



SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**Doctor of Public Health (DrPH)
in
Public Health Practice**

Student Handbook

Academic Year 2012-2013

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INTRODUCTION

The Student Handbook (the Handbook) contains information in regards to the Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) in Public Health Practice at the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) School of Public Health (SPH). Current and prospective students should refer to the Handbook whenever they have questions or concerns about program requirements and/or doctoral policies/procedures. All current students will be held responsible for the contents outlined in the Handbook regardless of whether the students are notified of this information through other means.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mission

To advance public health knowledge through research, service, and education of professionals who are dedicated to disease prevention, health promotion, and the achievement of efficiency, effectiveness and equity in the delivery of health services while minimizing health disparities among populations.

Vision and Values

The vision of the UNTHSC-SPH is to build on a diverse foundation as it continually strives to address the public health needs of Texas' diverse population through innovative and distinguished research, high quality educational programs, and dedicated service to the local, state, federal, and international communities.

Mutual Tolerance and Respect

Public health deals with controversial issues from multiple perspectives, and consideration of these issues may cause disagreements among individuals or may evoke strong personal feelings, depending on the individual experience, histories, identities, and worldviews. Therefore, in all interactions and communications, it is important that all parties involved strive to have mutual respect and tolerance for one another. Any individuals (students or otherwise) who have concerns to that end are encouraged to discuss the matter with their peers as well as superiors.

Concentration

The Dr.P.H. program in Public Health Practice prepares mid to late career professionals to serve in a variety of roles within government, private, and not-for-profit organizations by providing advanced training in public health leadership. To meet this objective, all students in the program pursue excellence in studies that integrate work experiences relevant to this advanced degree and apply knowledge and skills gained in leadership, public health policy, program management and evaluation, and professional communication. The primary focus is on public health practice that advances knowledge and facilitates discovery regarding public health practice, interventions, and policies that promote health at the individual, population, societal, and/or global levels. The Dr.P.H. curriculum will provide a strong foundation in leadership necessary for the public health practice. Advanced training within the public health practice program will be addressed.

Curriculum

The Dr.P.H. program requires a minimum of 90 semester credit hours (SCH) post-baccalaureate degree and is offered on a full-time or part-time basis. The required SCH are designated as follows.

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Dr.P.H. - Prerequisites | 15 SCH |
| Dr.P.H. - Public Health Practice Core Courses | 36 SCH |
| Elective Courses | 15 SCH |
| <u>Culminating Experience</u> | <u>9 SCH</u> |
| Total | 60 SCH |

Dr.P.H. Core Competencies

The Dr.P.H. curriculum will serve to integrate the five core areas of public health, emphasizing work experience relevant to this advanced degree and addressing learning methods in the context of public health practice. To develop leadership skills, students will interact and collaborate with senior public health practitioners through a variety of courses and the Doctoral Residency. Program content and learning experiences will address the public health competencies identified by the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH). Overall, upon completion of the Dr.P.H. program, the graduate will be able to demonstrate the following ability:

- **Advocacy** - Use scientific knowledge and ethical consideration to create and sustain active support for a cause or position with the intent of influencing decision-making regarding policies, practices and beliefs that advance public health at local, tribal, state, national, and international levels.
- **Communication** - Study and use communication strategies to inform and influence individual and community decisions that enhance health.
- **Community/ Cultural Orientation** - Interact and communicate effectively with people of different cultures. This includes having:
 - An awareness of one's own cultural worldview;
 - Mature attitudes toward cultural differences;
 - Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews; and
 - Possession of cross-cultural skills.
- **Critical Analysis** - Develop, synthesize, interpret, and apply evidence-based research and theory from a broad range of disciplines and health-related data sources to facilitate studies, interventions and policies for promoting population health.
- **Leadership** - Inspire trust and motivate individuals and teams to use evidence based strategies to envision and communicate a positive future that enhances essential public health services for all populations.

- **Management** - Provide fiscally responsible strategic and operational guidance for a variety of health - related organizations, both public and private, for the purpose of achieving individual and community health wellness.
- **Professionalism and Ethics** - Identify ethical issues, balance the claims of personal liberty against concerns about population health, consider the full spectrum of the determinants of health, identify the range of options for interventions, demonstrate the values and professional practices which form the basis of public health practice; understand and act upon the ethical concepts of social justice, virtue, and human rights; model accountability; and formulate and commit to personal and institutional development plans.

PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

Admissions Requirements

The UNTHSC-SPH is a member of SOPHAS (Schools of Public Health Application Service). Prospective students must apply to the program online at www.sophas.org. The application deadline to SOPHAS is January 15th each year. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all application materials are received by the SPH by the designated admissions deadline. The SPH admits potential students once every academic year, and as such, all incoming students must enter the program in the Fall semester. Applicants to the program will fall under one of the following admissions categories:

1. Full Admission – Accepted without reservation to the program.
2. Denied – Not admitted to the program because application was not competitive.
3. Non-review – Application not reviewed because the all application material were not received.

To be considered for admission, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold a MPH or a related earned master's degree(s) (or terminal clinical/doctoral degree) from a recognized institution.
- Submission of an application through the SOPHAS at www.sophas.org. All application materials need to be submitted to SOPHAS; UNTHSC-SPH does not require a supplemental application.
- Submission of complete, official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. Foreign transcripts must also include an official WES or ECE transcript evaluation report listing course-by-course U.S. grade point equivalencies.
- International applicants must demonstrate satisfactory proficiency in oral and written English. The minimum TOEFL score requirements are as follows: written exam = 550, computer-based exam = 213, internet based exam = 79.
- Submission of official scores from one of the following graduate admissions examinations:
 - Graduate Record Examination (GRE) use *institutional code 6565*,
 - Graduate Management Aptitude Test (GMAT),
 - Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT),
 - Law School Admissions Test (LSAT),
 - Pharmacy School Admissions Test (PCAT),
 - Dental School Admissions Test (DAT).

The examination requirement is waived for applicants possessing a professional doctoral degree with a license to practice in the U.S.

- Three (3) letters of recommendation sent via SOPHAS from professionals who are familiar with the applicant's academic and/or professional work.
- Current resume or curriculum vita.
- Statement of purpose (1-2 pages) addressing the applicant's career goals and how the Dr.P.H. will assist career aspirations.
- In general, a minimum graduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.2. Note that, although a minimum GPA has been established, admission to the program is highly competitive.
- If invited, applicants are expected to participate in an interview either in person or remotely through other means.

In addition to the content of the above requirements, other criteria may be used to determine the admissions category of all applicants.

Information submitted in the application materials must be complete and correct. Prospective students must notify the proper institution officials regarding any changes in the information provided on their application. Falsification or omission of any information on the application documents will void a student's admission, cancel their enrollment, and/or result in appropriate disciplinary action. Note that this holds true even after full admission into the program. All materials submitted during the application process become the property of the Health Science Center and cannot be returned.

Admissions Decisions and Deferments

Applicants will be furnished written notification regarding their admission status by the SPH Office of Admission and Academic Services. Statements by other Health Science Center personnel concerning the applicant's admissibility are not valid until confirmed in writing by the Office of Admission and Academic Services.

Students who are admitted to the program and plan to enroll are required to submit an Admissions Decision Form along with a non-refundable \$200 assurance fee that will be used toward tuition upon matriculation into the program. Applicants admitted to the program that do not intend to enroll in the semester for which they applied must contact the Office of Admission and Academic Services to request deferment. Deferments must be made in writing and cannot exceed one year from the original acceptance date. There is a deferment fee of \$300; the deferment fee is due at the time the request is made.

Appeal/Grievance Process

Specific policies and procedures have been established for students seeking to appeal an admissions decision. Appeals concerning admission to the School of Public Health should be addressed to the Dean of the School.

ADMITTED AND CURRENT STUDENTS

Academic Policies and Procedures

Students are expected to read, be familiar with, and abide by the general academic policies and procedures for the UNTHSC as well as the SPH. Such information can be found in the UNTHSC catalog (<http://www.hsc.unt.edu/catalog/2012-2013/2-Catalog%20Message.htm>) and the document posted on the UNTHSC-SPH website. Additional policies and procedures specific to the Dr.P.H. program are highlighted below. Note that some are duplicated from the general document to stress their importance.

Student Code of Conduct and Discipline

The primary concern of the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC) is the student. The Health Science Center attempts to provide for all students a campus environment that is conducive to academic endeavor and social and individual growth. To that end, rules, regulations and guidelines have been established to govern student behavior. The student's relationship with the Health Science Center has been formulated into a student code of conduct and discipline. Enrollment at the Health Science Center is considered implicit acceptance of these and other policies applicable to students, all of which are educational in nature and designed to help students understand expectations and accept responsibility for their own actions. This code and other policies are subject to change with reasonable notice. The student is responsible for obtaining and becoming familiar with all published rules and guidelines. This information is available on the Health Science Center intranet web site.

