

Community Research and Action

College of Community and Public Affairs
Binghamton University
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Doctoral Student Handbook



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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION	4
NON-MATRICULATED STUDENTS	6
GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND FINANCIAL AID	6
EXPECTATIONS FOR FULLY-FUNDED DOCTORAL STUDENTS	7
CCPA ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	8
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH	9
RESOURCES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS	9
GRADUATE SCHOOL MANUAL	9
BRIGHTSPACE	10
DOCTORAL STUDENT WORKROOM	10
SECURE DATA OFFICE	10
STAFF/FACULTY LOUNGE	10
LUNCH AND LEARN EVENTS	10
ADVISING AND MENTORING	11
PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE	12
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES	12
UNIVERSITY-WIDE FORMS AND APPLICATIONS	14
OVERVIEW OF DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	15
MILESTONE 1: SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ALL COURSE REQUIREMENTS	16
COURSE SUBSTITUTION OR WAIVER REQUESTS	18
INDEPENDENT STUDIES	18
REGISTRATION, CREDIT LOADS, AND ACADEMIC STATUS	19
CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION AND LEAVES OF ABSENCES	20
GRADING PROCEDURES	21
PRE-DISSERTATION AND DISSERTATION CREDITS	22
MILESTONE 2: SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	23
STEP 1: ESTABLISHING A FACULTY ADVISOR/COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION CHAIR	23

STEP 2: DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR COMPLETING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	24
STEP 3: SELECTING COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS	25
STEP 4: CHOOSING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OPTION	25
STEP 5: COMPLETING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	27
STEP 6: RECEIVING FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION OF THE SUBMITTED WORK	27
NEXT STEPS AFTER PASSING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION	29
ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY	29
MILESTONES 3 & 4: PROPOSE AND SUCCESSFULLY DEFEND A DISSERTATION	30
DISSERTATION FORMATS	30
PROPOSAL DEFENSE MEETING	30
OUTSIDE EXAMINER	31
DISSERTATION DEFENSE	32
REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN DISSERTATION DEFENSES	33
FINAL COPY OF DISSERTATION	34
GRADUATE APPLICATION FOR DEGREE	34
Appendix A- Doctoral Student Scholarly Activities & Opportunities to Look For	35
Appendix B- Independent Study Guidelines & Approval Form	37
Appendix C- Milestone Checklist Overview	40

INTRODUCTION

The Community Research and Action Doctoral Program prepares students for academic, practitioner, or policy-related careers as public scholars focused on addressing critical community issues. It recognizes that the applied research community is strengthened by the integration of diverse theories and research methods to conquer issues such as inequitable health care access, educational inequality, structural and systemic racism, and poverty. The curriculum draws from varied disciplines (e.g., anthropology, criminology, geography, sociology and psychology) to prepare scholars to conduct rigorous research on the dynamic interplay among individuals, the organizations serving them, and the communities in which they are embedded. Students entering the program typically have several years of professional experience in one or more fields including education, counseling, human services, public administration, social work and student affairs administration as well as a commitment to social justice, health and wellbeing, human rights, public service, social welfare and/or community transformation. Upon completion of the doctorate, scholars go on to leadership roles in higher education, school districts, and non-profit agencies.

Doctoral students in the program are guided to conceptualize their research topics across multiple levels of analysis (individual, organizational, community and societal), emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary approaches for community inquiry. Within this work, students are encouraged to investigate issues of race, class, sexuality, faith, tradition, ethnicity, gender and ability. Community-based research methods (e.g., social network analysis, critical ethnography, geographic information systems, multilevel structural equation modeling, and youth-led participatory action research) are also a unique focus within the program. In all courses, the program emphasizes the importance of researchers working in collaboration with communities while seeking understanding and solutions.

During their program, doctoral students are encouraged to collaborate with faculty to develop research studies that advance individual, organizational and/or community health and wellness, build empowerment, and seek social justice. Working alongside faculty in schools and communities, as well as on college campuses, students in the program research issues such as local food insecurity, college-student drinking, and mental health care for refugees. Appendix A provides a list of activities doctoral students are encouraged to engage in throughout their program, such as joining professional research organizations, attending and presenting at national research conferences, and authoring research papers in peer-reviewed journals.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Applicants for the doctoral program should have completed a master's degree in counseling, human development, psychology, public administration, social work, sociology, political science, student affairs, education, or another related social science discipline or profession. Candidates may be completing their master's degree at the time of application, with the expectation that all master's degree requirements will be completed prior to the start of the doctoral coursework if accepted.

Students are admitted to the program once per year. Applications received by **January 15** will be given full consideration for admission and funding the following fall. Applications received after this date will be given equal consideration, but support can only be given to the extent funds are available. Applications received **after May 1** will be moved to the next application cycle. Completed applications for admission to the doctoral

program must follow the guidelines outlined by the Graduate School at Binghamton University (<https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/>).

The Doctoral Program Committee evaluates applications for admission into the CRA Program and provides recommendations for funding and assistantships. Competitive funding packages may include tuition, annual stipend, and comprehensive health insurance for highly qualified candidates who intend to study full-time. Individuals who would like to pursue the degree on a part-time basis may also apply, although courses are typically only offered during the day.

Applications must include:

1. Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate level coursework.
2. A recently updated curriculum vitae or résumé.
3. Written statement of approximately 2-3 (single-spaced) pages that describes:
(a) the applicant's training and professional background as well as interest in issues facing communities; (b) research interests and associated relationships(s) to social justice, health and well-being, human rights, public service, social welfare and/or community transformation; (c) career goals (academic, research or policy-related) associated with pursuing a research degree; and (d) two or three faculty members in the College of Community and Public Affairs who could be potential advisors and why.
4. Three letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic background and record that address potential for advanced graduate study.
5. If an international student, proof of English proficiency and immigration and financial documentation. See the Graduate School website for updated information.

Applicants are typically notified in writing via email of final admissions decisions in mid-February to early March. Admissions decisions are separate from funding decisions, which come later (typically mid-March to mid-April).

Provisional admission: On rare occasions, an applicant whose credentials are incomplete may be admitted provisionally. (Normally, an applicant will not be provisionally admitted if more than one of the required credentials is missing.) Once the missing documentation is received, it will be reviewed by the graduate program and the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions. If approved by both, the status will be changed to a regular admit by the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions. All missing documentation should be submitted before the student initially enrolls. For unusual circumstances and with approval by the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions, the missing documentation may be submitted during the student's first semester. Students under provisional admission will not be allowed to register for subsequent semesters or graduate until they have provided specific documentation and their status has been changed to "regular."

Conditional admission: On rare occasions, students who do not meet academic requirements for admission, as determined by the graduate program and the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions, may be admitted conditionally, with the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions' approval. The Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions will not approve a recommendation of conditional admit if the applicant's credentials are incomplete. Graduate programs may recommend admittance and the conditions. It is expected that specific conditions for admission to regular status beginning in the second semester, and a

timetable for fulfilling those conditions, will be communicated in writing by the program to the student at the time of conditional admission. Normally a student can only be a "conditional admit" for the first semester. After the first semester, the program will review the student's progress toward satisfying those conditions. If they are not met, the program will recommend appropriate action by the Office of Graduate Recruitment and Admissions. Per federal regulations, international students cannot be granted conditional admission.

Please note: Students who have a felony or child abuse conviction are advised that their prior criminal history may impede their ability to complete the requirements of some licensure programs and/or to meet licensure requirements. If you have concerns about this, you are advised to contact the graduate program director. Felony or child abuse convictions may also impede securing authorization for research in some settings.

NON-MATRICULATED STUDENTS

Individuals curious about doctoral-level work, but not ready to commit to fully), may elect to apply as a non-matriculated student, completing up to 6 credits prior to completing the full admissions review process. Complete information about the application process is available on the Graduate Admissions website (www.binghamton.edu/admissions/graduate/apply/nondegree.html). Individuals interested in this pathway **must** meet with the CRA Doctoral Program Director to identify appropriate courses for enrollment.

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND FINANCIAL AID

Applicants and currently enrolled doctoral students may be eligible for financial awards to cover the costs of tuition and to provide a stipend to help defray the living costs. Typically, these awards include an appointment as a Graduate Assistant (GA) or a Teaching Assistant (TA). **These awards are merit-based and competitive.** In general, these awards provide recipients with a full tuition scholarship, as well as an academic year (10-month) stipend. In exchange, GAs are expected to work 20 hours per week during the term of their appointment (semester or academic year) under the direction of assigned faculty members or in a program office; TAs are expected to provide instruction or to assist with the instruction of assigned courses. The CRA Doctoral Program Director works with the Dean's office to make both GA and TA assignments.

For some appropriately qualified individuals, the Clifford D. Clark Diversity Fellowship for Graduate Students may be an appropriate avenue for funding doctoral work. Named for a former president of the university (1975-1990), and funded by the State University of New York and an endowment fund, the Clark Diversity Fellowships are merit-based and designed to recruit and support students who have been admitted to graduate study and contribute to the diversity of the student body. The funding package includes academic year stipends, full tuition scholarships, research and travel opportunities, and other benefits. Clark Fellows are guaranteed to receive this support for 3 years, assuming satisfactory academic progress. Applicants who feel this opportunity might be appropriate for them should contact the CRA Doctoral Program Director to discuss the recommendation process.

During the admissions process, application essays and other materials are used to great extent to determine who will be awarded with a GAship or other fellowship. Research interests, writing skills, and prior academic performance all go into determining who to award these prestigious positions. Applicants interested in these opportunities should identify within their application materials a desire to engage in full-time studies and meet with the CRA Doctoral Program Director in advance to discuss opportunities.

Renewal or continuation of assistantship awards for second and subsequent semesters will be contingent on availability of funds and operational needs, as well as on satisfactory performance of assistantship duties and satisfactory academic progress. All awards are renewed on a competitive basis and are granted for a maximum of two semesters at a time during a given academic year. Students will sign Terms and Conditions for Graduate/Teaching Assistant Employment before beginning their assistantship which will include specific information about performance measurement. Failure to meet these requirements could result in a temporary hold on your paycheck or termination of your assistantship. Expectations about vacations and leave for personal illness can be found on the Human Resources website (www.binghamton.edu/offices/human-resources/employees/current-employees/leave/ga-ta.html).

