

2013-2014

PhD in Epidemiology

Handbook



Department of Epidemiology

College of Public Health and Health Professions

College of Medicine

<http://epidemiology.php.ufl.edu/>

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Welcome from the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology

Welcome!

Welcome to the Department of Epidemiology, housed in both the College of Public Health and Health Professions and the College of Medicine, two of the six Colleges that make up the Health Science Center.

The College of Public Health and Health Professions routinely ranks first or second in National Institutes of Health research funding for colleges of health professions and within the top 20 in research funding for colleges of public health. With more than \$18 million in grant awards last year, the College ranks second among the University of Florida's 16 Colleges in research grants per tenure-track faculty member. In 2011, the annual percentage growth of NIH funding for the College of Medicine was the best in the nation.

The Department of Epidemiology has a new mission and new aims. First and foremost, we aspire to be a top tier program in the country, but can only achieve this through excellent faculty and terrific students like you. The Department is home to the PhD Program and the Epidemiology concentration in the MPH Program. We also have a new MS in Epidemiology Program launching soon.

I have found UF to be a wonderful place to call home and I know you will too.

Welcome to the Gator Nation!

Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH
Dean's Professor and Chair, Department of Epidemiology



Welcome from the Epidemiology PhD Program Director

Dear Epidemiology PhD Students,

Welcome to the Department and the Epidemiology family! We are excited to have you be a part of our active and successful department. This handbook will be your guide for all of the steps you take toward completion of your doctoral thesis. Read it over when you join the department and refer to it as you progress through the program. If you have questions that are not addressed in the handbook you can contact our Academic Program Coordinator or me. You should also consult the University of Florida Graduate Catalog for programmatic matters.



Our department works hard to ensure that our students have a positive and productive graduate experience. I hope that you consider your time in the Epidemiology PhD program as an opportunity to explore ideas, build knowledge, and prepare to become an independent researcher and educator rather than as something you need to get through quickly to move on in your career. Your experiences in Graduate School will become the basis of your professional career so I encourage you to get involved in committees, attend seminars, and engage professional and socially with fellow students and faculty both within and outside of the department. A quick conversation can turn in to a lifelong collaboration!

Enjoy your time at the University of Florida in the Department of Epidemiology, and...

Go Gators!

Cindy Prins, PhD, MPH, CIC, CPH
Clinical Assistant Professor and PhD Program Director
Department of Epidemiology

Introduction

The Graduate School establishes and administers graduate student policies and procedures campus-wide for the University of Florida. Policies and requirements listed in this handbook are either clarifications of those described in the [Graduate Catalog](#) or additional requirements or policies of the [PhD Program in Epidemiology](#). The PhD Program in Epidemiology is administered through the Department of Epidemiology, which is housed in both the Colleges of Public Health and Health Professions and Medicine.

Throughout this handbook, you will find links to programs, institutes, colleges and centers in the University of Florida. These links allow us to keep up with the ever changing complexion of the University.

Part I: The University of Florida

Overview of UF

The [University of Florida](#) in [Gainesville](#) is a major research university and one of only 17 public, land-grant universities that belong to the [Association of American Universities](#). It is the state's oldest and most comprehensive University and is among the nation's most academically diverse public higher education institutions. UF has a long history of established programs in education, research, health care and service.

UF has a 2,000-acre [campus](#) and more than 900 buildings, including 170 with classrooms and laboratories. UF's extensive capital improvement program has resulted in facilities ideal for 21st century academics and research, including the Emerging Pathogens Institute building; the Cancer and Genetics Research Center; the Biomedical Sciences Building; the Proton-beam Therapy Center in Jacksonville, the Institute on Aging and new Clinical and Translational Research Building (shown below).



The UF Health Science Center

The [UF Health Science Center](#) is the country's only academic health center with six health-related colleges located on a single, contiguous campus. They include the Colleges of 1) Dentistry, 2) Medicine, 3) Nursing, 4) Pharmacy, 5) Public Health and Health Professions, and 6) Veterinary Medicine. The Colleges teach the full continuum of students from undergraduates to professional students to advanced post-doctoral students, enrolling over 6,000 students each year.

The Health Science Center is also a world leader in interdisciplinary research. Major Institutes and Centers include the [Clinical and Translational Science Institute](#), the [Emerging Pathogens Institute](#), the [Institute on Aging](#), the [Center for Environmental and Human Toxicology](#), the [UF Health Cancer Center](#), the [UF Genetics Institute](#), and the [McKnight Brain Institute](#). Information on other UF centers and institutes can be found at this [link](#).

The Health Science Center is closely affiliated with the [UF Health](#) System. Together with clinical programs and services across all HSC colleges, the UF Health partnership is helping to create Florida's future healthcare workforce.

The Health Science Center has recently completed [Forward Together](#), a new strategic plan of core vision, values, and goals.

College of Public Health and Health Professions

The [mission](#) of the [UF College of Public Health and Health Professions](#) (PHHP) is to preserve, promote, and improve the health and wellbeing of populations, communities and individuals.

In 2009, the College received five-year accreditation from the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). PHHP is the first college to include both public health and health professions that has received accreditation as a School of Public Health. Quick Facts about the CPHHP can be found on the [college fact sheet](#).

Teaching

The College is composed of nine departments: 1) Behavioral Science and Community Health; 2) Biostatistics; 3) Clinical and Health Psychology; 4) Environmental and Global Health; 5) Epidemiology; 6) Health Services Research, Management and Policy; 7) Occupational Therapy; 8) Physical Therapy; and 9) Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences.

Research

Among colleges of health professions, the College of Public Health and Health Professions consistently ranks first or second in National Institutes of Health [research funding](#) and was granted 19.2 million in research support in fiscal year 2010-2011.

The College is home to numerous [research centers](#), including the Center for Pain Research and Behavioral Health, the Center for Pediatric Psychology and Family Studies, the Center for the Study of Emotion and Attention, the Center for Research on Telehealth and Assistive Technology, the Florida Center for Medicaid and the Uninsured, the Florida Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation and the Florida Trauma Rehabilitation Center for Returning Military Personnel, the Hearing Research Center, the Institute for Advanced Study of Communication Processes, the Institute for Mobility, Activity, and Participation, and the National Rural Behavioral Health Center. These units draw faculty from many departments, including Epidemiology, for transdisciplinary investigations that serve both scholarly and policy goals. The Florida Center for Medicaid and the Uninsured conducts research and policy analysis on access to health care for people with low income, and the Florida Office on Disability and Health is the state's first public health program to build epidemiologic capacity and coordinate Florida's disability programs.

Research Training

The College has received four NIH training grants: a K-12 Rehabilitation Research Career Development award, & two T-32 training grants: one in rehabilitation and neuromuscular plasticity, and the other in physical, cognitive and mental health in older adults. The Department of Epidemiology was awarded a Fogarty International Training Center to train mental health professionals in Bangalore, India, and Sikkim and Assam areas of India.

Patient Care

The College of Public Health and Health Professions is home to five patient clinics offering services in Speech and Audiology, and in Psychology.

Service

One major service site is provided through the Department of Epidemiology's [HealthStreet](#), which is a community-based effort that works every day to reduce disparities in healthcare and research participation by linking the medically underserved to medical and social services and opportunities to participate in research.

On an international level, students and faculty in the Departments of Physical Therapy, Behavioral Science and Community Health, and Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences travel annually to countries in Latin America to provide training, health care services and public health needs assessments. The College has also opened a UF Public Health Field Laboratory in Haiti. Opportunities also exist through the Fogarty International Training Center Program for students to work in India.

College of Medicine

The [UF College of Medicine](#) is acknowledged as having one of the strongest medical education programs in North America. Its mission is to improve health care in Florida, our nation and the world through excellence and leadership in education, clinical care, education, discovery and service.

Teaching

The College offers a variety of educational opportunities in addition to the medical degree, including the Interdisciplinary Program in Biomedical Sciences, which leads to a PhD or MS degree, and joint programs for both MD and PhD degrees. Also part of the College of Medicine is the School of Physician Assistant Studies. The College plays an important role in the continuing education of resident physicians and fellows through its collaboration with [UFHealth](#). The College offers residencies in 56 medical specialties and sub-specialties as well as clinical and research fellowships.

The College of Medicine has ranked among the top 50 medical schools for the past seven years and includes 40 research-oriented basic and clinical academic departments, 1000 students, 700 residents and fellows, and 1,170 faculty members. The Jacksonville campus, located 75 miles to the northeast, is home to more than 350 physicians and scientists delivering medical care in an urban setting, performing research and educating medical students and residents.

Patient care is provided by the UF Physicians Group Practice, a close collaboration with Shands at UF, the [Malcolm Randall Veterans Affairs Medical Center](#), and several community health-care sites and other affiliated hospitals in Florida.

