



Program in Applied Public Health Sciences

Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health 2023-24 Handbook

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UConn Program in Applied Public Health Sciences Ph.D. in Public Health

The UConn [Department of Public Health Sciences](#) offers the Doctor of Philosophy in Public Health (Ph.D.) degree for students anticipating careers in academia, federal agencies, state health departments, research institutes, private sector business and industry and national and international organizations to meet the health challenges of the 21st century. Our Ph.D. focuses on social and behavioral determinants of health, with three distinct areas of concentration:

- **Social and Behavioral Health Sciences.** Explores interpersonal and institutional influences on individual and community health, with attention to design and evaluation of interventions for improving health.
- **Occupational Health Sciences.** Offers students grounding in theory and methodology, as well as specialized instruction, that builds knowledge of the broad range of occupational exposures and their influences on health, illness and injury, and interventions to improve these outcomes.
- **Chronic Disease Epidemiology.** Develops expertise in cancer epidemiology and prognosis, psychiatric epidemiology including addiction disorders, developmental and physical disabilities, and nutritional determinants of health.

Program and Graduate School Administration.

UConn administrators, faculty and staff are readily available to students to ensure a positive experience during their course of study. The Program maintains an information line (860-679-5470) to leave messages for later review and follow-up.

Program in Applied Public Health Sciences – 195 Farmington Avenue, Farmington CT 06030-6325		
David Gregorio, Director	gregorio@uchc.edu	860-679-5480
Helen Swede, Ph.D. Coordinator	swede@uchc.edu	869-679-5568
Holly Samociuk, Program Associate	samociuk@uchc.edu	860-679-5467
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Program Information	publichealth@uchc.edu	860-679-5470
UConn Graduate School - 263 Farmington Avenue, Farmington CT 06030-1850		
Barbara Kream, Associate Dean	kream@uchc.edu	860-679-3849
Rebecca Straub, UConn Health Office of the Registrar	registrar@uchc.edu	860-679-2990
Charley Rowland, UConn Health Bursar	chrowland@uchc.edu	860-679-1632
Other useful UConn web addresses		
Academic Calendar	https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar/	
CITI Training	https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/	
HuskyCT	https://lms.uconn.edu/	
To access your uchc.edu email:	https://outlook.office.com/	
PeopleSoft Student Administration System	https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/	
UConn Graduate School Catalog	https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/	
UConn Health Institutional Review Board (IRB)	https://ovpr.uchc.edu/services/rics/hssp/irb/	

Ph.D. Credit Requirements.

The Ph.D. degree requires completion of **60 credits** beyond the Master's degree, consisting of **45 credits** in coursework and **15 credits** of Doctoral Dissertation Research. Degree requirements conform to standards of the UConn Graduate School.

Required courses in Foundational Knowledge (5):

[PUBH 5406](#) or [5460](#); [5434](#) or an advanced statistical elective; [5436](#) or an advanced epidemiology elective; [5453](#); and [6496](#). A student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 with no grade below a "B-

Electives (10): At least one course in each of the following three major categories. All electives require consultation and permission of student's Advisory Committee:

- Population Research Methods
- Biostatistics
- Epidemiology

We highly recommend students pursue specialized courses in their research area, if offered.

Course grades below B- are not counted as credits earned toward the Ph.D. degree and may require a retake for a student to continue in the Program. Courses in our Ph.D. Program typically carry 3 credits, which consist of approximately 45 contact hours per semester (3 hours per week for 15 weeks) and 90-120 hours of related out-of-class work. Failure to remain in good standing will result in a recommendation for remediation or termination from the Program.

Timeline.

All Ph.D. requirements must be completed within **8 years** of the start of matriculation toward the degree.

Ph.D. Admission Criteria.

Admission is competitive and students are selected on the basis of their demonstrated commitment to public health, strong academic preparation and relevant experience. In addition, our most competitive applicants:

- Hold a Master's degree in a relevant field of study (e.g., psychology, biostatistics, health education), **most preferably an M.P.H.** It is possible, although highly unusual, for a student with an exemplary undergraduate background plus exceptional public health experience (e.g., research publications; professional work) to earn admission into the Ph.D. Program without a prior graduate degree.
- Show evidence of having completed graduate courses with grades of B or better in **at least three of the five core disciplines of public health** (Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Behavioral Sciences, Occupational/Environmental Health, and Health Services Administration). Exceptional candidates who do not meet this criterion will be considered for admission with the expectation that 3-5 core discipline courses will be completed for non-Ph.D. credit, in addition to other credit requirements of the doctoral degree (i.e., credits earned for these prerequisites will not count towards the Ph.D. Program credit total).
- Demonstrate commitment to public health by evidence of at least three years' duration -- through education, professional experience, or significant volunteer contributions. Background or interest in research methods, as evidenced by demonstrated work experience, participation in independent or team-based research, a thesis-based master's degree, description of research interests in the personal statement, or authored publications is highly desirable.
- Competitive applicants will have strong recommendation letters commenting on intellect, academic performance, scientific curiosity, public health commitment, and evidence of trajectory for research independence. Additionally, we weigh the personal essay heavily, and strongly recommend a well-constructed letter discussing pertinent coursework, applied public health experiences, master's thesis experience, current research interests, and, if applicable, your role in research projects and publications.

Application Package.

Application to the UConn Graduate School (<https://grad.uconn.edu/admissions/apply-to-uconn/>) requires a \$75 fee. For preferred consideration, please submit application materials submitted by **DECEMBER 1st**. Applications submitted after the 2nd week of July cannot be considered for fall admission. A complete application includes:

- Official transcripts from each university-level school attended (uploaded).
- Three (3) current letters of reference from faculty or others who can address your potential for success in the Doctoral Program in Public Health.
- Personal statement of intent expressing your reasons for applying to our program, your educational and professional goals, and a description of all relevant research and professional experiences to date. This statement should also include a suggestion of 2-3 members of our faculty whose work most interests you and who might serve as academic advisors.
- Submission of GRE scores is **not** required.
- Residence affidavit for determination of in-state/out-of-state tuition status.

