

Outline of Policies: KN Doctoral Program (November 2017)

Selected Graduate College policies, culled from several web pages, are reproduced here, and are shown in italics. These apply to all programs. Please note that this document does not include the details of many of the procedures required by the Graduate College, for which their website should be consulted.

Policies specific to our program are not in italics.

Credit Hour Requirements:

Doctorate with prior master's degree: 64 hours. Doctorate without master's degree: 96 hours.

Only 400- and 500-level courses can be applied to the degree. Credit toward a graduate degree is only given for courses in which a student received a grade of A, B, C, CR, or S. At least 48 semester hours beyond the Master's level or its equivalent must be taken at UIC.

No more than 12 semester hours of credit earned as a non-degree student can be transferred into the degree program. Only graduate-level courses in which a grade of A or B was earned will be considered.

Doctoral students may transfer in no more than 25 percent of the hours required for the degree. This limit is for courses taken as a student in another college at UIC or another institution, but not coursework taken in a different program within the Graduate College at UIC. Transfer credit is considered only for courses in which the student received a grade of A or B. Credit earned more than six calendar years before admission to the Graduate College is not usually accepted for transfer.

A minimum of 9 credit hours of 500-level courses must be letter-graded courses (A to F), not project, thesis, or independent study, or seminar courses that are graded Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). Students must earn at least 32 hours in KN 599 or HN 599 (PhD Thesis Research).

Students who are full-time are expected to maintain a course load of at least 12 credit hours per semester.

Our doctoral program has no required courses. The following web pages for our program list suggested courses for Tracks 1 and 2 respectively:

<http://www.ahs.uic.edu/kn/academics/phd/mcmb/>

<http://www.ahs.uic.edu/kn/academics/phd/ip/>

GPA Requirement for Graduation: 3.0

Academic probation is the Graduate College's mechanism for warning students that their Degree GPA has fallen below the minimum standard of 3.00 (A=4.00). Students have two terms of enrollment (including summer, if registered) after the term in which their Degree GPA falls below 3.00 to remove themselves from probation.

Students who fail to raise their average to 3.00 or to otherwise fulfill the terms of their probation within the deadline will be dismissed from the University.

Time Limit for Completion:

Doctorate with prior master's degree: 7 years. Doctorate without master's degree: 9 years.

Yearly Evaluation:

A Doctoral Student Review Committee, appointed by and advisory to the Director of Graduate Studies, will solicit information each fall semester from every doctoral student, and will evaluate the student's progress. Based on the Committee's report, the Director of Graduate Studies will communicate to the student and his/her advisor any recommendations or other actions.

The document regarding the yearly evaluation process is included here as Appendix A.

Preliminary Examination:

The preliminary examination is generally administered during or near the end of the time the student has completed most, though not necessarily all, of the coursework, but has not made a major investment of time and effort towards the dissertation research project. Only students in good academic standing are permitted to take the examination. Doctoral candidates must be registered for credit the term when they take the preliminary exam. Students must also register each semester (excluding summer) after passing the preliminary examination and until successfully defending the dissertation. Students must register for the summer term if taking the preliminary exam or defending the dissertation during that term. Students who do not complete the degree requirements within five (5) years of passing the preliminary examination must retake the examination.

The Preliminary Examination usually takes place toward the end of the 2nd year in the program, although it can occur earlier or later as judged appropriate by the advisor and student. However, it is highly recommended that the exam is taken by the end of the 3rd year at the latest.

The committee for the preliminary examination consists of at least five (5) members, of whom at least three (3) are UIC Graduate Faculty with full membership, and two (2) of whom must be tenured. The chair of the Committee must be a full member of the UIC Graduate Faculty. An outside member is recommended but not required.

The Preliminary Examination consists of a written and an oral portion. Guidelines regarding

the written portion of the exam, adopted on April 22, 2009 and modified on September 15, 2014, are included as Appendix B. Although these are the recommended guidelines, the Preliminary Examination committee may decide to adopt a different format as long as the student is notified in advance and the alternative format is at least as rigorous as the recommended one.