Research

College of Medicine faculty have attained national leadership in patient care, research and education related to addiction, the brain and spine, cancer, diabetes, pharmaceutical design and development, genetics and organ transplantation. The College was responsible for 45.7 percent of UF's total extramural research awards for FY 2010, earning \$310 million in research grants and contracts. The College of Medicine houses [8 affiliated research institutes and 32 research facilities/centers](#).

UF was ranked the No. 1 public institution at transferring its research to the marketplace and is among the top 10 U.S. universities in licensing income. The University averages more than 50 issued patents each year. Two of the most widely recognized products to come out of research at the College of Medicine are Gatorade®, a popular sports beverage, and Trusopt®, an eye drop developed to treat certain forms of glaucoma.

Patient care

Patient care occurs at two principal locations — Gainesville and Jacksonville — and at more than 40 clinical practices. Clinical strengths are in cancer, neurosciences, aging, gene therapy, psychiatry and

addiction medicine, transplantation and children's services. UF faculty members account for approximately 550,000 physician visits and 44,000 discharges annually. The UFHealth Shands Cancer Hospital at UF, a 192-bed hospital designed to meet the area's growing need for cancer services, opened its doors to patients in November 2009. The hospital serves a variety of inpatients, including those receiving diagnostic and therapeutic oncology care. It also houses the Critical Care Center for Emergency and Trauma services. In 2012, the Florida Recovery Center opened its doors for those who seek recovery from addiction and eating disorders.

Department of Epidemiology

The [Department of Epidemiology](#) is uniquely housed in both the Colleges of Public Health and Health Professions and Medicine at the University of Florida. Faculty members are appointed in both Colleges. This forward governance structure was designed to create synergies resulting in a strong, competitive research profile and in highly trained students.

The mission of the new Department of Epidemiology is to improve health globally through education, training, research and service.

As a leader in the field, the Department aims to:

- Advance the field's theoretical and empirical base through rigorous multidisciplinary epidemiological research that monitors health globally.
- Prepare the next generation of scientific leaders to design and conduct ethical, relevant and innovative epidemiological studies.
- Train a public health workforce committed to working with diverse communities to bring about outcomes that matter.
- Develop and refine epidemiological measures and methods that address the dynamic and complex factors impacting public health globally.
- Provide leadership and service in epidemiology and public health through international, national, state, and local collaboration and community engagement.

The department offers the [PhD in Epidemiology](#), an [Epidemiology concentration in the MPH program](#), and a [MS in Epidemiology](#). Currently, there are over 70 students across these academic programs in the Department.

Part II: PhD in Epidemiology

Program Overview

The PhD in Epidemiology Program began in 2008. The PhD is a research degree, granted on evidence of overall proficiency in epidemiology, and particularly on ability to apply the skills in an independent investigation as demonstrated in a dissertation presenting original research with a high degree of literary skill.

The core coursework of the PhD program was designed to incorporate competencies recommended in the report of the 2002 [Workshop on Doctoral Education in Epidemiology](#) from the American College of Epidemiology and the Association of Schools of Public Health, and the [Applied Epidemiology Competencies: Competencies for Applied Epidemiologists in Governmental Public Health Agencies](#).

Graduates of the Epidemiology PhD program will be able to:

- Apply epidemiological methods to address critical and/or emerging public health and clinical research issues through the use of:
 - Appropriate epidemiological research designs
 - Advanced statistical analysis methods for health studies
 - Data structures and measurement methods for health research
 - Biological, behavioral and social theory applied to the understanding and prevention of contemporary threats to health and well-being
 - Depth of knowledge in an area of specialization
- Assimilate the history, philosophy, and ethical principles of epidemiology into current research
- Develop grant proposals and manage research projects
- Write scientific papers for publication in high-impact peer-reviewed journals and communicate research results to scientists, policy makers, and the public
- Compete successfully for research and teaching positions in academic institutions, and federal or state agencies

The program consists of required core coursework, TA effort, successful completion of a preliminary and qualifying comprehensive examination, preparation and successful oral defense of a dissertation proposal, admission to candidacy, conduct of research, and preparation and successful oral defense of a dissertation. These elements and the associated activities are described in the sections below.

Student Learning Outcomes

The following student learning outcomes are necessary for progression to candidacy:

1. Design epidemiologic research studies and analyze data to answer health-related research questions that are currently relevant to the population.
2. Prepare to become an independent researcher in the field of Epidemiology
3. Illustrate a thorough understanding of epidemiology concepts.
4. Display ethical behaviors, cultural sensitivity, teamwork, professional conduct and communication, and build academic skills such as grant writing.

Administration and Faculty

A current listing of [core faculty](#) is shown below and on the Department of Epidemiology website. The Director of the PhD Program, appointed by the Chair of the Department, works with the Chair to oversee the PhD program, assuring student progress and monitoring program accomplishments. The Director works closely with core faculty members in the Department of Epidemiology and collaborates with the PhD Curriculum Committee and the Admission Committee.

The PhD Academic Program Coordinator, also known as the Program Assistant, is responsible for maintaining student records and assisting the Program Director.

The graduate faculty members of the PhD Program in Epidemiology are:

- a) Core faculty in the Department of Epidemiology, and
- b) Affiliated graduate faculty from other Colleges in the Health Science Center

Graduate faculty members, invited by the Chair, are voted on by a majority of all other graduate faculty in Epidemiology. Once voted in, their names are sent to the UF Graduate School for approval.

A current list of all [graduate faculty](#) members in Epidemiology is included in the Department of Epidemiology web site.

Core Faculty in the Department of Epidemiology

Role in Program (Year Joined UF)	Faculty/Degree(s)	Mentor
Dean's Professor of Epidemiology and Chair (2011)	Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH PhD – 1987: Washington University in St. Louis (Sociology/Psychiatric Epidemiology) MPH – 1980: Boston University School of Public Health (Epidemiology) BA – 1977: Emmanuel College (Biology) RN – 1972: Jewish Hospital School of Nursing	-Lee N. Robins, PhD
Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine (2007) ¹	Robert Cook, MD, MPH MD – 1991: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill MPH – 1991: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Epidemiology) BSPH – 1986: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (Biostatistics)	-Roberta Ness, MD, MPH -Wishwa Kapoor, MD, MPH -Duncan Clark, PhD, MD
Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2012)	Maria Khan, MPH, PhD PhD – 2007: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Epidemiology) MPH – 2002: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Maternal & Child Health) BA – 1997: Swarthmore College (Sociology)	-William C. Miller, MD, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor of Epidemiology (2012)	Volker Mai, PhD, MPH MPH – 2000: Harvard School of Public Health (Quantitative Methods) PhD – 1999: University of Georgia (Microbiology)	- Arthur Schatzkin, MD - Steve Hursting, PhD, MPH, RD
PhD Program Director and Clinical Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2010) ²	Cindy Prins, PhD, MPH MPH – 2006: University of Florida (Epidemiology) PhD – 2000: The Pennsylvania State University (Biochemistry, Microbiology, and Molecular Biology) BS – 1993: University of Central Florida (Biology)	-Richard J. Frisque, PhD -Robert Cook, MD, MPH
Professor of Epidemiology (2012)	Ronald I. Schorr, MD, MS MS – 1990: Case Western Reserve University (Epidemiology) MD – 1982: Ohio State University (Medicine) BA – 1978: Duke University (Chemistry)	- Wayne A. Ray, PhD
Professor (2012)	David Sheps, MD, MSPH MSPH – 1988: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (Epidemiology) MD – 1969: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill BA – 1965: University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	-Herman (Al) Tyroler, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, Epidemiology PhD Program Ombudsperson, Director of MS in Epidemiology (2011) ³	Catherine W. Striley, PhD, MSW, MPE MPE – 2004: Washington University in St. Louis (Psychiatric Epidemiology) PhD – 2002: Washington University in St. Louis (Social Work) MSW – 1989: George Warren Brown School of Social Work, Washington University (Social Work) BA – 1980: University of Missouri at Kansas City (Political Science)	-Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH -Arlene Rubin Stiffman, PhD

Core Faculty in the Department of Epidemiology (Continued)

Role in Program (Year Joined UF)	Faculty/Degree(s)	Mentor
Research Assistant Professor and Epidemiology MPH Concentration Coordinator (2013)	Krishna Vaddiparti, PhD, MPE MPE – 2005: Washington University in St. Louis (Psychiatric Epidemiology) PhD – 2002: National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Deemed University, Bangalore, India (Psychiatric Social Work) Mphil – 1996: National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences Deemed University, Bangalore, India (Psychiatric Social Work) MSW – 1994: Osmania University, Hyderabad, India (Social Work) BA – 1992: Osmania University, Hyderabad, India (Sociology)	- Linda B. Cottler, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2007)	Xiaohui Xu, MD, MPH, PhD PhD – 2007: University of Pittsburgh (Epidemiology) MPH – 2002: Fudan University (Environmental Health) MD – 1999: Zhejiang University (Preventive Medicine)	-Evelyn O. Talbott, DrPH, MPH
Assistant Professor of Epidemiology (2013)	Lusine Yaghjian, MD, MPH, PhD PhD – 2009: University of Cincinnati College of Medicine (Epidemiology) MPH – 2003: College of Health Sciences, American University of Armenia MD – 1997: Yerevan State Medical University, Armenia	-Rulla M. Tamimi, ScD

Part Time Faculty

Role in Program (Year Joined UF)	Faculty/Degree(s)	Mentor
Courtesy Appointment (2012)	Richard Hopkins, MD, MPH	
Adjunct Instructor (2006)	Jerne Shapiro, MPH BS – 1998: University of Florida (Microbiology and Cell Science; Plant Pathology) MPH – 2001: University of South Florida (Tropical Public Health and Communicable Diseases)	-Steven Weisner, MD -Thomas Belcuore, MS
Research Assistant Professor (2012)	Jonathan Sugimoto, PhD, MHS PhD – 2010: University of Washington (Epidemiology) MHS – 2002: Johns Hopkins University (International Health, Disease Prevention and Control)	-Ira M. Longini, Jr, PhD -M. Elizabeth Halloran MD, MPH, DSc -Yang Yang, PhD

Student Guidance and Mentoring

Students accepted into the PhD program will have two active supervisors: 1) a Research Mentor and 2) an Academic Advisor.

