

Robert and Donna Manning College of Nursing and Health Sciences

EXERCISE AND HEALTH SCIENCES DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

FULL APPROVAL STATUS

The Exercise and Health Sciences Graduate Program maintains Full Approval Status from the Academic Quality Assessment and Development (AQUAD)

The Exercise and Health Sciences PhD Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston is accredited by Academic Quality Assessment and Development (AQUAD)



www.umb.edu/academics/cnhs

*The Department of Exercise and Health Sciences maintains the right to amend published policies, procedures, and requirements at any time



**ALL STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR UNDERSTANDING
AND COMPLYING WITH ALL HANDBOOK POLICIES**

Students are expected to refer often to the policies and procedures contained within the current Handbook.

*Policies are subject to change; students will be notified via email of important changes.

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1. Overview

The PhD program in the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences (EHS) is a research-oriented program with a minimum of 75 post-bachelor's degree credits or 42 credits for students entering with a master's degree obtained from accredited institutions. The program offers two concentrations: Applied Exercise Physiology and Physical Activity and Health Promotion. The 12 credits of core courses provide instruction in research design and methods, professional issues regarding ethics, health disparities, and important topics in the field of exercise and health sciences. The 6 credits of electives provide flexibility in the student's plan of study and allow students to tailor their focus to build their future professional and science career goals. The 24 research credits provide students the opportunity to develop an original and scientifically sound research proposal that contributes to the growing science of exercise and health sciences; design and conduct a research study; collect and analyze data; defend the findings of their research and disseminate the results. Before conducting their dissertation research, students shall take their qualifying examinations upon approval of their Qualifying Examination Committee. Once the student passes the qualifying examination, they can advance to forming their dissertation committee, and begin the process of developing a proposal, undertaking the research, and defending the findings.

Program outcomes

- Demonstrate a deep understanding of fundamental concepts of exercise science and/or health promotion.
- Conduct systemic inquiry and apply critical thinking to evaluate scientific literature relevant to the specialization area in exercise science and health promotion.
- Use an appropriate theoretical framework and quantitative and/or qualitative methods to acquire, analyze and interpret data.
- Disseminate scientific findings at local, national, and global levels through publications and presentations.
- Demonstrate leadership as a researcher and educator to promote physical activity and improve health in diverse populations

2. Curriculum

2.1 Course Requirements

Core Courses: 12 credits. The following are the core courses for completion of the PhD Program:

- EHS 825 Quantitative Research Methods (3 credits)
- NU 770 Biostatistics II: Advanced Statistical Methods in Healthcare Research (3 credits)
- EHS 887 Advanced Topics in EHS (3 credits)
- NU 705 Health Disparities (3 credits).

Electives: 6 credits (minimum). In addition to the core courses, students must successfully complete a minimum of 6 credits of electives. Appendix C shows the elective courses currently available to PhD students. Electives should enhance the student's competency in their

concentration area to complete the dissertation requirement and may have either a content or methods focus. Electives should be chosen in collaboration with the major faculty advisor and approved by the Graduate Program Director (GPD).

Courses offered by any department that are at the 600-level or above can be taken as electives. Courses that are 500-level or below may be taken as electives but must be approved by the GPD.

Research Credits: 24 credits (minimum). Students are required to complete a minimum of 24 research credits with the option of 1) 24 credits of Dissertation (EHS 899) or 2) 18 -23 credits of Dissertation credits and 1-6 credits of Directed Research (EHS 898) by working with the major faculty advisor on other research projects. Students are not permitted to enroll in dissertation credits before passing the qualifying examination.

Course credits related to formal coursework taken during a student's master's degree may be transferred to the total credits required for a PhD degree based on the criteria set by the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). Students should send their transcripts and relevant course syllabi to GPD for review. A minimum of 24 credits of formal coursework **MUST** be taken while in residence at UMass Boston.

Note: All credit requirements are minimum recommendations. Major faculty advisors may require their students to take master's level courses, additional electives, and/or research credits to strengthen the student's academic and research background.

Appendix B shows sample course schedules for EHS PhD students.

Full and part-time status

Full-time students are expected to take at least nine (9) credits per semester. Full-time continuous students should ideally complete all their coursework by the second year of study. The university considers graduate students engaged in dissertation research to be full-time students, regardless of the number of dissertation credits for which they register, providing the program director certifies they are working full-time on research.

Part-time students must carry at least six (6) credits per semester in each of the fall and spring semesters. Part-time students should complete their coursework in three to four years.