The complete UNTHSC Student Policy Handbook and Student Code of Conduct can be found on the web at <http://www.hsc.unt.edu/Sites/DivisionofStudentAffairs/>.

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of the UNTHSC not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or veteran status, Veterans of the Vietnam Era status, in its educational programs, activities, admission, or employment policies and practices.

In addition to complying with federal state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the health science center declares harassment that is based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) to be inconsistent with its mission and goals. The nondiscrimination policy is supported by the health science center policy statement on cultural awareness and diversity. The health science center specifically incorporates protections for qualified persons with disabilities; a prohibition against sexual harassment; and a prohibition against age limitations.

University complaint and grievance procedures provide employees and students with the means for the resolution of complaints that allege a violation of this Policy. For additional information or assistance with the equal opportunity, affirmative action, and harassment policies and procedures of the UNT Health Science Center, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office, 3500 Camp Bowie Blvd., Fort Worth, TX 76107 or call at 817-735-2357. In addition, if you have a concern about unethical, illegal or unsafe activity, you can call the UNTHSC Ethics Hotline at 1-877-606-9187 and anonymously report your concern to a third party organization not affiliated with the Health Science Center.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The UNTHSC does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability and complies with Section 504 and Public Law 101-336 (American with Disabilities Act) in its admissions, accessibility, treatment and employment of individuals in its programs and activities. The UNTHSC provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution's academic and employment requirements. For assistance, contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Office at the health science center (Reference Policy 7.105 Americans with Disabilities Act Protocol in the Student Policy Handbook).

Full-Time Enrollment for Financial Aid

Students must enroll for nine (9) semester credit hours (SCH) every Fall and Spring semesters to be considered full-time for financial aid. Enrollment in a total of six (6) SCH is considered full-time for the Summer semester. Students who have completed all but the Doctoral Residency requirement for the degree will be considered full-time if enrolled in three (3) SCH in any given semester. Students are responsible for meeting enrollment requirements for federal or state financial aid purposes.

Leave of Absence

All doctoral students are expected to make continuous academic progress toward the completion of the degree. In circumstances where this may not be possible, students in good academic standing may request a LOA from the SPH for a defined period of time (up to three consecutive semesters), during which no academic progress need to be made. To request a LOA, students should consult their Academic Advisor and the Dr.P.H. Program Director, and then complete a Request for LOA form that can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar. The request does not necessary guarantee approval of a LOA.

Concurrent Enrollment at another Institution

Students must secure written permission from their academic advisor and the Dr.P.H. Program Director before registering for any course(s) at another institution while registered for any course(s) at the UNTHSC. Failure to secure the required permission for concurrent enrollment prior to registration at the second institution may cause the UNTHSC to refuse degree credit for the work taken at said institution.

Time Limit for Degree Completion

All requirements for the Dr.P.H. degree must be completed within seven (7) years, but in general, students are expected to graduate in 4-5 years after being admitted to the program. Excluding extenuating circumstances approved by the Dr.P.H. Program Committee, time limits are strictly enforced, and students who do not complete all requirements within the allotted time are immediately dismissed from the program. Students who anticipate that they will exceed the time limit should apply for an extension in writing by submitting a letter to the Academic Services Office before the seven-year time limit expires. All requests for extension will be reviewed and evaluated by the Dr.P.H. Program Committee. Any student whose request is denied will be dismissed from the program unless all requirements for the degree are met prior to the original time limit. Any student whose request is granted may be mandated to fulfill additional requirements deemed appropriate by the Committee. Such requirements may include, but are not limited to, repeating out-of-date credits/courses or showing evidence of being up-to-date in the

major field of study. Holding a full-time job is not considered in itself sufficient grounds for granting an extension. Time spent in active service in the U.S. armed forces will not be used in computing the time limit. However, career members of the armed forces should consult with the Admissions Office concerning credit given to coursework completed before or during active military service.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Although, in general, students are graded on intellectual effort and performance, absences may lower the students' grade where the faculty member deems class participation essential. In such classes where participation is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should give written notice of the requirement at the beginning of the semester. An instructor may request the Registrar to drop a student from a course for lack of participation or one unexcused absences. If the instructor-initiated drop action falls within the time that the student is eligible to drop with instructor consent, a grade of W will be assigned. If the drop falls after this period, a grade of W or WF will be assigned as appropriate.

