

Section 8

University Degree Requirements

Degree Requirements

The following sections describe the University requirements established by the Office of Graduate Studies for the Master's, Education Specialist, and Doctoral degrees. However, individual programs and colleges may establish additional or *more stringent* requirements.

Student Responsibilities

The University of South Florida and all colleges, departments and programs therein establish certain academic requirements that must be met before a degree is granted. These requirements concern such things as curricula and courses, majors and minors, and academic residence. Faculty and graduate program directors are available to help the student understand and arrange to meet these requirements, but the student is responsible for fulfilling them. At the end of a student's course of study, if all requirements for graduation have not been satisfied, the degree will not be granted. For this reason, it is important for students to acquaint themselves with all regulations and to remain currently informed throughout their college careers. Courses, programs, and requirements described in the catalog may be suspended, deleted, restricted, supplemented, or changed in any other manner at any time at the sole discretion of the University and the USF Board of Trustees.

Graduate Faculty Definition

The University of South Florida recognizes Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty.

Graduate Faculty is defined to consist of all tenure-track or tenured faculty appointed at the Assistant, Associate, or Professor rank, who hold a terminal degree or equivalent in their discipline.

Graduate Faculty members

- are eligible to teach graduate courses and
- may direct and serve on masters, specialist, and doctoral level committees.

To chair a doctoral level committee, a Graduate Faculty member must engage in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities, such as publications, performances, exhibitions, patents, inventions and research grants.

Affiliate Graduate Faculty membership may be granted by the Office of Graduate Studies Dean to individuals whose skills or expertise meet criteria established by the College. Affiliate Graduate Faculty membership is in effect for a specified period of time and specific purposes.

Affiliate members may be eligible

- to teach graduate courses,
- to serve on master's, specialist, and doctoral level committees,

- to direct master's and specialist's level committees, and
- to co-direct doctoral level committees, at the discretion of the College.

Emeritus Professors and retired or recently resigned professors may also be appointed as Affiliate Graduate Faculty with the approval of the College and Office of Graduate Studies Dean.

Graduate Faculty Approval – Graduate faculty is defined as noted above; Colleges and Departments may have additional requirements. The Office of Graduate Studies will maintain a list of Graduate Faculty along with approval guidelines from the Colleges and Departments. For a current list of Graduate Faculty and Affiliate Graduate Faculty in any program contact the program director or coordinator. *Also see Section 3 Faculty and Research Interests.*

Master's Degree Requirements

Minimum Hours

A minimum of thirty (30) hours is required for a master's degree, at least sixteen (16) hours of which must be at the 6000 level. At least twenty (20) hours must be in formal, regularly scheduled course work, ten (10) of which must be at the 6000 level. Up to six (6) hours of 4000-level courses may be taken as part of a planned degree program. Additional graduate credit may be earned in 4000-level courses only if specifically approved by the appropriate College Dean. Lower level undergraduate course may not be used to satisfy master's course requirements but may be taken to meet specific prerequisites. Students enrolled in undergraduate courses as part of a planned degree program are expected to demonstrate a superior level of performance in these courses. All graduate and undergraduate courses taken as a graduate student count in the overall GPA, whether or not they count toward the minimum hours for the degree. Graduate students may not enroll for more than 18 hours in any semester without written permission from the College Dean.

Institutional Enrollment Requirement

The majority of credits toward a graduate degree must be earned through instruction offered by the home institution (e.g., USF Tampa, USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota-Manatee) granting the degree. For information about the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree refer to the degree requirements in the program listing. Students are responsible for consulting with their degree program coordinator for information on courses that may be taken outside their graduate degree program, as well as the Transfer of Credit Policy for course transfer eligibility requirements. Although equivalent courses may be offered at other institutions (including within the USF System), they may not satisfy degree requirements.

Time Limitations

Master's and Ed.S. degrees must be completed within five (5) years from the student's date of admission for graduate study. Courses taken prior to admission to the USF graduate program, for example as non-degree seeking or from other institutions that were transferred in, can be no older than seven years at the time of graduation. Master and Ed.S. degrees (including dual degree programs) that require course work in excess of 50 credit hours may be granted a longer statute of limitations by the University Graduate Council.

Time Limit Extensions

In the event that a student nears the end of the time limitation as specified above, but the student needs more time to complete the degree, the student may submit a request for an extension using the *Time Limit Extension Request Form*, available on the Office of Graduate Studies website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>. Requests must include

- the reasons for the delay in completion,
- the anticipated time needed for completion,
- and endorsements from the graduate faculty advisor, graduate program, and College Dean or designee,
- a detailed plan of study and timeline for the remaining requirements for the degree prior to submission to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval.