Research Mentor

Students will choose a Research Mentor in the first semester of enrollment. Guidelines for who can serve as Research Mentor are shown below. The Mentor will also serve as chair of the student's Dissertation Supervisory Committee. Soon after selecting the Mentor, the student will obtain a **Mentoring Compact**, which outlines expectations for mentoring for both the student and the Research Mentor. Students will meet with the Mentor, review the Compact, both will sign it, and the student will bring a copy to the Epidemiology Program Office. Compacts must be signed annually with copies being given to the Program Assistant for the student's file.

Academic Advisor

Students are assigned an Academic Advisor by the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology. Advisors will ensure that the student is completing the specific requirements needed to obtain the PhD in Epidemiology. The Academic Advisor will be a core faculty member within the Department of Epidemiology and will meet with the student in advance of the course registration period each semester to discuss academic progress. Advisors are available throughout the year to consult with students about academic issues. The Academic Advisor may also provide other general advice, serve as a member of the Supervisory Committee, or facilitate communication between the student and faculty.

Guidance

Every semester, the Mentor and Advisor will also sign off on the **Course Registration Form**. At each registration, the Mentor and student will help plan courses to be taken; however, it is the responsibility of the Academic Advisor to know the curriculum requirements in order to review the form and sign it. To keep track, the Program Assistant will document the completion of specific curricular requirements. This form will be provided to the student for meetings with the Advisor and Mentor.

Every August and May, students and Mentors will meet and review the **PhD Student Annual Mentoring Plan and Review of Progress toward Goals**. The Annual Mentoring Review Form, completed by the student before the meeting, outlines specific goals for the upcoming year. The Research Mentor adds comments in the presence of the student; the completed copy is then delivered to the PhD Program Assistant by the student. The PhD Program Director will review all Mentoring Review Plans.

Students should keep a copy of their form and bring it with them when meeting with their Academic Advisor or in subsequent annual meetings with their Mentor. In later years of the program, students should also review the previous year's goals and identify areas of progress.

Change in Mentor

Students who wish to change (or consider changing) the Research Mentor may do so after speaking with the Program Director (or Chair, if Program Director is involved). Reasons may include redirection of perceived interests or funding availability. Such changes will be considered if the student is in good academic standing, both the original and proposed new mentors agree to the change, and the request is provided in writing to the Program Director. If the student is not in good academic standing or one or both faculty members do not agree to the change, or there is personality conflict, the student will seek the advice of the Ombudsperson, who will resolve the issue.

Ombudsperson

An Ombudsperson, appointed by the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology, settles disputes between students and faculty. Students or faculty can refer a grievance to the Ombudsperson. When this happens, the Ombudsperson will discuss the issues with the student or faculty in confidence—working as an independent, objective broker for the student. Once an issue has been brought to the Ombudsperson, all other faculty involvement should cease, to allow the Ombudsperson the chance to settle the dispute. If a dispute cannot be resolved, the case will be brought to the Chair, who will seek the help of the University Ombudsperson.

Grandfathering Students when Requirements Change

Most programs have a clause in their handbook to cover this due to the ever changing world of academia. Changes are only made with the students' best interests in mind. In general, the procedures in this handbook apply to all students enrolled in the PhD in Epidemiology Program who have NOT completed their Qualifying Exam. Students who have fully completed their Exams are not bound by the changes in course requirements or Exams. Students who have successfully defended their dissertation proposals are NOT affected by changes in the dissertation proposal guidelines. Students who have NOT defended their proposals will be affected by these changes.

Supervisory Committee

Composition

The Supervisory Committee oversees and mentors the PhD student through completion of the dissertation phase. Supervisory Committee membership is dictated by the UF Graduate School (see [Graduate Catalog](#)). As shown in the table below, the Supervisory Committee consists of at least four faculty members. The Epidemiology PhD Program requires that at least two¹ members of the supervisory committee be a core member (has a primary appointment) in the Department of Epidemiology. At least three² members, including the Chair, must be Graduate Faculty members in the Department of Epidemiology PhD Program. At least two members must be tenured or on the tenure track. One Supervisory Committee member is required to be an external member-- a person who is not on the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Epidemiology but is Graduate Faculty in another UF academic unit.

Chair of the Supervisory Committee

The Chair of the Supervisory Committee is usually the Research Mentor -- a core faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology. If the Research Mentor is not a core faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology, then a core faculty member in Epidemiology must be selected to serve as Chair of the Supervisory Committee with the Research Mentor as Co-Chair.³

Supervisory Committee

The student and the Chair of their supervisory committee⁴ will work together to identify a proposed Supervisory Committee in the first 12 months in the program. If they do not, then the Chair of the Supervisory Committee may appoint members. After the student and Chair⁵ agree on the proposed Supervisory Committee, the student will obtain the **Supervisory Committee Selection Form** from the Program Assistant, who will confirm that the proposed committee meets the Department guidelines as shown in the table below. It is the responsibility of the student, not the⁶ Supervisory Committee Chair or Program Assistant, to obtain members' agreements to serve. Once selected, the Chair⁵ should alert the Director of the PhD program to the committee selection. Once approved, the Supervisory Committee Selection Form must be signed by all persons listed on the form. The student will obtain the signatures of all Supervisory Committee Members and then submit the Form to the Program Assistant. The last person to sign, the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology, will return the form to the Program Assistant, who will enter the committee into the UF Graduate School system for final approval at the Graduate School, and into the Epidemiology PhD database.

¹ Changed from "one" to "two" on 02/10/14

² Changed from "two" to "three" on 02/10/14

³ Modified from: "The Chair of the Supervisory Committee is the Research Mentor. Deviations from this must be approved by the Mentor, Advisor, Director of the PhD Program and Chair of the Department of Epidemiology"; on 02/10/14.

⁴ replaced "their Research Mentor" with "the Chair of their supervisory committee" on 02/10/14

⁵ Replaced "Mentor" with "Chair" on 02/10/14

⁶ Deleted "Research Mentor"

Additional Members

Additional Members to the Supervisory Committee can be requested but are not guaranteed. See table below for qualifications. The requested name should be entered on the form at the time it is submitted.

Supervisory Committee Roles and Responsibilities Regarding Dissertation:

Chair of the Supervisory Committee¹

- Mentor the student according to the Compact, which is signed annually
- Evaluate the student officially with a yearly letter of evaluation (Annual Mentoring Review Form)
- Communicate with the Supervisory Chair,² other members of the committee and the student
- Provide optimum support and guidance to help the student meet academic goals
- Help to prepare PhD student Area Examination (both oral and written); get approval of exam from the Chair of Epidemiology and the PhD Program Director
- Provide guidance on the student's dissertation topic
- Administer the doctoral dissertation proposal defense which must be attended by all members of the committee
- Monitor and evaluate the student's progress and give clear direction as to the final work plan leading to graduation
- Conduct the final oral examination (also known as doctoral dissertation defense) to satisfy that the dissertation is a piece of original research and a contribution to knowledge. The oral portion of the examination must be conducted in compliance with Graduate Council policies.
- Inform the Chair and PhD Program Director of all progress as the steps are completed, via email within one day of the completion

All together, the Supervisory Committee must meet at least biannually before the student advances to candidacy, and every semester thereafter to review the student's research. These meetings should be scheduled by the student, in consultation with the Supervisory Chair.

Changes in Committee Membership

Changes made to the Supervisory Committee follow the UF Graduate School procedures and must be approved by the Epidemiology PhD Program Director, and the Chair of the Department. Changes need to be approved at least 60 days prior to the date of the Final Oral Defense so that the request can be reviewed and so any new member will have ample time to become familiar with the student's work.

