



Program Guidelines

for

Ph.D. in Human Performance

in the

Department of Health and Human Performance

Effective: August 2012

(Revised/Approved February 23, 2012)

CONTENTS

	<u>Page Number</u>
Mission Statement.....	3
Program Administration.....	3
Admissions.....	4 - 5
Academic Advising.....	5
Advancement to Candidacy.....	5 - 6
Dissertation Requirements.....	6– 10
Residency/Teaching Practicum Requirement.....	11
Program Suspension.....	11
Preliminary Examinations.....	11 - 13
Forms & Signatures.....	13
MTSU Academic Misconduct Policy.....	13
Expectation for Post Dissertation Publication.....	13

The course offerings and requirements of Middle Tennessee State University and the Ph.D. in Human Performance Program are continually under examination and revision. This manual presents the offerings and requirements in effect at the time of publication, but there is no guarantee that they will not be changed or revoked. This manual is not intended to state contractual terms and does not constitute a contract between the student and the institution.

Mission of the Ph.D. Program

The mission of the Ph.D. in Human Performance (HP) is to train doctoral level students, who can become effective educators within the context of a rapidly changing education and public service environment, and to produce and publish scholarly research as members of the academic community.

The Ph.D. in Human Performance promotes doctoral level expertise combining pedagogy with scholarly achievement and research excellence (applied or theoretical) in the specializations of Exercise Science, Health, Kinesmetrics, Leisure Studies, and Physical Education. The program is primarily designed for the student who has completed a master's degree in one of these areas. However, applicants whose background rests outside of these areas are eligible to complete prerequisite courses and formally be admitted into the program if other entry criteria are met.

I. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Ph.D. in HP functions as a component of the Department of Health and Human Performance's Graduate Program. The HHP Graduate Program is administered by the HHP Graduate Program Director, who is a doctoral level faculty member in the Department of Health and Human Performance, currently Dr. Joey Gray. Administrative work for the program is conducted by an administrative assistant, Ms. Deborah Williams, who maintains student records and coordinates preliminary examinations.

A. Student Records

Student applications are located in the department's graduate office, AMG 209, until admission status is determined and appropriate correspondence is sent. Records of enrolled students are also maintained in this office. Requests for access to student files are to be made through the HHP Graduate Program Director.

B. Committee Structure

There are two committees which work with the HHP Graduate Program Director and Graduate Faculty Members to provide oversight and programmatic decisions regarding admissions, advisement, and curriculum. The committees are:

- 1) Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC)
- 2) Graduate Curriculum Committee

The Doctoral Advisory Committee discusses administrative issues about the program related to students, policies, coursework, internships, and preliminary examinations. A report on the decisions and recommendations of the DAC will be distributed to graduate faculty. A minimum of two meetings will take place each semester.

Committee membership includes:

- Chair of the HHP Department
- HHP Graduate Program Director
- Equity Liaison Member
- Doctoral Faculty in the HHP Department

Note: Every graduate faculty member is urged to attend all meetings.

The Graduate Curriculum Committee. The Ph.D. program in HP shares the Curriculum Committee with the Master's Degree Programs. Written recommendations from the curriculum committee for changes in graduate program curriculum (master's and doctoral levels) are submitted to the DAC who determine whether to act on the recommendations.

II. ADMISSIONS

Acceptance into the Human Performance Ph.D. program is based on a review of the materials the applicant has submitted to the College of Graduate Studies. Admission decisions are based on a number of criteria that are believed to predict success in the Ph.D. program. The following admission criteria for successful applicants are reviewed.

- **Scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE):** GRE scores on *each* Verbal and Quantitative components exceeds 450, with a minimum combined score of 1000. The Analytical Writing Assessment score on the GRE is also considered.
- **Previous Academic Performance:** A minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) for the last 60 hours of their previous academic work.
- **Letters of Recommendation:** Three “highly favorable” letters of recommendation from persons who have addressed the applicant’s academic qualifications and potential for success in doctoral study.
- **Statement of Purpose:** Applicants should provide a 400-500 word “statement of purpose” that includes their reason(s) for applying to the Ph.D. program, academic interests, professional goals, and area of specialization.
- **Research Skills:** Evidence of completed courses in statistics (or data analysis) and research methods.

