

An aerial photograph of the Florida State University campus. The image shows a mix of historic brick buildings with red-tiled roofs and modern multi-story academic buildings. Large green lawns are interspersed among the buildings, with many mature trees providing shade. A paved walkway with red brick accents winds through the campus. In the lower right, a large building with a prominent red-tiled roof and arched windows is visible. The overall scene is bright and sunny, with clear shadows cast by the buildings and trees.

FSU | DEPARTMENT OF ARTS LEADERSHIP,
EDUCATION & THERAPY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

Ph.D. in Art Education
with majors in: Art Education, Art Therapy, Arts Administration
and Museum Education & Visitor-Centered Curation

2026–2027

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DEAR STUDENTS,

Welcome to the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy at Florida State University!

We are delighted you have chosen FSU to embark on your academic journey. Whether you are new to FSU or returning, you are now part of a vibrant community where creativity, passion, and scholarly dedication thrive.

Florida State University, recognized as a preeminent institution in Florida, holds the highest designation of very high research activity as classified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Our faculty members are leaders in their fields, bringing creativity and research excellence to foster an engaging and dynamic learning environment.

Our philosophy and curriculum are designed to build a strong sense of community, encourage creativity, and support our mission of empowering individuals through the arts. We believe in the transformative power of art education to enhance social consciousness, deepen empathy, and promote community integration. Our graduates have pursued diverse and impactful careers as educators, therapists, planners, curators, administrators, and more.

This handbook is designed to guide you through your doctoral journey, outlining the policies and procedures essential for navigating the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Art Education. It covers each phase of the program, from admission to graduation, reflecting our commitment to high standards that may exceed those of the Graduate School. Doctoral students and graduate faculty must stay informed of current Graduate School policies and procedures, including updates between manual releases.

As you navigate through this handbook, you will find essential information and resources to help you succeed. We encourage you to take full advantage of the many opportunities within our supportive and inclusive community, engage with peers and faculty, participate in interdisciplinary collaborations, and immerse yourself in FSU's learning experiences.

Thank you for joining the Arts Leadership family. We look forward to supporting your growth, celebrating your achievements, and seeing your contributions to our community.

Questions about this handbook should be directed to the [Chair of the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy](#).

GENERAL INFORMATION

With over a 70-year history, the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy believes in the intrinsic value of art as a catalyst for social change. Not only can art promote the development of the individual but serves to enrich and enliven the world around us. As a comprehensive education and research program, we only offer graduate level degrees. We find this provides a rigorous and individualized learning experience as students work towards one of our many specialized degree options.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES & STUDENT SUCCESS

Mission Statement

In the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy, we empower people to empower people through the arts.

Departmental Values

While we pursue our mission, we value:

- Raising social consciousness
- Deepening empathy
- Embracing complex social identities
- Fostering community integration
- Championing participatory action

Community Vision Statement

The Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy strives to create a climate of inclusivity for our faculty, staff, and students. In doing so, we acknowledge that we are imperfect and are constantly working towards building a more just academic community. Because of this, we are always in the process of reviewing our curriculum, policies, and departmental culture to identify and address areas in need of reform. As such, we encourage departmental stakeholders to voice concerns or share ideas with the Student Success Committee, which meets monthly. As issues and ideas are presented, the faculty is committed to engaging in civic discourse focused on meaningful change as we push ourselves to broaden our perspectives and continue to open our doors wider.

Student Success

All students are invited to join the Student Success Committee in the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy. This committee is constituted by both faculty and student representatives and is dedicated to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for all graduate students. It guides initiatives that promote student well-being, academic success, and a strong sense of community within the department. Through events, such as orientations, town halls, professional development workshops, and monthly committee meetings, we work to ensure that students feel welcomed, heard, and connected throughout their academic journey. Students are encouraged to participate in the committee's events and consider getting involved to help shape the graduate experience for themselves and their peers.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE Ph.D. DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Ph.D. doctoral program is designed for those interested in advanced scholarly research, encouraging students to contribute significantly to their field. The Ph.D. program offers four unique majors: [Art Education, Art Therapy, Arts Administration, and Museum Education and Visitor-Centered Curation](#).

This degree is more than just coursework, it is focused on research and theory with the goal of becoming an expert in the field. Students are supported in their efforts to investigate and advance understanding related to individual student interests. Many degree recipients of the doctoral degree are now faculty in colleges and universities all over the world, leading and serving the profession of art education in meaningful ways.

Florida State University, distinguished as a pre-eminent university in the state of Florida, is identified by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as engaged in very high research activity, the highest status accorded to a doctoral-granting university. The wide-ranging scholarship of FSU faculty and graduate students is nationally and internationally recognized for its contributions to science, business, government, culture, and society. FSU faculty members are also recognized for their exceptional level of instruction.

DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Our department staff and faculty are always happy to answer any questions you have. Please be sure to look carefully at who the best person might be to respond to your inquiry. Be sure to use email whenever possible, as this creates a clear and transparent communication trail. Also remember to expect that emails sent before or after normal working hours/days will be responded to during normal business hours. Most faculty and staff strive to respond to emails within 48 hours.

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ACADEMIC CALENDAR & REGISTRATION DEADLINES

The Academic Calendar holds essential information on how our academic year is structured, including key dates, deadlines, and holidays. Understanding the academic calendar is crucial for planning your studies, ensuring you meet important deadlines, and maximizing your academic experience.

Our academic year is divided into three main semesters: Fall, Spring, and Summer. Each semester has its own unique schedule, including start and end dates, registration periods, and exam periods.

We encourage you to familiarize yourself with these calendars and refer to them regularly to stay informed about important dates and events throughout the academic year. If you have any questions or need more assistance, please contact the Office of the Registrar.

The [Florida State University Registration Guide](#) is published biannually by the Office of the University Registrar as an edition of the General Bulletin. The Registration Guides provide a specific term's enrollment appointments, academic calendar, exam schedules, financial information, university notices, and registration information.

NOTE: Students must take care **to register within their enrollment period to avoid late registration fees**. If a student requires help with registration, they can contact the department's Academic Program Specialist: Jennie Christensen, jmchristensen@fsu.edu.

FSU | UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR

ACADEMIC SERVICES ▾BULLETINS & REG. GUIDES ▾CALENDARSGRADUATION ▾SCHEDULING & CURRICULUM ▾STUDENT FORMS

The **Florida State University Registration Guide** is published biannually by the Office of the University Registrar as an edition of the *General Bulletin*. The *Registration Guides* provide a specific term's enrollment appointments, academic calendar, exam schedules, financial information, university notices, and registration information.

Summer/Fall 2026 Registration Guide

- UNIVERSITY NOTICES
- SUMMER ACADEMIC CALENDAR
- FALL ACADEMIC CALENDAR
- ENROLLMENT APPOINTMENTS: GENERAL POLICIES
- ENROLLMENT APPOINTMENTS
- EXAM POLICIES
- FALL EXAM SCHEDULE
- REGISTRATION INFORMATION
- GENERAL FINANCIAL INFORMATION
- SUMMER FEE RATES
- FALL FEE RATES
- FINANCIAL AID

Summer/Fall 2026 Registration Guide as a PDF

Summer/Fall Edition, February, 2026

ADMISSION

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Admissions decisions are made after the application deadlines. If you have questions about the degree during the application process, you can reach out to the program director within the major you are applying for. If you need clarification on the application itself, please don't hesitate to contact our Academic Program Specialist, [Jennie Christensen](#).

Degree Offerings

Ph.D. applicants apply for one of the following majors: Art Education, Art Therapy, Arts Administration, or Museum Education & Visitor-Centered Curation

Admission Deadlines

FALL ADMISSION:

- International applicants, priority deadline: January 15
- Art Therapy majors: January 15
- Applicants interested in funding consideration: February 1
- Applicants uninterested in funding consideration: July 1

SPRING ADMISSION:

Ph.D. students are encouraged to start in the fall. Please contact the program director of your desired major if you are submitting an application for spring admission.

- November 1 (this deadline excludes Art Therapy majors)

Admission Requirements

EXPERIENCE & GPA

- An earned bachelor's degree and master's degree.
 - from a regionally accredited US institution, or a comparable degree from an international institution.
 - should be in the field of study you wish to focus in (i.e. art education, art therapy, arts administration, and museum education)
- A 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale in Master's degree program
- An undergraduate and/or graduate major related to Art, Art Education, Arts Administration, Art History, Art Therapy, Museum Education, or Performing Arts
- Demonstrate a record of at least two years of experience related to the area of concentration (recommended).
- The applicant must be in good standing in the institution of higher education.

GRE Test Scores:

- Not required. If choosing to submit scores, please send official scores to FSU.

TOEFL (for International Students only)

- Minimum scores: 80 internet/213 computer

TUITION & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Tuition

Graduate students are charged tuition on the basis of Florida residency or non-residency. The current schedule of charges may be obtained at: <https://tuition.fsu.edu/>.

THE ACADEMIC COMMON MARKET (ACM)

The Academic Common Market (ACM) is a tuition-savings program for college students in 15 Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states, who want to pursue degrees that are not offered by their in-state institutions. Students can enroll in out-of-state institutions that offer their degree program and pay the institution's in-state tuition rates. Search programs available for your home state by clicking Search for Programs on the ACM website: <https://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-policies/academic-common-market>.

Graduate Assistantships

Prospective and admitted students are eligible to apply for an assistantship. Assistantships are competitive and the number of funded positions varies from year to year. Assistantships supply graduate students with a tuition waiver and stipend. The department is an equal opportunity employer.