3. Major Faculty Advisor

Before entering the PhD program, incoming students should work in conjunction with the EHS faculty and GPD to identify a major faculty advisor based on research interests.

The major faculty advisor will also typically serve as the chair of the student's dissertation committee and with whom they will conduct their dissertation research. The major faculty advisor will help the student identify a focus area, advise the student on relevant coursework for their

elective credits, and mentor the student on designing and conducting an original research project forming the basis of the dissertation requirement.

In certain cases, students may need to re-evaluate their plan of study and dissertation progress and discuss any changes with their major faculty advisor.

In cases where the major faculty advisor has not already been identified during the admission process, the student should identify a major faculty advisor from EHS who will serve as the chair of the student's Qualifying Examination Committee and Doctoral Dissertation Committee by the beginning of the 2nd semester.

EHS Graduate Faculty

Visit [Exercise and Health Sciences Department Faculty - UMass Boston \(umb.edu\)](https://www.umb.edu/exercise-and-health-sciences-department/faculty) for an updated faculty list.

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4. Annual Review of Progress

At the end of each academic year, the EHS Graduate Program Committee (GPC) will conduct reviews of all doctoral students enrolled in the program. The annual review process will include **a)** a meeting between the graduate student and their major faculty advisor; **b)** a written and signed report of program progress agreed upon between the graduate student and their major faculty advisor; and **c)** a meeting between the graduate student and GPC.

Annual Reviews will include the following elements:

- Written self-assessment of academic progress that is prepared by the graduate student.
- Written review of graduate student academic progress that is prepared by the major faculty advisor.
- A meeting between the graduate student and major faculty advisor to discuss the review.
- Signed copies of the graduate student self-assessment and major faculty advisor review forms should be submitted to the GPD and Graduate Program Assistant by the major faculty advisor for record in the student's file by March 31 each year.
- A meeting between the graduate student and GPC

5. Qualifying Examination

5.1 Overview

The purpose of the Qualifying Examination is to allow students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, creativity, requisite skills, and ability to integrate information and critique the literature in their chosen discipline as well as in appropriate related areas. Students who successfully pass the Qualifying Examination can move on to doctoral candidacy and start developing their dissertation proposal.

Students have the primary responsibility for preparing for the Qualifying Examination and are encouraged to consult early on with their major faculty advisor about the scope and logistics of the exam.

5.2 Timing of the Qualifying Examination

The timing of the Qualifying Examination should be designated by the student's major faculty advisor but must occur after all course requirements, except for research credits, are completed in good standing. Students should communicate with their major faculty advisor to assess when the student is ready to take the Qualifying Examination. It is recommended that the exam is completed by the end of the 3rd year from their matriculation date, although it can occur earlier or later as

judged appropriate by the major faculty advisor and student. The student must earn a passing grade on the Qualifying Examination to remain in the doctoral program.

5.3 Qualifying Examination Committee

Three months before the Qualifying Examination, the student should work with the major faculty advisor to form a Qualifying Examination Committee. The Committee shall consist of at least four faculty members with the student's major faculty advisor as the chair. A minimum of three members shall be EHS faculty. At least one member shall be tenured faculty at UMass Boston. An outside member is recommended but not required.

The Qualifying Examination Committee Recommendation Form must be signed by all committee members. The form should be emailed to the GPD and Graduate Program Assistant by the student's major faculty advisor at least 3 weeks before the expected date of the Qualifying Examination.

The Qualifying Examination Committee dissolves after the student passes the exam. At that point, the student will form a Doctoral Dissertation Committee (see Section 6).

5.4 Format of the Qualifying Examination

The Qualifying Examination consists of both a written and oral component.

Written Component: The student is expected to show proficiency in three topic areas:

- 1) Research methodologies and techniques (e.g., design, analysis, interpretation, application); particularly as it relates to the student's area of study.
- 2) General knowledge of the literature in Exercise and Health Sciences and the student's concentration (i.e., Exercise Physiology, Physical Activity and Health Promotion).
- 3) General knowledge of the chosen areas of study, particularly those areas delineated by the major faculty advisor.

The exam shall be taken in two days with a time limit of 5-6 hours per day. This portion of the exam is to be taken without the use of supplemental materials unless specifically provided or authorized by the Qualifying Exam Committee. Before the written exam, the Qualifying Examination Committee chair contacts each committee member to solicit appropriate questions. Questions should be designed to comprehensively probe the student's understanding of the three topic areas.

Before the written examination students should discuss specific content areas with the Qualifying Examination Committee members. The committee chair has the responsibility of making sure that the candidate is carefully examined and that all aspects of the examination are adequately covered.