All domestic graduate students are encouraged to complete the [Free Application for Financial Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) form. The recommended deadline for completing the FAFSA is March 1. All tuition scholarship support is used to establish financial aid loan and [Federal Work Study](#) eligibility. Students who have applied for financial aid assistance should be aware that a tuition award and/or a fellowship award will affect the amount of loan eligibility. For more information about student financial aid eligibility or other financial aid related questions, contact the Office of Financial Aid Services at finaid@binghamton.edu. Several federal Work-Study positions are also available on campus for graduate students who qualify on the basis of financial need. This program is open only to U.S. citizens and permanent residents of the United States. Scholarships may also be available to qualified students and often require completion of the FAFSA for screening. Please contact the CRA program director for more information about university, college, and program scholarships and associated eligibility criteria.

International teaching assistants should meet the English-language proficiency level (e.g., minimum score in TOEFL/IELTS/ESL tests) required by Binghamton University.

EXPECTATIONS FOR FULLY-FUNDED DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Doctoral students awarded GA or TA positions are assigned in a number of ways. For instance, faculty members who have been awarded grants may seek the support of doctoral students. Another opportunity may be to work with an assistant professor (i.e., faculty members who are within their first six years of a tenure-line position) as they typically are assigned GAs to support their research and teaching. On occasion, doctoral students may be asked to teach a course within their area of expertise. In making assignments, the CRA Doctoral Program Director considers a number of factors, such as areas of research interest, professional background, and methodological skill. Doctoral students with specific requests will be taken into advisement, but cannot be guaranteed. In addition, although it is preferred that positions do not change after assignment sometimes there does need to be a shift in assignments.

Once a doctoral student receives information about an assignment, they should contact the faculty member regarding the expectations for activities. Faculty members may involve a GA in research-related activities such as retrieving materials from the library, coding data, conducting interviews, downloading articles, etc. Faculty members may also ask their GA to assist with teaching-related responsibilities, such as finding materials, copying/scanning articles, or grading assignments. Regardless of the activity, it is expected GAs will complete in a professional manner, asking questions for clarification as necessary.

To complete assigned activities, GAs and TAs should take advantage of the Doctoral Student Workroom. **It is expected that all full-time, funded doctoral students will spend at least 1-day per week (approx. 8 hours) in the workroom during normal business hours (i.e., 8am-5pm).** In addition, GAs should consult with their assigned faculty members regarding a schedule for meeting times and their preference for where/when work is completed.

At the start of the academic year, GAs and TAs must meet with their assigned faculty members/programs to develop a *consistent* schedule for meeting the 20-hour per week expectation (if assigned to two faculty members, the 20-hours should be split into 10-hours per faculty member). Each week, GAs/TAs will be expected to report (a) hours worked, (b) tasks worked on, and (c) any tasks completed and ready for review. To this, GAs/TAs will prepare a Google Sheet and share it with the appropriate faculty member or department chair (if assigned as a TA), as well as with the CRA Doctoral Program Director.

In addition to the GA responsibilities, full-time, funded doctoral students are expected to attend the weekly “**Lunch and Learn**” events held **Thursdays from 12-1pm (preferably in-person)**, typically held in UDC-201.

CCPA ETHICS AND INTEGRITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As a professional school within Binghamton University, CCPA is committed to upholding the highest professional standards of ethics and integrity. Such standards are the core of any community-based or public-affairs profession. The core ethical principles which govern the decisions of the Academic E&I Committee include:

1. **Individual Rights, Responsibilities and Accountability.** We are responsible, as individuals and as professionals, to our students, colleagues, institution, community, and society.
2. **Mutual Respect.** We recognize and honor the rights and dignity of all individuals and groups.
3. **Honesty.** We are guided in all activities for high regard for the truth.
4. **Integrity.** We behave in a trustworthy manner to promote ethical practice and maintain the confidence placed in us by the public.
5. **Professional Competence and Conduct.** We demonstrate and develop professional knowledge and skills in ourselves, our constituents, and our institution.

The Community Research and Action Doctoral Program prohibits and does not tolerate illegal, fraudulent, dishonest, or unethical conduct while engaged in research, scholarly and creative activities.

The policies and procedures related to grievances, conflicts of interest, and professional codes of conduct/ethics/professionalism are available for review on the CCPA website (www.binghamton.edu/ccpa).

Any violations of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Engaging in research is central to successful completion of a doctoral program. To great extent, doctoral students and affiliated faculty members engage in research that concerns human participants. Therefore, it is expected that doctoral students will be familiar with the federal regulations governing research involving human participants prior to engaging in any research activities. Most doctoral students gain familiarity with these regulations during coursework, as well as from research experiences conducted with faculty members. For more information about these regulations, the educational requirements, and appropriate documentation can be found at the Binghamton University Research Compliance website (www.binghamton.edu/research/division-offices/research-compliance/).

RESOURCES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

A variety of campus resources are available to assist graduate students. A comprehensive guide to facilities and services appears in the Graduate Student Handbook (<https://gsobinghamton.org/>), published and distributed by the Graduate Student Organization (GSO), LNG 204, 777-4247. FYI- This handbook is different from the Graduate School Manual (<https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/resources/policies-procedures/manual/resources.html>), published by The Graduate School. For needs or problems of almost any kind, graduate students should be able to consult their PhD Program Director, who should be prepared to assist the students directly or to refer them to other resources on campus. Additionally, doctoral students in the CRA Program have access to exciting and engaged faculty members from around the world. We seek to provide doctoral students with access to a variety of resources to allow them to be successful.

GRADUATE SCHOOL MANUAL

The Graduate School maintains an online manual that details many of the policies and procedures that doctoral students across the university must adhere, including:

- Enrollment and registration policies, such as requesting a leave of absence, withdrawing from a course, and academic probation;
- Dissertation procedures and guidelines for preparation of the dissertation;
- Graduate student rights and responsibilities; and
- Grievance appeal procedures.

Doctoral students must become familiar with the information provided, which can be found on the Graduate School website: <https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/policies-and-procedures/manual/index.html>

BRIGHTSPACE

Required forms, resources, and recordings from Lunch and Learn lectures are posted in a Brightspace organization space. Doctoral students should become familiar with this site and use it for submitting Milestone checklists and other forms.

DOCTORAL STUDENT WORKROOM

The Doctoral Student Workroom (UDC-236) provides workspace and a variety of resources for doctoral students. The space includes several desktop computers with statistical software, books on topics relevant to doctoral work, and other materials. All CRA Doctoral Students are encouraged to use this space for studying, collaborating with peers, and completing tasks assigned for GAsships/TAsships. Doctoral students may also take advantage of the space to store research and course-related materials, but should do so in a respectful manner (i.e., store materials neatly in storage space available). When using the space, doctoral students should be respectful of others in the room, as well as the faculty and staff members with nearby offices. Please note that resources in the doctoral student work room (i.e. printer, office supplies) may only be used for research and teaching activities. Students should not exploit departmental resources for personal use. Keys must be picked up from the Facilities Operations Center on the main campus.

On rare occasions, doctoral students may be given access to their own office or a shared office space. Typically, this happens if a doctoral student is teaching a course or assigned to a grant. If you have a reason for needing a private office space, doctoral students should consider requesting a study carrel in Bartle Library on the main campus. More information is provided on the Libraries website:
<https://www.binghamton.edu/libraries/services/services-for-graduates/index.html>

SECURE DATA OFFICE (UNDER DEVELOPMENT!)

A number of doctoral students and faculty members have research interests that require access to data that needs to be maintained in a secure space. UDC-234 will be a space for this type of research. More details to follow!

STAFF/FACULTY LOUNGE

Doctoral students are welcome to use UDC-351 to store food, prepare meals/snacks, and relax. As a shared lounge, it is expected doctoral students must be respectful of others who use this space.

LUNCH AND LEARN EVENTS

Students are encouraged to participate regularly in the weekly Lunch and Learn events, a series of seminars for doctoral students about faculty member research projects, establishing a research trajectory, and emerging doctoral work. Attendance in person at the Lunch and Learn events is **expected for full-time, funded doctoral students** (as part of their funding package) and is strongly encouraged for all other students as schedules allow. The events are typically held in the University Downtown Campus and via Zoom for those who cannot attend in person. Additionally, recordings of the events are posted to the CRA Program Brightspace page.

ADVISING AND MENTORING

Advisors assist with guiding a doctoral students' development in their areas of expertise, especially in terms of their research development and involving them in the larger research community (e.g., co-authoring papers, manuscript reviews, introducing them to colleagues, nominating them for awards), finding financial support, and supporting their efforts to find a position after graduation (recommendations, contacts). The primary advisor will also: (a) ensure that the integrity and quality of the work is up to the high academic standards of the CRA Doctoral Program and The Graduate School and assure that all procedures are carried out fairly, (b) ensure that comprehensive examinations and dissertation defenses are conducted in a timely fashion, (c) arrange and conduct all meetings, and (d) confirm that requirements set forth by the committee are implemented in the final version of the dissertation. The primary advisor must be a tenure-line faculty in CCPA or hold a courtesy title with CCPA (speak with the Program Director if unsure).

The CRA Doctoral Program Director assists doctoral students with identifying an appropriate advisor, typically providing the doctoral student with an assignment at the start of their program based on information provided via the application essay. At the start of a doctoral student's program, it is suggested they begin to meet regularly with their advisor for guidance on course taking and seek opportunities for research and professional development. As they progress through their program, more regular meetings are advised to assist with the development of a plan for completing comprehensive questions and the dissertation.

Students may wish to change their advisor if their arrangement is no longer suitable in helping achieve their goals. If a student and faculty advisor can no longer work together for any reason, the CRA Doctoral Program Director may serve as a liaison between the pair if necessary. If the decision to change advisors occurs during the coursework phase/before Milestone 1, no official action needs to be taken. Students may communicate with their advisor that they no longer feel the arrangement is a good fit and search for another faculty member to work with. If a student wishes to change their official academic advisor after completing Milestone 1, they should meet with the CRA Doctoral Program Director and devise a plan for selecting a new advisor.

