MENTAL HEALTH, PhD

Overview

PhD Program Description

The PhD program is designed to provide key knowledge and skill-based competencies in the field of public mental health. To gain the knowledge and skills, all PhD students will be expected to complete required coursework, including courses that meet the CEPH competency requirements and research ethics; successfully pass the departmental comprehensive exam; select and meet regularly with a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) as part of advancing to doctoral candidacy; present a public seminar on their dissertation proposal; successfully pass the departmental and school-wide Preliminary Oral Exam; complete a doctoral thesis followed by a formal school-wide Final Oral Defense; participate as a Teaching Assistant (TA); attend Grand Rounds in the Department of Psychiatry; and provide a formal public seminar on their own research. Each of these components is described in more detail below. The Introduction to Online Learning (https://courseplus.jhsph.edu/core/index.cfm/go/course.home/cid/90/) course is taken before the start of first term.

Department Organization

The PhD Program, co-directed by Dr. Peter Zandi (pzandi1@jh.edu) and Dr. Heather Volk (hvolk1@jh.edu), is affiliated with the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the School of Medicine. This interdisciplinary doctoral and postdoctoral program is affiliated with the National Institute of Mental Health and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The program is designed to train scientists in the area of substance use and related problems, and to increase the number of epidemiologists with the interest and capacity to study psychiatric disorders. Graduates are expected to undertake careers in research on the etiology, classification, distribution, course, and outcome of mental disorders and maladaptive behaviors. The Program is funded with a training grant from the National Institute of Mental Health.

Pre-doctoral trainees are required to take four term series in Epidemiologic Methods (340.751-340.754), as well as the four term series in Biostatistics (140.621-624). In addition to the other departmental requirements for the doctoral degree, pre-doctoral trainees must also take four advanced courses in one of the domains of expertise they have selected to pursue: Genetic and Environmental Etiology of Mental Disorders, Mental Health Services and Outcomes, Mental Health and Aging, and Global Mental Health. Pre-doctoral trainees should consult with their advisor and the program director to select courses consistent with their training goals.

Postdoctoral fellows take some courses, depending on background and experience, and engage in original research under the supervision of a faculty member. They are expected to have mastery in the basic principles and methods of epidemiology and biostatistics. Thus, fellows are required to take 340.721 Epidemiologic Inference in Public Health, 330.603 Psychiatric Epidemiology, and some equivalent of 140.621 Statistical Methods in Public Health I and 140.622 Statistical Methods in Public Health II. They may be waived from these requirements by the program director if they can demonstrate equivalent prior coursework.

Drug Dependence Epidemiology Training (DDET) Program

This training program is led by Dr. Renee M. Johnson (rjohnson@jh.edu) and Dr. Brion Maher (brion@jh.edu). The DDET program is designed to train scientists in the area of substance use and substance use disorders. Research training within the DDET Program focuses on: (1) genetic, biological, social, and environmental factors associated with substance use, (2) medical and social consequences of drug use, including HIV/AIDS and violence, (3) co-morbid mental health problems, and (4) substance use disorder treatment and services. The DDET program is funded by the NIH National Institute on Drug Abuse.

The program supports both pre-doctoral and postdoctoral trainees. Pre-doctoral trainees have a maximum of four years of support on the training grant. After completing required coursework, pre-doctoral trainees are expected to complete original research under the supervision of a faculty member affiliated with the DDET program. Postdoctoral trainees typically have two years of support on the training grant. They are required to engage in original research on a full-time basis, under the supervision of a DDET faculty member. Trainees’ research projects must be relevant to the field of substance use.

All trainees are required to attend a weekly seminar series focused on career development and substance use research. The DDET program supports trainees’ attendance at relevant academic meetings, including the Annual Meeting of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD) each June. Training grant appointments are awarded annually and are renewable given adequate progress in the academic program, successful completion of program and departmental requirements, and approval of the training director.

Pre-doctoral trainees are required to take the required series in epidemiology and biostatistics, as well as The Epidemiology of Substance Use and Related Problems (330.602). In addition, they must
take three advanced courses that enhance skills or content expertise in substance use and related problems: one in epidemiology (e.g., HIV/AIDS epidemiology), one in biostatistics, and one in social and behavioral science or health policy. The most appropriate biostatistics course will provide instruction on a method the trainee will use during the thesis research (e.g., survival analysis, longitudinal analysis methods). (Course requirements for trainees from other departments will be decided on a case-by-case basis.)

Postdoctoral trainees are expected to enter the program with mastery in the basic principles and methods of epidemiology and biostatistics. They are required to take The Epidemiology of Substance Use and Related Problems in their first year (330.602), as well as required ethics courses. Postdoctoral trainees are encouraged to take courses in scientific writing and grant writing.

Global Mental Health Training (GMH) Program

The Global Mental Health Training (GMH) Program is a training program to provide public health research training in the field of Global Mental Health. It is housed in the Department of Mental Health (http://www.jhsph.edu/dept/mh/), in collaboration with the Departments of International Health and Epidemiology. The GMH Program is supported by a T32 research training grant award from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Dr. Judy Bass (jbas1@jhu.edu) is the training program director.

As part of this training program, trainees will undertake a rigorous program of coursework in epidemiology, biostatistics, public mental health and global mental health, field-based research experiences, and integrative activities that will provide trainees with a solid foundation in the core proficiencies of global mental health while giving trainees the opportunity to pursue specialized training in one of three concentration areas that are recognized as high priority: (1) Prevention Research; (2) Intervention Research; or (3) Integration of Mental Health Services Research.

Pre-doctoral trainees are required to take the required series in epidemiology and biostatistics and department of mental health required courses. In addition, they must take three courses that will enhance skills and content expertise in global mental health: 330.620 Qualitative and Quantitative Methods for Mental Health and Psychosocial Research in Low Resource Settings, 224.694 Mental Health Intervention Programming, 224.696 Mental Health Services and Systems Research in Low and Middle Income Countries, and 330.680 Promoting Mental Health and Preventing Mental Disorder in Low and Middle Income Countries.