THE DEPARTMENT OFFERS THREE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSISTANTSHIPS:

- **Graduate Assistantships (GA):** GAs may receive a position in support of an academic degree program, the department administration, a department committee, or in assisting an individual faculty member.
- **Research Assistantships (RA):** RAs may receive a position to carry out research with a specific faculty member or within a funded research project.
- **Teaching Assistantships (TA):** TAs are degree-seeking graduate students with a related master's degree. TAs perform primary teaching duties as the Instructor of Record (IOR). Non-native English speakers must pass a speaking proficiency exam to become an Instructor of Record (See: <https://cies.fsu.edu/programs/english-academic-purposes/speak-exam-information>).

Graduate Assistantships cover the fall and spring semesters and do not include summer. The award involves both a tuition waiver and a stipend. Students receive a waiver for their tuition (not inclusive of student fees) for at least 9 credit hours. Graduate assistants must enroll in a full course load (9 hours) of approved graduate credit each semester (your adviser is responsible for approving your courses). It is expected that the tuition waiver be applied to courses inside the College of Fine Arts, and permission must be granted by the Department Chair to use the waiver outside of the College.

The stipend is awarded for work completed within the department. The amount of the stipend reflects the hours contracted. Assistantships start at a minimum 25%-time dedication (i.e., 10 hours per week), and at this level the stipend amount is approximately \$9,300 per year. At the discretion of the department, contracts may go up to a maximum of 50%-time (i.e., 20 hours per week), and in these cases the stipend increases to reflect this change. Please note that most assistantships in our department are contracted at a 25% commitment.

The application form for assistantships can be found at: <https://arted.fsu.edu/assistantships-funding/>.

Other Fellowships and Funding Sources

The Graduate School offers fellowship opportunities and awards to prospective and active students: <https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards>.

Financial Aid

Loan Programs are available. Contact the Office of Financial Aid for more information: <https://financialaid.fsu.edu/>.

Financial Aid Awards vary according to need. Details about student loan and work-study opportunities at the University at <https://financialaid.fsu.edu/types-aid/federal-workstudy>.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Few schools offer more support and services to their international population than FSU. Our [Center for Global Engagement](#) staff will work with you to ease your transition to our Seminole Community. We hope you will contact us with any of your questions that are left unanswered after browsing our handbook. After you have been admitted to the University, please browse this site for information on your next steps. The following sections outline key points for international graduate students at FSU to pay attention to, more information can be found on the [international admissions](#) page.

English Language Proficiency

Official English Language Proficiency results are required of all international applicants whose native language is not English. The following are the minimum scores required for admission to the University, although some departments require higher scores at the graduate level:

- Internet based TOEFL ([IBTOEFL](#)): 80
- Paper based TOEFL ([TOEFL](#)): 550
- International English Language Testing System ([Academic IELTS](#)): 6.5
- Pearson Test of English ([PTE](#)): 55

These scores are considered official only when they are sent directly to the Office of Admissions from the testing agency and are not valid after two years. International graduate applicants seeking teaching assistantships are required to pass the SPEAK test which evaluates the English-speaking ability of non-native speakers of English and is administered at Florida State.

Academic Records

All transcripts/academic records that are not in English must be accompanied by certified English translations. To be considered "certified," documents should be true copies that are signed and dated by an educational official familiar with academic records. Any translated record should be literal and not an interpretive translation. Documents signed by a notary or other public official with no educational affiliation will not be accepted. If the transcript/academic record does not indicate the degree earned and date the degree was awarded, separate proof of degree is required.

Finances

Florida State University is required by U.S. federal regulations to verify the financial resources of each applicant prior to issuing the Form I-20. If granted admission to the University, an email with instructions on how to complete the I-20 will be sent from the Center for Global Engagement (CGE). You will provide information verifying your financial support (bank statements, award letters, scholarships, etc.). FSU requires proof of financial support for the first year of study and demonstrated availability of funds for the length of your academic program. U.S. federal grants and loans are not awarded to international students. Graduate students may apply to their respective departments for assistantships or fellowships, although funds are very limited. For further information, please contact your academic department directly.

The Center for Global Engagement

The **Center for Global Engagement** (CGE) and its staff are here to serve international students and their families. Whatever you need to help make your transition to Florida State go more smoothly, they will work hard to provide. They will advise you about F and J visa requirements and assist you with cultural adjustment, employment matters, housing, or personal concerns. The Center itself offers meeting space to international student organizations, a kitchen, and lounges for recreational use.

Intensive English Studies

If you need to improve your English skills before beginning your academic career in the United States, Florida State's **Center for Intensive English Studies** (CIES) is the place for you. CIES is an English language school for serious students who want to improve their English skills. You will be given personalized instruction by highly qualified teachers in a safe, friendly environment. Please note that admission to and completion of the CIES program does not necessarily guarantee admission to the University as a degree-seeking student.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

The following section outlines the broad procedures, progressions, and policies. In this first section certain topics are covered summarily with links to more in-depth descriptions in other parts of the handbook.

RESPONSIBILITIES

During your time in the graduate program, it is important to understand what the responsibilities of each of the departmental stakeholders are. In this section we will outline the general responsibilities for you, your adviser and committee chair, and dissertation committee members. Please note that more information about the roles of dissertation committee members and students can be found in the section: Dissertation Process.

Student

Your primary obligation is the timely and satisfactory completion of your program requirements including research and/or course work. It is your responsibility to become familiar with program requirements, the [university calendar](#), and policies in the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and the [College of Fine Arts Student Handbook](#).

You are responsible for maintaining contact with advisers, instructors, and committee members in order to keep them updated on your progress through courses and the program. You are responsible for meeting deadlines and providing quality academic products for evaluation in both your coursework and dissertation work.

As a graduate student in the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy, you have the right to regular contact with advisers and/or committee members throughout your program. In the event of an extended leave for your primary supervisor, you have the right to an alternate adviser. In order to facilitate the timely completion of program requirements, you also have the right to timely feedback (within approximately one month) on all academic work presented for evaluation. If you feel that your rights and obligations as a student have been violated, please see the grievances and appeals section of this handbook.

The university has outlined the following rights and responsibilities in the graduate student handbook:

A responsible student recognizes that freedom means the acknowledgment of responsibility to the following: to justice and public order; to fellow students' rights and interests; to the University, its rules, regulations, and accepted traditions; to parents, teachers, and all others whose support makes one's advanced education possible; to city, state, and national laws; to oneself; and to the opportunity for specialized training and continuing education toward the ends of personal fulfillment and social service. Students are urged to use their freedom in the University community to develop habits of responsibility that lead to the achievement of these personal and social values. Responsible student behavior requires observance of the Student Conduct Code, which is based on respect for the dignity and worth of each person and the requirements for successful community life. (from the FSU graduate student handbook)

Adviser

An essential part of a student's experience in the doctoral program is their relationship with the advising and supervising faculty. When you enter the program, you are assigned a faculty adviser who is generally the director of the program in which you are enrolled. The faculty adviser/program director will assist you with the following both initially and throughout the program. Once a student selects a major professor (i.e., the dissertation committee chair), this person will become their adviser.

- Orientation to the program
- Review of the policies and procedures of the program
- Mapping out the plan of study
- Identifying beginning and emerging educational goals, research interests, and areas of specialization
- Tracking and evaluating student progress through the program
- Selection of electives
- Guiding the selection of dissertation supervisor
- Fulfillment of graduation requirements and documentation

Major Professor (Committee Chair)

During the second or third semester, students will finalize the selection of a major professor from the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy, to direct the dissertation and assume further advising responsibilities. The major professor must be a member of the graduate faculty with graduate faculty status and have special competence in your proposed concentration. For more information about establishing your committee, please see the Dissertation Process section of the handbook.

Dissertation Committee

You and the major professor will organize a supervisory committee consisting of a minimum of four faculty members with graduate faculty status. One committee member will serve as the University Representative; this member must be from a different department and have tenure (ie, be either Associate Professor or Professor) and graduate faculty status. For more information about establishing your committee, please see the Dissertation Process section of the handbook.

EXPECTATIONS, PROCEDURES & REQUIREMENTS

Below is a list of expectations and requirements for new doctoral students to be aware of.

Academic Integrity

The Academic Honor Policy is an integral part of the FSU academic environment. The policy is fully described in the University's [Graduate Student Handbook](#), which outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process.

New students are introduced to the Academic Honor Policy at Orientation and pledge to uphold it at New Student Convocation. In surveys, students have indicated that the strength of an individual instructor's message about the importance of academic integrity is the strongest deterrent to violating the Academic Honor Policy. Thus, instructors should remind students of their obligations under the policy and fully communicate their expectations to students. If an

instructor encounters academic dishonesty, they should follow the procedures to resolve the alleged violation in a timely manner while protecting the personal and your educational rights as a student.

Please review the full academic honor policy on the [Office of Faculty Development and Advancement website](#). In addition to this policy, you will be required to complete the academic integrity training hosted by the department in the first full month of your first semester. The dates of this training will be communicated during student orientation.

Time Requirements

The doctoral process usually takes 2 years of coursework, followed by 2-3 years of research and must include a minimum of 36 hours of coursework (30 hours for students admitted prior to Fall 2025) and a minimum of 24 hours of dissertation credit. FSU requires that all requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within 5 calendar years from the time you pass the preliminary examination. If the 5 year window is exceeded, you must seek an extension using the Extension of Time Request from the Graduate School's website.

