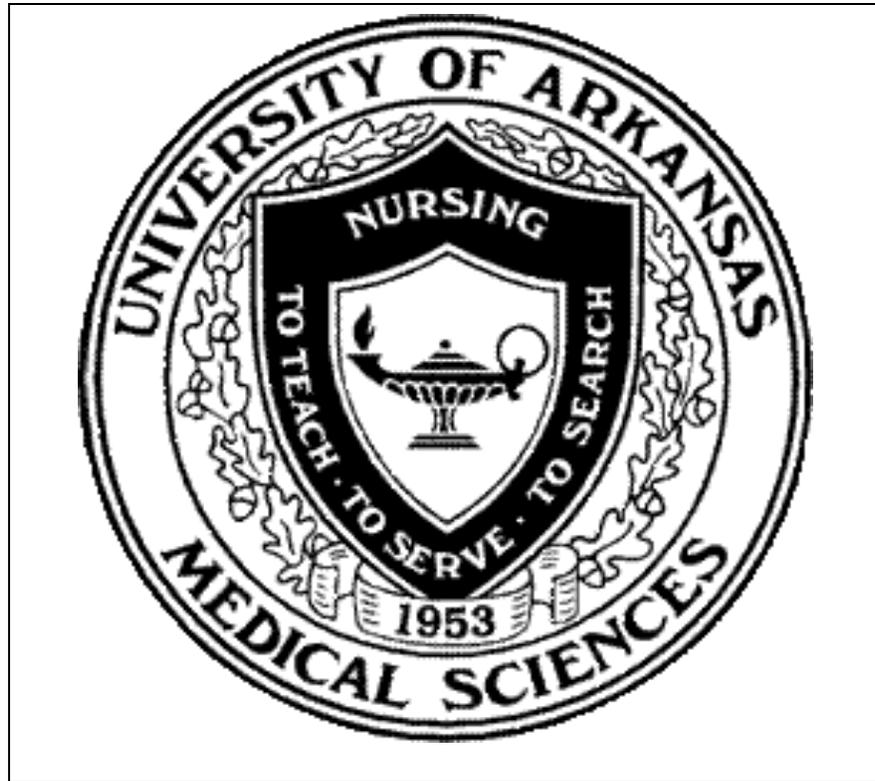


# **Nursing Ph.D. Program Handbook**



## **College of Nursing University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences 2021-2022**

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Welcome!

We're glad you are here! This handbook is designed to provide you with guidance as you progress through the Ph.D. doctoral program. The guide will not cover everything, but does include important material that we want to be sure you have at your fingertips. The Ph.D. faculty are available to discuss your particular needs at any point.

We offer a number of resources, and this handbook will familiarize you with the major ones. Additional information is available through the UAMS Graduate School Student Handbook, the College of Nursing (CON) Student Handbook, and the UAMS CON Website. This is a working document, so please let us know of additional information that you would recommend for future editions.

Please let me know if there is any way that I can help you during your stay with us. We wish you a stimulating educational journey. Thanks for choosing the UAMS Ph.D. in nursing program!

Sincerely,

Patricia Cowan, PhD, RN, FAAN  
Interim Director, PhD in Nursing program  
Graduate School

Dean and Professor  
College of Nursing

## **The Graduate School/ College of Nursing Relationship**

The relationship between the Graduate School and the College of Nursing is complex. You will recall that you completed your application on the Graduate School GUS website but it may also be found on the CON website. You are actually admitted to both the Graduate School and the College of Nursing, although your primary affiliation is with the Graduate School. Some of the requirements and rules are established by the Graduate School and others by the College.

To newcomers, these requirements can appear confusing. Read materials carefully, and ask questions freely. To learn more about the Graduate School, check out their website: [gradschool.uams.edu](http://gradschool.uams.edu).

## **Your New College Family**

As a new member of the College of Nursing (CON) family, it is good to know a bit of family history. The CON, born in 1953, first offered a baccalaureate program. The master's program was initiated in 1971, and currently offers a variety of nurse practitioner, nursing administration, and nursing education specialties. In 2013, the CON opened its doors to a new program, the Doctor of Nursing Practice. This program is housed in the CON and is not affiliated with the Graduate School.

The Ph.D. program accepted its first students in 1997, with the intent of providing the state of Arkansas with nurse leaders who would serve as faculty, clinicians, administrators, and researchers. Currently, 68 persons have graduated from this program.

The College of Nursing is housed in several areas on the UAMS campuses in Little Rock and in Fayetteville, Arkansas. At UAMS, faculty have offices on the fifth floor in the Education II and Daniel W. Rahn Interprofessional Educational (RAHN) Buildings. The vast majority of doctoral faculty has offices in the RAHN building.

For more information on the history, mission, and philosophy of the College,

see the UAMS College of Nursing catalog.

### **Overview of the Ph.D. Doctoral Program**

Graduates of the Ph.D. Doctoral program are prepared to advance the art and science of nursing through research and scholarship. They are expected to assume leadership positions in academic and healthcare settings and to influence nursing practice, research, healthcare delivery, policy, and the social awareness of nursing's contributions to the healthcare arena. Selected course work and educational activities are designed to help students develop knowledge in a specialized nursing area, develop and test theories, and acquire the skills and experience for conducting research that is relevant to their area of interest. The program is directed by a cadre of competent faculty and is facilitated by required and elective course work, independent study, and research activities. Our goal is to prepare nurses to advance the art and science of nursing through research and scholarship.

To that end, we offer courses that develop scientific perspectives and research skills. Support courses will help you individualize your program of study. You will conduct and write a dissertation to demonstrate your understanding of research and scholarship by addressing an original research question. As part of your dissertation, you will submit two manuscripts for publication. For more information about courses, please see the Academic Catalog.

**Interprofessional Education (IPE).** The university requires all students to complete IPE milestones. Students in the Graduate School who entered a PhD program in fall 2015 and beyond must complete the Exposure phase of the IPE curriculum prior to graduation. The Exposure phase requires participation in two activities.

1. The IPE Exposure workshop: Completed the same day as orientation to the Graduate School. The director of the PhD in Nursing program provides

names of students to the IPE staff who will then register students for the IPE Exposure workshop.

2. An Exposure Bridge activity. Activities include movies, book readings, and observations. A list of these activities can be found on the Graduate School website. Registration is required through GUS for the IPE Exposure Bridge activity. After registering in GUS, students use the Sign-Up Genius to select their preferred Exposure Bridge activity.

<https://gradschool.uams.edu/students/interprofessional-education-ipe-requirement-for-uams-graduate-school-students/>

To receive credit for the IPE Exposure workshop and IPE Exposure Bridge activity, students must complete the pre-work, participate in the workshop, and submit any post-documents (such as written reflection or post-test).

### **Time Limitations for Completion of Degree**

All requirements for the degree, including the dissertation, **must be completed within seven years from the time the student passes the Ph.D. doctoral comprehensive (candidacy) examination.** Student progress on the dissertation is monitored at regular intervals, and action is taken if there is failure to progress. It is to your advantage to start the dissertation as early as is feasible after successfully completing the candidacy examination. It is expected that you defend the dissertation proposal within two to three semesters following successful completion of the candidacy examination. Students typically have written the first three chapters of the dissertation and received feedback by the dissertation committee members prior to the dissertation proposal defense. Once the student has defended the dissertation proposal successfully, the student submits the proposal to the Institutional Review Board for approval to conduct the research and begins data collection. The time to

complete data collection, analyze results, and develop the two manuscripts that are the remaining chapters of the dissertation depend upon the study design, subject accrual, analysis needed, and time for writing. If you establish a timetable from the outset and adhere closely to it, the dissertation research and the associated procedures will be a smoother process for all concerned.

### **Academic Advisor and Your Program of Study**

The Ph.D. Doctoral Program Director will serve as your program advisor until you choose your dissertation chair. Your program advisor will work with you to plan your program of study. Please see **Appendix A** (Program of Study form). Your Plan of Study (POS) includes course work from transfer credits (a six-credit maximum as described in the Graduate School section of the Academic Catalog) and your schedule for completing required program courses. The Advisor will help you to identify faculty members in your interest area who are available to explore your research interest area for dissertation. You and your advisor will select support courses (electives) that help you meet your research and career goals. You may consider taking elective courses at other colleges or universities. As we work together to plan your program of study, we recommend that you carefully consider the demands of other life commitments, job responsibilities, family needs, etc. These need to be considered when deciding on a part-time or full-time option.

When a specialized course is not available, and depending on faculty resources, you may arrange with a faculty member to develop a Topic in Nursing or Independent Study course alternative. You and the faculty member supervising the Topic in Nursing or Independent Study course will meet to identify the purpose, the learning objectives, and end-products of the course. You will complete the agreement form (see **Syllabus**) and file it with the Program Director at the beginning of the semester. Your grade for this course will be based upon your meeting the stated objectives for the

Topic in Nursing or Independent Study Course.