International Applicants.

- Those whose native language is not English must submit English proficiency scores on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). A minimum TOEFL score of 600 (paper) or 250 (computer) is required for admission. The TOEFL should be taken well in advance of the admission deadlines to assure consideration for the requested admit term. Copies of score reports sent to students are acceptable. The IELTS test is also acceptable. To have TOEFL scores included with an application, use institution code 3915.
- For detailed information about the student Visa application process and forms, please see this link: <https://health.uconn.edu/human-resources/services/international-office/department-information/department-information-f-1-student-visa>
- The following documents to be finalized in order to matriculate into our program: Passport, F-1 Visa, I-94 and I-20. Please review the F-1 Checklist for instructions. <https://health.uconn.edu/human-resources/wp-content/uploads/sites/24/2019/07/OPTChecklistforStudents2019.pdf>
- Please be aware that our Program guarantees only of **one year** of assistantship funding. In the first year, the student and program will work together to seek financial support through faculty grant funds. When completing the **International Student Financial Declaration Form I-20 Visa** prior to the first year, you are free to select the **“One-Year”** option. Please keep in mind, this form will then need to be updated and resubmitted in order to document changes in financial support -- in every subsequent year, as needed. You also have the option to select **“Entire Stay”** should you have documentation of personal funds to cover the entire program. Our program typically takes 5-6 years to complete post-master’s degree, so we recommend specifying **6 years** when answering the **“Length of Program.”** All required forms should be submitted to our Program Coordinator who will forward to the appropriate staff. Please consult the F-1 Checklist for assistance.

Review of Applications.

Applications to our program are first screened by UConn Graduate School and our program staff to ensure that minimum requirements for admission are met. Applicants who fail to meet these requirements are notified why their application will not be considered for admission. Complete applications will be forwarded to our Admissions Committee for full review.. The committee evaluates potential applicants on the totality of the criteria listed above, so that a weakness in one area may be outweighed by strengths in other areas. An interview with faculty and members of the Admissions Committee is required. Final acceptance is dependent on finding an appropriate faculty mentor for your doctoral work. We conduct **rolling admissions** and, therefore, review of applications cease when we have reached our cohort number. With rare exceptions, admitted students start in the Fall semester .

Ph.D. Tuition and Fees.

Information regarding tuition and fee schedules for a particular semester is available on the UConn Health Bursar’s Office website at the Graduate School (see: <https://health.uconn.edu/graduate-school/admissions/bursar/>). Graduate tuition and fees per 3-credit course for 2023-24 is \$3,508 (in-state) or \$7,159 (out-of-state). Tuition and fees of students enrolled in 9+ credits per semester for 2023-24 is \$9,784 (in-state) or \$20,740 (out-of-state). Tuition waivers may be available to persons affiliated with the National Guard, Veterans, persons 62+ years of age, September 11th victim’s families or UConn or Connecticut State employees.

Course payment is due by the Friday before the start of the semester (August 25, 2023). A late payment fee of \$150 is payable by all graduate students whose tuition and fees are not paid in full on the published fee bill due date. If after Day 10 of the semester, your bill remains unpaid you will be assessed a second \$150 late fee. Checks returned by the bank for any reason are considered a late payment. Additionally, students will have services, such as class registration, denied if all fees have not been paid by the due date. If a student enrolled in the tuition payment plan fails to make two or more installment payments, or misses their October 20 installment payment, they will be dropped from the payment plan and their delinquent balance will be due immediately. This will result in a financial hold being placed on their account and they will be subject to a \$150 late fee. Payment of tuition and fees by credit card or e-check can be done online. Log onto the PeopleSoft Student Administration System (<https://studentadmin.uconn.edu/>) and enter your NetID and password. Select ‘SA Self Service’, then ‘Finances’ and ‘Make a payment.’

Failure to receive a bill does not relieve a student of responsibility for payment of fees by the specified due date. To avoid incurring late fees and potential discontinuation from the Graduate School and Programs, students must

register by the last day to register for Fall and Spring semesters (NOTE: The last day to register, drop or withdraw from a course without a 'W' on your transcript, and the last day to add a course without permission of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School can be found on the academic calendar (see: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar/>). Students with outstanding balances will have a 'Bursar Hold' placed on accounts, thus preventing them from accessing class registration, recreation services, transcripts and other services.

Assistantships.

Our Program guarantees assistantship funding only for the first year. The student and program will work together during the first year to seek financial support through faculty grant funds. A limited number of teaching assistantships are available.

Ph.D. Customary Course Load.

Full-time status is defined as 9 credits or more in a semester. Students holding graduate assistantships must register for 6 or more credits per semester to be considered full-time students. After successful completion of the General Examination (see below), a student's credit load includes Dissertation Research (see specific courses below). The holder of a **full assistantship** devotes one-half of available time during the week to studies and one-half (approximately 20 hours per week) to assistantship duties, whereas the holder of a **half assistantship** ordinarily devotes three-quarters of available time to studies and one-quarter (approximately 10 hours per week) to assistantship duties. Assistantships are not available for less than 10 hours per week or for those who are employed external to the program. To expand the number of paid work hours or to seek additional outside employment, students with assistantships **must** request approval from the Dr. Helen Swede. Per University stipulations, these extensions are rare, and typically approved for only advanced students with proven high performance.

Ph.D. Advisement.

Major advisors play a crucial role in Ph.D. study, serving as a student's mentor, advisor, and sometimes, project supervisor. The Program will assign you a major advisor based on mutual research interests. Meetings with your major advisor should be frequent, collegial, goal-oriented and productive. From your first semester in the Program, through your General Examination and Dissertation, your major advisor will be your key ally. His or her time commitment to you will vary according to your progress and changing needs. If you work as a graduate or research assistant in your advisor's research group, you can expect to spend more time with your major advisor, since he or she will be supervising your work product.

