



# Doctoral Program Guidelines (revised 10/14/14)

“The PhD degree is a research degree designed to produce the critical scholar. The degree is granted only to students who: 1) have mastered definite fields of knowledge so that they are familiar not only with what has been done in their specific fields but also with the potential and opportunity for further advances; 2) have demonstrated capacity to do original and independent scholarly investigation or creative work in their selected fields; and 3) have the ability to integrate their selected fields of specialization with the larger domains of knowledge and understanding” – [FSU Graduate General Bulletin](#)

## 1. Goals

The Ph.D. in Information Studies offered by the Florida State University School of Information, part of the College of Communication and Information, is a research degree designed to produce astute and creative researchers for academic, corporate, nonprofit, or governmental settings. Doctoral students will become familiar with a wide range of research methods, developing a background in social science, science, and/or humanities theories as they explain information phenomena, past and present. Doctoral students will also become aware of the multiplicity of problems in the information field to which these research techniques may be applied. To demonstrate this familiarity, they will perform original research, and report the results of their research in a clearly written dissertation.

## 2. Admission Procedures

Admission to the doctoral program is selective, based upon the assessment and balancing of a number of factors (including past performance) that, when taken together, provide evidence of superior scholastic ability and potential for success in a rigorous graduate program of research study. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the Ph.D. in Information Studies, applications from prospective students representing a wide range of fields are strongly encouraged. Detailed information about doctoral admission and application requirements are available at <http://ischool.cci.fsu.edu/admissions/graduate/phd/>.

### 2.1 Requirements for Students without Master's Degrees

Applicants to the doctoral program typically hold a master's degree or equivalent in a related field of study. In certain situations, the School may accept a student without a master's degree into the doctoral program. In this case, the School will determine an appropriate program of study to ensure that the student meets all doctoral program requirements and has adequate knowledge and skills upon completion of coursework.

Students without master's degrees who are accepted to the doctoral program will have to comply with all University and School of Information doctoral program admissions policies. Florida State University requires students admitted to a doctoral degree program without a master's degree either to complete a master's degree or to complete thirty (30) credit hours of graduate work before beginning the twenty-four (24) credit hour residency requirement for the doctoral program.

### 2.2 TA Certification

Each semester, in accordance with guidelines of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS) and the standards outlined by the University, the Academic Dean of each College is required to certify in writing to the Vice President of Faculty Development and Advancement and the Dean of The Graduate School that each student who serves as a teaching assistant (TA) in the classroom or online is competent to teach and for international teaching assistants (ITA) that they are also competent to teach in spoken English.

The SPEAK (Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit) test is a tool used by the University to evaluate the English speaking ability of non-native speakers of English. At FSU, the SPEAK test is administered by the Center for Intensive English Studies to international students who have been appointed or will be appointed as teaching assistants in an academic department at Florida State University. A minimum score of 50 is required on the SPEAK test or the student must take designated undergraduate-level English speaking preparatory courses until certification is achieved.

For more detailed information about the TA Certification process, visit [http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/teach\\_assist.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/teach_assist.htm).

### **2.3 Beginning the Doctoral Program**

Admitted students are required to begin doctoral work in the summer semester to establish the proper sequence of courses. Admitted students who are unable to begin their studies at the designated time may be required to re-apply if they wish to enroll at a later date.

## **3. Doctoral Program Structure**

The Ph.D. program at the FSU School of Information is overseen by the School's Doctoral Program Committee in cooperation with the Director of the School of Information, iSchool Graduate Student Services and iSchool Financial Services representatives. Each student's individual progress through the program is guided by a Major Professor and a Supervisory Committee.

### **3.1 Doctoral Program Committee**

The Doctoral Program Committee formulates policy for the Ph.D. program in the School of Information, and comprises at least three faculty members appointed by the Director of the School and at least one doctoral student elected by current doctoral students to represent first-year, second-year, and third-year students. The Chair of the Doctoral Program serves as Chair of the Doctoral Program Committee. The Chairperson is a tenured faculty member with Graduate Faculty Status who leads the formulation of policy and advises on procedures for the doctoral program in cooperation with the Associate Director for Academics, and advises students and faculty of relevant deadlines with assistance from the School's Graduate Student Services Team. Student members of the Doctoral Program Committee may participate in all committee meetings except those related to doctoral student admissions and evaluations.

