

9 March 2023

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Amy Lubitow, Chair, Graduate Council

RE: Proposal to Establish Professional Doctoral Degree Requirements

The degree requirements for doctoral degrees at Portland State University are based around the PhD. All but one of the doctoral degrees currently offered by Portland State is a PhD and these guidelines work well for those degrees.

It is generally accepted that to earn a PhD a student must make a significant contribution to new knowledge in their subject area. In other words, a PhD is specifically a research degree. But not all doctoral degrees are research degrees; many students, especially working professionals, may be seeking advanced knowledge that advances practice in their chosen discipline but is distinct from creating new knowledge. These students may wish to pursue what many institutions describe as a professional doctoral degree. Examples of these are: EdD, JD, DSW, DBA, DPT, DNP, AuD, OTD, DrPH.

Other institutions make the distinction between PhDs and professional doctorates. For example:

- Ohio State University

*Professional doctoral degrees prepare students for advanced professional knowledge with a practice perspective to the learning, and variable levels of scholarly work. Frequently, professional doctoral degrees will contain training and advanced knowledge that is required by a relevant licensing board and professional organization.*

- Northeastern University

*A PhD, or doctoral degree, is an academic, research-based degree in which the main goal is to develop advanced research skills and create new knowledge to share with others. In contrast, a professional doctorate, or a professional degree, is focused on the advanced practice of knowledge and skills, making it a degree for those who are more professionally oriented.*

- Walden University

*A professional doctorate is a doctoral-level degree for experienced professionals who want to translate their industry expertise into a higher position of credibility, leadership, and influence in their profession.*

The intent of this proposal is to create a separate set of requirements for professional doctoral degrees. The EdD program is the only 'professional' doctoral program that currently exists at Portland State. Broadly, students in the EdD program must meet the requirements designed for the PhD degrees. But these requirements are not always appropriate to the EdD program leading to requests for exceptions.

For example, EdD students are required to complete just 18 credits of 603 Dissertation, compared to 27 for PhD students. But is a dissertation even the right format for the culminating activity on the EdD? A recent request to submit a

“portfolio” was denied because it would not meet the definition of a dissertation. However, the proposed portfolio may have been a better expression of the work conducting during the degree. An examination committee for a PhD student is rightly required to have four members all of whom are experienced in research and the development of new knowledge. But in a professional program these requirements may exclude practitioners who are well positioned to assess the student. In short, applying the PhD requirements to professional doctoral programs does not serve either the students or the program well. By introducing new requirements for professional doctoral programs, the Graduate School hopes to open up space for improvements in the curriculum and design of the EdD program as well as the development of new professional doctoral programs.

The table on the next page summarizes the proposed requirements for professional doctoral degrees and highlights how they differ from the current requirements for PhD programs. The main differences are that professional doctoral students will not complete a dissertation. A professional doctoral program will then be able to define the form of the culminating activity, which may be similar to a dissertation but may also be quite different. For this reason, 606 Project rather than 603 Dissertation credits will be required. In line with current practice in the EdD program, 18 credits of 606 will be required. Because there will be no dissertation, the requirement for a proposal defense and advancement to candidacy has been eliminated. The committee requirements have been changed to reduce the required number of members (from 4 to 3), to allow NTTFs to serve as chair, and to allow members without PhDs to serve on the committee. Committee membership will not require Graduate School approval for professional doctorates; membership will be managed by the program which will retain the ability to make more stringent requirements for committee membership. Finally, although the total number of required credits remains the same (at 81), the timeline for completion of a professional doctorate has been shortened. The rationale for this is that the proposal defense has been eliminated, removing one of the timed milestones of the PhD. Additionally, protracted times to degree are not advantageous to students in a professional program whose best interests are served by applying their new learning in professional practice at the earliest opportunity.