Professionalism

At the UNTHSC-SPH, all academic activities, in class or otherwise, prepare students for future careers in public health. As such, students are expected to approach all academic activities in a professional manner. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Dress code** – Students are expected to dress comfortably but in such a way that does not detract from learning activities. In particular, during classes with guest lecturers or when an instructor gives specific instructions related to attire, it is expected that students dress appropriately to represent the school in a professional manner.
- **Activities outside of the UNTHSC** – When students are afforded the opportunity of attending and/or presenting at local, national, or international meetings of professional organizations, students are expected to conduct themselves professionally and dress appropriately, being mindful that they are representing the UNTHSC.
- **Communication** – During class room discussions, conversations, e-mail correspondences, etc. with faculty, staff, peers, or other professionals, students are expected to uphold the highest standard of courtesy and respect.

Quality of Work

Students must make satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements. Unsatisfactory progress toward a degree is defined as any one of the following:

- Obtaining a grade of F in any course attempted;
- Having a cumulative GPA below 3.0;
- Withdrawal from four or more courses;
- Carrying three or more incompletes in one year;
- Not maintaining continuous enrollment in dissertation or other courses with such requirement;
- An unsatisfactory portfolio review, with two unsatisfactory reviews warranting dismissal from the program.

Any action taken as a result of not meeting the above expectations is subject to the discretion of the department chair. Two unsatisfactory reviews may result in dismissal from the program. Final decisions with regard to the dismissal of a Dr.P.H. student fall under the purview of the Dr.P.H. Program Committee.

Grading Policies

Grade Point Average

The overall grade point average (GPA) is used to determine academic standing and eligibility for graduation. All GPA calculations are subject to post-audit and correction by the Office of the Registrar. The number of semester hours attempted for calculation of the GPA includes all courses with grades of A, B, C, F, and WF unless replaced by a later grade. Courses with grades of I, S, U, W, or Z are not counted as courses attempted for the purpose of calculating a GPA.

Grading System

Below are designations of grades that will appear on the official UNTHSC transcript.

| Used in calculation of GPA (Letter grades) | | Not used in calculation of GPA | |
|--|--|--------------------------------|--|
| A | 4 grade points for each semester credit hour (SCH) | P/NP | Pass/No Pass |
| B | 3 grade points for each SCH | S/U | Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory |
| C | 2 grade points for each SCH | W | Withdrawal |
| F | 0 grade points for each SCH | I | Incomplete |
| WF | Withdraw Failing, 0 grade points for each SCH | PR | In Progress |
| | | Z | Grade incorrectly recorded or not recorded |

Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) Grading

The SPH may elect to assign satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades in courses in which the student is engaged in individual research and is not attending an organized class. The student should inquire at the time of registration for such courses whether a letter grade or a satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade will be granted. Satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades are not taken into account in computing the student's grade point average.

Incomplete (I) Grades

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, the instructor may assign an incomplete (I) for the course. The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specified requirements. These requirements must be entered on the grade roster by the instructor.

Removal of Incomplete (I) Grade

A student must remove a grade of "I" by the last day of the subsequent semester in which the incomplete grade was obtained; no extensions will be granted. If, at the end of the following semester, the incomplete grade has not been removed, a grade of F will be recorded.

An "I" is removed by completing the stipulated work and obtaining the appropriate signatures (on a Removal of Incomplete Grade/Change of Grade form available from the Admissions Office). The instructor then files the form with the Academic Services Office so that the grade and the GPA can be adjusted accordingly. If a student does not complete the stipulated work within the time specified, a grade of F will be recorded and the student's GPA will be adjusted accordingly.

Grade Changes

No grade except for a grade of "I" may be removed from a student's record once properly recorded. Changes are not permitted after grades have been filed except to correct clerical errors. Requests for an error correction must be initiated immediately after the close of the semester for which the grade was

recorded. A faculty member who believes that an error has been made in calculating or recording a grade may submit, in person, a request for a grade change to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Office of the Registrar accepts requests for grade changes only from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Grade Appeal: Course Assignment

Any student who believes a grade for a course assignment has been inequitably awarded should contact the instructor first within five (5) working days after the grade was assigned to discuss and resolve the issue. If unable to resolve the issue, the student should submit a written appeal to the faculty member's Department Chair. The decision of the Department Chair in this decision is final. If the instructor is the Department Chair, the appeal should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. If the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is the instructor, the appeal should be submitted to the Dean of the School of Public Health for review and for final decision of the course grade appeal.

