



UNIVERSITY *of*  
DENVER

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GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

**University of Denver  
Graduate School of Social Work  
Ph.D. Program**

**Ph.D. Program Handbook  
2015-2016**

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## Preface

The Ph.D. Program Handbook is designed to provide important program information to Ph.D. students in the Graduate School of Social Work. It is not intended to be a complete statement of all School and University policies. In addition, note that the policies and procedures described in the Handbook are subject to change at the discretion of the Graduate School of Social Work, the Office of Graduate Studies, the Office of the Provost, and the University Trustees. They are not to be considered or otherwise relied upon as a complete statement of the legal terms and conditions of student enrollment and status. Instead, this Handbook has been designed to provide, in summary form, important information regarding Ph.D. studies at the Graduate School of Social Work in particular and the University of Denver in general. Students must also consult the Graduate Policy Manual available at <http://bulletin.du.edu/graduate/gradpolicy/> and remember that students are responsible to comply with those graduate policies, forms, and procedures. Further information is available from the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

Students need to also note that the regulations of the University and of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies are the prerogative of bodies outside the School. With regard to the regulations they set, those bodies have authority. The regulations of the School are designed to operate within the context of those bodies, but in the case of a discrepancy, the general regulations have priority. In other words, where there is a conflict between this Handbook and the Graduate Policy Manual, the Graduate Policy Manual takes precedence. Although this Handbook aims to give as accurate and complete information as possible from year to year, changes to policy and program requirements do occur so students should also check with their advisor, their Dissertation Director, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, or the Office of Graduate Studies on any matters of which they are unsure.

When a new Ph.D. Handbook is issued that has significant changes, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education should provide the new Ph.D. Handbook with information about the changes to all currently enrolled doctoral students who are beyond their first year. Students may elect to stay with their current Ph.D. Handbook or request to fall under the policies and procedures of the new Ph.D. Handbook. Students who wish to change should request a change to the new Ph.D. Handbook in writing directed to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. Students must follow the policies and procedures of a single handbook and may not choose policies and procedures from different handbooks.

## Welcome Message from the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education

On behalf of the administration, faculty, staff, current students, and Ph.D. program alumni, I welcome you to the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Denver and to your doctoral education experience. I am excited to have you here with us and look forward to working with you over the coming years while you embark on this new chapter in your life.

Founded in 1968, the University of Denver School of Social Work Ph.D. Program is one of the oldest doctoral social work programs in the U.S. and has produced 194 graduates, most of whom have gone on to assume leadership positions in academia, in government, and in research institutions. I hope that the time you spend in our program will challenge you intellectually to deepen your thinking as an emerging social work scholar so you too can take your place among the leaders in our chosen profession.

The GSSW faculty who will be integrally involved in your education as instructors, mentors, co-authors, supervisors, and colleagues have a deep commitment to your success and to ensuring that the doctoral program continues to produce stewards of our profession who are passionate about social work's vision of a more just and equitable world. They have a wide range of substantive and methodological expertise and among them you will find some of the leading scholars in our profession. Take the time and the initiative to get to know them and their work.

Over the past six years, the doctoral program has undergone a comprehensive program review that was inspired by the Carnegie Foundation Initiative on the Doctorate. The Carnegie Project, combined with a separate external program review by Dr. Kia Bentley, former president of the Group for the Advancement of Doctoral Education, kicked off a process of curriculum revisioning that was implemented starting in the Fall 2013. We are in a time of change in the program – change that will challenge us as a school to further deepen our commitment to quality doctoral education, and ultimately strengthen your educational experience.

Currently, we have 34 active students in our doctoral program. Typically, five or six new students enter each year, and they consistently report experiencing a faculty and staff committed to their success and graduation. I hope this Handbook provides you with information pertaining to the steps that lead to successful completion of your program and the array of policies and procedures related to those steps, but if you have any questions that remain unanswered, please let me know.

Sincerely,

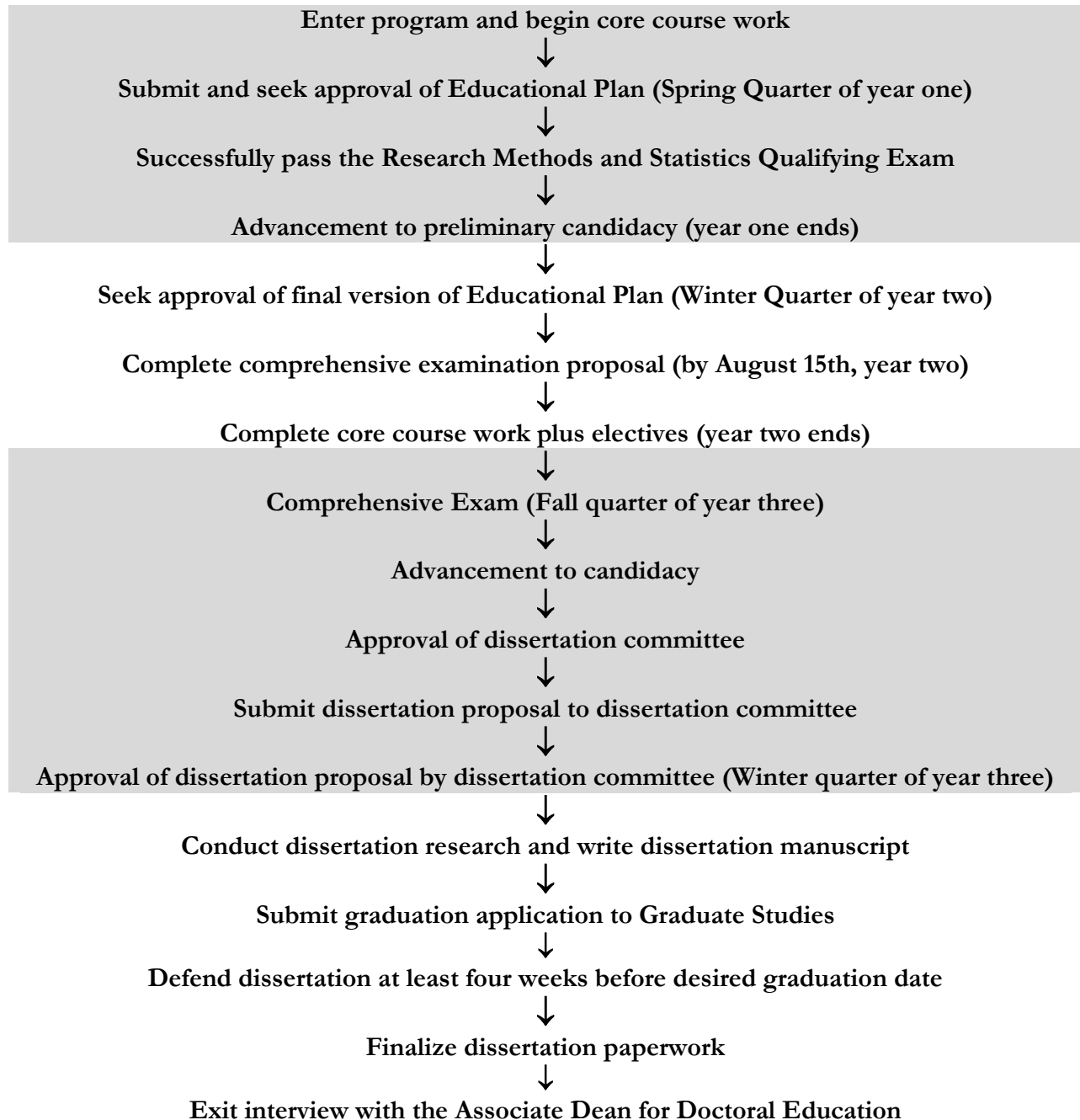
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "N Eugene Walls". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "N" being a stylized capital letter.

N. Eugene Walls, MSSW, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor & Associate Dean for Doctoral Education

## General Information

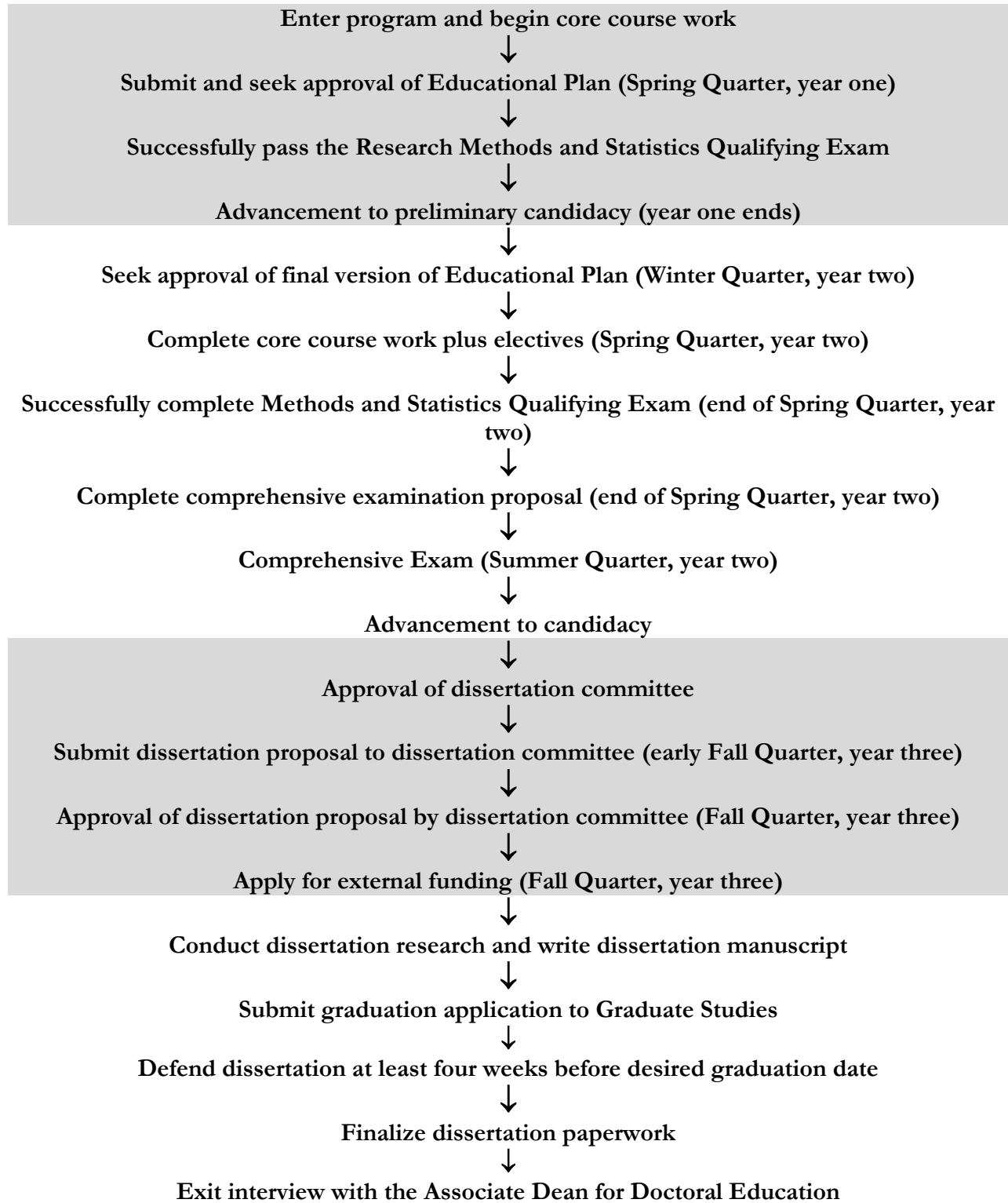
<u>Address:</u>	University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work Craig Hall, 2148 South High Street Denver, CO 80208
<u>Phone Numbers:</u>	N. Eugene Walls, Ph.D., Associate Professor & Associate Dean for Doctoral Education: 303-871-4367 Mandy Jameson, Program Coordinator: 303-871-2140 Sarah Sweetman, GSSW Registrar: 303-871-2843 GSSW reception desk: 303-871-2886
<u>Mailboxes:</u>	Ph.D. student mail folders are in the Student Lounge of Craig Hall.
<u>Computing:</u>	Ph.D. students are expected to provide their own mobile computers and software. DU PC support for student owned machines is available at 303-871-4700. GSSW also provides desktop computing resources in the Ph.D. offices with Microsoft Office software suites and access to quantitative and qualitative data analysis packages. GSSW has technology operations staff that provide internal support for instructional purposes. GSSW instructional technology support can be reached at 303-871-4680.
<u>Portfolio:</u>	The Ph.D. program maintains a group presence on the GSSW Student Resources Portfolio site where forms and handbooks are posted. Students are required to participate in the DU Portfolio community.
<u>Copy Resources:</u>	The GSSW copy machines are available for assigned GTA work. In general, GSSW supports paperless approaches and copy machines can digitize and be used to e-mail digital documents.
<u>Dissertations:</u>	Dissertations completed by prior Ph.D. students are available in the “University of Denver Dissertations” database through the DU library.
<u>Program Committee for 2015-2016:</u>	Eugene Walls, Associate Professor and Chair Kim Bender, Associate Professor Jennifer Greenfield, Assistant Professor Jeff Jenson, Professor Andreas Rechkemmer, Professor
<u>Ph.D. Program Coordinator:</u>	Mandy Jameson
<u>Faculty Directory:</u>	<a href="http://www.du.edu/socialwork/facultyandstaff/facultydirectory/index.html">http://www.du.edu/socialwork/facultyandstaff/facultydirectory/index.html</a>
<u>Staff Directory:</u>	<a href="http://www.du.edu/socialwork/facultyandstaff/deptstaff.html">http://www.du.edu/socialwork/facultyandstaff/deptstaff.html</a>

## Steps in the Ph.D. Program



While the above plan, outlines a typical 4-year path to completion of the PhD, students who plan on seeking external funding for their dissertation from foundation or governmental sources, will likely need to modify the schedule to insure that their dissertation proposal is ready in time for many of the funding opportunities that occur during the fall quarter. Students should research opportunities early in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the program and plan thoughtfully to insure timely completion of required components. See below for an alternative timeline incorporating that process.