### Proposal for the Structure of Professional Doctoral Degrees

	<b>PhD</b>	<b>Professional Doctorate</b>
<b>Total credits</b>	81	81
Years full time	3 years	3 years
Maximum time	13 years	9 years
<b>Comprehensive Exam</b>	Yes	Yes
Monitored by GS	Yes	Yes
Time from admission to comps	5 years	4 years
<b>Proposal Exam</b>	Yes	No
Candidacy	Yes	No
Time from comps to proposal	3 years	N/A
<b>Culminating activity</b>	Dissertation	Project
Credit type	603	606
Minimum number of credits	27	18
Time from proposal to graduation	5 years	N/A
Time from comp to graduation	N/A	5 years
Committee approved by GS	Yes	No
Minimum # of committee members	4	3
Maximum # of committee members	6	5
Chair must be TTF	Yes	No, NTTf permitted
Members must hold doctoral degree	Yes	At least 2
Format review by GS	Yes	No

## **Current Bulletin Language**

### Professional Degrees

PSU offers a variety of degrees which are designed to prepare students for work in professional fields. The programs are designed to develop a mastery of the subject matter in a chosen discipline and to provide practical training and experience in the field. Many professional degrees require more than the minimum 45 credits required for all master's degrees at PSU.

### Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)

The Doctor of Education degree is granted in recognition of mastery of theory, practice, and research in education. The Ed.D. in educational leadership program prepares highly qualified professional educators for positions in teaching, supervision, and administration in elementary and secondary education, in community and four-year colleges and universities, and in other educational institutions, both public and private.

## **Proposed Bulletin Language**

### Professional Master's Degrees

PSU offers a variety of degrees which are designed to prepare students for work in professional fields. The programs are designed to develop a mastery of the subject matter in a chosen discipline and to provide practical training and experience in the field. Many professional master's degrees require more than the minimum 45 credits required for all master's degrees at PSU.

### ~~Doctor of Education (Ed.D.)~~

~~The Doctor of Education degree is granted in recognition of mastery of theory, practice, and research in education. The Ed.D. in educational leadership program prepares highly qualified professional educators for positions in teaching, supervision, and administration in elementary and secondary education, in community and four-year colleges and universities, and in other educational institutions, both public and private.~~

### Professional Doctoral Degrees

A Professional Doctoral degree is awarded for advanced knowledge and skills designed to address real-world problems. Students demonstrate readiness for completing a culminating project by passing comprehensive examinations. Students then address a problem of practice by completing a culminating project supervised by a combination of faculty and industry leaders.

## **Current Bulletin Language**

### **Doctoral degrees**

#### **Preliminary examination**

Early in the doctoral program the student may be required to take preliminary examinations. The scope and content of the examination, and the standard of performance, is determined by the doctoral program.

### **Advisory committee**

When a student enters the doctoral program, a faculty adviser will be designated by the program to advise the student and to meet in regular consultation concerning the program of study and research. It is recommended that students also have an advisory committee appointed that should consist of at least three faculty members representative of the student's field of study. The members of the advisory committee should be appointed after successful completion of 9 credits and not later than six months prior to the completion of the comprehensive examinations.

### **Language requirement**

For the Ph.D. degree, the student may be required to demonstrate competency in at least one second language. Any second language requirement must be completed before the comprehensive examinations.

### **Residency requirement**

Residency for a doctoral degree program can be satisfied in one of the following ways:

- Three terms of full-time enrollment (minimum 9 graduate credits applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- Six terms of part-time enrollment (minimum 1 graduate credit applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- A doctoral student who was enrolled in the same major at PSU, and whose matriculation to the doctoral program immediately follows (within one calendar year) the master's degree program, may fulfill the residency requirement during the period in which the student was enrolled in the master's program.

### **Coursework and doctoral program of study**

The doctoral program of study includes coursework, research, internships, and/or seminar credits according to the requirements of the individual doctoral program. A minimum 27 credits of 603 Dissertation is required for all Ph.D. students; a minimum of 18 credits of 603 Dissertation is required for all Ed.D. students. A minimum of three academic years of graduate study beyond the bachelor's degree (equivalent to 81 quarter credits minimum) is required for all doctoral degrees.

All doctoral degrees are approved with a minimum number of required credits. These minimum credit totals cannot be waived even if the approved program of study exceeds the University minimum of 81 credits for a doctoral degree.

