pre-requisite for HLTH 776

HLTH 652 and HLTH 710 are pre-requisites for HLTH 712

Qualifying Examination (QE)

Must be taken either in the semester the student is completing her/his coursework or the next semester. Students must pass all sections of the examination before advancement to candidacy and before commencement of dissertation research. The Graduate Program Director must have approved a completed program of study before the Qualifying Examination. Refer to the Qualifying Examination Guidelines for additional information (available at www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section).

Individualized Research Plan: (minimum 15 credits)

HLTH 898	Independent Study/Mentored research experience (3-6 credits)
** , ***	Area of concentration (at least two 600+ level courses)

Advance to Candidacy

Once the Qualifying Examination and the Individualized Research Plan are completed, doctoral students must apply for Advancement to Candidacy using the Graduate School's required form, which is available at www.gradschool.umd.edu.

Independent Doctoral Dissertation Research: (minimum 12 credits)

HLTH 899 Doctoral Dissertation Research

IV. Completing Coursework

Course Waiver/Substitution Policies

Students are expected to demonstrate competency in the areas covered by the following coursework, prerequisites, co-requisites, and the equivalent of the DBCH Core course work. If prior equivalent coursework has been taken, any combination of the Core courses and co-requisites may be waived without substitution except for the following courses: HLTH 774 and HLTH 776. If Advanced Theory and Applications or Advanced Research Methods and Statistics courses are waived, they must be substituted. Waivers and substitutions must receive approval from the student's advisor, the instructor of course, and the DBCH Director of Graduate Studies. It is **strongly recommended** that newly admitted doctoral students submit any waiver or substitution paperwork to their assigned advisor for the initial review early in the summer prior to enrolling because the waiver/substitution process can take anywhere from 2 days to 8 weeks. All waiver/substitution requests must be processed within the student's first semester of enrollment. To begin the waiver/substitution process, print out the **REQUEST FOR WAIVER/SUBSTITUTION** cover sheet for each course request. The cover sheet is available on the DBCH website. Go to www.sph.umd.edu/bch and look under the GRADUATE section.

COURSE WAIVERS

- If you wish to waive EPIB 610 or EPIB 650, you must earn a 80% or higher on a waiver/placement exam which will be offered during the week of August 24th.
Date: TBD
- If you wish to waive MIEH 600, you must have earned a MPH from an accredited SPH or taken a course that is 95% similar to the one offered at UMD. Follow the Core Course Waiver Procedures listed on the cover sheet (available on our department website under GRADUATE > Forms)
- If you wish to waive HLSA 601, follow the Core Course Waiver Procedures listed on the cover sheet (available on our department website under GRADUATE > Forms)

- If you wish to waive HLTH 665, follow the Core Course Waiver Procedures listed on the cover sheet (available on our department website under GRADUATE > Forms)
- If you wish to waive HLTH 710, you must earn a 80% or higher on a waiver/placement exam which will be offered during the week of August 24th. Date: TBD
- If you wish to waive any other HLTH courses, follow the Course Waiver Procedures listed on the cover sheet (available on our department website under GRADUATE > Forms)

Program Plan of Study

The PhD Program Plan is intended to help students work out a time line for completing the PhD degree. The PhD Program Plan template (www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section) should be filled out and/or updated by the advisor and the student during their pre-registration advising meetings. Once completed, the student submits an electronic or hard copy of their updated program plan to the Director of Graduate Studies in order to obtain clearance to register for classes. **Students and their advisors are responsible for keeping the student's program plan up to date. If it is not up-to-date, students risk not graduating when planned or expected.**

Individual Progress Meetings

In addition to maintaining an up-to-date program plan, students will also be required to meet annually each spring with their advisor, the Graduate Studies Director, the Chair, departmental faculty who have had the student in class, and any faculty who have served as mentors to the student. The primary purpose of these meetings is to make sure the student is making satisfactory progress. Faculty will provide an assessment of the student's progress and make recommendations for improvement, if needed. The meetings are intended to be somewhat formal so students should be prepared to discuss their progress in the program and goals for the following academic year. Additionally, students should feel free to bring up any issues, questions or concerns they have about the program and/or their progress in the program.