- *Applicants with a bachelor's degree will be expected to have completed at least 18 hours of coursework in a related field. Applicants with a master's degree are expected to have completed at least 20 graduate hours in a related field. (this criterion is pending Graduate Council approval)*
- Applicants holding only a bachelor's degree will complete the requirements for an M.S. (thesis option) in addition to the Ph.D. requirements.
- NOTE: All students are required to have completed a thesis or scholarly-equivalent project prior to admission to candidacy.

Each specialization reviews applicant materials, identifies candidates for acceptance and recommends to the HHP Graduate Program Director student admission, provisional admission, or rejection to the program. The HHP Graduate Program Director reviews each application and makes an admission recommendation to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The College of Graduate Studies sends a letter notifying the applicant of the admission decision. If the applicant is provisionally admitted, the HHP Graduate Program Director sends a letter notifying the applicant of the provisions of admission. The HHP Graduate Program Office monitors the provisions and notifies the student and the College of Graduate Studies when provisions are met.

III. ACADEMIC ADVISING

Upon admission to the Ph.D. in HP Program the student will be assigned an advisor. The decision of advisor is based on the student's area of specialization and the faculty member's area of expertise, and the faculty member's current advising load. The purpose of advising is to assist the student in (a) selecting course work, (b) meeting additional provisions for admission which may have been stipulated upon acceptance, and (c) selecting the Chair of the dissertation committee. The advisor may hold either doctoral or graduate faculty status. If the advisor is to serve as chair, the student's major professor of the dissertation committee, he/she must hold doctoral graduate status. The advisor assists the student in writing the degree plan.

IV. ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

A student advances to candidacy when they complete their Preliminary Exams. Preliminary exams are taken in the last semester (usually) of coursework. If the student successfully passes their preliminary exams, the program notifies the College of Graduate Studies and provides the names of the student's dissertation committee. After checking to determine if all other conditions are met, the College of Graduate Studies informs the student that they have advanced to candidacy.

After being admitted to candidacy, students must submit a timeline of course and dissertation requirements to their advisor and the Ph.D. Director for annual review.

The degree plan is completed and submitted to the College of Graduate Studies no later than the completion of 30 hours. The degree plan requires signatures of the advisor and the HHP Graduate Program Director before it is sent to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

V. DISSERTATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Dissertation Topic Selection

The formal dissertation process of topic selection begins by selecting a dissertation advisor who serves as the chairperson of the student's dissertation committee. The dissertation committee chairperson must hold doctoral faculty status in the Department of Health and Human Performance at MTSU. The dissertation topic represents a consensus between students and their advisor that reflect joint interests, experiences, and background between the parties, and the willingness of both parties to produce a scholarly study that represents an extension of existing knowledge and is likely to be published in a refereed, scientific journal. Next, the student forms a dissertation committee, consisting of two additional faculty members who have obtained graduate faculty member status at MTSU (described later). These individuals include one member of the Health and Human Performance Department, and a member whose campus department affiliation is outside of the department. Each committee member is a person who will provide the student with expert consultation and feedback throughout the research development and writing process. When the topic is determined, the student writes a proposal that is either in the form of a traditional dissertation (i.e., Chapters 1,2, and 3 (Introduction, Review of Literature, and Methods) or in an article format that has been approved by the College of Graduate Studies. When the advisor agrees the proposal is ready to be formally presented for committee approval, the student then sets a proposal meeting date and formally presents his or her study to the committee.

B. Proposal and Proposal Meeting

The proposal meeting occurs after approval of advancement to candidacy and successful completion of preliminary examinations. Prior to collection of data pertaining to the dissertation research the candidate must submit and the dissertation committee must approve a proposal (also called the prospectus). In order to enable a Ph.D. candidate to complete the dissertation in a timely fashion, development of the proposal and the proposal meeting may occur at any time while classes are in session following advancement to candidacy.

The purpose of a proposal meeting is for the student to obtain formal, signed consent by the dissertation committee to formally begin the study based on an oral description of the planned research. The student's presentation consists of describing a reduced version of the following elements of the dissertation: the research problem, a brief review of relevant literature that provides background of the topic and supports a need for the study, the purpose of the study, hypotheses or research questions, limitations and

delimitations, a description of the sample, instrumentation and materials for data collection, data collection procedures, and planned statistical or data analyses.