For doctoral degrees, pre-admission and transfer limits are at the discretion of the individual doctoral programs; however, 603 Dissertation credits, or their equivalent, cannot be transferred from another university. Transfer credits are approved via a [GO-21D form](#) submitted to the Graduate School. See [Pre-admission and transfer credit](#) for detailed information. While potentially all coursework for the degree can be transferred from another institution, the following items must be completed at

PSU: comprehensive exams, residency, proposal, advancement to candidacy, and dissertation research.

A student must have a minimum 3.00 GPA on the courses applied to the program of study, as well as a minimum 3.00 GPA in all graduate-level courses taken at PSU, in order to graduate. Doctoral programs may establish a more rigorous standard. Although grades of C+, C, and C- are below the graduate standard, they may be counted as credit toward a doctoral degree with the specific written approval of the doctoral program. Grades of D or F indicate clearly unacceptable work and cannot be applied to graduate degree requirements. Audited courses cannot be used to meet any requirement for doctoral degrees.

A grade of IP (In Progress) may be used for 601 Research and for 606 Project when a student is progressing in an acceptable manner toward completion of the work; final grades for 601 and 606 credits are assigned by the instructor via an online grade change. An IP grade must be used for 603 Dissertation when a student is progressing in an acceptable manner; final grades for 603 Dissertation credits are assigned by the instructor on the [Recommendation for the Degree form \(GO-17D\)](#) and posted to the student's transcript after approval of the dissertation and certification for graduation by the Graduate School.

All coursework on the program of study, with the possible exception of seminar and internships, must be completed before a student can be advanced to doctoral candidacy. All coursework on the program of study must be satisfactorily completed before graduation.

For students entering a doctoral program with a master's degree, a maximum of five years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. For students entering with a bachelor's degree, a maximum of two additional years will be added to this limit, for a maximum of seven years from admission to completion of all comprehensive examinations. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

### **Comprehensive examination**

Before advancement to candidacy and not less than one academic year before all requirements for the doctoral degree are expected to be completed, the student must pass a series of comprehensive examinations in the field of specialization. The examinations may be written, oral, or both. The comprehensive examinations may not be taken until the language requirement, if any, and substantially all the coursework for the degree have been completed. Students must be registered for a minimum of 1 graduate credit during the term comprehensive exams are taken. Comprehensive exams are scheduled and administered in accordance with the established rules of the program, which must be made publicly available to students via the program's website or doctoral student handbook. Comprehensive exams can only be offered during regular academic terms, i.e., not between terms. The doctoral program must notify the Graduate School the student has passed comprehensive exams by submitting the [GO-22 form](#).

If the student fails the entire comprehensive exam or any section thereof, the doctoral program may dismiss the student from the degree program or permit the

student to repeat the entire examination, or the section that was failed, after a minimum of three months. The results of the second examination are final.

A maximum of three years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to advancement to candidacy. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

### **Dissertation proposal**

After passing the comprehensive examination and identifying a dissertation topic, a dissertation committee is appointed and the student must pass a proposal defense. The dissertation committee will take the place of the advisory committee and the faculty adviser is superseded by the dissertation adviser. The dissertation committee must be approved by the Graduate School using the [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee form \(GO-16D\)](#).

The dissertation committee must consist of four to six PSU faculty members: the dissertation adviser and a minimum of three and a maximum of five regular members. The chair of the dissertation committee must be regular, full-time PSU instructional faculty, tenured or tenure track, assistant professor or higher in rank; the other three to five committee members may include non-tenure track or adjunct faculty and/or members of the OHSU faculty. If it is necessary to go off-campus for one committee member with specific expertise not available among PSU faculty, a curriculum vitae (CV) for that proposed member must be presented with the GO-16D form. This off-campus member may substitute for one of the three to five regular committee members. All committee members must have doctoral degrees. At the discretion of the program, the designation of co-chair can be requested on the GO-16D form for one regular member of the committee. The designation of co-chair recognizes the significant academic advising role of the committee member, but oversight of the process and procedures and all administrative responsibilities remains with the chair.