### **Role of Faculty Mentor**

Some students may elect to have a faculty mentor. The Ph.D. Director will assist you in selecting a mentor based on recommendations from the Ph.D. faculty. You will most likely meet with the mentor one or two times per semester. The mentor will supplement the role of the program academic advisor by offering information, guidance, and support focused on coursework and your development of a research dissertation topic. A student may change mentors as she/he progresses in the program as her or his interests may change. The mentor may also assist the student in selecting important conferences to attend, meeting local experts in the area of a student's research, identifying organizations to join, selecting the best journals in which to publish, etc. The student is advised to get input on various assignments during the coursework, such as synthesis of the literature and pilot proposal from their mentor. The mentor is NOT the same as the dissertation chair, who will be selected after consultation with the Director of the Ph.D. Doctoral Program. However, the mentor may serve in this role or be a member of the dissertation committee, as she/he will be familiar with the student's area of interest and expertise.

Once you select your dissertation chair, this individual will serve as your major advisor. While you progress through the required courses, the Ph.D. Program Director will guide you and monitor your progress.

### **Course/Faculty Evaluation**

As part of end-of-course requirements, you will need to complete each course/faculty evaluation to ensure ongoing quality improvement in the educational program. As a member of the student body enrolled in a professional program of study, you are required to complete the course/faculty evaluations as a part of your

preparation for your professional role. The College of Nursing Scholastic Non-Cognitive Performance Standards will guide you in an understanding of these expectations. Failure to complete the evaluation process may result in a review, based on these standards, of your performance by administration.

### **Financial Assistance for Presenting Research**

We encourage our doctoral students to submit abstracts to present research findings on other doctoral projects, either as posters or podium presentations, at local, regional, national, or international scientific meetings. We expect you to submit an abstract each year to present scholarly work at the annual Arkansas Nursing Research Conference, as well as the UAMS-wide Graduate Research Day. The same abstract may be submitted for both. This abstract may focus on a class assignment or early research-related content. As you progress in the program, you are encouraged to submit an abstract to the annual conference of the Southern Nursing Research Society. Your mentor or course faculty are available to assist you in preparing your abstract. Developing and printing a poster for a conference can be costly if you use professional media. A less expensive alternative is to work with an on-line company such as [www.makesigns.com](http://www.makesigns.com). There are numerous sites available. When faculty are co-authors (presenters) on posters associated with your work as a PhD student, the College of Nursing will cover the cost of posters printed at UAMS Creative Services. The faculty needs to approve the poster and submit the request for the poster printing a minimum of two weeks prior to the date the poster is needed.

Due to budgetary constraints, financial assistance in presenting at a conference may not always be available. Do not assume that any expenses will be covered unless you receive written notification that you will be reimbursed.

If assistance becomes available through the UAMS Graduate School or the CON, an e-mail will be sent to all students with the latest information. Currently,

students may receive limited assistance. To qualify for any available funds, the student needs to be the first and/or presenting author to qualify for travel assistance, and this is usually limited to a one-time assistance. Please read the travel policies on the Graduate School website. To request assistance with costs once your abstract has been accepted for presentation, you need to complete the Travel Request Form. This same form may be used to request travel funds from the CON. The form is linked under “Fellowships, Grants, and Travel Awards” under the Forms & Links tab on the UAMS Graduate School website. Submit the completed request form to the Director of the PhD in Nursing program, who must approve the request prior to forwarding to the Dean of the College of Nursing. When submitting, include a copy of your abstract and letter of acceptance of your abstract. This same material is required for the Graduate School if funds are available.

Students traveling on behalf of UAMS who have been pre-authorized must pay for their travel out of their pocket and will be reimbursed at the rate the funding department (such as the Graduate School or CON) has stipulated. Student travel receipts must meet the same guidelines as state employees traveling for UAMS: no credit card receipts—itemized receipts only; receipts (such as airfare and lodging) must be in the name of the traveling student. No gratuities or alcohol are reimbursed.

Students who also hold a UAMS employee status (e.g. research assistant or faculty member) must follow the guidelines set forth for all UAMS employees and travel must be coordinated and approved prior to departure with their home department (such as CON or COM). Please see the CON Business Office for additional information.

Additionally, many organizations offer travel scholarships, such as the American Heart Association. Students are encouraged to apply for these funds.

## **Assistantships & Pre-Doctoral Scholarships**

Assistantships are a traditional way to support full-time doctoral students, as well as to provide hands-on training in research or teaching. In addition, the assistantship program provides networking opportunities and exposure to academic life. The number of Assistantships may vary. The CON currently offers two Assistantships per year and others are typically available using private foundation grant money.

### **Graduate Assistantship/Student Stipend**

**Purpose:** Provide doctoral students with financial assistance and experience working with a faculty as a Research Assistant (RA) or a Teaching Assistant (TA).

**Description of Assistantship/Stipend:** Depending on the Graduate School's budget, several student stipends are available each year: \$30,000/year for 12 months (August 1–July 30). A 10-month assistantship may be requested, but priority is given to those requesting a 12-month Assistantship. The stipend is paid on a monthly basis. Tuition is also paid for fall and spring semesters in addition to the monthly stipend. For the summer, only one credit hour tuition is paid. The recipient is required to work with the assigned faculty member(s) 14-16 hours per week. The student must be enrolled in full-time study (nine credit hours) during the duration of the Assistantship.

**Eligibility:** Any full-time (nine hours per semester), College of Nursing Ph.D. doctoral student is eligible to apply. Preference will be given to students who plan to attend the doctoral program full-time and not to pursue outside employment, and to students who have been in the program for several semesters. In making the selection, consideration will be given to GPA, employment status, and the student's goals.

**Application:** Submit the Application for Assistantship/Student Stipend through the Ph.D. Doctoral Program Director. The application packet is due by May

1st each year. Funding will usually start August 1st (see forms in back of handbook).

**Conditions:** Assistantships are for one year; a student can reapply for a second year of funding. This time may be extended if private funds are available to support the Assistantship. If the recipient drops below full-time study, the stipend ends. Reapplication is necessary for any future stipend benefits. Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA. If the recipient withdraws from the program of study in the middle of a semester, the tuition, fees, and assistantship salary for that semester must be repaid, unless there are extenuating circumstances. For more information, with additional guidelines, please see Graduate School Student Handbook.

### **National Institute of Health Pre-Doctoral Awards**

These two-year awards are highly competitive and will require that you work closely with a faculty member who will serve as your sponsor. For more information, please contact the Director of the Ph.D. Doctoral Program.

### **College of Nursing and Arkansas Scholarships**

To learn more about additional student financial resources, please refer to this link: <https://nursing.uams.edu/future-students/financial/financial-assistance/>. There are numerous scholarships available in the CON, but a limited number are designated for Ph.D. students. The Arkansas Graduate Nursing Education Student Loan and Scholarship (AGNSLS) Program, Act 1468, was originally established in 1995 and is designed to increase the number of advanced practice nurses, clinical nurse specialists, and nurse educators in the state of Arkansas. Students who receive nursing loans during graduate school may have these loans converted to scholarship grants according to the terms of the loan. Eligibility is extended to any bona fide Arkansas resident enrolled in an Arkansas accredited graduate nursing program that leads to a master's or doctoral degree in nursing.

**Doctoral Nurse Educator Loan:** Students in the Nursing Ph.D. program at UAMS who are full-time may receive up to **\$50,000** during their doctoral studies. The Doctoral Nurse Educator Loan has both a part-time and a full-time option. Full-time students must carry at least nine credit hours. Part-time students must carry six to eight credit hours. Full-time students can receive a maximum of \$16,000 per academic year (\$8,000 per fall and spring semester), while students who are part-time may receive up to \$8,000 per academic year (\$4,000 per fall and spring semester). Full-time students receiving the loan/scholarship funding must be employed less than 40 hours per week and preferably no more than 20 hours per week during their graduate studies.

The application for AGNSLS posts twice a year on the UAMS College of Nursing website:

- In the Spring for the upcoming academic year
- In the Fall for the upcoming Spring semester

Applicants must apply every year for further funding.

### **Doctor of Philosophy Candidacy Exam**

When you have successfully completed the required core courses, you may apply to take the Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (DCE). You must submit request by October 1st or March 1st of the semester you complete required coursework (See forms in back of handbook). The purpose of the Examination is for you to demonstrate knowledge and your readiness to conduct dissertation research. The objectives of the written and oral examination are to assess your ability to:

1. Analyze, synthesize, and apply advanced knowledge;
2. Develop an independent, thoughtful analysis of questions; and
3. Present this analysis in an effective, cogent, and succinct form.

## **Procedures for Taking the Candidacy Examination**

Your DCE committee will be composed of three members, including the person whom you have selected to chair your dissertation. Additional information on the DCE committee is provided in sections that follow. The committee will provide you with two questions. You will respond in writing to one of the questions. After successfully completing the written portion of the DCE, you must also pass an oral follow-up examination with your DCE committee. The first step is to complete a Request to Take Candidacy Examination form (**See forms in back of handbook**). When you complete the Request form, the Ph.D. Doctoral Program Director will complete an audit of your program of study and, if satisfied, grant approval for you to take the examination; the Program Director will also distribute specific information to you about the DCE process. During the semester in which you take the Candidacy Examination, you must register for at least one credit hour of coursework. The Chair of the Candidacy Examination Committee is responsible for completing and filing the report of the Doctor of Philosophy Candidacy Examination for each student (**see forms in back of handbook**). Once this completed form is filed, you are required to be enrolled continuously for the remainder of the Ph.D. program. This also includes continuous enrollment in summer.