The Mental Health Services and Systems (MHSS) Program

The Mental Health Services and Systems (MHSS) program is an NIMH-funded T32 training program run jointly by the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health Policy and Management. and also has a close affiliation with the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Drs. Elizabeth Stuart (estuart@jhu.edu) and Colleen Barry (cbarry@jhu.edu) are the training program co-directors.

The goal of the MHSS Program is to train scholars who will become leaders in mental health services and systems research. This program focuses on producing researchers who can address critical gaps in knowledge with a focus on: (1) how health care services, delivery settings, and financing systems affect the wellbeing of persons with mental illness; (2) how cutting-edge statistical and econometric methods can be used in intervention design, policies, and programs to improve care; and (3) how implementation science can be used to most effectively disseminate evidence-based advances into routine practice. The program strongly emphasizes the fundamental principles of research translation and dissemination throughout its curriculum.

Pre-doctoral trainees in the MHSS program are expected to take a set of core coursework in epidemiology and biostatistics, 5 core courses related to the core elements of mental health services and systems (330.662: Public Mental Health, 330.664: Introduction to Mental Health Services, 140.665: Causal Inference in Medicine and Public Health, 550.601: Implementation Research and Practice, and 306.665: Research Ethics and Integrity), and to specialize in one of 3 tracks: (1) health services and economics; (2) statistics and methodology; or (3) implementation science applied to mental health. Trainees are also expected to participate in a biweekly training grant seminar every year of the program, and take a year-long practicum course exposing them to real world mental health service systems and settings.

For more details see this webpage: http://www.jhsph.edu/research/centers-and-institutes/center-for-mental-health-and-addiction-policy-research/training-opportunities/

Epidemiology and Biostatistics of Aging

This program offers training in the methodology and conduct of significant clinical- and population-based research in older adults. This training grant, funded by the National Institute on Aging, has the specific mission to prepare epidemiologists and biostatisticians who will be both leaders and essential members of the multidisciplinary research needed to define models of healthy, productive aging and the prevention and interventions that will accomplish this goal. The Associate Director of this program is Dr. Michelle Carlson (mcarlso2@jhu.edu).

The EBA training grant has as its aims:

- Train pre- and post-doctoral fellows by providing a structured program consisting of a) course work, b) seminars and working groups, c) practica, d) directed multidisciplinary collaborative experience through a training program research project, and e) directed research.
- Ensure hands-on participation in multidisciplinary research bringing trainees together with infrastructure, mentors, and resources, thus developing essential skills and experience for launching their research careers.
- Provide in-depth knowledge in established areas of concentration, including a) the epidemiology and course of late-life disability, b) the epidemiology of chronic diseases common to older persons, c) cognition, d) social epidemiology, e) the molecular, epidemiological and statistical genetics of aging, f) measurement and analysis of complex gerontological outcomes (e.g, frailty), and g) analysis of longitudinal and survival data.
- Expand the areas of emphasis to which trainees are exposed by developing new training opportunities in: a) clinical trials; b) causal inference; c) screening and prevention; and d) frailty and the integration of longitudinal physiologic investigation into epidemiology.
- Integrate epidemiology and biostatistics training to form a seamless, synthesized approach whose result is greater than the sum of its parts, to best prepare trainees to tackle aging-related research questions.

These aims are designed to provide the fields of geriatrics and gerontology with epidemiologists and biostatisticians who have an appreciation for and understanding of the public health and scientific
issues in human aging, and who have the experience collaborating across disciplines that is essential to high quality research on aging. More information can be found at: https://coah.jhu.edu/graduate-programs-and-postdoctoral-training/epidemiology-and-biostatistics-of-aging/.

Aging and Dementia Training Program
This interdisciplinary pre- and post-doctoral training program is an interdisciplinary program, funded by the National Institute on Aging, affiliated with the Department of Neurology and the Department of Psychiatry at the School of Medicine, the Department of Mental Health at the School of Public Health and the Department of Psychology and Brain Sciences at the School of Arts and Sciences. The Department of Mental Health contact is Dr. George Rebok (grebok1@jhu.edu). The goal of this training program is to train young investigators in age-related cognitive and neuropsychiatric disorders.

Program Requirements
Course location and modality is found on the BSPH website (https://publichealth.jhu.edu/academics/course-directory/coursesection-numbers-explained/).

Residence Requirements
All doctoral students must complete and register for four full-time terms of a regular academic year, in succession, starting with Term 1 registration in August-September of the academic year and continuing through Term 4 ending in May of that same academic year. Full-time registration entails a minimum of 16 credits of registration each term and a maximum of 22 credits per term.

Full-time residence means more than registration. It means active participation in department seminars and lectures, research work group meetings, and other socializing experiences within our academic community. As such, doctoral trainees are expected to be in attendance on campus for the full academic year except on official University holidays and vacation leave.

Course Requirements
Not all courses are required to be taken in the first year alone; students typically take 2 years to complete all course requirements. Please note that PhD students are required to take either PH.550.600 Living Science Ethics - Responsible Conduct of Research or PH.306.665 Research Ethics and integrity: U.S. and International Issues as part of their ethics requirement (see research ethics section below).

Students must obtain an A or B in all required courses. If a grade of C or below is received, the student will be required to repeat the course. An exception is given if a student receives a C (but not a D) in either of the first two terms of the required biostatistics series, but then receives a B or better in both of the final two terms of the series; then a student will not be required to re-take the earlier biostatistics course. However, the student cannot have a cumulative GPA lower than 3.0 to remain in good academic standing. Any other exceptions to this grade requirement must be reviewed and approved by the departmental CAS and academic adviser.