In the case of unforeseen and extenuating circumstances (weather, documented illness, etc.) the examination can be rescheduled.

Oral Component: The oral component of the Qualifying Examination may not exceed two hours. Only the student and the committee will be required to attend. The purpose of the oral examination is to provide a format within which the committee may ask the student to clarify, enhance, or otherwise further explain their responses to the written examination.

The oral portion must occur within three weeks of completing the written component. Note: The oral examination is independent of the Dissertation Proposal presentation (see Section 6.2).

5.5 Grading of the Qualifying Examination

Student answers to each exam question will be graded by the committee member who develops each question. Each member of the Qualifying Examination Committee assigns a grade of “pass” or “fail” on the Examination Report. The grading rubric is attached in Appendix D. The committee may require that specific conditions be met before the “pass” recommendation becomes effective. The exact conditions and timeframe to complete the conditions must be specified on the Examination Report.

5.6 Retaking the Examination

- A student failing one or more topic areas will be allowed to retake the examination in those specific topic areas in a format to be determined by the committee.
- Students must pass all topic areas, on either the first or second test administration, before they are allowed to advance to doctoral candidacy and start developing their dissertation proposal.
- Any student who fails one or more topic areas on the second administration will be dismissed from the program.

Once the student has passed the Qualifying Examination, the “Stage 1 – Notification of Candidacy” Form (See Table 2 Below) must be completed and signed by the GPD and Dean of Graduate Studies.

6. Dissertation Procedures

6.1 Dissertation Committee Selection

As soon as the student has been admitted to candidacy, the major faculty advisor and student should work together to identify members of the dissertation committee. The members must be approved by both the EHS GPD and Dean of Graduate Studies.

The dissertation committee shall consist of at least four members. Three members of the committee shall be tenured/tenure-track faculty members in EHS. At least one member shall be tenured faculty at UMass Boston. The dissertation committee shall also include a member who is external to EHS. The external member may come from any other UMass Boston department or school, or from outside of the university. When there is uncertainty about whether an individual is sufficiently independent of the candidate’s program to serve as the external member, the GPD in consultation with the major faculty advisor shall determine the nominee’s eligibility.

The following are UMass Boston’s OGS requirements for the qualifications of faculty to chair dissertation committees: Must be a full-time faculty member and must have: 1) A doctoral degree (typically a PhD or EdD, but in some instances a degree such as a JD, MD, or DBS may be appropriate); and 2) A record of scholarship and/or professional achievement within a period of five years before the formation of any dissertation committee that the faculty member chairs. All

non-EHS committee members (both internal and external to UMB) are required to submit a copy of their curriculum vitae to the GPD for their review and approval.

Once the committee has been selected, the “Stage 2 – Notification of Proposed Dissertation Committee” Form (See Table 2 Below) needs to be submitted by the PhD candidate to the GPD and Graduate Program Assistant. Any potential external committee members who are from outside of UMass Boston must submit their curriculum vitae to the GPD. The GPD will then submit it to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval.

6.2 **Dissertation Proposal**

Once a student is advanced to candidacy, they will develop their dissertation research question(s) and write a proposal for their intended research.

The written proposal will consist of the three dissertation chapters: **1) Introduction** (include specific aims, rationale, and hypotheses, **2) Background/Literature Review** (include significance and innovation), and **3) Study Design and Methods**. Specific requirements for the dissertation proposal including the format will be developed in consultation with the major faculty advisor and dissertation committee, based on the focus of the intended research. A dissertation committee member’s expertise may be involved during the proposal development process; however, it is the dissertation chair’s role to guide the student through the process. It is suggested the student engage the committee early on and provide specific aims and basic methodology. This can be done in various formats including individual or group meetings, or sending email documents with proposed ideas.

During the oral proposal defense, the student will present their proposed research to the dissertation committee. The presentation should include the background of the issue(s), methods, and rationale for their methodological choices. The presentation is expected to last approximately 30-45 minutes. Next, the committee will ask the candidate questions and clarifications as necessary. The candidate will then be excused from the room and the dissertation committee will discuss any revisions needed and the status of the proposal defense. The committee will evaluate whether the student has adequate knowledge of the content area and the relevant methodologies. **Committee members must come to a consensus and sign the “Stage 3 – Notification of Proposal Acceptance” Form (See Table 2 Below).**

The options for approving the proposal are as follows: 1) approve (“A”), 2) approve with reservations (“AR”), or 3) do not approve (“N”).