## **Policies and Procedures for the Doctoral Comprehensive Exam**

The Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (DCE) is to represent the student's own original work. Use of written resources is permitted and encouraged. Any assistance from peers, faculty, family, and friends is NOT PERMITTED.

## **Doctoral Candidacy Examination (DCE) Guidelines**

1. During the last semester of required Ph.D. doctoral courses, but no later than October 1st (Fall semester) or March 1st (Spring semester), the student will

- complete a request to take the Doctoral Candidacy Examination (DCE). The DCE must be successfully completed prior to the initiation of dissertation research.
2. Around November 15th (Fall semester) or April 1st (Spring semester), the student will receive written guidance and the DCE questions, as well as a list of the specific committee members who will evaluate their written and oral response to the selected question.
  3. During the regular pre-registration period, the student will pre-register for the following semester and must enroll in a minimum of one hour of Dissertation Seminar (NPHD 6201), as well as at least two hours of Dissertation (NPHD 6202) with the dissertation chair. In the event that the student does not pass the DCE, their registration for dissertation seminar and hours will be withdrawn, as one must pass the DCE in order to progress to Dissertation hours.
  4. If the student is unsuccessful with the DCE, the student must retake the DCE in the current semester. If the student is not successful after two retakes, the student will be dismissed from the program.

### **DCE Committee Membership**

1. Each DCE committee will have three members, two of whom must be graduate faculty teaching in the College of Nursing Ph.D. program. The third member may be any faculty member in the College of Nursing who has a Ph.D. degree. The student's dissertation adviser cannot chair a student's DCE committee, but will serve as a member on the committee.
2. The Ph.D. Program Director will appoint the student's DCE committee chair and two additional members. The three-member committee will require the approval of the Ph.D. Council. Should the Ph.D. Program Director determine that a conflict exists in the committee membership, then the Director may suggest an alternative configuration of members, again to be approved by the Council.

To assure integrity and consistency of the grading process, students are not permitted to request a change in the membership of the committee during the entire DCE process. The original committee members will be responsible for grading any repeated DCE. In the event that a faculty member becomes unavailable during this process, the Ph.D. Program Director will appoint a replacement.

The student should meet with all DCE committee members during the semester the examination is to be taken to discuss her/his areas of interest, the likely dissertation topic, and the timeline for written and oral examinations.

### **The Doctoral Comprehensive Exam**

The DCE consists of written and oral components. Each will be discussed below:

#### **Written component**

The written component will be a take-home examination. Six weeks are allowed to complete the examination. The student will complete the written paper and submit it to the DCE committee. It may be sent by e-mail along with a request for confirmation of receipt to all committee members.

1. The written component consists of two questions that are posed to the student by the Committee. The student picks one question to answer. The written component covers knowledge in any of the three areas:
  - a. Introduction to the problem, documentation of its significance, and relationship to the health of individuals, groups, families, or communities
  - b. Conceptual or theoretical underpinnings of the proposed study
  - c. Methodological Considerations
2. Written response to the question should be typewritten and no more than 20 pages, double-spaced, and in 12-point Ariel font; it must conform to the APA or AMA format as required by a professional journal. The 20 pages are exclusive of

references, figures, tables, and appendices, but these must be included. It is the student's responsibility to disseminate the written exam paper to each committee member. The student is encouraged to submit the written paper for publication.

3. Criteria for grading include (a. Depth of knowledge; (b. Critical evaluation of knowledge; (c. Synthesis of content; and (d. Clarity in expression and logical development of ideas.
  - a. A student who receives a grade of **satisfactory** will proceed to the oral component of the DCE.
  - b. A student who receives a grade of **unsatisfactory** will need to retake the written component of the DCE. In order to allow sufficient time for re-writing the examination and due to enrollment dates, the student will not be able to register for dissertation hours the following semester in the event of unsatisfactory work on the written component.
4. The three DCE committee members must reach consensus on whether or not the student can proceed to the oral component of the DCE. The DCE committee will inform the student, the dissertation chair, and the Ph.D. Program Director within one week of receiving the written exam paper whether or not the student can proceed to the oral component of the DCE.
5. If the student needs to retake the written component, the student should meet with the DCE committee chair to receive feedback on the written exam paper and set up a timeline to retake the written component. The student must submit the rewritten exam paper to the DCE committee by the end of 15 business days.
6. The date of the oral exam will be confirmed after the student turns in the rewritten paper.

### **Oral Exam**

1. The oral exam will be one to two hours in length.

2. The oral component must occur within two weeks of the submission of the written examination.
3. In the interim, between the written and oral exams, the student shall not be provided with evaluative feedback. **The oral exam is viewed as an integral part of the process, and judgment as to over-all performance and the final outcome should be withheld until the completion of the oral exam.**
4. The intent of the oral component is to determine whether the student is adequately prepared and sufficiently intellectually independent to conduct doctoral-level research. Therefore, the oral component questions will cover the student's knowledge and understanding of theory, research methodology, methods, and data analysis related to the proposed area of study. However, the oral exam is not confined to the topics covered in the written examination.
5. Questions may draw on knowledge acquired during the program that has relevance to the phenomenon of interest and its study. The oral component also tests the student's ability to be confident and skeptical, to discuss empirical and theoretical considerations in the proposed study, and to defend his/her own ideas, yet be open to alternatives.
6. The three DCE committee members must reach consensus on whether or not the student receives either a "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory" outcome on the DCE. If the student receives a grade of unsatisfactory on DCE, she/he must retake the entire DCE within two weeks. Figure 1 outlines the DCE process.

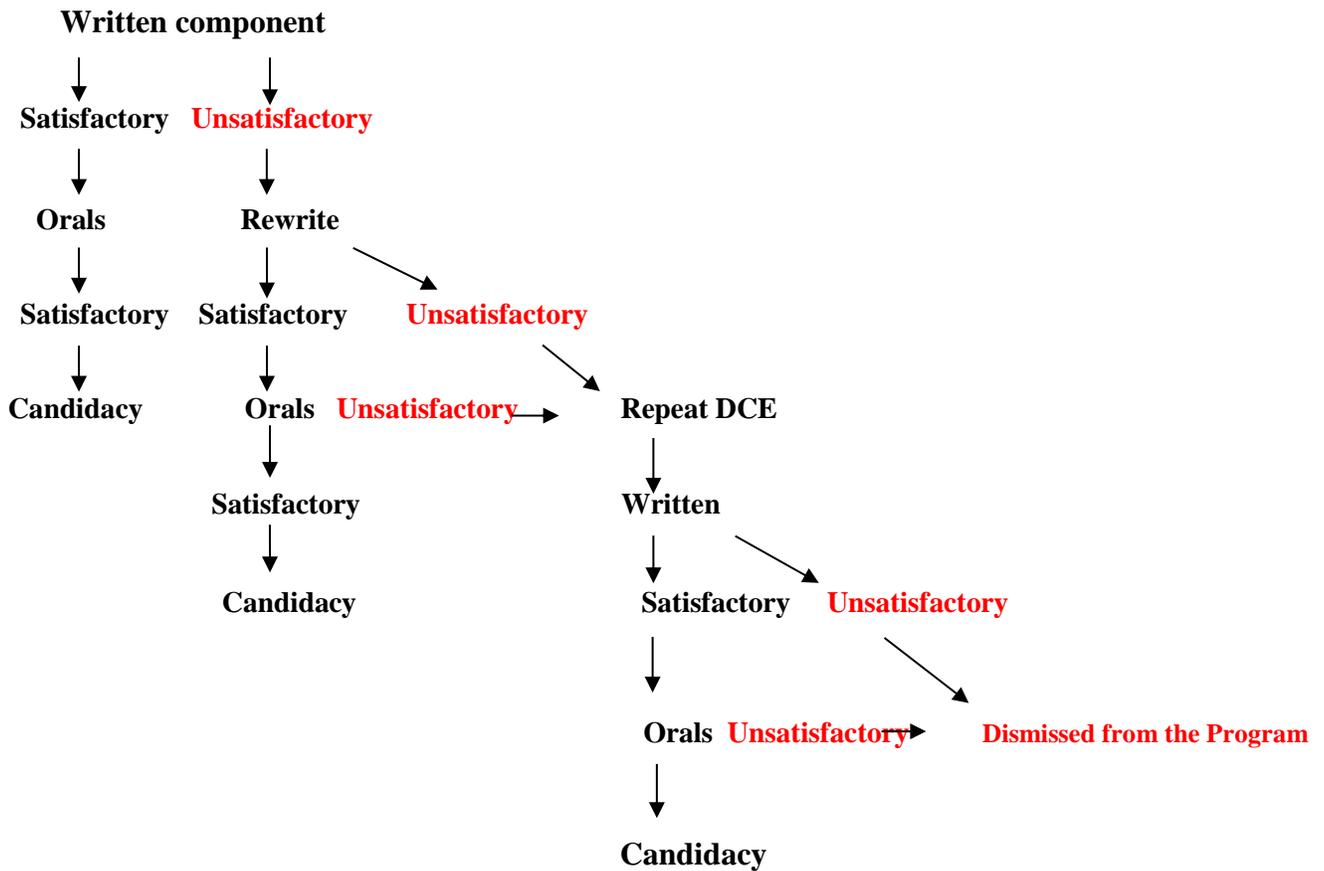
### **Final grade of the DCE**

Final outcomes of DCE will be one of the following:

- a. Satisfactory: The student must receive a grade of satisfactory. This decision is to be recorded as "satisfactory" on the Graduate School Report form.