Major advisors must be UConn faculty appointed to the Public Health area of study. Students holding graduate research assistantships with a faculty member, most likely have that faculty member as a major advisor. Some students do not hold graduate assistantships because they are already involved in active research programs that they anticipate continuing for their doctoral research. Other students do not have a specific idea of their research interests at the start of their studies. Don't worry! You will start out with an assigned major advisor and can change advisors as your direction becomes clear.

The faculty composition of your advisory committee will vary somewhat depending on the program milestone in which you are engaged (e.g., General Examination, Dissertation Proposal) – Please refer to the Guidelines for Advisory Committee Structure document on the Program webpage.

For students working full-time outside our Program or University, care must be taken, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STUDENT'S DISSERTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE, that the dissertation research project does not overlap with specific job duties.

It is the student's responsibility to request an initial appointment with your major advisor, and to take the lead in scheduling meetings at regular intervals. It is the major advisor's responsibility to make time for you, and to be available on an *ad hoc* basis. Students may change advisors during their time of study. After discussing the change with a prospective major advisor, students must submit a Change of Major Advisor Form (at <https://registrar.uconn.edu/forms/#>) to Holly Samociuk (at samociuk@uchc.edu) who will review and forward the document to the Graduate School. Occasionally, the process of changing advisors occurs under stressful circumstances or unexpected events, so remember that Dr. Helen Swede will help you secure the signatures you need in a timely manner. We recommend that you become familiar with the research, advising styles, and professional interests of faculty members, that you talk to students, go to faculty presentations, public lectures and symposia, and that you work with your ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHAIR. Each faculty member in Public Health has well-established skills and interests. Be aware that you should expect to match your research goals to your advisor's research goals, rather than the reverse. Seeking a good match is a top priority for doctoral students!

Eligible Ph.D. Advisors		
Department of Public Health Sciences Faculty		
Angela Bermúdez-Millán, Ph.D., M.P.H.	bermudez-millan@uchc.edu	Nutrition & health policy
Stacey Brown, Ph.D.	stbrown@uchc.edu	Health sociology, public health practice
Mary Elizabeth Bruder, Ph.D.	bruder@uchc.edu	Developmental disabilities & early intervention
Douglas Brugge, Ph.D., M.S.	brugge@uchc.edu	Occupational & environmental health
Jennifer Cavallari, Sc.D., C.I.H.	cavallari@uchc.edu	Occupational & environmental epidemiology
Audrey Chapman, Ph.D., M.Div., S.T.M.	achapman@uchc.edu	Humanities & bioethics
Shayna Cunningham, M.H.S., Ph.D.	scunningham@uchc.edu	Child/maternal health; Global health
Ellis Dillon, Ph.D.	edillon@uchc.edu	Health systems/Services research
Wenji Gan, Ph.D.	wgan@uchc.edu	Statistical methods
James Grady, Dr.P.H.	jgrady@uchc.edu	Statistical methods
David Gregorio, Ph.D., M.S.	gregorio@uchc.edu	Disease surveillance; Cancer epidemiology
Kristin Guertin, Ph.D.	kguertin@uchc.edu	Epidemiology
Amy Hunter, Ph.D., M.P.H.	amhunter@uchc.edu	Injury control; Epidemiology
Youngi Jo, Ph.D.	jo@uchc.edu	Infectious disease epidemiology, Health systems/services
Chia-Ling Kuo, Ph.D.	kuo@uchc.edu	Statistical methods
Zita Lazzarini, J.D., M.P.H.	lazzarini@uchc.edu	Public health law
Bing Lu, M.D., Dr.P.H.	blu@uchc.edu	Epidemiology
Tara Lutz, Ph.D., M.P.H., CHES	lutz@uchc.edu	Developmental disabilities; Health education & promotion
Megan O'Grady, Ph.D.	ogradey@uchc.edu	Health systems/services research
T. Greg Rhee, Ph.D., M.S.W.	rhee@uchc.edu	Health systems/services research; Economics
Helen Swede, Ph.D.	swede@uchc.edu	Cancer epidemiology and prognosis; Genetics
Howard Tennen, Ph.D.	tennen@uchc.edu	Health psychology
Misti Levy Zamora, Ph.D.	mzamora@uchc.edu	Environmental health
Emeritus/Retired Public Health Sciences Faculty		
Thomas Babor, Ph.D.	babor@uchc.edu	Health psychology, Addiction sciences
Bonnie McRee, Ph.D.	mcree@uchc.edu	Addiction sciences
Stephen Schensul, Ph.D.	schensul@uchc.edu	Medical anthropology
Jane Ungemack, Dr.P.H.	ungemack@uchc.edu	Health systems/services research; Substance abuse
External UConn Health and UConn Storrs Faculty		
Sarita Arteaga, D.M.D., M.A.G.D.	arteaga@uchc.edu	Oral rehabilitation; biomaterials
David Banach, M.D., M.P.H.	dbanach@uchc.edu	Infection control & prevention
Grace Chan, Ph.D.	gchan@uchc.edu	Statistical methods; Mental health, addiction, & psychiatry
Alicia Dugan, Ph.D.	dugan@uconn.edu	Organizational/industrial psychology
Richard Fortinsky, Ph.D.	fortinsky@uchc.edu	Aging & health care
Jennifer Garza, Sc.D.	garza@uchc.edu	Ergonomics, occupational health & safety
Brenda Kurz, Ph.D.	brenda.kurz@uconn.edu	Prenatal depression
Julie Robison, Ph.D.	jrobison@uchc.edu	Aging & health care
William Shaw, Ph.D.	wshaw@uchc.edu	Program evaluation
Susan Schmeiser J.D., Ph.D.	susan.schmeiser@uconn.edu	Family law
Sarah Willen, Ph.D., M.P.H.	sarah.willen@uconn.edu	Global health & human rights
Zhao Helen Wu, Ph.D.	zhu@uchc.edu	Substance abuse & health disparities

Transfer of Credits or Advanced Standing.