No proposal defense shall be valid without a dissertation committee approved by the Graduate School. The GO-16D form should be submitted to the Graduate School a minimum of six weeks in advance of the estimated date of the dissertation proposal meeting. The student must deliver a draft of the dissertation proposal to all members of the approved committee no fewer than 14 days before the proposal defense.

A dissertation proposal must take place in a meeting with the student and the entire, appointed committee. While it is expected that all members should be physically present, remote participation is permitted under [specific conditions](#). The student will make an oral presentation of the written proposal for discussion, evaluation, and suggested modification. The final proposal submitted to the committee for approval should be sufficiently detailed and clear to provide a blueprint for the study to follow. The proposal is expected to include the following:

1. General nature and present status of knowledge of the problem.
2. The theoretical and empirical framework within which the proposed problem exists.
3. The significance of the proposed research and its likely contributions.

#### 4. The research methodology to be used.

The doctoral program recommends the student for advancement to candidacy once the dissertation proposal has been approved.

### **Human Research Protection Program**

All research involving human subjects conducted by faculty, staff or students in any program at PSU must have Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) approval. This policy applies to all research under the auspices of the University, including surveys and questionnaires, whether supported by grant, contract, gift, University, or personal funds. After proposal approval, the student must submit a HRPP application to the Office of Research Integrity if human subjects are involved in the research in any way. A student cannot be advanced to candidacy until HRPP approval is granted. The student should allow a minimum of six weeks for the approval process.

### **Advancement to Candidacy**

A student is advanced to candidacy after successful defense of the dissertation proposal and with the recommendation of the doctoral program, after verification of the student's program of study, and after HRPP approval has been granted (if applicable). The doctoral program must request advancement to candidacy by submitting the [GO-23 form](#) to the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School retains final approval authority for advancement to candidacy.

A doctoral candidate has a minimum of four months and a maximum of five years from the effective date of advancement to candidacy to complete all requirements for graduation, including defense of the dissertation and its final approval by the Graduate School (doctoral programs may have stricter requirements). Candidates must be continuously enrolled during that period. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

### **Dissertation preparation**

With guidance of the dissertation committee, the candidate presents a dissertation setting forth the results of original and independent investigation. The dissertation must constitute a contribution to knowledge, significantly enlarging, modifying, or reinterpreting what was previously known. Until the degree is granted, the student enrolls for the number of graduate credits appropriate to the amount of University services utilized, as determined by the dissertation adviser, with a minimum of 1 graduate credit each term. Ph.D. students must register for a minimum of 27 credits of 603 Dissertation before graduation; Ed.D. students must register for a minimum of 18 credits of 603 Dissertation before graduation. Continuous enrollment of a minimum 1 graduate credit is required through the term a student graduates, even if this results in more than 27 (18) credits of 603 Dissertation at the time of graduation. Ph.D. and Ed.D. students should only register for 603 Dissertation credits after advancement to candidacy.

### **Degree application**



Students must [apply for graduation](#) by the first Friday of the anticipated term of graduation; see the [Graduate Candidate Deadlines](#) for specific due dates. There is a required \$30 fee per application as well as a \$2 service charge.

As a one-time courtesy, students who do not complete degree requirements can have their application for graduation carried forward to a future term (typically the next term, but it could be at maximum up to one year in advance). To request that an application for graduation be carried, students must contact the Graduate School in writing and provide an explanation for the graduation delay. If students do not graduate a second time, the application for graduation will be dropped; they will then need to reapply for graduation by the appropriate deadline (and will be assessed a new fee).

### **Dissertation defense**

After preparation of the written dissertation, the candidate's dissertation committee will conduct a dissertation defense. A dissertation defense may be scheduled only during the regular academic terms, no later than five weeks prior to the close of the term of application for graduation in which the degree will be granted (i.e., must be completed four weeks before the beginning of finals week). For summer term graduation, deadlines apply to the regular eight-week summer session dates. Later completion will result in graduation in a subsequent term. The student must deliver a final draft of the dissertation to all members of the approved committee no fewer than 14 days before the dissertation defense.