Students who are “approved” have up to 2 weeks to make any minor revisions recommended by the dissertation committee. Revisions may require the committee to re-read sections of the proposal for approval or may just be handled between the candidate and their major faculty advisor. In some cases, the oral presentation may need to be redone. These exact conditions will be determined by the dissertation committee. Students who receive a “do not approve” on their dissertation proposal did not demonstrate a cohesive literature review, research questions, and/or methodologies in their written proposal document or during their oral defense. Students are allowed to re-propose their dissertation one time. Students who do not pass the re-proposal are dismissed from the program.

Research Compliance

All research involving contact with human subjects or animals must be approved by the campus Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the campus Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Data collection cannot start until appropriate IRB or IACUC approvals have been obtained. Forms and information about IRB or IACUC Review can be obtained from [Office for Research and Sponsored Programs](#). Students are advised to consult with the IRB or the IACUC early in the process.

6.3 Dissertation – Execution Stage

Following approval of the dissertation proposal, the student can begin IRB or IACUC application process. Once IRB or IACUC approval is obtained, the dissertation procedures and methods can commence. It shall be the responsibility of the dissertation committee to supervise the project's execution. The dissertation document shall follow the format required by the OGS ([https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/admissions/graduate-students/UMass_Boston_Dissertation_Thesis_Submission_Standards_\(Revised_May_2023\)_1.pdf](https://www.umb.edu/media/umassboston/content-assets/admissions/graduate-students/UMass_Boston_Dissertation_Thesis_Submission_Standards_(Revised_May_2023)_1.pdf)). The student can use either the traditional format or the multi-Monograph (alternative format) to organize the sections of their dissertation. The results of the research shall be presented in a manuscript-ready format including two or more separate papers that are ready to be submitted to a peer-reviewed journal. The student is expected to submit at least one of these papers to a journal before defending their dissertation; the paper must be under peer review to meet this requirement.

6.4 Final Oral Defense

The final oral defense will be primarily concerned with, but not necessarily limited to, the candidate's dissertation. This examination shall be scheduled when all dissertation committee members agree that the dissertation is sufficiently complete to undergo defense (with at least 2 weeks to review and approve the written document). However, approval of the dissertation, passing the defense, and/or recommending the degree, is not implied by scheduling this examination. **At this time, the “Stage 4 – Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation” Form (See Table 2 Below) needs to be signed and approved by the dissertation committee chair, GPD, and Dean of Graduate Studies.** This form should be completed by March 1st for spring graduation.

Students are required to deliver a public oral presentation (open to faculty, students, and staff) on their research. This presentation is expected to last approximately 30-45 minutes and should cover brief background and introduction, methods, results, and conclusions. Once the presentation is complete questions can be asked by the invited members. After the completion of this session, the guests will be excused, and committee members will be allowed to ask questions. Next, the student will be excused while the committee deliberates. Each committee member must vote either “approve” or “disapprove”.

If all committee members cast positive votes, the student shall be deemed to have passed the final oral examination. If there is one negative vote, the degree will be held up pending satisfactory resolution by the student of the objections of the dissenting member of the committee.

Any revisions or changes should be completed within a 2-week timeline. **Once all members have agreed to “approve”, the “Stage 5 – Results of Dissertation Defense” form (See Table 2 Below) should be signed. This process and form should be completed by March 15th.**

6.5 **Process and Deadlines for Dissertation Submission**

Final submission:

- By 11:59 PM (EST/EDT) on the dates below, you must submit a copy of your defended and revised thesis/dissertation, approved in full for content by your program, to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) via the [UMass Boston/ProQuest/UMI ETD](#) website.

April 20	for a May degree date
July 20	for an August degree date
December 1	for a December degree date

- Before the final submission, the **format** of the dissertation must have been approved in full by the OGS format editor and must have been authorized by this editor in writing to submit the final version of the dissertation.

A. Materials Needed for Submission

1. Dissertation in PDF format; make sure there is no password protection on the file. You should include the **unsigned** Signatory Page in the pdf; do not include the **signed** signatory page.
2. An electronic copy of your abstract to cut and paste
3. Supplemental files (optional)
4. Signed Signatory Page
5. Chairperson and Committee Members' names and titles
6. Subject Categories
7. Credit/Debit Card for payment

B. Corrections with Format Editor

- The format editor is responsible only for the standards listed in this document. These standards will guide you through the process of preparing your thesis or dissertation for submission to the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) where an editor will review it for compliance with these Standards. These Standards will help you create a polished and professional document suitable for publication. Please use these guidelines from the moment you begin your thesis or dissertation. Doing so may save you time by shortening the review process once you have submitted your document to the Format Editor at OGS. You should not use theses or dissertations written prior to October 2018 as models for manuscript preparation and formatting, since they may not conform to the current standards.
- Issues that fall primarily within the purview of the program, rather than OGS, include:
 1. All content and grammar

2. Footnote and endnote format
 3. Bibliographical format
- The format editor is primarily responsible for making sure that you have correctly followed the OGS standards in all respects. He/she may not approve your thesis until ALL of these standards for the format have been successfully met.