The Graduate School customarily allows up to six (6) credits to be transferred from another academic institution. Such transfer is permitted when the student has “demonstrated the ability to do acceptable graduate work at the University of Connecticut,” and the credits meet the following criteria:

- Credits are from an accredited institution
- Student earned a grade of B or higher the course
- Course contributes to the objectives of the student’s proposed doctoral program; and,
- Student is in good standing at UConn.

Under special circumstances, and with the guidance of committee chair, Ph.D. candidates may petition the Graduate School to accept additional transfer credits.

If you started a doctoral program elsewhere and completed some graduate coursework at other universities or in other departments within UConn, you may be able to use some of the credits you earned or manuscripts from your thesis or dissertation to fulfill some of your requirements for the Ph.D. in Public Health. Decisions concerning these credits will be made by Dr. Helen Swede, Ph.D. Program Coordinator, with input from your Advisory Committee. In most cases, these decisions will be made in concert with filing the formal Plan of Study with the Graduate Records Office.

Alternative to transfer credit, doctoral students with MPH degrees can request up to **six credits of advanced standing**, in which these credits will be waived from your 45-credit coursework requirement. Please email requests to the Dr. Helen Swede, Ph.D. Program Coordinator, including a brief description of your masters degree with 2-4 relevant courses taken, who will forward the request to David Gregorio, PhD, M.S., the Program Director.

Please consult the current Graduate Catalog at <https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/> and the Graduate School website at <https://grad.uconn.edu/> for information and pertinent policies, procedures and forms.

Required courses **must** still be met even if you transfer courses or receive a credit waiver.

Ph.D. Continuous Registration.

Remember, after you finish your all required and elective coursework, you must maintain continuous registration throughout your enrollment at the University. Continuous registration means enrolling in a course every Fall and Spring semester in a degree-bearing program. Failing to register every spring and fall will inactivate your registration and other student accounts (e.g., library privileges, email, etc.); reinstatement will require payment of any fees in arrears and a separate reinstatement fee. If you have been discontinued for more than one semester, you will have to reapply to the Program again.

After passing your General Examination, there are two options to maintain continuous registration:

- **Doctoral Dissertation Research (GRAD 6950):** Research efforts of doctoral students and is used to meet the fifteen-credit doctoral research requirement. Students taking this course will be assigned a final grade of S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory).
- **Doctoral Dissertation Preparation (GRAD 6999):** A non-credit course to be used to maintain registered status by doctoral students who have reached candidacy (see definition below), have completed the 15 doctoral research credits and who are not registered for any other credit-bearing course.

In addition, students can register for **Special Readings (GRAD 6998):** A non-credit course for which doctoral students must register in cases where their regular program of coursework for credit has been interrupted.

Ph.D. Interim Progress Reports.

At the end of each academic year, students, with their major advisors, will complete the Ph.D. Student Progress Report which summarizes academic progress/deficiencies. Students are expected to initiate the report by submitting a list of their accomplishments to their major advisor. Aspects of the report will address:

- Student needs/deficiencies that may limit progress,
- Student assets/accomplishments that uniquely prepare the student for graduation, and
- Timeline for completing any remaining program requirements.

The Progress Report is a self-evaluation tool for you and your major advisor. It should be completed with ample documentation and submitted as a draft to your major advisor one month before the last day of Spring Term classes

(approximately April 10). Students and their major advisor should review it together. With agreement about its content, both will sign the form and submit it to the Public Health Program Office for inclusion in the student file, with a copy provided to the Program Coordinator.

The Progress Report represents one of many vehicles for communicating with your major advisor about your progress and for seeking feedback. Frequent exchanges about your academic and work performance should be part of the regular interaction between you and your faculty advisors. It is your responsibility to initiate and seek feedback from your major advisor on a regular basis. If disagreements arise with your major advisor regarding your progress, it is best to seek counsel from the Program Coordinator or Director right away.

Program Milestones

UConn Ph.D. Requirements.

While the UConn Graduate School offers doctoral programs much flexibility in designing the curriculum, there also are a number of clear expectations which we have incorporated into our course of study. For reference, please see “Standards and Degree Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree” in the Grad School Handbook. (<http://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/>)

Ph.D. Residency Requirement.

During the second or subsequent years of graduate work in the field, the University of Connecticut Graduate School requires that at least two consecutive semesters must be completed in residence (i.e., as full-time matriculates). Alternatively, this requirement may be met by combining one semester of residence, plus a contiguous, 12-week summer period made up of Summer Sessions I & II or Summer Session IV, if agreed upon by the Advisory Committee and the student. It is left to the Advisory Committee to determine whether a student’s outside employment is a distraction that prevents the student from devoting essentially full-time effort to the planned program. The Advisory Committee will record this determination on the Plan of Study, along with a description of the nature, extent, and period(s) of outside employment during the residence period. The purpose of the Residency Requirement is that graduate students can fulfill the special demands of a doctoral program only by devoting a continuous period of time to concentrated study and research.

Ph.D. Plan of Study.

The Plan of Study must be approved by Storrs before a student is eligible to take the General Examination (see below). The plan summarizes coursework completed and to be taken through completion of the degree. According to the Graduate School, the Plan of Study for Doctor of Philosophy (see: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/forms/#>), “must be prepared, signed by the student and members of the Advisory Committee, and submitted to the Graduate School for approval by the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty Council when the student has completed not more than 45 credits of coursework to be applied to the degree.” Customarily, doctoral students submit their plans to the Graduate School when around **75% of course credits** have been successfully completed. The Graduate School will not review plans if less than 18 credits have been earned. In developing your Plan of Study, your advisor will help you select courses that are consistent with your academic goals and will be at the 5,000 level or higher. Fifteen (15) credits of GRAD 6950 must be listed on the Plan of Study, representing the research effort devoted to the dissertation. Listed on the Plan of Study are courses completed and to be taken adding to the total of 45 required credits. If advanced standing credits have been awarded, a note signifying the number of credits approved will be written at the top of the Plan of Study by the Program staff. If courses from another institution were approved by the Program to be transferred, they should be listed in the body of the form. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the specific course requirements have been met. Please send the Plan of Study to Holly Samociuk (samociuk@uchc.edu) to review. She will file a copy and forward the completed form to the Graduate School.