The following are the course requirements for the PhD program in the Department of Mental Health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biostatistics</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.621</td>
<td>Statistical Methods in Public Health I (first term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.622</td>
<td>Statistical Methods in Public Health II (second term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.623</td>
<td>Statistical Methods in Public Health III (third term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.140.624</td>
<td>Statistical Methods in Public Health IV (fourth term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Must be completed to be eligible to sit for the departmental written comprehensive exams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epidemiology</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH.340.751</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods 1 (first term)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.340.752</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods 2 (second term)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.340.753</td>
<td>Epidemiologic Methods 3 (third term)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Must be completed to be eligible to sit for the departmental written comprehensive exams.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Mental Health Courses</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Courses usually taken first year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.604</td>
<td>Seminars in Research in Public Mental Health (all terms required for first year students)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.617</td>
<td>Psychopathology for Public Health (first term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.662</td>
<td>Public Mental Health (first term)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.603</td>
<td>Psychiatric Epidemiology (second term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.661</td>
<td>Social, Psychological, and Developmental Processes in the Etiology of Mental Disorders (third term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.607</td>
<td>PREVENTION OF MENTAL DISORDERS: PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS (third term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.612</td>
<td>Introduction to Behavioral and Psychiatric Genetics (fourth term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.623</td>
<td>Brain and Behavior in Mental Disorders (fourth term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses to be taken either first or second year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.664</td>
<td>Introduction to Mental Health Services (first term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.602</td>
<td>The Epidemiology of Substance Use and Related Problems (first term online and second term in person)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses usually taken second year:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.657</td>
<td>Statistics for Psychosocial Research: Measurement (first term)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.660</td>
<td>Grant Writing for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (fourth term)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH.330.611</td>
<td>Writing Publishable Manuscripts for the Social and Behavioral Sciences (second year and beyond only - second term)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Requirements Outside the Department of Mental Health
The School requires that at least 18 credit units must be satisfactorily completed in formal courses outside the student’s primary department. Among these 18 credit units, no fewer than three courses (totaling at least 9 credits) must be satisfactorily completed in two or more departments of the Bloomberg School of Public Health. The remaining outside credit units may be earned in any department or division of the University. This requirement is usually satisfied with the biostatistics and epidemiology courses required by the department. Candidates who have completed a master’s program at the Bloomberg School of Public Health may apply 12 credits from that program toward this School requirement. Contact the Academic Office for further information.

School-wide Courses
Introduction to Online Learning (http://distance.jhsph.edu/core/index.cfm/go/course.home/cid/90/) taken before the first year.

Ethics Training
PH.550.860 Academic & Research Ethics at BSPH (0 credit - pass/fail) required of all students in first term of registration.

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) connotes a broad range of career development topics that goes beyond the more narrowly focused “research ethics” and includes issues such as conflict of interest, authorship responsibilities, research misconduct, animal use and care, and human subjects research. RCR training requirements for JHPSH students are based on two circumstances: their degree program and their source of funding, which may overlap.

1. All PhD students are required to take one of two courses in Responsible Conduct of Research, detailed below one time, in any year, during their doctoral studies.

2. All students, regardless of degree program, who receive funding from one of the federal grant mechanisms outlined in the NIH notice below, must take one of the two courses listed below to satisfy the 8 in-person hours of training in specific topic areas specified by NIH (e.g., conflict of interest, authorship, research misconduct, human and animal subject ethics, etc.).

The two courses that satisfy either requirement are:

• PH.550.600 Living Science Ethics - Responsible Conduct of Research [1 credit, Evans]. Once per week, 1st term.


Registration in either course is recorded on the student’s transcript and serves as documentation of completion of the requirement.

• If a non-PhD or postdoctoral student is unsure whether or not their source of funding requires in person RCR training, they or the PI should contact the project officer for the award.

• Students who have conflicts that make it impossible for them to take either course can attend a similar course offered by Sharon Krag at Homewood during several intensive sessions (sequential full days or half days) that meet either on weekends in October or April, a week in June, or intersessions in January. Permission is required. Elizabeth Peterson (epeterso@jhsph.edu) can provide details on dates and times.

• Students who may have taken the REWards course (Research Ethics Workshops About Responsibilities and Duties of Scientists) in the SOM can request that this serve as a replacement, as long as they can provide documentation of at least 8 in person contact hours.

• Postdoctoral students are permitted to enroll in either course but BSPH does not require them to take RCR training. However, terms of their funding might require RCR training and it is their obligation to fulfill the requirement.

• The required Academic Ethics module is independent of the RCR training requirement. It is a standalone module which must be completed by all students at the Bloomberg School of Public Health. This module covers topics associated with maintaining academic integrity, including: plagiarism, proper citations, and cheating.

Special Studies Credits
Several educational opportunities come under the description of special studies that should be formally registered (PH.330.840 Special Studies and Research Mental Health). Some are described further below as TA requirements and grand rounds. Other examples will arise, such as special study arrangements with specific faculty or helping with a specific project whose goals are aimed at the student’s education and training. Research group meetings may qualify for this under certain circumstances. Please discuss this with your adviser and with the Vice Chair for Education, Dr. Bass. To determine the number of special studies credit hours consider each credit is associated with 3-4 hours of work per week.

Comprehensive Examination
The Comprehensive Examination provides the faculty with an assessment of the doctoral student’s level of competence, integration of knowledge across the core curriculum, and fulfills the School’s requirements as outlined below:

“This examination should constitute a comprehensive inquiry into the student’s grasp of the subject matter underlying their discipline. It should explore the student’s understanding of scientific principles and methods as well as their substantive knowledge of the major field and related areas.”

A student will become eligible for the Comprehensive Examination upon completion of all the courses required for the exam and approval of his/her adviser. This will normally take place after 6 consecutive terms of full-time study. Students must pass the Comprehensive Examination prior to scheduling the Departmental Oral Examination and the School’s Preliminary Oral Examination.

Exams will be offered by the Department one time each year in January at a date announced via memo to all students from the Academic Program Administrator. All students starting their 2nd year will be assumed to be sitting for the January exam. Any student who will not be taking the exam at that time must make the decision in conjunction with their adviser and notify the Senior Academic Program Coordinator before the 2nd year begins.
**Format of Exam**
The Department's Comprehensive Examination will be a multi-day exam consisting of a total of 4 substantive knowledge essays (each one 1500-2000 words in length). In writing the essays, candidates are expected to demonstrate their knowledge of a particular area in the field of public mental health.

The four substantive knowledge essay questions will be derived from a list of 20 questions provided to the students in the summer after the first year of study (usually early July). The questions will be designed to cut across the required course curriculum, forcing students to integrate across material and topics. The Comprehensive Exam coordinator will solicit questions from all department faculty, and will select from contributed questions plus the existing bank of questions to generate the 20 questions to be provided to each new cohort of students.