C. Communication and Step-by-Step Process for the PhD Student

Before your defense:

Introduce yourself to your format editor by email (optional). Feel free at this time to ask any questions you may have about the format.

Email the format editor a copy of your Signatory Page, to obtain approval of its format *before* seeking the actual signatures. *Please be attentive to the details of the signatory page, particularly the name and title of each committee member. Any errors will require you to have the page re-printed and re-signed by your committee again.*

After your defense (and after any revisions required by your program have been made):

1. Submit your initial document to the OGS via the [UMass Boston- ProQuest/UMI ETD website](#). Do not include the signed Signatory Page. The signed Signatory Page should be mailed or brought to the OGS. A dissertation will be corrected for format on a first-come, first-served basis. You are encouraged to submit your dissertation before the published initial submission date, to give yourself more time to make corrections.
2. Wait a week to be contacted by your format editor; if you do not hear back from your advisor after a week, you should either email him/her or call the OGS. Remember, it is *your responsibility*, with your format editor's help, to make sure that this process is complete by the final-submission deadline.
3. Make any corrections that are necessary, following your format editor's directions exactly. Return the corrected version of your dissertation to the OGS via the [UMass Boston-ProQuest/UMI ETD website](#) as quickly as possible.
- 4.

**** Please note that there may be multiple steps to the correcting process, and you may need to submit and resubmit your dissertation more than once before you obtain the final OK from your format editor.

5. Receive the final OK from your format editor in writing.
6. *The full final submission must be received by the OGS by April 20th for May graduation, by July 20th for August graduation, and by December 1st for December graduation.*
7. You will receive an email receipt for the final submission of your dissertation. Please note that you may have additional requirements for graduation. Please contact the Registrar's Office for a final determination of your graduation status.

D. Final Copies of the Dissertation

- Once the final version of the dissertation has been accepted by the OGS, it becomes the property of that office and cannot be removed by the degree candidate, any

member of the faculty or staff, or other students. No further corrections may be made.

- One bound copy will be given to and retained by your program, the other will be retained by Healey Library.

Copyright Information

A dissertation automatically falls under general copyright protection as soon as it is fixed in the final form. No fee or formal registration with the Library of Congress is required. However, a copyright notice should be placed on the page following the title page. See the sample page at the end of these standards. This copyright notice is generally sufficient, but if formal registration is desired, you may either contact the Copyright Office at the Library of Congress. An electronic copy of the abstract may be kept by the OGS or Healey Library and may be published (hard copy or electronically) as part of collections of abstracts, and dissertations.

University of Massachusetts Intellectual Property Policy, Amherst and Boston (Doc. T96-040) states that “Theses and Dissertations – The texts of all student theses and derivative works of these works, are considered Exempted Scholarly Works; therefore, the student will own the copyright to the Scholarly Work, subject to a royalty-free license to the University to reproduce and publish the Scholarly Work.”

More Information:

[Standards for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations at the University of Massachusetts Boston](#)

Table 2. Required Documentation and Recommended Deadlines for Completing the Dissertation

Forms	Required Paperwork	Recommended Deadline
Qualifying Examination Committee Recommendation Form	Qualifying Examination Committee Recommendation Form	After all course requirements, except for research credits, are completed in good standing No later than the end of Year 3
Stage 1:	Notification of Candidacy (After passing the qualifying examination) https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/orsp/new_stage_1.pdf	End of Semester 5 (Fall semester).
Stage 2:	Notification of Proposed Dissertation Committee	End of Semester 5 (Fall semester).

	https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/orsp/new_stage_2.pdf	
Stage 3:	Notification of Proposal Acceptance https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/orsp/new_stage_3.pdf	End of Semester 6 (Spring semester).
Stage 4:	Notification of Intent to Defend Dissertation https://www.umb.edu/editor_uploads/images/orsp/new_stage_4.pdf	8th semester; Contact GPD/GPA at least 10-14 business days before the defense date.
Stage 5:	Results of Dissertation Defense Dissertation Tracking Form stage 5	By March 15th (for a May graduation date) of the 8th Semester. <i>August 1 deadline for Summer degree</i> <i>December 1 deadline for a December degree.</i>