Grade Appeal: Course Grade

Any student who believes a course grade has been inequitably awarded should first contact the instructor who awarded the grade in order to discuss and attempt to resolve the issue. Any instructor no longer associated with the UNTHSC at the time of the appeal will be represented in these proceedings by the Department Chair over the concentration in question. The student who is unable to resolve the differences with the instructor has five (5) working days following the first class day of the subsequent semester to file a written appeal with the appropriate Department Chair. If the instructor is the Department Chair, the appeal should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. If the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs is the instructor, the appeal should be submitted to the Dean of the School of Public Health for review and for final decision of the course grade appeal.

Repeating of Courses

If a grade of F is received in a required course, the course must be repeated. Students are not obligated to repeat a course if a grade of F is obtained in an elective. Students may repeat any course twice (maximum enrollment of 3 times). The best grade obtained will be used in the calculation of the GPA. If a grade of W is recorded on the student's transcript, this is considered one of the three allowable attempts at successfully completing the course.

Withdrawal Limit

Students may withdraw from a maximum of six (6) courses throughout the completion of the degree requirements.

Dr.P.H. Degree Requirements and Logistics

Completion of Curriculum Plan

A curriculum plan listing all courses taken and plan to be taken must be completed by the student, approved by the student's Academic Advisor, and the Dr.P.H. Program Director, and submitted to the Office of Admission & Academic Services before the completion of the first semester of enrollment (first Fall). Curriculum plan templates for each concentration can be found on the UNTHSC website (<http://www.hsc.unt.edu/education/sph/Curriculum.cfm>) under the heading of Doctor of Public Health in Public Health Practice. Curriculum plans must follow the degree requirements outlined by the School for the academic year in which the plan is filed.

All subsequent requests for curriculum plan changes must be submitted in writing by the student to their Academic Advisor and the Dr.P.H. Program Director, using the "Request for Modification to Curriculum Plan" form, found on the UNTHSC website

(http://www.hsc.unt.edu/education/sph/documents/General_Forms/Req_Modifi_Curriculum_2011-2012.doc) All approved changes must be submitted to the Admissions Office by the student.

For students requesting advanced standing (see section below), a draft curriculum plan will be submitted to the Academic Advisor and the Dr.P.H. Program Director. Upon approval, this draft will be forwarded to the Admissions Office, where a degree audit will be completed. Final approval for curriculum plans that include Advanced Standing will be approved by the Dr.P.H. Program Committee.

Transfer Credit

Students may apply 12 semester credit hours (SCH) earned in relevant graduate coursework from other U.S. accredited graduate institutions toward the 90 SCH required for the Dr.P.H. program.

Listed below are some general guidelines and/or procedures for approval of transfer credit.

- All transfer credits are subject to approval by the Academic Advisor.
- Only courses where a grade of B or higher were attained are eligible for transfer.
- For any course taken more than seven (7) years prior to entry into the program, justification must be provided explaining why the course is still relevant.
- The burden of proof of accuracy and relevancy for any course considered for transfer credit is on the student. As such, it is the student's responsibility to provide the Academic Services Office with official transcripts from other institutions as well as the course syllabus.

Non-Transfer Course Substitution

Students who have completed courses that meet the degree requirements of the Dr.P.H. program may request to substitute a course on their curriculum plan with another course. In these instances, students are required to complete the equivalent number of semester credit hours that are being substituted because they are not eligible for transfer credit. Dr.P.H. students must identify course substitutions in conjunction with their Academic Advisor and must document the substitution on the "Request for Modification to Degree Plan" form.

Academic Residency Requirement

Dr.P.H. students must complete a minimum of 18 semester credit hours during their first academic year (Fall, Spring, and Summer) to meet the School's academic residency requirement. Failure to do so without just cause may result in an unsatisfactory progress report put into the students' academic file and/or dismissal from the program.

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy indicates that the faculty believes the student has potential to become an independent public health practitioner and is qualified to begin doctoral residency under faculty supervision. Those students who successfully complete the following requirements are advanced to candidacy.