## Steps in the Ph.D. Program (Alternative Timeline)



## Program Description

The GSSW Ph.D. Program has as its purpose and commitment the production of social work scholars. The program provides students the opportunity to actively configure and plan their learning with faculty advising and collaborative mentorship. As students move through the many steps of achieving their Ph.D., GSSW affordances include a vibrant intellectual community committed to the ideals of the social work profession and the advancement of social work scholarship.

The Ph.D. Program emphasizes:

- knowledge development in social work science
- mastery of the conduct of scholarly inquiry
- development of teaching skills
- publication and presentation of scholarly work
- collaborative scholarship in substantive areas
- an intellectual culture that values new ideas and discovery

Graduates of the Ph.D. Program are expected to: 1) demonstrate the ability to think conceptually and critically about social work issues; 2) apply theoretical and practical reasoning to social work practices and social policy; and 3) conduct research that contributes to the social work knowledge base. Students are expected to enter the program with a basic proficiency in case study, qualitative analysis, and statistical reasoning.

When students arrive, they should begin identifying potential mentors among faculty members. A mentor is a faculty member who may have been identified by the student as a scholar with whom they might like to work and who usually shares the scholarship interests, methodological approaches, or interpersonal fit with the student. Mentors may be GA supervisors, dissertation directors, or other faculty with whom the student works. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education is the official advisor for all first year students.

In the Winter quarter of their first year, students develop their Educational Plan in consultation with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. This plan includes required core courses in addition to elective courses chosen by students to help acquire a theory emphasis and the knowledge and the skills needed to conduct dissertation and independent research. At that time, students may also choose what is known as a “permanent” advisor. The permanent advisor is a member of the social work faculty who remains in the role of advising the student throughout the comprehensive examination process and until the student is advanced to candidacy.

The Educational Plan, once approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, is presented to the Doctoral Program Committee in their spring meeting for approval.



The Educational Plan is a formal, official document, a copy of which is kept in the Ph.D. Program Office. The student's advisor must approve any minor changes to the document. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education must approve major changes to the document. In both cases, change documents are kept in the student's record. When the student is advanced to candidacy, the Educational Plan is used as a basis for certifying that the student has completed their coursework. As such, the student should keep their Educational Plan updated as courses taken change.

University policy requires a minimum of 135 quarter hours beyond a baccalaureate for the doctor of philosophy degree in social work. For an MSW or equivalent (e.g., MSSW, MSSA), 60 quarter hours toward this requirement may be credited for "A" or "B" work completed as part of the master's degree conferred through an accredited school of social work. Transcripts of students with a master's degree in an academic discipline other than social work will be reviewed, and up to 45 credits of master's work and up to 15 credits of post-master's work may be counted toward the Ph.D. degree for "A" or "B" work in courses that are sufficiently related to degree requirements. Students without an MSW or BSW are required to take, SOWK 4020, Integrated SW Practice for Social Justice and one additional MSW course determined by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education after a review of the student's transcript to intellectually ground them in the discipline. Continuous enrollment credits are not calculated toward the degree requirements.

In addition to the 60 credit hours granted for the MSW degree, a typical program consists of 75 quarter-hour credits, distributed as follows: 52 hours of required course credits and 23 hours of elective course credits. Students are required to take at least one 3-credit policy course, one 3-credit theory course along with 6 additional credits of advanced methodology or statistics as part of their 23 elective hours. All courses and independent studies must be consistent with the student's Educational Plan and approved by the student's academic advisor each quarter.

Students transferring from other social work Ph.D. programs may transfer up to 15 quarter hours of doctoral work, in addition to 60 quarter credit hours from an MSW degree. All transfer students must take 48 or more credit hours at the University of Denver to qualify for graduation. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will individually determine each transfer student's status regarding which doctoral core courses need to be taken at DU.

Candidacy is achieved after completing course work, successfully passing the Methods and Statistics Qualifying Exam, and successfully completing a comprehensive examination that demonstrates thorough knowledge of social work issues, theory, policy, research, and special populations. All students are required to complete the Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Examination, described in detail on pages 33-37, is a paper on an approved topic followed by an oral examination.

Advancement typically occurs in the summer quarter of the second academic year or fall quarter of the third academic year, depending on the student's program completion trajectory. At that point, the student selects their Dissertation Committee members and Dissertation Director/Advisor. Time required to complete dissertation requirements varies. Details regarding the dissertation are found on pages 37-43.

While the program is designed to be completed in four years, on average, students are currently completing the Ph.D. program within 4 ½ to 5 years of their date of enrollment. Students **must** complete the Ph.D. Program within seven years of the date of first enrollment. Extensions are not granted for other than exceptional circumstances. Such requests (for a one-year program extension beyond the seven-year time period) must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. See <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/exceptions.pdf> for details about the process of making an extension request. In addition, medical leave of absences are available for students who meet such criteria. Details about requesting a medical leave of absence are available at <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/medical.pdf>.

## Ph.D. Program Core Course Requirements

All students must successfully complete the following core doctoral courses in the Ph.D. Program:

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### Year One\*

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#### Fall Quarter:

- SOWK 5000: Seminar in Professional Social Work Issues (2 credits)
- SOWK 5110: Introduction to Advanced Quantitative Research Method (3 credits)
- SOWK 5120: Introduction to Advanced Qualitative Research Method (3 credits)
- SOWK 5201: Statistical Methods in Education, Psychology, and Social Work (5 credits)\*\*
- SOWK 5300: Social Science Theory and Philosophy of Science (3 credits)

#### Winter Quarter:

- SOWK 5000: Seminar in Professional Social Work Issues (2 credits)
- SOWK 5111: Quantitative Methods for Assessing Social Interventions (3 credits)
- SOWK 5121: Qualitative Data Analysis (3 credits)
- SOWK 5202: Correlation and Regression (4 credits)
- ELECTIVE: (3 credits)

#### Spring Quarter:

- SOWK 5000: Seminar in Professional Social Work Issues (2 credits)
- SOWK 5130: Mixed Methods Research in Social Work (3 credits)
- SOWK 5203: Multivariate Analysis (5 credits)
- ELECTIVE: (3 – 6 credits)

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### Year Two

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#### Fall Quarter:

- SOWK 5101: Social Welfare Policy Analysis and Development (3 credits)
- SOWK 5301: Social Work Theory in Research and Practice (3 credits)
- SOWK 5500: Pedagogy in Social Work Education (3 credits)
- ELECTIVE: (3 – 6 credits)

#### Winter Quarter:

- SOWK 5450: Social Work Knowledge Integration and Publication (2 credits)
- SOWK 5700: Teaching Practicum (3 credits)
- ELECTIVE: (3 – 9 credits)

#### Spring Quarter:

- ELECTIVE: (8 – 15 credits)
-

\*For students entering the program without the MSW, the sequencing of courses will likely vary depending on an individualized assessment of the students' previous degree(s).

**\*\*Students may elect to waive SOWK 5201 if they have a graduate level statistics course in which they made an A or B, or Pass (in the case of Pass/Fail courses). The students must apply for the waiver using the Graduate Course Substitution or Waiver Approval Form located at <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/graduatesubstitutionwaiver>, and must attach a copy of the syllabus for the graduate level statistics course they completed. A course on research methods does not qualify for the waiver as methods courses frequently do not have in-depth coverage of statistical analysis and inference. The credit hours waived must be replaced with credit hours of advanced statistical training.**

## Core Course Descriptions

### **SOWK 5000 Seminar in Professional Social Work Issues**

Examines the dilemmas and challenges confronting the social work profession and social work education. Examines the nature of professional education, the nature of the profession itself and the forces internal and external to the profession that have an impact on education for social work. Among the topics addressed are history of social work education and the profession, current professional issues and the impact upon practice and education.

### **SOWK 5101 Social Welfare Policy Analysis and Development**

Applies analytical techniques to development of social welfare policy stressing the ability to formulate a policy hypothesis (i.e., a statement, in testable form, of a basic premise undergirding a policy position) and to reach conclusions based on analysis of empirical evidence related to the policy hypothesis.

### **SOWK 5110 Introduction to Advanced Quantitative Research Method**

Introduces students to quantitative approaches to conducting social research. The course includes material related to measurement, sampling, research design, data collection, and data analysis. While each of these topics encompasses technical issues to be mastered by doctoral students, the logic and underlying rationale of these research methods is of prime importance in this course. A second component of the course requires students to define and begin to develop a substantive area of intended study and research during their enrollment in the doctoral program. Elements of articulating a substantive research area and steps toward defining key research questions in a topical area are reviewed. Aspects of conducting literature reviews leading to the articulation of a substantive research area are discussed in class sessions.

### **SOWK 5111 Quantitative Methods for Assessing Social Interventions**

Social work researchers are in a unique position to contribute to knowledge about the causes of individual and societal problems and to test interventions that seek to prevent or ameliorate such problems. A variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods are used to advance knowledge about etiological factors contributing to individual and social problems and to assess the outcomes of specific social policies and practice strategies. This course presents a detailed examination of quantitative methods and designs that are useful in assessing the effects of social interventions. Measurement, sampling, and design issues in generating and testing research questions and hypotheses are explored. Experimental, quasi-experimental, and survey research designs are assessed and applied to practice and policy issues and problems. Special emphasis is placed on developing skills necessary to conduct intervention research.

### **SOWK 5120 Introduction to Advanced Qualitative Research Method**

This course provides a substantive doctoral-level review of content on qualitative research methods and strategies. It is developed for students from social science disciplines. The content includes the nature of the method, the epistemological implications and assumptions, and appropriate applications. Student learning and evaluation includes the experience of developing a research proposal based on qualitative methodology and conducting data collection for a mini-research project. This class is a prerequisite for SOWK 5121 Qualitative Data Analysis. This course is required for social work doctoral students. Students from other departments may register for the course with permission from the professor.

**SOWK 5121 Qualitative Data Analysis**

The focus of this course is on data analysis and interpretation, demonstration of the science of the analysis, and presentation of findings in oral and written forms. Students are expected to conduct qualitative analyses on textual data they collected as part of SOWK 5120 or as a result of some other qualitative data collection experience. Over the course of the term students will learn to code and analyze their data, interpret findings, orally present those findings, and write a final paper in which they demonstrate a rigorous engagement with qualitative data analysis and the literature relevant to their topic.

**SOWK 5130 Mixed Methods Research in Social Work**

This course introduces doctoral students to mixed methods research in social work and the social sciences. Students will explore mixed methods as a third research paradigm that strategically combines both quantitative and qualitative methods within a single inquiry. The course encourages students to actively reflect on previous qualitative and quantitative research training. Specific topics for the course include: history and language of mixed methods research; relevant paradigms and epistemological debates; mixed methods design and research questions; and analysis and dissemination considerations.