(Editor's note – for the time limit extension procedures, if the time limit extension will cause courses taken or transferred into the program to be older than 7 years, then a request for course concurrency may be required or the courses may be invalidated toward the degree requirements, per the time limit policy)

If approved, the time limit extension also applies to courses applied toward the degree. However, programs may require additional or repeat coursework as part of the condition of the time limit extension. Students who exceed the time limitations may have their registration placed on hold until a request for extension has been approved. Only one time limit extension request is permitted. Students who are temporarily unable to continue the program should submit a Leave of Absence Request, which extends the time limit for the duration of the approved Leave (see the section on *Leave of Absence* in the *Enrollment Requirements* section.).

Enrollment Requirements

Refer to the Academic Policies Section

Major Professor

The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the department to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. If a major professor cannot be identified or in the event a major professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another major professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement major professor should confer with the Program Director for available options (including converting to a non-thesis program if available.) If no other options exist the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and major professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, must be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

- Be graduate faculty, as defined by the University, from the student's academic. Faculty who do not meet this definition may serve as Co-Major Professor.
- Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities and have met departmental (or equivalent) requirements.
- Have been approved by the Department Chair (or equivalent) to serve as a Major Professor or Co-Major Professor.

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e., for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing and able to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the committee and another faculty is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. To ensure that the student can make satisfactory progress, one of the Co-Major Professors must be accessible. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.); the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as "Co-Major Professors" and jointly serve in that role. Consequently both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e. committee form, change of committee form, etc.)

Appointment of a (Co)-Major Professor(s) may be rescinded by the Department Chair (or equivalent), with the approval of the appropriate Department (or equivalent) faculty committee (separate from student advisory committee.)

(Co-) Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities

Available on the Office of Graduate Studies Website: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

Thesis Committee

Students working toward a thesis degree will have the benefit of a committee of members of the graduate faculty. The committee will approve the course of study for the student and plan for research, supervise the research and any comprehensive qualifying exams, and read and approve the thesis for content and format.

Composition

The committee will consist of either:

- 1) the major professor and at least two other members; or
- 2) two co-major professors and at least one other member

Committee members should be from the general research area in which the degree is sought. (Colleges and Programs may require additional committee members and specify characteristics.)

Member Definition

All graduate faculty, as defined by the University and the College/Department, and approved by their department and college, are assumed by the Office of Graduate Studies as qualified to be a member of and/or supervise a committee. Persons desiring to serve on a Graduate committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (i.e. visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the University and the College/Department must submit a curriculum vitae (CV) and be approved by the Department, College, and, as needed, the Office of Graduate Studies, for each committee.

Committee members must meet the following requirements:

- Be graduate or affiliate graduate faculty, as defined by the University
- Have the background and expertise that contributes to the success of the student.

In addition to the requirements specified in the Graduate Faculty definition, committee membership will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

Approval

Once a committee has been determined, a Supervisory Committee Form needs to be completed by the student and submitted to the Committee Members for original signatures. Check with the College for instructions and forms. The original appointment form and two (2) copies should be submitted to the College Associate Dean's office for approval. A copy of the approved form should be kept in the student's file. An approved and current Committee Form must be on file in the program/college before graduation may be certified. Committee forms need to be processed as early in the program as possible, but no later than the semester prior to graduation. (Colleges and departments may institute additional requirements for membership on Supervisory Committees.)

Changes to Committee

Changes to a Supervisory Committee must be submitted on a Change of Committee Form. Check with the College for instructions and forms. Original signatures of faculty being added to the Committee, along with the approval signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s), must be on the form. Faxed signatures are acceptable. Faculty who are removed from the Committee are not required to sign the form, provided that the (Co-) Major Professor(s) has signed. In such instances the signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s) indicate(s) approval of the change, as well as acknowledgement and approval of the change by the removed member. Any non-faculty being added to a committee must submit a Curriculum Vitae (CV) for college approval. Change of Committee Forms should be submitted for approval as soon as the change takes place. Changes to a Committee are official only once approved and filed by the program and college.

Masters Comprehensive Examination

Prior to clearance for the degree, candidates must perform satisfactorily on a comprehensive examination or an alternative method designated by the academic unit to measure student competency in the major area. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit during the semester when the comprehensive examination is taken. If the exam is taken between semesters, the student must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in the semester before or following the exam.

Thesis

If a thesis is required, it must conform to the guidelines of the University. Refer to the Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines, available on the web at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php> for complete information about requirements, procedures, and deadlines. *For enrollment requirements, refer to the Academic Policies section in the Catalog.*

Format

The Thesis must conform to one of two formats:

Option 1 – a traditional format³ inclusive of:

- Part I: Preliminary Pages
 - Title Page
 - Dedication (optional page)
 - Acknowledgments (optional page)
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables (if applicable)
 - List of Figures (if applicable)
 - Abstract

³ Deviations from the available format are acceptable if approved in advance by the Supervisory Committee and Office of Graduate Studies.

Part II: Text (divided by chapter or section headings)

Part III: References / Bibliography

Appendix Sections and copyright permission (if applicable)

About the Author (optional page)

Option 2 — collection of articles/papers instead of chapters. References may be at the end of each section or at the end of the entire document. Copyright permissions (if applicable) must be noted in the Appendix.

