DOCTORAL PROGRAMS

Supervisory Committee
In order to assure that students are under careful advisement and mentoring throughout their careers, a supervisory committee must be established before a doctoral student begins the last 45 credit hours of their program of study. The supervisory committee consists of at least four graduate faculty members, one of whom must be from outside the student’s academic department/school or area in which the doctorate is to be granted. The chair of the supervisory committee must be a member of the graduate faculty. In addition to the minimum requirement of four graduate faculty members, other eligible persons may be recommended by the graduate program committee for appointment by the dean to the supervisory committee, provided at least two-thirds of the membership of each committee is graduate faculty.

The student must submit the Appointment of Supervisory Committee form before they begin the last 45 credit hours of their program of study. The supervisory committee is approved by the dean for Graduate Studies, based on the recommendation of the graduate program committee in the student’s major prior to the approval of the program of study. The establishment of a supervisory committee is based on the student’s demonstrated ability in the fundamental subject matter of the student’s major field and professional promise.

Changes to the Supervisory Committee
Any changes to the supervisory committee after initial approval must be submitted via a new supervisory committee form and submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval by the dean for Graduate Studies.

If the chair of a supervisory committee leaves the employ of the university, or retires, Graduate Studies must be notified immediately and a change in the supervisory committee must be made as follows:

- If the student has already achieved candidacy, the former chair who has left the employ of the university may be permitted to continue as co-chair of the supervisory committee, with the agreement of the departmental/school graduate program committee and the dean for Graduate Studies. A second co-chair must be appointed who is a resident graduate faculty member.
- If the student has not yet achieved candidacy, a new chair of the supervisory committee who is a resident graduate faculty member must be appointed immediately, with the agreement of the departmental/school graduate program committee and the dean for Graduate Studies.
- If a member of the supervisory committee, other than the chair, leaves the employ of the university, or retires, a replacement should normally be appointed who is a resident graduate faculty member. In certain circumstances where a special and needed continuing expertise is involved and the staff member is willing to continue serving, they may continue as a member of the supervisory committee, with the approval of the departmental/school graduate program committee and the dean for Graduate Studies.

Plan of Study
Within the same semester of its appointment, the supervisory committee will meet to designate and subsequently file in Graduate Studies a complete plan of study, including any language or research tool requirements (if applicable).

Generally, courses taken before admission to the doctoral program cannot be included in the Doctoral Requirements section of the program of study form. At least 45 hours of the student’s doctoral coursework is to be completed after the approval of the program of study by the dean for Graduate Studies. Any subsequent change in the program must be approved by the supervisory committee and the Dean for Graduate Studies.

The minimum amount of graduate credit for the PhD is 90 semester hours, including a dissertation. Some programs require more hours. Please refer to the degree requirements for your individual degree.

The minimum amount of graduate credit for the EdD is 96 semester hours, including a dissertation. Some programs require more hours. Please refer to the degree requirements for your individual degree.

Residency
A residency requirement has been established for the purpose of ensuring that the doctoral program be reasonably compact, continuous, and coherent; and that a substantial portion be done at and under the close supervision of the university. The residency requirement is part of the student’s approved program.

In exceptional circumstances, where it is clear that the purpose of residency is being fulfilled but the formal conditions are not met, the student’s supervisory committee may, with the approval of the dean for Graduate Studies, designate an alternative procedure for satisfying the residency requirement.

Requirements for PhD in Biomedical Informatics, PhD in Criminology and Criminal Justice, PhD in Exercise Science, PhD in Gerontology, PhD in Information Technology, and PhD in Psychology

- For a student beginning a doctoral program in the University of Nebraska system with a bachelor’s degree, the residency requirement for the PhD is 27 hours of graduate work within a consecutive 18-month period or less, with the further provision that 15 of these hours must be taken after receiving the master’s degree or equivalent.
- For a student who transfers to the University of Nebraska system with a master’s degree from another institution, or who takes a break in their graduate work between the time the master’s degree is awarded and the time they start work on a doctoral program, the residency requirement for the PhD is 27 hours of graduate work in a consecutive 18-month period or less.
- For a student who transfers to the University of Nebraska system with a master’s degree from another institution, or who takes a break in their graduate work between the time the master’s degree is awarded and the time they start work on a doctoral program, the residency requirement for the PhD is 27 hours of graduate work in a consecutive 18-month period or less.
- Not more than one-third of the work for residency, or nine credit hours, may be taken during the summer sessions.

Requirements for the PhD in Public Administration and EdD degree

- The residency requirement for doctoral students in Educational Administration and Public Administration is 24 hours in 24 consecutive months. The supervisory committee may determine how many of the required residency hours may be taken during the summer sessions.

Time Limit for Completion of Degree
A minimum of three full years of graduate study is normally required to complete a program for the degrees Doctor of Philosophy and Doctor of Education. The time limit on granting the PhD or EdD degree is ten years from the beginning of the doctoral course work. Individual programs may have other deadlines for completion. Neither the courses taken nor the time spent in study determines the granting of the degree.
Comprehensive Examination

PhD

When a student has substantially completed studies in the program, they must pass a written comprehensive examination. The written comprehensive examination is not a repetition of course examinations; rather, it is an investigation of the student's breadth of understanding in the field of knowledge of which their special subject is a part. The student will also be required to pass an oral comprehensive examination.