The Doctoral Program Committee, in cooperation with each student's first year advisor and the Doctoral Program Chair monitors each student's progress through his or her first year of residency. The Graduate Student Services Team provides clerical and record-keeping services for doctoral student files.

### **3.2 Major Professor**

Upon entering the program, each student will be assigned a first year advisor to help guide him/her through the first year of the program; this advisor will also conduct the student's first annual review (see section 5.4

below). During the first year of study, doctoral students should discuss ideas for possible dissertation topics with their First Year Advisor, and once the student has settled on a general area of research, the student should select and formally declare a supervising Major Professor by submitting the online [Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Request Form](#). Students should select a permanent Major Professor and Supervisory Committee by the end of the first semester of the second year.

The Major Professor, who must have Graduate Faculty Status and be eligible to chair a Supervisory Committee as defined by FSU and School of Information policies,

- serves as chair of the student's Supervisory Committee;
- conducts the student's annual reviews;
- helps the student identify opportunities for research collaborations;
- directs the student's preliminary examinations; and
- supervises the development of the candidate's prospectus and dissertation.

### **3.3 Supervisory Committee**

The Supervisory Committee consists of the Major Professor as chair, at least two other faculty members from the School of Information with Graduate Faculty Status, and the University Representative. The University Representative is drawn from outside the School of Information and must be a tenured member of the faculty with Graduate Faculty Status who is free of conflicts of interest with other members of the committee. The Supervisory Committee may include additional faculty members with or without Graduate Faculty Status.

The Supervisory Committee assists the Major Professor by:

- participating in the student's annual reviews;
- writing preliminary examination questions as necessary;
- evaluating preliminary examinations;
- helping the candidate prepare his or her prospectus; and
- advising the candidate on all aspects of the dissertation process.

As their research evolves, students may feel the need to change the Major Professor or members of the Supervisory Committee. This is a natural part of the research process, and such changes are accomplished by submitting online [Ph.D. Supervisory Committee Request Form](#). Excessive changes over time, however, are discouraged and may not be approved.

## **4. General Regulations**

Doctoral students in the School of Information are expected to be active members of the School of Information community, and as such, they are required to make adequate progress each year toward the completion of their Ph.D.

### **4.1 University Regulations and Record Keeping**

Doctoral students are required to check the policies and procedures of The Graduate School frequently, and to ensure adherence of their program procedures to all appropriate University policies governing the doctoral degree. They are also required to keep accurate and up-to-date records of their progress (including personal copies of all official forms), and to make sure these records are properly submitted for the academic electronic file.

## **4.2 Residency Requirements**

While there is no specific residency requirement beyond the University's minimum residency requirement of twenty-four (24) credit hours earned in a consecutive 12 month period for those with a relevant master's degree, the student will need to take a minimum of thirty-six (36) credit hours beyond the master's degree to satisfy the School's minimum requirements for the doctoral degree (Directed Individual Study courses do not count toward the residency requirement).

At least twenty-four (24) credit hours in the student's program must be taken in the School of Information. The student's Supervisory Committee will determine how many additional credit hours may be necessary for the student to gain the knowledge and background required to pass the preliminary examination.

## **4.3 Additional Requirements for Students without Master's Degrees**

Florida State University requires students entering the program without a master's degree to complete thirty (30) credit hours of graduate work before beginning the twenty-four (24) credit hour doctoral residency requirement.

## **4.4 Teaching Experience**

There are many opportunities for students to gain teaching experience through teaching assistantships in the School. All new doctoral students are required to attend the University's Program in Instructional Excellence just prior to the first fall semester, and students who have teaching assistantships are required to read the Florida State University School of Information Teaching Assistant Handbook.

## **4.5 Annual Orientation**

Each year, just prior to the beginning of the fall semester, all new doctoral students are required to attend an orientation meeting with the Doctoral Program Committee, the Director of the School, and available faculty (continuing doctoral students are encouraged to attend). This meeting provides the student with an opportunity for initial contact with faculty and fellow students who may share common academic interests.

## **4.6 Annual Review**

Doctoral students are required to prepare a portfolio of work for review by their Supervisory Committee no later than October 1 of each calendar year; it is the student's responsibility to schedule this annual review. If the student fails to schedule an annual review in the fall semester, he/she will not be permitted to register for courses in the subsequent spring semester. Students must submit an updated [PhD Program of Study Worksheet](#) and updated curriculum vita (CV) by November 1. Students who have not held their annual review and submitted the required documentation may have their spring schedule cancelled.