¹ Changed from "Chair of the Supervisory Committee (Research Mentor)" to "Chair of the Supervisory Committee" on 02/10/14

² Changed from "others" to "the Supervisory Chair," on 02/10/14

PhD in Epidemiology Supervisory Committee Qualifications

Person	Type	Required to be Core Faculty Member in Department of Epidemiology?	Graduate Faculty (GF) Status	Must be Tenured or Tenure Accruing?
A	Supervisory Chair ¹	At least two ² members of the committee must be	Required to be core faculty ³ in Epidemiology	Yes
B	Supervisory Committee Member		Required to be core faculty ³ in Epidemiology	At least one of the two must be
C	Supervisory Committee Member		If not GF in Epidemiology, required to be GF in other Department	
D	External Member	Cannot be	Graduate Faculty at UF, but may NOT be GF in Epidemiology	No
E	Additional Member (optional)	No	Not required- needs special approval	No

If the Research Mentor is not a primary member of the core faculty in the Department of Epidemiology, a Chair from the Department of Epidemiology will be appointed to serve, with the Research Chair appointed to be a Co-Chair of the dissertation.

¹ Changed from "Research Mentor" to "Supervisory Chair" on 02/10/14

² Changed from "one" to "two" on 02/10/14

³ Changed from "GF" to "core faculty" on 02/10/14

⁴ Deleted "Some students request a Supervisory Chair different from Research Mentor. This must be approved by the Research Mentor, Program Director and Chair of the Department. The Supervisory Chair must have the same qualification listed above for Research Mentor, and constitutes an Additional Member of the Committee." and added "If the Research Mentor is not a primary member of the core faculty in the Department of Epidemiology, a Chair from the Department of Epidemiology will be appointed to serve, with the Research Chair appointed to be a Co-Chair of the dissertation.", on 02/10/14

Curriculum

The PhD in Epidemiology program requires a minimum of 90 semester credits beyond the bachelor's degree. All students are required to complete, or to have completed, the following courses:

Epidemiology Prerequisite Courses

<i>Course</i>	<i>Epidemiology Prerequisites</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>
N/A	HIPAA & CITI certification	
PHC 6001	Principles of Epidemiology in Public Health	
PHC 6937 ²	Introduction to Public Health for the Health Professions	

The HIPAA and Human Subjects courses are available on-line through a sign in process using your Gator1 sign in. The HIPAA Class is [PRV801 HIPAA and Privacy – Research](#); the CITI Course in The Protection of Human Research Subjects is available through the [CITI site](#); you should create a sign in choosing University of Florida, our department and Biomedical Research for key personnel. You do not have to complete any extra or optional training listed.

The current curriculum is shown below. All students must complete a minimum of 36 credits of epidemiology core coursework, 39 credits of general Epidemiology Elective Courses, and 15 credits of dissertation work. Students will regularly review their progression towards meeting program curriculum requirements by completing the **PhD Curriculum Form** and reviewing it regularly with the Program Assistant, the Research Mentor, and the Academic Advisor each semester.

<i>Epidemiology Core Courses – REQUIRED (36 Credits)</i>		
<i>Course</i>	<i>Foundation in Statistics & Data Management (8 Credits)</i>	<i>Credits</i>
PHC 6052	Introduction to Biostatistical Methods (SAS-based)	3
PHC 6053	Regression Methods for Life Sciences (SAS-based)	3
PHC 7065 OR	Critical Skills in Epidemiological Data Management (PHC 7065)	2
PHC 6080 & PHC 6081	SAS for Public Health Data (PHC 6080) & SAS for Public Health Analysis (PHC 6081)	1 & 1
<i>Course</i>	<i>Foundation in Epidemiology (3 Credits)</i>	<i>Credits</i>
PHC 6003 OR PHC 6517	Epidemiology of Chronic Disease (PHC 6003)	3
	Epidemiology of Chronic Disease online (PHC 6003)	3
	Public Health Concepts in Infectious Disease (PHC 6517)	3

Course	Epidemiologic Methods (12 Credits)	Credits
PHC 6000	Epidemiology Research Methods I	3
PHC 6011	Epidemiology Research Methods II	3
Choose 6 credits from these courses	Social Epidemiology (PHC 6016)	3
	Methods in Spatial Epidemiology (PHC 6194)	3
	Advance Design & Methodology for Case-Control Studies (GMS 6826)	2
	Longitudinal Research Design (GMS 6829)	2
	Experimental & Quasi-Experimental Research Designs for Community Settings (GMS 6844)	2
	Advanced Pharmacoepidemiology (PHA 6935)	3
	Psychiatric Epidemiology (PHC7038)	3
	Cancer Epidemiology (PHC 6937)	3
Course	Doctoral Seminar Series (6 Credits)	Credits
PHC 7727	Grant Writing for Clinical and Health Research	2
PHC 7934	Epidemiology Seminar I	2
PHC 7000	Epidemiology Seminar II	2
Course	Journal Club Series (2 Credits)	Credits
PHC 7901	Epidemiology Journal Club (Fall)	1
PHC 7902	Epidemiology Writing Circle (Spring)	1
Course	Ethics (2 Credits)	Credits
PHC 7427	Ethics in Population Science	2
Course	Measurement (3 Credits)	Credits
PHC 6711	Measurement in Epidemiology & Outcomes Research	3
Epidemiology Elective Courses (39 credits)		
Course	Statistics Electives (6 credits)	Credits
Choose 6 credits from these courses	Clinical Trials Methods (PHC 6020)	3
	Biostatistical Computation Using R (PHC 6055)	1
	Applied Survival Analysis (PHC 6937)	3
	Other relevant approved Advanced Statistical course	VAR
Course	Epidemiology Electives (18 Credits)	Credits
Choose up to 18 credits from these courses	Independent Study (PHC 7979)	VAR 1 - 3
	Survey Research Methods (PHC 6716)	3
	Meta-Analysis in Clinical, HSR & Public Health (PHC 6846)	2
	Design & Conduct of Clinical Trials I (GMS 6818)	2
	Design & Conduct of Clinical Trials II (GMS 6819)	2
	Measuring & Analyzing Health Outcomes (GMS 6822)	3
	Translational Research in Biomedical Sciences (IDP) (GMS 6841)	2
	Advanced Epidemiology Methods III (PHC 6937)	3
	Measurement Development (PHC 6937)	1
	Domestic Epidemiological Field Research (PHC 6937)	VAR 1 - 3
	International Epidemiological Field Research (PHC 6937)	3
	Other relevant approved Advanced Epidemiology course	VAR

Course	General Electives (15 Credits)	Credits
Choose at least 15 credits	Other approved Epidemiology courses or relevant graduate level courses	15+
Other (15 credits)		
Course	Dissertation Research Courses – REQUIRED (15 Credits)	
PHC 7979	Advanced Research	3 or more
PHC 7980	Dissertation Research	12

Supervised Teaching Experiences (No credits)

<i>Experience</i>	<i>Credits</i>	<i>Semester</i>
Course:	0	

The Department of Epidemiology Curriculum Committee meets regularly to review and adjust the curriculum. *The list of approved courses is updated regularly.*

Curriculum Summary: PhD in Epidemiology

The Epidemiology PhD Curriculum Form summarizes the required components of the University of Florida PhD in Epidemiology degree and includes a list of specific courses that have been approved as requirements or elective categories. Specific course availability varies and some courses may not be available every year.

The Program Assistant will track the courses and maintain an updated file of each student's PhD courses using the PhD Curriculum Form that documents what curriculum requirements have been completed. At the time of each registration, the Program Assistant will provide an official matrix of courses taken and requirements yet to take.

Substitution or exemption for any specific curriculum requirements must be initiated with a letter of explanation that is signed by the student's Research Mentor and Academic Advisor (e.g. a specific course was cancelled or not offered for several years). Such requests will then be reviewed by the Curriculum Committee, and the decision of the Curriculum Committee will be placed in the student's academic file.

Registration

Registration requirements are consistent with the UF [Graduate School Requirements](#), unless otherwise specifically stated in this handbook. **Full-time students** in the Epidemiology PhD program are required to register for a minimum of either 9 (fall and spring semesters) or 6 (summer session) credits while they are actively working toward their degrees. Students receiving assistantships or fellowships must register for the number of credits required by the Graduate School for their specific award. Students failing to register for two or more consecutive terms are removed from the program and must submit an [Application for Readmission](#) if they wish to resume their graduate studies at the University of Florida.

Part time students in the Epidemiology PhD program are required to register for a minimum of either 3 credits in the fall and spring semesters or 2 credits in the summer session while they are actively working toward their degrees. Full time students are not permitted to change to part-time status without a specific written explanation approved by the Research Mentor, Academic Advisor, and PhD Program Director. Taking a leave of absence requires written approval.