Other roles a faculty advisor may play:

- Assist the doctoral student with selecting course electives;
- Support the doctoral student with identifying appropriate professional organizations and learning the culture of the organization;
- Suggest outlets for scholarship, such as conferences and journals; and
- Provide the doctoral student with information about potential fellowships, graduate workshops, and other opportunities.

Doctoral students can change advisors if research interests change and/or working styles are not compatible. In such cases, students should consult with the CRA Doctoral Program Director and/or their primary or secondary advisors to make advising changes. In general, changes should not be made during the dissertation process without substantial reason to warrant a change. These changes must be approved by the CRA Doctoral Program Director.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND DOCTORAL PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The CRA Program Director is responsible for the day-to-day function of the doctoral program including recruitment, admission, and oversight of student advisement. The CRA Program Office maintains records on each doctoral student's progress through the program as well as associated forms for major milestones.

The CRA Program Director also chairs the Doctoral Program Advisory Committee. The committee is composed of five full-time, tenure-track faculty members representing different departments in the College. In addition to faculty representation, doctoral program staff may also serve on the committee, as well as faculty representatives from other colleges, as needed. At times, students will be asked to join the committee to share their perspectives on emerging academic issues. In addition to reviewing applications, the Doctoral Program Advisory Committee reviews programmatic policies and procedures. Final decisions regarding the program rest with the PhD program director.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Off Campus College (OCC) is another important resource for students providing services and programs to both students living off-campus, as well as those thinking of moving off-campus. OCC offers many services including free legal clinics, information on transportation, computerized housing lists, lease review, and comprehensive advising on housing issues by staff. OCC seeks to assist all students in learning how to live safely, successfully, and independently in the communities that surround the University. For more information, you may stop in at The Union 280G, call 607-777-2797 or [visit their website](#).

The **Graduate School** is responsible for academic, financial and institutional matters of concert to graduate students. The Graduate School Office can answer general questions concerning the University and interpret Graduate School policies and procedures. Contact the Graduate School at gradsch@binghamton.edu (general inquiries) or call 607-777-2151.

The **Office of the Dean of Students (DOS)** is a group of offices and programs that work collaboratively to assist Binghamton University students. DOS provides support for a variety of student concerns including illness, death in the family, financial difficulties, academic trouble, and other personal emergencies. To contact DOS, call 607-777-2804 or email dos@binghamton.edu. Learn more about DOS and their offices here.

The **Multicultural Resource Center (MRC)** facilitates programs and activities supporting the recruitment, retention, personal and professional development of all students with a special emphasis on students from culturally diverse and historically underrepresented populations. You can contact them by calling 607-777-4472, emailing mrc@binghamton.edu, or visiting their website (www.binghamton.edu/centers/mrc).

The **Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD)** Office has a mission to promote (1) the educational and personal development of Binghamton University students with disabilities, (2) the enhancement of the University's architectural and program accessibility, (3) and the promotion of a campus culture characterized by attitudes of caring, respect and inclusion. To learn more about the process of registering with SSD, visit their website.

The **Violence, Abuse and Rape Crisis Center** (VARCC) is a single place for students — or anyone — to report an incident of sexual violence. VARCC offers many services including trauma recovery, sexual assault advocacy, Title IX reports, and reports to the Office of Student Conduct, University Police Department, and Binghamton City Police Department. To contact their office or to learn more, call 607-777-3010, email empower@binghamton.edu, or visit their webpage.

Insurance. For TAs and GAs who are members of the bargaining unit represented by the Graduate Student Employees Union (GSEU), a health insurance plan with an annual maximum amount of \$350,000 per year is provided to cover illness and injury. The State provides a contribution of 90 percent for individual coverage and 75 percent for dependent coverage. Assistants who are on at least half an assistantship and employed on a stipend of more than \$4,293 per year are eligible for the benefit. To receive this benefit, eligible TAs and GAs must enroll using a form available in the Employee Benefits Office of Human Resources (AD 244).

For all other graduate students, a 12-month accident and sickness insurance policy is available through the University. Coverage for dependents is available for an additional fee. Students may purchase the insurance at any time on a pro-rata basis and, if they wish, may continue the coverage even if they withdraw from school.

Students who have no other health insurance and who are not covered by a family member's policy are urged to purchase insurance through the University. International students are required to carry University health insurance; view current rates on the ISSS website (www.binghamton.edu/international/student-scholar-services/). Waiver of this requirement may be obtained only after evidence of comparable insurance coverage has been approved by the coordinator of ISSS. Contact the ISSS office at Floor 1R, Room 142 of Old Champlain Building or call 607- 777-2510. Visit the ISSS office for additional information or to contact them directly: www.binghamton.edu/international/student-scholar-services/contact-us.html#contact-us

Travel and Research Funding. Several opportunities are available to assist with supporting doctoral student travel to professional conferences or to support research activities. The Graduate School provides information about several of these opportunities on its website: www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/awards-honors/travel-awards.html

Created by the GSO, the Alumni Association, and the Binghamton University Foundation, in association with the Graduate School, the Graduate Student Conference Travel and Research Fund (GSCTRF) supports individual and group travel to conferences that provide recognition to the program, the department, or the school, as well as to the individual participant. Major emphasis is on funding travel and related expenses for conferences in which Binghamton graduate students are invited participants. Visit the website for additional information: www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/awards-honors/travel-awards.html

Funds are also provided for research requests approved by the GSCTRF Awards Committee. While funds cannot be used for the typing or copying of doctoral dissertations, graduate students are encouraged to apply for grants to enhance their academic resources. Contact the Graduate Student Organization for details: <https://gsobinghamton.org/>

Additionally, the CRA Doctoral Program may offer funding to support students traveling to conferences to present research or engage in scholarly activities. When available, funds are available on a first come, first serve basis, up to \$250 per student per academic year.

Emergency Loan. The Binghamton Foundation provides a short-term emergency loan fund that allows graduate students to borrow up to \$600 for a maximum of six weeks. A processing fee is charged based on the amount of the loan. For details or to borrow funds, contact the Binghamton Foundation in Old O'Connor G042 or call 777-4021. Requests for loans can be made by completing a Student Loan Application, available on the website: www.binghamton.edu/operations/policies/policy-701.html.

Student Emergency Fund. The Binghamton University Student Emergency Fund grant is an award of financial assistance for currently enrolled Binghamton University students experiencing unusual and unforeseen circumstances that have caused financial demands, immediately threaten one's academic progress and success (e.g., fire, flood, car accident), and for which there is no other source of reasonable remedy for the student. The amount of the award is in relation to individual needs, and in most cases does not exceed \$500. For additional details, contact the Dean of Students at dos@binghamton.edu. www.binghamton.edu/dean-of-students/support/student-emergency-fund.html

UNIVERSITY-WIDE FORMS AND APPLICATIONS

Application for Leave of Absence:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/pdf/request-for-leave-of-absence.pdf>

Application for Semester Withdrawal:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/registrar/student/course-registration/withdrawal.html>

Application for Transfer Credit:

https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/pdf/request_for_transfer_credit.pdf

Request for Late Add / Withdraw / Delete / Change:

https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/pdf/request_for_late_add_withdraw_delete_change.pdf

International Students and Scholar Services (ISSS) Release of Student Records:

<https://www.binghamton.edu/international/student-scholar-services/forms/index.html>

Directory Exclusion Authorization Form:

https://www.binghamton.edu/registrar/pdf/directory_exclusion_authorization_form_update.pdf

Directory Exclusion Removal Form:

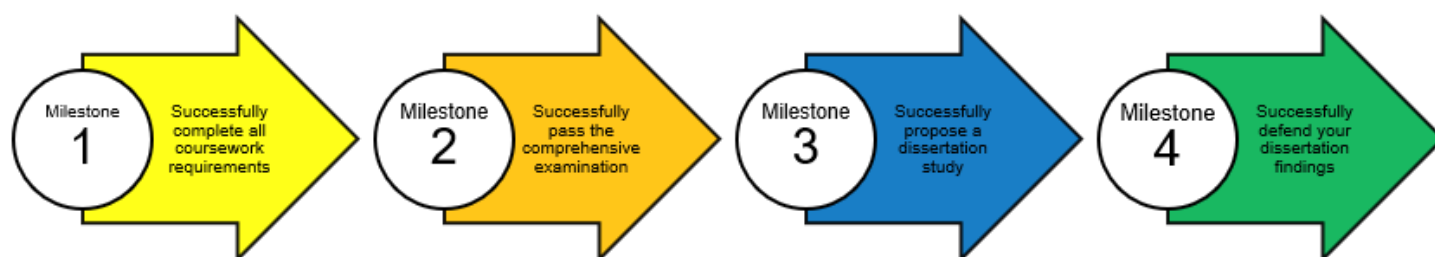
https://www.binghamton.edu/registrar/pdf/directory_exclusion_removal_form_update.pdf

OVERVIEW OF DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To earn a doctoral degree, students must successfully meet four milestones: (a) successful completion of the required sequence of courses, including required, elective, and dissertation credits; (b) successfully passing a comprehensive examination; (c) successfully propose a plan for dissertation research; and (d) successful defense of a dissertation. These milestones are described briefly in the next sections and illustrated in Figure 1. An overview chart of the Milestone Checklists is included in Appendix C. **All Milestone forms are posted to the CRA Doctoral Program Brightspace page and should be submitted via the Assignments section of Brightspace.**

Figure 1

Overview of the Requirements for a Doctoral Degree



Milestone 1- Successful Completion of All Course Requirements. Coursework for the Doctorate in Community Research and Action includes 3 core courses (9 credit hours), 5 research courses (15 credit hours), and 3-4 elective courses (9-12 credit hours) for a total of 33-36 post-master’s credits, plus 1-2 dissertation credits. Selection of elective courses is carefully made to advance a specific area of study or research interest (e.g., health systems, social justice and education, qualitative research) defined by students in consultation with their advisors. Students may take a total of 6 credits of independent study (CCPA 697) as electives. Each independent study or directed research experience must be accompanied by a written proposal. Appendix B provides additional information. All required forms are posted to the CRA Doctoral Program Brightspace page.