Students, in consultation with their Major Professor, will determine the format of their portfolios (e.g. notebook, website, etc.), and are responsible for keeping them up-to-date during their time in the program. The following headings should be used to assist in the organization of the portfolio, but with the approval of Major Professor may be modified to meet particular student needs:

1. Updated PhD Program of Study Worksheet with suggested plan of study;
2. Annual review letters written by the Major Professor from previous years;
3. Current CV;

4. Copies of papers, exams, and other significant items completed for courses while a Ph.D. student at FSU;
5. Copies of any presentations, electronic manuscripts, papers published, delivered, or submitted for publication or review while a Ph.D. student at FSU;
6. Statement of student self-assessment of past year's activities and how these activities have been supportive of goals toward the Ph.D. and subsequent career objectives;
7. Statement of student perceived needs for coursework or study in the coming year to prepare for preliminary examinations, or if preliminary examinations are completed, to defend the prospectus; and
8. Other items deemed important by the student or the Supervisory Committee to faithfully represent the student's progress or goals.
9. Students must submit their updated portfolio to their Supervisory Committee at least two weeks before the annual review is scheduled to take place. All Supervisory Committee members are expected to participate in the annual review.
  - o **First-year students** are expected to meet with their assigned Major Professor to share accomplishments and challenges encountered in the program and to plan coursework and activities for the coming year.
  - o In the **second year of study and until the student passes the preliminary exam** the student is expected to convene their supervisory committee for an annual review meeting.
  - o **Students who have advanced to candidacy** may still wish to convene their committees, but may conduct their annual review meeting directly with their major professor. Regardless of whether a meeting of the supervisory committee is called or not, it is expected that members of a student's supervisory committee will have an opportunity to provide input concerning the student's progress and that the annual review letter will be reviewed and approved by the full committee before it is submitted by the major professor.

Once the annual review is complete, the Major Professor is responsible for:

- writing an annual review letter using the School of Information Annual Review Letter template that describes the student's progress during the year; and
- making sure letter is submitted via the online [PhD Annual Review Letter Submission Form](#) for inclusion in the student's academic electronic file **no later than November 15** of each calendar year.
- providing a copy of the annual review status and letter to all members of the Supervisory Committee.

As part of the annual review, the Major Professor is required to indicate whether the student is making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the Ph.D., and the Doctoral Program Committee will use this information to present a summary report on the yearly progress of all School of Information doctoral students for discussion at the December faculty business meeting. Graduate Student Services will prepare a summary report of doctoral student progress as submitted via the annual review, to include a summary of completed core course work requirements and annual review status as submitted by each Major Professor.

Once the annual review is complete, the student is responsible for submitting an updated CV and a copy of an updated program of study as approved by the Major Professor during the annual review via the online [PhD Annual Review Document Submission Form](#). **All student documents must be submitted via the online submission form no later than November 1.**

If the student's Supervisory Committee determines the student is not making satisfactory progress toward his or her degree at the annual review, the Major Professor will formulate a plan for improvement with specifics outlined in the annual review letter. If the student's Supervisory Committee determines the student is still not making satisfactory progress at the next annual review, the student will be dismissed from the program.

## **4.7 Dismissal Policy**

Doctoral students may be dismissed from the program for any of the following reasons:

- Two unsatisfactory annual reviews in a row;
- A doctoral coursework GPA less than 3.0;
- Failure to pass any part of the preliminary exam after two attempts, or within six months of being notified of failure for the first time;
- Failure to complete all requirements for the doctoral degree within five calendar years from passing the preliminary examination;
- Failure to pass the prospectus defense;
- Failure to pass the dissertation defense; and
- Violations of any other University policy, including plagiarism and the academic honor policy.

Dismissal from the program will take the form of a written letter from the Dean of the College. The Major Professor is responsible for overseeing adequate documentation of all aspects of a student's progress through the program and for communicating with the Director when issues arise concerning a student's satisfactory progress.