- b. Unsatisfactory: If the student receives a grade of unsatisfactory, this decision is to be recorded as “unsatisfactory” on the Graduate School Report form.

**Figure 1: Diagram of the DCE Process**



## **Dissertation**

### **Purpose of a Dissertation**

A dissertation represents your first supervised, but independent, research project. It allows you to demonstrate what you have learned, while receiving guidance and oversight from a faculty committee. Traditionally, a dissertation consists of five chapters, ranging from the introduction to conclusions.

At the CON, we have modified this in keeping with current trends that emphasize publishing research. You will write the typical first three chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, & Research Methods) and this will constitute your dissertation proposal. In lieu of chapters reporting findings (typically chapter 4) and conclusions (chapter 5), you will develop and submit two publishable manuscripts. An abstract of these manuscripts must be submitted along with your updated proposal for your final dissertation.

When you enter doctoral candidacy, you are required to register for at least one dissertation hour every term, including summer, until the dissertation is completed. You must also register for Dissertation Seminar (one credit) for the first two semesters (Spring and Fall) or with permission until the proposal is defended. You are expected to be prepared and to schedule your proposal defense by the end of the second semester of Dissertation Seminar. In rare circumstances, a student may petition the Ph.D. Director for permission to register for a third semester. A total of eighteen hours of dissertation, including two credits of dissertation seminar, are required to graduate.

You will first select your dissertation chair. Your chair will help you select members of your dissertation committee. Each committee member should be carefully selected for his/her area of expertise. For example, you might select a member with experience in the research method you will use in your dissertation research or in the content area you will be pursuing. You must have a minimum of

five members on your dissertation committee, one of whom must be an “outside member,” i.e. a faculty member outside of the CON or external to UAMS. You may have up to two committee members external to UAMS. A CV and request form for each external committee member must be submitted to Dr. McGehee, Dean of the Graduate School, for review and approval. While it is possible to have more than five committee members, consult with your chair regarding the benefit verses challenges of additional committee members. It is possible to have an ‘ad hoc’ non-voting committee member who provides expertise or entrée for the proposed research.

### **General Area of Research Interest**

It is helpful for you to identify an area of research interest as early as possible. Some of you will know your focus at the time you interview, and others will develop this interest during their early coursework. An advantage of selecting your research focus early is that course papers and projects can support your dissertation work. **By the time you enroll in *NPHD 6112: Synthesizing the Literature*, you are expected to have selected your research question. You are expected to select your Chair by the time you enroll for the grant-writing course, *NPHD 6113: Preliminary Studies & Grant Development*.**

### **Dissertation Chair**

The dissertation chairperson assumes primary responsibility for assisting you in all phases of the dissertation and serves as your major advisor. Consider your selection carefully, as you will work very closely with this faculty over a period of months. This individual must be a doctorally prepared graduate faculty member in the College of Nursing, with an appointment in the Graduate School, who meets the criteria to serve in this role. See **Appendix C** for a list of faculty currently qualified to serve as dissertation chairs. The dissertation chair must be competent to supervise the research

as a whole; other faculty on the dissertation advisory committee will serve as resource persons for specific aspects of the study.

Early in the program of study, you should attempt to become acquainted with the entire graduate faculty in the College of Nursing. In consultation with the Ph.D. Program Director and your faculty mentor, you should select a dissertation chair that publishes, and preferably is funded, in your proposed area of research. It is helpful for you to obtain updated reports on the graduate faculty's areas of research interest and publications. When selecting a dissertation chair, you should also consider areas of expertise and personal style. The Ph.D. Program Director will consider factors such as faculty area of expertise, methodological experience, and workload equity when assisting you to select a chair. Once a dissertation chair is selected, students and the chair are encouraged to meet on a regular basis to facilitate progress on the dissertation.

### **Composition of Doctoral Dissertation Advisory Committee**

The purpose of the committee is to guide your dissertation research and to provide the expertise needed for you to complete dissertation requirements. Expertise includes the areas of specific content, methodology, and data analysis. The dissertation chair will help you select, and must approve, all committee members. The committee consists of the dissertation chair and a minimum of four additional members, two of whom must be from the College of Nursing. One member must come from outside the College of Nursing. If a committee member is outside of UAMS, please complete a request for review (**see forms in back of handbook**). The request must indicate that the individual will serve as a dissertation committee member but not as the chairperson of the dissertation. Be sure to indicate the area of expertise the outside member brings to the committee. Consult the Graduate School Handbook for requirements related to committee membership, and other important information.

After selecting your dissertation chair and committee members, you will complete and submit the Doctoral Advisory Committee Form (See forms in back of handbook) to the Director of the Ph.D. Doctoral Program in Nursing, who will review and approve the committee members before forwarding it to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

In general, you should submit drafts of each chapter of the dissertation to all committee members for their comments and suggestions. The entire dissertation committee is required to meet with the student at least one time each Fall and Spring semester to review your drafts, provide suggestions, and assess your progress. A UAMS Graduate School Student Advisory Committee Report (**see forms in back of handbook**) will be signed by all committee members each time the committee meets to document student progress.

### **Change in Dissertation Chair**

Either you or the dissertation committee chair may ask for a change in the chair. This is a serious decision and is generally made in consultation with the CON Ph.D. Program Director. The need for a change may arise for a number of reasons, i.e. a faculty member may leave the College, you may change dissertation topics, or a serious problem occurs in the working relationship. A request to change dissertation chair must be formally submitted to the CON Ph.D. Doctoral Program Director, who will then submit the request for approval to the Dean of the Graduate School. You will need to request any change on the Doctoral Advisory Committee Form (**See forms in back of handbook**).

### **Changes in Doctoral Dissertation Advisory Committee Membership**

Changes in committee membership must be requested by the Dissertation Chair and the student. Please complete the request on the Doctoral Advisory

Committee Form (**See forms in back handbook**). Submit the request to the Ph.D. Doctoral Program Director for signature, who will then send it to the Dean of the Graduate School for approval.

### **Dissertation Seminar (NPHD 6201)**

When you enter doctoral candidacy, you are required to participate in a monthly dissertation seminar for a minimum of two semesters or until you have defended your dissertation proposal. These semesters count one credit each toward your 18 dissertation hours, and are graded pass/fail, based on meeting specific requirements.

### **Developing the Proposal**

Your dissertation proposal will guide you as you conduct your dissertation. In essence, it provides the background and blueprint for your study, and serves as a contract for the scope of work to be conducted. You will develop your proposal with the guidance and support of your dissertation chair and your committee.

The proposal should include the introduction of the problem (Chapter 1), the review of related literature (Chapter 2), and a detailed methodological plan for your study (Chapter 3) (See **Appendix D.**) Preferences regarding the format of the dissertation proposal may vary with the committee members, so it is important that you understand your committee members' expectations.

While developing the proposal, it is not necessary for you to consult committee members equally about each aspect of the problem and design. However, it is highly recommended that you consult with members about aspects directly related to their areas of special competence. Additional faculty or resource persons may be consulted as needed. It is the joint responsibility of you and your dissertation chair to make the decisions on the research design and methodology, even if decisions are made that one or more committee members believe to be less than optimal.

The committee's responsibility is to act in an advisory capacity, rather than as directors of the research. However, they must support the agreed-upon proposal when providing advice during the research stage. The dissertation chair is responsible for resolving significant differences of opinion among committee members.

### **Proposal Defense and Approval**

The student arranges a committee meeting (up to two hours in length) to discuss the written proposal and gain approval for the study. The proposal meeting should be scheduled when all members are available. ***The student is responsible for arranging the proposal defense and distributing electronic copies of the proposal at least ten working days before the meeting. This time frame is required, so do not request an exception.*** Refer to **Appendix D** to guide the development of your dissertation proposal. The dissertation chair will conduct the session.

The proposal defense should be viewed as a working session in which differences of opinion are resolved. It is a good idea to audiotape the session, or take careful notes on the issues raised and decisions reached during the proposal defense. Your committee members' suggestions are intended to ensure the study's feasibility and quality. Your Chair will write a summary of your committee's recommendations for change and send it to you and your committee members. ***You will make these changes in your proposal and ask your Chair and Committee to approve the revisions before you develop and submit your research protocol to the UAMS Institutional Review Board (IRB).***

### **Documentation of Successful Proposal Defense**

After successful defense of the dissertation proposal, it is the student's responsibility to complete (**see forms in back of handbook**) with requested signatures and file this form with the Program Director.