- Completion of all core and concentration required courses for the Dr.P.H. in the degree plan;
- Maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 throughout all coursework;
- Successful completion of the Dr.P.H. Integrated Competency Evaluation (ICE) (see details below);
- Completion of appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) training designated by the UNTHSC Office for the Protection of Human Subjects (OPHS) and HIPPA;

- Completion of Doctoral Portfolio Requirements (details below).

Dr.P.H. Integrated Competency Evaluation (ICE)

The Integrated Competency Evaluation (ICE) is the comprehensive examination equivalent experience for the Doctor in Public Health (Dr.P.H.) Practice degree in the School of Public Health at the University of North Texas Health Science Center (UNTHSC). The ICE is based upon a personal self-assessment, a written narrative, a portfolio (binder) of competency mastery documentation, and an oral presentation highlighting the assessment and narrative. Each Dr.P.H. Practice student is expected to provide a Self-Assessment of each of the 54 competencies defined under the seven domains as outlined in the ASPH Education Committee –Doctor of Public Health (Dr.P.H.) Core Competency Model, Version 1.3, November 2009 referenced at the website (Pages 12-18):

http://www.asph.org/publication/Dr.P.H._Core_Competency_Model/index.html. In general, the ICE is administered once per academic year in the Spring semester by the Dr.P.H Program Committee. As such, students should communicate with the Integrated Comprehensive Exam (ICE) coordinator regarding specifics of the ICE. The minimum requirements for sitting for the ICE are as follows:

- Completion of or concurrent enrollment in all core and concentration required courses in the degree plan;
- Enrollment in the department specific Dr.P.H. Integrated Competency Examination (ICE) course (PHED 6000) in the semester in which the ICE is taken;
- Written permission from the student's Academic Advisor, i.e. a permission number to enroll in the above course.

Students have two (2) attempts to successfully pass the ICE. Students who do not pass after two attempts will be dismissed from the program.

Any student who believes a grade on the ICE has been inequitably awarded should contact the Integrated Comprehensive Exam (ICE) Coordinator first within five (5) working days after the grade was assigned to discuss and resolve the issue. If unable to resolve the issue, the student should submit a written appeal to the Program Coordinator within five (5) working days. If unable to resolve after discussion with the Program Coordinator, the student can submit a written appeal in the form of a letter to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs within five (5) working days. Every stage of the appeal process will be carried out in an efficient manner to render a decision within thirty (30) days of the original appeal request.

Doctoral Residency

Overview

The Dr.P.H. Practice –Doctoral Residency Program is intended to assist students with developing evidence-based leadership skills by interaction and collaboration with senior public health practitioners through a “hands on” application experience in a health service organization. The purpose of this residency is to provide the student with a practice-based leadership experience in which the student can apply the Dr.P.H. Core Competencies learned in the classroom and from previous work experience. In addition, the residency will provide the student with an opportunity to appreciate the complexity of public health organizations and the individuals that comprise them; and to provide insight for further development of skills and knowledge needed in the public health career field.

Faculty Mentor

The Faculty Mentor during the residency process facilitates the residency experience by serving as a guide throughout the residency process. In order to be a Faculty Mentor, the faculty must have been a

faculty member within the UNTHSC School of Public Health for at least one year. The Dr.P.H. Program Committee has to approve the Faculty Mentor selected by the student to ensure that the faculty's background aligns with the student's career goals and residency objectives. In addition, the Department Chair must approve their role as "Faculty Mentor" based upon work load, research demands and performance expectations. It is recommended that a Faculty Mentor should not mentor more than three Dr.P.H. students at any one time. In order to guide the student through his/her residency experience, it is desired that the Faculty Mentor be currently involved or have been involved in public health practice education, evaluation, and/or research, ideally associated with student's interests and professional goals.

Site Supervisor

The Dr.P.H. Practice Residency Site Supervisor is a senior public health professional who has agreed to and is approved by the Dr.P.H. Program Director and Faculty Mentor to supervise the residency experience and the Major Project. The Site Supervisor and the Faculty Mentor share the responsibility of ensuring and educational environment during the residency period. The Site supervisor should always feel free to consult with the Faculty Mentor and Dr.P.H. Program Director regarding questions, issues or concerns that may arise during the residency program.