Part I: Preliminary Pages

Title Page

Dedication (optional page)

Acknowledgments (optional page)

Table of Contents

Abstract

Part II: Introduction

Collection of Articles/Papers *

Conclusion

Part III: References / Bibliography

Appendix Sections and copyright permission (if applicable)

About the Author (optional page)

*Students must be first author for articles and papers used for the thesis/dissertation, or another designation or affirmation that the student had primary intellectual responsibility for the publication.

Directed Research

Directed Research hours may satisfy up to 50% of the thesis hour requirement.

Manuscript Processing Fee

USF Regulation USF4-0107, <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf4.0107.pdf>

Students participating in the thesis/dissertation process are required to pay a processing fee. More information is available on the Thesis and Dissertation website.

Exchange of Thesis for Non-Thesis Credit

If a student changes from thesis to non-thesis during a semester and is currently enrolled in thesis credit, the current thesis credits may be exchanged without academic penalty if a Office of Graduate Studies Petition is filed with the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the last day to withdraw without Academic Penalty. If a student enrolled in a thesis required program has taken thesis credits but elects to change to non-thesis track or program, the accumulated thesis credits may not be exchanged or converted to another non-structured credit. The thesis hours will remain on the transcript and will retain the "Z" grade.

Thesis Defense

Policies and procedures for the thesis defense are handled within the College and Program. Contact the College and Program for requirements.

Thesis Final Submission Guidelines

Information on requirements for submission of the finished and approved manuscript copies is available online at the Thesis and Dissertation website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>. Students who fail to submit the final copy of a thesis by the posted submission deadline will be considered for graduation in the following semester and must therefore apply for graduation by the posted deadline, enroll in a minimum of two (2) thesis hours for that subsequent semester, and meet the submission requirements as posted on the Thesis/Dissertation website. Only after the Office of Graduate Studies has approved the manuscript can the student be certified for the degree.

Mandatory Electronic Submission

Students are required to submit the thesis in an electronic format (ETD). Requirements and procedures are available at the Office of Graduate Studies website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>

Submission for Official Publication and Archiving

All theses/dissertations will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies designated System for official publication and archiving.

Changes after Publication

Once a thesis is approved and accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies for publication, it cannot be changed.

Release of Thesis Publications

The University recognizes the benefits from collaboration with sponsors on research projects but also recognizes the possibility of conflicts of interest in the disclosure of the results of the collaborations. While the sponsor's economic interests in the restriction of disclosure should be considered, the University has a primary mission to extend knowledge and disseminate it to the public and the broader academic community. The University's "Statement of Policy Regarding Inventions and Works" acknowledges the possible need for delays in publication of sponsored research to protect the sponsor's interests, but it provides no definite guidelines for the restrictions of publication beyond the statement: "Disclosure delays mutually acceptable to the Inventor, the Vice President for Research, and the sponsor, if any, are authorized in order to allow patent applications to be filled prior to publication, thereby preserving patent rights..."⁴

To protect the University's primary goal from un-due compromise, the University has adopted the following guidelines:

1. The recommendations of sponsors, regarding publication of research results should be considered advisory rather than mandatory.
2. In support of academic discourse and the mission to promote and share academic works, Theses will be released for worldwide access once submitted to and approved by the USF Office of Graduate Studies. In the event that a patent or copyright application provides reason to delay the release of the Thesis, a petition to request a one year delay may be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies for consideration. Such requests must be received by the format check of the thesis.
3. Students should not be delayed in the final defense of their theses by agreements involving publication delays.

⁴ April Burke, "University Policies on Conflict of Interest and Delay of Publications," Report of the Clearinghouse on University-Industry Relations, Association of American Universities, February, 1985.

Duty to Disclose New Inventions and Works

USF 0-300 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-300.pdf> and USF 12.003 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf12.003.pdf>.

For information about the requirements of this policy contact the Division of Patents and Licensing at (813) 974-0994.

Thesis Change of Grade

In the semester in which the final manuscript has been received, reviewed, and certified for permanent filing in the University Library, the Office of Graduate Studies submits the change of grade from “Z” to “S” for the last registration of thesis courses to the office of the registrar when all grades are due at the end of the semester.

Education Specialist Degree (Ed.S.) Requirements

Ed.S. Thesis

Students who are required to submit an Ed.S. Thesis must meet all of the requirements for the thesis, as specified in the Master’s Degree section of this publication. For specific degree program information, refer to the College of Education.

Ed.S. Project

Students who are required to submit an Ed.S. Non-Thesis project must meet all of the requirements as specified by the College of Education. A project does not need to meet the requirements of a thesis and is not submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval and archiving.