The dissertation defense, which is open to the public, is the culminating experience in the doctoral studies. The candidate is expected to prepare an oral presentation on the research methodology and results. The oral presentation should not exceed 60 minutes. Following the oral presentation, the candidate must defend the dissertation as a worthy contribution to knowledge in its field and must demonstrate a mastery of the field of specialization as it is related to the dissertation. The questioning and discussion are for the purpose of: (1) further enlightenment of the candidate and the committee of the significance and limitations of the research, and (2) demonstration that the candidate has met the high expectations of the University for the awarding of the doctoral degree.

A dissertation defense must take place in a meeting with the student and the entire, appointed committee. While it is expected that all members should be physically present, remote participation is permitted under [specific conditions](#). For dissertation approval, there may be no more than one dissenting vote on the dissertation defense. If the student fails the dissertation defense, the doctoral program may dismiss the student from the program or permit the student to hold a second defense after a minimum of three months. The results of the second defense are final.

After passing the dissertation defense, the student will be required to make any necessary edits and revisions. The final, post-defense version of the dissertation must be approved by committee members by signing the Dissertation Signature Page. For final approval, there may be no more than one committee member who does not approve the final, post-defense version of the dissertation by not signing the Dissertation Signature Page.

The final dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School not later than three weeks prior to the close of the term of application for graduation. See the [Graduate Candidate Deadlines](#) for specific dates. For details about thesis formatting and submission, see the [Thesis and Dissertation Information](#) available from the Graduate School.

### **Time limitations**

For students entering a doctoral program with a master's degree, a maximum of five years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. For students entering with a bachelor's degree, a maximum of two additional years will be added to this limit, for a maximum of seven years from admission to completion of all comprehensive examinations. Doctoral programs may have stricter requirements. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

A maximum of three years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to advancement to candidacy. Doctoral programs may have stricter requirements. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

A doctoral candidate has a minimum of four months and a maximum of five years from the effective date of advancement to candidacy to complete all requirements for graduation, including defense of the dissertation and its final approval by the Graduate School. Doctoral programs may have stricter requirements. Candidates must be continuously enrolled during that period. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

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## **Proposed Bulletin Language**

### **Preliminary examination**

Early in the doctoral program the student may be required to take preliminary examinations. The scope and content of the examination, and the standard of performance, is determined by the doctoral program.

### **Advisory committee**

When a student enters the doctoral program, a faculty adviser will be designated by the program to advise the student and to meet in regular consultation concerning the program of study and research. It is recommended that students also have an advisory committee appointed that should consist of at least three faculty members representative of the student's field of study. The members of the advisory committee should be appointed after successful completion of 9 credits and not later than six months prior to the completion of the comprehensive examinations.

### **Language requirement**

For the Ph.D. degree, the student may be required to demonstrate competency in at least one second language. Any second language requirement must be completed before the comprehensive examinations. Professional doctoral programs do not have a second language requirement.

## Residency requirement

Residency for a doctoral degree program can be satisfied in one of the following ways:

- Three terms of full-time enrollment (minimum 9 graduate credits applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- Six terms of part-time enrollment (minimum 1 graduate credit applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- A doctoral student who was enrolled in the same major at PSU, and whose matriculation to the doctoral program immediately follows (within one calendar year) the master's degree program, may fulfill the residency requirement during the period in which the student was enrolled in the master's program.

## Coursework and doctoral program of study

The doctoral program of study includes coursework, research, internships, and/or seminar credits according to the requirements of the individual doctoral program. A minimum of three academic years of graduate study beyond the bachelor's degree (equivalent to 81 quarter credits minimum) is required for all doctoral degrees. A minimum 27 credits of 603 Dissertation is required for all Ph.D. students; a minimum of 18 credits of ~~603-Dissertation~~ 606 Project is required for all ~~Ed.D.~~ professional doctoral students.

All doctoral degrees are approved with a minimum number of required credits. These minimum credit totals cannot be waived even if the approved program of study exceeds the University minimum of 81 credits for a doctoral degree.