**SOWK 5201 Statistical Methods in Education, Psychology, and Social Work**

Examines the use and interpretation of statistics in educational and human services research, including descriptive and inferential statistics.

**SOWK 5202 Correlation and Regression**

Examines correlational and multiple regression research designs and their application to social work and social science problems. Prerequisite: SOWK 5201.

**SOWK 5203 Multivariate Analysis**

Provides a conceptual understanding of common multivariate statistical techniques as applied to research in social work and the social sciences. Prerequisite: SOWK 5201.

**SOWK 5300 Social Science Theory and Philosophy of Science**

This foundation doctoral level course introduces traditional issues and recent developments in the philosophy of science, and provides an overview of social science theory and theoretical frameworks. It will examine philosophical questions on scientific inquiry and the consequences modern science imposes on our basic understanding of knowledge and nature. The course analyzes and critiques the social-and-behavioral-science foundations that undergird the social work knowledge base and current social work theories.

**SOWK 5301 Social Work Theory in Research and Practice**

Examines how theories, conceptual frameworks, perspectives, and models are used specifically within social work research, education, and practice. This course explores how theories are used in research and in social work interventions on individual, family, group, organizational, community, and policy levels. The course analyzes and critiques the social work knowledge base and the current state of social work theories. SOWK 5300 is the pre-requisite for this course.

**SOWK 5500 Pedagogy in Social Work Education**

Examines philosophies, theories, and pedagogical models that are utilized in social work education.

It explores how various perspectives shape the approaches and techniques used and how these, in turn, impact classroom effectiveness and issues of classroom management. The course incorporates concepts and develops skills based on evidence-based teaching.

**SOWK 5450 Social Work Knowledge Integration and Publication**

Introduces students to integrating knowledge for social work scholarship through the use of tools that support academic argumentation and exposition. It provides students with the skills, expertise, and readiness necessary to compose a number of scholarly documents, including academic publications and the dissertation proposal. The course focuses on the preparation and writing of the comprehensive examination proposal as an example of such documents. The major product of the class is a paper designed to meet the requirements of the comprehensive examination proposal. Advisors and mentors participate in class presentations and critiques as a part of preparing the student for their ongoing scholarship.

**SOWK 5700 Teaching Practicum**

Provides an opportunity to work with a faculty mentor on issues associated with course design, classroom instruction, and student evaluation. Students may register for two sections of 5700 during their program, but a minimum of one section is required.

**SOWK 6991 Independent Study**

Students undertake special study in a defined area of interest with faculty consultation. By arrangement. *8 qtr. hrs. maximum.*

## **Elective Courses**

### Electives to Support Student Educational Plans

In addition to the core courses, students must complete 23 elective hours in theory, policy, research methodology/analysis, and in a substantive area of study. Students work with their advisor and other faculty members to develop an Educational Plan that includes 23 elective hours.

Students are required to take one three-credit policy course, one three-credit theory course, and six credits of advanced methodology and statistics as part of the 23 elective hours. The remaining elective hours can include courses in advanced research methodology/analysis and substantive area elective courses. Eight hours of independent study are allowed as part of a student's elective plan of study. Up to 8 credit hours of relevant Ph.D. level work completed at other universities after enrollment at GSSW can be transferred and counted toward the total 23 elective hours.

Electives may be chosen from other University of Denver departments and/or other universities with approval of the advisor and Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. All courses taken outside GSSW must be designated as doctoral level by the departments offering them. Selected master's level and MSW courses that complement the student's course of study may be taken with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education's approval. Students taking master level courses for doctoral credit within GSSW are expected to perform at a level beyond that expected of master students. University College classes cannot be counted for credit toward the Ph.D.

### Independent Study Electives

Independent Study electives are arranged through a joint agreement between a faculty member and one or more students. All proposals must be approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. The plan may be initiated by faculty or students to achieve a particular content objective. A student may acquire up to 8 hours of credit in Independent Study during the program. Units of Independent Study that substitute for a required elective course (i.e., required policy elective, required theory electives) will count for that course and are not counted toward the 8 hours limitation. Credit hours of more than 8 must have special permission from the student's advisor and Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

An Independent Study elective should:

- have a purposeful relationship to the student's Educational Plan;
- be taken either as an enrichment for the student's learning or because of a deficiency in a particular content area in the curriculum;
- not be considered if it is a duplication of course content offered during the year in the regularly scheduled classes (please see Directed Study option below);
- be taught by a qualified, full-time faculty member; and,
- be guided by a written contractual agreement (Independent Study Form) between the faculty member and student.

A copy of the Independent Study Form is available from the Ph.D. Office or the GSSW Registrar. This form must be approved by the student's advisor and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and submitted to the GSSW Registrar **prior to the first day of the quarter in which it will be registered.**

### Directed Study

Under special circumstances only, a student may be allowed to register for a DU course as a **directed study**, in the event that the course is not offered during the quarter in which it must be taken. Students pursuing a course as directed study must follow the syllabus for the catalog course to the extent that the individualized study format permits. For more information about directed studies, please contact the GSSW Registrar. Directed studies require the same approvals as independent study, and may be denied at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. Courses taken as directed study will not be counted towards the 8 credit hour limitation on independent study.

### Electives from Outside the University of Denver

Students may take up to 8-quarter hour (Ph.D. level) graduate credits at institutions other than the University of Denver. The procedures for taking courses in other institutions are as follows:

- The student shall make a written request to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education describing the course and including detailed official information as to the course content (e.g., bulletin descriptions or course syllabus). The relevance of the course to the student's program of study should be demonstrated in the written request. The student's advisor shall approve this/these course(s) and so note by



signing the student's Educational Plan (a copy of this plan should be attached to the request).

- A minimum grade of B must be earned in order for the outside course to be transferred and credited to the DU degree. An official transcript record shall be sent, at the student's request, to the GSSW Registrar.
- Regulations applying to independent study within DU shall also apply with respect to independent study at institutions other than DU.

Exceptions to this policy and/or procedures and regulations must be requested in writing to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. A rationale statement signed by the student's advisor setting forth the basis for the request of exception should be attached to the student's request.

## **Academic Advising**

The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education advises all first year students. The Educational Plan is to be developed with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for review and approval, and finally reviewed and approved by the Ph.D. Program Committee by the middle of the student's third quarter of course work.

By the end of the first year students should consult with the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education regarding their preferences for a permanent advisor. A key role of the advisor is to assist students after they have achieved preliminary candidacy at the end of the first year. The permanent advisor can be chosen from among faculty serving on the Ph.D. Program Committee or any tenure line faculty member. The choice of the advisor must be approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. Normally, this faculty member will remain as the advisor through the comprehensive examination and dissertation process. However, as described below, the advisor can be changed at the request of either the student or the faculty member.

1. Request for change initiated by student. The student should discuss the desire to change advisors with her or his assigned advisor. The student should provide the advisor with a memo stating the student's intent to change advisors. The student shall then locate a faculty member to succeed the previous person, discuss her or his willingness to assume the role of advisor and obtain from that person a memo to that effect. The student then shall forward the memo(s) and a statement requesting the change to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education who will send an official notice of the change to all involved parties and the GSSW Registrar.
2. Request for change initiated by faculty member. The faculty member wishing to cease being a student's advisor should discuss this change with the student and forward a memo to that effect to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education shall consult with the student to identify possible replacements. The student may then approach other faculty to discuss their willingness to take up the responsibility. When a successor has been found, that faculty member will forward a memo to that effect to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, who will follow through with an official notice of the change to all involved parties and the GSSW Registrar.

3. Appeals. The GSSW Office of the Dean is the final point of appeal.

## **Student and Academic Performance**

The Ph.D. Program of the Graduate School of Social Work has established the following grading policies.

### General

The policies of the University of Denver Graduate Council, under which the GSSW operates, provide that advanced degrees are not awarded automatically upon the completion of any required number of courses or hours of credit. Student status is subject to continuing review, and if she or he makes unsatisfactory progress, the student may be terminated from the program.

The doctorate is the highest degree offered by the University. It is conferred upon students who successfully complete those requirements that the faculty have prescribed. Total achievement within the framework of accepted standards and course requirements constitute the major consideration in awarding the doctorate.

### Grading

The University of Denver uses a letter grading system based on value points associated with each letter. The following sets forth the letter grades and their value points. Certain courses such as teaching practica are graded as Pass/Fail. Unless designated as such, all other courses use the letter grading system.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Points</u>
A	94-100	4.0
A-	91- 93	3.7
B+	88- 90	3.3
B	84- 87	3.0
B-	81- 83	2.7
C+	78- 80	2.3
C	74- 77	2.0
C-	71- 73	1.7
F	70 or below	0
I	Incomplete; no value until removed	

The "I" grade cannot be used to extend the opportunity for improving performance or raising the grade achieved within the usual quarter time lines. An Incomplete is to be used only under exceptional circumstances, such as illness, family emergency, etc. The "I" must have a grade value within one year or it will automatically become an "F". Please see <http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/incompletegrade.html> for specific policies and procedures related to incomplete grades.

### Required Grade Levels

Students are expected to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 at all times.<sup>1</sup> GPAs will be computed regardless of outstanding Incompletes. All policies pertaining to the GPA will be implemented regardless of any outstanding Incompletes. If at the end of any quarter a student's cumulative GPA is less than a 3.0, the student will have one quarter to raise the cumulative GPA above 3.0. **If the student's cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 for two consecutive quarters, the student will be terminated from the Program.** In addition, students receiving grades of C+ or lower in a core (required) course are required to re-take the course. When a student retakes a course, the credit hours earned in the initial course (with the C+ or lower grade) do not count toward credit hours required for the degree. Students may not retake a course through the Directed Study method unless no other option exists to complete the course during their time in the program and only at the discretion of the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

The GSSW Registrar will notify students in writing at the end of any quarter in which their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. The notification, with a copy to the student's advisor, will:

1. note the student's cumulative GPA;
2. indicate that if the student's cumulative GPA is not above 3.0 at the end of the next academic quarter in which the student is enrolled that the student will be terminated from the Program; and
3. require the student to contact his or her advisor immediately to develop a plan designed to remedy the academic deficits.

A student whose cumulative GPA is less than 3.0 for two consecutive terms will be notified in writing by the GSSW Registrar and Associate Dean for Doctoral Education of their termination from the program.<sup>1</sup> The notification, with a copy to the student's advisor, will state:

1. the basis for the termination from the program;
2. the fact that the student will not be allowed to enroll in additional courses at the University of Denver; and,
3. the fact that the student has a right to appeal the termination to the Dean and that this appeal must be made in writing within two weeks of the date the student was notified of the termination.

### Rights of Appeal for Academic Grades

Grade appeals must be based on problems of process and not on differences in judgment or opinion concerning academic performance. The burden of proof rests on the student to demonstrate that one or more of the following occurred:

- The grading decision was made on some basis other than academic performance and other than as a penalty for academic misconduct.
- The grading decision was based upon standards unreasonably different from those which were applied to other students in the same course and section.

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<sup>1</sup> Maintenance of a 3.0 grade point average, by itself, does not constitute sufficient evidence of acceptable academic performance in the Ph.D. Program. Other bases for termination from the Ph.D. Program due to academic difficulties include receiving grades of C (2.0) or below for nine or more hours of courses taken for Ph.D. Program credit (whether inside or outside the Graduate School of Social Work) and receiving a grade of less than C (2.0) in any core course at any time. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will notify the student in the event of any of these conditions.

- The grading decision was based on an unreasonable departure from previously articulated standards.

The grade appeal process is outlined on this webpage:  
<http://www.du.edu/registrar/records/gradeappeal.html>

### Evaluation of Progress for First Year Students and Advancement to Preliminary Candidacy

The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will evaluate student progress during the third quarter of the first year for full-time students. The evaluation will involve a review of the student's Educational Plan and a discussion of the student's performance in courses taken during the first two quarters. To be considered as having made satisfactory progress, a student must have completed all first-year courses and present a minimum of 3.0 grade point average. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, after approving the plan, will facilitate the Ph.D. Program Committee approval process by presenting the Educational Plan and leading the discussion of the student's performance.

Based on satisfactory progress in all course work, approval of the Educational Plan by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and by a majority vote of the Ph.D. Program Committee, and successful completion of the Methods and Statistics Qualifying Examination, the student will be advanced to the status of preliminary candidacy.