Essays are expected to draw on the existing literature as well as the student’s own critiques of and insights into current research. All assertions of fact must be documented with references to published research. Formal references will be required for major works that provide fundamental support for the conclusions presented. Unresolved issues in each area should also be discussed with references made to existing and ongoing research.

**Preparation for Examination**
Students are expected to prepare for the examination over the course of two terms by drafting outlines and gathering relevant materials in order to comprehensively answer each of the 20 questions. Students may work with other students who will take the exam at the same time to prepare and review one another’s outlines and drafts essays. During the exam, we expect see essays that represent each student’s own work and students may not share drafts with one another once the exam period has begun. Students will sign an honor code document when they receive the essay questions noting that they will not share the questions with anyone not taking the exam with them at the same time and date.

**READERS**
The Comprehensive Exam Coordinator shall be responsible for assignment of reviewers for the different essays and will supervise the grading process. Where possible, assignment of reviewers will take into account the research questions selected by the candidate and faculty specialty areas. Readers are free to seek consultation for specific questions outside their own areas. Readers will not include the candidate’s adviser.

**Grading and Evaluation**
Each essay will be read by at least two independent faculty reviewers, who will assign a pass or fail grade (note: high and low pass will not be options, only pass/fail). Students must score a “pass” on 3 of 4 essays in order to pass the entire exam. If there is disagreement among the faculty, the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator will bring the reviews to the Department Chair for a final decision.

The decision of the reviewers will be communicated to the Department Chair who will send a letter to each student and their adviser advising them of their Comprehensive Exam results. Written notification of the decision to pass will be communicated to the Office of Records and Registration by the Senior Academic Program Coordinator.

**Non-Passing Determination**
If a student receives a ‘fail’ on 2 or more of the essays, the student will be required to retake the number of essays they failed (e.g., if they failed 2 essays, they will retake 2 essays). The re-take essays will be selected from among the 21 essay topics that were not selected for the original exam; the student will not be asked to re-write the specific essay that they failed. The decision on when to hold the re-take will be made on an individual basis after discussions with the student’s adviser, to ensure the student is adequately prepared for their re-take. The re-take must be taken within 6 months of the initial exam.

**Debriefing**
Debriefing sessions for each student who failed to pass the Comprehensive Exam will be scheduled as soon as possible after the decision of pass/fail has been made for all candidates. This meeting will include the student’s adviser and the coordinator of the comprehensive exams. The debriefing will be an opportunity to identify the difficulties and receive guidance to help with preparation for a re-take, if one is allowed. In the event of a second failure, the Department Chair will meet with the student and adviser to discuss whether the student should be allowed to continue their studies.

**Requirements for Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy**
Students advance to doctoral candidacy following successful passing of the Departmental and School-Wide Preliminary Oral Examinations. Prior to the Oral Exams, students must pass the Department’s Written Comprehensive Examination and take and pass the proposal writing course offered by the Department of Mental Health (PH.330.660 Grant Writing for the Social and Behavioral Sciences). This course will be offered in the fourth term and is typically taken in the second year of doctoral study to assist with the development of the student’s dissertation proposal.

**Dissertation Proposal**
To facilitate consistency and provide an opportunity for building skills in grantsmanship, students will be required to write their dissertation proposal using the NIH NRSA F31 Research Component format. This format includes a 1-page Specific Aims page and 6 pages of proposal text, single space with 0.5-inch margins and a minimum of 11-point font. As is standard for NIH research proposals, the proposal should include the following sections:

- Significance of the proposed research,
- Innovation of the research and/or methods, and
- the Research Approach which includes the methods for the dissertation research.

References are not included in the 6-page limit. Example proposals are available from the Vice Chair for Education.

**Thesis Advisory Committee**
All students will put together a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC), which consists of the thesis adviser and two to four other faculty, as their proposal is being developed. The TAC can be formed during the 3rd or 4th term of 2nd year and should be formed no later than the 1st term of the 3rd year. The composition of this Committee is decided on by the student and their adviser with the objective of including faculty who will assist the student in the development of feasible and relevant research aims, support the student throughout their dissertation process, and provide continuity in the evaluation of each student’s progress as they work to complete their thesis. Students may meet with their TAC members individually or as a group to get ongoing feedback, though it is recommended that group meetings be regularly held in order to facilitate group-level feedback which is often different from what is obtained during one-on-one meetings. Students often find it is also more efficient to meet with committee members as a group for feedback. The Thesis Advisory Committee also provides final approval and sign off of the student’s dissertation proposal prior to scheduling Departmental and School-Wide
Oral Exams. A Dissertation Proposal Approval form is available from the Academic Program Administrator, Patty Scott.

Public Presentation of Dissertation Proposal
To assist with the development and synthesis of the dissertation proposal and provide an opportunity for students to present their research ideas and methods for feedback from an audience that includes colleagues and peers not in their area of study, students are required to present a 30-45 minute oral public presentation of their dissertation proposal followed by a Q&A session. Students may choose to schedule this presentation in connection with a TAC meeting, which could follow after the presentation to help the student finalize their proposal. The faculty adviser and the Vice Chair for Education will assist with the scheduling of the Proposal Presentations, which may be scheduled as part of the Wednesday lunchtime seminar. The public presentation must be completed prior to scheduling the Department and School-Wide Preliminary Oral Exams.

Departmental Preliminary Oral Examination
The purpose of this examination, as stated in the Policy and Procedure Memorandum (PPM-Academic 01), is to “determine whether the student has both the ability and knowledge to undertake significant research in their general area of interest.” Specifically, the examiners will be concerned with the student’s capacity for logical thinking; breadth of knowledge in relevant areas; and ability to develop and conduct research leading to a completed thesis. Discussion of a specific research proposal will serve as a vehicle for determining the student’s general knowledge and research capacity. However, this examination is not intended to be a defense of a specific research proposal.

Each doctoral student will briefly (~10 minutes) present their proposed dissertation research at the Departmental Oral Examination, which is intended to determine the student’s readiness to proceed to the School Preliminary Oral. The student and adviser will propose to the Department Chair which faculty will sit for this exam. The faculty member of highest seniority, other than the adviser, will chair the committee. The faculty member of highest seniority, other than the adviser, will chair the committee. Please let the Senior Academic Program Coordinator (Patty Scott) know in advance of any AV needs.