The meeting is open to all department and university faculty and students. All persons in attendance have the opportunity to provide the student with feedback, make recommendations, or to ask questions. However, the committee is given the first opportunity to respond to the student's presentation. In general, the proposal meeting time is as long as needed; however, due to time restrictions for room availability, generally the meeting is completed within one hour. After the question period, the committee meets privately to determine their decision to pass the proposal and allow the student to move toward initiating the study (which may include revisions in the planned study), or to reject the proposal, which would require the student to revise the study and hold a second proposal meeting.

The final copy of the dissertation proposal must be provided to all members of the committee at least one week – preferably two weeks - prior to the proposal meeting. It is expected that the oral presentation is approximately 45 – 50 minutes, with 10 – 15 minutes for discussion and questions.

The proposal should have been reviewed by all committee members prior to submitting a final copy, which is due in the HHP Graduate Program Office at least one week prior to the proposal meeting. The Committee Chair confirms the meeting date and time, the location and notifies faculty of the proposal meeting at least one week in advance of the proposed date. A copy of the proposal is to be delivered to the HHP Graduate Program Office one week in advance of the proposal meeting. **A copy of the proposal will remain in the HHP Graduate Program Office for review by any member of the faculty one week prior to the proposal meeting.**

The proposal is formally presented to a meeting of the dissertation committee and any other interested faculty and students who may wish to observe, or provide input or comment. Following the presentation, the dissertation committee will inform the candidate of its decision on the proposal.

If the proposal is passed, any required changes to the proposal will be communicated clearly by the dissertation advisor on the Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Approval Form, based upon modifications suggested by the committee. Each member of the student's committee will sign a form, obtained from the department's graduate program office that indicates their approval of the study, with recommended changes. Prior to data collection, the student must complete the required online IRB application and receive formal written approval from the MTSU Office of Compliance to conduct research involving human subjects. This process ensures that the proposed study is conducted in an ethical manner and that the student has completed the online course ensuring the student's understanding of proper procedures for conducting research.

C. Dissertation- Data Collection

Typically, the dissertation includes data that are original and obtained by the student. Use of archival data or other available data sets must be approved by the IRB. Analysis of existing data sets may be acceptable under extenuating circumstances with the approval of the dissertation committee.

Note: Manuals, curricula and literature reviews may be considered part of the research process and may be included in the development of the dissertation. However, these do not stand alone as a Ph.D. dissertation.

D. Dissertation Format

The department follows the writing style of the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual (APA)* (6th ed.) for the dissertation format. There will be five complete chapters (*Introduction, Literature Review, Methods, Results, and Discussion*). As noted in the *APA Publication Manual*, the student is the first author of any joint authorships of the dissertation submitted for journal review unless the student approves a different order of authorship.

With prior approval from the dissertation committee chair, a student may follow a manuscript format approved by the College of Graduate Studies. Please check with the dissertation committee chair and/or the Graduate School for details regarding the use of the manuscript format.

E. Dissertation - Committee Membership

As indicated earlier, the student is responsible for nominating a dissertation advisor, who is a doctoral faculty member and serves as the committee chairperson. In collaboration with the chair, and partially based on the dissertation topic, the student then invites two other committee members (explained below).

- Chair. Doctoral Faculty member, HHP Department.
- Members. Two to four additional faculty serve on the committee – one of whom is required to be from outside the department and one from the HHP Graduate Faculty.
- Additional members (from outside the department or the university) may be selected for specific expertise. Outside committee appointments must have the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies, the HHP Graduate Director, and the Dissertation Committee Chair. Outside committee members must have Graduate Faculty status granted by the Graduate Council of the College of Graduate Studies. To obtain the optimal benefit of strong professional advising, students are urged to select committee members and dissertation topics in which faculty have moderate familiarity and/or expertise.

Note: A dissertation committee form will be completed and submitted to the HHP Graduate Program Director and a copy submitted to the College of Graduate Studies. Changes in committee membership are to be submitted on the Change in Dissertation

Advisory Committee Form. The form will be sent to the College of Graduate Studies and a copy will be placed in the student's file in the HHP Graduate Program Office.

F. Role of Dissertation Committee Members

Dissertation committee members function as a unit, with each member providing expertise on various parts of the dissertation study. Students and faculty should be clear about the roles that each member will have. The committee should agree on the study design and the overall format of the dissertation. Once meetings are held with committee members to discuss the overall research plan, the student will write Chapters 1,2, & 3 in either a traditional dissertation format (*Introduction, Literature Review and Methods*, respectively) or in a manuscript format approved by the College of Graduate Studies and submit them for review by committee members at least one week prior to the proposal meeting.