For doctoral degrees, pre-admission and transfer limits are at the discretion of the individual doctoral programs; however, 603 Dissertation/606 Project credits, or their equivalent, cannot be transferred from another university. Transfer credits are approved via a [GO-21D form](#) submitted to the Graduate School. See [Pre-admission and transfer credit](#) for detailed information. While potentially all coursework for the degree can be transferred from another institution, the following items must be completed at PSU: comprehensive exams, residency, proposal, advancement to candidacy, and dissertation/project research.

A student must have a minimum 3.00 GPA on the courses applied to the program of study, as well as a minimum 3.00 GPA in all graduate-level courses taken at PSU, in order to graduate. Doctoral programs may establish a more rigorous standard. Although grades of C+, C, and C- are below the graduate standard, they may be counted as credit toward a doctoral degree with the specific written approval of the doctoral program. Grades of D or F indicate clearly unacceptable work and cannot be applied to graduate degree requirements. Audited courses cannot be used to meet any requirement for doctoral degrees.

A grade of IP (In Progress) may be used for 601 Research and for 606 Project when a student is progressing in an acceptable manner toward completion of the work;

final grades for 601 and 606 credits are assigned by the instructor via an online grade change. An IP grade must be used for 603 Dissertation when a student is progressing in an acceptable manner; final grades for 603 Dissertation credits are assigned by the instructor on the [Recommendation for the Degree form \(GO-17D\)](#) and posted to the student's transcript after approval of the dissertation and certification for graduation by the Graduate School.

All coursework on the program of study, with the possible exception of seminar and internships, must be completed before a Ph.D. student can be advanced to doctoral candidacy. All coursework on the program of study must be satisfactorily completed before graduation.

For students entering a Ph.D. doctoral program with a master's degree, a maximum of five years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. For students entering with a bachelor's degree, a maximum of two additional years will be added to this limit, for a maximum of seven years from admission to completion of all comprehensive examinations. For students entering a professional doctoral program, a maximum of four years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. Failure to meet ~~this~~ these time limits will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

### **Comprehensive examination**

Before advancement to candidacy and not less than one academic year before all requirements for the doctoral degree are expected to be completed, the student must pass a series of comprehensive examinations in the field of specialization. The examinations may be written, oral, or both. The comprehensive examinations may not be taken until the language requirement, if any, and substantially all the coursework for the degree have been completed. Students must be registered for a minimum of 1 graduate credit during the term comprehensive exams are taken. Comprehensive exams are scheduled and administered in accordance with the established rules of the program, which must be made publicly available to students via the program's website or doctoral student handbook. Comprehensive exams can only be offered during regular academic terms, i.e., not between terms. The doctoral program must notify the Graduate School the student has passed comprehensive exams by submitting the [GO-22 form](#).

If the student fails the entire comprehensive exam or any section thereof, the doctoral program may dismiss the student from the degree program or permit the student to repeat the entire examination, or the section that was failed, after a minimum of three months. The results of the second examination are final.

For Ph.D. students, a maximum of three years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to advancement to candidacy. For professional doctoral students, a maximum of five years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to graduation. Failure to meet ~~this~~ these time limits will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

## **Culminating project**

Professional doctoral students will complete a culminating project in partial fulfillment of degree requirements.

After passing the comprehensive examination and identifying a culminating project topic, a project committee is appointed. The project committee will take the place of the advisory committee and the faculty adviser is superseded by the project adviser.

The culminating project committee must consist of three to five members. The chair must be a PSU tenure track or non-tenure track faculty member. Potentially all of the regular committee members can be off-campus members. At least two committee members (the chair and a regular member) must have doctoral degrees. At the discretion of the program, the designation of co-chair can be used for one regular member of the committee. The designation of co-chair recognizes the significant academic advising role of the committee member, but oversight of the process and procedures and all administrative responsibilities remains with the chair.

A proposal is not required for a culminating project, but some programs may develop their own internal proposal process. Professional doctoral students are not advanced to candidacy, but they are required to obtain Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) approval if appropriate (see below).

With guidance from the culminating project committee, the student prepares a project designed to address a problem of practice. Until the degree is granted, the student enrolls for the number of graduate credits appropriate to the amount of University services utilized, as determined by the project chair, with a minimum of 1 graduate credit each term. Professional doctoral students must register for 18 credits of 606 Project before graduation.