Ph.D. General Examination.

As stated, doctoral students may sit for this exam once their Plan of Study has been approved by the Graduate School. The General Examination for the Ph.D. in Public Health has multiple objectives. It demonstrates your acquisition of public health knowledge, applying this knowledge under various scenarios, analytic skills and critical thinking ability, while also reflecting your unique background and goals. The General Examination serves an educational function, not simply an assessment, for the student. Those who successfully complete General Examination requirements are deemed ready to engage in **independent** dissertation research. The program strongly encourages students to consult with their advisors, other faculty, and advanced students regarding strategies to prepare for the examination (e.g., review of completed course materials, reading articles in your field, formatting, etc.).

Process:

- Your Major Advisor manages the General Examination procedures, soliciting topic areas from the student and committee members, scheduling phases of the exam, receiving grades and evaluations from the faculty, chairing oral exam, and signing forms that report the outcome of the exam to the Graduate School.
- General Examination Committee is comprised of a student's Advisory Committee and two additional UConn faculty members, who can be outside the public health sciences department. The Graduate School requires no fewer than 5 faculty members.
- The exam may take a variety of formats regarding time to completion (1-3 weeks); type (i.e., proctored, take home); and, may include, but not be limited to, papers, special projects, take-home exams, and other types of written examination. Preparation of a research proposal is an option for the General Examination, but strict care should be taken that it does not replicate the intended dissertation topic to avoid overlap with the Dissertation Proposal approval process. The Program strongly encourages that the exam include a section testing acquisition and application of foundational and specialized knowledge.
- The exam should result in the equivalent of 25-30 pages of content.
- As the first step, the student will submit a formal write-up to the Major Advisor outlining suggested topics to be covered and a timeline. For the process to work optimally, you should interact with your major advisor on a frequent basis.
- While student input is requested, the Major Advisor and General Examination Committee have wide latitude over format and content.
- The Major Advisor presents the final proposal to the General Examination committee for comment and approval. As needed, the student changes the proposals to reflect modifications from committee. Approval of the proposal by committee members should be recorded by an email.
- The committee should develop a standardized evaluation sheet for grading the exam. (See Helen Swede, Ph.D. for examples).
- Once the written exam is passed, the Major Advisor schedules the oral examination. The committee might request modifications, however, to the answers prior to scheduling the Oral Defense.
- When the examination and defense has been completed to the satisfaction of the Advisory Committee, the approval form should be signed and submitted to the Graduate School. Report on the General Examination for the Doctoral Degree" form (see: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/forms/#>)

Additional information in the Graduate Catalog: <https://gradcatalog.uconn.edu/grad-school-info/academic-regulations/>

Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal.

Students should anticipate that the dissertation process represents at least one year of full-time graduate study. In carrying out the dissertation, students must demonstrate breadth and depth in comprehension of the relevant professional literature, their ability to develop theoretical approaches, skill in synthesizing information in original and complex ways, and mastery of research methodology. The dissertation is not to be completed in isolation from faculty mentors/advisors, but rather in cooperative effort in which the members of their committee provide frequent and significant input at all stages of project execution. Students are encouraged to benefit from the support and advice of their committee and keep the lines of communication open throughout the dissertation research process. That said, the dissertation is to represent the student's independent thinking and implementation. We recommend that students draft solutions, whenever possible, to problems they encounter prior to consulting their advisors. The following reflects a common and recommended timeline for students to complete their Ph.D. degree requirements. Specific Graduate School deadline dates for each academic year can be found at <https://registrar.uconn.edu/academic-calendar/>.

There are no specifications regarding the format of the prospectus other than requiring a 10–20-page document describing the 'blueprint' of the research and analysis methodology, along with a summary literature review and scientific rationale. Statistical power analysis should be included, if appropriate.

External Review of Proposal.

The University requires a review of the prospective by experts in the field before the student can proceed to the Oral Defense of the proposal. The prospectus must be approved by the full committee before sending out for the External Review. Please send the Ph.D. Program Coordinator a pdf of the approved proposal, along with 2-4 suggestions for reviewers, including their email addresses, and the Ph.D. Program Coordinator will communicate with them. It is optional for the student or Major Advisor to contact potential reviewers ahead of time, but reviewers should have no

prior interactions with student or advisors about the proposed research project. Indicate in the email that the committee has approved the proposal, and cc: committee. Prospectus reviewers should have a Ph.D., Dr.PH., M.D., or an equivalent doctoral degree. The Graduate School encourages that at least one of the External Reviewers be from outside of the university. If there are no major flaws identified by the external reviewers, the oral defense of the proposal may be scheduled.

The following questions taken from the UConn Graduate Catalog will be sent to the External Reviewers for their critique of your proposal, to be completed in a 3-week time period:

- Is the proposal well-written, well-organized, and well-argued?
- Does the proposal describe a project of appropriate scope?
- Does the student demonstrate knowledge of the subject and an understanding of the proposed method of investigation?
- Does the student show awareness of the relevant research by others?
- Does the student consider how the proposed investigation, if successful, will contribute to knowledge?

Oral Defense of Prospectus.

Our program has selected **Option #2** from the Graduate School's list of choices on the 'Dissertation Proposal for the Doctoral Degree' form, which is an oral presentation to both Advisory Committee and external. Major and Associate Advisors along with the two External Reviewers should attend (phone or in person). It would be desirable to have both External Reviewers attend but that might be challenging logistically, so we strongly encourage that at least one should attend by phone or in person. Please be sure the Program Coordinator attends the oral defense in order to sign the approval form before you can submit it to Storrs. Please provide the program (samociuk@uchc.edu) with the signed form along with pdfs of the proposal and IRB Letter of Approval. **Storrs will not approve the dissertation proposal without an IRB approval letter.** Start working on the IRB submission as soon as you can – can take 2 to 3 months to obtain approval.

Dissertation Research.