Doctoral Degree Requirements

The doctoral degree is granted in recognition of high attainment in a specific field of knowledge. It is a research degree and is not conferred solely upon the earning of credit, the completion of courses, or the acquiring of a number of terms of residency, but also the successful completion of scholarly work. The length of residency and the requirements below are minimums; programs/colleges may elect to establish more rigorous requirements. The degree will be granted after the student has shown proficiency and distinctive achievement in a specified field, has demonstrated the ability to do original, independent investigation, and has presented these findings with a high degree of literary skill in a dissertation. A major professor will be appointed as soon as possible but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. The advisor will advise on any specific subject matter deficiencies and assist in the choice of a major professor and area of research.

Responsible Conduct of Research

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) is a critical element in training for scholarship. USF has information about RCR available online at: www.grad.usf.edu/rcr.php

Effective Spring 2013, Office of Graduate Studies requires all new doctoral students to have basic RCR training by completing the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) module most relevant to the student’s program of study. The CITI modules have been designed to introduce researchers to various elements of research conduct ranging from research misconduct to data management to mentoring. As this is a minimum requirement, specific doctoral programs may require training that goes beyond the basic components introduced in this module. Graduate Programs that have received Office of Graduate Studies approval for rigorous RCR training consistent

with disciplinary standards and practices may exempt their students from the CITI requirement. Students must complete the module, or provide evidence of previous qualified RCR training to their Program Director and Office of Graduate Studies, in the first semester enrolled in a doctoral program. Previous RCR training should have been completed within the past year. Students will be unable to register for courses in a future semester until successful fulfillment of this RCR requirement. Once the training is completed, the Registration hold will be lifted.

Doctoral Minimum Hours

The doctoral degree is earned on the basis of advancement to doctoral candidacy status and satisfactory completion of the dissertation. The minimum number of credit hours to earn the doctorate is 72, post-bachelors, including dissertation. The minimum number of credit hours required for each individual programs is noted in the degree requirements section of the Graduate Catalog for that program listing. Some graduate programs may require more than 72 hours. Programs with formally approved concentrations must have core major requirements that all students must successfully complete. The typical minimum number of credit hours post-master's is 42, allowing for a 30 hour master's degree program. Some programs may have variations in the post-master's hours requirement, which is acceptable provided that the total minimum credit hours post-bachelors is 72 hours or greater.

Students must comply with general enrollment requirements and also institutional residency requirements. All doctoral students must have at least one gradable (A-F) graduate course taken at USF to satisfy the GPA minimum requirements. Up to six (6) hours of 4000-level courses may be taken as part of a planned degree program. Additional graduate credit may be earned in 4000-level courses only if specifically approved by the appropriate College Dean. Lower level undergraduate course may not be used to satisfy doctoral course requirements but may be taken to meet specific prerequisites. Students enrolled in undergraduate courses as part of a planned graduate degree program are expected to demonstrate a superior level of performance in these courses. All graduate and undergraduate courses taken as a graduate student count in the overall GPA, whether or not they count toward the minimum hours for the degree. No undergraduate course may be used to satisfy the gradable minimal course requirement for the doctoral degree.

Time Limitations

Doctoral degrees must be completed within seven (7) years from the student's original date of admission for doctoral study. All courses applied to the doctoral degree must be completed within seven (7) years, including courses taken

- 1) prior to admission to the USF doctoral program,
- 2) taken as non-degree seeking, or
- 3) transferred in from other institutions.

There is no time limitation for courses from a completed master's degree used toward a doctoral degree. For students who are readmitted, see Readmission Policy. Typically a student will reach candidacy within four years, but this may vary per discipline.

Time Limit Extensions

In the event that a student nears the end of the time limitation as specified above, but the student needs more time to complete the degree, the student may submit a request for an extension using the *Time Limit Extension Request Form*, available on the Office of Graduate Studies website <http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>.

Requests must include

- the reasons for the delay in completion,
- the anticipated time needed for completion,
- and endorsements from the graduate faculty advisor, graduate program, and College Dean or designee,
- a detailed plan of study and timeline for the remaining requirements for the degree

Prior to submission to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval. If approved, the time limit extension also applies to courses applied toward the degree. However, programs may require additional or repeat coursework as part of the condition of the time limit extension. Students who exceed the time limitations may have their registration placed on hold until a request for extension has been approved. Only one time limit extension request is permitted. Students who are temporarily unable to continue the program should submit a Leave of Absence Request, which extends the time limit for the duration of the approved Leave (see Leave of Absence in the Enrollment Requirements section for information; the *Leave of Absence Request Form* is available online at: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/student-forms.php>).

Enrollment Requirements

See *Academic Policies Section*

Institutional Enrollment Requirement

The majority of credits toward a graduate degree must be earned through instruction offered by the home institution (e.g., USF Tampa, USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota-Manatee) granting the degree. For information about the minimum number of credit hours required for the degree refer to the degree requirements in the program listing. Students are responsible for consulting with their degree program coordinator for information on courses that may be taken outside their graduate degree program, as well as the Transfer of Credit Policy for course transfer eligibility requirements. Although equivalent courses may be offered at other institutions (including within the USF System), they may not satisfy degree requirements.