Conduct of Examination and Report of Results
A folder containing an up-to-date transcript will be made available to the faculty of the oral examination on the day of the exam by the Senior Academic Program Coordinator. Immediately following the examination, the departmental oral exam committee will evaluate the student’s readiness to move on to the school-wide oral exam. If the exam committee determines the student is ready, they will inform the student and the student may proceed with the school-wide exam as scheduled. If the exam committee determines the student is not yet prepared, a list of items to review and materials to prepare will be provided to the student by the committee (through the adviser) and advice will be given as to postponing the school-wide exam until the student is more fully prepared.

The results of the examination will be reported by the student’s adviser to the Academic Program Administrator (Patty Scott). Any further conditions will be dictated to the Academic Program Administrator for preparation of the appropriate memorandum.

School-Wide Preliminary Oral Examination
The School-Wide Preliminary Oral Examination takes place after the student has successfully completed the Departmental Preliminary Oral Examination. The student selects a faculty committee of at least five (5) members, representing at least three departments, with no more than three from the student’s own department. One of the faculty members must be the student’s thesis adviser. All of the committee members must be at the level of assistant professor or higher. The chair of the examining committee is appointed by the Graduate Board Office and must be a full or associate professor from outside the student’s department. The School-Wide Preliminary Orals must be scheduled at least one month in advance. The appropriate forms must be submitted to the Senior Academic Program Coordinator for review and be signed by the Chair of the Department. Upon approval by the Chair of the Department, the form will be directed to the Office of Records and Registration. Forms are available online through the BSPH portal: https://my.jhsph.edu/offices/StudentAffairs/RecordsRegistration/DoctoralCandidateInfo/Pages/default.aspx

The School-Wide Preliminary Oral Exam should be taken no later than the end of the student’s third year in residence and before significant engagement in research. If a student has not taken their School-Wide Preliminary Oral Exam by the end of their third year, they are no longer considered in ‘good standing’ and must request an extension in their timeline. (Note: the summer before the beginning of the fourth year is still considered the third year and the student may complete this exam during that time).

Suggested Time Line
We recognize that not all students’ academic and research plans will necessarily fit into one timeline. Students and their adviser should develop a proposal and dissertation timeline that best suits their needs. Below is a suggested timeline for completion of the milestones needed to move to doctoral candidacy and completion of the doctoral degree. Note: Students may register for elective coursework at anytime during their 4 years of the program.

- 1st Year
  - Terms 1 through 4: Required coursework
- 2nd Year
  - Terms 1 and 2: Required coursework and studying for comprehensive exam
  - January: Comprehensive exam
  - Terms 3 and 4: Draft aims, put together TAC (have first TAC meeting if possible)
  - Term 4: Grant writing class
  - Summer: Continue drafting aims and full proposal
- 3rd Year
  - Terms 1 through 3: Public proposal presentation, TAC sign off on proposal
  - Terms 2 through 4: Schedule and complete Department and School-wide Preliminary
- 4th Year
  - Terms 1 through 4: Ongoing dissertation work
  - Terms 3 through 4: Final dissertation defense

1 To remain in academic good standing, the school-wide Preliminary Oral Exam must be completed by the end of the 3rd year.

Doctoral Thesis
All doctoral students must complete an original investigation presented in the form of a thesis. The thesis must be based on original research, worthy of publication, and acceptable to the Department of Mental Health and to a committee of thesis readers. As part of the thesis process, each
student must develop a thesis proposal that will be reviewed and found acceptable by the student's adviser while the student is enrolled as a doctoral student.

**Monitoring of Progress**

After passing the School-Wide Preliminary Oral Examination, each student's thesis progress will be monitored by their TAC on at least a bi-annual basis.

Doctoral advisers must officially approve the final draft of a student's thesis prior to dissemination to the other members of the Thesis Oral Examination Committee. **Students must fill out and submit the paperwork for the Final Oral Examination at least 30 days prior to the final defense date.** A signed Dissertation Approval form must accompany each hard copy of the thesis distributed. A copy of this form is available on the Office of Records and Registration website. An adviser may provide the approval in the form of an email message if traveling makes a signature impractical. Students should provide a complete and final copy of their dissertation to the committee members at least four weeks prior to the Final Oral Examination. All forms related to the final thesis defense can be found on the JHU portal at: [https://my.jhsph.edu/Offices/StudentAffairs/RecordsRegistration/DoctoralCandidateinfo/Pages/default.aspx](https://my.jhsph.edu/Offices/StudentAffairs/RecordsRegistration/DoctoralCandidateinfo/Pages/default.aspx)

After the student completes the Thesis Defense and the final version of dissertation is approved by the committee and the student's adviser, each doctoral student is required to submit one copy for binding to the Office of Records and Registration for the departmental library. The copy should be on acid-free paper. One additional copy is to be provided to the Eisenhower Library. Information on formatting requirements is posted on the Registrar's Office website (see above).

**Institutional Review Board Approval (IRB: Committee on Human Subjects)**

IRB Approval should be sought as soon the student has a final proposal for their dissertation research project. In order to graduate, certification that the student is on an IRB approved protocol (either on a new application or as an amendment to an existing protocol) that is the basis for the dissertation must be on file with the Office of Graduate Education and Research, which is provided to that office by the IRB. More details can be viewed at the IRB website: www.jhsph.edu/irb ([https://www.jhsph.edu/irb/](https://www.jhsph.edu/irb/)). Students should discuss any questions about the use of human subjects in their research activities with their adviser.

**Thesis Format**

The dissertation can take one of two forms: the traditional dissertation monograph model; or the three manuscript dissertation model.

**The Traditional Dissertation Monograph Model**

In this model, the dissertation typically consists of an abstract, 5-7 chapters, references, and any appendices. The outline of chapters below is merely a guide, reflecting the academic discipline or orientation of the student's research. All dissertations must include a Table of Contents at the beginning.

**Abstract:** The abstract is a short overall summary of the work. It lays out the purpose(s) and aims of the study, the methods, and the key results and implications. The abstract generally is 2-3 double spaced pages.