Registration Procedure

Registration for students in the Epidemiology PhD program will be done by the PhD Program Assistant. Prior to each upcoming semester, the Program Assistant will compile a list of courses to be offered that are approved by the Curriculum Committee as PhD core program requirements or approved electives. Students may request to take other courses as electives, but such courses must be approved by the student's Academic Advisor and Research Mentor and will be subject to review by the Program Director and the Curriculum Committee. Once students have identified their proposed schedule, they will complete a **Course Registration Form** and have the form signed by the appropriate people. It is then submitted to the Program Assistant.

Registration for Independent Research

If registering for an independent study, pre-candidacy work (PHC 7979) or post-candidacy dissertation research (PHC 7980), the student should initiate the process several weeks prior to registration. The steps needed to register for these courses include:

- Completing a **Dissertation Research Contract** with PHC 7979 or 7980 specified or an **Independent Research Contract Form** that outlines contact time with the instructor, time allocation by students, and specific plan (goals and objectives) and deliverables to be completed during the semester.
- Obtaining signatures from the Instructor, the Research Mentor, and the Academic Advisor.
- Submitting signed contracts to the Program Assistant, who will obtain review from the Chair of the Curriculum Committee.
- The Chair of the Curriculum Committee will then either approve the Contract, or communicate with the student about changes or clarifications that must be completed before approval for registration.

Once the Curriculum Committee Chair has approved the contract, the Program Assistant will complete the registration process and create a unique section number for the student that links the course to the supervising faculty member. At the end of the semester, students must complete the work in the contract in order to receive credit (S/U). If work is not completed, the student will receive an "I" (incomplete) grade that can be changed once the student has completed the work. In addition, a particular effort cannot be requested a second time.

Registration in Final Semester

All PhD students must register for a minimum of either three (fall and spring semesters) or two (summer session) credits of PHC 7980 during the term they graduate. As noted above, these credits are arranged and documented using the Dissertation Research Contract. Candidates must submit a [Degree Application](#) on-line through ISIS by approximately the second week of their final term (see the Graduate Catalog or posted deadlines for the exact date). They may only do this after written confirmation from the Program Director that all course requirements will be filled by graduation. This application must be renewed for a subsequent term if all degree requirements are not fulfilled in the term in which the application was filed.

Academic Residence Requirement

Student participation in Department and College seminars and activities and interaction with other students and faculty is an important part of Doctoral education, therefore students must remain in residence in the Gainesville area to be able to attend these events and to meet face-to-face with their Research Mentor and Academic Advisor. Students who want to relocate more than reasonable commuting distance away from Gainesville may petition to do so only after they have advanced to candidacy. A petition for an exemption to the Academic Residence Requirement must be submitted at least 3 months prior to the proposed relocation date and must include:

- A statement of reasons for the relocation
- A written plan detailing the work the student will be completing during the time period out of residence
- A written plan outlining how the student will maintain regular contact with their Research Mentor and Academic Advisor and how this contact will be documented
- Signatures of the student, their Research mentor and their Academic Advisor

Petitions will be reviewed by the PhD Program Director and the Epidemiology Department Chair. The student, their Research mentor, and their Academic Advisor will be informed of the final decision within 3 weeks of receipt of the petition.

Personal Time

Per the [agreement](#) between the University of Florida Board of Trustees and Graduate Assistants United, "Personal time under this Article shall be with pay for up to five (5) days per semester appointment.

Each employee shall be credited with such five (5) days at the beginning of each semester and shall use leave in increments of not less than one (1) day. For example, an employee scheduled to work six (6) hours on Monday and three (3) hours on Tuesday, who is unable to perform assigned duties on these days for any of the reasons described above, would be charged with two (2) days of personal time, regardless of FTE appointment, or number of work hours scheduled. The personal time provided under this article shall not be cumulative.”

Personal time days must be pre-approved by your research mentor and they do not carry over.

Leaves of Absence

Per the [agreement](#) between the University of Florida Board of Trustees and Graduate Assistants United, “1) Graduate assistants shall be entitled to six (6) weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- a) the birth of a child and in order to care for that child;
 - b) the placement of a child with a graduate assistant for adoption or foster care;
 - c) the care of a spouse, domestic partner, mother, father, brother, sister, child, legal dependent, or a relative living in the graduate assistant’s household;
 - d) A serious health condition of the graduate assistant which makes the GA unable to perform his or her duties.
- 2) The graduate assistant shall provide the University with written notice not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of the requested leave, if practicable. In the case of emergency, the graduate assistant must give verbal notice within twenty-four (24) hours of taking leave. In the case of a serious health condition, the University may request medical verification from a health care provider. The University also may require the GA to see a medical provider of the University’s choice and at the University’s expense.
- 3) The graduate assistant may request an extension of the leave, which the University, at its sole discretion, may provide.
- 4) The GA is entitled to return to the same or similar position at the conclusion of the leave. This return provision does not apply if the return date is after the completion of an employment contract.
- 5) The University shall continue to pay the health care premiums during the duration of the GA’s leave. If applicable, the University tuition waiver shall be maintained.
- 6) A GA must be in at least a second semester of employment as a graduate assistant to be eligible for this leave provision. “**

Transfer of Credits

The Department of Epidemiology and Curriculum Committee will *consider* transferring graduate coursework that was obtained prior to acceptance in the PhD program. This includes graduate work previously conducted at the University of Florida. All course transfers must meet guidelines outlined in the UF Graduate Catalog [guidelines for graduate degrees](#), as well as guidelines of the Department of Epidemiology.

A maximum of 30 credits can be requested to apply to the 90 credit requirements in the PhD in Epidemiology program with these caveats:

- Program in which course was taken should lead to an MPH or MS in Epidemiology degree at that institution; courses that do not meet this criterion may be requested.
- A grade of B or higher was obtained. Pass/Fail courses are not transferrable.
- Required courses are not transferrable unless there is a direct match to our course.
- Only courses directly related to the PhD in Epidemiology will be transferred.
- Course credits are based on instructional hours; in general, one hour of instruction per week during a semester equals one credit.
- No more than 6 credits of General Electives may be transferred.

Procedure

Course transfer requests must be submitted in the first semester after enrollment in the PhD program. (i.e., Courses begin in August - transfers must be submitted by October 31st of that year). Transfers will only be considered once; in other words, you may not submit transfers in August and September and October.

To request a transfer students must:

- Be sure to have previous academic transcripts, course syllabi, have identified potential courses that may qualify for transfer, and have identified which required courses or general categories within the current PhD curriculum that each transferred course may fulfill or replace prior to meeting with their Academic Advisor.
- Meet with the Academic Advisor to complete the **Course Transfer Request Form** and obtain signatures of approval.
- Submit the Course Transfer Request Form and any accompanying course syllabi to the Program Assistant.

The Program Assistant will track that this was submitted, and give transfer request materials to the Epidemiology Curriculum Committee for review. The Curriculum Committee will approve, disapprove, or request more information for each course transfer request. The Program Assistant will then submit the approved courses to the UF Graduate School for final approval.

Final Check

No transferred course can be taken for PhD credit at UF. For example, if student is allowed to transfer Spatial Epidemiology from University X, Spatial Epidemiology cannot be taken at UF for credit towards the PhD in Epidemiology.

Required Supervised Teaching Experience

Before graduation, students must obtain teaching experience with graduate-level epidemiology students or courses. This experience will include providing general assistance to a course instructor, developing and giving lectures, gaining experience with online teaching, helping to develop or update course curricula and teaching a course. The Supervised teaching experience is not a Teaching Assistant position; it is a zero credit course that students will complete in addition to other assistantship duties and coursework.

Teaching experiences:

- Must be a full semester in duration
- Must be assigned by the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology
- Must be approved courses. Courses that could fulfill the TA requirement include courses taught by Epidemiology Graduate Faculty that are included in the PhD curriculum, as well as other undergraduate or graduate courses taught by core Epidemiology faculty that include significant epidemiology content. The Chair of the Department will consider requests when assigning students to teach specific courses each semester, although teaching experiences will also take into account course needs, previous teaching experiences completed, and other individual teaching obligations as outlined in an annual appointment letter provided to each student.

Students will:

- Receive their assignment from the Chair well in advance of the semester.
- Meet with the course instructor, prior to the start of the course, to identify specific objectives and duties for the upcoming course. Students are expected to spend 6 to 10 hours per week for each teaching experience, with part of the experience including attending the class if given on-campus⁶.
- Complete required [TA training module](#) prior to their first teaching experience. They will show proof to the Program Assistant in order to meet this criterion. Attendance of this course will be documented in the database for that student.
- At the end of the teaching assignment, meet with the course instructor to receive feedback and evaluation. The course instructor will provide a written evaluation of the students' work to the Program Assistant.

Assignment Requirements

Type of Funding	Supervised Teaching Experience Requirement before Graduation
Graduate Fellowship from UF or Department of Epidemiology	4 courses, ideally within the first two years
Stipend and Tuition from faculty in Epidemiology or other Departments	2 courses, ideally within the first two years
Self pay	2 courses, ideally within the first two years

Students are strongly encouraged to complete their Supervised Teaching Experience requirements during their first two years of the PhD program.