7. Policies and Procedures

7.1 Academic Standing and Progression

Academic standing is the basis for decisions regarding student progression, probation, graduation, and dismissal in the Graduate EHS Program. Academic standing is determined by the student's cumulative quality point average, a measure of all the grades the student has earned in the University which are applied to the course requirements of the PhD Program. The following policies apply to all matriculated students in the Graduate Program. Policies in effect when the student is matriculated into the program of study will apply throughout the student's program of study. Policies in the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences handbook may be more stringent than those of general graduate academic policies set forth by the [Office of the Registrar](#). In matters of policy difference, the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences policy supersedes the University policy. All graduate EHS students are required to comply with the policies included in this document.

7.1.a All full and part-time students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 to graduate.

7.1.b All full and part-time students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA may be subject to academic dismissal.

7.1.c Students who do not maintain a cumulative quality point average of 3.0 will be referred to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal with an explanation to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon a review of the student's record and letter of appeal, the CNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and GPD.

7.2 Full-time and Part-Time Enrollment

The faculty intends to be flexible with students' needs to balance the demands of graduate study with the obligations of work and family. Students may, therefore, elect to enroll in the program on either a full-time or part-time basis. Upon admission, students will indicate which option they will choose. A student may change their enrollment option only with the permission of their faculty advisor and the GPD. The semester enrollment patterns under each option presented above apply to students who are enrolling full-time.

7.3 Seven-Year Limitation on Period to Earn a Degree

University policy indicates that all graduate students must earn their degree within seven years of the date of matriculation into the program of study in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

7.3.a Exceptions to the credit minimum must be made in consultation with the student's advisor. Changes will affect the student's program of study and expected date of graduation.

7.3.b The student must petition their GPD for an exception to the minimum credit policy.

7.3.c Exceptions will be made in special circumstances and may be granted for one semester only.

7.3.d If an exception is granted by the GPD, the student will be notified in writing and requested to meet with their advisor to file a new program of study and expected date of graduation.

7.3.e Graduate students who fail to complete their program of study within seven years will be placed on registration hold by the university registrar and may be subject to dismissal by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

7.4 Request for Extending Seven-Year Limitation

Graduate students may seek an extension of the seven-year time limitation to complete their program of study because of extenuating circumstances one time during their program of study.

7.4.a Graduate students must be in good academic standing and not on probation to be considered for an extension.

7.4.b Graduate students must file a petition for an extension on the deadline to graduate in writing to the GPD who will forward the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The petition request should include all relevant information including a clear statement of the reasons for the request, the extenuating circumstances, and a revised plan of study with a new date of graduation.

7.4.c A signature of the graduate student's academic advisor of record must accompany the petition for extension containing the revised program plan at the time of the request.

7.4.d The Dean of Graduate Studies will notify the graduate student of the decision in writing.

7.5 **Leave of Absence**

The University requires that a student seeking a leave of absence (LOA) must petition the program director who will justify the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. An approved LOA extends the statute of limitations for degree completion by the length of the leave. The university requires that each matriculated graduate student maintain continuous registration until the degree has been formally awarded. If the student does not register for courses or dissertation credits during any semester, the student must pay the current fee per semester, referred to as the program fee, to maintain continuous registration.

7.6 **Program Continuation**

All degree-seeking graduate students must maintain continuous registration also known as a program fee until the degree sought by the student is formally awarded. Students can register for the program fee (CAS 600) on the WISER online registration system. Continuous registration must also be maintained even when a student is on a leave of absence from the program.

Continuous registration requires a fee to be paid to maintain matriculation. If for any reason a student does not register for courses or dissertation credits, he/she must maintain continuous registration per semester. <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/graduate-student-statute-limitations/>

Failure to register before the registration deadline for the semester for which the student is registering may result in late fees and be classified as inactive.

7.7 **Graduate Assistantships**

The University offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in teaching or research to qualified students. Applicants for admission to graduate programs and currently enrolled students should consider applying. These graduate assistantships, which range from 0.5 to 1.0 FTE require weekly service in the areas of teaching, research, or administrative support. In return, the University pays a stipend and provides a tuition waiver and a waiver of a certain percentage of the fees. Students may obtain more information about assistantships by contacting the GPD. General information about assistantships is also available from the OGS.

7.8 **Graduation Requirements and Procedures**

Students should inform the program director/assistant before filing for graduation to review their unofficial transcript to confirm all courses are completed. The College recognizes PhD students eligible for graduation in May, August, and December.