**Chapter 1: Introduction: Statement of the Problem and Specific Aims.** This chapter, which tends to be relatively short (5-6 double spaced pages), provides an introduction to the dissertation. It describes briefly why this work was undertaken, what background conditions or data suggested it was an important problem, and what, then, this project was intended to accomplish.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review.** The literature review summarizes existing literature that informed the dissertation research. It generally is organized topically. The literature review tends to be a fairly detailed review, particularly for those topics most directly related to the content and methods of the dissertation.

**Chapter 3: Methods.** The content of the methods chapter varies tremendously with the methodological approach taken by the student for the dissertation research. With traditional empirical studies, it will generally include the specific aims, research questions, and/or hypothesis; a description of the source of study data, a description of the study instrument, and its development, if relevant; a description of secondary data obtained, if relevant; analytic methods, including data cleaning, creation of a data set, creation of variables and/or qualitative codes, types of analyses done, and human subjects issues.

**Chapters 4-6: Results.** The results chapter(s) report the main findings of the dissertation. They are often organized by research question, specific aim, or hypothesis, but need not necessarily follow this format.

**Chapter 7: Discussion of Results and Policy Implications.** The discussion chapter both summarizes key findings and discusses findings in light of existing literature and in light of their policy implications. Also included generally are a description of the study's limitations and implications for future research.

**References:** A listing of all citations used for the dissertation must be provided. The Department allows any standard format for references.

**Appendices:** Appendices can be used for many purposes. They can include study instruments, if relevant; they can include additional tables not included in the main body of the dissertation; also included must be a copy of the student's CV. The traditional dissertation should be able to "stand alone" without appendices, however, so results should never be put in appendices that are key to the study's main findings.

All components of the traditional dissertation will be judged by the committee to be one of the following: Acceptable, Acceptable with Revisions, or Unacceptable. Students, with guidance from their adviser, will rework their dissertation until all components are judged acceptable.

**The Three Manuscript Thesis Model**

In this model, the thesis typically consists of a minimum of three papers in publishable form, linked to the student's thesis topic, with accompanying introductory and conclusion chapters. One of these papers may be the literature review, providing a comprehensive critical review, suitable for publication. The format of the manuscript dissertation generally consists of an abstract, 5-6 chapters, references, and any appendices. The outline of chapters below is merely a guide. The pages numbers are rough estimates, and the form of the chapters will vary, reflecting the academic discipline or orientation of the student's research. All dissertations must include a Table of Contents at the beginning.

**Abstract:** The abstract is a short overall summary of the work as a whole, providing a rationale for the inclusion of the different manuscripts being brought together. It lays out the overall dissertation purpose(s) and aims of each manuscript, a brief description of the methodological approach, and the key results and implications. The abstract generally is 2-3 double spaced pages.
Chapter 1: Introduction. Statement of the Problem and Specific Aims. This chapter provides an introduction to the topics covered in the manuscripts and the conceptual model or guiding theory that links the different manuscripts together. It describes briefly why the work was undertaken, what background conditions or data suggested it was an important problem, and what, in terms of public health significance, this project was intended to accomplish.

Chapter 2: Literature Review. A general literature review summarizes existing literature that informed the overall project. It generally is organized topically. This can be relatively brief (4-7 pages) as a review for the individual papers or it can be one of the manuscripts, providing a comprehensive critical review of the literature.

Chapter 3-5: Individual Dissertation Manuscripts. In these chapters, the student presents the complete manuscripts, each containing their own abstract, background, methods, results and discussions, as well as references and accompanying tables/figures.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Results and Policy Implications. A chapter which integrates and discusses the findings reported in the manuscripts. It should include a discussion of the conclusions of the research, and it should make recommendations for further studies.

References: A listing of any citations not already included in the individual manuscripts (i.e. from Chapters 1, 2, 6) must be provided. The Department allows any standard format for references.

Appendices: An appendix outlining in detail the study methods and any accompanying data tables necessary to fully understand the data. They can also include study instruments. A copy of the student’s CV must also be included in the Appendices.

A manuscript oriented thesis must also meet the following criteria:

1. The doctoral student must be the first author on the three manuscripts used to satisfy this requirement.
2. No manuscript will be accepted as part of the dissertation if it was submitted for publication before the student passes the School-Wide Preliminary Oral Exam.

As is true for the traditional doctoral dissertation, all components of the manuscript-oriented dissertation will be judged as one of the following: Acceptable, Acceptable with Revisions, or Unacceptable. Students, with guidance from their adviser, will rework their dissertation until all components are judged acceptable.

Each doctoral student is required to submit one copy for binding to the Office of Records and Registration for the departmental library. The copy should be on acid-free paper.

Final Oral Defense of Thesis
Oral defense of the thesis by the candidate before the committee of faculty is the final step for the doctoral degree. All doctoral students are required to present their completed thesis to a Thesis Oral Examination Committee, and gain approval. To establish this Thesis Oral Examination Committee, the student and their adviser identify four faculty members to serve as thesis readers. The composition of this committee includes the student’s adviser and faculty from at least two other departments of the University, two of which must be from the Bloomberg School of Public Health; at least one committee member must have neither a primary nor a joint appointment in the student’s department. The committee may be increased to five members provided the conditions stated above are satisfied for four readers. The faculty included in the committee should be at least the rank of assistant professor, with at least one faculty at the level of associate or full professor from outside the Department of Mental Health to serve as committee chair. One faculty at the scientist level or one adjunct faculty is allowed. The committee may contain faculty members who are part of the Thesis Advisory Committee, but should also contain at least one non-TAC member.

Forms to establish this committee are available through the Office of Records and Registration. The Appointment of Thesis Reader and Final Oral Exam form (combined form) must be submitted at least one month before the scheduled defense date. This form must be submitted to the Senior Academic Program Coordinator for review and to be signed by the Chair of the Department. Upon approval by the Chair of the Department, the form should be directed to the Office of Records and Registration. The form is available online through the BSPH portal under the Office of Records and Registration/Doctoral Students page.

A Doctoral student is not considered complete at the time they pass their final oral defense. Students are considered complete when:

1. copies of their acceptance letters from the Examining Committee Chair and Thesis Adviser are on file in the Office of Records and Registration;
2. one copy of the dissertation is delivered to the Office of Records and Registration (departmental copy);
3. one copy of their dissertation is delivered to The Milton S. Eisenhower Library (Homewood Campus).