Academic Achievement & Grades

FSU requires that you maintain a 3.0 cumulative average; failure to do so results in a termination of studies. In addition to this requirement, any grade of a C or lower can result in you being asked to retake the course by your adviser or chair.

Success in a doctoral program is based on your ability to conceptualize and produce a doctoral dissertation. This is not a traditional graded assignment and therefore, it is recommended that you strive, in the first years of your program, to distance yourself from relying on solely graded feedback mechanisms as a validation of your work. While it is necessary to produce a letter grade for your classes, the emphasis of your courses is on developing broad empirical, theoretical, and methodological knowledge along with a very high competency in scholarly, academic writing. Working consistently at this level should produce an 'A' grade, but more importantly it should ensure your success in the future development of your research and output.

Incomplete Policy

Incomplete ("I") grades will only be recorded in exceptional cases if the student has completed a substantial portion of the course, is otherwise passing, but is unable to complete a well-defined portion of the course for reasons beyond their control. If the student finds themselves in these circumstances, they must petition the instructor and be prepared to present documentation that substantiates their case. Incomplete grades will not be granted to allow the student to do extra coursework in an effort to increase their grade. All incomplete grades will need to be documented using the incomplete form. For a comprehensive overview of policies related to Incomplete Grades and access to the form, please consult the [Grade Services](#) page from the University Registrar.

Minimum Enrollment

A student who has completed the required coursework, passed the preliminary examination and submitted an [Admission to Candidacy Form](#) and continues to use campus facilities and/or receives faculty supervision, but has not been cleared by [Manuscript Clearance](#) shall include in the required full time load **a minimum of two credit hours of dissertation per semester until completion of the degree**. Before registering for dissertation hours, you must consult the major professor as to the proportion of time to be devoted to dissertation work. If a student does not maintain minimum enrollment, after two consecutive semesters they will be removed from the university as active students and will have to re-apply to the program in order to continue.

Failure to Meet Expectations

Doctoral students have several benchmarks to pass as they progress toward a degree. Failure to meet these benchmarks may result in removal from the program. Prior to removal, a student may be provided a [remediation plan](#) that outlines criteria that a student needs to meet in order to continue in the program. While each student scenario can be quite different, the following is a brief outline about what may occur if a student encounters an obstacle:

COURSEWORK

Each student must work directly with the instructor regarding the adequate completion of coursework. Doctoral students must receive a C+ or higher in their non-elective coursework, or they will be required to retake the course.

DIAGNOSTIC EXAM

This exam is an individual assignment that is evaluated by departmental faculty members. Failure to pass the exam can result in a request for either a partial or total reexamination. Under certain circumstances, failure to pass the reexamination will prompt the development of a [remediation plan](#), which will establish requirements a student must meet in order to continue in the program. Failure to pass the exam can lead to the dismissal of a student from the program (see Dismissal Procedures).

PRELIMINARY EXAM

Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy a maximum of two times. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the degree program.

RESEARCH INTEREST PAPER, PROSPECTUS, DISSERTATION DEFENSE

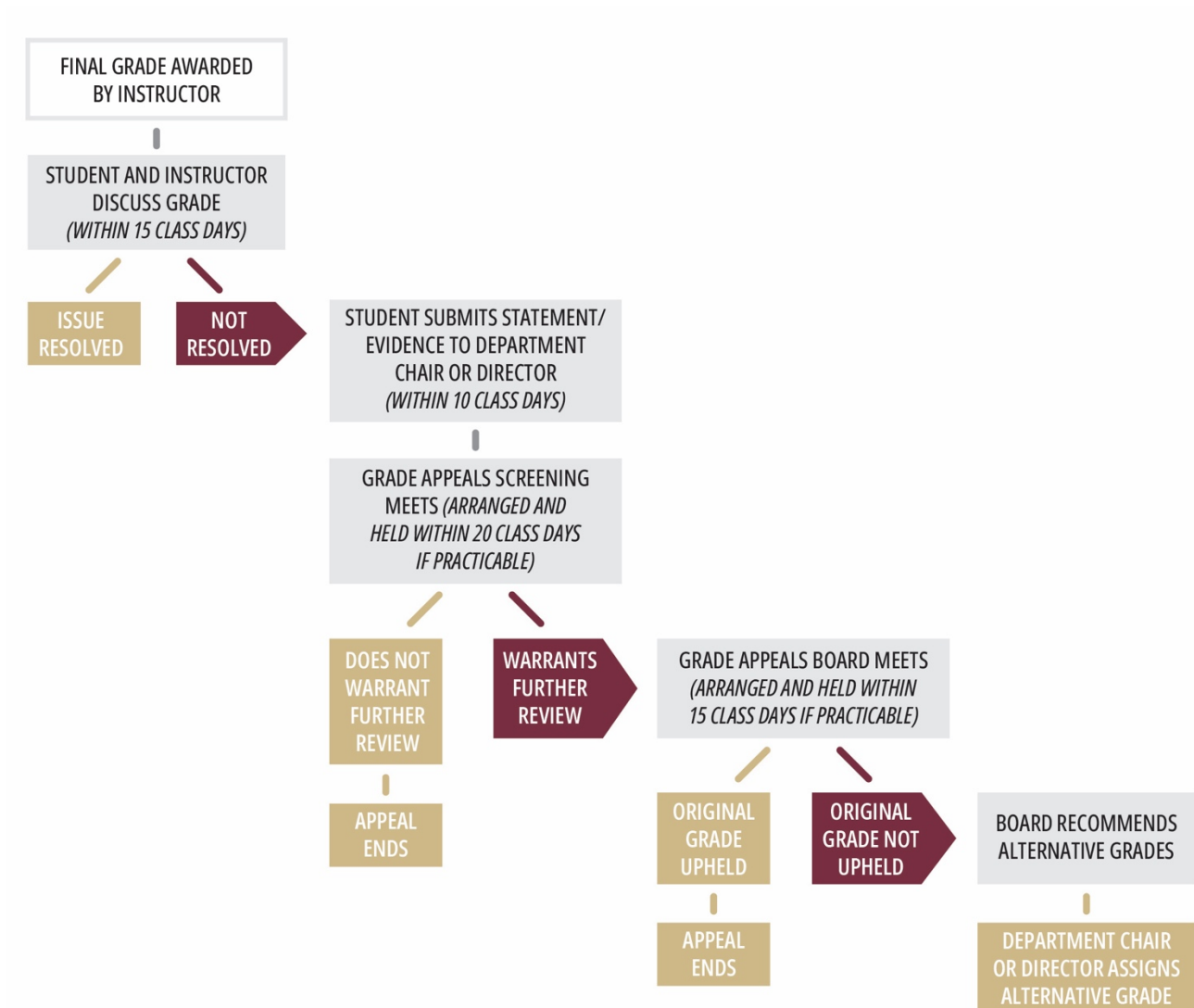
To schedule committee meetings or submit work to the Manuscript Clearance Portal to move forward on the dissertation, a student must receive clearance from the major professor. If a student perceives that they are stalled and not able to take their work to committee, they should address this with their chair or initiate a grievance (see Grievance & Appeals). If a committee meeting does not result in an exam/defense pass, a student can expect to receive guidelines provided by the major professor outlining expectations on how to improve the document. Failure to pass an exam/defense a second time will lead to the development of a [remediation plan](#) provided by the major professor. After a second fail, however, the major professor may initiate a discussion about a student's ability to finish the degree.

GRIEVANCES & APPEALS

Grade Appeal Process

The purpose of the grade appeals system is to afford an opportunity for a student to appeal a final course grade under certain circumstances. Faculty judgment of students' academic performance is inherent in the grading process and hence will not be overturned except when you can show that the grade awarded represents a gross violation of the instructor's own specified evaluation (grading) statement and therefore was awarded in an arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory manner. The evaluation (grading) statement used during the grade appeals process is the one in your instructor's syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