## **Conducting the Dissertation Research**

After your dissertation committee has approved your proposal, you must obtain appropriate institutional committee approvals before beginning the study. If your dissertation research involves human subjects, the UAMS IRB must approve the study before you can begin. Other approvals may also be required, depending upon where the dissertation research will be conducted and/or the research procedures being used. Information about the IRB is available at [irb.uams.edu](http://irb.uams.edu). Please note that it may take six weeks to have your proposal reviewed by the IRB, and it is not unusual to need to make changes requested by the IRB. There are templates on the IRB website to assist you in developing your consent forms and protocol.

If the study is to be conducted in a setting outside of UAMS, please consult with the UAMS IRB to determine whether IRB approvals from those settings need to be obtained and included with your UAMS IRB materials. If the study is to be done at UAMS, you must obtain UAMS IRB approval prior to securing administrative approval from the hospital. Please consult [http://irb.uams.edu/about\\_us/full-board\\_meetings/](http://irb.uams.edu/about_us/full-board_meetings/) for the schedule and deadlines for submitting materials to the UAMS IRB.

The College of Nursing has secured some gift cards for PhD in Nursing students to use as a research incentive for subjects participating in your dissertation research. Any research incentive participation must be incorporated into the IRB proposal. A copy of the gift card request form and protocol is available in the Blackboard course shell of NPHD 6202: Doctoral Dissertation.

## **The Dissertation Defense and Dissemination Process**

As you finalize your study and prepare for graduation, you will address three separate components: a pre-defense meeting, the final defense, and the preparation and submission of the written documents. These activities typically take place in the

last semester before graduation. Make sure you allow adequate time to go through these processes! Check the current semester due dates for final defense and submission of dissertation to the library (see forms in back of handbook). You will develop a specific timeline with your dissertation chair. Please refer to (see forms in back of handbook) for guidelines on the latest dates to complete the various steps. ***The student is responsible for distributing electronic copies of the dissertation and manuscripts at least ten working days before the pre and final defense.*** Committee members need time to carefully read and review your dissertation.

### **Pre-Defense meeting**

A pre-defense meeting of the entire Committee is scheduled to review the first three chapters and manuscripts that you have developed, and to plan your final defense. **In most cases, dissertation committee members provide considerable feedback on your manuscripts at this meeting.** This meeting is a time to discuss your findings, prepare for the final defense, and receive assistance in revising manuscripts to increase the chance of being published. Please use the Pre-Defense Meeting Checklist (see forms in back of handbook) to determine if you are ready to schedule this meeting. You are responsible for obtaining approval from your chair before scheduling this meeting. In some cases, your committee may decide to schedule an additional pre-defense meeting to review the dissertation and manuscripts after additional work is done. You are responsible for distributing an electronic copy of your work to each member ten working days prior to the pre-defense meeting. You should also consult with your Dissertation Chair prior to the pre-defense meeting for any additional materials (e.g., statistical analyses printouts, PowerPoint slides) to be brought or prepared for Committee review during the meeting. Expect to present a brief summary to your committee. This PowerPoint presentation usually lasts about 30 minutes.

## **Technical Requirements in Writing the Dissertation**

The CON requires that dissertations be written according to the latest edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (American Psychological Association, Washington, DC). The current edition of the APA publication manual serves as the official guide for papers and scholarly works for both faculty and students in the College of Nursing. Students are held accountable for following these guidelines in scholarly works/papers for grading and academic honesty. The two manuscripts must follow the specific reference and format guidelines for the selected professional journals.

## **Guidance in Developing Dissertation Manuscripts**

To meet the goal for dissemination and/or extension of dissertation research findings, the following types of manuscripts are considered acceptable to meet the intent and purpose.

- a. Manuscripts that include data/research findings from the study.
- b. Manuscripts that address research-related issues encountered in carrying out the study, i.e., consent issues, recruitment discoveries, or methodological aspects of study that fill a void in existing literature.
- c. A submitted major research proposal on a related research question or that extends the findings that are deemed fundable by a regional or national professional organization.

All students must develop a manuscript as described in “a” above. The second “manuscript” may be an “a”, “b”, or “c” that is approved by the entire dissertation committee.

## **Final Defense**

Once you have completed your study, you will present and defend your

findings to a meeting of your Committee, professional colleagues, and your community. **(See forms in back of handbook)** for an overview checklist of the dissertation process. You will arrange a date and time (approximately two hours) that is satisfactory to all committee members for the final defense of the dissertation. **(See forms in back of handbook)** to request final defense arrangements.

You are responsible for obtaining approval from your chair before scheduling this meeting. Please refer to **(see program due date forms and pre-defense student checklist in back of handbook)** for general guidelines. You are also responsible for coordinating with the Ph.D. program administrative assistant at least 30 days prior anticipated defense date to schedule the meeting. You must submit the entire dissertation (the first three chapters, the abstract, and two manuscripts, including the submission and formatting guidelines for the selected journals), with appropriate references, to your committee **ten working days** before the final defense.

Your dissertation chair will provide definitive guidance and review your Power Point slides as you prepare for your dissertation defense. The following information provides general guidelines to ensure that you meet expectations. Please note that we encourage you to attend defense meetings of other students, as they are open to the public, and will help to demystify the process for you. An email notification of all Dissertation Defenses is sent to CON Student and Faculty distribution groups, so that they may attend research presentations of interest. A notice is also distributed campus-wide by the graduate school.

We encourage you to practice presenting your defense at your pre-defense meeting. It is useful to consider your presentation as similar to a research presentation at a national meeting. Use Power Point slides to aid your presentation. Make sure you utilize spell check and grammar check on the slides. Add references where indicated. Please address the following in an organized and coherent manner:

- Research question

- Rationale and significance of study
- Conceptual framework
- Methods, including research design, sample, procedures
- Findings
- Present your findings in terms of your manuscripts.
- Indicate the journal where you are submitting your manuscripts, and then describe your sample and discuss other findings, limitations, and implications. This should include the theoretical approach, implications for nursing research, education, policy, and/or practice.

The total dissertation defense meeting should last approximately one to two hours (30–40 minutes to present and 40 minutes for questions and discussion). The faculty and attendees may ask questions regarding any aspect of the presentation, and the student is expected to answer the queries. Some of these questions may be asked at the pre-defense meeting. The Graduate School provides refreshments.

You will be excused from the room while the committee evaluates the defense and makes its decision. The dissertation chair will then invite the student in and verbally inform the student of the committee's decision. The decision may include additional required changes in the dissertation or manuscripts. Committee members may elect to sign off, or wait to see the changes. The chair will not sign until you have made all changes and provided proof that you have submitted the manuscripts for publication.

Documentation of submission and a copy of each of your two dissertation based manuscripts/grant proposal need to be submitted to the Director of the Ph.D. in Nursing Doctoral Program (**see forms in back of handbook**).

If you do not pass the defense, your dissertation committee will develop a plan of action for you to follow prior to scheduling another dissertation defense.

You need to bring at least five sheets requiring committee signature with you to the defense. Please refer to Thesis and Dissertation Preparation <https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/Thesis-and-Dissertation-Preparation-v8-lp.pdf> for specific regulations and type of paper.

### **Dissertation Format and Approval**

The Graduate School regulations regarding the preparation and submission of the dissertation and or thesis can be found at the following link.

<https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/Thesis-and-Dissertation-Preparation-v8-lp.pdf>

The dissertation chair will review the dissertation for conformity to the Graduate School's Regulations for Preparing Theses and Dissertations. The dissertation should be emailed to the UAMS Library Administrative Office no later than ten business days before the degree is to be granted (see Academic Calendar for due dates). Documents to be submitted to the Library include: electronic version of the complete dissertation in Adobe PDF format; completed e-filing form; and Committee Signature Page. The Library reviews the documents to verify completion and appropriate formatting. Following this review and approval, the Library saves the e-dissertation to its thesis/dissertation repository and considers this the formal filing of the document complete.

One PDF copy of the entire document (including abstract, signature pages, and complete dissertation) must be uploaded to ProQuest within two business days of submitting the dissertation to the UAMS Library. Your timeline must ensure that two final copies of the dissertation, together with two copies of a "dissertation abstract" of not more than 350 words, are submitted to the library for approval ten working days before the degree is conferred.

An overall summary abstract for the entire study, not to exceed 350 words, is

required by the Graduate School to be placed at the beginning of the dissertation. The dissertation abstract should address the Introduction/Purpose, Background, Methods, Results, and Discussion/Conclusion. Findings and implications are typically covered in chapters 4 and 5, which we do not require in the Nursing Science Ph.D. dissertation, so there is a need to document findings somewhere without violating future copyright agreements. A brief summary of each manuscript is generally included.

The actual manuscripts that are submitted for publication are not included with the dissertation. Please go to the Graduate School website to find specific instructions for dissertation preparation. You may find instructions under <https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/Thesis-and-Dissertation-Preparation-v8-lp.pdf>.

When you submit chapters 1–3 and the abstract to the library, it is mandatory that your documents are in compliance with specific guidelines provided at this website.