If the committee judges that a student is not making satisfactory progress or does not have an adequate Educational Plan, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will address the appropriate issues with the student. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education is empowered to develop and approve a revised plan to remedy the situation and move the student to preliminary candidacy.

### Evaluation of Continuing Students

The academic performance of continuing students will be reviewed annually by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. An advisor or any professor can bring concerns about a student to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education at any time throughout the academic year. Concerns may be raised about academic performance, collegiality, ethics or any other professional standards of the social work field and/or the academy. The concerns will be addressed through a meeting of the student, their advisor, professor(s) raising the concern, and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. A written plan to address the concern(s) must be submitted and approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and will be filed in the student's academic record. The written plan should be specific about what is required and include a timeline for completion of the requirements. If the written plan (and its timeline) are not completed as outlined, the student may be terminated from the program.

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty, commonly known as plagiarism, occurs when someone takes credit for work produced by another. Academic dishonesty and the appearance of dishonesty are avoided if proper bibliographic citations are included whenever the work of another is used. Proper bibliographic citations are described in the *APA Publication Manual* (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Students are expected to purchase

the APA Manual for use during their doctoral studies. The APA manual is available in the DU Bookstore or in most major bookstores.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

1. Representing any work of another person, including materials from the professional literature, as one's own product and achievement.
2. Quoting from another work without indicating the fact by quotation marks or indentation and acknowledging the source.
3. Paraphrasing without proper acknowledgment of the source.
4. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid in any assignment or examination.
5. Submitting a written assignment prepared for one class as original work for any other class without prior knowledge and permission of the instructor.
6. Representing interaction of clients in written case materials that did not in fact happen or presenting untrue statements in such material.
7. Fabrication of data sets or the editing or otherwise changing of existing data sets.

Sanctions, Corrective Actions, and Termination due to Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty may occur in the context of a core or elective course, in completion of duties in the student's graduate assistantship or other funded support or non-funded opportunities (pre-doctoral fellowships, external dissertation grants, faculty grants, collaborative unfunded projects with faculty, etc.), in research or other activities undertaken collaboratively with other student colleagues, or in sole authored/administered projects. In cases involving coursework, a course instructor has the right to levy appropriate sanctions and/or require specific corrective actions that must be followed by the student. Instructors should inform the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and/or the Ph.D. Program Committee that academic dishonesty has occurred and request that the Associate Dean and/or Committee complete a review of the alleged dishonesty. Academic dishonesty may also occur in assignments or work completed outside formal classroom settings (e.g., comprehensive exams, dissertations, independent studies). Faculty discovering academic dishonesty that occurs outside the classroom will refer such cases to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and/or Ph.D. Program Committee for review. Similarly, accusations of academic dishonesty emerging out of collaborative work with other students should be reported to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education and/or PhD Program Committee.

Upon receipt of a case involving academic dishonesty, the Associate Dean and/or Committee will review the incident and recommend sanctions and/or corrective actions. A student who has violated principles of academic dishonesty may be terminated from the program. A termination decision for reasons of academic dishonesty is made by a majority vote of the Ph.D. Program Committee membership. Notification, with a copy to the student's advisor, will state:

1. the nature of the academic dishonesty and basis for the termination from the Program;

2. the fact that the student will not be allowed to enroll in additional courses at the University of Denver; and
3. the fact that the student has a right to appeal the termination to the Dean and that this appeal must be made in writing within two weeks of the date the student was notified of the termination.

Depending on the severity of the academic misconduct, the case may be referred to the University of Denver's Office of Student Conduct for review.

### Rights of Appeal for Academic Dishonesty

Appeals are made to the Dean, who will determine a cause for appeal and appoint an ad hoc faculty appeal committee of three members to review the case and make recommendations. The Dean will designate the chair of the committee. This committee shall hear the appeal within three weeks of the time the appeal is made and will furnish a decision in writing to the student and the Dean within one week of its hearing. The chair of the appeal committee shall act as recorder. If the Dean does not determine just cause for appeal, the student will be terminated from the program.

If the student believes that the process of appeal and resolution have not been satisfactory, the student may appeal in writing to the Provost. The Provost may refer appeals to appropriate bodies or personnel for their recommendation on specific issues. In some cases, the Provost may refer an appeal to the Graduate Council for its recommendation. The Provost is the final authority in the appeal process; final action by the Provost should, when possible, take place within four weeks after the receipt of appropriate recommendations.

GSSW Ph.D. Program appeal procedures are based on processes outlined in the University of Denver *Graduate Policy Manual*. Additional details regarding the appeal process outside of GSSW are described in this manual. The manual is available on-line at <http://bulletin.du.edu/graduate/gradpolicy>

## **Educational Policies**

### Academic Integrity and Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the NASW Code of Ethics, the criteria for student evaluation and review found in the *Graduate School of Social Work Academic Bulletin & Student/Faculty Handbook*, and the University rules concerning academic dishonesty, also found in the *Graduate School of Social Work Academic Bulletin & Student/Faculty Handbook*. Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior at all times, showing respect to peers, instructors, and diverse points of view.

The University defines "academic dishonesty" as:

1. Plagiarism – representation of another's work or ideas as one's own.
2. Cheating – actual or attempted use of resources not authorized by the instructor for academic submission.
3. Fabrication – falsification or creation of data, research or resources to support academic submission.

4. Aid of academic dishonesty – intentionally facilitating plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication by others.

All are grounds for disciplinary action, including course failure and dismissal from the University.

### Academic Writing

GSSW follows the citation and writing style described in *APA Publication Manual*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (ISBN 978-1-4338-0561-5) second printing for all written submissions.

### Class Attendance Policy

Attendance is a matter of professional behavior. Students are expected to attend *all meetings of a class*, including the scheduled hours for field instruction, for which they are registered. Instructors are expected to establish attendance requirements for their classes and may, at their discretion, use class attendance as one factor in assigning a grade for a class. Participation in official University activities, personal emergencies, and major religious observances (see below) are all considered valid reasons for absence. Students who miss more than 2 class sessions may not be allowed to pass that course. *It is the responsibility of the student to check with the instructor regarding any absence from class and to make arrangements regarding the work missed.* The responsibility for completing all work in the course rests with the student. Please review your course syllabus for attendance expectations specific to each course.

### Name and Pronoun Use in the Classroom

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. The instructor will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise your instructor of this preference early in the quarter so that she or he may make appropriate changes to language use in the classroom.

### Religious Accommodation Policy

Rationale:

The University of Denver community is enriched by individuals of many faiths that have various religious observances, practices and beliefs. In affirming this diversity, it is university policy and practice to provide religious accommodations for students and employees unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship.

Many of these religious observances are related to holy days, or days of observance. Faculty, staff, student organizations and other programming groups are strongly urged to be mindful of major holy days in their scheduling. A list of the most-frequently observed religious holidays can be found at: <http://portfolio.du.edu/religiouslife>. Please note that this list is meant to be inclusive, and that religious holidays have no official status at DU.

## Religious Accommodation Policy:

University policy grants students excused absences from class or other organized activities for observance of religious holy days, unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship. Faculty are asked to be responsive to requests when students contact them IN ADVANCE to request such an excused absence. Students are responsible for completing assignments given during their absence, but should be given an opportunity to make up work missed because of religious observance.

Once a student has registered for a class, the student is expected to examine the course syllabus for potential conflicts with holy days and to notify the instructor by the end of the first week of classes of any conflicts that may require an absence (including any required additional preparation/travel time). The student is also expected to remind the faculty member in advance of the missed class, and to make arrangements in advance (with the faculty member) to make up any missed work or in-class material within a reasonable amount of time.

Examples of reasonable accommodations for student absences might include: rescheduling of an exam or giving a make-up exam for the student in question; altering the time of a student's presentation; allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work or arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment due dates; releasing a graduate assistant from teaching or research responsibilities, etc. The student must be given the opportunity to do appropriate make-up work that is equivalent and intrinsically no more difficult than the original exam or assignment. Faculty should keep in mind that religion is a deeply personal and private matter and should make every attempt to respect the privacy of the student when making accommodations (for example, it is not appropriate to announce to the class that a student is doing a presentation or making up an exam at a later date because of their religious observance).

If a student and course instructor cannot agree on an accommodation, the student may bring the matter to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for a decision. Additional resources in resolving disagreements over accommodations include the University Chaplain, the Center for Multicultural Excellence, and the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. If there is still no agreement, the student may bring the matter to the school or college dean's office, where a final decision will be made. Students who believe they have been discriminated against on the basis of religion by the denial of a requested religious accommodation may contact the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity to learn about filing a discrimination complaint.

## Students with Disabilities

Students who have a disability protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and want to request accommodations must make an appointment with the Disability Services Program (DSP) [303-871-2278], located in the Morgridge College of Education (Ruffatto Hall, 1999 E. Evans Ave.) on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor. The *Handbook for Students with Disabilities* is available online at <http://www.du.edu/disability> and is also available from Lisa Ingarfield, Director of Career and Student Development for GSSW students. Lisa is located in Craig Hall Room 369, email [Lisa.Ingarfield@du.edu](mailto:Lisa.Ingarfield@du.edu), phone (303) 871-3841. The *Handbook* provides guidance on DU policy and procedures concerning students with disabilities.



After DSP has determined and notified a student of the accommodation(s) to be afforded, the student must immediately contact his or her instructors concerning how the accommodation(s) will be implemented, because accommodations cannot be offered retroactively.

### Technology Use in the Classroom

GSSW supports the use of technology for learning and advancing knowledge while at the same time respecting the classroom environment. In order to create and maintain an optimal learning environment, we ask that students use technology appropriately as directed by the instructor of the course. Work on laptops, cell phones, and other devices that is outside class assignments can disrupt fellow students and negatively hinder the shared learning of all participants.

GSSW courses may utilize audio and video recording, and you will be informed of the days and times when your voice and image may be recorded. By participating in recorded sessions, you consent to allow the University of Denver to reuse the recordings for educational purposes.

When using non-DU hosted services for school related work, DU cannot guarantee privacy and you are bound to the terms and agreements of any such service.

## **Programmatic Milestones**

The Graduate School of Social Work expects students in the Ph.D. Program to make consistent progress toward completion of their degree. As such programmatic milestones have been established and eligibility for certain types of financial support is tied to completion of programmatic milestones.

### Year One Programmatic Milestones

At the end of the first year of the Ph.D. Program, students are expected to have:

- a) successfully completed approximately one-half of the course credits required for completion of their degree;
- b) received an overall satisfactory rating on their Graduate Teaching or Research Assistantship (if awarded);
- c) developed and received approval for their Educational Plan;
- d) successfully passed the Research Methods and Statistics qualifying examination; and,
- e) selected a permanent academic advisor.

These milestones need to be completed in order to move into preliminary candidacy. If any of the milestones are not completed by the end of the first year of the Ph.D. program, a written plan (including timeline) for addressing the deficiency must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for approval. The remediation plan will be filed in the student's educational file. GSSW Teaching and Research Assistantships will not be awarded to students who have not completed their year one programmatic milestones by the end of the first academic year

### Year Two Programmatic Milestones

At the end of the second year of the Ph.D. Program, students are expected to have:

- a) successfully completed all required course credits required for completion of their degree (75 credits beyond the MSW or 90 hours beyond their non-MSW master's degree and no incompletes);
- b) received an overall satisfactory rating on their Graduate Teaching or Research Assistantships (if awarded);
- c) updated and finalized their Educational Plan; and,
- d) successfully completed and received approval on their comprehensive exam proposal by August 15th

If any of the milestones are not completed by the end of the second year of the Ph.D. program, a written plan (including timeline) for addressing the deficiency must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for approval. GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships will not be awarded to students who have not completed their year two programmatic milestones by the end of the second academic year (see section on GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships below).

### Year Three Programmatic Milestones

At the end of the third year of the Ph.D. Program, students are expected to have:

- a) successfully passed their comprehensive exam\*;
- b) been moved to final candidacy;
- c) received a satisfactory rating on their GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowship(s), Graduate Teaching Assistantship(s), or Graduate Research Assistantship(s) (if awarded); and,
- d) completed and received approval for their dissertation proposal.

GSSW Doctoral Fellowships will not be awarded to students who have not completed their year three programmatic milestones by the end of the third academic year (see section on GSSW Doctoral Fellowships below).

\*All students are expected to have successfully passed their comprehensive exam by the end of their fourth year in the program. Failure to have done so will result in termination from the program.