The oral portion of the exam takes place in front of the convened committee (one member in remote connection is allowed, though not recommended) in closed session at the latest one month after the written portion is completed. Waivers to the one-month rule can be requested to the DGS should circumstances require it.

Each member of the examining committee assigns a grade of “pass” or “fail” on the Examination Report. A candidate cannot be passed with more than one “fail” vote. The results of the examination must be submitted to the Graduate College within two (2) weeks of the completion of the exam.

Students are allowed a second chance to take the exam should this be deemed necessary by the committee. The format of the second attempt is decided by the committee and may consist of a whole retake of the exam (written and oral) or just the portions judged unsatisfactory during the first attempt.

The second attempt of the Preliminary Examination should take place one year after the first attempt at the latest.

A third examination is not permitted.

Proposal defense

The Proposal defense consists in a written proposal of the dissertation project and its oral defense in front of a committee. This should be scheduled after the Preliminary Examination, but before the research work has progressed beyond exploratory data collection, so as to allow meaningful changes in the research program based on input from the student’s Committee. The Committee to which the proposal is presented should be the same as the Committee for the final defense of the dissertation (see below), unless there are circumstances that necessitate a change.

The written proposal may be in the form of a grant application (F31 NIH format is recommended) or in thesis format, as decided in concert by the advisor and student. Irrespective of the format chosen, the proposal should include an introductory section detailing the background and significance of the proposed work as well as a methods section.

The Committee should be provided with the written proposal at least two weeks before the scheduled date of the oral presentation.

The first portion of the oral presentation is open to the public and the committee may then decide to proceed further in closed session with the student.

Progress evaluation

Students are responsible for keeping the committee updated on progress towards completion of their project and dissertation.

Between the proposal and dissertation defense there needs to be at least a one-time communication about the project's progress to the committee. This can take the form of (documented) e-mail(s) to members of the committee or of one or more convened meetings of the committee as deemed appropriate by the advisor and student.

Completion of this requirement is noted on the student's annual progress report.

Dissertation defense

A minimum of one year has to elapse before the defense of the dissertation after passing the preliminary examination.

The defense must be open to the academic community of the University and be publicly announced one week prior to its occurrence.

The dissertation committee consists of at least five persons, of whom one must be from outside their program. The chair of the committee must be a full member of the UIC graduate faculty. At least two members of the committee must be tenured faculty at UIC; at least one must be from outside the degree-granting program, which may include graduate faculty from other UIC departments or colleges. The outside member can also be from outside the university, in which case the member must demonstrate equivalent academic standards; the members' curriculum vitae must accompany the Committee Recommendation Form.

A candidate cannot be passed if more than one vote of "fail" is reported. If the vote is "fail", the committee may recommend that the Dean permit a second defense. This second examination must be initiated by submission of a new Committee Recommendation form, even if there is no change in membership. A third defense will not be permitted.

The core of the dissertation in the PhD program in Kinesiology and Nutrition consists in original research work. The research may take any form (or a combination of: forms, including laboratory, clinical or electronic approaches. The research must be creative and original, advancing a field of Kinesiology and/or Nutrition by adding significant new knowledge, testing current theory or leading to a new theory. The dissertation may be presented in the traditional thesis format or may consist of manuscripts (typically, though not necessarily, three) of publishable quality in peer-reviewed journals. The specific requirements for both are to be established by the dissertation committee in accordance with Graduate College requirements. Publication of all or part of the research work prior to the dissertation defense is highly encouraged.