The supervisory committee arranges for written or oral examinations. As soon as possible after passing those examinations, the committee convenes and reports to Graduate Studies the results of those examinations and the specific area of research for the dissertation and progress to date by submitting the Application for Candidacy. Should the student fail the comprehensive examination or a part thereof, they may be allowed to re-take it during the following academic term upon specific recommendation by the supervisory committee.

EdD

When the applicant's program of study is substantially completed, comprehensive examinations that cover the appropriate field of study and related subjects will be administered. These examinations will thoroughly test for an understanding of the field of knowledge designated by the student. If an applicant fails the comprehensive examination, another attempt to pass such examination may not be made in the same academic term.

Admission to Candidacy

When the doctoral student has passed the comprehensive examination, the supervisory committee will recommend to Graduate Studies their admission to candidacy for the doctoral degree, noting in that recommendation the dates upon which the comprehensive examination was completed. The Admission to Candidacy for the Doctoral Degree application form must be filed with Graduate Studies at least seven months prior to the final oral examination. If the term of candidacy is extended beyond three years (excluding summer terms), the candidate must pass another comprehensive examination. Following admission to candidacy, the student must register during each academic year semester until they receive the PhD or EdD degree. Students not in residence may register for a minimum of one semester credit in dissertation. Failure to register during each academic year semester will result in termination of candidacy.

Final Examination

The final examination is oral. It is given by the supervisory committee after the candidate's studies have been completed and the dissertation has been accepted for examination. The committee also determines its character and length. The examination may be devoted to the special field of the dissertation or to the candidate's general knowledge, or it may be designed to test judgment and critical powers.

The final oral examination will not be scheduled unless the chair of the supervisory committee and at least two other members of the committee are available for the examination. Exceptions may be made only by permission of the dean for Graduate Studies. In any event, the supervisor and readers of the dissertation must have seen and approved the completed dissertation before the final oral examination will be scheduled.

The final oral examination over the dissertation may be waived only with the unanimous consent of the supervisory committee and only in extremely unusual circumstances. The committee reports the results of the final oral examination or the reason for its waiver to Graduate Studies by using the Report on Completion of Degree (https://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/forms-resources.php) form.

In the event that members of an oral examining committee are not unanimous regarding the passing of a candidate, the student is to be approved for the degree only if one examiner dissents. However, in each case, the dissenting member of the committee will be expected to file a letter of explanation to Graduate Studies.

Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation should make a creative contribution to knowledge in your field while also demonstrating mastery of relevant resources and methods. It is expected the dissertation will have a single topic, however broadly defined, and all parts of the dissertation will be interrelated. This, however, does not prevent sections of the dissertations from being discrete units.

The dissertation should also demonstrate your potential to make future, original contributions to knowledge, understanding, or methodologies in your discipline. For example, the originality of a dissertation may involve the discovery of significant new information or principles of organization, the achievement of a new synthesis, the development of new methods or theories, or the application of established methods to new materials or procedures.

Given the diverse nature of the fields in which dissertations are written and the wide variety of topics that are explored, it is impossible to designate an ideal length for the dissertation. A long dissertation is not necessarily better than a shorter one since the value and scale of the dissertation topic ultimately depends on the quality of its thought and the clarity of its exposition. Your dissertation supervisory committee will determine the appropriateness of these and other issues.

Grades for a doctoral dissertation are recorded on the permanent record after completion and approval by the department/school and the Office of Graduate Studies. Grades will be either "S" for satisfactory or "U" for unsatisfactory.

The dissertation is not considered to be a publication thus it may be published, in whole or in part, and either quoted or paraphrased, by giving appropriate credit to the relevant department/school, the Graduate College, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

NOTE: The doctoral supervisory committee guides your progress toward the completion of the dissertation, but it is your responsibility to follow instructions on the preparation of the document and to observe filing deadlines.

Dissertation Submission Procedures

The doctoral supervisory committee guides the student in the conduct and development of the dissertation and approves the final product. Typically, final recommendations from the supervisory committee, or supervisory committee chair, are provided to the student at the time of the final oral examination, although details vary among department/schools and individual faculty. Final approval of the dissertation is contingent upon approval by the supervisory committee and Graduate Studies.

Procedures:

At least three weeks prior to the last published date for holding oral exams, bring the following to Graduate Studies:

- Application for Final Oral Examination or Waiver of Examination
- One copy of each of the Abstract and the Title Page of the dissertation.
- If the Final Oral Examination is waived, these documents must be presented to Graduate Studies at least three weeks prior to the last published date for holding oral examinations.

When the final dissertation has been approved by the supervisory committee, the student must submit hard copies of the following to Graduate Studies for the final administrative step in the approval process:

- One paper copy of the Title Page
- One paper copy of the Abstract
• **Report on Completion of Degree** form, signed by the supervisory committee
• Upload your document to ProQuest
• Completed Survey of Earned Doctorates: https://sed-ncses.org/GradDateRouter.aspx

NOTE: If the dissertation is to be held pending patent issuance, etc., the student must specify this at the time the file is submitted to ProQuest.

After the documents are submitted to Graduate Studies, the student must upload their dissertation to ProQuest. Learn more about the upload instructions (http://dissertations2.umi.com/unomaha).

PLEASE NOTE: There may be a fee to submit the dissertation through ProQuest. The amounts are noted on their website.

After successfully uploading the dissertation, Graduate Studies will be notified electronically by ProQuest of the submission and asked to provide final approval.

Formatting Instructions (http://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/dissertation-format.php)

Submission Instructions (http://www.unomaha.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/dissertation-format.php)