Residency Process

The Dr.P.H. Doctoral Residency is the culminating experience and the final product required for the fulfillment of the degree. The Doctoral Residency may commence once the student has advanced to candidacy. The residency period consists of 720 contact hours, which corresponds to a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 36 calendar weeks depending on how many hours per week the student will dedicate towards the residency. When to begin and conclude their residence and how many hours per week the student will complete has to be outlined in the Residency Learning Contract, which is an agreement between the student and the Site Supervisor that has been approved by the Faculty Mentor and the Dr.P.H. Program Committee. The placement of student residents at sponsoring sites is the joint responsibility of the student and the Dr.P.H. Program Director. The student's faculty mentor can assist in the identification of residency site and experience. The Dr.P.H. Program Committee will provide final approval.

Residency Content

While each doctoral residency will have its own unique characteristics, all *Dr.P.H. Practice Residencies* should contain the following five major components designed to achieve the program's objectives and develop the Dr.P.H. core competencies:

- (1) the opportunity for the student to work under the direction of a senior-level executive who serves as the student's Site Supervisor;
- (2) an orientation to the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the organization, including a period of time devoted to an organizational rotation;
- (3) a position within the organization with leadership and management responsibilities, which should include planning and directing meetings as well as writing documents and providing oral presentations of the tasks accomplished;
- (4) the assignment of a Major Project that meets both the student's training needs and the needs of the organization, which, at the end of the residency, will be presented to the organization's leadership and at the UNTHSC SPH Doctoral Symposium;
- (5) ample exposure to the internal and external environment of the organization..

Major Project

The main assignment of all students is the Major Project, which must be a substantive contribution to public health practice and to the residency site and is an application of the competencies developed and enhanced throughout the residency experience. The doctoral student, in collaboration with the Site Supervisor and the Faculty Mentor, identifies a topic of interest for his/her Major Project. The scope of the project will be defined and developed by the Site Supervisor. The student will develop a proposal including a work plan, which must be presented and approved by the Faculty Mentor and Academic Advisor. In addition, the Major Project will have to be presented to the UNTHSC Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. The completed Major Project will be presented at the residency site and at the UNTHSC SPH Residency Symposium. Other assignments for the student should be selected for their educational value and to broaden their residency experience.

Residency Evaluation

A student's residency experience officially concludes once the Site Supervisor Evaluation, the Student Residency Evaluation, the Faculty Mentor Evaluation, The Reflection Paper and the written Major Project have been received by the Dr.P.H. Academic Advisor. At this time, the Faculty Mentor in consultation with the Dr.P.H. Academic Advisor will assign a grade (Pass/Fail) for the residency experience and the Major Project. The Reflection paper must include information about the student's residency experience and what was learned and will be used by the Dr.P.H. Academic Advisor and Faculty Mentors to make recommendations regarding how the program might be improved in future years.

Dr.P.H. Leadership Symposium

The culminating event for the residency is the Dr.P.H. Leadership Forum Symposium. This event provides an opportunity for all the members of the outgoing Dr.P.H. class – including first and second year Dr.P.H. students, Site Supervisors, SPH faculty, Faculty Mentors, and members of the community alike -- to come together for a final presentation about the residency experience and the Major Project. The Oral Presentation will include a summary of the residency experience, but the content will primarily focus on the Major Project produced. Prior to presenting at the Doctoral Symposium, the student has to defend the *Dr.P.H. Practice Residency* to the Dr.P.H. Program Committee and address at a minimum the following: 1) description of the residency site, 2) residency activities, 3) significant contributions, 4) value of residency experience, 5) competencies mastered and enhanced, and 6) Major Project overview.

Doctoral Portfolio

Each doctoral student will be required to demonstrate proficiency of the Dr.P.H. competencies through the successful completion of the *Doctoral Portfolio* (the Portfolio). The student will continuously expand and enhance the content of the Portfolio throughout the doctoral study. The student's Academic Advisor as well as the Dr.P.H. Program Committee will review the Portfolio annually prior to the Fall Semester to measure the performance and progression in the program. The review will result in the Portfolio being deemed either "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory". A satisfactory review will require the completion of all academic milestones for any given academic year. An unsatisfactory review will result in specific expectations and milestones for the following year determined by the Dr.P.H. Program Committee. Milestones for students that receive advance standing and/or part-time students will be determined on a completed semester credit hours (SCH) basis. Students with two unsatisfactory Portfolio reviews will be dismissed from the Dr.P.H. Program. At the time of any given review, a satisfactory review will, at the minimum, require the following:

- Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 at the time of review;
- Continuous enrollment of at least 2 SCH every semester;

- No more than a total of 6 course withdrawals from the time of entry into the program up to the time of review;
- Completion and submittal of all necessary and appropriate forms and/or memos in a timely manner.