In addition to the [EHS requirements](#), doctoral students must meet the graduation requirements set by the OGS. <https://www.umb.edu/admissions/graduate-students/graduate-students-assistantships/>

Filing for Graduation

All students must declare their intent to graduate by applying online through WISER by the dates published on the [Academic Calendar](#)

[Planning for Graduation and How to Apply](#)

Appendices

Appendix A. Further information

Frequently asked questions <https://www.umb.edu/admissions/graduate-students/graduate-students-assistantships/faqs/>

Policies, Forms, and Deadlines for Dissertation https://www.umb.edu/academics/graduate/info_for_graduate_students/graduating_from_umass_boston/theses_dissertations

Academic Policies <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/policies/>

Academic Calendar https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_calendar

Graduation Policies <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/graduation>

Graduate Registrar Forms <https://www.umb.edu/registrar/forms>

Office of the Bursar <https://www.umb.edu/bursar>

Appendix B. PhD Course progression

Entry to PhD with an MS Curriculum/Course Progression

Semester	Courses (Credits)
Semester 1 (Fall)	EHS/NU 825-Advanced Research Methods (3) EHS/NU 770- Biostatistics II (3) EHS 787- Advanced Topics in EHS (3)
Semester 2 (Spring)	NU 705 Health Disparities (3) Elective (3) Elective (3)
Semester 3 (Fall)	EHS 898 Directed Research/EHS 899 Dissertation (6)
Semester 4 (Spring)	EHS 898 Directed Research/EHS 899 Dissertation (6)
Semester 5 (Fall)	EHS 898 Directed Research/EHS 899 Dissertation (6)
Semester 6 (Spring)	EHS 898 Directed Research/EHS 899 Dissertation (6)
Total Credits	42

Entry to PhD with a BS Curriculum/Course Progression

Concentration (For MS Only)	Applied Exercise Physiology	Physical Activity and Health Promotion
Semester 1 (Fall)	EHS630 Advanced Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685 Applied Exercise Physiology (3) NU760 Biostatistics I (3)	EHS630 Advanced Fitness Assessment (3) EHS685 Applied Exercise Physiology (3) NU760 Biostatistics I (3)
Semester 2 (Spring)	EHS625 Quantitative Research Methods (3) EHS655 Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) EHS680 Clinical Exercise Physiology (3)	EHS625 Quantitative Research Methods (3) EHS655 Advanced Physical Activity and Health (3) EHS670 Designing Exercise and Health Promotion Interventions (3)
Semester 3 (Fall)	EHS682 Exercise Metabolism (3) EHS825 Advanced Research Methods (3) NU770 Biostatistics II (3) EHS787 Advanced Topics in EHS (3)	EHS656 Advanced Nutrition and Health (3) EHS825 Advanced Research Methods (3) NU770 Biostatistics II (3) EHS787 Advanced Topics in EHS (3)
Semester 4 (Spring)	NU705 Health Disparities/NU757 Social and Behavioral Determinants of Health (3) Elective (3) EHS 898 Directed Research (3)	
Semester 5 (Fall)	Elective (3) Elective (3) Elective (3) EHS 898 Directed Research (3)	
Semester 6 (Spring)	EHS 899 Dissertation/ EHS 898 Directed Research (9)	
Semester 7 (Fall)	EHS 899 Dissertation (9)	
Semester 8 (Spring)	EHS 899 Dissertation (6)	
Total Credits	75	

Appendix C. PhD Elective Courses

Exercise and Health Sciences		
EHS 410/610	Exercise and Aging	3
EHS 620	Pediatric Exercise	3
EHS 440	Health Fitness Management	3
EHS 635	Project and Program Management	3
EHS 645	Leadership and Communication	3
EHS 350/650	Obesity and Weight Management	3
EHS 670	Designing Exercise and Health Promotion Interventions	3
EHS 675	Principles of Public Health	3
EHS 480/680	Clinical Exercise Physiology	3
EHS 682	Exercise Metabolism	3
EHS 685	Applied Exercise Physiology	3
EHS 710	Physical Activity Intervention, Chronic Disease and Disability in Aging	3
EHS 731	Body Composition Assessment	3
EHS 740	Human Motor Control and Movement Dysfunction	3
EHS 745	Theoretical Foundations of Health Behavior	3
EHS 772	Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology and Prevention	3
EHS 775	Statistical Methods for Epidemiology	3
EHS 783	Neuromuscular Aspects of Exercise in Obesity and Cancer	3
EHS 784	Cardiovascular Aspects of Exercise in Clinical Populations	3
EHS 786	Exercise Endocrinology and Metabolic Disorders	3
EHS 787	Neurovascular Exercise Physiology in Health and Cardiovascular-Related Disease	3
EHS 790	Professional Skills & Grant Writing for Exercise Science	3
Writing/Communication		
MBAACM 681	Analytical Writing in Management	3
MBAACM 682	Oral Communication for Managers	3
MBAACM 684	Written Communication for Managers	3
Leadership		
MBAMGT 683	Leadership Management in the 21st Century	3
MBAMGT 680	Management of Health Organizations	3
NURSNNG 765	Leadership and Management in Health Care	3
DISRES 621	Negotiation	3
Biology		