Milestone 2- Successfully pass the comprehensive examination after completing all coursework and before the dissertation proposal. Students must successfully pass the comprehensive examination to advance to candidacy and proceed to the dissertation proposal. *Funded students are expected to complete their comprehensive examination before their third year to remain eligible for the final year of funding.*

Milestone 3- Successfully propose a dissertation study that establishes you as an independent scholar in your chosen area of expertise. To do this, doctoral students work under the advisement of a dissertation chair (typically their advisor) to design the proposed research study. Proposal meetings must include the dissertation chair and two committee members (typically from CCPA).

Milestone 4- Successfully defend your dissertation findings to a committee that includes the dissertation chair, two committee members, and an outside examiner appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Dissertations can be either a five or six chapter (traditional) format or a series of three publishable (or published) papers. Completed dissertations typically range from 150-200 pages.

MILESTONE 1: SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ALL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

During doctoral preparation, students engage in coursework aimed at preparing them to engage in scholarship, whether as an academic or as a practitioner. This includes coursework aimed at introducing doctoral students to numerous theoretical and conceptual frameworks, research methodologies, and the state of research in a given field of research interest. This includes successfully completing three required core courses, five courses on research methodologies, and at least three electives. Table 1 presents the recommended course sequence for full-time students, along with required milestones. Part-time students should see the PhD Program Director or their advisor for course sequencing and milestone guidance.

Table 1

Recommended Course and Milestone Sequence for Full-time Students in the CRA Program

YEAR ONE
<p>Fall (9 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CCPA 602: <i>Qualitative Analysis</i> (3 credits; required) ▪ CCPA 603: <i>Quantitative Methods</i> (3 credits; required) ▪ CCPA 611: <i>Conceptualizing and Researching Community</i> (3 credits; required) <p>Spring (9 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CCPA 600: <i>Research Design</i> (3 credits; required) ▪ CCPA 605: <i>Quantitative Methods 2: Multivariate</i> (3 credits; required) ▪ CCPA 612: <i>Power and Policy for Social Change</i> (3 credits; required)
YEAR TWO
<p>Fall (9 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced research course (3 credits; required) ▪ Elective (3 credits; must be 500 level or above) ▪ Elective (3 credits; must be 500 level or above) <p>Spring (9 credits)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CCPA 610: <i>Positionality, Social Justice, and the Politics of Knowledge Production</i> (3 credits; required) ▪ Elective (3 credits; must be 500 level or above) ▪ Elective (3 credits; must be 500 level or above) <p>Milestone 1: Complete Program of Study (due January/June after course complete)</p> <p>Milestone 2: Successfully Complete Comprehensive Examination (typically during summer break)</p>
YEAR THREE
<p>Fall (1 credit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CCPA 699: <i>Dissertation Seminar</i> (1 credit) <p>Milestone 3: Successfully Propose Dissertation Research Prospectus</p> <p>Spring (1 credit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CCPA 699: <i>Dissertation Seminar</i> (1 credit) <p>Milestone 4: Successfully Defend Dissertation Research</p>

*Students who are course complete but have not successfully passed their comprehensive exam must enroll in CCPA 698- Pre-Dissertation Seminar (1 credit).

Sample Advanced Methods Courses (must successfully complete at least 3-credits):

- CCPA 679 Advanced Quantitative Methods for Community-Based Research
- EDUC 627 Mixed Methods
- GEOG 535 Seminar in GIS Research

Sample electives (must successfully complete at least 9-credits):

- AAAS 580E Race & Disease
- ANTH 571A Narrative in Culture & Society
- ANTH 572K Global Health in Anthropology

Throughout coursework, doctoral students must **maintain an overall, cumulative GPA of 3.0**. Students are required to repeat any course required for the degree when they have earned a grade of a C+ or lower.

A graduate student whose **cumulative grade-point average falls below 3.0** may be enrolled subsequently only on a probationary status, with the written approval of the CRA Doctoral Program Director. While on probation, the student must meet at the outset of the semester with the director to review academic performance and progress toward a return to satisfactory standing

A graduate student whose **cumulative grade-point average falls below 2.6** will be considered in academic jeopardy as well as on academic probation. Students may be in academic jeopardy for only one semester before dismissal from the program.

Students have the right to receive a warning when academic performance or progress is judged to be unsatisfactory. Students can also view their full academic records using the DegreeWorks online platform. DegreeWorks is viewable online through BU BRAIN.

As a doctoral student approaches course completion and meeting, it is important they have discussions with assigned/potential faculty advisors regarding:

- Possible dissertation topics and research methodologies,
- Expectations of a chair for the comprehensive examination and/or dissertation,
- Availability for on-going/regular meetings,
- Opportunities for research and professional collaboration, in addition to the dissertation (i.e., collaborations on conference presentations, publications, etc.), and
- Consideration of additional committee members and how to approach to gauge willingness.

These conversations can assist with the transition from coursework into the research stage, which is much more student-driven and independent. Moreover, establishing a supportive, professional relationship can set the groundwork for ensuring a faculty member can appropriately advise on a given topic and is willing to do so.

After completing all coursework, doctoral students should complete the **Milestone Checklist 1** form by either **June 1 or January 1**, whichever comes first after completing all required courses. Doctoral students should

download the form available in the CRA Doctoral Program Brightspace page. Completed forms should be uploaded to the Assignment section of Brightspace.

COURSE SUBSTITUTION OR WAIVER REQUESTS

Normally, no doctoral courses completed in another program or at another institution will be accepted in transfer. Substitutions or waivers for core and research courses are unusual. A written request for substitutions or waivers for core or research courses or waivers, including the academic justification, must be forwarded to the PhD Program Director. If approved, the course waiver or substitution should be clearly documented on Milestone Checklist 1 and documentation of the approval saved by the Program Director and/or advisor.

INDEPENDENT STUDIES

An independent study is a learning experience that allows a student opportunity for *self-directed learning relating to an area of academic interest*. The independent study will involve, in a broad sense, critical analysis and application or development of theories and research relating to the area of inquiry chosen by the student.

To qualify for an independent study, **all** of the following must be met:

- Doctoral student must be matriculated in the Community Research & Action Doctoral Program in CCPA,
- The independent study must be related to the educational goals of the student, **and**
- The student should have sufficient background to undertake the independent study and learn from the experience.

Independent Study Guidelines:

- Must be graded with normal grading option only (i.e., A, A-, B+, etc.).
- Must have the approval of the faculty advisor, faculty sponsor for the independent study (if different from the advisor), and the CRA Program Director.
- Must be overseen by a “faculty sponsor.” Generally, this is the doctoral student’s faculty advisor. However, it can be any full-time, tenure-line currently appointed in the CCPA.
- Faculty sponsors should have specific expertise related to the Independent Study, providing an opportunity for the doctoral student to engage in a rich learning experience.
- Can be taken for 1-3 credits. As a general guideline, a 3- credit independent study will require a written assignment(s) of at least 20-30 pages, ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal or as a book chapter. Faculty members and doctoral students should refer to the Provost’s guidelines on credit hours and course expectations ([here](#)).
- Faculty sponsors ensure that the proposal is implemented properly and submit the final grade to the Registrar’s Office.
- Can be taken in Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters (not Winter).

Please note: Since the preparation of a proposal requires a great deal of thought and consideration, planning should begin well before the registration period for the semester in which the independent study will be performed.

To apply for an independent study, the student must:

1. Meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the purpose and content of the proposed Independent Study, who will serve as the “faculty sponsor,” and what will be the final product produced. **Please note:** the faculty advisor should always participate in the development and approval process, even if they will not serve as the faculty sponsor.
2. After receiving approval from the faculty advisor, the doctoral student should prepare:
 - the [Independent Study Cover Sheet](#) (available on the CRA Doctoral Program Brightspace site);
 - a well-developed proposal of the activities to be performed during the Independent Study, including any course readings, writing activities, and research plans. The proposal should include:
 - the learning objectives for the independent study specific to the student’s education goals and plan of study;
 - information regarding the academic/experiential preparation for undertaking the independent study;
 - specific activities to be undertaken during the independent study and how will they be supervised;
 - specific details of the written component of the independent study to be; and
 - a week-by-week, detailed agenda of how these activities will be completed.
3. After completing these documents, the doctoral student must get the faculty advisor and Independent Study faculty sponsor (if not the advisor) to approve.
4. Completed and signed forms_must be uploaded to Brightspace for approval by the CRA Program Director.
5. After all approvals are in place, the CRA Program staff assistant will register the doctoral student from CCPA 697. This must be done **at least 1-week in advance of the start of the semester.**

REGISTRATION, CREDIT LOADS, AND ACADEMIC STATUS

Binghamton University requires all students to complete confirmation of enrollment for all semesters they are enrolled. If confirmation of enrollment is not completed by the deadline posted, all courses will be dropped regardless of whether the semester bill is paid in full. Confirming your enrollment acknowledges that you have been presented with and reviewed financial aid, billing and refund policies as required by federal and state agencies, SUNY, and Binghamton University. If the course is later dropped after the official drop period, the student remains liable for payment for all or part of the costs.

Students sometimes ask a professor for permission to attend a course without officially registering for the course; students should be aware that registering for such a course with a grading option of "Audit" will result in full fee assessment (tuition and fees), regardless of whether or not a faculty member has granted informal permission to sit in on a class.

Graduate students are encouraged to pre-register whenever possible. **Funded students are required to pre-register.** Pre-registration helps the University plan for course and classroom needs and, thus, helps to assure that course demand is met. Graduate students should be completely registered by the first day of classes. **Penalty fees are assessed to all students for late registration, late add/drop and late payment of bill.**

Students are responsible for their own registration and to ensure that they are registered for the proper number of credits and type of courses. Although CCPA staff may assist with student registration, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to check his/her registration and correct it as needed. Registration can be checked via BU Brain. The Graduate School will not approve late add/drop course petitions based on the claim that someone else registered for the student. Late add/drop petitions submitted relative to a particular semester, with a third or less of that semester remaining will only be considered for exceptional circumstances beyond the student's control.