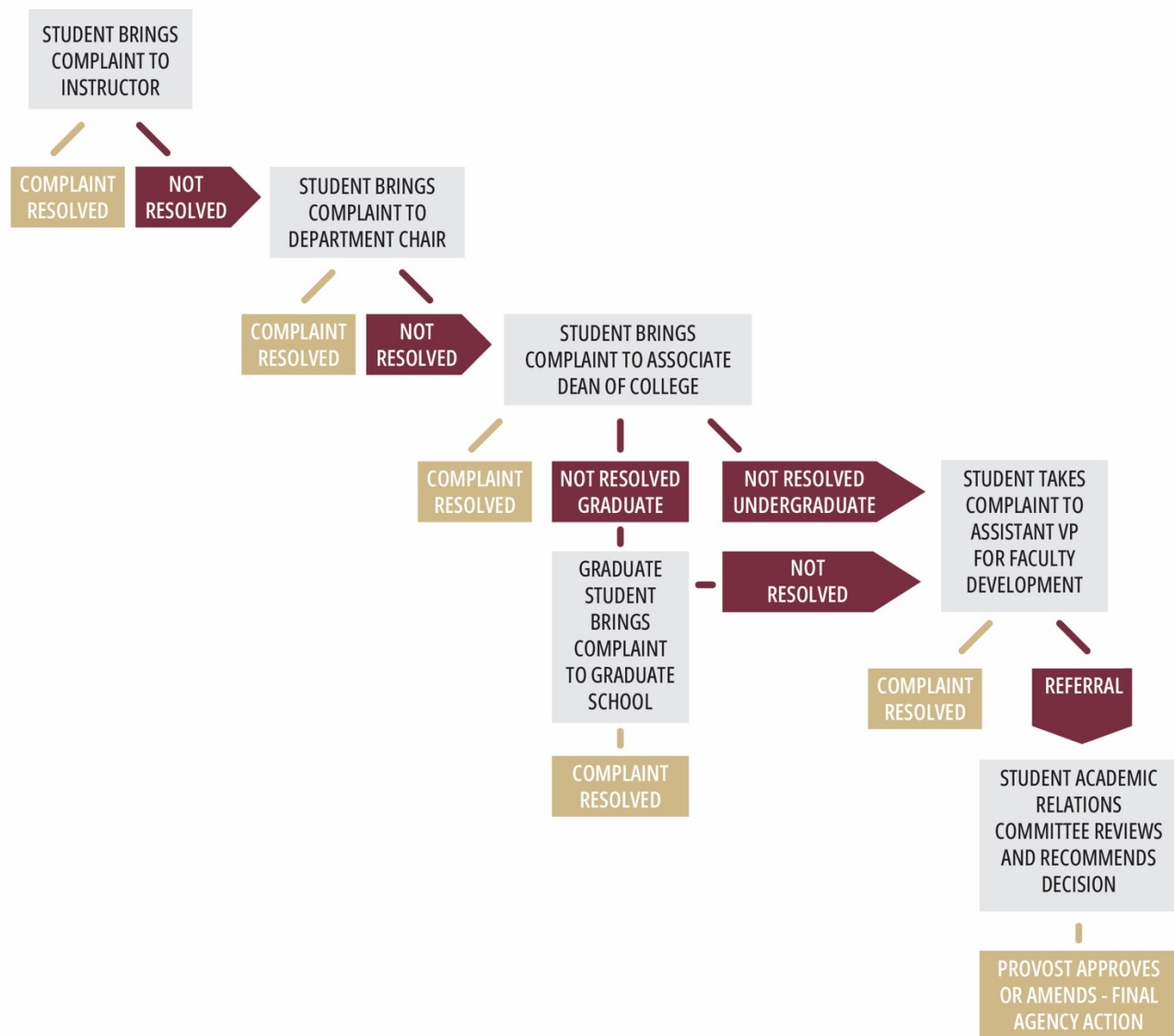
For instructions on the process, please review the "Grade Appeals Flowchart" document.



Academic Grievances Process

Students who allege that academic regulations and procedures have been improperly applied in specific instances may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process. In this process, you bring a complaint first to the instructor, then to the department chair, and finally to the academic dean appropriate to the course involved, stopping at the level at which the complaint is resolved. If no resolution is reached, you may bring the complaint to the attention of the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement for either resolution or referral to the Student Academic Relations Committee of the Faculty Senate. A graduate student whose complaint is unresolved must see the Dean of the Graduate School prior to meeting with the Vice President for Faculty Development and Advancement.

Please see the chart below for details of this process:



POLICY FOR DISMISSAL OF A GRADUATE STUDENT FOR REASONS OTHER THAN GPA

The University reserves the right to dismiss graduate students and terminate their enrollment in an academic program based on a number of different criteria, beyond that of GPA alone. Oversight is provided by The Graduate School, Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, and Office of the Registrar. Additional details on the steps involved in the process are available for faculty and administrators from the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement and for graduate students at the Graduate School.

Dismissed students will not be permitted to register for further graduate study, including registering as non-degree students, in the degree program or college from which they had enrollment terminated.

Graduate students who have been dismissed from one degree program may seek admission to another degree program but will not be readmitted or allowed to add the dismissed degree program back as a second major or degree. This includes seeking admission into a different degree program that shares a joint pathway with the dismissed degree program.

Program terminations (dismissal for a reason other than GPA) are generally identified by the faculty with support from the Department Chair (or unit head) in the department/unit or single-unit college level and may occur for a number of different reasons.

As specified by university policy, Graduate policy, or within the unit's Graduate Student handbook, reasons may include but are not limited to:

- Inability to conduct independent research in a fashion appropriate with the accepted norms of a discipline.
- Inability to function within a team environment to the extent that it negatively affects the learning, practice and/or research of fellow graduate students.
- Behavior that does not meet the professional standards of a discipline (typically clinical, social work or school settings, but also including Motion Picture Arts, internship work, etc.).
- Failure to meet artistic or creative performance standards.
- Failure to be approved for an Extension of Time (EOT).
- Failure to complete important degree milestone requirements within a reasonable period of time.
- Inability to pass the doctoral diagnostic exam, preliminary exam for admission to candidacy, etc.
- Failure to complete the doctoral degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their treatise or dissertation.
- Failure to complete the master's degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their thesis, or the production of their thesis-equivalent creative project.

In addition, please note that suspension or expulsion from the university may result if a student is found responsible in a formal Academic Honor Policy (AHP) hearing for an egregious AHP violation, or as an outcome from a Student Conduct Code charge for which a student is found responsible.

Graduate program handbooks must provide information about failure to meet specific milestone or behavioral requirements. Students who are dismissed for reasons other than grades may follow the General Academic Appeals Process if they have evidence that academic regulations and procedures have been improperly applied.

PROCEDURES FOR DISMISSAL OF A GRADUATE STUDENT FOR REASONS OTHER THAN GPA

Category 1

Failure to make Adequate Progress in the Academic Degree Program and/or Failure to Meet the Professional Standards of the Discipline

This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Inability to conduct independent research in a fashion appropriate with the accepted norms of a discipline.
- Inability to function within a team environment to the extent that it negatively affects the learning, practice and/or research of fellow graduate students and/or the faculty PI.
- Behavior that does not meet the professional standards of a discipline (e.g., clinical, social work or school settings, but also including Motion Picture Arts, internship work, etc.).
- Failure to meet artistic or creative performance standards.
- Failure to complete important degree milestone requirements within a reasonable period of time.
- Failure to complete the doctoral degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their treatise or dissertation.
- Failure to complete the master's degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their thesis.

Category 2

Failure to Meet University or Program Requirements for Continuation in the Academic Degree Program

This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Inability to pass the doctoral diagnostic exam, preliminary exam for admission to candidacy, etc.
- Failure to pass the comprehensive examination, if required by a program for the master's or specialist degree.
- Failure to pass the defense of the thesis, treatise, or dissertation.
- Failure to meet the time limit completion requirement for the master's, specialist, or doctoral degree.
- Failure to be approved for an Extension of Time (EOT).
- At a minimum, except for situations in which a serious violation of established behavioral, academic, or professional expectations has occurred in the academic degree program, the following steps must be addressed.

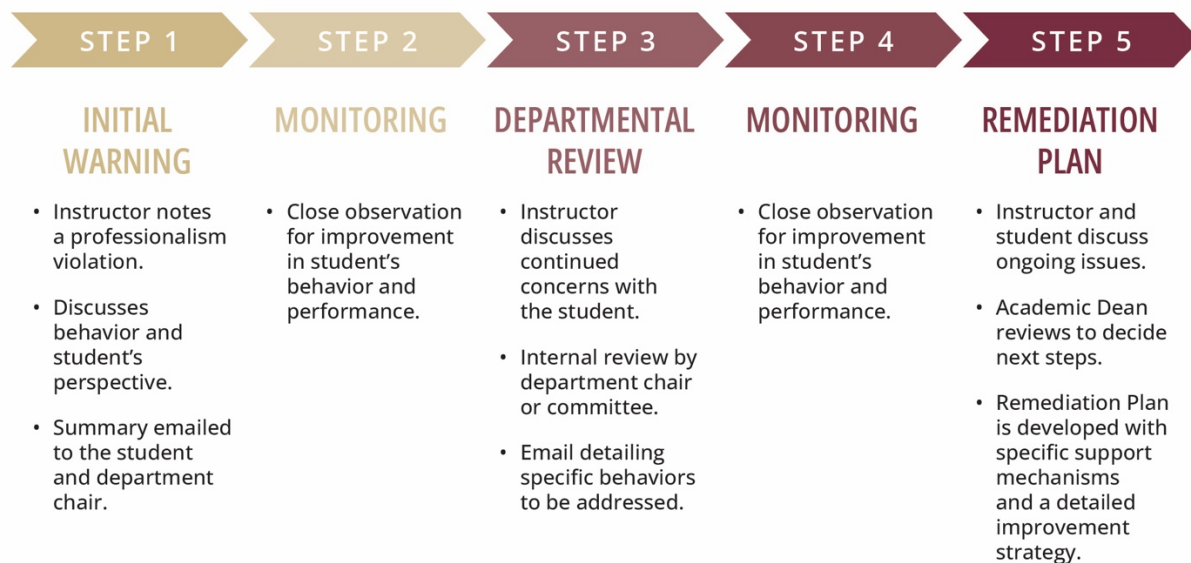
STEPS FOR DISMISSAL OF A GRADUATE STUDENT FOR REASONS OTHER THAN GPA

Step 1: Identification

A graduate student is identified by the faculty or unit leadership in their academic program, department, or single-unit college as:

1. Category 1: Failing to make adequate progress in the academic degree program and/or failing to meet the professional standards of the discipline.
 - a. Proceed to Step 2.
2. Category 2: Failing to meet university or program requirements for continuation in the academic degree program.
 - a. Skip Step 2. Proceed to Step 3.

Figure: From Identification to Remediation



Step 2: Remediation Plan

If the reason for the dismissal of the graduate student falls into Category 1 (see above), then the graduate student must meet with their major professor/faculty adviser and Department Chair to develop a detailed remediation plan for improvement.

