

**Frequently Asked Questions
for Doctoral Students
Fall 2012**



Question: The Doctoral Regulations recently changed. How do I know what I must do for my degree? Have my requirements changed?

Answer: The Doctoral Regulations were updated to in April, 2012. Students who enter after this date will follow the new rules. If you entered prior to April, 2012, the requirements for your degree remain the same. You should follow the regulations in place when you first enrolled.

Question: The new regulations increased the number of credits to 72. Why were the credits increased?

Answer: The number of credits was increased in response to recommendation provided during the last CEPH reaccreditation. With a 45 credit master's degree, the amount of upper level (doctoral) study was minimal (15 credits). These changes were made to enhance our doctoral program. The impact on students is minimal because in both sets of regulations, 30 credits are required post-masters. In the new regs, up to 42 credits earned in the master's degree may be applied to the doctoral degree; in the old regs, only 30 credits could be applied from master's study.

Question: What other changes took place?

Answer: In response to the accreditors report, additional courses specific for doctoral students were developed (8000 level courses). All students are required to take an Epidemiology and biostatistics beyond the 6030 required for professional master's degrees. These courses are to further develop analytical skills required for research. The student and their advisor select the course that best fits with their research focus and career goals. Students are also required to take research methods in their discipline. The Research Readiness (SPHL 8800) course is also required and prepares students in grant writing.

Question: In old regulations, the interdisciplinary seminar was required. Now it is no longer offered. What do I do if I have not taken it?

Answer: You do not have to take it and should work with your advisor to make sure you achieve the interdisciplinary competencies. You may also take the Research Readiness course.

Question: Do I have to register each semester after I have completed my course work?

Answer: All students must be continuously registered in a degree-granting division of the university during the academic year (exclusive of the summer session) in either full-time or part-time status from the date of the first registration until the awarding of the degree. Failure to be continuously registered is *de facto* withdrawal and the school reserves the right not to readmit. After completing course work, doctoral students may register in Dissertation Research (SPHL 9990) or dissertation (SPHL9970).

Question: What is the difference between Dissertation Research (SPHL 9990) and Dissertation (9970)?

Answer: Students who have completed their course work, but not taken the comprehensive exam or defended the prospectus must register for at least 2 credits of Dissertation Research. After your status is changed to doctoral candidate (after prospectus defense), you register for Dissertation each semester until you defend your dissertation.

Question: Can the seven year time limit be extended?

Answer: Degree requirements must be completed within seven years after the student first enrolls in the doctoral program. Under special circumstances, the student in consultation with their advisor, may ask for a 1 year extension. This is not automatic and there must be a substantial reason that the degree was not completed in the prescribed time frame. Progress must be sufficient that the remainder of the dissertation may be completed within 1 year. Leaves of absence or failure to register do not extend the time clock.

Question: What is ProQuest?

Answer: ProQuest is the organization that archives dissertations for most major universities. It is a comprehensive service for publishing, archiving and disseminating graduate research. Tulane University requires that all dissertations are sent to ProQuest. You may request a delay of up to two years before it is made public to protect your findings until they are published in a journal. Submitting to ProQuest does not preclude you from publishing your findings in scientific journals.

Question: If I plan to graduate this semester, what are the dates for submitting my dissertation?

Please see submission dates in the School's academic calendar.

<http://sph.tulane.edu/academic-calendar>