## **Financial Support Parameters & Eligibility**

### Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)

GTAs are generally made available to qualified first and second year students who are still in the process of completing their coursework. In special circumstances, GTAs may also be awarded to students beyond their first two years of the program when they are available. They typically include an annual living stipend (in exchange for 20 hours of work per week supervised by a GSSW faculty member), a waiver of health insurance fees (for students enrolled in at least 8 credit hours), and a full tuition waiver (for students in the first two years of the program). Parameters for GTA work and eligibility are under the jurisdiction of the Office of Graduate Studies and are outlined in the Graduate Policies & Procedures Manual of that office.

GTA work assignments and faculty supervisors are assigned based on:

- a) Faculty requests for particular students, including contractual obligations for new faculty and for grant-related commitments;
- b) Faculty requests for assistance with tasks that enhance the educational experience of doctoral students;
- c) Student requests for particular faculty supervisors;
- d) Substantive and/or methodological match; and/or,
- e) Student career goals.

The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education makes GTA faculty supervisor assignments on an annual basis prior to the beginning of the academic year. While every effort will be made to accommodate faculty and student requests, there is no guarantee and assumptions should not be made about assignments until officially notified by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. Should any problems arise in the GTA work assignments, the student and/or faculty supervisor should notify the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education promptly so the situation can be addressed.

GTA responsibilities may include teaching, research, or administrative responsibilities. However, as the primary purpose of the Ph.D. program is to produce highly qualified emerging scholars for the social work field, responsibilities should primarily be focused on research-related activities. In general, no more than 10-15% (2-3 hours per week) of the students' time should be focused on teaching and administrative responsibilities. Faculty request for teaching support should primarily rely on the teaching practicum required of all second year doctoral students.

#### GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships

GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships are generally made available to qualified third year students who have met their second year milestones (see section on Year Two Programmatic Milestones above). Students who have not completed all of their Year Two Programmatic Milestones by the end of their second academic year are not eligible for GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowship funding. Attainment of Year Two Programmatic Milestones after the second academic year has ended does not meet the requirement for eligibility and, as such, funding for only part of the third year experience is not permitted. GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships are funded by the Graduate School of Social Work and are funded through temporary hourly employment (at 20 hours per week) and, as such, fall under the jurisdiction of Human Resources.

The availability and number of GSSW Pre-Doctoral Fellowships are contingent upon funding and may vary year to year, although every effort will be made to fund the Fellowships at the same funding level as GTA living stipends, and to provide (6) Fellowships each year.

For AY 2015-2016, GSSW will offer:

<b>Type of Fellowship</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Funding Level</b>
GSSW Dean's Pre-Doctoral Fellowships	(3)	GTA Stipend Level
Susan S. Manning Pre-Doctoral Fellowship	(1)	GTA Stipend Level
Walter F. LaMendola Pre-Doctoral Fellowship	(1)	GTA Stipend Level
James R. Moran, Pre-Doctoral Fellowship	(1)	GTA Stipend Level

Because Pre-Doctoral Fellowships are considered temporary employment, students will only receive funding for the hours that they actually work and for which their supervisor signs off. Hours must be turned in on biweekly timesheets, which will be provided to the students electronically. Failure to turn in a signed timesheet by the due date will result in delayed payment.

No student is required to accept a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship for third year funding and may pursue other financial arrangements if they are more congruent with the student's needs and career goals. Students who decline Pre-Doctoral Fellowship funding may teach as adjunct instructors in the GSSW program, up to three courses per year at regular adjunct pay ONLY if they have attained the Year Two Programmatic Milestones. Third year students who have not attained the Year Two Programmatic Milestones are not eligible to teach for GSSW until such time as those goals have been achieved.

At the beginning of each quarter, Pre-Doctoral Fellows will, in conjunction with their faculty supervisor, outline "measurable products" they will produce during that quarter on the Quarterly Work Plan which must be completed and turned in to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator no later than the third week of the quarter. The Quarterly Work Plan will be used to evaluate the success of the student's work on a quarterly basis by the faculty supervisor.

Responsibilities of Pre-Doctoral Fellows may include (a) teaching, (b) research-based activities, and/or (c) administrative duties.

### *Teaching*

As part of the work responsibilities, students may teach up to three GSSW courses per academic year (excluding summer). These responsibilities are negotiated with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the student's Pre-Doctoral Fellowship supervisor, who determines if the student is qualified to teach for the program, the number of courses the student can teach, and what courses are available to teach. Students will likely end up teaching courses in the foundation year, rather than a concentration year course, dependent upon course availability. Not all Pre-Doctoral Fellows will be deemed eligible to teach, and not all will elect to teach as part of their third year work assignment.

Typically students will only teach one course per quarter, and each course taught will count for 10 hours per week of work for Pre-Doctoral Fellowship funding. (Teaching is not paid at the adjunct rate above and beyond the third-year funding.) The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is the official supervisor for teaching responsibilities and will require meeting once per quarter to review teacher/course evaluations, and may require additional meetings to support the student's development as a teacher (e.g., new teacher orientation, pedagogy discussions, etc.). Teaching evaluations should be at a level deemed acceptable by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for continued teaching in the program as part of Fellowship funding responsibilities.

Students may also be engaged as teaching assistants for certain courses offered at GSSW if such opportunities exist as part of their teaching responsibilities. Unlike adjunct teaching, hours for

teaching assistants are, however, under the supervision of the lead faculty for the course and students receive work credit for the actual number of hours undertaken in those duties.

### *Research and Administrative Work*

During quarters when students are teaching a course, they are expected to work 10 additional hours on research and administrative tasks, with the primary focus being on research-based activities. During quarters during which students are not teaching a course, they are expected to work 20 hours per week on research and administrative tasks. The work should focus on the attainment of the goals listed on the quarterly work plan. Attainment of work plan goals should be at a level deemed acceptable by the faculty supervisor and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education for continued receipt of Pre-Doctoral Fellowship funding.

### *Work in Addition to Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Funding*

Students may seek employment, including grant- or center-funded employment at GSSW or elsewhere on the DU campus, in addition to third year Pre-Doctoral Fellowship funding. *However, we strongly discourage such activity as it may impede the student's completion of their program* or the student's ability to attain the Year Three Programmatic Milestones which must be attained in order to be eligible for (a) fourth year funding via the GSSW Doctoral Fellowships mechanism and/or (b) adjunct teaching for GSSW.

### GSSW Doctoral Fellowships

GSSW Doctoral Fellowships are generally made available to qualified fourth year students who have met their third year milestones (see section on Year Three Programmatic Milestones above). Students who have not completed all of their Year Three Programmatic Milestones by the end of their third academic year are not eligible for GSSW Doctoral Fellowship funding. GSSW Doctoral Fellowships are funded by the Graduate School of Social Work and are funded through temporary hourly employment (at 20 hours per week) and, as such, fall under the jurisdiction of Human Resources.

The availability and number of GSSW Doctoral Fellowships are contingent upon funding and may vary year to year, although every effort will be made to fund the Fellowships at the same funding level as GTA living stipends.

For AY 2015-2016, GSSW will offer:

Type of Fellowship	#	Funding Level
Enid Cox Doctoral Fellowships	(2)	GTA Stipend Level

### *Enid Cox Doctoral Fellowship Priorities*

Based on the substantive areas of interest of Dr. Enid Cox, for whom the fellowships are named, priorities for receipt of Enid Cox Doctoral Fellowships are:

- a) students from outside the U.S.;

- b) students who have a research focus on international social work or social work that is not U.S.-based, and/or;
- c) students who have a research focus on gerontology.

If there are no eligible students who meet these priorities (or students who meet the priorities are not demonstrating strong performance in the completion of the program), however, other students may be considered. Consideration for Enid Cox Doctoral Fellowships are made based on a combination of the fellowship priorities and the performance of the eligible doctoral students.

### *Logistics of Doctoral Fellowship Funding*

Because Doctoral Fellowships are considered temporary employment, students will only receive funding for the hours that they actually work and for which their supervisor signs off. Hours must be turned in on biweekly timesheets which will be provided to the students electronically. Failure to turn in a signed timesheet by the due date will result in delayed payment.

No student is required to accept a Doctoral Fellowship for fourth year funding and may pursue other financial arrangements if they are more congruent with the student's needs and career goals. Students who decline Doctoral Fellowship funding may teach as adjunct instructors in the GSSW program, up to five courses per year at regular adjunct pay ONLY if they have attained the Year Three Programmatic Milestones. Fourth year students who have not attained the Year Three Programmatic Milestones are not eligible to teach for GSSW until such time as those goals have been achieved.

Because the intent of the Doctoral Fellows funding is to support outstanding graduate students in the completion of their dissertations, 10 of the required 20 hours per week are automatically allocated to completion of the doctoral dissertation. This work falls under the supervision of the student's dissertation director. The remaining 10 hours may additionally be under the supervision of the student's dissertation director or may be supervised by another faculty member, but should focus on either (a) the production and dissemination of non-dissertation research or (b) the conversion of dissertation chapters into manuscripts for submission to publication outlets.

At the beginning of each quarter, Doctoral Fellows will outline "measurable products" they will produce during that quarter on the Quarterly Work Plan which must be completed and turned in to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator no later than the third week of the quarter for both the dissertation-related work as well as for the remaining 10 hours. The Quarterly Work Plan will be used to evaluate the success of the student's work on a quarterly basis by the faculty supervisor(s).

### *Work in Addition to Doctoral Fellowship Funding*

Students may seek employment, including grant or center-funded employment at GSSW or elsewhere on the DU campus, in addition to fourth year Doctoral Fellowship funding. *However, we strongly discourage such activity as it may impede the student's completion of their program or the student's ability to complete their doctoral work in a timely fashion.* Fourth year students receiving Doctoral Fellowship funding may teach up to three courses as an adjunct instructor, in addition to receiving Doctoral Fellowship funding. That is, any adjunct teaching for Doctoral Fellows is above and beyond the funding provided by the Doctoral Fellows funding mechanism and is therefore paid at the normal adjunct rate.

### *Eligibility for Adjunct Teaching Positions*

Since the fourth year Doctoral Fellowship funding mechanism does not cover all fourth year students, many students elect to teach as an adjunct instructor at GSSW while completing their doctoral program. From the fourth year and beyond, doctoral students may teach up to (5) courses per year depending on their teaching skill level (as assessed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs), and courses available in the MSW program to be taught. No student is required to teach as an adjunct instructor and there is no guarantee that students will be hired to teach as an adjunct, even if they desire to do so. That decision is the sole purview of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

For students who do not receive fourth year Doctoral Fellowships, up to five courses may be taught in the academic year and those courses are paid at the normal adjunct rate. To be eligible to teach as an adjunct in the MSW program, all doctoral students who are in their fourth year or beyond must have attained their Year Three Programmatic Milestones (see section above on Year Three Programmatic Milestones). Fourth (and beyond) year students who have not attained the Year Three Programmatic Milestones are not eligible to teach for GSSW until such time as those goals have been achieved.

### External Doctoral Fellowships

GSSW doctoral students are encouraged to apply for external fellowships to support their doctoral dissertation and other research work. Application for and receipt of external fellowships and grants are typically viewed quite positively when the student enters the job market. Listed below are some potential mechanisms for obtaining additional support for dissertation and other research work. Anytime external funding is being sought, the student should contact the GSSW Associate Dean for Research and follow the procedures for submission of proposals outlined by them. Students planning on seeking external funding (particularly for dissertation work) should thoroughly review the timelines required by external funding sources as many deadlines will necessitate completion of programmatic milestones (particularly the approval of the dissertation proposal) in a manner that is faster than the timeline for completion of the doctorate in four years.

While there are many potential sources for external funding, some sources are listed in Appendix B.

## **Enrollment after Course Completion**

University of Denver Office of Graduate Studies policies require that all graduate degree-seeking students must be in active status and continuously enrolled Fall through Spring terms. Enrollment may consist of registration for courses or Continuous Enrollment. A graduate student who is not in active status and not continuously enrolled must apply for readmission.

Continuous Enrollment is the mechanism utilized during the time when courses have been completed, and the student is working on their comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal or dissertation. Continuous Enrollment credits are not transcribed and do not count toward the Ph.D. course credit degree requirements. It is a placeholder mechanism to ensure that the student

maintains active status at the University while completing their comprehensive exam and their dissertation

### Continuous Enrollment

Continuous Enrollment (CE) is for students who have completed all their coursework. CE is only allowed when a student is pursuing academic work/research necessary to complete a degree and is designed primarily for students who are working on a dissertation, comprehensive exam, thesis, or required internship. CE allows students to maintain active status with the University and to use university resources; including library, e-mail, lab access, student health insurance and reduced rates at the Coors Fitness Center. It is not to be used for enrollment purposes while making up an Incomplete. An exception is if all other course work is completed and the student is working on the thesis or dissertation while completing the work required for the incomplete.