Upon approval of the prospectus by the Graduate School, the student is now considered a Candidate for the Ph.D. degree. Regular meetings of the student and advisor are strongly encouraged in order to enhance the learning process and to avoid serious consequences from the inevitable bumps in the road. Regular communication with the Advisory Committee is likewise suggested. As a mark of growing independence, the student should take responsibility to initiate these discussions. In the supervisory role, the advisor is responsible for the overall integrity of the research. See courses (above) required to enroll in order to complete the 15 credits of dissertation or maintain continuous standing at UConn.

Format of Dissertation.

The Program has no formal requirements but encourages the manuscript/chapter approach consisting of 3-4 specific chapters structured for submission as manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal. This approach also includes chapters that cover a comprehensive expository of the literature and pertinent historical context that links the papers together; and, a concluding chapter addressing contributions to the field, strengths and limitations of the dissertation, public health implications and recommendations for future research. It is the prerogative of the Advisory Committee to determine if the papers are to be submitted or published as a condition of graduation. Our program is highlighting the chapter format due to the growing necessity for evidence of leadership publications by applicants for post-doctoral positions and other employment. The classical dissertation may be more suitable for certain research projects (e.g., an entirely novel research topic) and would fulfill the requirement for rigorous scholarship. If the classical format is pursued, please describe 2-3 potential publications for future submissions to peer-reviewed journals including additional data collection and/or analyses to be conducted. For either format, a page length of 125-150 is considered the norm.

Typical process for the approval of the dissertation would be:

- Major Advisor approves 'final' version of dissertation.
- Student then sends 'final' version to full committee for comment. Typically, Associate Members are given at least two weeks to review.
- Date for oral defense should be about **one month after** the student submits the final version to their Advisory Committee to allow for addressing comments and requested changes before the defense.
- Announce oral defense in the [University Events Calendar](https://events.uconn.edu/) (at: <https://events.uconn.edu/>) at least two weeks before the date of defense.

- All committee members must approve the dissertation prior to the oral defense.
- With committee approval, the student will upload the dissertation to [Submittable](#) (instructions found in the [Submittable help file](#)), and submit the [Defense and Final Thesis/Dissertation Approval form](#) (this webform accounts for both the final exam and overall approval of the thesis). This online form will route to your major advisor and committee members for approval before notifying the Office of the Registrar's Degree Audit team that you have completed this requirement.

Oral Defense of Dissertation.

This step cannot occur sooner than three months *after* the approval of your proposal by the Graduate School. If you have not been notified by the Graduate School, please follow-up with them. For example, for a May graduation, if your proposal has not been approved by February, you will not be eligible to schedule your oral defense by April. As this step is the final academic examination, we recommend the following order of questioning after the student has completed the slide presentation:

1. Major Advisor
2. Committee Members
3. Other UConn Faculty
4. External Faculty
5. Open to audience
6. Committee convenes in private, and calls back student when a decision is made.
7. Options: Pass, Pass with Minor Changes, Provisional Pass with Major Changes, Fail

Required Attendees at Oral Defense.

A minimum of **five** UConn faculty members, including the Major and all Associate Advisors, must be present and attest to their presence on the final General Examination form. Please contact the Program Coordinator about having a virtual meeting as UConn policies might revert back to in-person only. If your committee does not have a minimum of five UConn faculty, please seek out and invite faculty members to attend your defense. If all committee members cannot attend the oral defense – please complete the Request for Changes in Plan of Study form, as soon as possible, and select another Associate Advisor who can attend. In order to avoid a late change to your advisory committee, please confirm the availability of your full committee for a general block of time in which you anticipate to hold your defense.

Program Notification.

Please send to the program office a formal announcement of your oral defense so that we can invite all students and faculty. We encourage everyone to attend the oral defense to learn about our students' multi-year projects, participate in a community experience, and bid our students farewell and hearty congratulations on this milestone.

Typical Timeline from Start to Finish

Semester	
1-4	Successfully complete formal coursework
2	Prepare Plan of Study with major advisor
3-6	Develop dissertation topic, membership of Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) and prospectus
4	Submit Plan of Study to the Public Health Office
	Assemble General Examination Committee
5	Develop and revise proposal for General Examination
6	Complete written component of General Examination
	Complete oral defense of General Examination
	Submit draft dissertation prospectus to DAC
7	Submit the DAC approved dissertation prospectus to the PhD Program Coordinator, who will administer the external review
	Conduct oral defense of dissertation prospectus with the external reviewers and PhD Program Coordinator in attendance
	Submit dissertation prospectus and IRB Approval Letter to the Public Health Office; they will send to the Graduate School after making a copy for your file
7 & 8	Commence dissertation research in full
8	After final version of dissertation is approved by DAC, file Tentative Approval Page with Graduate School at least 7 days prior to oral defense
	Conduct oral defense of dissertation, which must occur at least three months after approval of dissertation prospectus by Storrs
	Submit dissertation to Submittable , complete Survey of Earned Doctorates , and submit the online Defense and Final Thesis/Dissertation Approval form; forward approval emails, along with an electronic copy of your dissertation to the Program Office.
	Graduation!

University Communications and Email Accounts.

It is important that students routinely monitor email accounts originating at UConn Health and UConn (Storrs). Each uses separate systems to distribute information (e.g., closings, emergencies, etc.) pertinent to their location. Your uconn.edu email should forward automatically to your UConn Health email address (uchc.edu). If you find this has not happened by the 10th day of classes, contact IT Services at techsupport.uconn.edu. They will assist you by chat, phone (860-486-4357) or email at help@uconn.edu. You cannot forward from the UConn Health account to another because of HIPAA and other security concerns.

Background Checks.

Background checks are conducted on all students in accordance with current federal government mandates. The required Background Information Sheet can be found at <https://mph.uconn.edu/forms/>. Completed forms may be emailed to backgrounds@uchc.edu.

University ID.