Students should consult the “After the Final Thesis Defense To Do List” which can be found on the Office of Records and Registration page for doctoral students on the BSPH portal.

Students who would like their dissertation copyright protected may do so through the Commercial Binding Office of the Milton S. Eisenhower Library (A Level, Commercial Binding Office, 516-8397, Homewood).

Students must be continuously registered up to and including their term of completion.

Policy Regarding Publishing Thesis Papers Before the Final Defense
Doctoral Students are encouraged to submit papers for publication in a range of areas prior to the final defense. Students who submit papers before the defense that become part of the dissertation must document in the appendix of the thesis what stage of publishing the papers are in (e.g., submitted, in press, or published), as well as document the contributions of the co-authors to the papers.

Teaching Assistantships
Teaching Assistant (TA) positions provide students with an opportunity to develop their teaching and interpersonal skills, to work professionally with faculty and fellow students, and to contribute service to the Department. All full-time doctoral students are required to serve as a TA for 3 courses offered by the Department of Mental Health course during their time in the program. Students usually begin their teaching assistantships in their 2nd year and frequently TA one class per year.

Prior to TAing, all students are required to take the Online Module: Essential Elements for Teaching Assistantships https://courseplus.jhu.edu/core/index.cfm/go/enr.enr.start/cid/1886/.

Because this is an educational requirement, students will register for PH.330.840 Special Studies and Research Mental Health the term
they are TAing with the faculty they are assisting (number of credits corresponding to number of credits for that course). Prior to the start of the course, the teaching faculty and TAs should meet to review the checklist of expectations and responsibilities for both the primary faculty and TAs, which will serve as guidelines for the TA commitments (See Appendix). During this meeting, the TA and faculty will discuss expectations of both the TA and faculty members. The checklist can be used as a template for the discussion, with particular expectations circled or initialed to show they have been discussed. We recommend that a similar meeting occur at the course midpoint to evaluate the TA relationship and performance from both perspectives. This is separate from the normal, much more frequent, interactions related to the actual course management or other work products. Students who choose to serve as a TA beyond the three required terms may receive compensation for their time. This should be discussed with the primary instructor, Senior Academic Program Coordinator, and the Department Administrator.

Length of TA Commitment
The TA commitment is for 8-12 weeks for an 8-week (quarter-based) course, to include 2 weeks before the course begins and 2 weeks after. TA responsibilities should take an average of 8-10 hours per week, including time in class and office hours. Emphasis on “average”, as this timing may be >10 hours during heavy weeks for the course and less in light weeks of the quarter. TAs are expected to attend all class sessions unless specifically arranged otherwise with the primary instructor.

During each summer, the Senior Academic Program Coordinator will send an email to the students entering their 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years to solicit preferences for which class they want to TA. All students should discuss with their adviser which courses would best fit their interests and schedule before sending in their requests.

Psychiatry Grand Rounds
To gain a deeper understanding of mental disorders from a clinical perspective, doctoral students are required to attend Grand Rounds in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences for at least two terms. This is usually during the second or later year of study. Credit is obtained for attendance by registering for one credit of special studies (PH.330.840 Special Studies and Research Mental Health) with the adviser of record, and providing a final document per term with approximately one-paragraph summaries of each grand rounds to review and discussed with the adviser (typically via an hour in-person session near the end of the term). The student should also email the Senior Academic Program Coordinator with this information so it can be documented in the file. The schedule for Grand Rounds can be found at: http://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/psychiatry/for_faculty/calendars.html

Public Didactic Lecture or Seminar
As part of building students’ competency to public present their research, each doctoral student is required to present a formal, public seminar of their research during their academic program. Conference presentations will not meet this requirement. The purpose of this requirement is to give students an opportunity to plan for and present a 30-45 minute presentation of their own research for feedback from peers, faculty, and, when appropriate, community members.

Expectations for Good Standing
“Good standing” is defined as maintaining an overall 3.0 GPA or higher, standing for the comprehensive examination at or before the end of the second year of study, and standing for the preliminary oral examination at or before the end of the third year of study. If a student does not meet these criteria, approval by the Department Chair will be needed to continue to receive any departmental scholarship funds.

Monitoring of Academic Progress
At the end of the first quarter each year, the Vice Chair for Education reviews each student’s Academic Plan to assess doctoral progress, and each quarter a review of all students’ academic grades is done by the Vice Chair for Education and the Senior Academic Coordinator. This review should help anticipate potential problems that might move a student out of ‘good standing’. The faculty adviser, Director of Doctoral Programs, and the Senior Academic Coordinator will work with any student at risk of failing out of ‘good standing’ to proactively prevent this situation. If a student is not in good standing, this could trigger dismissal from the PhD program (see below).

Dismissal Policy
Any of the following criteria are considered grounds for dismissal from the PhD program in the Department of Mental Health:
1. Failure of any or all sections of the Department’s comprehensive examination on two occasions
2. Overall GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive terms
3. Earning a C or less in a course required by the Department after 2 attempts at taking the course
4. Failure of school-wide orals on two occasions
5. Failure to complete a successful dissertation defense within 7 years of matriculation

Postdoctoral Fellowships
Postdoctoral fellows (PDFs) are considered non-degree seeking students, but must maintain registration for each term: 16 credits for PH.330.830 Postdoctoral Research Mental Health, with a minimum of 12 credits per term if additional courses of interest are taken. PDFs are not permitted to earn more than 16 credits of didactic course work for academic credit during their tenure as postdoctoral fellows. However, this 16 credit limit may be extended for some special PDF training programs if prior approval is obtained from the School’s Committee on Academic Standards. There is no limit on the number of courses a fellow may audit. The PDF’s adviser approves the registration request. Upon successful completion of the program, the Department will notify the Office of Records and Registration, which will issue a PDF Certificate. The School’s postdoctoral handbook has additional critical information for PDFs: https://www.jhsphs.edu/academics/postdoctoral-training/Postdoc-guidebook.pdf

The NIH requires that Postdoctoral fellows supported by an NIH training grant receive training in the responsible conduct of research. Courses that fulfill this requirement are PH.550.600 Living Science Ethics - Responsible Conduct of Research and PH.306.665 Research Ethics and integrity: U.S. and International Issues. These courses must be taken for pass/fail. Postdoctoral Research fellowships are generally for two years. The postdoctoral programs differ from program to program. Most postdoctoral fellowships are tailored to the needs and abilities of the individual fellow.