All signatures on final copies and abstracts must be originals. Once the copies are turned in to the library, you must contact the Graduate School to obtain a dissertation agreement form and instructions for clearing campus <http://gradschool.uams.edu/students/graduating-students/>.

### **Tips from the Trenches**

All communication concerning the conduct of your dissertation should flow between you and your dissertation chair. Inform your chair when you have discussions with other committee members. Together, you and your dissertation chair will set a timeline for proposal preparation, completion of pilot work if required, and meeting objectives for each semester of dissertation work. Your chair will supervise your application for IRB approval of your study. Before you submit your materials, you must demonstrate that you have been trained in the ethical conduct of research.

To do the online training and receive a certificate for protection of human subjects in research, please go to <http://orc.uams.edu/compliance-education-program/human-subject-protection-training-citi/> and access the online Human Subjects Protection (CITI) training.

It is important that you obtain approval from your dissertation chair before setting the date for your proposal defense and before circulating any drafts or final copy of the proposal to committee members.

### **Funding**

We suggest that you seek funding for your dissertation research. Funding will not only help defray research expenses, it will provide valuable opportunities to learn about the process of obtaining research support. Please consult your dissertation chair to assist you to identify potential funding sources, such as local chapters of Sigma Theta International. Depending on budgetary constraints, students may apply for funding from the UAMS Graduate School to help defray study-related costs.

You are highly encouraged to explore research funding opportunities early in your program of study. Federal government and private organization funding opportunities are available. See <https://researchtraining.nih.gov/career/graduate> for information on federal funding opportunities for doctoral students.

For all requests for research funding, you will need to complete a notification form. You can obtain this form from the Ph.D. Director. For further information, see student research funds: <http://gradschool.uams.edu/students/fellowships-grants-travel-awards-for-graduate-students/>. Please notify the Director of the Ph.D. program if you receive funding.

### **Dissertation Data Guidelines**

The dissertation research may involve original research, secondary analysis of

a faculty member's existing database, secondary analysis of an existing large database outside the CON, or a joint study involving a faculty member or researcher. If you conduct a secondary data analysis, you will need to develop original research questions, use a conceptual framework or model, and develop a detailed data analysis plan.

### **Ownership of Data/Authorship of Published Manuscript Guidelines**

*Original Research:* The ownership of data originating from a student's original research rests with the student. However, it is expected that faculty who serve on your dissertation committee will be co-author any of the publications evolving from the research. There are two reasons that this is important professionally:

- Faculty devote considerable time and effort to guide you through the dissertation process. Many manuscripts are returned for changes after submission, and faculty assist with reviewing these changes, after graduation, you will be carrying out research and publishing as part of a team, and it is expected that each person assisting with the actual research and writing for a study will be listed as a co-author for any publications.
- It is to your benefit to demonstrate that you have collaborated and published with a team of scientists. This will be especially beneficial later in your career when you are applying for grant funding.

*Secondary Data Analysis:* Whoever originally plans and implements a study maintains ownership of the data unless a written agreement to the contrary is negotiated prior to the student initiating dissertation proposal development.

If a secondary analysis is conducted, the owner of the data has the right to be a co-author on publications emanating from the data set in addition to the Dissertation Committee. A student performing a secondary analysis must be first author on the two

required dissertation publications. To avoid confusion and conflict later, if additional publications are forthcoming from the secondary analysis, ranking of authorship must be negotiated and preferably put in writing prior to the initiation of manuscripts.

If you undertake a joint project or secondary analysis as dissertation research, it is the responsibility of the dissertation chair to ensure that you have experience in preparation of a Human Subjects Review application and data collection. This experience may be incorporated as an independent study or while working as a research assistant with faculty at other sites, etc. The experience should occur while you are in the Ph.D. doctoral program to ensure that the experience reflects current protocols, especially human subjects concerns.

Although the owner of the data may be listed as a co-author on dissertation publications, the owner may not write any portion of the manuscript since publications are the outcome of the student's dissertation work and must be evaluated by the dissertation committee.

In the event the student does not publish the secondary analysis within a three-year time frame after graduation, the right to publish reverts back to the owner of the data, but the owner may not publish the original work of the student without the student's written permission.

*Joint Research:* This occurs when the student and faculty together plan the study, mix resources, use the same participants for data collection, and/or combine the results for analysis. However, as stated earlier, the student must develop original research questions and analyze the resulting data separately to produce two original manuscripts derived from the implementation of the research methodology or theoretical framework supported with findings from the research. Ownership of the data should be negotiated before the student begins the proposal process.

It is recommended that if the faculty member contributes significant resources to the research process, the faculty member should be co-author on the required two

publications. Other guidelines under secondary analysis also apply to authorship, failure to publish, etc.

### **Graduation**

During registration of the semester in which you plan to graduate, complete the Degree Application Form online at <http://gradschool.uams.edu/students/graduating-students/> (see **forms in back of handbook**). Also, remember to clear campus by completing the Campus Clearance form, downloadable from the same website.

### **Withdrawal Policy from UAMS Graduate School**

If you leave the University voluntarily before the end of a semester or summer term, you must file, and have accepted by the Graduate School registrar, a Petition for Withdrawal from Registration by completing the online form found at this website: <https://registrar.uams.edu/our-forms/adddropwithdrawal-form/> (see forms in back of handbook). You may also request to take a leave of absence for extenuating circumstances. Discuss either leave of absence or withdrawal decision with the Ph.D. Director **before completing any form**. The registration/change deadlines for dropping courses apply to withdrawal as well. Students who fail to withdraw officially will receive “Fs” in the classes for which they are registered but which they fail to complete. All students who withdraw from the Graduate School must complete this process. Failure to complete the process will result in the inability to receive an official transcript.

# APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A**  
**Sample Plan of Study**  
**BSN-PhD (Full Time – Fall Start)**

<p>Minimum of 81 credits. This includes 6 required courses totaling 18 credits highlighted in peach; plus minimum of 6 credits of electives, 16 credits of dissertation and 2 credits of dissertation seminar. Additional credit hours to reach the minimum of 81 credits. Electives provide content or methodological expertise. There are four courses (12 credits) of educational courses that can be taken as electives if desired.</p>		
<b>FALL 1</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Term Completed</b>
BIOS 5013: Biostat I	3	
BIOM Lab	1	
NURS 5100: Theory	3	
NURS 5101: Research Methodology	3	
TOTAL	10	
<b>SPRING 1</b>		
BIOS 5212: Biostat II	3	
BIOM Lab	1	
NPHD 6102: Qualitative Methods	3	
NURS 5102: Advanced Physiology and Pathophysiology	3	
TOTAL	10	
<b>SUMMER 1</b>		
NURS 5391: Human Genetics	3	
NPHD 6117: Culture of Health	3	
<b>OR</b> NPHD 6105: Issues	2	
TOTAL	5-6	
<b>FALL 2</b>		
NURS 7112: Healthcare Informatics	3	
NPHD 6118: Philosophies & Theory in Science & Research	3	
NPHD 6103: Quantitative Methods	3	
TOTAL	9	
<b>SPRING 2</b>		
<b>ELECTIVE:</b> HPMT 5104: Health Econ	3	
NPHD 6112: Synthesizing the Lit	3	
NPHD 6110: Leadership in HC Systems	3	
NPHD 6116 Research Practicum ( <b>OR Fall 3</b> )	1	
TOTAL	9-10	
<b>SUMMER 2</b>		
NPHD 6117: Culture of Health	3	
<b>OR</b> NPHD 6105: Issues	2	
NPHD 6115 Leadership in HC Systems Field Experience	1	
NURS 5205: Quant Epi ( <b>take in Spring 2 if not taking HPMT 5104</b> )	3	
TOTAL	3-5	
<b>FALL 3</b>		
NPHD 6113: Preliminary Studies/Grant	3	

<b>ELECTIVE:</b> NPHD 6108:Qual Analysis	3	
<b>OR OTHER ELECTIVE:</b> Topics or Other	2-3	
NPHD 6116 Research Practicum	1	
<b>TAKE Doctoral Candidacy Exam (DCE)</b>		
TOTAL	9-10	
<b>SPRING 3</b>		
NPHD 6201 Doctoral Dissertation Seminar	1	
NPHD 6202 Doctoral Dissertation [16 dissertation hours total for degree]	2 or more	
<b>SUMMER 3</b>		
NPHD 6202 Doctoral Dissertation	TBD	
<b>FALL 4</b>		
NPHD 6201 Doctoral Dissertation Seminar	1	
NPHD 6202 Doctoral Dissertation	TBD	
<b>Thereafter each semester take NPHD 6202 Dissertation until dissertation research completed and defended</b>		