## **5. Doctoral Student Coursework**

The School of Information program has a minimum of 36 hours (see 5.1 – 5.4) of required coursework that must be completed before taking the preliminary exam. The doctoral coursework includes:

- doctoral seminars offered by the School of Information (18 hours)
- additional coursework, which may be taken outside of the School, but must be pre-approved by the Major Professor (9 hours)
- proseminar (4 hours)
- research collaborations (5 hours)

### **5.1 Doctoral Seminars (18 hours)**

Doctoral students are expected to take School of Information doctoral seminars each semester they are in residence before advancing to candidacy. Each student is required to take three core seminars:

1. LIS 6024 (Seminar in the Historical Foundations of Library and Information Science);
2. LIS 6279 (Research in Information Studies); and
3. LIS 6278 (Issues in Theory Development).

Each student must also take three additional 6000-level courses offered by the School of Information, which may include special topics courses (LIS 6919).

### **5.2 Proseminar Requirement (4 hours)**

All doctoral students who are either pre-candidacy or working as teaching assistants are required to register for LIS 6936 (Proseminar in LIS Research and Teaching) for a minimum of 1 hour of credit or up to a maximum of 3 credit hours each semester. A maximum of 4 credit hours of proseminar may be counted toward completion of the 36 hours of required doctoral coursework.

### **5.3 Additional Course Work (9 hours)**

Nine semester hours of additional course work must be completed at the graduate level. This course work may be conceptualized as a formal minor or used to augment the individual student's plan of study. Minors may cover aspects of information phenomena in related academic disciplines like psychology, sociology, linguistics, communication, history, literature, and computer science, or may address relevant cross-disciplinary topics proposed by the student and agreed to by the Major Professor in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

Students admitted to the doctoral program beginning Summer 2013 are required to take *LIS 6040 Teaching in Information Studies* (3 hours) during their first summer semester of enrollment. This course may be applied toward completion of the 9 hours of additional course work.

#### **5.4 Research Collaborations (5 hours)**

Doctoral students are required to complete five credit hours of research collaboration (LIS 6911). These research collaborations may or may not be supervised by the Major Professor, but must meet with Major Professor approval. The objective of the research collaborations is to provide students with:

- an opportunity to work with faculty engaged in research in mutual areas of interest;
- firsthand experience in the practicalities of research investigations;
- an opportunity to develop and strengthen research skills;
- experience in specific research methodologies;
- experience in interpreting and writing up research results; and
- a foundation to support dissertation research.

After consultation with the Major Professor, the doctoral student will approach faculty with related research interests to develop a formal contract (see sample template) that articulates:

- the student's anticipated tasks and responsibilities in the research project;
- the amount of time expected from the student during the semester and an initial projection of how the time might be distributed;
- working arrangements in terms of the location(s) of work, need to travel, the identity of other collaborators on the project, and other logistics specific to working on the project;
- the student's specific learning objectives (which may include developing a conceptual mastery of a topic area and/or specific research-related skills); and
- an agreement on how the student's performance will be evaluated.

Specific research activities will vary based on the contract negotiated between the student and the faculty member and will reflect the student's need to acquire skills and gain experience in completing specific research tasks and responsibilities. Required readings will vary with the nature of the research project and the specific tasks or skill development for which the student will be responsible. All projects are subject to final approval by the Major Professor and the Director of the School.

Doctoral students are encouraged to give a public presentation that demonstrates experience in the research generated by research collaborations. These public presentations may be scheduled into the School's regular Research Colloquium or other research presentation series.

#### **5.5 Statistics Requirement**

The School of Information views competency in statistics as important to success in the program. Students must demonstrate competence in established statistical methodologies in one of two ways

1. students may complete at least one graduate-level course in statistics (taken within three years prior to the date of application) prior to being admitted;
2. students may complete a graduate-level course in statistics as part of their program of study.

Students must complete the statistics requirement with a grade of B or better, and prior to registering for preliminary examination. The statistics course may not count toward completion of the 36 hours of required doctoral coursework.

Additional coursework in statistics and other specific research methodologies (e.g., content analysis, survey research, experimental design, qualitative analysis, or historiography) may be required by the student's individual program of study and areas of interest. Appropriate statistics and methods courses are offered by a variety of departments at the university.

### **5.6 Directed Individual Study**

Doctoral students may take up to 12 credit hours of Directed Individual Study (DIS) courses, LIS 6909; any hours above 12 credit hours are counted as duplicate credit. Up to six (6) semester hours of prelim prep may be converted to dissertation hours (LIS 6980) if the preliminary examination is successfully passed by the 7th week deadline as outlined in the University Academic Calendar (prorated for summer).