Full-Time Registration Requirements:

- Most doctoral students in the CRA program enter as a **Level 3** (i.e., they have completed the requirements for the master's degree and begun doctoral coursework). Newly-admitted doctoral students who have not yet provided the Graduate School with a final (official) transcript showing conferral of a master's degree will be coded as a Level 1 student until proof of the master's degree is provided.
- A Level 4 student is a doctoral student who has been advanced officially to candidacy (ABD).
- **Levels 3 and 4** students must be registered for **9 credits** to be considered full time. For more information about this policy, please consult <https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/resources/policies-procedures/manual/index.html#enrollment>

CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION AND LEAVES OF ABSENCES

All students who have been admitted into the program must maintain continuous registration each major (fall and spring) semester for a minimum of 1 credit hour. Once enrolled, students are expected to make continuous progress toward the degree or certificate. Students who are "course complete" or ABD should register for 699. Graduate students are not required to maintain matriculation during the summer unless they intend to complete their final degree requirements during this period. Students graduating in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of 699 in the summer.

Students who wish to absent themselves from studies for *a semester or two* should register for one credit of continuous registration (700). **The continuous registration 700 should not be used on a routine basis.** Once enrolled, students are expected to make continuous progress - semester by semester - toward the degree or certificate. Absence from class does not constitute an official withdrawal. Also, students going off campus for research related to degree requirements should remain registered.

A leave of absence is granted only in exceptional circumstances, such as prolonged illness or other unusual personal hardship, and requires detailed justification. Students on leave are excused from the registration requirement during the period of the leave. Leaves are normally granted for six months. If necessary, an extension of another 6 months, for a total of up to one year, may be approved. If possible, requests for

leaves of absence should be submitted one month prior to the semester for which the leave is requested. Students, in consultation with their advisor, should forward leave of absence requests to the Program Director for review.

Leaves of absence are not granted for a semester already begun. Instead, students should use the withdrawal procedures. **Note: on a case-by-case basis, typically for medical reasons, a leave of absence may be granted once the semester has started.** In these cases, once the leave is approved, the student will be administratively withdrawn from all current coursework. In addition, leaves of absence are not granted to students who wish to absent themselves to undertake thesis or dissertation research elsewhere; such students should maintain continuous registration at Binghamton. Students going off campus to fulfill an internship related to degree requirements should also remain registered.

Students who have begun a semester and then find that they cannot finish that semester should officially withdraw from their courses. Registration for one credit of "continuous registration" (700) will be required if the student withdraws from all courses. For withdrawal after the course-withdrawal deadline, students must cite extraordinary circumstances beyond their control. Poor judgment and academic incompetence do not qualify as extraordinary circumstances. Withdrawing from courses such that the semester credit hours fall below a full-time course load may affect eligibility of students for university funding and other financial aid for that semester; in which case, students may be required to return funds.

Students who do not register and who have not been granted a leave of absence must reapply to the Graduate School and pay additional fees. Students who do not maintain registration are severed and may not return; they must reapply, paying a new application fee. Readmission is not automatic. Students who are readmitted are required to register and pay for one credit for each semester they have not registered, plus one credit for the semester they re-enter, up to a maximum of four credits.

GRADING PROCEDURES

The grading system of the Graduate School applies to all graduate-level courses offered in the Community Research and Action doctoral program. Grades are based on a letter scale: A through C- and F. Grades of S (satisfactory) and U (unsatisfactory) may be used in a limited number of courses for which no greater precision in grading is required. The grades of S and U are not assigned a numerical value and thus are not averaged in with other grades in computing grade-point averages. A grade of S denotes a minimum level of academic performance equivalent to at least a B.

For the purpose of computing semester or cumulative averages, each letter grade is assigned a quality point value as follows:

A = 4.0	C+ = 2.3	I =
A- = 3.7	C = 2.0	Incomplete
B+ = 3.3	C- = 1.7	NC = No
B = 3.0	D = 1.0 (used only in	Credit
B- = 2.7	SOPPS)	
	F = 0.0	

These grade values are combined with course credit hours to produce a grade-point average. To calculate the GPA, multiply the total number of grade points times the total number of credits and divide the total points by the total credits. A cumulative grade-point average of B (3.0) is required for graduation. Courses in which a student has received a D or an F do not count toward the number of courses required for a graduate degree or certificate.

Students are permitted to repeat for credit any graduate course in which they have earned a grade of B- or lower. This option is contingent on approval by the Program Director and on review by the Graduate School. Courses may be repeated only once. When a course is repeated, the second grade is substituted for the first in the computation of the student's grade-point average at the point of degree finalization. For the purpose of financial aid, however, the repeated course remains on the transcript and is considered part of the academic workload.

PRE-DISSERTATION AND DISSERTATION CREDITS (CCPA 698 AND CCPA 699)

After completing all coursework, a doctoral student must maintain continuous enrollment at BU to remain in the program. For students who have not successfully completed the comprehensive examination, this means enrollment in CCPA 698. After successfully completed the comprehensive examination, the doctoral candidate (now considered All But Dissertation, or ABD) is enrolled in CCPA 699. In general, these credits are assigned to the advisor/dissertation chair as they can best evaluate meaningful progress toward completion. Failing to make meaningful progress may result in an Unsatisfactory evaluation and potential removal from the Graduate School. It is expected all doctoral students will complete at least 2 credits in CCPA 699 prior to their defense.

MILESTONE 2: SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The comprehensive examination process serves multiple, interconnected purposes. First, it assesses doctoral students' mastery of program objectives, including demonstration of conceptual and methodological skills. Second, it evaluates the development of expertise within a doctoral student's selected area of concentration. The process also serves as documentation of developing of scholarship through doctoral program experiences. Last, and perhaps most importantly, it assists doctoral students with translating conceptual and methodological skills developed during coursework into a plan for independent research and scholarly activities. Completing this process can only take place after a doctoral student completes all of their coursework. Administration of comprehensive exams may occur during any semester depending on the student's progression through the programs and the availability of committee members.

As the doctoral student nears the comprehensive examination stage, the role of faculty advisor begins to take on new meaning. Unlike coursework where the primary aim is to gain knowledge from many faculty members, graduate studies center on **generating new knowledge**, often in collaboration with the faculty advisor who may wish to include you in their research projects. The faculty advisor should assist the doctoral student with considering how coursework, independent research activities, the comprehensive exam, and, ultimately, the dissertation align and may lead to a long-term research trajectory.

Comprehensive exams can be taken at any point in the calendar year, however, many faculty members prefer to hold these meetings during the Fall or Spring semesters. To maintain continuous enrollment, Doctoral students may need to register in CCPA 698 until successfully completing the comprehensive examination process. In general, these credits are assigned to the advisor who can best evaluate meaningful progress toward this milestone. Please email the CRA Program Director with any questions regarding this process.

This guide provides doctoral students and faculty members additional information about the advising and comprehensive examination process. It also introduces a second option for meeting expectations of the comprehensive examination process. Doctoral students should discuss both options with their selected faculty advisors and determine the option most suitable for them.

STEP 1: ESTABLISHING A FACULTY ADVISOR/COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION CHAIR

Doctoral students nearing completion of their coursework and entering into the research stage of their program (i.e., beginning to work on the dissertation) are required to confirm who will serve as the faculty advisor/comprehensive examination chair. In general, the same person serves both roles and is the person most knowledgeable of the doctoral student's research interests and career goals, providing opportunities that align with these aims. For some doctoral students, this relationship is established at the outset of their program, while others may select to change advisors as their research interests and topics evolve. It is important to note that **the advisor and topic should go together**- students may need to adjust their research topics in order to align better with faculty expertise. This allows the faculty member to lend their expertise and to mentor a doctoral student effectively.

Please note. The faculty advisor must be identified *prior* to selecting additional committee members. Although ultimately it is the doctoral student's decision as to who participates on the committee, the advisor can provide valuable insight on selecting additional, relevant committee members.

It is the responsibility of each doctoral student to identify a research topic and secure a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor should be willing to assist with overseeing the research process, from comprehensive examination through the defense of the dissertation, if possible. If a person is not assigned at the start of the doctoral student's program, the doctoral student may need to meet with several faculty members to discuss potential topics and research methodologies to identify an appropriate advisor. Faculty members in CCPA and the director of the CRA Doctoral Program can assist with considering potential options and with securing an advisor, provided students are making satisfactory degree progress. Participation in college and CRA Doctoral Program events, such as the Lunch and Learns and other seminars, can provide a doctoral student with opportunities to meet faculty members they may not complete coursework from but who may share similar interests. Therefore, it is highly encouraged that doctoral students take advantage of these opportunities during their preparation.

All tenured or tenure-track faculty members in CCPA may serve as faculty advisors. However, clinical professors, professors from other universities, and individuals in roles such as lecturer or visiting assistant professors cannot. Faculty members who hold a courtesy title in CCPA but are tenured or tenure-track in other colleges at Binghamton University may also serve as faculty advisors. The CRA Doctoral Program director maintains a list of those faculty members who hold a courtesy title and can assist with this process if appropriate.

STEP 2: DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR COMPLETING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

As soon as a doctoral student establishes who will serve as the comprehensive examination chair, they should begin discussing a plan for completing the Comprehensive Examination. This should happen no later than in their final semester of coursework, if not sooner (especially if selecting Option 2). It ***strongly encouraged*** that the comprehensive examination aligns closely with the doctoral student's dissertation research topic, providing an opportunity for the comprehensive examination process to serve as a time for engaging deeply in the literature and methodologies used by other researchers to investigate this topic, as well as for doctoral students to begin considering new ways to conceptualize and research the topic.

As the doctoral student begins planning for the Comprehensive Examination, they should discuss with their faculty advisor:

- Potential research topics, and how to narrow the topic to something “do-able”;
- Current research on the topic, including gaps identified by the doctoral student;
- Potential research methodologies;
- Most appropriate option for completing the process (Option 1 or Option 2);
- A draft timeline for preparation and completion, including potential times when a faculty advisor may be unavailable (e.g., planned extended research trips, sabbaticals, etc.).
- Additional committee members (see next section).