In the event that student feels their workload is too high with assistantship duties, coursework, and the Supervised Teaching Experience, they will need to arrange to reduce their Graduate Assistantship FTE to levels necessary to complete the supervised teaching requirement.

Qualifying Examination

The University of Florida requires all PhD students to complete both a written and an oral PhD qualifying examination. The Department of Epidemiology has additional criteria.

The exam has three components: 1) the Written Preliminary Examination, 2) the Written Area Examination, and 3) the Oral Area Examination.

1) The Written Preliminary Examination begins the process. It can only be completed if the student:

- Has a minimum 3.00 GPA and is in good academic standing;
- Has completed the core (non-elective) coursework for the PhD program, with the exception of *PHC 7727 – Grant Writing Skills in Clinical and Health Research* which may be taken after the Written Preliminary Exam
- Is currently registered for coursework at the time the examination is taken.

Students interested in taking the Written Preliminary Examination should complete the **Written Preliminary Examination Request Form** and obtain signatures from their Research Mentor and Academic Advisor no later than three weeks in advance of the test date.

The Written Preliminary Examination will be given twice each calendar year—in June and December. It is a one day (8 hour), closed book, closed notebook exam. The Epidemiology Curriculum Committee will solicit questions from Graduate Faculty in Epidemiology for use; however, the final arbiter of questions will be the Chair of the Department of Epidemiology. Questions may or may not be shared in advance of the exam with all faculty; prior to any faculty member seeing the exam, he/she will sign a statement that they will not share the content prior to the exam. High stakes exam protocols are utilized during the exam period: no internet availability, and no phones.

Part 1 is the general knowledge component with questions that test conceptual knowledge of epidemiology in an applied way. Questions will come from current issues in epidemiology, grant design, definitions, ethical issues, and current opinions regarding state of the art issues and their effect on the field. Points for each question are given to sum to 100. This is a hand-written exam.

Part 2 involves the critique of a journal article where the article is given at the time of the exam and students are expected to critique every component of the article from the title, funding, through the methods and bias. Laptops are allowable, but internet access is not. This is a pass/fail exam.

Each exam section will be graded by at least 3 core members in the Department of Epidemiology. Answers are read aloud; faculty agree on the score for each question. Any question that is “failed” will need to be redone in order that the student learns the material. This is accomplished by having the student take home the questions; in 3 days, the answers must be turned back in to the Program Assistant. Source material may be used; however, the work must be that of the student alone. Re-

worked material will be graded by the Exam Chair; if the answers are still not correct, or if on Part 1, a score higher than 70 still is not obtained, the student will be required to come before 3 core faculty members to discuss the points they did not do well on. If the student still does not perform well on this re-do of material, the student may be asked to leave the program. These decisions are made on a case by case basis.

For Part 2, all students will be asked to redo any question that was not passed. If over 30% of the items have been failed, the student will be asked to review a new paper. In order to receive a pass grade, over 70% of the items will need to be passed. Failure to do so will result in a student potentially being asked to leave the program.

All grading is blinded through a number system that only the Program Assistant knows. All communication of grading and exam results to the student goes through the Program Assistant.

2) Written Area Examination

The Written Area Examination may only be taken after successful completion of the Written Preliminary Examination. The format of the examination requires:

- Knowledge of the specific area of expertise of the student
- Knowledge of the unique aspects of Epidemiology in study designs related to the area of expertise
- Ability to think conceptually and clearly about the area of expertise

The student will notify the Research Mentor (Supervisory Committee Chair) of their perceived readiness to be examined. The Research Mentor will begin to assemble five questions related to the field of study. Questions will take into consideration design of studies, persistent and current problems in the field today that need to be solved, and other research issues. The questions will be generated and submitted to the Supervisory Committee for review. Once agreed upon by the Supervisory Committee, the Research Mentor will send them to the Epidemiology Curriculum Committee Chair for review (needs two weeks' notice) to ensure a consistent level of difficulty. Upon approval by the Curriculum Committee, the Curriculum Committee Chair will return the questions to the Research Mentor who will schedule a date for the exam period². On that date the Research Mentor will give the exam questions to the student and collect the responses within 7 calendar days.

Three of five questions will be chosen by the student and addressed within a seven calendar day period. Work must be that of the student alone. Faculty may not discuss the exam questions with students prior to the exam start and they may not help in any way. Answers should be typed, double-spaced in Arial 12-point font with one inch margins all around. No more than 10 pages per question will be allowed.

The Research Mentor may require the assistance of the Supervisory Committee to grade the exam. Exams will be graded within two weeks of the exam completion. Each question will be graded as pass/fail. All three questions must be successfully answered to advance to the oral phase. If all three questions are failed no rewrite will be allowed and the student will not pass the Written Area Exam,

which means that the student will not pass the Qualifying Exam. Any question not successfully answered must be rewritten until a level of passing is achieved, but only 2 rewrites per exam will be allowed. For example, a student may rewrite one question twice or two questions one time. Failure to pass the Written Area Exam will result in the candidate not passing the Qualifying Exam and not advancing to the Proposal Defense. The student will then meet with the Program Director to discuss options. The final graded Written Area Exam must be handed to the PhD Program Assistant to be kept in the student's file.

3) Oral Area Exam

Within two weeks of passing the Written Area Exam, the student must pass his or her Oral Area Exam. This one hour exam will cover any of the three questions answered in the Written Area Examination, as well as a brief discussion about the other two questions. All members of the Supervisory Committee must be present. If any member is not available due to illness or travel, a core faculty member of the Department of Epidemiology must be substituted to fill in; it is expected though that dates will be pre-vetted in order that all members will be able to attend. The Oral Area Exam will be open to any Epidemiology Graduate faculty members but closed to students. Upon passing the Written Preliminary Exam, the Written Area Exam and the Oral Area Exam, the student will officially progress to the dissertation proposal phase. The date of passing the Written Qualifying Exam and the Oral Area Exam will be entered into the student's record in the PhD database by the PhD Program Assistant, after being notified by the research Mentor.

Qualifying Examination

Exam Component	Given By	When Taken	Content
Written Preliminary Examination (WPE)	Department of Epidemiology	Any time after completion of core coursework and if criteria for status are met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Closed book, closed notebook •One day •General Epidemiology knowledge and •Journal critique
Written Area Examination	Supervisory Committee with approval of Curriculum Committee Chair	After successful completion of WPE and prior to the Oral Area Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Three of five questions written
Oral Area Exam	Supervisory Committee with approval of Curriculum Committee Chair	After successful completion of the Written Area Exam and at least six months prior to final dissertation defense.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Any content from the five questions—even those not answered.

Dissertation Proposal

As soon as the Candidate has an approved Committee, she/he may begin the work on the dissertation proposal. The proposal consists of:

- Abstract—30 lines of text, similar to that of the NIH abstract
- Specific Aims—state clearly and concisely what is being proposed, and hypotheses that will be tested (2 pages max)
- Significance—such as defined by the NIH grant application, with relevance to the field of epidemiology and public health (3 to 6 pages)
- Preliminary Studies (optional)—that describes what work has already been done as a beta test or leading up to the work to be done (3 pages max)
- Design and Methods—must have an understanding of how the work will be accomplished, with a flow chart and time line, power calculation, statistical tests to be performed, strengths and limitations. (5 to 10 pages)
- Literature Cited (no page limit)

In advance of any scheduling of the dissertation proposal defense, the Supervisory Chair will meet with the Department Chair, the PhD Program Director, and the Program Assistant to discuss the process of the dissertation proposal defense.¹ Students will work with their Supervisory Chair to prepare the dissertation. Once the Chair feels it is ready for review, the student will send it to the Committee for review. Once the Committee members agree it is ready for defense and the Qualifying Exam has been passed, the Program Assistant will set up a dissertation proposal defense date.² Within two weeks of this, the Program Assistant will give the “Admission to Candidacy” form to the Supervisory Chair for the examination. The Program Assistant will inform the Chair of the Department and the PhD Program Director about the defense and post the name and date of the defense on the back hall bulletin board. The Program Assistant will attend all Dissertation Proposal defenses.

All members of the committee must attend the proposal defense in person.³ The Proposal Defense will commence with a succinct, yet complete overview of the student’s research proposal, given as an oral presentation that is approximately 30 minutes and is supported by visual aids (slides/overheads). It should focus on the proposal topic and methodology. The final dissertation format (three journal articles or traditional dissertation proposal) will be discussed and agreed upon with the candidate’s Committee *at this point*.

¹ Added “In advance of any scheduling of the dissertation proposal defense, the Supervisory Chair will meet with the Department Chair, the PhD Program Director, and the Program Assistant to discuss the process of the dissertation proposal defense.”