Major Professor

The Major Professor serves as the student's advisor and mentor. Students should confer with the department to confirm the internal process and timeline for the selection and appointment of the Major Professor. The student must identify a major professor and receive that person's agreement to serve as major professor. The selection of the Major Professor must be approved and appointed by the department as soon as possible, but no later than the time the student has completed 50% of the program. Students must have a major professor in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. If a Major Professor cannot be identified or in the event a Major Professor is unable or unwilling to continue serving on the student's committee, the student is responsible for finding another Major Professor. Students who are unable to find a replacement Major Professor should confer with the Program Director for available options. If no other options exist the student may be requested to voluntarily withdraw from the program or may be honorably withdrawn in good academic standing. The student and Major Professor should plan a program of study which, when completed, will satisfy the degree requirements specified. A copy of this program, signed by the student and professor, should be maintained in the student's department file.

Major Professors must meet the following requirements:

- Be active in scholarly pursuits as evidenced by at least one refereed publication in the last three years.
- Be graduate faculty, as defined by the University, from the student's academic area. Faculty who do not meet this definition may serve as Co-Major Professor
- Be engaged in current and sustained scholarly, creative, or research activities and have met departmental (or equivalent) requirements
- Have been approved by the Department Chair (or equivalent) to serve as a Major Professor or Co-Major Professor

The membership of graduate faculty will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

In the event a Major Professor leaves the University (i.e. for an appointment at another university, due to retirement, etc.) and the Major Professor is willing and able to continue serving on the student's committee, the Major Professor then becomes a Co-Major Professor on the committee and another faculty is appointed as the other Co-Major Professor. To ensure that the student can make satisfactory progress, one of the Co-Major Professors must be accessible. In the event a Major Professor is on temporary leave (e.g. sabbatical, research, etc.); the Major Professor shall coordinate with the Program Director to facilitate the needs of the student. In some instances a student may choose to have two professors serve as Major Professor. In this situation the faculty are approved as "Co-Major Professors" and jointly serve in that role. Consequently both faculty must sign approval on paperwork pertaining to the student's processing (i.e. committee form, change of committee form, admission to candidacy, etc.).

Appointment of a (Co-)Major Professor(s) may be rescinded by the Department Chair (or equivalent), with the approval of the appropriate Department (or equivalent) faculty committee (separate from student advisory committee.)

(Co-) Major Professor(s) of the Graduate Student Supervisory Committee Responsibilities

Available on the Office of Graduate Studies Website: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/policies.php>

Doctoral Committees

Some Colleges have a Program Committee comprised of graduate faculty, who advise the student from admission up to doctoral candidacy, when the formal Doctoral Dissertation Committee is formed. As soon as an area of research is determined and a major professor is selected, a Doctoral Dissertation Committee will be appointed and approved for the student. The Department will request approval of the Doctoral Committee from the Dean of the College and, as needed, the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

Role of Doctoral Committees

Depending on the College, either the Program Committee or the Doctoral Dissertation Committee is responsible for

- approving the student's course of study
- grading the written comprehensive qualifying examination

Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Doctoral Dissertation Committees will,

- approve the plan for research
- supervise the research
- read and approve the dissertation, and
- conduct the dissertation defense.

Composition

The Doctoral Dissertation Committee will consist of at least four members

- three must come from the academic area (i.e., discipline) of the student
- at least one external member (from outside the Department, School, or equivalent, hosting the doctoral program, but may be within the academic discipline)

Faculty holding joint or adjunct appointments in the degree-granting academic unit (i.e. Department or equivalent) cannot be external members on a student's committee.

Member Definition

All graduate faculty, as defined by the University and the College/Department, and approved by their department and college, are assumed by the Office of Graduate Studies as qualified to be a member of and/or supervise a doctoral committee. Persons desiring to serve on a committee who are not defined as Graduate Faculty (i.e. visiting faculty, professionals, etc.) by the University and the College/Department must submit a curriculum vitae and be approved by the Department, College, and Office of Graduate Studies, for each committee.

Committee members must meet the following requirements:

- Be graduate or affiliate graduate faculty, as defined by the University
- Have the background and expertise that contributes to the success of the student.

In addition to the requirements specified in the Graduate Faculty definition, committee membership will be based upon criteria developed within the appropriate program or department and approved at the college level. These criteria must be forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies.

Approval

Once a committee has been determined, a *Doctoral Dissertation Committee Form* needs to be completed by the student and submitted to the Committee Members for original signature. Check with the College for instructions and forms. To insure uniformity of excellence across the colleges, the (Co-)Major Professor(s) of Doctoral Dissertation Committees will need to submit a current curriculum vitae (equivalent to an NIH Bio, approximately two pages long with the last three (3) years of scholarly activity included) with the committee appointment form to the College Dean or designee. This approval is in addition to the approval from their department chairperson. (Colleges and departments may institute additional requirements for membership on Doctoral Dissertation Committees.) Once approved, the original form and the approved Curriculum Vitae (CV) are placed in the student's file. An approved and current Form must be on file in the program/college before graduation may be certified. *Doctoral Dissertation Committee Forms* need to be processed as early in the program as possible, but no later than the semester prior to graduation.