### Continuous Enrollment Registration

CE requires annual approval by the student's faculty advisor and the Office of Graduate Studies. CE Approval Forms are located on-line at <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/CE.pdf>. Students should print the form, obtain their advisor's signature and submit it to the Office of Graduate Studies. Permission to enroll for CE is granted on a quarter-by-quarter basis. Students requesting CE registration must complete and submit the required form prior to the beginning of the subsequent quarter (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer) in order to be enrolled. Students are responsible to register themselves online for CE each quarter. Registration for CE must follow the Registrar's deadlines. To avoid late registration charges, students must register for CE prior to the first day of classes. CE hours will not appear on student transcripts. Students must register and pay for CE on a term-by-term basis.

## **Teaching Trajectory**

While ever student brings unique experiences and skills to the experience of teaching in higher education, most students will typically adhere to the following teaching trajectory:

Year 1: Acting as a teaching assistant through GTA mechanism (2-3 hours per week maximum)

Year 2: One or two teaching practica with GSSW faculty

Year 3: Independent teaching of own class through pre-doctoral fellowship mechanism or adjunct teaching mechanism (if not receiving a pre-doctoral fellowship).

Building student's teaching skill set should be tailored to the individual student. Deviation from this trajectory should only occur when it is in the student's best educational interest and after discussion with the student, advisor, and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

## **Research Methods and Statistics Qualifying Exam Requirement**

To ensure that students have the necessary foundation in research methodology and statistical analysis to support their successful completion of their doctoral program and to meet skill set



expectations of new faculty members, the Ph.D. program requires successful completion of a Research Methods and Statistics Qualifying Exam at the end of the first year of study.

Typically the exam will be scheduled approximately one to two weeks after the end of the spring quarter of the first year. The exam is taken by all students on the same date as established by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education. The exam covers content from required research methods and statistics courses taken during the first year of study in the doctoral program. The exam is taken using an identifier code rather than the student name so that faculty grading the exam is unable to discern which student's tests are being graded. Each exam consists of three sections: Methods Part 1 (general research methods), Methods Part 2 (intervention research methods) and Statistics. Each section is graded by at least two members of the Ph.D. Program Committee as either Pass or Fail. Should a student fail any section of the research methods and statistics qualifying exam, they may elect to take the failed section(s) of the exam one more time during the month preceding the fall quarter of the second year. Should the student fail the section(s) of the exam a second time, they will be terminated from the program. The exam may include multiple-choice, brief answer, essay or other types of questions common in graduate examinations.

### **Comprehensive Examination Requirement**

The Graduate Council of the University of Denver determines general policies governing the conduct of graduate study. Among the requirements established by the Graduate Council is the successful completion of a comprehensive examination, a written and oral exam designed to evaluate the student's work at the University of Denver. University regulations provide that the comprehensive examination is a separate and independent requirement at the doctoral level. The purpose of the examination is to provide a means by which the student demonstrates capacities for independent and systematic scholarship in keeping with the educational objectives of the doctoral program of the Graduate School of Social Work. The examination serves also as a basis for determining the student's readiness for pursuit of the doctoral dissertation. While the objectives of the examination differ from those of the dissertation, it is recognized that in some situations interconnectedness may result in sharpening the student's understanding of issues bearing upon the dissertation research problem.

The comprehensive examination in the Ph.D. Program in the Graduate School of Social Work consists of a written paper that focuses on a selected problem of importance for social work. An oral examination is also required. During the oral exam, the student's written paper will be reviewed by a three person faculty committee (the advisor and two readers). The student will submit a comprehensive examination proposal by August 15th of the second year of study and complete the examination process by the end of Fall Quarter of the third year of study. All students are expected to have successfully passed their comprehensive exam by the end of their fourth year in the program. Failure to have done so will result in termination from the program.

#### **The Written Comprehensive Examination**

The purpose of the written comprehensive paper is for the student to demonstrate integration of social work knowledge and the capacity for independent and systematic scholarship consistent with the standards and expectations of Ph.D. education. In the paper, the student will identify an issue or problem of importance for social work and discuss significant historical, theoretical, policy, and

research issues associated with the problem. This discussion and analysis should demonstrate readiness to begin work on the Ph.D. dissertation.

The student selects the comprehensive paper topic in consultation with their advisor and two faculty readers. The student prepares the comprehensive examination proposal with the advice and consultation of their advisor, the faculty readers, and any other interested parties. All proposals need to meet scholarly standards, such as APA format, scholarly language, and good grammar. After the proposal is formally submitted to the Ph.D. Program Office, the advisor and readers review it and note if it is approved, approved with qualifications, or not approved. Their critiques are submitted to the Ph.D. Program Office for distribution and will be distributed together after they are all received. The reviews will be given to the student with copies to the advisor. The student and the advisor should meet to discuss the reviews. The advisor then convenes a meeting of the readers and the student--an oral review--to establish common understanding of the feedback and to develop clear expectations for the comprehensive paper. At the oral review of the proposal, the critiques are discussed and readers can formally require “qualifications” to be responded to in the examination paper based on their critiques.

Students are not expected to write the proposal or parts of it again for continued review unless it does not propose to meet one or another of the four required areas:

- A. Statement of the substantive/problem area
- B. Analysis of theoretical frameworks for examining the problem area
- C. Review of key policy approaches in the problem area
- D. Critical review of relevant research

The comprehensive examination proposal is a proposal for an examination. It is not the examination and it is not a dissertation proposal. The purpose of the readers in this phase is to ensure that the topic can be the subject of an examination (for example, that it is a significant problem of concern to social work). The readers guide the student in terms of the specifics of what the readers expect to be covered in an examination paper on this topic (being mindful of the four required areas). The fifth required area (Conclusions & Implications) is not prescribed in the proposal, but emerges in the examination paper based on the investigation. The examination is intended to provide the student the opportunity to demonstrate integration of social work knowledge and the capacity for independent and systematic scholarship consistent with the standards and expectations of Ph.D. education. The oral review attached to the proposal phase is intended to ensure that the student knows clearly what the readers want included in the examination paper. It is not a defense.

The student’s advisor and two readers assigned by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education constitute the Comprehensive Examination Committee. Students may indicate preferences for Comprehensive Examination Committee members among GSSW faculty, however, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education is not bound to those preferences.

The topic must be of significance to social work or social welfare, and be sufficiently established to allow the student the opportunity to examine and critically review a body of scholarly literature and

research. The paper includes five sections. In the first section, the student defines and articulates an issue or problem of importance. Subsequent sections examine theory, policy, and research relevant to the identified problem. A recommended outline follows:

A. Statement of the substantive/problem area

The student will define and demonstrate a familiarity with a substantive topic. Discussion should demonstrate an understanding of the prevalence, nature, historical antecedents, and recent trends associated with the problem area or topic. Biases, prejudices, and omissions, especially those relevant to vulnerable populations, should be explicated.

B. Analysis of theoretical frameworks for examining the problem area

Two or more social theories that provide a context for understanding the onset and/or persistence of the identified social problem should be identified and critically reviewed. Discussion in this section should include an assessment of the utility of the selected theories for informing social interventions aimed at the problem.

C. Review of key policy approaches in the problem area

The student will identify the range of key policy approaches aimed at the preventing or ameliorating the problem area. One major policy approach should be selected and described in detail. Effects and limitations of this policy should be identified and discussed. Suggestions for policy reform should be noted.

D. Critical review of relevant research

In this section, the student discusses and critically analyzes relevant empirical evidence and research related to the problem area. This review should include a discussion of the dominant methodological approaches used to examine the problem. Important gaps in the knowledge base should then be identified. The section should conclude with the identification of two or more research questions that the student views as necessary to advance knowledge pertinent to the problem area.

E. Conclusions and implications

A brief section that summarizes the problem area and identifies next research steps should be included.

### The Oral Comprehensive Examination

The purpose of the oral examination is to provide the student an opportunity to respond to the critiques and any other questions that the readers may raise in relation to the comprehensive paper and its discussion. The examination lasts approximately ninety minutes. A decision on the student's performance is determined by majority vote of the Comprehensive Examination Committee.

### Evaluation Criteria for the Comprehensive Paper

The length of the paper should not exceed **60 double-spaced pages**, excluding references. Papers exceeding this page limit will not be accepted and will be returned to the student for editing. Recognizing that space limitation creates the need for selectivity, the student must present a

rationale for selection and exclusion of pertinent content. There is an expectation that the student will rely predominately on primary sources from the literature.

The selected topic should be pertinent to social welfare and/or the social work profession and should build on the content of the core and outside courses the student has completed. In addition, the paper should address the relevance of the topic to vulnerable populations. Critical analysis must be demonstrated throughout the paper. Critical analysis requires the student to evaluate the material presented and to provide a well-reasoned explanation for their conclusions.

The Comprehensive Examination Paper (See Appendix A) grading rubric should be used by the student in assisting them to prepare their examination paper and by the faculty for evaluating the quality of the comprehensive paper.

### Procedures

1. The student should prepare a double-spaced comprehensive examination proposal, no longer than 12 pages, that presents an argument for a substantive area of interest that is of central importance to social work. The proposal should “build a case” for the inclusion or exclusion of specific material in each section. For example, given the page limitation of the paper, it may not be possible to address all of the theories or policies that may be relevant to a particular topic. In such a case, the proposal needs to address which theories and policies will be covered in the paper and provide a rationale for the choices.
2. The student must email a digital copy of the proposal to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator. The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will then select two faculty readers and the Ph.D. Program Coordinator will distribute the proposal to the readers by email. Readers are drawn from all GSSW faculty members and are assigned on a rotating basis, taking into account the substantive interests and workload of each faculty member. A copy of the proposal will also be distributed to the student's advisor and placed in the student's electronic file.
3. The advisor and faculty readers must complete their reviews and email them to the Ph.D. Coordinator within two weeks of the proposal's submission. The advisor and readers can approve, disapprove, or approve with qualifications specifying what those qualifications are in writing. The student cannot proceed with writing the paper until all readers approve the proposal.

The reviews will be given to the student with copies to the advisor after all critiques are received. The student and the advisor should meet to discuss the reviews. The advisor then convenes a meeting, called the oral review, of the readers and the student to establish common understanding of the feedback and to develop clear expectations for the comprehensive paper. The meeting should take place within two weeks of receiving the critiques. Any qualifications should be forwarded to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator within two weeks of the oral review.

4. Upon completion of the comprehensive examination paper, the student emails a copy to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator for distribution to all committee members. Within two weeks,

the readers and advisor are to independently prepare their respective critiques of the paper and submit them by email to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator for forwarding to the student and to members of the examining committee. The advisor, with the student, arranges for the oral examination to take place, normally within two weeks of receiving the critiques.

The options for the vote on the student's written and oral presentation performance are pass or fail. The advisor should have the "Comprehensive Examination or Paper Orals Form" signed and forwarded to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator within two days following date of oral examination.

5. In the event of failure, the student will be allowed to choose another topic and proceed through the examination (paper and oral) a second time. A student is allowed only two opportunities to complete the comprehensive examination process before being terminated from the Ph.D. Program.

### Role of the Faculty in the Comprehensive Exam Process

Faculty readers function as reviewers and will read the comprehensive examination paper only at the time of final submission. Therefore, once the examination proposal is approved the role of the readers is evaluative, not consultative. The student's advisor also plays an active consulting role during preparation for the comprehensive paper proposal. However, after a paper proposal is accepted, the advisor's role is largely administrative. As chairperson and member of the comprehensive oral examination committee, the advisor's responsibility is to advise the student and to ensure a fair hearing for the student, consistent with the criteria established in this document. A student's advisor and other faculty may offer general consultation at any point during the comprehensive examination process. However, no faculty member will read all or a portion of a comprehensive paper prior to the time it is forwarded to the assigned readers for reading.

As the comprehensive examination is, by definition, an examination, students should ensure that the paper is solely their own work. Colleagues, editors, or other students should not read all or a portion of a comprehensive paper prior to the time the oral examination has been completed and submitted.