A student ID is necessary to access portions of the UConn Health and UConn Storrs facilities and services. Procedures for obtaining IDs differ by location:

- UConn Storrs: Students receive an information packet from the Graduate School soon after acceptance to our program. Instructions are provided as to setting up NetID, Photo ID, and email accounts. A NetID is the username and password needed to register for courses, to access materials for courses in which a student is enrolled and other systems/services administered by UConn Storrs. The Storrs Help Desk at 860-486-4357 is available to assist with matters pertaining to a NetID. The UConn Storrs information packet may also contain a medical form. **DO NOT COMPLETE THAT FORM**; a separate UConn Health medical form will be provided by our program.
- UConn Health: Students will receive an information pack from our program prior to Program Orientation in August. Instructions are provided as to setting up email accounts, obtaining a Photo ID, parking pass and documenting health status. The UConn Health Service Desk at 860-679-4400 is available to assist with matters pertaining to UConn Health email accounts.

Immunizations.

State policy requires all degree-seeking students born after December 31, 1956, to present proof of adequate immunization or screening for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, meningitis and tuberculosis. Although you may register for classes without immunization clearance, you may not attend classes; failure to comply with immunization requirements by the 10th day of classes will block you from class. The UConn Health Employee Health Service (EHS), in the Main Building, Room CG228, issues immunization clearance for students. For students with immunization documented by their health care provider, please email or fax the form to: Louisa Pickett at 860-679-4587 or occmedehs@uchc.edu. Students who require vaccinations or TB testing, can obtain such by scheduling appointments with the EHS by calling 860-679-2893 (clinic hours are 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM Monday through Friday).

COVID-19 Protocol.

Students are encouraged to periodically review UConn Health's COVID restrictions to assure a safe productive learning environment. Students on our campus are considered part of the UConn Health workforce, which includes employees and badged non-employees. Students will follow the COVID guidelines on the UConn Health website for employees: <https://health.uconn.edu/covid-provider/>. This site is updated frequently.

COVID Vaccination Reporting.

All graduate students on the UConn Health campus must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with primary series vaccination or apply for and receive a medical or personal exemption before the start of the Fall 2022 semester. You must [log-in](#) to the [Non-Employee Vaccine Registry](#) to report your vaccine status. Reporting your COVID vaccine status is a requirement of working and studying at UConn Health, not only to ensure that you are in compliance with our vaccination policy but also for our federal reporting needs. If you wish to request a deferral or exemption, and information on UConn Health's guidance on deferrals and exemptions, please use the forms on [this site](#).

Health Insurance.

Students are required to have health insurance upon enrolling in our Graduate Program. Those who receive health insurance through a graduate assistantship should go to: <https://hr.uconn.edu/ga-health-insurance/>.

Required Training.

Admitted students must complete online training courses regarding research ethics and conduct as a member of the UConn community. Training must be completed before a student can engage in any research activities; all training modules must be completed by October 15th. Certificates of completion should be sent to Danica Brown (at danbrown@uchc.edu) for inclusion in your academic file. Failure to complete the training could jeopardize your standing in the Graduate School.

- Required web-based CITI Training courses address research, ethics, regulatory oversight, responsible conduct of research, research administration, and other topics pertinent to member organizations and individual learners. Basic training can be accessed: <https://www.citiprogram.org/default.asp>.
- Students are required to be trained on the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), as part of their Annual Compliance Training (at [2022/2023 Compliance Self-Learning Packet \(Non-Clinical\)](#) (most MPH students) or [2022/2023 Compliance Self-Learning Packet \(Clinical\)](#) (Dual degree students).

Library.

Books, periodicals and web-portals are maintained within the Lyman Maynard Stowe Library (see: <https://lib.uconn.edu/health/>). Access to this resource requires persons to possess a valid UConn ID badge and UConn Health email account.

Learning Resources.

UConn Storrs provides a license to O'Reilly Online Learning Resource (at: <https://software.uconn.edu/support/>) that includes over 35,000 eBooks, plus videos. Students with a NetID can access specific books (and within a specific book, once selected, print sections and even download with app for offline use).

Software.

SAS & SPSS, along with other software, are available at no charge from UConn Storrs through a virtual environment providing two different ways to access software remotely from anywhere, at any time on your PC, Mac or iPad. With AnyWare Desktop (formerly called SkyBox), you can connect to a virtual desktop running Windows 10 with all the available software. With AnyWare Apps, you select only the application you wish to use. AnyWare Desktop and Apps are accessed using your NetID at <https://software.uconn.edu/uconn-software-online/>. Every person, with a NetID, also has available to them a P drive, which is a 50G max UConn mapped secure drive.

Currently SAS, SPSS and other software are available for free student download to personal PC devices (see <http://software.uconn.edu/software/>). Microsoft Office is also available at no cost to students at: <https://software.uconn.edu/microsoft-products-students/>.

Student Parking.

All students parking on the UConn Health campus are required to register for a permit, park in their assigned locations, and display a valid hangtag. Permits (\$162.00 annual; \$67.50 fall or spring semesters; \$27.00 summer session) are available through Parking, Transportation & Event Services at 860-679-4248 or parking.transportation@uchc.edu.

UConn Health students are assigned premium parking in Garage 1 on levels 4, 5 and 6. Visiting students may be assigned to an alternative location such as L3 based on current parking demand. Students with a valid UConn Health Student permit and hangtag may park in available spaces after hours during nights and weekends, and also on major holidays only in Lots A1, A4, and A5; West Road; 195 Farmington Avenue (Area 3 spaces only); Cell and Genome Sciences Building (Area 3 only). Parking in unauthorized locations, during unauthorized times and/or without a valid hangtag will result in citations. A campus parking map and forms are available at: <https://health.uconn.edu/park/forms-and-maps/>.

Shuttle service is provided to outer campus locations on Farmington Avenue, Munson Road and South Road. Schedules are posted at: <https://health.uconn.edu/park/shuttle-bus-service/>. UConn students from Storrs or the Regional campuses attending classes at UConn Health (Farmington) should contact Parking, Transportation and Event Services by email at parking.transportation@uchc.edu or by phone at [860-679-4248](tel:860-679-4248) for parking information.

Code of Conduct.

Can be found at <https://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-pdf/>.