Meeting Program Benchmarks

The following tables illustrate program benchmarks students are expected to reach and by when. If a student does not reach a benchmark by the expected date, he/she will be put on departmental probation for one year. Students should meet the missed requirement within the one year probationary period. If a student misses two consecutive benchmarks, he/she will be dismissed from the program. In some instances, course availability may make it difficult for FT students to complete their formal coursework during the expected time period. If this occurs, special exceptions will be made for those students.

Full-Time Doctoral Student with a MPH Upon Enrollment								
	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	5 th year	6 th year	7 th year	8 ^{th+} year
Complete the majority of formal coursework		x						
Complete the qualifying exams		x						
Advance to candidacy			x					
Complete/defend a dissertation proposal			x					
Complete/defend the dissertation				x				
Complete the program/graduate				x				

Full-Time Doctoral Student without a MPH Upon Enrollment								
	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	5 th year	6 th year	7 th year	8 ^{th+} year
Complete the majority of formal coursework			x					
Complete the qualifying exams			x					
Advance to candidacy				x				
Complete/defend a dissertation proposal				x				
Complete/defend the dissertation					x			
Complete the program/graduate					x			

Part-Time Doctoral Student with a MPH Upon Enrollment								
	1 st year	2 nd year	3 rd year	4 th year	5 th year	6 th year	7 th year	8 ^{th+} year
Complete the majority of formal coursework			x					
Complete the qualifying exams			x					
Advance to candidacy				x				
Complete/defend a dissertation proposal					x			
Complete/defend the dissertation						x		
Complete the program/graduate						x		

Part-Time Doctoral Student without a MPH Upon Enrollment								
	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	5th year	6th year	7th year	8^{th+} year
Complete the majority of formal coursework				x				
Complete the qualifying exams				x				
Advance to candidacy					x			
Complete/defend a dissertation proposal							x	
Complete/defend the dissertation								x
Complete the program/graduate								x

V. Independent Study Credits (HLTH 688, HLTH 898, HLTH 899, theory elective)

Some students elect to take independent study (IS) credits in order to fulfill an elective or to get additional research or other types of professional experience. IS credits are variable meaning they vary from 1-6 credits depending on the amount of work and time involved. IS work is designed to be led by the student with minimal guidance from the faculty sponsor. If you wish to register for IS credits, you must submit an IS Contract (available at www.sph.umd.edu/bch >GRADUATE > Important Forms) with all required signatures to the Director of Graduate Studies. When submitting an IS contract, you must include an updated, approved program plan with IS credits entered in the appropriate place or simply in the notes filed if the IS credits are not fulfilling a program requirement.

Some students complete an IS to meet their advanced theory elective. If you wish to do this, the IS must include the application and/or evaluation of health behavior theory, which you will learn to do in HLTH 665 and HLTH 666. Because it is an **ADVANCED** elective, you must be applying the skills that you have learned/are learning in the program (e.g., applying theoretical constructs, measuring validity and reliability).

VI. Travel Funding

The Department of Behavioral and Community Health is committed to assisting students who need travel funds to present their scholarship at scientific conferences. The amount of funds in the account will vary year to year with lesser amounts during lean years and greater amounts during robust years. The past three years the total amount in the fund has been \$5000.00

POLICY:

Travel Support will only be provided for graduate students who:

- Are presenting a paper/poster (first author is preferable) at a scientific/scholarly conference and/or
- Are attending a scientific/scholarly training that is essential to their professional development and/or

- Have defended their project/thesis/dissertation proposal, are in the job market, and want to use the conference's employment services/networking opportunities

Eligibility for Travel Support:

- All BCH graduate students currently enrolled and in good standing
- Approval of travel by the student's faculty advisor
- Filing of a travel fund application that includes a copy of the paper's abstract and proof of acceptance (if appropriate) statement of why travel is required (or verification) and completed the Graduate School's Goldhaber Travel Award Form (if applying)

Trip Maximums:

- Domestic travel = \$400
- International travel = \$600

Duration of Program Maximums:

- MPH students, over the duration of their degree, a total allocation of \$500
- PhD students, over the duration of their degree, a total allocation of \$2,500

We *strongly encourage* that students plan carefully to use their travel funds so that they can travel throughout their duration as a graduate student.