Changes to Committee

Changes to a Doctoral Dissertation Committee must be submitted on a *Change of Committee Form*. Check with the College for instructions and forms. Original signatures of faculty being added to the Committee, along with the approval signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s), must be on the form. Faxed signatures are acceptable. Faculty who are removed from the Committee are not required to sign the form, provided that the (Co-) Major Professor(s) has signed. In such instances the signature of the (Co-) Major Professor(s) indicate(s) approval of the change, as well as acknowledgement and approval of the change by the removed member. Any non-faculty being added to a committee must submit a CV for approval. If a faculty member is being added as a Co-Major Professor, or if there is an appointment change to the Major Professor position, a CV must be included for the faculty member who is being added to that position. Change of Committee Forms should be submitted for approval as soon as the change takes place. Changes to a Committee are official only once approved and filed by the program and college. An approved and current *Doctoral Dissertation Committee Form* must be on file before graduation may be certified.

Doctoral Qualifying Examination

As soon as the substantial majority of the course work is completed, the student must pass a written qualifying examination covering the subject matter in the major and related fields. This examination may be supplemented by an oral examination. Students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in their discipline at the time they take the qualifying examination. If the exam is taken between semesters, students must be enrolled for a minimum of two (2) hours of graduate credit in the semester before or following the exam.

Admission to Candidacy

In order to be admitted to doctoral candidacy, students must meet the following requirements at USF:

1. admission to a doctoral program
2. appointment of a Doctoral Committee ,
3. attainment of an overall and degree program Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 at USF at the time of candidacy. All "I" and "M" grades, including "IF" and "MF", must be cleared before candidacy may be finalized.
4. successful completion of a qualifying examination
5. certification by the Doctoral Committee that the above qualifications have been successfully completed.

The Admission to Candidacy form should be submitted for approval during the semester that the qualifying exams were completed, but no later than the semester following the successful completion of the exam. The form will be approved by the Dean of the College and forwarded to the Dean of the Office of Graduate Studies for final approval. Doctoral Candidacy is effective as of the day that the Office of Graduate Studies approves of the request and changes the student's status to 6C. For procedures and processing deadlines refer to the Office of Graduate Studies website at www.grad.usf.edu.

Once candidacy status is approved, students with approved candidacy are eligible to enroll in dissertation hours (7980) in the semester that immediately follows the last business day of the approval window. For example, students approved during the Fall approval window may enroll in the Spring. Students approved during the Spring approval window may enroll in the summer and students approved during the Summer approval window may enroll in the Fall. **Students may NOT enroll in dissertation hours prior to being admitted to doctoral candidacy.**

Each degree program has a required number of dissertation hours for completion of the degree. Departments may, with College approval, apply Directed Research hours toward the total number of dissertation hours required. Directed Research hours shall not exceed 50% of the dissertation hour requirement. No directed research hours will be converted to dissertation hours (i.e. a directed research course dropped and a dissertation course added) prior to or during the approval window. *For more information refer to Enrollment Requirements in the Academic Policies section.*

Dissertation

Dissertation requirements are for the academic degrees of Ph.D. and Ed.D. For the professional degrees of Au.D. and D.P.T., contact the professional school for doctoral project requirements. The Dissertation must conform to the guidelines of the University. Refer to the Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines, available on the web at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php> for information about requirements, procedures, and deadlines. For enrollment requirements, refer to the Academic Policies section in the Catalog.

Format

The Dissertation must conform one of two available formats

Option 1 - traditional format⁵ inclusive of:

Part I: Preliminary Pages

Title Page
 Dedication (optional page)
 Acknowledgments (optional page)
 Table of Contents
 List of Tables (if applicable)
 List of Figures (if applicable)
 Abstract

Part II: Text (divided by chapter or section headings)

Part III: References / Bibliography⁶

Appendices Title Page
 Appendix Sections (if applicable)

Part IV: About the Author (required for dissertations)

Option 2 — collection of articles/papers instead of chapters. References may be at the end of each section or at the end of the entire document. Copyright permissions (if applicable) must be noted on the Acknowledgements page.

Part I: Preliminary Pages

Title Page
 Dedication (optional page)
 Acknowledgments and copyright permission (if applicable)
 Table of Contents
 Abstract

Part II: Collection of Articles/Papers

Part III: References / Bibliography⁷

Appendices Title Page
 Appendix Sections (if applicable)

⁵ Deviations from the two available formats are acceptable if approved in advance by the Supervisory Committee and Office of Graduate Studies.