Student Rights and Assurances - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.
- The University may disclose Directory Information without a student's prior written consent. The University designates the following as Directory Information: The student's name, University-assigned identifiers (NetID); date of birth; addresses; telephone number; school or college; major field of study; degree sought; expected date of completion of degree requirements and graduation; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; full or part time enrollment status; the previous educational agency or institution attended; class rosters; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of athletic team members and other similar information. Except as noted in point #3 above, the roster for a class will not be released, except to students enrolled that class.
- Students may restrict the release of Directory Information, except to school officials with legitimate educational interests and others as indicated in point #3 above. To do so, a student must make the request in writing to the Office of the Registrar, Wilbur Cross Building, Unit 4077G, Storrs, CT 06269-4077. Once filed, this request becomes a permanent part of the student's record until the student instructs the University, in writing, to have the request removed.

Additional details on FERPA guidelines are available at: <http://www.ferpa.uconn.edu/>, or the U.S. Department of Education Family Policy Compliance Office home page at: <https://www.ed.gov/category/keyword/family-policy-compliance-office-fpco>. Questions regarding FERPA can be directed to the University Registrar: registrar@uconn.edu.

The University of Connecticut is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all of our students, staff, and faculty. As part of that commitment, you are required to complete an online interpersonal violence prevention program, entitled Not Anymore from Student Success™ that addresses issues related to Consent, Bystander Intervention, Sexual Assault, Dating and Domestic Violence, Stalking, and more. *Not Anymore* will help you better understand how vitally important these issues are to creating a safe environment and to our community expectations, and what you can do to help make your campus safer for everyone.

Scholarly Integrity in Graduate Education and Research.

Scholarly activity at the graduate level takes many forms, including, but not limited to, classroom activity, laboratory or field experience, writing for publication, presentation, and forms of artistic expression. Integrity in all of these activities is of paramount importance, and the Graduate School of the University of Connecticut requires that the highest ethical standards in teaching, learning, research, and service be maintained. Scholarly integrity encompasses “both research integrity and the ethical understanding and skill required of researchers/scholars in domestic, international, and multicultural contexts.” It also addresses “ethical aspects of scholarship that influence the next generation of researchers as teachers, mentors, supervisors, and successful stewards of grant funds” (Council of Graduate Schools, *Research and Scholarly Integrity in Graduate Education: A Comprehensive Approach*, 2012).

The Graduate Faculty Council, in accordance with the provisions of its By-Laws, has adopted this policy concerning scholarly integrity in graduate education and research and has approved the procedures set forth herein for addressing alleged violations. The Dean of the Graduate School shall coordinate the reporting, investigation, and determination of alleged breaches of scholarly integrity by graduate students in accordance with this policy. (A graduate student is defined as any individual who holds admission to the Graduate School to pursue either a graduate certificate or graduate degree, as well as any other individual enrolled in a graduate-level course who is not strictly enrolled in an undergraduate degree or an undergraduate certificate program.)

Members of the Graduate Faculty have primary responsibility to foster an environment in which the highest ethical standards prevail. All members of the University community have a responsibility to uphold the highest standards of scholarship, which encompasses activities of teaching, research, and service, and to report any violation of academic integrity of which they have knowledge. Instructors have a responsibility to take reasonable steps to prevent scholarly misconduct in their courses and to inform students of course-specific requirements. *Student misconduct other than scholarly misconduct, as defined herein, is governed by the University's Student Code, which is administered under the direction of the Office of the Provost. Enforcement of its provisions is the responsibility of the Director of Community Standards. At the Health Center, student misconduct other than scholarly misconduct is governed by the Rules of Conduct.*

Scholarly misconduct is broadly defined as a failure to uphold standards of scholarly integrity in teaching, learning, research, or service. For the purpose of this Policy, scholarly misconduct shall be deemed to include, but not be limited to, the following types of misconduct. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but does identify major categories of scholarly misconduct, and provides illustrations where appropriate.

- *Cheating* involves dishonesty during a course, on an examination required for a particular degree, or at other times during graduate study, e.g., copying the work of another student.
- *Plagiarism* involves using another person's language, thoughts, data, ideas, expressions, or other original material without acknowledging the source (adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators, *Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices*, 2003).
- *Distorted reporting* involves "any omission or misrepresentation of the information necessary and sufficient to evaluate the validity and significance of research, at the level appropriate to the context in which the research is communicated" (D. Fanelli, *Nature* 494:149; 2013).
- *Fabrication or Falsification of Grades* involves any form of falsification of coursework or tampering with grades, e.g., a student making unauthorized changes to her/his own grades or an instructor consciously misreporting grades of students.
- *Misrepresentation* involves taking an examination for another student, submitting work done by another individual as one's own, submitting the same work for evaluation in two or more courses without prior approval, unauthorized use of previously completed work or research for a thesis, dissertation, or publication, or making false, inaccurate, or misleading claims or statements when applying for admission to the Graduate School or in any scholarly or research activity, including publication.
- *Academic or Research Disruption* involves unauthorized possession, use, or destruction of examinations, library materials, laboratory or research supplies or equipment, research data, notebooks, or computer files, or it might involve tampering with, sabotage of, or piracy of computer hardware, computer software, or network components.
- *Fabrication or Falsification in Research* involves falsification of, tampering with, or fabricating results or data.
- *Research Violations* include violation of protocols governing the use of human or animal subjects, breaches of confidentiality, obstruction of the research progress of another individual, or disregard for applicable University, local, State, or federal regulations.
- *Professional Misconduct* involves violation of standards governing the professional conduct of students in particular fields (e.g., pharmacy, nursing, education, counseling, therapy).
- *Deliberate Obstruction* involves hindering investigation of any alleged act of scholarly misconduct.
- *Aiding or Abetting* involves actions that assist or encourage another individual to plan or commit any act of scholarly misconduct.

Allegations of scholarly misconduct will be addressed in accordance with the procedures set forth by UConn (See: <https://grad.uconn.edu/faculty-staff-resources/advising-mentoring/scholarly-misconduct/>).