- The unit should provide a written remediation plan and/or written academic communication to the graduate student containing specific information about improvement(s) needed to avoid dismissal.
- The remediation plan and/or academic communication should be developed by the major professor/faculty adviser and Department Chair for the individual graduate student and be shared with the graduate student in writing. For doctoral students, the annual evaluation is one opportunity to document unsatisfactory progress, yet a special review may be conducted at any time.

- **NOTE:** The remediation plan should include a reasonable timeline for the graduate student to meet the goals and objectives of the remediation plan. The length of time for remediation is dependent on the situation and is up to the program to decide and justify.
- The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (or designated equivalent individual in the Dean's Office) must be notified of the situation, the deficiencies, and the remediation plan prior to communication with the graduate student.

*If the reason for the dismissal of the graduate student falls into Category 2 (see above), then the Department Chair can move directly to Step 3 (see below).

Step 3: Consultation

This step involves Consultation with the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement to Discuss Potential Program Dismissal.

If the graduate student fails to resolve/remediate the specified and documented deficiency within a reasonable timeframe, as noted in Step 2 (see above), or falls into Category 2, then the department or single-unit college may initiate a program dismissal. If the program chooses to terminate the academic progress of the graduate student, then the following steps must be completed prior to notifying the graduate student of the termination and sending the graduate student a dismissal letter.

- The Department Chair must first consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs of the college regarding their intent to dismiss. The discussion should include the unit's graduate handbook language, the remediation steps taken (if Category 1), the graduate student's efforts to date to resolve or address the deficiencies, and the grounds for the program termination.
- The Associate Academic Dean for Academic Affairs (Dr. Sara Scott Shields, skshields@fsu.edu) should contact the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement (Dr. Amy Guerette, aguerette@fsu.edu) and set up a consultation to discuss the program's intention to move forward with the dismissal (for reasons other than GPA) of a graduate student from a degree program.
- At a minimum, the dismissal letter must specify the following information.
 - The process followed to notify the graduate student of their deficiencies and the opportunity and guidance that was provided to allow them an opportunity to rectify those deficiencies.
 - The termination reasons.
 - Benchmarks missed.
 - The fact that dismissal from the degree program constitutes dismissal from the University (unless formally admitted to another graduate degree program prior to dismissal).
 - Clear information about the method and timing of the graduate student's separation from the degree program and University.
 - An academic hold will be placed on registration to prevent future registration. Any future registration will be cancelled.
 - If applicable, outline possible alternatives offered and agreed upon by the graduate student, e.g., conferral of a lower-degree level (see Step 3D below).

- Timeline to complete specific coursework for the given semester, if any. For example, the letter needs to clearly articulate to the graduate student that the courses in which they are currently enrolled need to be completed by the dismissal date in order to earn credit for them.
- Notification of the right to appeal and information about how to do so, and
- A deadline for any appeal submittal to the Associate Academic Dean for Academic Affairs. *See “[General Academic Appeals Process](#)” for more information.

During the consultation with the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement and/or writing of the dismissal letter, there can be a discussion about the possibility of providing the graduate student with alternative opportunities. This is **not required**, and it is at the unit’s discretion to offer.

Under certain extenuating circumstances during the dismissal process of a graduate student, the Department Chair, or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may offer the graduate student with the opportunity to change their degree program type or level **within** the same degree program (i.e., MA to MS, MFA to MS, PhD to EdS, PhD to MA/MS, etc.). The student must accept a conferral of an alternate degree or degree level.

Prior to considering and offering this opportunity to the graduate student, the Department Chair, or Associate Dean for Academic Affairs **must** first evaluate the following:

1. Whether the graduate student already possesses the lower level of the degree, as the University prohibits the awarding of more than one degree from the same CIP Code. *There can be no appeal to this requirement.
2. The Department Chair must clearly explain to the graduate student in writing that if the lower level of the degree is awarded, then:
 - a. The graduate student can facilitate a Change of Major Request into a different degree program (if accepted by the other program).
 - b. All coursework leading up to that degree is considered final and credits used towards the alternate degree cannot be used towards a future graduate degree.

Step 4: Approval of Dismissal Letter

Once the dismissal letter has been written and finalized by the Department Chair and reviewed and approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, it should be sent for final approval to the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement (Dr. Amy Guerette, aguerette@fsu.edu).

Step 5: Sending the Dismissal Letter

After final approval has been granted from the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, the written dismissal letter must be sent to the graduate student who is being dismissed, as well as several offices for record-keeping.

The dismissal letter must be sent from the Department Chair to the graduate student. The following individuals must be copied (i.e., cc:ed) on the dismissal letter:

- Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (Dr. Sara Scott Shields, skshields@fsu.edu)
- Office of Faculty Development and Advancement (Dr. Amy Guerette, aguerette@fsu.edu)
- Office of the University Registrar (Dr. Kimberly Barber, kabarber@fsu.edu),
- The Graduate School (Mr. James Beck, jbeck@fsu.edu)

CURRICULUM

PLAN OF STUDY- STUDENTS ADMITTED SPRING 2025 OR EARLIER

Curricular Table

CORE REQUIRED STUDIES	
DOCTORAL SEMINARS	9 CREDITS (TOTAL)
ARE 6380 Teaching and Learning	3 Credits
ARE 6931 Social Foundations	3 Credits
ARE 6937 Philosophical Structures	3 Credits
RESEARCH METHODS REQUIREMENTS	15-16 CREDITS (TOTAL)
ARE 5745 Research Survey	3 Credits
Research Electives (3)	9 Credits
Statistics/Descriptive Research	3-4 Credits
DOCTORAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK	
ELECTIVE COURSES RELATED TO DISSERTATION TOPIC	6 CREDITS (TOTAL)
<i>Elective expectations will vary dependent on research focus</i>	
<i>Electives may include research methodology or content courses</i>	
REQUIRED EXAMS	
ARE 8964r Preliminary Doctoral Examination	0 Credits
ARE 8967 Diagnostic Exam	0 Credits
TOTAL TO ACHIEVE CANDIDACY STATUS	30 CREDITS
CULMINATING PROJECT	
ARE 6980 Dissertation	24 Credits
ARE 8985r Dissertation Defense	0 Credits
TOTAL DISSERTATION	24 CREDITS

PLAN OF STUDY- STUDENTS ADMITTED FALL 2025 OR LATER

Curricular Table

CORE REQUIRED STUDIES	
DOCTORAL SEMINARS	9 CREDITS (TOTAL)
ARE 6380 Teaching and Learning	3 Credits
ARE 6931 Social Foundations	3 Credits
ARE 6937 Philosophical Structures	3 Credits
RESEARCH METHODS REQUIREMENTS	15-16 CREDITS (TOTAL)
ARE 5745 Research Survey	3 Credits
ARE 5781 Qualitative Research Traditions	3 Credits
Research Electives (2)	6 Credits
Statistics/Descriptive Research	3-4 Credits
DOCTORAL ELECTIVE COURSEWORK	
ELECTIVE COURSES RELATED TO DISSERTATION TOPIC	12 CREDITS (TOTAL)
<i>Elective expectations will vary dependent on research focus</i>	
<i>Electives may include research methodology or content courses</i>	
REQUIRED EXAMS	
ARE 8964r Preliminary Doctoral Examination	0 Credits
ARE 8967 Diagnostic Exam	0 Credits
CULMINATING PROJECT	
ARE 6980 Dissertation	24 Credits
ARE 8985r Dissertation Defense	0 Credits

CORE CURRICULUM

Doctoral Seminars

All doctoral students in the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy must include in their programs of study:

- ARE 6380 Doctoral Seminar Teaching and Learning
- ARE 6931 Doctoral Seminar Social Foundations
- ARE 6937 Doctoral Seminar Philosophical Structures

Required Research Methods

All doctoral students in the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy must include in their programs of study:

- ARE 5745 Research Survey
- ARE 5781 Qualitative Research Traditions
- One quantitative methods class

For quantitative options, the recommended statistics course is:

- EDF 5400 Descriptive and Inferential Statistics

Quantitative research courses that substitute the statistics course may include:

- MUS 5722 Descriptive Research
- ARE 5786 Survey Research and Descriptive Statistics in the Arts

Research Methods Electives

In addition to the required research methods courses, students will complete the 15-hour requirement by choosing two electives. Selection of the research methods electives will require approval from your adviser.

Research electives offered in the department include, but are not limited to the following:

- ARE 5780 The Theory and Practice of Arts Based Research
- ARE 5785 Introduction to Applied Research
- ARE 5786 Survey Research in the Arts
- ARE 5257 Visitor Studies
- ARE 5xxx Narrative Inquiry

ELECTIVES

Aligned with your plan of study and learning objectives, coursework can be pursued within and outside the department, in related areas including curriculum, philosophy, psychology, history, administration, assessment, and others. Please note that for some majors of the Ph.D., the elective courses will be used to fulfill of major-specific course requirements. Students should plan this portion of their programs with their faculty adviser. You are also encouraged to search for courses on your own as you collaborate with your adviser (all qualifying courses will be listed at the 5000 level or higher). Prior to enrolling in a course outside the department, you should consult with your adviser. Advisers may recommend additional courses for fulfillment of electives or research methods.

Students can browse departmental course listings, or identify courses in other departments, using the [Graduate Bulletin](#).

DIRECTED INDIVIDUAL STUDY (DIS)

In some cases, DIS courses can be developed in consultation with your adviser or major professor, these classes can often fill the gaps in content if a course is not offered in the university.