Establishing a plan can assist with successful transition from coursework to comps completion to dissertation proposal!

STEP 3: SELECTING COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In addition to the faculty advisor/chair, doctoral candidates must identify **two** additional faculty members willing to serve on their Comprehensive Examination Committee. Doctoral candidates should seek feedback and advice from their faculty advisor regarding members appropriate for membership. Similar to the faculty advisor, the committee members should have shared expertise and interest in the topic area, to the greatest extent possible. Committee members must be tenure-line faculty, and most often come from departments within CCPA, but they may also be faculty members from other colleges at Binghamton University. These additional committee members are **not** required to hold courtesy titles with CCPA, but must be tenured or tenure-track.

In rare instances, a doctoral student may wish to include an individual from outside of Binghamton University (for example, a faculty member from another university). In such cases, the individual must be approved by the dean of the Graduate School for participation on the committee. To be considered, the individual must hold an earned doctorate and experience within academia, since their role is to evaluate the extent to which your comprehensive examination meets standards of academic rigor. Doctoral students should speak with the CRA Doctoral Program director if there are questions regarding the appropriateness of a potential member.

If the doctoral student chooses to include someone from outside of Binghamton University on their Comprehensive Examination Committee, the doctoral student should submit the name and contact information for the individual along with a current curriculum vita to CRA Doctoral Program director. If the individual is considered an appropriate fit, the director will submit a letter of support to the dean of the Graduate School, who must also agree with the acceptability of the individual as a committee member. These individuals may serve as committee members, but cannot serve as the chair.

Please note. Comprehensive examination committee members *often* serve on dissertation committees, but for a variety of reasons committee membership, including the faculty advisor, can change. Doctoral students should speak with the CRA Doctoral program director and/or their faculty advisor if considering any changes.

The faculty advisor, in consultation with the committee members, is responsible for ensuring the materials provided by the doctoral candidate meet appropriate standards of rigor. This includes considering the doctoral student's writing style, accuracy in their analysis, and ability to articulate an argument.

STEP 4: CHOOSING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OPTION

As of Spring 2022, there are now **two options** for completing the Comprehensive Examination process. The faculty advisor should work closely with the doctoral student to select the option best suited to allow them to make steady progress toward the next stage (dissertation completion). This includes considering the extent to which the doctoral student has had opportunities to engage in research on their topic, be involved in the publication process, and consider multiple perspectives for designing research activities. **Regardless of option, doctoral students should prepare all materials according APA Style (7th ed.) guidelines**, including items like headers, internal citations, and a title page, as well as an accurate reference list.

Option 1: Traditional, 3-Question Format

Committee members will develop three questions that address theory and research as well as the application of both to real world practice and policy. These questions will be grounded in the learning from the program's core and research classes as well as the student's area of concentration. The questions should also assist the doctoral student with the initial stages of conceptualizing their dissertation through the application of theory and research to their areas of interest. For instance, a question may allow a student to compare and contrast multiple theoretical frameworks for approaching their topic. As another example, a question could allow a doctoral student to review the research literature related to their topic. Last, a separate question could provide an opportunity for the doctoral student to compare and contrast approaches to researching their topic, providing an opportunity to demonstrate awareness of a variety of research designs.

Please note: it is highly recommended that at least one question requires the doctoral student to carefully consider the research literature on their topic. This could be from a historical perspective, analysis of research designs, or examination of conceptual frameworks used by other researchers.

Option 2: Literature Review + Manuscript Authorship

In this option, doctoral students document their scholarship and progress toward their ability to engage in independent research activities by completing **two** important documents: (a) a comprehensive, systematic review of literature, **and** (b) manuscript authorship.

Literature Review. This review of the literature must be of publishable quality, as judged by the student's committee, and be first or sole authored by the doctoral student. It can be a published review paper (e.g., a book chapter) written by the student with assistance from a faculty mentor IF the student is first author. It should be approximately 35 double-spaced pages in length, including references (however, it may be shorter if already published to meet publication requirements). This may emerge from a course assignment, assuming all suggested changes and edits are made and the faculty advisor deems it of publishable quality.

Manuscript Authorship. The second requirement is the preparation of a first or co-authored published journal article, or article ready for submission for publication to a peer-reviewed journal on a *topic relevant to the doctoral student's area of research interest*. Co-authorship means (a) having one's name on the paper, and (b) contributing significantly to the conceptualization, writing, and editing/revising process. The manuscript should be of such quality that it meets standards for publication in a national or international, highly ranked or regarded, peer-reviewed outlet.

Please note: It is the responsibility of the faculty advisor and committee members to evaluate whether a manuscript meets these expectations. As mentioned, the doctoral student must contribute significantly to the conceptualization, writing, and editing/revising process, but this does not always translate into first or second authorship, especially if part of a larger research team. Moreover, the faculty advisor and committee members should consider the extent to which the publication fits within the doctoral student's areas of interest, assists them with moving towards their dissertation, and developing as an independent researcher.

Additional Note: A manuscript submitted for the comprehensive examination should not also be submitted as part of a 3-paper dissertation *unless it has undergone substantial revision*. The manuscript should only "count" towards meeting one of these milestones.

STEP 5: COMPLETING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The process for completing the comprehensive examination varies based on the option selected. Doctoral students should read the section relevant to them very closely.

Option 1: Traditional, 3-Question Format

In preparation for completing the comprehensive examination, the faculty advisor will assist the doctoral student with developing a thorough reading list that can help with completing the questions. The chair, in communication with the other committee members, may decide to design all three questions or request each committee member to design a single question. Moreover, the committee members may provide the doctoral student with “extra” questions (i.e., four or six different questions), allowing the doctoral student to select the questions they feel most prepared to answer.

At least 2 weeks in advance: Once the doctoral student feels ready, they should work with the chair and committee members to establish a timeline for completing the examination. This plan should be documented using the **Milestone 2 form available on the CRA Brightspace** page and should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the start of the comprehensive examination process. The plan should include the date on which the candidate will receive their questions, when responses are due, and when the committee will meet with the doctoral student to provide feedback.

Students will have **two weeks** (14 calendar days) to complete their take home examination. Responses to each question should be a minimum of 10-15 pages, double-spaced (using Microsoft Word or an equivalent word processing program), be formatted according APA Style (7th ed.) guidelines, and include references. The comprehensive exam questions will be administered by email on Fridays at 4 p.m. and will be due two Fridays later by 4 p.m. Exam essay responses will be distributed by the program staff assistant to the members of the student’s committee via email.

Option 2: Literature Review + Manuscript Authorship

In this option, the doctoral student may be working on the documents while still completing coursework. However, as a part of the comprehensive examination the doctoral student should follow similar procedures as described for Option 1. Once the faculty advisor feels confident the documents are ready for committee review, the doctoral student should work with the chair and committee members to establish a timeline for completing the examination. This plan should be documented using the **Milestone 2 form available on the CRA Brightspace** page and should be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the start of the comprehensive examination process. The plan should include the date on which the candidate will provide documents to the committee and when the committee will meet with the doctoral student to provide feedback.

STEP 6: RECEIVING FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION OF THE SUBMITTED WORK

For both options, committee members will evaluate the written comprehensive examination within **two weeks** (14 calendar days) of submission by the doctoral student. Students will also schedule a two-hour oral examination/presentation with their committee members to receive feedback and respond to additional questions. This examination includes areas in which the student needs to demonstrate further proficiency

beyond the level demonstrated in the written responses. Faculty advisors should communicate to the student the specific areas that may be addressed prior to the meeting so they can adequately prepare. Committee members will evaluate the student's responses (both written and oral) as *high pass*, *pass*, or *fail*. Two-thirds of the committee must evaluate performance on the exam as pass and/or high pass for a student to advance to candidacy.

Questions to Consider in Evaluating Documents Submitted for the Comprehensive Exam

Both Option 1 and Option 2 are meant to assess doctoral students' mastery of program objectives and the development of expertise within their area of concentration. The materials submitted, whether papers ready for publication or responses to selected questions, should serve as documentation of how students have developed as scholars within their field of chosen expertise. Perhaps most importantly, the process of creating the materials should provide an opportunity for doctoral students to translate conceptual and methodological skills developed during coursework into a plan for independent research and scholarly activities.

Committee members must then evaluate the materials to ensure doctoral students meet standards of rigor and appear ready to move forward with independent research activities. To assist with evaluations, committee members may wish to use these questions as a guide. However, these questions should not be considered a rubric, nor are they exhaustive or used as a checklist. Rather, they are meant to be broad enough to guide committee members in their evaluation of the materials submitted to ensure a doctoral student has demonstrated readiness to move into candidacy and to begin work on the dissertation proposal.

Do the materials prepared:

- Provide evidence of ideas for research designs that will contribute meaningfully to their respective field of research interest?
- Demonstrate evidence of analytical and integrative thinking in reflecting on the program at the end of coursework, especially with respect to upcoming dissertation work?
- Offer evidence of a clear understanding of the research literature relevant to the doctoral student's field/interests?
- Summarize major points in the body of literature, as well as gaps in need of being addressed?
- Demonstrate the doctoral student has begun to develop a research question or purpose as a result of a sufficient review of the research literature?
- Suggest the doctoral student has reflected upon different activities completed during their program and progress to date?
- Demonstrate an ability to produce publishable, well-written work aligned with potential journal guidelines or expectations of their field?

All/or portions of the comprehensive examination may be repeated (using new questions or expecting newly submitted documents) one time and should be scheduled no sooner than 4 weeks and no longer than 12 weeks from the previous oral examination date. Students must retake the comprehensive examination and be evaluated as passing by two-thirds of committee members before proceeding with the dissertation proposal. Failure of a second comprehensive examination will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

NEXT STEPS AFTER PASSING THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

After successfully passing the comprehensive examination, the doctoral student moves into the candidacy stage of their doctoral program. Doctoral candidates should work closely with their faculty advisor (now often referred to as their dissertation chair), to develop a plan for research that meets the rigor and expectations of a dissertation. Although data may come from projects a doctoral candidate has engaged in with the faculty advisor or during coursework, the proposal must document a new and novel way of investigation of that data. A form available from the Graduate School must be completed by the faculty advisor and submitted to the CRA Program Director (cra.phd@binghamton.edu) to document passing the comprehensive examination, allowing the doctoral student to enter into the Candidacy stage of their program and begin work on the dissertation phase of the doctoral program.