Travel awards are constrained to cover ONLY:

- Conference registrations (Early bird is preferred)
- Cost of abstract submission
- Flights (booked sufficiently in advance to achieve good rates)
- Hotel costs
- Mileage if driving to out-of-state conference
- Poster production

All funds must be approved by the faculty advisor and the department as "appropriate and reasonable."

VII. Dissertation Funding

The Department of Behavioral and Community Health is committed to assisting students who need matching funds to complete their projects/theses/dissertations (P/T/D). The departmental project/thesis/dissertation fund will vary year to year with lesser amounts during lean years and greater amounts during robust years.

POLICY:

Project/thesis/dissertation (P/T/D) support will only be provided for graduate students who:

- Have matching funds from their advisor or another faculty member or significant merit as determined by the Graduate Program Committee (GPC); and
- Have successfully defended their project/thesis/dissertation proposal

Eligibility for P/T/D Support:

- All BCH graduate students currently enrolled and in good standing

- Approval of fund request by the student's faculty advisor
- Filing of a P/T/D fund application that includes a copy of the P/T/D's abstract, proof of matching funds, statement of why funds are requested and what specifically the funds will be spent on

P/T/D Maximums:

- MPH students = \$250.00
- PhD students = \$500.00

Students may apply **only once** for funds even if they receive multiple fund infusions from their advisor or another faculty member.

Examples of how P/T/D awards can be spent:

- Participants/subject incentives
- Travel costs related to data collection (e.g., gas to get to/from Baltimore for interviews with participants)
- Survey copying/production
- Undergraduate assistant

All funds must be approved by the faculty advisor and the department as "appropriate and reasonable."

V. Applying for Advancement to Candidacy

Once the Qualifying Examination and the individualized research plan credits are completed, doctoral students must apply to the Graduate School for advancement to Doctoral Candidacy. The form to be used for this is: APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY. The form is available on the Graduate School website (www.gradschool.umd.edu). Once completed, the form should be signed by your advisor and then submitted to the Department Graduate Studies Director for approval before sending it to the Graduate School.

VI. Dissertation Requirements

General Information

All Doctoral degree students are required to complete a dissertation [HLTH 899 Doctoral Dissertation Research (12 credits)]. All dissertation credits will be given an Incomplete Grade until the research is completed. Normally, your faculty advisor is the default chair of your dissertation committee; however, if it is more appropriate to have another faculty member who is a better fit, be sure to notify your advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies that you made this change. This new faculty member/chair will become your faculty advisor and you will register for dissertation credits under his/her section number.

No student may formally propose a dissertation topic until advancement to candidacy.

A. Designing the Dissertation Research Project

1. Selecting a Dissertation Topic: A dissertation begins with a question about some (any) aspect of public health, health behavior, or health education. The purpose of the dissertation research study is to attempt to find the answer to that question.

2. Developing a Dissertation Proposal: After selecting a dissertation topic, a written proposal that details the research plan and exactly how it will be conducted is submitted. Students may also want to consider the manuscript option. Guidelines for the manuscript format are available on the department website under the GRADUATE section.

3. Requesting Approval of a Dissertation Proposal: The proposal must be approved by a committee of five faculty members, at least three of whom must be DBCH faculty. All must be members of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Maryland. One will be the dissertation advisor who will chair the committee. The Graduate Dean's Representative must be outside the DBCH and be a member of the University's Graduate Faculty and must be a tenured professor.

Since this committee must approve the research, it is a good idea to determine the members early and seek advice in designing the research. Committee member selection should be done in consultation with the dissertation advisor.