### **5.7 Additional Credit Hours**

If deemed necessary by the student's Supervisory Committee, additional credit hours may be required to fulfill individual program requirements in various areas such as research methods, foreign languages, statistics, or computer technology.

## **6. Advancing to Candidacy**

When the student is ready to advance to candidacy, the Major Professor works with the other members of the Supervisory Committee to develop and administer the student's preliminary examination, which confirms that a doctoral student has attained the required level of comprehensive scholarship and possesses knowledge of appropriate techniques for conducting research in selected areas of library and information studies.

Before taking the preliminary examination, the doctoral student must have completed all required course work with no unresolved incomplete grades.

### **6.1 Eligibility to Prepare for the Preliminary Examination**

Students must submit the [Core Requirement Verification Form](#) prior to registering for prelim prep hours. Core requirements include:

- completion of the 36 hours of required doctoral course work
- completion of the statistics requirement (*see section 5.5*)
- having an approved supervisory committee on file
- have the approval of his/her Supervisory Committee

### **6.2 Preparing for the Preliminary Examination**

There are no common, predetermined subject areas in which all students are examined; each examination is individualized according to the student's area of specialization and plan of study. Examination criteria generally relate to the following factors:

- mastery of specific knowledge in an area of specialization;
- familiarity with current trends in that area;
- knowledge of scholarly investigation in that area;
- knowledge of the interrelationships between their general area of interest and area of specialization within Library and Information Studies. If the student has a declared minor, the minor area will be included in the preliminary examination ; and
- ability to relate the selected area of specialization to larger domains of knowledge and scholarship.

The Supervisory Committee determines when the student is ready to take the examination, and is responsible for setting dates for the preliminary exam and developing a set of preliminary examination questions. The student must register for LIS 8964 Doctoral Preliminary Examination (zero credits) during the semester in which the examination will be taken. If the student registers for LIS 8964, but does not take the examination that semester, the student will receive a grade of "I" from the Major Professor. If the preliminary exam is not successfully passed within 1 year of registration for LIS 8964, the previous registration for LIS 8964 will be retroactively dropped and the student must request re-registration of LIS 8964 during the term in which the preliminary examination will be completed.

With the assistance of the Supervisory Committee, the student must prepare a statement of goals pursued in his or her program of study that identifies and defines the student's major and minor areas of interest. Examination questions will be based on the student's statement and typically comprise parts covering the student's:

1. major area of specialization;
2. minor area of interest;
3. theory; and
4. methods.

Examination questions must be approved by the Director of the School; questions must be submitted for approval two weeks before the date the examination is to begin. Once approved by the School Director, the Major Professor must submit the examination questions via the online [PhD Preliminary Examination Administration Form](#) once the date of examination has been confirmed and scheduled with the Supervisory Committee.

### **6.3 Preliminary Examination**

Students are expected to take the preliminary examination by the end of their third year in the program.

The student's Supervisory Committee may schedule the preliminary examination to extend over a consecutive seven-day period. The examination must begin and end on a day when the University is open for business. The student will receive all questions by 10:00 AM on the first day of the examination via email from Graduate Student Services (with copy to all committee members), and must return the completed answers by 10:00 AM one week later via the online [PhD Preliminary Examination Student Submission Form](#) (accommodations for religious obligations will be made on a case by case basis by the Supervisory Committee). Detailed instructions, including formatting instructions, will be given to the student along with the questions. A copy of the completed examination will be distributed to each member of the Supervisory Committee the same day it is received by Graduate Student Services.

Answers to all parts of the preliminary examination will be graded using the following criteria:

- demonstrated knowledge of the literature, including the ability to point to specific sources and to link people or groups with ideas;
- demonstrated ability to integrate specific topics across the broader field of information studies;
- demonstrated ability to synthesize, analyze, and draw out concepts from the literature;
- demonstrated ability to develop a personal perspective on the issues discussed and defend that perspective through reference to relevant literature;
- demonstrated ability to organize information presented; and
- demonstrated ability to use correct grammar, sentence construction, and appropriate documentation style.

The Supervisory Committee will evaluate and decide whether to “Pass” or “Not Pass” each part of the examination (there are no high passes, marginal passes, marginal failures, etc.). The parts are independent of one another, and performance on one part does not affect performance on any other part.