## **Dissertation Requirements**

### Introduction

Completion of a dissertation is a major requirement of the program leading to the Doctor of Philosophy degree. The Graduate School of Social Work requires the completion of a satisfactory dissertation in the field of social work.

The dissertation requirement is designed to afford students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to (1) do competent research in social work, (2) organize materials logically, write clearly, and make sound interpretations and conclusions from the facts presented, and (3) make a contribution to the field.

The dissertation supervision process at the Graduate School of Social Work at DU is a committee-directed undertaking. While each candidate and committee will work out the methods and

procedures somewhat differently, the basic principles require all committee members to be involved in decisions and checkpoints in a very active manner. The dissertation committee should work collaboratively throughout the dissertation process. Further, in the interest of assuring that policies are applied to all students in the same way and that workload is distributed equitably between faculty members, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education serves a quality checkpoint/monitoring role by reviewing and signing off on decisions at various points in the process.

### Selecting a Dissertation Committee

Students should consult with their advisor and the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education as they begin to consider selecting a dissertation committee. The choice of members for the committee should be guided by the candidate's need for consultation on substantive matters, research methods, and statistical analytic approaches. It is common for a student to form a committee by choosing one person with whom they have an established working relationship, one person who has special substantive knowledge related to the research topic, and one person who has special research methods or statistical knowledge congruent with the proposed dissertation research. Clearly a particular faculty member can fulfill more than one of these roles. Any faculty member who is asked to serve as the dissertation director or be a member of a dissertation committee is free to accept or decline the student's request.

The doctoral candidate's dissertation oral defense committee is recommended by the school or department and approved by the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. The *Thesis/Dissertation Oral Defense Committee Recommendation* form should be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies as soon as the dissertation proposal has been approved or defended but no later than the first day of the quarter in which the student expects to complete his/her degree.

### Composition

The committee is composed of a minimum of four and a maximum of seven members. Minimally three are voting members, including the dissertation director. The chair of the oral defense committee is a non-voting member and must be from a department, school, or college other than that of the candidate. All voting members of the committee must be full-time appointed faculty at DU and have research records appropriate to the student's area of specialization. Faculty from appropriately related programs who hold the terminal degree in their field may serve on the committee as long as the candidate's graduate program has the majority representation and a two-thirds majority of the members, excluding the director, hold the earned doctorate. When a doctoral degree is interdisciplinary, faculty representation from all disciplines must be reflected on the committee.

### Oral Defense Committee Chair

The committee member from outside the student's graduate department represents the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies and serves as chair of the oral defense committee. The oral defense committee chair must be a tenured member of the DU faculty and must hold an earned doctorate from an accredited institution. It is the responsibility of the student to find an appropriate oral defense committee chair to serve who meets these requirements.

### Dissertation Director

The dissertation director must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the candidate's graduate program. It is the dissertation director's responsibility to ensure that the student's research meets appropriate academic standards for the discipline in which the degree is being conferred.

### Special Members

In rare occasions, students may request to add an adjunct faculty member, post-doctoral appointee, a professor from another institution, or another qualified person—including someone without a doctorate but with other appropriate qualifications—as a special committee member. A special member may not be considered a substitute for one who meets the University requirements; rather, the special member should be considered as an addition to the core committee. Students also may request that a non-tenure track, full-time appointed DU faculty member serve as committee chair. These requests must be supported by a strong rationale, have the support of the student's program and be approved by the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies. The request must include: a statement of rationale, the proposed special member's CV and *Thesis/Dissertation Oral Defense Committee Recommendation* form.

The student chooses members for the dissertation committee and completes the committee form with the required signatures. The form is then given to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator to forward to the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education who reviews the committee for review of expertise contribution and final approval. The form is placed in the student's file. The dissertation director becomes the student's formal advisor. No changes in committee membership may occur unless a written request signed by both the student and committee member and is approved by the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education.

In consultation with committee members the student prepares the dissertation proposal following the format presented in this section. In selecting a topic, the student should keep in mind that:

1. The subject should have significance for social work theory, knowledge, practice, or for social work research methodology; or for new syntheses or analyses of existing social work knowledge.
2. The problem may relate to the past or the present; may make use of library material or material obtained in the field and such material may be from primary or secondary sources.
3. The study should be feasible in terms of the time requirements of the program and available resources.

### Structure of the Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation is an original scholarly work in which a student demonstrates her/his ability to conduct research pertaining to an important problem in social work or social welfare. The dissertation study should be conducted with the highest possible standards of rigor and scholarship. Students submit a written dissertation proposal following the successful completion of the comprehensive examination. The dissertation proposal is developed in consultation with a student's dissertation committee and is a required step before beginning dissertation research. The proposal is 25-40 pages in length and should provide sufficient detail about the proposed study's purpose, aims,

and methodology. Issues of appropriateness and feasibility should also be addressed in the proposal. Dissertation proposals should be written with strict adherence to APA style. Proposals should follow the structural guidelines outlined below:

## **I. Cover Page**

The cover page should include the title of the dissertation, the student's name, and the names and signatures of all dissertation committee members.

## **II. Statement of the Research Problem and Major Questions**

This part of the proposal describes a research problem that is clearly relevant to social work. The research problem must be described in sufficient detail to ensure that any faculty member reading the proposal can become acquainted with the problem and its relevance to the field. After the introduction of the problem, a brief review of the state of theory and knowledge about the problem is provided, along with citations from the most pertinent literature. This section concludes with a small set of research questions and research aims that are clearly linked to the problem and the state of theory and knowledge in the field about the problem.

## **III. Methodology**

This section explains how a student plans to produce original knowledge that is clearly responsive to the research questions posed. Although a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods may be appropriate, this section must provide a detailed and unambiguous description of the exact research methods to be used. The methods chosen must be of sufficient scope and rigor to clearly show strong potential for an important advancement in the state of knowledge relevant to the research questions. Whether primarily qualitative or quantitative methods are used, key concepts are to be clearly articulated and defined in operational terms. Sampling methods, measures, data collection, and data analysis techniques must be described in sufficient detail to allow assessment of their appropriateness, both to the questions and the overall approach. Sources of risk to subjects and the methods that will be used to ensure the participants are protected from harm and abrogation of basic rights should be identified.

## **IV. Timeline and Resources**

This section provides a timeline for the completion of major phases of the dissertation (e.g., human subjects' approval, data collection, data management, analysis, etc.) and the resource requirements of each phase. The timeline provides a series of benchmarks for both the candidate and her/his committee to assess the progress of the research. The timeline and resources required will vary by the type of dissertation research; however, students should be both thorough and realistic. In particular, some margin should be built in for the unanticipated difficulties that are common to this level of research. The resource requirements that should be identified at each stage of the dissertation include such items as the cooperation of outside agencies, research assistants, software and computer access beyond that routinely provided, consultation, and internal/external funding sought or received.



## V. References

An APA style reference section should be included in the proposal.

### Evaluating the Dissertation Proposal

Each student submits an electronic copy of the completed dissertation proposal to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator prior to the sixth week of the academic quarter. The Ph.D. Program Coordinator will forward the proposal to her/his dissertation committee, the group responsible for evaluating the proposal. The dissertation committee members will provide written feedback within two weeks of receiving the proposal by submitting the feedback to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator. The proposal feedback will be distributed to the student and committee members once all feedback has been received. An oral review of the proposal with all committee members present is held approximately two weeks following the distribution of the feedback. The oral dissertation proposal review is intended to address any shortcomings in the proposal. An approved proposal serves as a benchmark for evaluating the adequacy of a student's completed dissertation.

In assessing a student's proposal, the dissertation committee will consider the:

- relevance of the research for social work;
- clarity of the study's purpose, research questions, and specific aims;
- rigor of the proposed study;
- originality of the research; and,
- feasibility of the overall proposal.

The dissertation director and the student schedule a meeting of the dissertation committee to take place within two weeks of proposal submission to discuss the document, seek clarification, and assess the viability of the proposal as the basis of a dissertation. Approval of the proposal requires a unanimous decision by members of the committee. A student is given up to three hearings in order to obtain approval of the dissertation proposal. If the dissertation proposal has not been approved after three hearings, the student may dissolve or reconstitute her or his committee and begin the process again. This stage may be repeated as frequently as necessary or until the seven-year time line has been exhausted.

When the dissertation committee is satisfied with the formulation of the problem and the study design, the Dissertation Proposal Form, which provides for written approval of a student's dissertation proposal by all committee members, will be completed and put in the student's file. An electronic copy will be forwarded to the student. The student is responsible for submitting the "Thesis/Dissertation Oral Defense Committee Recommendation Form" to the Office of Graduate Studies (please carbon copy the Ph.D. Program Coordinator). The form can be found here: <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/committee.pdf>.

### Conducting Research and Writing the Dissertation

The dissertation director takes the lead role in coordinating work with the student in completing the dissertation. However, all committee members are to be involved in decisions and checkpoints in a very active manner. For example, committee members shall be involved in the review and approval of the final design statement, data collection instruments, sampling plan, the final draft of the study, and other similar issues.

For all research involving the use of human subjects, students are required to complete the *Application to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects*. A copy is available on the University of Denver website (<http://www.du.edu/orsp/policies-procedures/forms.html>). The approved application is to be completed and filed with the dissertation proposal prior to beginning any work with human subjects. Please note that proposals to conduct dissertation research with human subjects should be submitted to the Institutional Review Board after the dissertation proposal is formally approved.

The form and other procedures to be followed in writing the dissertation should be in accordance with the instructions contained in the most current copy of the APA style handbook. Format, footnotes, etc., must be internally consistent. Specific instructions for final formatting and arrangement of the content of the dissertation are contained in the document. Dissertation Instructions are available on the Graduate Studies website <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/formatting.pdf>.

### Oral Examination Committee

After a final review of a complete dissertation draft by all members of the dissertation committee, the dissertation director in consultation with the student shall proceed to arrange for the dissertation defense by selecting the examining committee.

The examining committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3)-voting members plus an outside chairperson who does not vote. Members of the dissertation committee are required to be members of the examining committee.

The chairperson of the oral examination is chosen from outside the Graduate School of Social Work in consultation with the student and officially invited by the dissertation director. This person must hold a doctorate and must be a tenured faculty member of the University of Denver. The examination chairperson does not vote on the dissertation oral exam.

### Dissertation Defense

The student is responsible for scheduling the oral examination, which must be conducted prior to the beginning of the third week before the quarter closes. Specific deadlines can be found on the Graduate Studies webpage: <http://www.du.edu/currentstudents/graduates/graduationinformation.html>. The dissertation should be in the hands of the examining committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination. The dissertation director will confirm in writing to each member of the examining committee the date, time, and place of the examination. The examination is open to individuals not on the examining committee; and will be announced to the GSSW community. The examining committee chairperson will clarify the role of such individuals if such individuals are in attendance at the examination. Everyone other than the committee must leave during deliberations and are not permitted to vote or voice their opinion on the quality of the dissertation.

The chairperson of the oral examination represents the Graduate School of Social Work and Office of Graduate Studies, which has established the policy of having a tenured full-time faculty member from another department or school serve as chairperson of the examination committee. The chairperson has the responsibility for making certain that the examination is conducted in a

professional manner and that the student has a fair opportunity to defend her/his dissertation. The chairperson is expected to provide opportunities for each voting member of the examination committee to participate in the examination and to see that the examination is of high quality while staying within proper limits of inquiry. The chairperson is expected to have read the dissertation prior to the examination and to participate in the examination as her/his academic expertise permits, but the chairperson does not vote on the recommendation of the committee.

## **Preparing for Graduation**

Students must apply to graduate in accordance with the University of Denver Graduate Studies Office deadlines available at <http://www.du.edu/currentstudents/graduates/graduationinformation.html>. The application for graduation instructions are found at <http://www.du.edu/registrar/graduation/index.html>. Students are responsible for submitting the “Oral Defense Schedule” to the Office of Graduate Studies at least four weeks prior to the date of oral defense. This form is also available at <http://www.du.edu/currentstudents/graduates/graduationinformation.html>.

After final approval of the dissertation, students must officially submit their dissertation to an online submission site, ETD Administrator. Instructions are found here: <http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/ETD.pdf>. Additional information about graduation instructions, deadlines, and required forms are available at the Office of Graduate Studies website <http://www.du.edu/currentstudents/graduates/graduationinformation.html>. This website also has forms for students to order bound copies of their dissertation (optional) and a request to participate in commencement.