Journal Club

The Journal Club is a student-driven gathering that meets regularly throughout the year (usually 4 to 8 times a semester) with the main purpose of critically evaluating articles in scientific literature. It is intended to give students exposure to various health disciplines and fields, as well as to foster the development of skills necessary in preparing scientific manuscripts of their own. For each Journal Club meeting, a student will be chosen to lead the session with the help of a faculty facilitator. This student will be responsible for choosing the article(s) that will be discussed during the meeting, as well as deciding the structure, format, and/or activities for the meeting

Journal Club Peer-Review Panel

For each Journal Club session, the student that leads the session will be decided by a peer-review process conducted by an ad-hoc panel of doctoral students/candidates and a faculty member. All students who wish to lead a Journal Club session will prepare and submit a one-page proposal indicating the article(s) chosen, significance and relevance of the article(s), as well as the structure, format, and activities planned for the session. The panel will meet and review the proposals to determine which student should lead the corresponding session. In general, the faculty member on the panel is simply present to oversee that the review process is fair and that the proposals are chosen based on merit. As such, he/she does not weigh in on the final decision by the panel.

Annual Portfolio Review Process

All doctoral students and candidates are responsible for updating their respective Portfolios each academic year through Canvas (<http://web.unthsc.edu/canvas>) in preparation for the annual review by the Dr.P.H. Program Committee. In general, the annual review occurs once every academic year prior to the Fall semester. As such, all Portfolios must be updated by July 31st each year. Students and candidates will be notified of the result of the review prior to the Fall semester. However, any candidate who wishes to graduate in any given semester must update and complete the Portfolio at least two weeks prior to the deadline to submit all graduation requirements for that semester as designated on the SPH Academic Calendar (<http://www.hsc.unt.edu/catalog/2012-2013/52-Academic%20Calendar.htm>). Soon thereafter, the Dr.P.H. Program Committee will convene in a special session to review the Portfolios of all graduating candidates.

FOR GRADUATING CANDIDATES

Application to Graduate

It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of his/her progress toward the degree and to file the Intent to Graduate form (http://www.hsc.unt.edu/education/SPH/documents/GraduationForms/Intent_to_Graduate_Form.docx) with the Office of Admission & Academic Services. Consult the Academic Calendar (<http://www.hsc.unt.edu/catalog/2012-2013/52-Academic%20Calendar.htm>) for the appropriate dates. Reference the Instructions for Submitting Graduation Materials

http://www.hsc.unt.edu/education/sph/documents/GraduationForms/Instructions_for_Submitting_Grad_Materials.doc) for instructions on specific forms that are needed for graduation. Information concerning graduation fees are available in the Tuition and Fee Register, on the School of Public Health website under *Forms and Guidelines*, or may be obtained from the Office of Admission & Academic Services.

Commencement Exercises

The UNTHSC commencement exercises and the SPH hooding ceremony are held once every academic year in May. Diplomas may be obtained from the Office of the Registrar at the conclusion of any semester in which all graduation requirements have been met and verified.

Participation in Pre-Commencement and Commencement Ceremony

Students must complete all degree requirements for graduation to participate in pre-commencement (the SPH hooding ceremony) and the UNTHSC commencement exercises. If a student who has submitted the Intent to Graduate form has failed to satisfactorily complete all academic requirements for graduation, the UNTHSC-SPH Admission & Academic Services Office may permit the student to participate in commencement exercises provided that all remaining degree requirements will be completed of the current academic year, i.e., end of the subsequent Summer semester.

Students who have three (3) or less semester credit hours (SCH) remaining to fulfill degree requirements may be permitted to participate in pre-commencement and commencement exercises. Such students must be in good academic standing (3.0 or better grade point average). Students who have 3 SCH or less and want to participate in either ceremony, must submit a written request to the UNTHSC-SPH Admission & Academic Services Office to receive permission to participate. The UNTHSC-SPH reserves the right to deny any request. Appeals to decisions pertaining to participation in commencement exercises may be made to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Awarding of the Diploma

No diploma will be awarded until the UNTHSC-SPH has verified that the student has completed all academic requirements and the Office of Student Financials has verified that the student has met all financial obligations to the UNTHSC. Diplomas will be mailed by the Office of the Registrar to those students who have been granted this option and who have subsequently satisfied all requirements.