The Supervisory Committee has the authority to request an oral review of any part of the written preliminary examination questions with the student after the answers have been read and before determining a “Pass” or “Not Pass.” If an oral review is administered, it will be conducted within three weeks after the written examination has been completed. Passing each part of the preliminary examination must include passing the oral component if applicable.

A grade of PASS requires at least a majority approval of the committee for each part of the examination.

After determining the results of the examination, the Major Professor informs student of the outcome and submits the online Preliminary Examination Decision Form as soon as possible, but no later than one month after the end of the examination.

If students receive a “Not Pass” for any part, they may be permitted to retake that part of the examination by answering a different question developed by the Supervisory Committee for that part; students will have two days to retake each part of the examination, up to a maximum of seven days to retake all parts of the exam. The Supervisory Committee will offer suggestions and learning activities that may enhance the student’s performance; students may not change their topic areas after receiving a “Not Pass.” Failure to pass any part of the examination after two attempts or within six months of being notified of failure for the first time will result in dismissal from the program.

Any parts of the examination that need to be repeated must be graded by the Supervisory Committee. The Major Professor must inform the student of the outcome of the re-examination and resubmit the result via the online [Preliminary Examination Decision Form](#).

If the student has procedural questions about the preliminary examination (including the oral review), he or she may request a meeting with the Supervisory Committee as a whole. If the student wishes to appeal the results of the examination, he or she must notify the Director of the School in writing within 60 days following the administration of the examination. If the Director is unable to successfully adjudicate the appeal, an additional meeting involving the Dean of the College, the Director of the School, the Doctoral Program Committee Chair, the Major Professor, and the student will be held. If the issue still has not resolved, the student may appeal to the Student Academic Relations Committee (SARC) of the Faculty Senate.

Students with known medical issues or who encounter medical issues while taking the preliminary exam who wish those issues taken into consideration should notify their MP as soon as possible with an explanation of the

medical issues affecting their completion of the exam. The student's Major Professor in consultation with the Director of the School will determine the appropriate means for the student to complete the preliminary exam taking the medical issue into consideration.

## **6.4 Admission to Candidacy**

A student who has passed all parts of the preliminary examination becomes a candidate for the doctoral degree, and must be admitted to candidacy at least six months prior to awarding the Ph.D. degree. The Major Professor must notify the School of Information Director and Graduate Student Services that the student has passed the preliminary examination. Graduate Student Services will submit all required paperwork to have the student admitted to doctoral candidacy, which is required before the doctoral student will be permitted to register for dissertation credits. If the student is eligible for conversion of prelim prep hours to dissertation hours, this paperwork will be included with the Admission to Candidacy form submitted to the Office of the University Registrar.

## **7. Doctoral Candidates**

Doctoral candidates must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree within five calendar years from the time they pass the preliminary examination. If all requirements are not completed within this time, the Supervisory Committee may elect to do one of the following:

1. allow the student to request an extension of time via their Major Professor, which also requires approval from The Graduate School; or
2. require that a new preliminary examination be successfully completed; or
3. dismiss the student from the doctoral program.

### **7.1 Prospectus**

The School of Information requires a prospectus on a research project suitable for the doctoral dissertation. The content of the prospectus should follow accepted research practices appropriate to the candidate's area of research and generally contains sections labeled Introduction, Statement of Purpose, Literature Review, Methodology, and Timeline. Candidates interested in conducting research using methodologies that do not fit with this approach should consult with the Major Professor to determine additional specifications for the type of study contemplated.

The Major Professor assists in the development of the student's prospectus by:

- stipulating the minimum specifications for the dissertation;
- encouraging participation of Supervisory Committee members in the prospectus and dissertation stages;
- determining when the prospectus is ready to defend (in consultation with the candidate and the Supervisory Committee members);
- scheduling the prospectus defense, and announcing the time, date, and prospectus title at least two weeks prior to the prospectus defense; and
- inviting the faculty, students, and general public to attend the public presentation prior to the prospectus defense.

Prior to the prospectus defense, the doctoral candidate is required to:

- coordinate with the Major Professor to arrange meetings with the Supervisory Committee;

- submit an application in the [Human Subject Review System \(HSRS\)](#) A minimum of two weeks before the prospectus defense. Research that involves the approval of organizations outside of FSU (e.g school districts, private organizations) will also need to demonstrate that these organizations approve the research protocol.
- reserve a room and appropriate multimedia equipment;
- distribute copies of the prospectus to the Supervisory Committee at least two weeks prior to the defense; and
- submit a copy of the prospectus at least two weeks prior to the prospectus defense date via the online [Defense Draft Submission Form](#). Upon submission, a copy will be automatically sent to the Goldstein Library to be placed on reserve, and copies sent to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information Dean, the Director of the School of Information, and the Doctoral Program Committee Chair.