Only students who have successfully defended their dissertation may participate in the GSSW graduation ceremony. Students who plan to defend their dissertation and graduate in summer are eligible to participate in the GSSW ceremony the following spring.

## **Beyond Graduation**

To provide an opportunity for marketing graduating doctoral students, the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education will oversee the production of the annual CV Booklet which will be distributed electronically to deans of schools of social work, Ph.D., MSW, and BSW program directors, and others who are likely engaged in hiring decisions. Guidelines for inclusion of photo and CV in the booklet include:

- Student is planning on being on the national, academic job market;
- Student has not been included in the CV booklet more than one other time;
- Student complies with deadlines for obtaining photograph and CV;
- Student prepares CV in the format provided.

## **Compliance with the Ph.D. Program Handbook and Guidelines**

The Associate Dean for Doctoral Education, Ph.D. Program Coordinator, and faculty advisors are available to clarify the policies and procedures contained herein and to provide related guidance.

Please note however, that students are wholly responsible for knowing requirements and adhering to designated deadlines and time limits.

### Policies Subject to Change

The Student Handbook will be revised from time to time. Students will be informed of these changes through written and web updates. It is the responsibility of the student to be aware that policies are subject to change.

## Appendix A

### Rubric Definitions – Comprehensive Exam Paper, PhD Program, GSSW, 2014/15

Please enter a score from 1 to 5 using the guidelines for Emerging, Developing, and Mastering levels as anchor points:

#### *Required Elements*

	<i>Emerging (1)</i>	<i>Developing (3)</i>	<i>Mastering (5)</i>	<i>SCORE</i>
RE1.1 Statement of substantive/problem area (requires prevalence and nature of the problems; its history & recent trends; analyzes biases & omissions, particularly around vulnerable populations)	Begins to define the problem, may present one needed element. Many areas missing or poorly covered. Discussion of vulnerable populations is superficial	Covers most of the required elements but not in enough depth – more like completing an annotated list than an analysis. Begins to analyze biases and omissions, particularly for vulnerable populations, citing convincing evidence	Analyzes the required elements in depth, shows ability to synthesize rather than annotate. Covers biases and omissions, particularly for vulnerable populations, in depth. If gaps are identified, goes beyond documentation of the evidence for that, and demonstrates original thought about the social justice implications	
RE1.2 Analysis of theoretical frameworks for examining problem	Uses only one theory, or the coverage of two theories is superficial	Describes two theories in some detail, but does not evidence much critical review. Discussion of the utility of the theory is there, but without enough application to the problem area	Uses at least 2 theories – defines and critically reviews each. Analyzes the utility of the theories to inform social intervention in the substantive/problem area	
RE1.3 Review of key policy approaches	Describes a policy but either misses one much more relevant to the topic or misses many details of the policy's impact and limitations	Defines a relevant policy for the area, begins to analyze its impacts and limitations, but lacks context, doesn't provide enough examples, may list, but not describe, reform suggestions	Discusses at least one relevant social policy impacting the problem. Analyzes its impacts and limitations; suggests reforms	
RE1.4 Critical review of relevant research	Concretely discusses some research in this area, with no synthesis of the overall body of research. Does not indicate awareness of extent of research	Begins a discussion of the scope of the available research, but may be unsure of the dominant research methods, may write by listing, rather than critically comparing. May be unsure of the gaps in this area	Critically analyzes the existing research in this area, analyzing dominant methods, and identifying gaps in the knowledge. May describe the search, or the scope of what is available. Suggests two thoughtful research questions (depending on year of comp)	

*Critical Thinking Expectations (from Washington State University Critical Thinking Project: <http://wsuctproject.wsu.edu/ctm.htm>, resource guide)*

	<i><b>Emerging (1)</b></i>	<i><b>Developing (3)</b></i>	<i><b>Mastering (5)</b></i>	<i><b>SCORE</b></i>
CT1.1 Considers the influence of context and assumptions	<p>Approach to the issue is egocentric or socio-centric. Does not relate issue to other contexts (cultural, political, historical, etc.). Shows little awareness of social justice.</p> <p>Analysis is grounded in absolutes, with little acknowledgement of own biases.</p> <p>Does not fully recognize context or surface assumptions and underlying ethical implications</p>	<p>Presents and explores relevant contexts and assumptions regarding the issue, although in a limited way.</p> <p>Analysis includes some empirical verification, but primarily relies on established authorities.</p> <p>Provides some recognition of context and consideration of assumptions and their implications, begins to frame this problem in the context of societal privilege and prejudice</p>	<p>Analyzes the issue with a clear sense of scope and context, including an assessment of audience. Considers other integral contexts.</p> <p>Analysis acknowledges complexity and bias of vantage and values, although may elect to hold to bias in context.</p> <p>Identifies influence of context and questions assumptions, addressing ethical dimensions underlying the issue.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of the ways societal privilege and prejudice have not only impacted the problem, but set the frame for analysis and intervention with the problem</p>	
CT1.2 Presents, assesses, and analyzes appropriate supporting data/evidence	<p>No evidence of search, selection or source evaluation skills.</p> <p>Repeats information provided without question or dismisses evidence without adequate justification.</p> <p>Does not distinguish among fact, opinion, and value judgments.</p> <p>Conflates cause and correlation; presents evidence and ideas out of sequence.</p> <p>Data/evidence or sources are simplistic, inappropriate, or not related to topic.</p>	<p>Demonstrates adequate skill in searching, selecting, and evaluating sources to meet the information need.</p> <p>Use of evidence is qualified and selective.</p> <p>Discerns fact from opinion and may recognize bias in evidence, although attribution is inappropriate.</p> <p>Distinguishes causality from correlation, though presentation may be flawed.</p> <p>Appropriate data/evidence or sources provided, although exploration appears to have been routine.</p>	<p>Evidence of search, selection, and source evaluation skills; notable identification of uniquely salient resources.</p> <p>Examines evidence and its source; questions its accuracy, relevance, and completeness.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of how facts shape but may not confirm opinion.</p> <p>Recognizes bias, including selection bias.</p> <p>Correlations are distinct from causal relationships between and among ideas. Sequence of presentation reflects clear organization of ideas, subordinating for importance and impact.</p> <p>Information needed is clearly defined and integrated to meet comprehensive requirement.</p>	

CT1.3 Identifies and assesses conclusions, implications, and consequences	<p>Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences, or conclusion is a simplistic summary.</p> <p>Conclusions presented as absolute, and may attribute conclusion to external authority.</p>	<p>Conclusions consider or provide evidence of consequences extending beyond a single discipline or issue. Presents implications that may impact other people or issues.</p> <p>Presents conclusions as relative and only loosely related to consequences. Implications may include vague reference to conclusions.</p>	<p>Identifies, discusses, and extends conclusions, implications, and consequences. Considers context, assumptions, data, and evidence. Qualifies own assertions with balance.</p> <p>Conclusions qualify as the best available evidence within the context. Consequences are considered and integrated. Implications are clearly developed, and consider ambiguities.</p>	
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### ***PhD Level Writing Expectations***

	<b><i>Emerging (1)</i></b>	<b><i>Developing (3)</i></b>	<b><i>Mastering (5)</i></b>	<b><i>SCORE</i></b>
WE1.1 Writing flows well – thoughts, transitions, grammar are good	Not proofread	Problems with grammar & transitions between topics slow down, confuse the reader	Smooth flow of ideas and informative transitions between topics	
WE1.2 Literature references are specific and analyzed in enough detail	Numerous non-specific references grouped in parenthetical citations.	Mixes specific and non-specific references, some works clearly analyzed, others included hastily.	Gives the sense that each work read and referenced is unique, makes some contribution to knowledge in this problem area.	
WE1.3 Primary sources are used	Many secondary citations to works that are in print and need to be read in this problem area	Most citations are to primary sources but may rely on secondary citation when the original author is difficult to understand	Minimizes use of secondary citations; reads original works for theory, history, research, etc. The exception is out of print works.	
WE1.4 APA style used for citations and references	Barely there	Most APA citing/referencing conventions are met, sometimes inconsistently	References and citations follow APA style requirements	

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Each committee member should score the comprehensive exam paper using the rubrics above, recording the score in the column titled *SCORE* on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). The rubric form should NOT be submitted with the comments that are to be distributed to the full committee and the student, but should be brought to the meeting and turned into the chair of the committee at the end of the comprehensive exam meeting. The chair of the comprehensive exam committee should complete the attached summary of the ratings for all three members of the comprehensive exam committee. Scores for each element range from a low of 1 to a high of 5. This summary rating sheet should be included with the paperwork indicating pass/fail and returned to the PhD Program Coordinator.

	<i>Reader 1</i>	<i>Reader 2</i>	<i>Chair</i>
<b>REQUIRED ELEMENTS 1.1</b>			
<b>REQUIRED ELEMENTS 1.2</b>			
<b>REQUIRED ELEMENTS 1.3</b>			
<b>REQUIRED ELEMENTS 1.4</b>			
<b>CRITICAL THINKING 1.1</b>			
<b>CRITICAL THINKING 1.2</b>			
<b>CRITICAL THINKING 1.3</b>			
<b>WRITING EXPECTATIONS 1.1</b>			
<b>WRITING EXPECTATIONS 1.2</b>			
<b>WRITING EXPECTATIONS 1.3</b>			
<b>WRITING EXPECTATIONS 1.4</b>			



## Appendix B

Potential sources for external funding of research (particularly dissertation research) are listed below. The Associate Dean for Research and/or the Associate Dean for Doctoral Education frequently have copies of sample proposals for many funding mechanisms, Please involve them in your consideration of application for funding early in the process.

- Alcohol Research Group (pre- and post-doctoral fellowships):  
[www.arg.org/training](http://www.arg.org/training)
- American Association of University Women - American Fellowships:  
<http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards/american-fellowships/>
- American Association of University Women – International Fellowships:  
<http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/educational-funding-and-awards/international-fellowships/>
- American Cancer Society, Training Grants in Oncology Social Work:  
<http://www.cancer.org/research/applyforaresearchgrant/granttypes/doctoral-training-grant-oncology-social-work>
- American Education Research Association, Dissertation Grants:  
<http://www.aera.net/ProfessionalOpportunitiesFunding/FundingOpportunities/ERAGrantsProgram/DissertationGrants/tabid/12812/Default.aspx>
- Association for Gerontology Education in Social Work, Pre-Dissertation Initiative:  
<http://agesw.org/about-agesw/pre-dissertation-initiative>
- Centers for Disease Control, R49 Dissertation Mechanism
- Council on Social Work Education, Minority Fellowship Program:  
<http://www.cswe.org/CentersInitiatives/ScholarshipsandFellowships/MFP/31830.aspx>
- Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Wellbeing:  
<http://www.chapinhall.org/fellowships/doris-duke-fellowships>
- Fahs Beck Foundation: <http://www.fahsbeckfund.org/>
- Fulbright US Student Program: <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/about/types-of-grants/study-research>
- Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation, Dissertation Fellowships:  
<http://www.hfg.org/df/guidelines.htm>
- Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy: <http://www.horowitz-foundation.org/grant-info/>
- Korean American Scholarship Foundation: <http://www.kasf.org/western>
- Myra Sadker Foundation, Dissertation Grant: <http://www.sadker.org/awards.html>
- National Academy of Education/Spencer Dissertation Fellowship:  
[http://naeducation.org/NAED\\_080200.htm](http://naeducation.org/NAED_080200.htm)
- National Association of Social Workers, Jane B. Aron Dissertation Fellowship:  
<http://www.naswfoundation.org/aron.asp>
- National Association of Social Works, Eileen Blackey Dissertation Fellowship:  
<http://www.naswfoundation.org/blackey.asp>

- National Institute of Health, F31, Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Awards for Individual Predoctoral Fellows. Through various institutes.
- National Institute of Health, R36 Dissertation Awards. Through various institutes in NIH (e.g., CDC, NIMH, AHRQ)
- The Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship: [pdsoros.org](http://pdsoros.org)
- Social Science Research Council, Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship: <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/dpdf/>
- Social Science Research Council, International Dissertation Research Fellowship: <http://www.ssrc.org/programs/idrf/>
- Society for Social Work & Research, Doctoral Fellows Award: <https://secure.sswr.org/awards.php#fellows>
- Spark Policy Institute Fellowship: [www.sparkpolicy.com](http://www.sparkpolicy.com)
- University of Denver, Interdisciplinary Research Institute for the Study of (In)Equality Research Grants: <http://www.du.edu/irise/research-grants/graduate-student.html>