- *Committee Chair.* This person approves all aspects of the dissertation process including: topic selection; proposal development; IRB proposal (the chair will sign the IRB form), provide final approval of all completed work; and notify faculty of proposal and defense dates. The chair also signs all required forms related to the dissertation process.
- *Second Committee Member.* This member provides in-depth expertise, reviews draft work, and is available for consultation.
- *Additional Committee Members.* Reviews draft work and is available for consultation.

All committee members must attend proposal meetings and dissertation defense meetings. If members must be absent due to geographic considerations, or illness, either the meeting is rescheduled or the absent member's comments and questions are addressed during the meeting. The dissertation committee chair determines if the meeting may occur in the absence of any members.

Note- Committee members read and review all drafts and copies of the dissertation. Their primary role is to ensure that the student submits a dissertation that is scholarly and is potentially publishable in a discipline-specific refereed journal. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO SUBMIT DRAFTS AND PROPOSALS THAT HAVE BEEN REVIEWED AND CORRECTED FOR PROPER NARRATIVE AND SPELLING, GRAMMAR, AND FORMAT PRIOR TO COMMITTEE REVIEW.

Changing Dissertation Committee Chair or committee members. If a student (or a faculty member): (a) wishes to change the structure of the committee as was originally set, (b) change the dissertation topic, or (c) report the student's unsatisfactory progress toward completing the dissertation, then the matter is taken to the HHP Graduate Program Director. Changes to dissertation committees, once established, must be reported to the College of Graduate Studies on the Change in Dissertation Advisory Committee Form.

G. Institutional Review Board Approval (IRB)

As indicated earlier, prior to collection of pilot data and/or dissertation data, but after the proposal has been officially approved by the student's committee, approval from MTSU's IRB must be obtained. In addition, the student may have to gain consent from school, agency or hospital administrators which are releasing data or granting permission for participants to enter a study. Prior IRB approval is mandatory on all dissertation research before data are collected, but **after** the study has been proposed and approved by the student's dissertation committee. Finally, as indicated earlier, **all** researchers at MTSU must complete the Human Participants Protection Education for Research Teams online course. The certificate that accompanies completion of the course is submitted along with the IRB.

H. Dissertation Credits

The student must register for at least one dissertation credit every semester after successful completion of departmental written preliminary examinations. **The student cannot register for these credits until the semester following successful completion of the examinations.** The student must continue to register for a minimum of 1 hour of credit each semester thereafter (until graduation).

I. Dissertation Defense

After completion of the dissertation and all other prescribed work for the degree, candidates will be given a final oral examination dealing primarily with the dissertation and its relation to the candidate's major field of study. The College of Graduate Studies will publish the dissertation title, date, time and location of the defense **at least two weeks prior to the defense.** A copy of the dissertation is to be delivered to the HHP Graduate Program Office two weeks in advance of the defense meeting for review by any member of the faculty. The defense is open to all members of the University community who may wish to attend. The dissertation defense is administered by the advisory/dissertation committee according to program guidelines. Successful defense of the dissertation must be confirmed in writing by all members of the advisory/dissertation committee. This examination will be conducted by the student's dissertation committee. All committee members are expected to be in attendance at this meeting. This meeting constitutes the oral examination.

After the student's defense is completed, visitors are asked to leave the room and the committee confers as to whether the student has successfully "passed" the defense. Corrections and suggested changes are outlined by the committee members and given to the student in writing by the student's dissertation advisor (committee chair). After the student makes final corrections and submits the corrected version to each committee member all members sign the approval page.

VI. RESIDENCY/TEACHING/PRACTICUM REQUIREMENT

Residency Requirement. Students must be enrolled as full-time graduate students (9 semester hours) for at least one semester to fulfill residency requirements. The College of Graduate Studies requires that residency requirements be satisfied through completion of **campus-based study**. MTSU doctoral students may not fulfill residency requirements through registration in dissertation credits, internships, or independent studies.

Two practicum requirements are required in the doctoral program of studies-whether one or both are in teaching, field experience, or completing a research study, depending on the experience of the student and the requirements recommended by the advisor.