The comprehensive examination may be repeated (using new questions) once and will be scheduled no sooner than 4 weeks and no longer than 12 weeks from the previous examination date. Students must retake the comprehensive examination (one or multiple questions determined by the committee) and be unanimously evaluated as passing by the committee members before proceeding with the dissertation proposal.

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

After students have passed the comprehensive examinations demonstrating they have met all research skills and coursework requirements, they are eligible for **All But Dissertation** (ABD) status. At this time the graduate program must submit the "Recommendation for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degree" form to The Graduate School.

Typically, 2-4 semesters elapse between admission to candidacy and the granting of the doctoral degree. Doctoral candidates must complete all requirements for the degree, including the dissertation, within five years after admission to doctoral candidacy.

Five-Year Limit for Admission to Candidacy. A student in a doctoral program must be admitted to candidacy within five years of admission to The Graduate School if entering directly into a doctoral program or within five years after award of a master's degree at Binghamton University. The following clarifications to this policy should be noted:

- If a student is granted a leave of absence, the period of the leave is not counted against the time limit to be admitted to candidacy.
- If a student earns a master's degree at Binghamton University and then does not continue immediately for the doctoral degree, the five-year limit begins when the student is readmitted to the University for Doctoral Studies.

A student may petition for an extension of the time limit by submitting a request to the PhD Program Director. The Director, if he/she endorses the request, then forwards it to The Graduate School for final action by the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School.

MILESTONES 3 & 4: PROPOSE AND SUCCESSFULLY DEFEND A DISSERTATION

When the student and primary advisor have agreed upon the focus for the dissertation research, committee membership will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised so that the most appropriate advisors and committee members will be available to support the student through the stages of designing and conducting the research, analyzing the data and writing the dissertation. The dissertation committee must have a minimum of three members and will also include an outside examiner.

DISSERTATION FORMATS

Students in the CRA doctoral program have the option of completing the dissertation in its traditional format or an alternative three-paper format.

Traditional dissertation

The traditional format includes a minimum of five chapters: Chapter 1 introduces the dissertation study, conceptual framework, and problem statement; Chapter 2 is a review of the literature; Chapter 3 describes the research methods; Chapter 4 presents the results of the findings of the study (may include additional chapters if a qualitative dissertation); and Chapter 5 discusses the results (or findings) in the context of the conceptual framework and literature reviewed, discusses the implications for practice and/or policy, and also makes recommendations for future research studies.

Three-paper dissertation

The three-paper format includes sharply focused and thematically linked manuscripts targeted to journals identified by students in consultation with their committee members. Representing the student's original scholarship and sole authorship, the first could be a systematic or scoping review of the literature and the second and third papers should be empirical. Alternatively, all three papers can be empirical with their own brief review of the literature. All three papers must be solo authored by the doctoral candidate and, with the review and consent of the committee, can be submitted for publication prior to the dissertation defense. The three-paper dissertation also requires an introductory and closing chapter.

Regardless of which is selected, completed dissertations typically range from 150-200 pages in length and must meet all stylistic guidelines set by the Graduate School. Please note that the dissertation must be solely the work of the PhD candidate. No parts of the dissertation should be co-authored.

PROPOSAL DEFENSE MEETING

When the student and primary advisor have agreed upon a potential dissertation topic, the student schedules a two-hour proposal defense meeting to obtain committee approval before the research is carried out, regardless of whether completing the traditional or three-paper format. The proposal meeting should be scheduled by students only after passing their comprehensive examination and receiving approval to do so from primary advisors (this typically occurs within 3-6 months after passing comprehensive exams). Students initiate these arrangements by submitting **Milestone 3 via Brightspace at least 4-weeks** in advance of the proposal meeting.

For the traditional dissertation format, students should prepare: (a) a cover page; (b) a table of contents; (c) Chapter 1; (d) Chapter 2; (e) Chapter 3; (f) references; and (g) appendices, including drafted Human Subjects forms (if required).

Students electing to complete the three-paper dissertation option must submit a proposal organized and detailed by the following headings: (a) summary of the proposal and aims of the research (1-3 pages); (b) detailed review of the literature highlighting current knowledge, critiquing and synthesizing previous research, and identifying gaps the dissertation will address (5-10 pages); (c) if applicable, any pilot work the student has done in support of the dissertation; and (d) a separate and detailed outline for each of the three papers (5 pages each or 15 pages total), (e) references; and (f) appendices, including drafted Human Subjects forms (if required).

As noted, DRAFTS of the appropriate Human Subjects forms (if required) should be submitted to the Committee along with the research proposal. For the current versions of Human Subjects forms, visit the Division of Research webpage. The written proposal should be given to the committee members a minimum of two weeks before the meeting.

Preparation for the dissertation proposal meeting should include a 15-20-minute presentation of the aims and scope of the proposed project for the committee. After the presentation, the committee will ask specific questions of students about the project and make recommendations for strengthening the proposed research. At the conclusion of the proposal meeting, it is customary for the primary advisor to request that everyone except the examining committee leave the room, so that the members may reach a decision about how to move forward. The committee must unanimously approve the dissertation proposal. After the meeting, the primary advisor and the student will meet to discuss required revisions. Students are expected to revise their dissertation proposals and send to committee members within 30 days.

OUTSIDE EXAMINER

In addition to the initial, 3-member committee, a fourth “outside examiner” or “external member” is added to the committee in advance of the defense (please refer to the [Graduate School Manual](#) for additional information). The outside examiner’s role is to ensure the doctoral defense is rigorous and recognize that the work completed is comprehensive (and speak up if that is not the case). Therefore, it is advised that this individual have some connection to the research topic or methodology so that they might participate in the discussion and offer useful feedback. However, this individual must come from *outside of CCPA*, typically from another college at Binghamton University (i.e., a faculty member from Harpur College or the Decker School could serve as an outside examiner). The doctoral candidate, in consultation with their advisor, should identify an appropriate outside examiner and seek their willingness to participate in the final defense. However, the outside examiner must be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School since they serve as a representative of the Graduate School. **Doctoral students must submit the name of the requested outside examiner to cra.phd@binghamton.edu at least one month prior to the defense**, along with appropriate contact information (phone number, email address, department/college).

On occasion, a doctoral candidate can add as an outside examiner an individual from outside of Binghamton University. The individual must hold a doctoral degree, actively participate in research, and have experience in

institutions of higher education in the US. In these instances, the doctoral candidate should submit to cra.phd@binghamton.edu the requested individual's name, contact information, and a recent CV, along with the Request Form included in the [Graduate School Manual](#). The Program Director will review the provided information and forward it to the Graduate School who will determine their eligibility for participation on the committee.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

Figure 2 offers an illustration of the final steps of the dissertation process. When the student has completed writing the dissertation and has revised to the satisfaction of the primary advisor, the final oral defense of the dissertation is scheduled. The doctoral candidate should begin working to identify an appropriate day and time approximately 2-months prior to the project defense date to allow the committee ample time for scheduling. Committee members should receive the dissertation **at least two weeks before the defense** (preferably 4 weeks).

Figure 2

Illustration of the Final Steps of the Dissertation Process



Preferably **at least one month in advance** of the Defense, but not less than 14 days in advance, doctoral candidates must share the specific day and time the defense will be held by submitting **Milestone 4 via Brightspace**. According to Graduate School policy, the Dissertation Defense must be a **public examination and open to any who wish to observe**. Therefore, the date, time, and location (in-person or virtual) must be shared broadly (typically via email on CCPA listservs). On Milestone 4, you will need to provide:

- Dissertation title
- Dissertation abstract
- Committee chair
- Other committee members, including the Outside Examiner, and their email addresses
- Date and time of the defense
- If the defense will be virtual or in-person

The final oral defense will be two hours long, beginning with a 15-20-minute presentation of the research by the candidate.

The defense meeting must be open to any person wishing to attend and will be advertised to the broader campus community. The primary advisor is responsible for ensuring that the examination is open and impartial, allowing reasonable opportunities for members of the committee and outside observers to question the candidate about the dissertation. At the conclusion of the examination, it is customary for the primary advisor to request that everyone except the committee leave the room, so that the members may reach a decision. This procedure should not be invoked at any other time during the examination and should not preclude any questions from either committee members or outside observers.

To pass, the student must receive the unanimous approval of the dissertation examining committee approved by the Graduate School. All members of the examining committee who accept the dissertation in partial fulfillment of requirements for the doctorate shall so attest by completing the online form sent via the Graduate School “workflow”. If the outside examiner does not signify approval in this manner, he or she should give the reason for dissent by submitting a separate memorandum to the dean of the Graduate School within three business days of the examination.

If at the final examination the examiners generally approve of the dissertation, but require significant changes and are not yet prepared to give final approval, the primary advisor will coordinate with these members to compile all required changes and will inform the student of the scope and substance of those changes. The examining committee will establish how the changes will be reviewed and approved.

After the committee chair and other members of the committee have signaled their final approval of the dissertation via the workflow, the program director will also provide approval, indicating that the student has now fulfilled all academic requirements for the doctoral degree and has successfully defended the dissertation.

The vice provost and dean of the Graduate School may void any dissertation defense that is not carried out in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Graduate School. In addition, upon the recommendation of the vice provost and dean's appointed outside examiner, the vice provost and dean may declare a dissertation defense null and void.

REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN DISSERTATION DEFENSES

Normally, all dissertation defenses take place on campus and require the full attendance of the dissertation committee including the outside examiner. However, at the discretion of the CCPA, and with the unanimous consent of all members of the dissertation committee and the student, committee members or the outside examiner may participate in the defense via real-time videoconferencing. In special cases (undue hardship), the student may also request to have the oral presentation of their dissertation via video-conferencing.