² Replaced “the student will set up a dissertation proposal defense” with “the Program Assistant will set up a pre-dissertation proposal defense. 02/10/14

³ Added “All members of the committee must attend the proposal defense in person” on 02/10/14

The Committee will then examine the written proposal and the oral presentation. Thirty minutes will be given for questions to address such topics as:

- Literature evaluation skills
- Theoretical application
- Scientific background
- Study design
- Models of disease or conditions
- Analytical methods
- Measurement methods
- Data and statistical analysis plans

After the student has answered questions from the Supervisory Committee, the Committee will meet without the student present to determine the outcome of the proposal defense. The results will be immediately communicated to the student and that same day the core Epidemiology faculty member will notify the PhD Director and the Chair of Epidemiology. The following scale will be used:

- Pass with minor revisions—students must revise and submit the revisions to the Research Mentor/Chair of the Committee
- Pass with major revisions—students must revise and receive the approval of at least 3 of the 4 committee members
- Not acceptable—student and Research Mentor must meet with the PhD Director

Any recommended remedial work or revisions must be completed within six months from the time of proposal presentation. If a student needs more than one rewrite, the Chair of the Department will be notified. A re-examination may be requested but it must be recommended by the student's supervisory committee and approved by the Chair of the Department.

Admission to Candidacy

Upon passing the proposal defense, the student's Supervisory Committee Chair will obtain signatures from all Supervisory Committee members on the Admission to Candidacy Form and inform the student that he/she has advanced to Candidacy. The Program Assistant will obtain the form from the Research Mentor and submit the data to the Graduate School³.

IRB Approval

All dissertations must receive IRB approval. This can take a few weeks to a couple of months depending on the timing and the state of the work. It is suggested that this be done as soon as possible after the defense to avoid lengthy delays. Students are advised to take an active role in the approval process^{4,5,6}.

Dissertation

The written and oral phase of the Area exam must be passed at least six months prior to the final dissertation defense. No more than five years may pass between passing the Oral Dissertation Defense and the conferring of the degree. Every candidate for an Epidemiology PhD degree is required to prepare and present a dissertation that shows independent investigation, and is acceptable in form and content to the Supervisory Committee and to the Graduate School. A doctoral dissertation must demonstrate the ability to conceive, design, conduct, and interpret independent, original, and creative research. It must describe significant original contributions to the advancement of knowledge and must demonstrate the ability to organize, analyze, and interpret data. The student and Supervisory Committee are responsible for the level of quality and scholarship.

PhD in Epidemiology candidates will work with their Supervisory Committees to identify an appropriate format for their dissertations. Two format options are acceptable: 1) traditional; and 2) three journal articles. The traditional format follows the outline above in a single coherent document.

Traditional Dissertation Format

The traditional dissertation format is an expanded version of the dissertation proposal format. The dissertation consists of:

- Abstract—Must be 350 words or less
- Specific Aims—state clearly and concisely the hypotheses that were tested
- Significance—such as defined by the NIH grant application, with relevance to the field of epidemiology and public health
- Design and Methods—clearly describe how the work was accomplished, with descriptions of statistical tests that were performed
- Results – Organize results by specific aim
- Discussion – Discuss the innovative aspects of the work, how the work advances the field, how the goals of the study were or were not met, and the strengths and limitations of the study. Include a discussion of future directions of the research.
- Human Subjects – Discuss how human subjects were included in each aim of the study, including how subjects were identified, recruited, the informed consent process, and protection of human subjects rights, including privacy.
- Literature Cited -

Journal Article Format

Candidates in scientific fields publish results of their research as journal articles. The three journal article format allows the student to prepare three journal articles, tied together by a common theme, as the core of their dissertation proposal. However, all copyright concerns must be addressed and any chapter that represents a journal article must have a footnote at the bottom of the first page that states, “Reprinted with permission from...” and gives the source as it is listed in the references section. The Graduate School stresses the fact that the dissertation is the primary objective and publication is the

secondary objective. Students must use the formatting requirements of the Editorial Office for spacing and margins, pagination and copy sequence, heading formats, and overall preparation.

The Graduate School encourages candidates to use the scholarly journal in which they have published as a guide for thesis and dissertation preparation. A printed journal article on an analogous subject serves as a tangible, graphic guide for style of writing, use of abbreviations and numbers, reference system, and overall usage policies. Do not use the journal style manual to format the thesis or dissertation, however. To prepare the thesis or dissertation, use the formatting requirements of the Editorial Office.

The journal article format allows for presentation of three manuscripts developed for submission to scientific journals. If this format is selected, the dissertation must have a common introduction and review of literature. There must also be a final chapter summarizing the overall results, conclusions, and recommendations for further research. In addition, the dissertation must have the following elements:

- A common table of contents covering the entire body
- An abstract of the complete study immediately preceding page 1 of the main text
- A common list of references at the end of the text
- All pages numbered in sequence—from page 1 through the biographical sketch
- A footnote at the bottom of the first page of each article that states, “Reprinted with permission from...”

The Journal Article Format requires that:

- The student must be first author of all three articles
- The work has been done while a student in the PhD Program in Epidemiology
- The articles are submitted to journals before the committee will sign the approval form
- The articles were not submitted for publication prior to advancing to Candidacy
- There must be 2 members of the Supervisory Committee who are not co-authors on any article (to show independence)

All formats

Each student is expected to work closely with the Supervisory Committee during the active research phase and while developing the written dissertation. A draft copy of the whole dissertation must be given to the dissertation committee at least one month prior to the defense. This allows time for any major changes to be conveyed and discussed prior to the defense. All committee members must provide written feedback to the student and the Research Mentor at least two weeks prior to the Defense.

Dissertations must be written according the UF Graduate School requirements. If these requirements are not met, the dissertation will not be accepted. The Graduate Council requires the Graduate School Editorial Office, as agents of the Dean of the Graduate School, to review dissertations to ensure the format is acceptable, and to make recommendations as needed. When first presented to the Graduate School Editorial Office, the dissertation should be final and completely formatted. Students should be familiar with the format requirements and should work with the [Application Support Center](#) to

troubleshoot their files before providing their first submission document to the Editorial Office for review. The Graduate School also regularly provides dissertation workshops to help students prepare their dissertations according to the guidelines. Students are encouraged to attend these workshops and to frequently refer to the Graduate Catalog while planning and preparing their doctoral dissertation.

[Format requirements](#)

[Format examples](#)

[Dissertation Checklist](#)

[Editorial Document Management System](#)

[Graduate School Graduation Checklist](#)

[ETD Technical Support](#)

[Thesis and Dissertation FAQs](#)

[Graduation Checklist](#)

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all dissertation requirements for the graduate school are met; students are strongly encouraged to carefully review the [UF Graduate Student Handbook](#), and to attend [workshops or presentations](#) related to the dissertation process.

Final Oral Dissertation Defense

After submitting the dissertation and completing all other work prescribed for the degree, the candidate is given a final oral examination by the Supervisory Committee, on campus. Before the date is scheduled, the committee Chair and the Epidemiology faculty member (if different than the Chair) will meet with the Epidemiology Department Chair and the PhD Program Director.¹ The Epidemiology Program Assistant will contact committee members to schedule the defense date and time and will reserve a room for the defense.² The candidate and the Supervisory Committee Chair must be physically present at the defense and all efforts will be made to schedule the defense at a time when the remaining committee members can also be physically present.³ If one member of the Supervisory Committee is unable to make it to the defense, they may attend using a bidirectional webinar with video. If more than one committee member is unable to attend then the defense must be rescheduled. Two weeks prior to the defense the Program Assistant will review all of the requirements again with the Committee Chair.

The PhD Dissertation Defense consists of an oral defense of the research results that are described in the dissertation. The oral defense is open to other faculty, family/friends, and other students. The Program Assistant will publish the dates, titles, and presenter to all Graduate Faculty members in Epidemiology and relevant Departments Chairs in PPHP and COM, and the Deans of these two Colleges. The approximately two-hour defense begins with a 45-minute succinct presentation by the Candidate, followed by questions from Supervisory Committee members, then other faculty member guests. It ends with all guests and the candidate leaving the room so the Supervisory Committee can discuss the outcome.

The Committee may vote:

Pass—with minor revisions that the Research Mentor (Chair) will review and pass

Incomplete—with major revisions that will require at least 3 of the Committee members to review and finalize

Fail—which means that even major revisions will not make the dissertation acceptable. Hopefully, a student will never get this vote, as it is a reflection of the Research Mentor as well as the entire Committee if this vote is reached.

¹Added, "Before the date is scheduled, the committee Chair and the Epidemiology faculty member (if different than the Chair) will meet with the Epidemiology Department Chair and the PhD Program Director." on 11/13/13

²Added, "The Epidemiology Program Assistant will contact committee members to schedule the defense date and time and will reserve a room for the defense.

³Added, "and all efforts will be made to schedule the defense at a time when the remaining committee members can also be physically present."

The Supervisory Committee Chair must hold the ETD Signature Page until all members are satisfied with the dissertation. However, this form must be submitted electronically, via GIMS, by the Final Clearance Deadline for the Graduate School Editorial Office, during the term of intended degree award. If the Candidate passes without changes, the candidate and the Supervisory Committee Chair sign the UF Publishing Agreement Form, while the entire Supervisory Committee signs the ETD Signature Page and the Final Examination Report. Only completed dissertations may be signed off on.