Submission of the dissertation

Follow current Graduate College guidelines at

<https://grad.uic.edu/thesis>

For formatting issues, consult the Thesis Manual at:

http://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/ThesisManual_rev_06Oct2016.pdf

Contacts:

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Appendix A
Evaluation of Doctoral Student Progress
(Adopted April 30, 2012, Modified November 2017)

All graduate students are expected to maintain appropriate progress toward a degree. A student may be dismissed and/or financial support (fellowship, research assistantship, teaching assistantship, tuition and fee waiver) can be withdrawn for failure to maintain satisfactory progress. Assessment involves a review of student performance in both coursework and research. There is no guarantee, stated or implied, that a degree will be granted to a student admitted to the program.

The Graduate College charges the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) with the yearly assessment of doctoral student progress within each unit.
(<http://grad.uic.edu/cms/?pid=1001054>)

In the Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition, a 3-person Doctoral Student Review Committee, which is advisory to the DGS, contributes to that assessment. Members of the Committee are appointed by the DGS to staggered, three-year terms. The third-year member normally serves as chair. Committee members do not participate in the review of their own advisees, in which case the two remaining members conduct the review.

Each academic year in the Fall semester the Committee solicits a self-assessment of progress in written form from each doctoral student and his/her advisor. This student also submit a separate assessment about his/her mentoring experience. The student's self-assessment may consist of an updated list of publications, presentations, academic honors and fellowships, etc. The student includes academic goals for the upcoming year, and in the first year or two it is typical for the self-assessment to consist mainly of plans and goals regarding courses taken and planned. The student can also be interviewed at the Committee's request. The Committee deliberates on this information and sends its evaluation and recommendations to the DGS. The DGS (or a designee, in case the DGS is also the student's adviser) summarizes the evaluation and recommendations (including the student's and adviser's assessments) and conveys this report to the student and the adviser. The student is given an opportunity to discuss this report with the DGS (or designee). The student can also submit a written response. All material pertaining to the evaluation is retained in the student's file.

This review system does not displace any duties or responsibilities of the adviser,

who guides the student's graduate experience. Rather, it serves to define and apply consistent standards and expectations across the unit. Individual faculty advisers may impose standards that exceed those of the Review Committee if the standards are presented in writing to the student and a copy signed by the student is added to the student's permanent file. The Committee's review in this case is based on the criteria listed in that document.

If the DGS deems a student is not making appropriate progress, the student will be placed on Departmental probation. The adviser will then work with the DGS to establish a detailed timeline of expected progression. Progress along the timeline should be documented by the student. The Committee, with the DGS acting as an ex-officio member, will evaluate the compliance of the student to the timeline after a six-month period. A written evaluation will be sent to the student and to the faculty adviser. Non-compliance can result in a recommendation of removal of financial assistance and/or dismissal from the program.

Students who feel they have received unfair treatment have recourse to the Department Head and to standard grievance process.

Appendix B
Recommended guidelines for written Preliminary Exam
(Adopted April 22, 2009- Modified September 15, 2014)

The exam should cover three thematic areas. The thematic areas should be defined/selected in consultation with the student's academic adviser with input from the committee. It is advisable that students begin to identify these areas as early as possible during their doctoral study. It will also assist the student in determining potential dissertation topics.

The exam should not duplicate course exams. Questions that encourage the student to synthesize information and formulate speculations should be emphasized. The general nature of the questions should be described to the student well before the exam. Specific examples from previous exams should be provided if requested.

Students will have the option of completing the exam in a one-day or two-day format.

One Day:

Students will be given 10 hours to complete the exam. Upon arrival, the student will be given a set of 5 questions, from which he or she must choose three to answer.

Two Day:

On day one, the student will be expected to work between 6 and 7 hours, be given three questions and required to answer two. On day two, the student will be expected to work for 3-4 hours, be given two questions and required to answer one.

Note: The general recommendation is for the student to spend an average of three hours on each question, taking short breaks as necessary for rest or refreshment. Results of the exam will be made available to the student approximately two weeks after the exam.

These are recommended guidelines. The Preliminary Examination committee may decide to adopt a different format as long as the student is notified in advance and the alternative format is at least as rigorous as the recommended one.