When the proposal is ready for final review, schedule a meeting with the dissertation proposal committee. At this meeting the proposal may be approved as is, totally rejected, or require certain changes. In the latter two cases, the proposal would need to be reworked for another review. (NOTE: The limit is two formal proposal meetings.) Schedule the proposal meeting at least ten working days in advance and electronically send the **DEFENSE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT FORM** (www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section) to the Director of Graduate Studies for distribution to all Department faculty and graduate students, who may attend this meeting. At that time, provide a copy of the complete proposal to each member of the committee. The Graduate Studies Director **does not** need a copy of your proposal.

When the proposal is approved, the members of the committee will sign a **PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM** and a **BCH DISSERTATION PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FORM** (both forms are available at www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section). The dissertation advisor will then forward these documents to the Department Graduate Studies Director to sign and place in your file.

If the research project involves human subjects, IRB approval must be obtained after it has been approved by the dissertation proposal committee. For complete details, see: **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES PERTAINING TO RESEARCH/PROJECTS INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS** available on the University of Maryland website (www.umd.edu – look under Research).

Soon after the proposal is approved and human subjects approval is obtained (and no later than 90 days prior to the final defense), students should request Graduate School approval

of their dissertation examining committee. Ideally this should be the same committee that approved the dissertation proposal. Again, all must be members of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Maryland. One of these five will be the dissertation chair. The Graduate Dean's Representative must be outside the DBCH, be a member of the University's Graduate Faculty and be a tenured professor. The form to be used for this purpose is titled **NOMINATION OF THESIS OR DISSERTATION EXAMINING COMMITTEE** and is available on the Graduate School's website (www.gradschool.umd.edu). Once this form has been submitted, the Graduate School will send a **REPORT OF THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE** form to the dean's representative and the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the dissertation defense. The chair will bring this form to the final defense meeting and committee members will sign this form once the dissertation has been defended and requested changes, if any, have been made.

B. Completing The Dissertation Research Project

After the dissertation research project has been approved, proceed with the research. It is expected that the conduct of the project will be according to what was approved by the committee. Before making any changes in the nature of the research, approval of your dissertation committee is required. Once the research is completed, the student is required to prepare a written report to cover all aspects of the project.

C. Defending The Dissertation

Once the committee has been approved by the Graduate School, schedule the oral defense meeting. (Note: No dissertation defense meetings can be scheduled during the last week before regular Graduate School deadlines for submitting all requirements.) A **DEFENSE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT FORM** (available at www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section) must be sent electronically at least ten days prior of the defense date to the Director of Graduate Studies for distribution to all BCH faculty and graduate students, who may attend this meeting. At this time, be prepared to give each member of the committee a complete copy of the dissertation to review. Any member of the faculty or any graduate student may attend this meeting.

Three things can happen at the oral defense:

- the dissertation can be accepted as is
- the dissertation can be rejected
- the dissertation can be accepted on the condition that certain changes be made within a specified time frame.

When final approval is granted, each committee member will sign the **REPORT OF THE EXAMINING COMMITTEE** form that will be sent from the Graduate School to the dean's representative and the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the dissertation defense. This form must be signed by all members and submitted to the graduate school approximately 4 weeks prior to commencement. In addition, that chair of the committee must complete the **BCH DISSERTATION DEFENSE ASSESSMENT RUBRIC**

FORM (www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section). This form is a departmental form that must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies upon completion.

The final dissertation must be submitted electronically to the Graduate School approximately 4 weeks prior to commencement. In addition, students must submit the **ELECTRONIC THESIS AND DISSERTATION PUBLICATION FORM** (available at www.gradschool.umd.edu) to the Graduate School. Check deadlines on the Graduate School's website (see above link) to determine final dates for each semester.

D. Dissertation Proposal and Defense Meetings

Current Departmental regulations call for all dissertation research projects to comply with the following:

- (1) A formal announcement using the DEFENSE MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT FORM must be sent electronically to the Director of Graduate Studies at least 10 days prior to the final defense date.
- (2) All proposal and defense meetings take place in the BCH conference room 1234A SPH. If the conference room is booked, students must request another location through their dissertation chair and/or the department coordinator.
- (3) The guidelines for the general content of the proposal are available on the department website (available at www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section). The content of the final dissertation is determined by the nature of the study and the student's dissertation advisor.