To enroll in **ARE 6905. Directed Individual Study (1-3)**, you must request permission from the instructor you will work with. Once granted, you can use the **DIS Enrollment Form** to initiate the enrollment process. The form will prompt you to create a name for the course, identify calendar benchmarks, and describe the expectations for the DIS with sufficient detail to allow an instructor to grade the effort at the end of the semester.

NOTE: students are allowed to include a MAXIMUM of 6 hours of DIS on their official transcript.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATES

Graduate certificates, ranging from 12 to 21 credit hours, are designed to allow students to take courses in an area of specialization, enhancing their academic and professional experience. College credit certificates are not intended as a degree, but as a supplement to a student's specific educational goals or professional career preparation and shall be noted on a student's transcript as an official credential of the university. All graduate certificate program students must have achieved a cumulative 3.0 (B) grade point average in all graduate certificate courses attempted in order for the graduate certificate to be granted.

Students may work towards a graduate certificate in addition to pursuing their doctoral degree. In some programs, certificate program course credit can be applied toward the doctoral degree.

Students should contact the respective department/unit for more information regarding admissions and general graduate certificate program requirements. Students must apply to the certificate program before taking the second course that will count toward this certificate.

A full list of graduate certificate programs can be found here: <https://gradschool.fsu.edu/academics-research/graduate-certificate-programs>.

The following certificates are commonly of interest to students in our department:

Museum Education and Visitor-Centered Curation

This certificate is housed within the Department of Arts Leadership, Education & Therapy. Doctoral students completing degrees in art education, arts administration, or art therapy, may find this graduate certificate program complements their course of study and provides support and specialization for those interested in working with museums.

<https://artsleadership.fsu.edu/programs/museum-education-visitor-center-curation-graduate-certificate/>

Preparing Future Faculty, the Graduate School

The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) Program assists Florida State's doctoral students (and others headed toward academic careers) prepare for future faculty work. Through participation in coursework, workshops/seminars, trainings, and mentoring, PFF Fellows increase their awareness of expectations for faculty performance and of resources available to aid in scholarly careers, and build their readiness to address research, teaching and related demands of faculty life. Goals include enhancing the placement of FSU students in university positions and supporting the finest scholarly accomplishments of FSU's graduates in their future careers. The PFF Graduate Certificate Program is an academic certificate program that is offered by The Graduate School and requires 12 graduate credit hours.

<https://gradschool.fsu.edu/degrees-and-programs/preparing-future-faculty-pff>

Program Evaluation, Anne's College

The Program Evaluation graduate certificate provides students a set of interdisciplinary competencies to design, implement, and critique evaluation research. The program

content also helps evaluators, policy analysts, health and social service administrators, and program managers in their careers. The structure of the certificate coursework is based on the 2018 American Evaluation Association (AEA) Evaluator Competencies. During the program, you'll gain a range of knowledge, skills, and dispositions important for conducting evaluations in different practice settings.

<https://annescollege.fsu.edu/program-evaluation>

Civic and Nonprofit Leadership, College of Social Sciences and Public Policy

Designed primarily for students who already hold or wish to assume nonprofit leadership roles. It will also be of interest to students in government agencies or private businesses that deal extensively with nonprofits. The nonprofit certificate emphasizes the distinctive features of nonprofit organizations and provides management skills and knowledge that are helpful, specifically for civic and nonprofit leaders.

<https://cosspp.fsu.edu/academics/graduate-certificate-programs/>

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

In graduate programs, assessments beyond coursework serve as critical benchmarks to evaluate student progress and readiness for advanced academic challenges. These activities, including Diagnostic and Preliminary exams, as well as Annual reviews, provide structured opportunities to assess professional conduct, research acumen, and scholarly growth. The Diagnostic Exam typically gauges foundational knowledge upon entering the program, while the Preliminary Exam evaluates readiness for dissertation research and mastery of the field. The Annual Review, conducted each spring, offers a comprehensive evaluation of progress, focusing on academic achievements, professional development, scholarly dispositions, and adherence to timelines. These assessments are integral to ensuring students meet program expectations and achieve their academic and professional goals.

EXAMS

Diagnostic Exam

Students will register for the diagnostic exam (ARE8967) during their second full semester in the doctoral program. This exam introduces you to and evaluates you on your ability to analyze and synthesize information, to demonstrate critical thinking, and to write clearly and logically. In addition, the faculty use this exam to assess your depth of knowledge in your field, your awareness of the main issues in your field, and your familiarity with the current and past research/literature. This mandatory examination is primarily used to assess your current academic standing and aptitudes, while evaluating areas for improvement.

This exam is completed in addition to a student's coursework. A faculty member will be assigned to the diagnostic exam course and will be available to answer any questions students may have regarding this assignment. All department faculty will evaluate your examination. Your faculty adviser/program director will notify you of the results. The results are used to guide the selection of further coursework for you. The grade scale includes pass or fail. If you fail to meet expectations on your diagnostic examination, a remediation plan will be drafted and you will need to retake the course in the following semester.

Failure to meet expectations on the Diagnostic exam: Failure to pass the exam can result in a request for either a partial or total reexamination. Under certain circumstances, failure to pass the reexamination will prompt the development of a remediation plan establishing requirements a student must meet in order to continue in the program. Failure to pass the exam time may lead to the dismissal of a student from the program.

Preliminary Exam

The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student's subsequent formal or informal study. Prior to the examination, the student's examining committee will determine whether the student 1) has a 3.0 average, and 2) has progressed sufficiently in the study of the discipline and its research tools to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this exam is to determine whether or not you:

- have mastered program content acquired through course work and individual reading,
- can apply this knowledge in a complex, creative, and orderly manner,
- use theory and research to support statements,
- present ideas effectively in writing and speaking
- can move on to the dissertation portion of your doctoral program (ie, candidacy)

FORMAT

The examination consists of a written and an oral component.

The written examination consists of 4 questions and is completed during a 30-day period. You are responsible for distributing the entire exam to your committee chair and members at the completion of your 30-day window. If English is your second language, please consult with your major professor for additional time to correct grammar, spelling, and sentence structure (but not academic content) of your exam after submitting a completed draft during the 30 day period. Please plan to distribute this exam in whatever format is convenient for your committee members (paper or digital). These copies will need to be distributed in a timely manner that meets the time expectations of the exam. Once submitted, the written exams are then read and evaluated by your committee members.

The oral defense takes place a minimum of two weeks after the finalization of the written component. While committee members are reviewing the exams, you and your adviser can work with your committee to plan an oral defense meeting. For the oral exam, you will be questioned on aspects of the written exam that warrant further explanation. In addition, you will be evaluated on your ability to communicate pertinent information in an effective manner. This meeting, like others, is meant to provide you with constructive feedback on your writing, research, and course progression.

An extra member may be appointed to the examining committee at the discretion of the Academic Dean, Dean of Graduate Studies, or on recommendation of the major professor. The Department Chair, the Academic Dean, the Dean of Graduate Studies, or other faculty may attend the oral exam as non-voting members. After the examination, the examining committee (major professor) submits a report communicating the exam outcome to the academic dean: Pass, fail, additional work to be completed, or to be reexamined.

SCHEDULING

You will need to register for the preliminary exam course, ARE8964, in the semester in which you plan to defend the exam. The preliminary examination is administered at or near the completion of course work (preliminary examinations will not normally be given during the summer). It typically follows the completion of the program of studies and the first committee meeting. You should discuss with your major professor to determine the timing of this exam.

EVALUATION

The examining committee will report the outcome of the examination to the academic dean: passed, failed, additional work to be completed, or to be re-examined; the report following the reexamination must indicate the student either passed or failed. Students can expect to receive guidelines provided by the major professor outlining expectations on how to improve their response if additional work, reexamination, or a second attempt is requested. The results of the examination will be reported to the Office of the University Registrar for inclusion in the student's permanent record. [The exam rubric can be found HERE](#). The Academic Dean's office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt using the [Doctoral Preliminary Examination Form](#).

FAILURE TO MEET EXPECTATIONS ON THE PRELIMINARY EXAM AND DEFENSE

Students are allowed two attempts to pass the preliminary exam. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the degree program.

The second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy a "full class week" is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt, if necessary within the same semester, and must receive either a "pass" or a "fail" grade for each attempt. The Academic Dean's office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt using the [Doctoral Preliminary Examination Form](#).

Students who allege that academic regulations and/or procedures were improperly applied for the re-examination of their preliminary exam may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process.

ANNUAL REVIEW

Each spring, the faculty will conduct an annual review of your progress in the program. The [Annual Review Form](#) for this evaluation can be found in the appendix. Facilitated by your adviser (program director or major professor), the faculty will review professional conduct, responsibility, responsiveness to feedback, research and writing, scholarly activities, and timing of progress. Faculty will offer comments and recommendations, to be summarized by your adviser. Following the faculty review, you will meet with your adviser to go over the evaluation and plan any adjustments. If you fail to meet expectations during your annual review a remediation plan will be drafted.

DISSERTATION PROCESS

This section reviews the expectations for doctoral candidates, the committee chair (major professor) and the committee members. This section is meant to provide clarity about the dissertation process, so you are aware of each step in the progression. We recommend that you review this entire section prior to beginning the formal dissertation process and ask any clarifying questions as you begin to work towards the culminating event of your dissertation defense.

ROLES

Student Responsibilities

Doctoral students and candidates are expected to take an active and responsible role in the dissertation process from the start of the program. With guidance from the major professor, you will develop a topic and a schedule for your progress.