For professional doctoral students, a maximum of five years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to graduation. Individual programs may have stricter limits. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

## **Dissertation proposal**

Ph.D. students will complete a dissertation in partial fulfillment of degree requirements.

After passing the comprehensive examination and identifying a dissertation topic, a dissertation committee is appointed and the student must pass a proposal defense. The dissertation committee will take the place of the advisory committee and the faculty adviser is superseded by the dissertation adviser. The dissertation committee must be approved by the Graduate School using the [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee form \(GO-16D\)](#).

The dissertation committee must consist of four to six PSU faculty members: the dissertation adviser and a minimum of three and a maximum of five regular members. The chair of the dissertation committee must be regular, full-time PSU instructional faculty, tenured or tenure track, assistant professor or higher in rank;

the other three to five committee members may include non-tenure track or adjunct faculty and/or members of the OHSU faculty. If it is necessary to go off-campus for one committee member with specific expertise not available among PSU faculty, a curriculum vitae (CV) for that proposed member must be presented with the GO-16D form. This off-campus member may substitute for one of the three to five regular committee members. All committee members must have doctoral degrees. At the discretion of the program, the designation of co-chair can be requested on the GO-16D form for one regular member of the committee. The designation of co-chair recognizes the significant academic advising role of the committee member, but oversight of the process and procedures and all administrative responsibilities remains with the chair.

No proposal defense shall be valid without a dissertation committee approved by the Graduate School. The GO-16D form should be submitted to the Graduate School a minimum of six weeks in advance of the estimated date of the dissertation proposal meeting. The student must deliver a draft of the dissertation proposal to all members of the approved committee no fewer than 14 days before the proposal defense.

A dissertation proposal must take place in a meeting with the student and the entire, appointed committee. While it is expected that all members should be physically present, remote participation is permitted under [specific conditions](#). The student will make an oral presentation of the written proposal for discussion, evaluation, and suggested modification. The final proposal submitted to the committee for approval should be sufficiently detailed and clear to provide a blueprint for the study to follow. The proposal is expected to include the following:

1. General nature and present status of knowledge of the problem.
2. The theoretical and empirical framework within which the proposed problem exists.
3. The significance of the proposed research and its likely contributions.
4. The research methodology to be used.

The Ph.D. doctoral program recommends the student for advancement to candidacy once the dissertation proposal has been approved.

### **Human Research Protection Program**

All research involving human subjects conducted by faculty, staff or students in any program at PSU must have Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) approval. This policy applies to all research under the auspices of the University, including surveys and questionnaires, whether supported by grant, contract, gift, University, or personal funds. After proposal approval, the student must submit a HRPP application to the Office of Research Integrity if human subjects are involved in the research in any way. A student cannot be advanced to candidacy until HRPP approval is granted. The student should allow a minimum of six weeks for the approval process.

## Advancement to Candidacy

A student is advanced to candidacy after successful defense of the dissertation proposal and with the recommendation of the ~~Ph.D. doctoral~~ program, after verification of the student's program of study, and after HRPP approval has been granted (if applicable). The ~~Ph.D. doctoral~~ program must request advancement to candidacy by submitting the [GO-23 form](#) to the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School retains final approval authority for advancement to candidacy.

A doctoral candidate has a minimum of four months and a maximum of five years from the effective date of advancement to candidacy to complete all requirements for graduation, including defense of the dissertation and its final approval by the Graduate School (doctoral programs may have stricter requirements). Candidates must be continuously enrolled during that period. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

## Dissertation preparation

With guidance of the dissertation committee, the candidate presents a dissertation setting forth the results of original and independent investigation. The dissertation must constitute a contribution to knowledge, significantly enlarging, modifying, or reinterpreting what was previously known. Until the degree is granted, the student enrolls for the number of graduate credits appropriate to the amount of University services utilized, as determined by the dissertation adviser, with a minimum of 1 graduate credit each term. Ph.D. students must register for a minimum of 27 credits of 603 Dissertation before graduation; ~~Ed.D. students must register for a minimum of 18 credits of 603 Dissertation before graduation.~~ Continuous enrollment of a minimum 1 graduate credit is required through the term a student graduates, even if this results in more than 27 ~~(18)~~ credits of 603 Dissertation at the time of graduation. Ph.D. ~~and Ed.D.~~ students should only register for 603 Dissertation credits after advancement to candidacy.