VIII. Summary of PhD Regulations

General Program:

- Each student is expected to propose an overall program plan by completion of 12 hours of coursework.
- Courses taken at a consortium school (<http://www.consortium.org/main.asp>) are considered UMCP courses if taken for academic credit. (Contact the Consortium Coordinator, Room 1113 Mitchell Building, 314-8239 to obtain "Permission to Enroll in the Consortium Program" form).
- Courses taken at a non-consortium school may be part of a Ph.D. program if: (1) the student has received prior approval to take the course; and (2) the course is taken for academic credit.
- A student has five years to be admitted to candidacy.
- A student has four years to complete the dissertation after admission to candidacy.
- Although the University has a time limit policy that allows for extensions, only those students making progress in the program (determined by the advisor and Director of Graduate Studies) will be supported for such a time limit extension.

- Any request for subsequent time limit extensions will require substantiation of the need and the reason for requiring such an extension; more than one extension is extremely rare.

Dissertation:

- Nomination of the dissertation examining committee must go to the Graduate School 90 days before the dissertation defense.
- A dissertation committee consists of five members, including the chair and at least 2 other members from the BCH. The approved proposal format is available from the DBCH website (www.sph.umd.edu/bch - look under the GRADUATE section).
- A three chapter format is required for the proposal, with complete versions of the introductory and methods chapters.
- There is no overall page limit for the full proposal.
- Complete reference lists for the materials submitted, and all instrumentation proposed must accompany the proposal.
- All meetings, proposal and defense, will be open to graduate students and faculty
- All dissertation meetings must occur with appropriate announcement 10 working days in advance, and take place in the BCH conference room, 2387 SPH Building (or appropriate alternative location).
- To announce a meeting, an announcement must be on the graduate bulletin board at least 10 days in advance of the meeting. Also 10 days in advance, email the Graduate Studies Director the announcement form which will be forwarded to department faculty and graduate students listservs.
- All five committee members must be present at the final defense meeting.

IX. Program Checklist

Following is a checklist for the Ph.D. degree program which outlines, in sequence, a series of recommended steps for completing the degree program. This checklist may be used as a guide to help plan activities throughout the program. Each year, the Graduate School publishes a listing of key dates that a student is responsible for meeting (available at <www.gradschool.umd.edu>).

1. If eligible, submit a written request for waiver and/or substitution of any required course to your advisor prior to the first semester.
2. Before completion of the first 12 credit hours, prepare a program plan to be signed by your advisor and submitted to the Graduate Studies Director for your student file.
3. Complete all coursework. (Note: Advising is mandatory every semester; to be cleared for registration requires a newly-approved copy of your proposed plan of study, each semester.)

4. Meet with the Graduate Studies Director to arrange for qualifying examination.
5. Complete and pass all sections of qualifying examination.
6. Meet with faculty advisor to develop the individualized research plan.
7. After successfully passing qualifying examination and the 15 credits of individualized research, submit application for advancement to candidacy to the Graduate School.
8. In consultation with dissertation advisor, develop dissertation proposal.
9. Establish dissertation proposal committee and submit dissertation proposal to committee for approval.
10. Hold proposal meeting.
11. If human subjects will be involved, obtain Department and University human subjects approval.
12. Establish dissertation examining committee and submit form requesting appointment of doctoral dissertation examining committee to Graduate School (at least 90 days prior to your defense).
13. Complete research and prepare dissertation manuscript. Then, submit manuscript to dissertation advisor for review and revise as necessary.
14. Apply for diploma. THERE IS A SPECIFIC DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING THIS FORM. Consult the Graduate School Deadlines at <www.gradschool.umd.edu>
15. Submit dissertation manuscript to other members of your dissertation committee for review and revise as necessary.
16. Schedule and complete oral defense of doctoral dissertation.
17. Revise dissertation as necessary.
18. Submit your dissertation electronically and the Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Publication Form to the Graduate School approximately 4 weeks prior to commencement. Be sure to meet the Graduate School's DEADLINE (look on www.gradschool.umd.edu).
19. Attend Departmental Graduation Luncheon to CELEBRATE!!!