For updates and requirements for dissertations, check the [Graduate School website](#) or check with the PhD Program Director.

Part III: Other Important Information

Gatorlink

UF requires all students to maintain access to their Gatorlink e-mail. GatorLink is a computer ID and suite of services that allow access to a variety of UF campus computing resources. Every student is required to get a GatorLink ID. Students will be held accountable for information contained in official university mailings to the GatorLink address (which resembles this format: username@ufl.edu). Free services, including a free mailbox and web space, are available. Other campus services require a GatorLink sign on to authenticate your identity. To use GatorLink, you must agree to abide by the policies stated in the Policies for Use of GatorLink and in the UF Acceptable Use Policy. To create your GatorLink, you must go to the [GatorLink home page](#).

Financial Aid

Students in the PhD program are expected to have a source of funding for tuition and stipend (living expenses). Funding may be secured from several sources, including University of Florida graduate assistantships, research sponsorship by a UF faculty member, and teaching assistantships. Check with the [Grants and Fellowships](#) pages for ideas. Students are encouraged to seek NIH funding for R36, F31 and NSF funding for their dissertation work, for the final two years of their program.

Students on University of Florida graduate assistantships are expected to contribute 20 hours/week to the teaching and/or research activities in the department. These duties are discussed with the student and specified in letters of acceptance and award. In semesters when students are Teaching Assistant for the Department, they will work 10 hours per week and TA 10 hours per week.

Funding for Professional Travel

Epidemiology Chair's Travel Award

The Chair's Travel Award provides travel funds up to \$500 each fiscal year (July to June). The award is available to PhD students enrolled in Epidemiology who are presenting a poster or paper at a conference or meeting. The activity must be related to the student's career development, the student must be in good academic standing, and they must receive approval from their research mentor.

After official notification of acceptance of abstract, the student must submit that official acceptance, event details, a letter to the Chair requesting the funds, and estimated expenses with the **Travel Authorization Form** to the Epidemiology Business Manager. Students will be reimbursed after travel has occurred. Students must turn in all receipts for reimbursements with summary page of expenses along with all funders of the trip within 30 days of travel. Unused funds do not carry over to the next year. Availability of funds to be able to offer the Chair's Travel Award will be evaluated each fiscal year and students will be notified if the award is cancelled.

Graduate Student Council Travel Grants

Grants of up to \$250 are awarded by the Graduate Student Council (GSC) to cover travel-related expenses for presenting research or participating in professional development at a professional conference. Reimbursement may cover conference registration, transportation, and lodging, but not food, entertainment, or purchases made on department Pcards. Grants are provided to half-fund travel, so your expenses must be twice as much as the amount requested. Information on applying for GSC Travel Grants can be found on the [GSC](#) web page.

Florida Residency

Non-resident students on an assistantship are eligible for a waiver of the non-resident tuition fee while on the assistantship. Other out-of-state students are encouraged to begin the process of establishing Florida as their legal state of residence as soon as they move here. Graduate students eligible for Florida residency are (1) U.S. citizens with non-Florida residency status, indicated by a resident code of "N" on University records, and (2) Resident Aliens with non-Florida residency status, indicated by a resident code of "E" on University records. International students with a resident code of "A" are not eligible to apply for Florida residency.

Recommendations for establishing and declaring Florida as the legal state of residence are outline on the [UF Admissions page](#).

Academic Integrity and Professionalism

In addition to prescribed coursework in the PhD program, students are strongly encouraged to collaborate with their mentors and other faculty members on presentations at professional meetings, publications in peer-reviewed journals, and professional service, such as reviewing journal articles, consulting with community agencies, and serving on University and Department committees.

The Department of Epidemiology has opportunities for students to learn about current activity in the field of epidemiology and to meet practicing epidemiologists. Students are strongly encouraged to attend major seminars or talks that are directly supported by the Department of Epidemiology, and to meet with visiting epidemiologists during times that are allotted to PhD students. Students who cannot attend these organized, departmental activities should RSVP to indicate their reason for non-attendance.

Professional communication and behavior is expected of all students in the program. Students are strongly urged to participate in service activities, including community service, service on Department or University committees or organizations, or service within professional organizations.

Research Integrity

All students are responsible for receiving training in the Responsible Conduct of Research. This training should be received as early in the PhD program as possible; ignorance of federal regulations covering research is not an excuse for misconduct. Graduate students can be and are held accountable for their conduct, and such accountability can lead to serious consequences. To meet this training need, students are required to take the Department Ethics Course. Students should also expect regular discussion of expected conduct with their mentors.

The University has an [Office of Research](#) and Research Compliance Officer. Become familiar with the information on their web site.

You are responsible for reading and understanding this policy before you engage in any research activities:

UF Research Misconduct Policy. [“It is the policy](#) of the University that each individual faculty, staff member and student is expected to maintain high ethical standards in the conduct and reporting of his/her scientific and scholarly research. Faculty, staff, and students have responsibilities for ethical conduct in research not only to the University, but also to the community at large, to the academic community, and to private and public institutions sponsoring the research activities. Research Misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research or reporting the results. It does not include honest error or honest differences in interpretations or judgments of data. It also does not include authorship or credit disputes. Should alleged incidents of misconduct in research occur, reporting of such possible violations is a shared responsibility, and it is the duty of the faculty, staff members and students to respond in a fitting

manner to resolve issues arising from such alleged misconduct. Such an allegation should be brought to the administrative officer to whom the accused reports (e.g., supervisor, department chair, dean or director). The procedures for reporting misconduct may vary depending on the type, seriousness, and technical nature of the alleged misconduct. “

In addition to the administrative officer to whom the accused reports, academic and research misconduct will be reported to any persons who have a legitimate educational need to know about the issue. This may include the Department Chair, the PhD Program Director, and members of the dissertation committee.

The full University Policy of Research Misconduct section can be accessed [here](#).

If you have any concerns about conduct, please see the Ombudsperson to clarify the UF policy and to consider possible action.

Student Honor Code

All students are required to abide by the [Student Honor Code](#). In adopting this Honor Code, the students of the University of Florida recognize that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students who enroll at the University commit to holding themselves and their peers to the high standard of honor required by the Honor Code. Any individual who becomes aware of a violation of the Honor Code is bound by honor to take corrective action. Student and faculty support are crucial to the success of the Honor Code. The quality of a University of Florida education is dependent upon the community acceptance and enforcement of the Honor Code.

On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied:

On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.

Grievance Procedures

Grievance Procedures for graduate students at the University of Florida are outlined in the University of Florida [Graduate Student Handbook](#). Students are encouraged to speak to their Research Mentor, Academic Advisor, PhD Program Director, or Epidemiology Department Chair to help resolve any issues. The department uses the Ombudsperson, Dr. Catherine Striley, to assist with student concerns or issues. Once an Ombudsperson is engaged, other discussions should cease in order to allow this process to work.

Counseling and Student Health

Students may occasionally have personal issues that arise in the course of pursuing higher education or that may interfere with their academic performance. If you find yourself facing problems affecting your coursework, you are encouraged to talk with an instructor and to seek confidential assistance at:

[University of Florida Counseling & Wellness Center](#), 352-392-1575

Visit their web site for more information.

Crisis intervention is always available 24/7 from:

[Alachua County Crisis Center](#): (352) 264-6789

BUT – Do not wait until you reach a crisis to talk with a counselor. The University of Florida Counseling Center has helped many students through stressful situations impacting their academic performance; you are not alone so do not be afraid to ask for assistance.

The [Student Health Care Center at Shands](#) is a satellite clinic of the [main Student Health Care Center](#) located on Fletcher Drive on campus. Student Health at Shands offers a variety of clinical services, including primary care, women's health care, immunizations, mental health care, and pharmacy services. The clinic is located on the second floor of the Dental Tower in the Health Science Center. For more information, contact the clinic at 392-0627 or check out the web site.

Shared Governance

Shared governance is important at the University of Florida and in the Department of Epidemiology. The Department of Epidemiology invites student participation on several committees including the:

- Epidemiology Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Meetings
- Social Networking Committee
- Seminar/Symposium Committee.
- Other Committees as determined.

To be involved, contact the PhD Program Director.

At the University level, Graduate Student Council serves as a liaison between UF graduate students, UF administration, and the UF Student Government. General body meetings are held on the third Thursday of each full month of the Fall and Spring term. More information can be found on the [Graduate Student Council](#) website.

Readmission Requirements

Students, who have left the program prior to graduating and wish to be readmitted, require the following:

- A minimum GPA of 3.00.
- GRE scores that satisfy the admission requirements of the PhD program in effect at the time of readmission.
- Three letters of recommendation from faculty members on the Epidemiology PhD Graduate faculty.

Readmission is not guaranteed, irrespective of the circumstances that necessitate it.