BIOL 607	An Introduction to Computational Data Analysis for Biology	3
BIOL 612	Advanced Cell Biology	3
BIOL 615	Immunology	3
BIOL 650	Scientific Communication	3
BIOL 674	Cell Signaling	3
BIOL 675	Advanced Molecular Biology	4
BIOL 693	Seminar in Neurobiology	3
Health-Related Courses		
NURSNG 705	Health Disparities	3
NURSNG 741	Health Policy I	3
NURSNG 742	Health Policy II	3
MBAMGT 681	The Health System and Health Policy	3
GERON GR 611	Health and Physical Changes in Aging	3
Research Methodology-Related Courses		
NURSNG 721	Program Evaluation	3
NURSNG 770	Biostatistics II: Advanced Statistical Methods in Healthcare Research	3
NURSNG 780	Epidemiological Methods	3
PSYCH 775	Qualitative Methods in Psychological Research	3
PAFG 645	Program Evaluation	3

Appendix D: Qualifying Examination Grading Rubric

EVALUATION CRITERIA	DO NOT PASS		PASS		NOTES
	UNACCEPTABLE - 1	INCOMPLETE - 2	PROFICIENT - 3	EXEMPLARY - 4	
A. Knowledge of topic and main components of research	Inaccurate, irrelevant and/or misinterpreted content; misuse of terminology and citations; gross misinterpretation of content; inability to formulate novel and/or significant hypotheses; lack of understanding of research ethics.	Many inaccuracies and some misinterpretation of content; improper use of terminology and citations; misinterpretation of content; hypotheses are not significant or not novel or incorrectly formulated; understanding of research ethics is insufficient.	Nearly all information presented is accurate and relevant; proper use of terminology and citations; demonstrates understanding of content; hypotheses are for the most part novel, significant and correctly formulated; satisfactory understanding of research ethics.	All information presented is both accurate and relevant; proper use of terminology and citations; insightful interpretation of content; all hypotheses are novel, significant and correctly formulated; excellent understanding of research ethics.	
B. Ability to understand and analyze information	Invalid judgments based on evidence provided; indefensible conclusions.	Merely recalls information; lists and defines, but fails to synthesize, analyze, evaluate the knowledge, detect patterns, or apply knowledge.	Nearly all judgments are valid and based on evidence; conflicting positions interpreted reasonably well; examples and literature support arguments; content synthesized well for the most part; ideas tend to flow logically; analysis of material is accurate and conclusions are defensible; exhibits clear thinking and conceptualization.	Valid judgments based on evidence; precise interpretation of conflicting positions; exemplary use of examples and literature to support arguments; synthesis of content is clearly evident; logical flow of ideas; analysis of material is insightful and conclusions are fully defensible; convincing; exhibits advanced thinking and conceptualization.	
C. Effective communication	Spelling, grammar and usage clearly interfere with meaning; difficulty maintaining style; difficulty with sentence structure; no sense of audience; writing and/or spoken communication is unacceptable for doctoral level; organization is unclear or confusing; generally off point and unfocused.	Spelling, grammar, and usage errors detract from credibility; simplistic sentence structure and style; difficulty with maintaining scholarly tone; limited sense of audience; writing and/or spoken communication is inappropriate for doctoral level.	Writing style is competent, and sentence structure is sound; generally appropriate for audience; clear and largely complete with a somewhat scholarly tone; writing and spoken communication is generally appropriate for doctoral level.	Sophisticated writing style and advanced sentence structure; appropriate for audience; overall clear, thorough, and scholarly tone; writing and spoken communication unmistakably appropriate for doctoral level; organization is fully logical and readily apparent; all key points supported by data; examples and arguments properly referenced; key points are highlighted; appropriate use of examples.	A non-passing score in the "effective communication" criterion can be addressed through the requirement that specific conditions be met before the "pass" recommendation becomes effective, as determined by the committee, as long as there are strong scores in criteria A and B. The exact conditions and time-frame to complete the conditions must be specified on the Examination Report. .