Prior to the defense, the candidate will present his or her prospectus in a public presentation, including a public questions and answers session. Following this presentation, the candidate will defend his or her prospectus in a private meeting with an examining committee consisting of the candidate's Supervisory Committee, the Director of the School or Doctoral Program Chair; other members of the graduate faculty may attend the defense, but may not ask questions.

The defense is an oral examination presided over by the Major Professor, and the committee's determination of the success of the defense may take place in a meeting without the candidate. The committee will certify in writing to the Director the results of the examination: passed, failed, or to be re-examined. The results of a re-examination must indicate the student either passed or failed. A grade of PASS for the defense of prospectus requires at least a majority approval of the committee.

After the prospectus defense, the Major Professor:

- provides a list of the required revisions to student within one month of the defense;
- informs the Supervisory Committee members when approved changes have been made;
- approves the revised prospectus in consultation with the Supervisory Committee (if revisions are necessary); and
- submits the [Prospectus Defense Signature Form](#) with signatures and grade designation for all Supervisory Committee Members.

After the prospectus defense, the candidate is responsible for

- revising the prospectus as determined by the Supervisory Committee.
- If required revisions affect the research protocol, the student must request a protocol change on his or her Human Subjects application.

**Students may not begin data collection until they have successfully defended their prospectus and received approval from the Office of Research.** Failure to comply with FSU Institutional Review Board procedures may result in a permanent embargo of the dissertation and the student may forfeit being awarded a Ph.D.

## 7.2 Publishable Paper

Prior to defending the dissertation, each doctoral student is required to produce a paper of publishable quality. This requirement is designed to ensure that students learn how to write for publication and are aware of publisher requirements regarding manuscript submissions. Papers may be based on the student's dissertation research, research collaborations, or other original research, but do not need to be single-authored. If the paper

is joint-authored, however, the student must have contributed a substantial portion of the final product. Actual publication, or submission for publication, is not required, but is encouraged.

Students may satisfy the publishable paper requirement in one of two ways:

1. Writing a paper that is published (or accepted for publication) in a peer-reviewed journal during their time in the doctoral program; or
2. Submitting a paper to the Supervisory Committee for review, and with the approval of the Supervisory Committee, submitting the same paper to the Doctoral Program Committee for a final review to determine whether the paper is of publishable quality. If the Doctoral Program Committee and Supervisory Committee are not in agreement, the Director of the School will review the paper and make the final determination.

When this requirement is satisfied, the student will submit the paper via the online [Ph.D. Publishable Paper Submission Form](#), which will be verified by the Major Professor.

### **7.3 Dissertation and Dissertation Defense**

University regulations require that a minimum of 24 hours of dissertation credit (LIS 6980) be earned between the time the student is admitted to candidacy and the date the degree is awarded. The candidate must register for a minimum of two hours each semester. The number of credit hours taken each semester should represent the proportion of time devoted to the dissertation, whether on or off campus.

The Major Professor assists in the development of the student's dissertation by

- advising the candidate on all aspects of the dissertation in a timely fashion;
- coordinating and approving advice from the Supervisory Committee and other faculty;
- reviewing drafts of the dissertation and providing guidance for necessary changes;
- determining when the dissertation is ready to defend (in consultation with the candidate and the Supervisory Committee members);
- scheduling the dissertation defense, and announcing the time, date, and dissertation title at least four weeks prior to the defense;
- inviting the faculty, students, and general public to attend the public presentation prior to the defense.

The date of the dissertation defense must be no fewer than four weeks prior to the date on which the doctoral degree is to be awarded.

Prior to the dissertation defense, the doctoral candidate is required to:

- ensure that the dissertation is in conformance with the accepted prospectus and all other University requirements;
- reserve a room and appropriate multimedia equipment;
- distribute copies of the dissertation to the Supervisory Committee at least four weeks prior to the defense;
- submit a copy of the prospectus at least two weeks prior to the prospectus defense date via the online [Defense Draft Submission Form](#). Upon submission, a copy will be automatically sent to the Goldstein Library to be placed on reserve, and copies sent to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information Dean, the Director of the School of Information, and the Doctoral Program Committee Chair.