You should submit thoroughly proofread drafts, come prepared to meetings, follow all dissertation policies, and maintain regular, professional communication—primarily through email. Progress updates and any major life changes affecting dissertation work should be shared with the major professor. All formal communication and draft submissions must occur via email or the [manuscript clearance portal](#). If in-person meetings happen, the student must email a detailed summary and next steps to the major professor within 48 hours. Online meetings can be recorded and summarized.

Major Professor Responsibilities

The major professor, or “Chair,” will be selected based on topical knowledge or methodological expertise. The major professor is responsible for guiding the candidate to produce doctoral level, original scholarship in the proposed topic area. The major professor must be a member of the department faculty and hold graduate faculty status. In special circumstances, with approval, a Co-Chair arrangement may be appropriate for a particular dissertation. The Chair’s responsibilities include:

- Being familiar with current dissertation policies and procedures
- Advising you from the proposal through the final defense
- Guiding you in the selection of committee members
- Guiding you to set a realistic timeline for completion of the dissertation
- Setting expectations and assigning you a grade for dissertation hours each semester
- Guiding you toward achieving a high level of technical and ethical quality in your dissertation research
- Assisting you in developing a quality prospectus and navigating the prospectus defense and approval process
- Providing guidance on the research proposal structure, formatting, content and setting clear and reasonable expectations for timely completion
- Guiding you in the selection of methods/procedures for data collection and analysis*
- Assisting you in the dissertation proposal defense process
- Assisting you in navigating the IRB approval process
- Assisting you in data collection and analysis*
- Preparing you for the defense process

*If a separate Methodologist is assigned, the Chair may serve in a support role.

Committee Members Responsibilities

All members of your committee share responsibility for providing feedback to help you in producing a quality dissertation. Committee members are responsible for reading manuscripts within the agreed-upon minimum 2 or 4 week timeframe (see timeline discussion below), suggesting substantive editorial changes, and providing rationale for their support and critiques. Committee members who perceive major flaws that are likely to result in a candidate's unsuccessful defense should discuss these concerns with the candidate and major professor immediately. Committee members' responsibilities include:

- In cooperation with the Chair, advising the candidate from the proposal stage through the final defense of the dissertation
- Provide subject matter expertise as requested by Chair or candidate
- Reading drafts and providing meaningful feedback at each defense stage of the dissertation process (more frequent review of dissertation materials may occur within some committees)
- Guiding the candidate in the selection of methods/procedures for data collection and analysis**
- Assisting the candidate in data collection and analysis**
- Corresponding with the Chair and candidate as needed for clarification/resolution of methodological issues during the Dissertation process**
- ** A Methodologist (if the Chair is not performing both roles) should be selected who has expertise in the type of study the candidate is pursuing (quantitative, qualitative, mixed, historical).

DISSERTATION PROCESS: TIMELINE & STAGES

The following overview discusses each stage of the doctoral degree. You can find a detailed outline of this process in the department's Canvas site (for current students): [here](#).

Coursework

During your first 4 semesters (this may extend beyond 4 semesters based on individual progress), you will be expected to complete all the requisite coursework in the Ph.D. program. This process is meant to prepare you to begin drafting your research proposal and selecting your committee. As you begin your coursework, we advise you to make the most of the assignments by using them to work towards your first draft of your research proposal. For more information about coursework, see the curriculum section of this handbook.

Committee Selection

After the 2nd or 3rd semester in the program, you will begin to have an idea of the direction your research is taking. This is the time to review the faculty in the department and make a decision about who can serve as your major professor. When making this decision, consider 1) who best suits your needs as an evolving researcher, 2) the faculty member's preference for the [Dissertation Format](#) you are interested in, and 3) the faculty member's research interests and current publications. This will help you identify who can best facilitate your dissertation experience. The steps for selecting your committee are:

- You should request a formal meeting with your potential major professor. During this meeting you can review your research interest and express interest in their mentorship. Give the faculty member the opportunity to ask questions and offer them some time to think about this commitment.
- Once the faculty member has determined whether they will serve as your major professor, you will need to begin working on your dissertation proposal.

- While working on this proposal, you and your major professor can explore options for your full committee. While working with your chair to create your committee, it is important to consider your committee makeup. Some things to consider are committee members' preferences for dissertation formats, content knowledge, methodological expertise, and theoretical familiarity.
- Your full committee will need to include two additional faculty inside of the department and one faculty member outside of the department. This external faculty member is the University Representative. All of the committee members will need to have graduate faculty status and the University Representative must also be tenured, which is typically indicated by being an associate or full professor.
- You can complete the [Graduate Supervisory Committee Formation Form](#) once you have confirmed with all committee members.

Research Proposal Paper

A research proposal paper is a paper that outlines a preliminary topic and begins to explore a timeline for the dissertation. The goal for this proposal should be to provide a general sense of your research direction. For a sample research proposal outline see your dissertation chair.

This paper usually presents:

- a statement of problem
- the research question(s)
- the theoretical or conceptual framework
- a brief empirical literature review
- a justification of the study, which may refer to a gap in the literature
- methodological possibilities
- a timeline for completion
- the identification of the dissertation format (traditional or journal article style)

Once this paper is complete, your chair will approve the paper to be sent out to the dissertation committee in preparation for the program of studies meeting. The committee will need 2 weeks to review the research proposal before meeting for the program of studies meeting.

Program of Studies Meeting

The program of studies meeting is a meeting that has two goals:

- the first is to give the committee a chance to review your proposal and get a clear idea of your research plan
- the second is to review your [program of studies](#) and establish any need for additional courses or remediation.

This meeting is meant to be a productive session where students are given constructive feedback about their course progression and preliminary research ideas. It is important that you go into this meeting with the expectation of receiving feedback on your project, keeping an open mind and being receptive of feedback are critical at this stage in the process. During this meeting, your dissertation committee will also determine whether the student 1) has a 3.0 average, and 2) has progressed sufficiently in the study of the discipline and its research tools to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation. At the conclusion of the program of studies meeting, you will be invited to take your preliminary examination.

Dissertation Format

The dissertation can take one of two formats. The decision on which format to take will be made in conversation between the doctoral student and dissertation chair.

The available formats are:

1. Traditional format: A dissertation comprised of 6 basic chapters
2. Journal Article format: A dissertation comprised of 3 chapters, 2 publication ready manuscripts, and a conclusion

Please see [Dissertation Formats](#) for a description and outline of each format.

Preliminary Exam

The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student's subsequent formal or informal study. Upon passing the form, doctoral students become doctoral candidates and begin enrolling in dissertation hours.

For detailed information about the preliminary exam, please see the corresponding section of this handbook.

The examination, created by your dissertation committee, consists of a written and an oral component. The written examination consists of 4 questions and is completed during a 30-day period. You are responsible for distributing the entire exam to all committee members at the end of the examination period. The oral component must take place at least two weeks after the completion of the written component. At the oral defense, each committee member will complete an evaluation rubric (see Appendices) and together, the examining committee will report the outcome of the examination to the academic dean: passed, failed, additional work to be completed, or to be re-examined; the report following the reexamination must indicate the student either passed or failed. The results of the examination will be reported to the Office of the University Registrar for inclusion in the student's permanent record. Once the examination is passed, the major professor will also process the [Admission to Candidacy form](#).

NOTE: committee members will not normally meet during the summer for the oral component of the exam.

Admission to Candidacy

Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree. No student may register for dissertation hours prior to the point in the semester in which the preliminary examination was passed. An [Admission to Candidacy](#) form must be completed and filed in the Office of the University Registrar prior to registration for dissertation hours.

CONVERTING DIS TO DISSERTATION HOURS:

After completion of the admission to candidacy process, the student may retroactively add dissertation hours for that semester in which the preliminary examination was completed. *Retroactive changes are only permitted if the preliminary examination is passed by the end of the **seventh week** of the semester.*

Time Limitations

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five calendar years from the time the student passes the preliminary examination and is admitted to candidacy. If this time is exceeded, a student must complete an [Extension of Time](#) (EOT) request. If the student's major professor and/or department chair does not choose to approve an Extension of Time (EOT) then the student may no longer be enrolled in that program or at Florida State University.

Dissertation Hours

Doctoral candidates must complete a minimum of 24 dissertation hours. To determine the rate at which you complete these hours, you should work closely with your major professor to plan on your progress after you are admitted to candidacy.

Before registering for dissertation hours, the student must consult the major professor as to the proportion of time to be devoted to dissertation work. The number of hours listed will show the proportion of time to be devoted to the dissertation. The number of hours should not only reflect the effort of the student but should take into account the use of campus facilities/resources and faculty interaction/supervision.

To enroll, students will complete a contract for the dissertation hours reflecting the agreed upon commitment between faculty and students. This is completed with the form: [Doctoral Dissertation Hours - Enrollment](#). *When completing this form, please take into consideration that, as a general rule, faculty need a minimum of two to four weeks to provide feedback on writing, depending on the length of text under review.*

MINIMUM CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT POLICY:

Each semester, doctoral candidates must fulfill FSU's minimum enrollment policy by enrolling in at least two credit hours of ARE 6980 Dissertation Hours. If a student does not enroll for two consecutive semesters they will be removed as active students from FSU. To continue in the program, students will need to re-apply through the admission portal.

Prospectus

The dissertation prospectus builds on the proposal by helping you organize, delineate, and make decisions regarding your dissertation and research approach. The prospectus serves as a committee agreed-upon plan for developing the proposal and finalizes the structure of the dissertation research project.