⁶ Include either References or a Bibliography, as specified by your style guide.

⁷ Include either References or a Bibliography, as specified by your style guide.

Directed Research

Directed Research hours taken with the (Co) Major Professor(s) prior to approval to doctoral candidacy by the Office of Graduate Studies may satisfy up to 50% of the dissertation hour requirement, with program approval.

Manuscript Processing Fee

USF Regulation USF4-0107, <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf4.0107.pdf>
Students participating in the thesis/dissertation process are required to pay a processing fee. More information is available on the website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>

Doctoral Dissertation Defense

After the Doctoral Dissertation Committee has determined that the final draft of the dissertation is suitable for presentation; the Committee will request the scheduling and announcement of the Dissertation Defense (also called Final Oral Examination or Oral Defense). Check with the College and Program for college and program specific procedures for this process. A copy of the announcement should be sent to the Office of Graduate Studies, preferably two weeks in advance of the defense date. The announcement must also be posted in a public forum for a minimum of twenty-four hours to comply with statute requirements for a public meeting. A student must successfully defend the dissertation in order to be able to proceed and complete the final submission process.

Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair

The Doctoral Dissertation Defense (Final Oral Examination) shall be presided over by

- an external committee member from outside the Department, School, or equivalent, hosting the doctoral program, but may be within the academic discipline,

OR,

- a non-committee member (a.k.a. Outside Chair)
(Refer to the individual Program's Degree Requirements in the Graduate Catalog for information).
If the Chair is from another institution, this individual must be approved for Affiliate Graduate Faculty status.

The Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair's role includes overseeing the proceedings as well as serving as the student's advocate, by ensuring fairness of the process. Faculty holding joint, courtesy, or adjunct appointments in the degree-granting academic unit (i.e. Department or equivalent) cannot serve as the Defense Chair.

Procedures for Conducting the Doctoral Dissertation Defense (Final Oral Examination)

1. The Doctoral Dissertation defense (final oral examination) should be conducted within a timeline to allow for the student to make any necessary corrections following the defense and still meet the final copy deadline for turning in the Dissertation to the Office of Graduate Studies.
2. The presentation should be considered an important function in the Department and all graduate students and faculty be encouraged to attend.
3. The presentation and defense are open to the public and as such, must meet the requirements of the Sunshine Laws for the State of Florida. The Doctoral Dissertation Committee deliberation is not public.
4. The room selected for the examination should have adequate seating with an alternate room selected in case of problems.

5. It is required that all members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee be present for the examination unless an absence is approved prior to the defense taking place by the Office of Graduate Studies Dean. In the event that a member cannot attend in person, participation is permissible via speakerphone or video conference. A minimum of three members, including the Major Professor is required to proceed with the defense. If a non-committee member (Outside Chair) chairs the Defense, this individual does not count as one of the three required members in attendance. If an unforeseeable situation arises that would prevent compliance with this requirement the Major Professor or Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair should contact the Office of Graduate Studies for guidance and approval to proceed with the defense.
6. The length of the examination period will generally not exceed three hours. Throughout this time the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair is to be in charge of all proceedings and, ideally, is expected to play a balancing role between advocacy and contention.
7. The Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair, at any time during the course of the examination, may request all visitors to leave.
8. Presentation
 - The Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair should open the proceedings by introducing the candidate and the Doctoral Dissertation Committee.
 - The examination should begin with a presentation by the candidate designed to summarize the dissertation.

9. Questions

Following the presentation the Defense may be moved to a different setting for the main examination. The College determines the order of the proceedings described below:

- The examination will consist of questions about the research by the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair and the Doctoral Dissertation Committee.
- It is suggested that questioning should be limited to about 15 minutes for each Doctoral Dissertation Committee member with subsequent rounds of questioning as necessary.
- Questions from the faculty-at-large and/or the public may be allowed following the presentation. It is suggested that questioning from the general audience be limited up to 5 minutes per person.

10. Deliberations and Voting

Following the completion of these proceedings, the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair

- will ask all visitors and the candidate to leave and will re-convene the Doctoral Dissertation Committee only.
- will preside over the deliberations and voting of the Committee. (*Note: If a non-committee member [Outside Chair] is used, he/she will not participate in the voting.*)
- is responsible for tallying the votes and informing the candidate of the final decision. The voting is to be limited to “pass” and “fail” votes. ***The vote of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee must be unanimous.*** If unanimous agreement cannot be reached, the Doctoral Dissertation Defense Chair notifies the Department Chair (or appropriate equivalent) who will endeavor to resolve the dispute in an expedient fashion.

- records the vote on the Successful Defense Form and conveys the decision of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee (Successful Defense form) to the Department/College Graduate office to be kept in the student's file.