VII. SUSPENSIONS FROM THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM

If a student does not maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree as demonstrated by their grades or fails to complete written and research tasks as agreed with their dissertation advisor, the HHP Graduate Program Director is notified and then advises the Department Chair. Students failing to maintain satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements may be placed on academic probation and may be suspended from the program and from the University. Suspended students must apply for readmission and meet the admission requirements at the time of readmission. A minimum GPA of 3.25 is required for conferral of the Doctorate degree.

VIII. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATIONS

A. Written Examinations

Students are required to complete examination questions in three content areas: statistics, research methods and design, and in a scientific (specialization) area. The statistics and research methods and design exams will be offered each May and November. For the scientific area, students and the advisor determine the semester that the exam is to be taken (usually after all core requirements and most of the specialist area courses are completed). Each program specialization committee chooses whether to schedule scientific area examinations on the July and November test dates or at an alternate date and time. A list of students who sit for the Preliminary Examinations is submitted to the HHP Graduate Program Director. Students must be in good academic standing and have earned a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 in all graduate work before taking written preliminary examinations. Study guides are prepared by the faculty committee members who prepare the questions. Questions are graded by the faculty member who prepared the questions. If the student's response to each question within a content area is not graded as a "pass", one additional faculty member will be consulted to reassess the student's answers. If the second faculty grader confirms the initial assessment, the student's original grade remains the same. If, however, this second faculty grader does

not agree with the original assessment, the two faculty graders will consult and attempt to reach a consensus on the student's grade. If a consensus between the two faculty members cannot be reached, the Graduate Coordinator will be asked to either appoint a third grader or arbitrate the matter directly and make a final decision.

The written examinations are to be completed on the department's computers. *Preliminary Written Examination Records are kept on file in the administrative assistant's office as part of the student's file.*

Students must successfully complete all three examinations within a one-year period.

B. Evaluation Criteria

There are two possible grades that may be assigned to each content area of the preliminary examination.

P	Pass
F	Fail

To obtain an overall pass of the preliminary examinations, the doctoral student **must obtain a grade of "Pass" in each of the three content areas. A grade of "Fail" on the statistics exam or the research methods and design exam means that the examination that was failed must be retaken during the next testing session and the student will be required to answer a new set of questions. Any student who has concerns about this policy may consult Graduate Director or Chair of the HHP department.**

If a passing grade is not received in the scientific (specialization) area, the faculty grader may request an oral examination. If the oral examination is given, the faculty(s) member who graded the written examination will select a second faculty member and schedule an oral examination with the student within two weeks following the written examination. A minimum of two faculty members will conduct the oral examination. Students may review the written test question(s) prior to the oral examination, but may not review their answer(s) or the graders' comments. After the oral examination, faculty members who conducted the oral examination determine if the overall grade for the examination is pass or fail.

The preliminary examinations may be taken no more than twice (See *Graduate Catalog*).

"A less than satisfactory outcome including a fail decision on any component of the examinations may result in additional academic requirements and/or a re-examination. A re-examination may be given only once. A second fail decision on any component of the examinations results in a recommendation to the dean of the College of Graduate Studies for academic dismissal."

A student may appeal the dismissal recommendation by contacting the HHP Graduate Program Director. Exceptions to the policy must be recommended by the HHP Graduate Program Director and approved by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

IX. FORMS AND SIGNATURES

Forms and signatures required by the Advisor, Dissertation Committee Chair and Committee Members are listed below:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1) Degree Plan | Signature of Advisor, HHP Graduate Program Director, and Dean of College of Graduate Studies |
| 2) Advancement to Candidacy | Signature of HHP Graduate Program Director |

X. MTSU ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY

Students and faculty in the Ph.D. in Human Performance follow the MTSU Guidelines for Academic Integrity at MTSU. Students are responsible for reading and developing familiarity with the information contained in the brochure published by MTSU's Office of Judicial Affairs & Mediation Services "Academic Integrity at MTSU" (<http://www.mtsu.edu/judaff/documents/ainews.pdf>)

XI. EXPECTATION FOR POST DISSERTATION PUBLICATION

The Department of Health and Human Performance strongly recommends that graduate students who successfully defend their thesis or dissertation attempt to generate a manuscript of their study and submit it to a refereed journal for possible publication. In addition, students should follow the guidelines regarding co-authorship within their academic specialization. Students who aspire to conduct additional research will benefit from the mentoring process in attempting to publish their study.

Revision/Approved Date: February 23, 2012