## Degree application

Students must [apply for graduation](#) by the first Friday of the anticipated term of graduation; see the [Graduate Candidate Deadlines](#) for specific due dates. There is a required \$30 fee per application as well as a \$2 service charge.

As a one-time courtesy, students who do not complete degree requirements can have their application for graduation carried forward to a future term (typically the next term, but it could be at maximum up to one year in advance). To request that an application for graduation be carried, students must contact the Graduate School in writing and provide an explanation for the graduation delay. If students do not graduate a second time, the application for graduation will be dropped; they will then need to reapply for graduation by the appropriate deadline (and will be assessed a new fee).

## Dissertation defense

After preparation of the written dissertation, the candidate's dissertation committee will conduct a dissertation defense. A dissertation defense may be scheduled only during the regular academic terms, no later than five weeks prior to the close of the term of application for graduation in which the degree will be granted (i.e., must be

completed four weeks before the beginning of finals week). For summer term graduation, deadlines apply to the regular eight-week summer session dates. Later completion will result in graduation in a subsequent term. The student must deliver a final draft of the dissertation to all members of the approved committee no fewer than 14 days before the dissertation defense.

The dissertation defense, which is open to the public, is the culminating experience in the Ph.D. doctoral studies. The candidate is expected to prepare an oral presentation on the research methodology and results. The oral presentation should not exceed 60 minutes. Following the oral presentation, the candidate must defend the dissertation as a worthy contribution to knowledge in its field and must demonstrate a mastery of the field of specialization as it is related to the dissertation. The questioning and discussion are for the purpose of: (1) further enlightenment of the candidate and the committee of the significance and limitations of the research, and (2) demonstration that the candidate has met the high expectations of the University for the awarding of the doctoral degree.

A dissertation defense must take place in a meeting with the student and the entire, appointed committee. While it is expected that all members should be physically present, remote participation is permitted under [specific conditions](#). For dissertation approval, there may be no more than one dissenting vote on the dissertation defense. If the student fails the dissertation defense, the doctoral program may dismiss the student from the program or permit the student to hold a second defense after a minimum of three months. The results of the second defense are final.

After passing the dissertation defense, the student will be required to make any necessary edits and revisions. The final, post-defense version of the dissertation must be approved by committee members by signing the Dissertation Signature Page. For final approval, there may be no more than one committee member who does not approve the final, post-defense version of the dissertation by not signing the Dissertation Signature Page.

The final dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School not later than three weeks prior to the close of the term of application for graduation. See the [Graduate Candidate Deadlines](#) for specific dates. For details about thesis formatting and submission, see the [Thesis and Dissertation Information](#) available from the Graduate School.

### **Time limitations for Ph.D. students**

For students entering a Ph.D. doctoral program with a master's degree, a maximum of five years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. For students entering with a bachelor's degree, a maximum of two additional years will be added to this limit, for a maximum of seven years from admission to completion of all comprehensive examinations. Ph.D. doctoral programs may have stricter requirements. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the ~~doctoral~~ program.

A maximum of three years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examinations to advancement to candidacy. Ph.D. doctoral programs may have



stricter requirements. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

A Ph.D. candidate has a minimum of four months and a maximum of five years from the effective date of advancement to candidacy to complete all requirements for graduation, including defense of the dissertation and its final approval by the Graduate School. Ph.D. doctoral programs may have stricter requirements. Candidates must be continuously enrolled during that period. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

**Time limitations for professional doctoral students**

For professional doctoral students, a maximum of four years will be allowed from admission to completion of all required comprehensive examinations. Individual programs may have stricter limits. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.

For professional doctoral students, a maximum of five years will be allowed from the completion of comprehensive examination to graduation. Individual programs may have stricter limits. Failure to meet this time limit will result in cancellation of admission to the doctoral program.