Dissertation Final Submission Guidelines

Information on requirements for submission of the finished and approved manuscript copies is available online at the Thesis and Dissertation website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>. Students who fail to submit the final copy of a dissertation by the posted submission deadline will not be considered for graduation. The student may be considered for graduation in the following semester and must therefore apply for the degree (graduation) by the posted deadline, enroll in a minimum of two (2) dissertation hours for that subsequent semester, and meet the submission requirements as posted on the Thesis/Dissertation website. Only after the Office of Graduate Studies has approved the manuscript can the student be certified for the degree.

Mandatory Electronic Submission

Students are required to submit the dissertation in an electronic format (ETD). Requirements and procedures are available at the Office of Graduate Studies website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/ETD-res-main.php>

Submission for Official Publication and Archiving

All theses/dissertations will be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies designated System for official publication and archiving.

Changes after Publication

Once a dissertation is approved and accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies for publication, it cannot be changed.

Release of Dissertation Publications

The University recognizes the benefits from collaboration with sponsors on research projects but also recognizes the possibility of conflicts of interest in the disclosure of the results of the collaborations. While the sponsor's economic interests in the restriction of disclosure should be considered, the University has a primary mission to extend knowledge and disseminate it to the public and the broader academic community. The University's "Statement of Policy Regarding Inventions and Works" acknowledges the possible need for delays in publication of sponsored research to protect the sponsor's interests, but it provides no definite guidelines for the restrictions of publication beyond the statement: "Disclosure delays mutually acceptable to the Inventor, the Vice President for Research, and the sponsor, if any, are authorized in order to allow patent applications to be filled prior to publication, thereby preserving patent rights..."⁸

To protect the University's primary goal from un-due compromise, the University has adopted the following guidelines:

1. The recommendations of sponsors, regarding publication of research results should be considered advisory rather than mandatory.
2. In support of academic discourse and the mission to promote and share academic works, Dissertations will be released for worldwide access once submitted to and approved by the USF Office of Graduate Studies. In the event that a patent or copyright application provides reason to delay the release of the Dissertation, a petition to request a one year delay may be

⁸ April Burke, "University Policies on Conflict of Interest and Delay of Publications," Report of the Clearinghouse on University-Industry Relations, Association of American Universities, February, 1985.

submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies for consideration. Such requests must be received by the format check of the dissertation.

3. Students should not be delayed in the final defense of their dissertations by agreements involving publication delays.

Duty to Disclose New Inventions and Works

USF 0-300 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-300.pdf> and USF 12.003 <http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf12.003.pdf>.

For information about the requirements of this policy contact the Division of Patents and Licensing at (813) 974-0994.

Dissertation Change of Grade

In the semester in which the final manuscript has been received, reviewed, and certified for permanent filing in the University Library, the Office of Graduate Studies submits the change of grade from “Z” to “S” for the last registration of dissertation courses to the office of the registrar when all grades are due at the end of the semester.

The Use of “Ph.D.” in Credentials and Publication

Students may only use the credential of “Ph.D.” after degree conferral is granted. It is inappropriate to use the credential until it is officially and formally granted. The use of the abbreviation “Ph.D.” in university publications, correspondence, etc., including websites and other electronic media, shall be upper case “P”, lower case “h” followed by a period, an upper case “D” and another period. It shall not be used in the format of all upper case letters without periods, as in “PHD”.

Section 9

Graduation Information and Post-Doctoral Affairs

Application for Degree (Graduation)

To graduate, a student must submit the Application for Degree through their College. This application must be submitted in the term of expected graduation by the deadline noted in the academic calendar. If a student applies for graduation and is not approved, a new Application for Degree must be submitted by the deadline in a new term. In order for the degree statement to appear on a student's academic record, the student must file the aforementioned application whether or not participation in the commencement ceremony is desired.

The application for a graduate degree is online at <http://www.usf.edu/registrar/resources/graduation.aspx>

The application must be submitted to the College advising office prior to the graduation application deadline. Inquiries concerning approval or denial of graduation should be made to the appropriate college. It is the student's responsibility to clear all "I" (Incomplete) and "M" (Missing) grades in all courses and to provide official transcripts of all transferred course work needed for graduation at least three weeks prior to the end of the term in which he/she expects to graduate.

Graduation Requirements

It is the student's responsibility to make sure that he/she has met all degree requirements (e.g. be *in good standing*) as specified in the Policies and Degree Requirements sections of this publication, as well as any College and Program requirements for the degree.

Commencement

Graduate students **may not** participate in commencement exercises **until all requirements** for the degree sought have been fulfilled. Students graduating from programs based from the Tampa campus (despite location, i.e. may be located in St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Lakeland, etc., such as students in Marine Science) participate in commencement exercises on the Tampa campus. All doctoral graduates receive degree conferral from the Tampa campus and therefore participate in commencement exercises in Tampa.

Diplomas

Diplomas are mailed to the student's permanent address approximately six (6) weeks after commencement. Students with a change of address need to fill out a change of address form at the Registrar's office. Questions regarding diplomas and degree certification should be directed to the Registrar's office at 974-2000.