- enroll in LIS 8985 (Dissertation Defense) for zero credit hours at the beginning of the semester in which the defense of the dissertation is to be held;
- submit the online Defense Announcement Form located in the GradSpace Blackboard Organization under Manuscript Clearance/Forms/Defense Announcement Form, at least two weeks prior to the dissertation defense date.

Students are strongly encouraged to attend the Electronic, Thesis, and Dissertation (ETD) Workshop presented by The Graduate School prior to beginning the dissertation, as well as attend a refresher session prior to scheduling the defense to make sure all manuscript clearance procedures and formatting are being followed. A schedule of available workshops can be found on The Graduate School [Professional Development Workshop Series](#) page.

Prior to the defense, the candidate will present his or her dissertation in a public presentation, including a public questions and answers session. Following this presentation, the candidate will defend his or her dissertation in a private meeting with an examining committee consisting of the candidate's Supervisory Committee, the Director of the School (or the Director's designee), and other faculty members as appointed by the Director; other members of the graduate faculty may attend the defense, but may not ask questions.

All committee members and the student must attend the entire defense in real time, either by being physically present or participating via distance technology. If exceptional emergency circumstances, (e.g. medical or other emergency situation), prevent the participation of a committee member, then it may be necessary to arrange for an additional appropriately qualified colleague selected by the Director of the School to attend the defense. A minimum of four members with Graduate Faculty Status must participate.

The defense is an oral examination presided over by the Major Professor, and the committee's determination of the success of the defense may take place in a meeting without the candidate. The committee will certify in writing to the Director of the School the results of the examination: passed, failed, or to be re-examined. A grade for the defense of dissertation requires a majority approval of the committee. Each member of the Supervisory Committee must sign the Manuscript Signature Form to substantiate the results of the defense. The results of a re-examination must indicate the student either passed or failed.

After the dissertation defense, the Major Professor:

- provides a list of the required revisions to the student within 48 hours of the defense;
- informs the Supervisory Committee members when approved changes have been made;
- approves the revised dissertation in consultation with the Supervisory Committee (if revisions are necessary);
- ensures that all required Manuscript Clearance Forms are signed by all members of the Supervisory Committee, including the university representative;
- ensures that a permanent official copy of the approved dissertation is submitted for inclusion in the student's academic electronic file;
- assists with final clearance for graduation; and
- hoods the graduate (if desired) at the graduation ceremony.

After the dissertation defense, the candidate is responsible for

- revising the dissertation as determined by the Supervisory Committee;
- following the timeline of due dates for each step of dissertation manuscript clearance and publication as specified by The Graduate School;

- submitting all necessary forms as outlined by the Manuscript Clearance section of The Graduate School. Students should consult the Manuscript Clearance section of the GradSpace organization site in Blackboard for a list of all required forms and surveys.

The university representative on the Supervisory Committee is required to submit the University Representative Doctoral Defense Report form to The Graduate School Manuscript Clearance Advisor with a copy to the Dean of the College of Communication and Information within one week after the date of defense, certifying that the examination has been conducted according to University policy.

## **7.4 Graduation**

Doctoral students will need to apply for graduation, obtain clearance from the School and University, and order graduation robes if attending the graduation ceremony (for more information, see the Graduations section of the Office of the Registrar's website). Doctoral students need to be aware of University timelines and due dates, and to meet all such dates when submitting their final copy of their dissertation to the university and preparing to graduate. For more information, see the Office of Graduate Studies Guidelines and Requirements for Electronic Theses, Treatises, and Dissertations (ETD) and the UMI Doctoral Publishing Guidelines located in the Manuscript Clearance section of the GradSpace Blackboard organization site. Students should attend an ETD Workshop offered several times each semester by The Graduate School.

### **USEFUL LINKS**

[\*\*iSchool PhD Student Registration Request\*\*](#)

[\*\*PhD Annual Review Document Submission Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*PhD Supervisory Committee Request Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*PhD Core Requirement Verification Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*PhD Prelim Examination Student Submission Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*Defense Draft Submission Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*PhD Publishable Paper Submission Form\*\*](#)

[\*\*FSU iSchool Dismissal Reinstatement Request\*\*](#)

[\*\*Doctoral Student Award Nomination Form\*\*](#)