The prospectus is made up of the first three chapters of your dissertation. The prospectus establishes the rationale for conducting the study (chapter 1), includes a review and analysis of the relevant literature (chapter 2), describes the design and methodology (chapter 3) that will be used for the study, and gives an updated proposed timeline for completing the study. (As you complete your timeline you should plan ahead by looking at the [graduate school's manuscript clearance calendar](#) for submitting dissertations, so that your final semesters are in sync with university guidelines). For students who will pursue the journal article dissertation format, the prospectus will also include an organizing framework for the 2 articles.

NOTE: In consultation with your major professor, you may find ways to tailor the prospectus to align with your career goals. This may include substituting some or all of the prospectus for a significant grant proposal (EG - IMLS, NEA, NEH, NIH grant or similar). Any changes to the prospectus model should be made in conversation with the Chair and approved by the committee.

You will work with your dissertation chair to develop the prospectus, consulting the [university-approved dissertation checklist](#) for specific guidance on the structure and organization of the dissertation. It is strongly recommended that you use the [templates](#) provided by the university to help you early in the writing process. When ready, the prospectus will be reviewed and approved by the committee chair, then it can be sent out to the full committee for review and a prospectus meeting can be arranged. The committee will need 2 weeks to review the prospectus before being asked to meet for the prospectus meeting.

Once your prospectus has been approved and the [rubric of prospectus defense](#) is completed, you will be cleared to seek IRB approval and once approval has been received, you can begin conducting your research.

IRB Approval

After the prospectus has received final approval, following the prospectus meeting, students may submit their formal application to collect data directly to FSU's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please note, no data may be collected until IRB approval is granted. Special consideration for seeking early IRB approval must be approved by your committee chair, members and department chair. FSU's IRB committee reviews each study conducted by FSU students to determine if the anticipated benefits of the study outweigh the risks associated with participation in it. While developing your proposal, you should review the [IRB website](#) and consider attending the graduate school's [workshops](#) on conducting research and seeking IRB approval.

The IRB has very specific and unwavering [deadlines](#) for when the IRB committee meets, this means that you will need to submit your IRB application several weeks prior to the actual IRB committee meeting. It is important that you are aware of these [deadlines](#) and accommodate them in your planning.

Dissertation Completion

From this point forward all meetings, approvals, and postings should be made through [FSU's manuscript clearance portal](#).

Following IRB approval, you can collect and analyze your data and report your findings. This will complete the remaining chapters of your dissertation if using a traditional format, or will allow you to finish articles 2 and 3, and the summary, if following the article format. You will also need to prepare the abstract and any other introductory page options in the [templates](#) offered through the graduate school.

When ready, the dissertation will be reviewed and approved by the committee chair, and then can be sent out to the full committee for review and a dissertation defense meeting can be arranged. The committee will need 4 weeks to review the dissertation before being asked to meet for the dissertation defense. Students must also publicly post an announcement for their dissertation defense. Information about that process can be found on the [manuscript clearance portal](#).

Dissertation Defense

To complete the defense, students must carefully adhere to all the deadlines and procedures published in the [manuscript clearance portal](#). We encourage students to self-enroll in the Canvas course provided by the manuscript clearance portal to learn more about this process. Students are not to submit work to the manuscript clearance portal without permission from their major professor. The link to enroll is: [HERE](#).

In addition, students must register for ARE 8985 Dissertation Defense (0 credit hours) as well as 2 hours of dissertation hours in their final semester.

When the major professor is satisfied that the full dissertation draft, including the abstract, meets all the requirements specified by the graduate school and addresses the feedback from the prospectus meeting, the major professor will help you call a dissertation defense meeting. The full committee then reviews the dissertation and abstract, using the graduate school guidelines as the minimum standard. This review will look at the relevant content, analyses, reporting and interpreting of results, form and style, and ethical issues related to reporting results.

The committee either approves the dissertation and abstract, which enables you to continue through the manuscript review process or returns the documents with a set of suggested revisions. The committee enters their review through the online manuscript clearance portal, as well as using the [dissertation defense rubric](#). You will then work with your committee chair to make any requested revisions. If the committee requests to review these revisions, another meeting will be convened. Upon final dissertation approval, you will need to follow through with the remaining steps of the [manuscript approval process](#).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

NEW STUDENTS

- [Graduate Student Handbook](#): Policies and standards governing student conduct and rights at the university
- [New Student Resources](#): Review the resources for new graduate students, which includes information about **campus life** and **childcare**
- [FSU Graduate School](#): The Graduate School supports graduate students in every program at Florida State University. We provide assistance in academic matters, advice on University-wide degree requirements, information on the availability of financial assistance including assistantships, fellowships and scholarships, as well as approval for theses and dissertations.
- [The Graduate Student Resource Center](#): The Graduate Student Resource Center (GSRC) site presents valuable resources and information to support graduate student success and provides academic and professional development to graduate students.
- [Admissions](#): Online status checks, information about Previews, residency requirements, majors, and more
- [Financial Aid](#): Links to FAFSA, Scholarship info, and costs for attending FSU
- [Division of Student Affairs](#): The Florida State University Division of Student Affairs empowers and supports all students to achieve their full potential.
- [My.fsu.edu student portal / Secure Apps](#)
- [Canvas \(canvas.fsu.edu\)](#)

CAMPUS LIFE AT FSU

- [FSU Events Calendar](#)
- [Student Organizations and Involvement](#) serves as a guide for Florida State students in molding and creating their FSU experience.
- [Student Government Association](#): The Student Government Association is your voice at Florida State University with three branches of the government—executive, legislative, and judicial. SGA budgets more than ten million dollars of activity and service fees each year to Student Organizations, the Oglesby Union, and Campus Recreation.
- [Congress of Graduate Students \(COGS\)](#): As the body representing graduate students, COGS represents graduate student interests to the university and community and is empowered to issue resolutions expressing the views of graduate students and calling attention to important issues. The Congress provides graduate students with grants for conference travel, and funds programs and activities across campus that

are targeted at graduate students. Additionally, the Congress is a funding source for graduate student organizations.

- [FSU Athletics](#): Scores, schedules, and more for all Men's and Women's Sports
- [Oglesby Student Union](#): The Oglesby Union offers several activities for students, 7 days a week. Departments include:
 - [The Union Art Center](#)
 - [Crenshaw Lanes Bowling](#)
 - [FSU Flying High Circus](#)
 - [Club Downunder](#) offers concerts, comedians, and other activities several times a week
 - [Student Life Cinema](#): Blockbuster films shown in FSU's movie theatre, FREE for FSU Students
 - [Seminole Dining](#): Check out all of the dining options on campus, including the Suwannee Room, Chili's, and more

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- [Campus Recreation](#): Work out at the Leach Center, join a Sports Club or Intramural Team, reconnect with nature through Outdoor Pursuits and the FSU Reservation, and more.
- [Department of Student Support & Transitions](#): The Victim Advocate Program offers support for victims of crime, and education to the community
- [University Health Services](#): FSU's fully accredited Primary Care facility, providing a full range of medical services and outreach programs
- [University Counseling Center](#): Provides confidential mental health counseling services and prevention programming to FSU students free of charge.
- [Alcohol.fsu.edu](#) Read about the dangers of binge drinking, FSU's alcohol policies, and other information
- [Tobacco-Free Campus](#): Read the Tobacco-Free Policy and find resources for tobacco cessation.
- [Healthy Campus](#): Our Mission is to maximize campus wellness, we support academic and personal success.

ACADEMICS

- [Registrar](#): Information about Courses, Academic Calendar, Tuition, and Graduation
- [Reading-Writing Center](#): Consultants in the Reading-Writing Center, many of whom are themselves graduate students and all of whom are trained in holistic, process-centered peer consulting, help fellow writers both strategically, and with practical support for the project in hand: from brainstorming, to getting words on the page through extended drafting and revising, tutors act as both test audience and experienced commentators, talking with students about their goals and expectations, and offering practical

help, feedback and advice. In addition, RWC consultants can help hone analytical reading skills that are an essential prerequisite for effective academic writing

- **Office of Accessibility Services**: As a primary advocate for students with disabilities, the OAS works with faculty and staff to provide accommodations for the unique needs of students both in and out of the classroom.
- **Career Center**: As a centralized comprehensive career services office, the Career Center is involved in a wide variety of programs including career planning services, experiential education, course instruction and research. Career Liaison, College of Fine Arts - Aimee Rieger - arieger@fsu.edu.
- **Garnet & Gold Scholar Society**: The Garnet and Gold Scholar Society facilitates involvement and recognizes the engaged, well-rounded student who excels within and beyond the classroom in the areas of Leadership, Internship, Service, International, and Research.

COMMUNITY

- **Center for Global Engagement**: Provides comprehensive immigration services and advising to international students, scholars, faculty and staff. The Center for Global Engagement is certified by the federal government's Student and Exchange Visitor Program.
- **Center for Leadership & Service**: The Center for Leadership & Service transforms lives through leadership development and community engagement.
- **Student Organizations and Involvement** serves as a guide for Florida State students in molding and creating their FSU experience.

APPENDIX

LINKS

Forms

[Admission to Candidacy](#)

[Annual Review Form](#)

[Assistantship Application](#)

[Directed Individual Study - Enrollment Form](#)

[Doctoral Dissertation Hours - Enrollment Form](#)

[Doctoral Preliminary Exam Attempt Form](#)

[Graduate Supervisory Committee Formation Form](#) (use for new committees or to submit changes)

[Late Add Form](#)

[Program of Studies Form](#)

[Time Extension Request](#)

Rubrics

[Preliminary Exam - Evaluation & Rubric](#)

[Prospectus Defense Rubric](#)

[Dissertation Defense Rubric](#)

Dissertation Formats

[Dissertation Formats](#)