Similarly, if in exceptional circumstances one member of the dissertation committee cannot be present (either physically or virtually); he or she may submit questions and comments in writing. Such arrangements must be

approved in advance by the Program Director and must have the unanimous consent of all other members of the dissertation committee and the student. In all instances, the primary advisor and the outside examiner must be physically or virtually present to observe the process.

If holding a defense virtually, arrangements for Zoom should be made by the CRA Program Assistant to ensure the meeting can be made public. Doctoral students should consult the Graduate School Handbook for additional details and procedures.

FINAL COPY OF DISSERTATION

Dissertations must be submitted to the Graduate School electronically by posted due dates. Doctoral candidates are responsible for submitting their final dissertation by following all procedures established by the Graduate School. The Graduate School reviews your submission, makes sure your academic record is complete and that all required fees are paid, then submits your work to ProQuest/University Microfilms International (UMI). UMI prepares archival digital copies and microfilm copies, both of which are maintained in perpetuity and migrated to new storage media as necessary, in accord with UMI's contract with the Library of Congress. UMI then disseminates your work to various bibliographic databases and indexes and publishes a full-text copy of your work on a website available to the Binghamton University community. Readers outside of Binghamton may find your dissertation and purchase copies directly from UMI. If students wish to publish parts of their dissertation after their defense, they should enlist the help of their advisor for this process.

The Community Research and Action program does not require a bound hard copy of the dissertation, however, many dissertation chairs appreciate receiving a copy. Make sure to ask your chair of their preference.

The Graduate School Manual, including the Guidelines for Preparing or Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation, can be found on their website: <https://www.binghamton.edu/grad-school/policies-and-procedures/manual/index.html#thesis-or-dissertation>

Doctoral candidates are encouraged to begin the formatting process early, including setting appropriate headings, margins, and pagination. This will assist in the successful submission process.

GRADUATE APPLICATION FOR DEGREE

Doctoral degree students must file a Graduate Application for Degree (GAFD) form the semester in which they plan to complete all degree requirements and graduate. This serves as notification to the Graduate School of a student's intent to graduate. It also initiates a series of approval forms for the student's advisor, committee, and the program director. The GAFD is valid for one semester only. If a student files a GAFD but fails to graduate, she or he must submit a new application for degree survey in the following semester or the next semester of intended completion.

APPENDIX A- DOCTORAL STUDENT SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES & OPPORTUNITIES TO LOOK FOR

During doctoral work, there are many activities you may wish to engage in outside of coursework to better prepare you for meeting career goals. This chart helps map out when and what to look for as you complete your program. Use it as a guide and as a way to “benchmark” how prepared you will be for after commencement. You may want to bring it to meetings with your advisor or other trusted mentors.

	Actions	If you do NOT plan on entering academia	If you plan to teach at comprehensive university	If you plan to pursue a postdoc position/teach at a research university
During Year 1	Develop and maintain a curriculum vitae	X	X	X
	Make an ORCID ID		X	X
	Attend networking events	X	X	X
	Attend professional development workshops	X	X	X
	Make a Research Gate account/LinkedIn/Other social media	X	X	X
	Complete CITI training	X	X	X
	Attend a conference (i.e. BU Research Forum)	X	X	X
During Year 2	Join professional organization(s)	X	X	X
	Submit an abstract for presentation at a regional or national conference		X	X
	Submit a co-authored paper in a peer reviewed, research journal			X
	Submit a co-authored paper in a practitioner journal	X	X	X
	Practice grant writing or develop parts of a grant application with mentor	X	X	X

	Actions	If you do NOT plan on entering academia	If you plan to teach at comprehensive university	If you plan to pursue a postdoc position/teach at a research university
During Year 3/By End of Dissertating	Create cover letter (s) for job applications	X	X	X
	Develop and practice job talk	X	X	X
	Present at Lunch & Learn!	X	X	X
	Submit an abstract for presentation at a regional or national conference based on dissertation	Yes, at practitioner-oriented conference	X	X
	Submit a co-authored paper in a peer-reviewed journal based on dissertation	X	X	X
	Search for a teaching opportunity		X	X
	Draft a teaching statement		X	X
	Draft a DEI statement	maybe	X	X
	Draft a research statement		maybe	X

APPENDIX B— INDEPENDENT STUDY GUIDELINES & APPROVAL FORM

Definition of an Independent Study: An independent study is a learning experience that allows a student opportunity for *self-directed learning relating to an area of academic interest*. The independent study will involve, in a broad sense, critical analysis and application or development of theories and research relating to the area of inquiry chosen by the student.

Eligibility: To qualify for an independent study, **all** of the following must be met:

- Doctoral student must be matriculated in the Community Research & Action Doctoral Program in CCPA,
- The independent study must be related to the educational goals of the student, **and**
- The student should have sufficient background to undertake the independent study and learn from the experience.

Independent Study Guidelines:

- Must be graded with normal grading option only (i.e., A, A-, B+, etc.).
- Must have the approval of the faculty advisor, faculty sponsor for the independent study (if different from the advisor), and the CRA Program Director.
- Must be overseen by a “faculty sponsor.” Generally, this is the doctoral student’s faculty advisor. However, it can be any full-time, tenure-line currently appointed in the CCPA.
- Faculty sponsors should have specific expertise related to the Independent Study, providing an opportunity for the doctoral student to engage in a rich learning experience.
- Can be taken for 1-3 credits. As a general guideline, a 3- credit independent study will require a written assignment(s) of at least 20-30 pages, ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal or as a book chapter. Faculty members and doctoral students should refer to the Provost’s guidelines on credit hours and course expectations ([here](#)).
- Faculty sponsors ensure that the proposal is implemented properly and submit the final grade to the Registrar’s Office.
- Can be taken in Fall, Spring, or Summer semesters (not Winter).

Please note: Since the preparation of a proposal requires a great deal of thought and consideration, planning should begin well before the registration period for the semester in which the independent study will be performed.

To apply for an independent study, the student must:

6. Meet with their faculty advisor to discuss the purpose and content of the proposed Independent Study, who will serve as the “faculty sponsor,” and what will be the final product produced. **Please note:** the faculty advisor should always participate in the development and approval process, even if they will not serve as the faculty sponsor.

7. After receiving approval from the faculty advisor, the doctoral student should prepare:
 - the [Independent Study Cover Sheet](#) (available on the CRA Doctoral Program Brightspace site);
 - a well-developed proposal of the activities to be performed during the Independent Study, including any course readings, writing activities, and research plans. The proposal should include:
 - the learning objectives for the independent study specific to the student's education goals and plan of study;
 - information regarding the academic/experiential preparation for undertaking the independent study;
 - specific activities to be undertaken during the independent study and how will they be supervised;
 - specific details of the written component of the independent study to be; and
 - a week-by-week, detailed agenda of how these activities will be completed.
8. After completing these documents, the doctoral student must get the faculty advisor and Independent Study faculty sponsor (if not the advisor) to approve.
9. [Completed and signed forms](#) may be uploaded to Brightspace for approval by the CRA Program Director.
10. After all approvals are in place, the CRA Program staff assistant will register the doctoral student from CCPA 697. This must be done **at least 1-week in advance of the start of the semester**.



Community Research and Action, PhD Program
COLLEGE OF COMMUNITY AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CCPA 697 Independent Study
Cover Sheet

Date: _____

Name (Please Print): _____ BU#: _____

Student Signature: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Semester/year: Fall 20____ Spring 20____ Summer 20____

Number of Credits (1-3): _____

Title of Independent Study to be displayed on transcript (limited to 30 characters)

Approval by faculty sponsor:

I have read the attached proposal and agree to act as faculty sponsor for this Independent Study, including offering assistance with meeting the objectives described and assigned a course grade at the conclusion of the semester.

Faculty sponsor (Please Print): _____

Faculty sponsor signature: _____

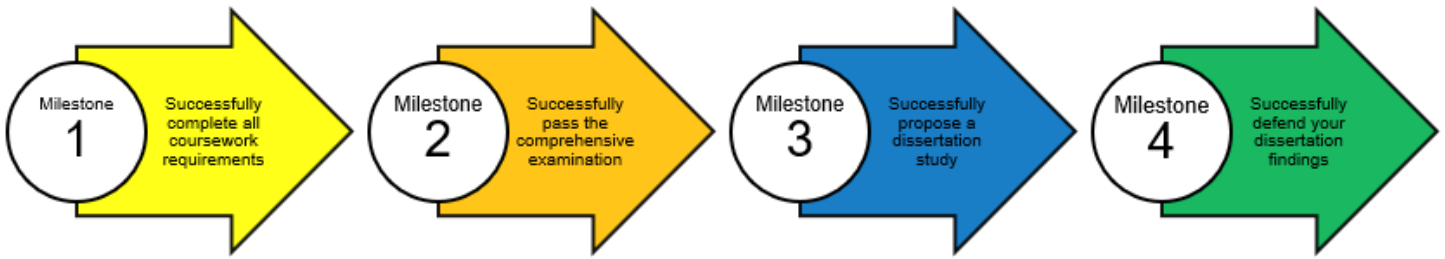
Faculty advisor (Please Print): _____

Faculty advisor signature: _____

*Submit to Brightspace at least one week
in advance of the semester start.*

Rev. 7/22

APPENDIX C- MILESTONE CHECKLIST OVERVIEW



Item	Purpose	Submit by?
Milestone Checklists		
1: Course Completion	Document course completion and confirm Comprehensive Exam committee	June 1 or Jan 1
2: Comprehensive Examination Completion	Document plan for completing the comprehensive examination, including dates	At least 2 weeks prior to exam
3: Dissertation Proposal	Assist with the process of developing and proposing a plan for the dissertation; includes information about proposal date and time	At least 2 weeks prior to exam
4: Defending Your Dissertation	Overview of steps from proposal to defense; includes information about defense date and time, as well as the title and abstract	At least 2 weeks prior to exam

Milestone Checklists that need to be submitted should be uploaded to the appropriate location on Brightspace.