**Sample Plan of Study**

**MNSc-PhD (Part Time - Fall Start)**

Minimum of 60 credits beyond the master’s degree and includes both required and elective courses. Additional electives can be taken to provide content or methodological expertise. A minimum of 16 credit hours of dissertation and 2 credit hours of dissertation seminar are required.		
<b>FALL 1</b>	<b>Credits</b>	<b>Term Completed</b>
BIOS 5013: Biostat I	3	
BIOM Lab	1	
NPHD 6118: Philosophies & Theory in Science & Research	3	
TOTAL	7	
<b>SPRING 1</b>		
BIOS 5212: Biostat II	3	
BIOM Lab	1	
NPHD 6102: Qualitative Methods	3	
TOTAL	7	
<b>SUMMER 1</b>		
NPHD 6117: Culture of Health	3	
<b>OR</b> NPHD 6105: Issues (offered alternate years)	2	
NURS 5205: Quant Epi (if not taken in MNSc program)	3	
<b>OR OTHER ELECTIVE:</b> Topics or NURS 5391: Human Genetics	1-3	
TOTAL	3-6	
<b>FALL 2</b>		
NPHD 6103: Quantitative Methods	3	
<b>ELECTIVE:</b> NPHD 6108:Qual Analysis	3	
<b>OR OTHER ELECTIVE:</b> Topics or Other	3	
TOTAL	6	

<b>SPRING 2</b>		
NPHD 6112: Synthezing the Lit	3	
NPHD 6110: Leadership in HC Systems	3	
TOTAL	6	
<b>SUMMER 2</b>		
NPHD 6117: Culture of Health	3	
<b>OR</b> NPHD 6105: Issues (offered alternate years)	2	
<b>OR Elective:</b> NURS 5391: Human Genetics or TOPICS in Nursing	3	
<b>OR OTHER ELECTIVE:</b> Topics or Other	1-3	
NPHD 6115 Leadership in HC Systems Field Experience	1	
TOTAL	3-7	
<b>FALL 3</b>		
NPHD 6113: Preliminary Studies/Grant	3	
NPHD 6116 Research Practicum (or Summer 2)	1	
<b>OR OTHER ELECTIVE:</b> Topics or Other	2-3	
<b>TAKE DCE</b>		
TOTAL	6-7	
<b>SPRING 3</b>		
NPHD 6201 Dissertation Seminar	1	
NPHD 6202 Dissertation [16 dissertation hours total for degree]	2-3	
TOTAL	3-4	
<b>SUMMER 3</b>		
NPHD 6202 Dissertation	3-4	
TOTAL	3-4	
<b>FALL 4</b>		
NPHD 6201 Dissertation Seminar	1	
NPHD 6202 Dissertation	2-4	
TOTAL	3-5	
<b>SPRING 4</b>		
NPHD 6202 Dissertation	3-5	
TOTAL	3-5	
<b>SUMMER 4</b>		
NPHD 6202 Dissertation	2-4	
TOTAL	2-4	

## APPENDIX B

### UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES COLLEGE OF NURSING

#### Guidelines for Topics in Nursing

##### NPHD 6111 TOPICS IN NURSING 1-6

Discussion and advanced study on selected topics not covered in general courses. The student may repeat up to a maximum of 6 credit hours. Prerequisite: Consent.

Topic in Nursing allows students to pursue a topic relevant to their research career goals. Topic in Nursing are distinguished from Independent Study opportunities in that the titles of the Topic in Nursing are listed on the students' transcripts and the faculty are more likely, but not necessarily, to have a pre-existing series of readings and activities available for the student. Topic in Nursing can include, but are not limited to, opportunities to expand the student's knowledge base on a specific topic of interest to the student, such as:

- A specialty area, such as the nursing care of gerontologic, pediatric, forensic, or other patient populations.
- A research area, such as research with women and heart disease, or disordered sleep, or pain.
- A phase of the research process, such as the ethical conduct of research as regulated by institutional review boards.
- A methodologic process, such as an in-depth exploration of a statistical method or interview procedure.

The credits can range from 1-6 and effort is expected to reflect proportionate credit the same as in structured courses. Typically, students will not take more than 6 credits of Topics in Nursing throughout their Ph.D. doctoral program. The request to take a required course at a time other than the annual scheduled course is not adequate rationale for a special topic. Preparation of a poster or oral presentation, by itself, does not meet the intent of Topic in Nursing although these may appropriate products of the course. A student that is required to come in contact with a patient/family during the course must have *student* malpractice insurance and current CPR certification to accompany their registration forms and these are required to be submitted at the time of registration.

##### GUIDELINES

Learning objectives and achievable goals are to be developed jointly between the student and faculty member who is directing the work. Credit hours are negotiated at that time and reflect the planned scope of the work and intended products. The Topic in Nursing Agreement Form must be completed and signed by the student and faculty and placed in the student's permanent record at the beginning of the course. A grade of incomplete may be filed at the end of the course if the student has not met the designated outcome criteria. The incomplete is treated the same as an incomplete in a formally developed course, with the same requirements and restrictions.

## APPENDIX C

### UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES COLLEGE OF NURSING

#### Qualifications for Dissertation Chairperson

#### **Dissertation Committee Chair (Must have all the following qualifications)**

1. Ph.D. or comparable doctoral degree.
2. Graduate Faculty Appointment by the Graduate School.
3. Service on two dissertation committees
  - a. At least one must be completed
  - b. One may be in progress
4. At least two recent data-based publications (one may be in press).
5. Approval of the Ph.D. Program Director and Dean of the Graduate School.

#### **Faculty Approved to Chair Dissertation Committees**

CHAIRS
Dr. Claudia Barone
Dr. Patty Cowan
Dr. Leanne Lefler
Dr. Corey Nagel
Dr. Sara Jones
Dr. Martha Rojo

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Components of a Dissertation**

Note: Much of the following information was taken from

Cone, J. D., & Foster, S. L. (1993). *Dissertations and theses from start to finish: Psychology and related fields*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

This provides general guidelines. Your chair and dissertation committee may modify so check with the research specific chapter content.

#### **Chapter 1: The Introduction**

This is a relatively short chapter that introduces your reader to the topic, overview, and research problem of your dissertation. The introduction also includes the hypothesis or research problem statement and should briefly introduce your conceptual framework, as well as key concepts and assumptions. The philosophical approach to the question should also briefly be addressed. Try to present sufficient information to your reader so that they understand the research question, its importance, and how the conceptual framework guides the study to answer your questions. However, do not give so much information that your second chapter, the literature review, becomes redundant.

#### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter summarizes an extensive search of the existing literature, providing a critical and integrative review of it. To write this section, you should use the “funnel” approach: Begin discussing the general literature of your topic area and gradually narrow the focus to the specific area of content addressed by your research question.

It should be obvious to your reader why your study needs to be completed. This section should include a summary of what is known and what is unknown in

relation to your problem and conclude with how your study contributes to filling the identified gap in the literature. You should also include a section on research using your conceptual framework that supports that this model is appropriate to study your problem and selected concepts/variables.

It should be noted that your proposal should contain the full literature review you plan to include in the final draft of your dissertation. (of course, you may add a few articles to the final literature review that were published between the time of your proposal and the conclusion of your study). There are several reasons why you should avoid submitting a brief overview of the literature in your proposal. First, a complete review of the literature allows you to be confident that your dissertation topic addresses a need in the field of research. You do not want to work for months on a project that has already been completed by another researcher. Secondly, a detailed review of the literature acquaints you with procedural and design details of your research topic. By thoroughly reviewing the existing literature, you may avoid mistakes that others have made before you. Actually, writing this section for your proposal will force you to think through the details of your project in more depth than simply reading the literature and writing a brief overview. Finally, you have to write this chapter for your final project anyway. If you do it now, your project is half over!

Locating relevant literature should build upon all of the literature search techniques from the NPHD 6112 *Synthesizing the Literature* course. A brief summary is included, but you should review your course notes for a complete strategy for searching and accessing pertinent documents. Use computerized literature searches. Be sure to include searches of several different databases. For example, don't just search *Medline*; also include a search of *PsycLit*, *PsychoINFO*, or *CINAHL*. In addition, the Internet may hold valuable resources. You may also scan the table of contents of relevant journals and check the reference lists from

relevant articles. Review articles often provide another excellent literature source. Avoid using secondary sources (Do not use someone else's interpretation of an article; look it up and read it for yourself.) and the popular press (e.g., newspapers and popular magazines, such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, or *People*). Once you've critically read the literature, it's time to start writing! Be sure you know the length and format requirements for UAMS. Then begin by organizing your articles and writing an outline. Be sure to introduce your study and your hypothesis following your critical analysis of the literature.

In chapter 2, it is wise to use sub-headings to assist the reader in recognizing how you have organized the review. You should have a sub-heading for each major concept. At the start of chapter 2, you can also introduce the order that you will be using. The rationale should be in chapter 1 and the research using the framework in chapter 2. Any preliminary research that you have done on this topic should be included in Chapter 2 also.

### **Chapter 3: Methods**

In the proposed methodology for your study, you describe how you plan to carry out your study. The important thing to remember when writing this section is the goal of replicability. Anyone who reads this chapter should be able to exactly replicate your study. Also, remember that while *you* may know exactly how you are going to perform the study, your reader knows nothing about your intentions. Make certain the organization and presentation of the material are clear. Remember that this section, as well as chapters 1 and 2 of the dissertation, is written in future tense since it is what is proposed at this point. Once you have completed the study, revise to past tense, and add any changes you encountered when actually implementing your study.

The basic components of the methods section are research design, sample/

participants, instrumentation, and procedures, including human subjects, protection, and data analysis. However, it may be necessary to add other subsections depending on your study. For example, you may need to devote subsections to design, independent variables, and/or dependent variables. Remember that you need to cite references in this section to support your choice of sampling, procedures, analyses, etc.

Typically, in chapter 3 the author lists assumptions that are made about participants, measures selected, a statistical analysis plan, etc. in the study. In addition, limitations of the methods should also be clearly identified.

## **The Manuscripts**

### **In Lieu of Chapters 4 and 5**

The UAMS College of Nursing requires two completed, publishable manuscripts in place of chapters 4 and 5. The following information should be useful to you as you develop your manuscripts. Once you have completed your project, you should update the first three chapters. These materials must be approved by your dissertation committee along with your manuscripts. Only the first three chapters and abstract are to be turned in to the library along with a brief summary of your manuscript as your final product for dissertation since copyright issues prevent you from having your entire manuscripts in dissertation and published in a journal. Your manuscripts are to be submitted for publication as a requirement for completing the dissertation.

### **Manuscript Results**

In this section of your manuscript, you report the major data related to your hypothesis. Present data that is important to your study and avoid including interesting but tangential results.

You may want to begin this section by restating the principal hypotheses. In order of importance, address the data used to test each hypothesis and discuss the relevant statistical analyses. If you have multiple hypotheses with multiple dependent measures, you may want to use subheadings. Address a different hypothesis under each subheading.

Remember to conform to the conventions of APA statistical presentation. Your reader should not be side tracked by trying to decipher a creative code you have developed for reporting your statistics. In general, present the symbol of the statistic followed by the degrees of freedom (e.g.,  $F [1, 29]$ ), then the value of the statistic (e.g., 5.78), and finally the probability levels (e.g.,  $p < .05$ ). In addition, tables are often very useful for presenting a large amount of data. Again, remember the reader. Make the table easy-to-read as well as informative.

### **Manuscript Discussion**

Individuals are often confused about what to include in this section of a manuscript. They may feel that they have already stated everything a reader needs to know about the study. However, findings still need to be *discussed*. What was the implication of your findings upon your hypothesis? What were the limitations of your study?

Begin this section by summarizing your results. Do not restate the actual numbers that reported in the previous section. Use as little statistical jargon as possible. Consider whether a layperson could understand your statements. For example, do not report significant effects; instead state how your variables affect your participants (e.g., “Cats who had chicken meat juice added to their food ate more food than cats that did not have chicken meat juice added.”)

Secondly, interpret your findings. What do the results mean? What do the results tell us about the relationship between the independent and dependent

variables? Following the interpretation of the findings, place your study within the context of the literature.

Does your study contradict findings from prior literature or does it converge with prior findings? If so, how do your findings extend the research knowledge base? Next, consider what implications your findings have. How should your findings alter the way individuals think about the issues you have researched? What are the implications of your research to theory, other research and practice? How do your findings link to your theoretical framework?

Include a subsection on the limitations of your study. What limitations occurred because of the decisions made on how to conduct the study? What limitations arose while the study was being conducted? Think about internal problems (design) and external problems (things that could not be controlled for). Note any measurement or statistical limitations.

Finally, comment on future research. What are your recommendations for where research needs to head? Tell other researchers what questions were raised during your study and what issues they could examine, given your findings.

## **References**

References should be listed at the end. Include all publications, including Internet websites, cited in writing your dissertation. Do not list articles you read but did not cite. Use the current edition of the *APA Publication Manual* to write your reference section.

## **Appendices**

Appendix sections are a place to include any extra details that might be useful to someone trying to replicate your study or for committee members trying to ensure that your study was completed in an ethical manner. This might include

such items as instructions to participants, consent forms, or non-copyrighted data collection instruments. Place these items in the order that the reader encounters them reading your dissertation. Each piece of information should be labeled under a different heading. For example, your consent form might be (**Appendix A**), the instructions to the participants in (**See Syllabus**), and the data collection instrument will be (**See Syllabus**).

**Graduate School & CON Links & Forms**

<b>Forms</b>	<b>Links</b>	<b>Attachments</b>
<b>Add/Drop/Withdrawal</b>	<a href="https://registrar.uams.edu/our-forms/adddropwithdrawal-form/">https://registrar.uams.edu/our-forms/adddropwithdrawal-form/</a>	 AddDropWithdrawal Fill in Form .pdf
<b>Advisory Committee Meeting</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2017/05/Graduate-Student-Advisory-Committee-Meeting-Form-2017.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2017/05/Graduate-Student-Advisory-Committee-Meeting-Form-2017.pdf</a>	 Graduate-Student-Ad visory-Committee-Me
<b>Candidacy Exam (DCE)</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/PhdCandExam.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/PhdCandExam.pdf</a>	 PhdCandExam.pdf
<b>Calendar (Graduate)</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/GradSchool-Calendar-2021-2022-v6-lp.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/GradSchool-Calendar-2021-2022-v6-lp.pdf</a>	 GradSchool-Calendar -2021-2022-v6-lp.pdf
<b>Dissertation Deadlines</b>	Important dates to meet on final defense	 Dissertation Deadlines.pdf
<b>Dissertation Defense Request List for PhD Assistant</b>	Complete form and submit to PhD Assistant	 Dissertation Request to Defend fill in form.l
<b>Dissertation Advisory Committee</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/Doctoral-Advisory-Committee.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2021/07/Doctoral-Advisory-Committee.pdf</a>	 Doctoral-Advisory-Co mmittee fill in form.pc
<b>Dissertation Outside Member</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/FACULTY-APPL-OUTSIDE-FOR-DISSERTATION-COMM.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/FACULTY-APPL-OUTSIDE-FOR-DISSERTATION-COMM.pdf</a>	 FACULTY-APPL-OUTSI DE-FOR-DISSERTATIO
<b>Dissertation Proposal</b>	Bring form with you to your proposal defense. Your committee members will need to sign this form.	 Dissertation Proposal Defense Fill in Form C
<b>Dissertation Submission of Data-based Manuscript for Publication</b>	Complete form and submit hard copies of your manuscript submissions.	 Submission of Dissertation Data-bas
<b>Dissertation Electronic Filing</b>	<a href="https://registrar.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2021/04/Dissertation-and-Thesis-Submission-Electronic-Filing-Form-4-8-2021.docx">https://registrar.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2021/04/Dissertation-and-Thesis-Submission-Electronic-Filing-Form-4-8-2021.docx</a>	 Dissertation-and-The sis-Submission-Electr
<b>Final Defense Exam</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/PhdFinalExam.pdf">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2012/04/PhdFinalExam.pdf</a>	 PhdFinalExam Fill in Form.pdf
<b>Graduation</b>	<a href="https://registrar.uams.edu/graduation/">https://registrar.uams.edu/graduation/</a>	link

<b>Degree Application</b>	<a href="http://gradschool.uams.edu/students/graduating-students/">http://gradschool.uams.edu/students/graduating-students/</a>	 Degree Application Fill in Form.pdf
<b>Leave of Absence Request</b>	<a href="https://registrar.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2021/03/Request-for-Leave-of-Absence-3-31-2021.v3.docx">https://registrar.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2021/03/Request-for-Leave-of-Absence-3-31-2021.v3.docx</a>	 Leave-of-Absence-Request Fill in Form.pdf
<b>Registrar Forms</b>	<a href="https://registrar.uams.edu/our-forms/">https://registrar.uams.edu/our-forms/</a>	Resources 501-526-5600 <a href="mailto:Registrar@uams.edu">Registrar@uams.edu</a>
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<b>Graduate School Fellowships, Grants, &amp; Travel Awards</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/students/fellowships-grants-travel-awards-for-graduate-students/">https://gradschool.uams.edu/students/fellowships-grants-travel-awards-for-graduate-students/</a>	link
<b>Dissertation Final Defense Checklist</b>	Checklist to keep you on task	 Final Dissertation Defense Checklist.pdf
<b>Pre-Dissertation Defense Checklist</b>	Checklist to keep you on task	 Pre-Defense Student CHECKLIST.pdf
<b>Program Due Dates</b>	Deadline Dates to follow to avoid delays	 Due Dates.pdf
<b>Tuition Discount</b>	<a href="https://tuitiondiscount.uams.edu/">https://tuitiondiscount.uams.edu/</a>	link
<b>Library Resources</b>	<a href="https://libguides.uams.edu/nursing">https://libguides.uams.edu/nursing</a>	Sheila Thomas 501-686-6736
<b>Interprofessional Education (IPE) &amp; Exposure Requirements</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/students/interprofessional-education/ipe-requirement-for-uams-graduate-school-students/">https://gradschool.uams.edu/students/interprofessional-education/ipe-requirement-for-uams-graduate-school-students/</a>	Schedule Activities
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<b>Tuition Graduate Research Assistant Stipend</b>	<a href="https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2015/08/Tuitionform2014-Document.doc">https://gradschool.uams.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/147/2015/08/Tuitionform2014-Document.doc</a>	 Tuition Graduate School Resh Asst Fill i