PhD Schoolwide Program Policy
Department of Mental Health candidates for the degree Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) must fulfill all School requirements, as
specified in the PhD Schoolwide Policy (https://my.jhsphs.edu/Resources/PoliciesProcedures/ppm/PolicyProcedureMemoranda/Academic_Programs_03_Doctor_Of_Philosophy_Degree_042522.pdf) last revised April 25, 2022. These include, but are not limited to, a minimum of four consecutive academic terms at the School in full-time residency (some programs require 6 terms), continuous registration throughout their tenure as a PhD student, satisfactory completion of a Departmental Written Comprehensive Examination, satisfactory performance on a University Preliminary Oral Examination, readiness to undertake research, and preparation and successful defense of a thesis based upon independent research.

PhD Students are required to be registered full-time for a minimum of 16 credits per term and courses must be taken for letter grade or pass/fail. Courses taken for audit do not count toward the 16-credit registration minimum.

Students having already earned credit at BSPH from a master's program or as a Special Student Limited within the past three years for any of the required courses may be able to use them toward satisfaction of doctoral course requirements.

Completion of Requirements

The University places a seven-year maximum limit upon the period of doctoral study. The Department of Mental Health students are expected to complete all requirements in an average of 4 - 5 years. Tuition funding is provided for up to four years. Formal leaves of absence may extend this time.

General Policies

Admission Standards

The admissions committee for the Department reviews all applications for admissions to degree programs and fellowships. Each application is reviewed and scored by multiple faculty members. Many factors are taken into consideration before the faculty member assigns a score including the student's past experiences and commitment to research or professional practice and educational excellence in this field. Included in the consideration are standardized test scores (i.e. GRE) and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) for foreign students. The Statement of Purpose of each applicant is carefully considered also as part of the admission process as are the recommendations and their indication of the program fit to the student's training and goals. There must be a fit between an applicant's career commitment and the interests of a faculty adviser for admission for research-oriented doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows in the Department. These rating sheets are confidential and do not become part of a student's file.

Advisers

Each student/fellow is assigned a faculty adviser prior to the time of enrollment in a course of study. Every attempt is made to assign advisers appropriate to the student's/fellow's area of interest. All Master of Health Science (MHS) students are assigned the Director of the MHS (Dr. Parisi) program as their primary adviser, and encouraged to designate a secondary adviser who will serve as a mentor for their thesis project. All Doctoral students are assigned an adviser at acceptance and are encouraged to be in contact with them prior to the start of the academic year.

Advisers play an important role in the student's/fellow's life. They are the initial point of contact regarding academic program, registration for courses, and subsequent changes in status or program. Registration, add/drop, pass/fail agreements and many other School forms require the adviser's signature. The adviser is available to help students choose courses, to help with resolution of academic problems, and to provide general guidance. It is the student's/fellow's responsibility to seek the advice and guidance of the adviser. Faculty members establish their own office schedules and this may vary from faculty member to faculty member. Students and fellows should speak with individual advisers to make arrangements for regular meetings.

As students/fellows progress in their academic careers, they may request a change to a different adviser. These requests should be sent in writing with approvals from both the old and new adviser and submitted to the Senior Academic Program Coordinator to be approved by the Vice Chair for Education. Requests to discuss adviser-related issues can be made to either the Senior Academic Program Coordinator or the Vice Chair for Education.

Course Waivers

It sometimes is possible to waive a required course based on previous course work and/or experience. Required courses outside the Department of Mental Health may have different waiving requirements than courses within the Department. If a student wishes to receive a waiver for a required course, they should first meet with their adviser and confirm that the requirements have been met. Together with the adviser, a student should draft a detailed request in writing for submission to the Vice Chair for Education. The request should have signatures of the lead faculty teaching the course, the training program director (if appropriate), and the student's adviser prior to submission to the Vice Chair. A final decision on the waiver request will be made in consultation with the Department Chair; the student and adviser will be notified of the decision and if the waiver is granted, a note will go in the students academic file.

Academic Standards

To maintain satisfactory academic performance and good academic standing the school-level policy indicates that students must meet minimum academic standards to remain in their program. A student's failure to meet any of the criteria below is grounds for being placed on academic warning and/or being dismissed from the program. To remain in satisfactory academic standing a student must:

Minimum cumulative grade-point average (GPA). Qualitatively, on a scale of 0 - 4.0, students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA: 2.75 for Master's students and 3.0 for Doctoral students. Students with a GPA falling below that limit will be placed on academic warning and will have one term of registration in which to raise their GPA above the threshold for their degree. Students not meeting the minimum GPA after one term may be granted additional term(s) on academic warning if academic progress has been shown in the cumulative GPA; that approval beyond one term must be reported to the School's Committee on Academic Standards. Students on academic warning must meet with their academic adviser and program director (or senior academic program coordinator) each term to review their academic plan and receive approval for their course schedule prior to registering for courses. Students with a cumulative GPA below the minimum may not register for more than 18 credits per term. Any repeated courses count towards this 18 credit limit.

Minimum grades in core (i.e. required) courses. Students must earn a minimum grade on a set of required program-specific core courses; “Pass” for courses offered only on a pass/fail basis. “C” or higher for Master’s students, and “B” or higher for Doctoral students, for courses offered for letter grading. A student who earns a grade below that
threshold in a course that meets a core requirement must, at the next opportunity, make a second attempt to complete the core course by repeating the same course or by completing another course that has been approved by the Vice Chair for Education. A grade below the threshold on the second attempt may be grounds for dismissal and must be reported to the School’s Committee on Academic Standards.

**Maximum timeframe for completion of degree.** Students must successfully complete all program-specific requirements (such as a thesis or dissertation, as detailed in other program PPMs) within 4 years for Master’s programs, and 7 years for PhD program according to the requirements specified in the program-specific descriptions and PPMs. Extensions are possible as described in the program-specific PPMs and must be formally approved by the Committee on Academic Standards.

**Academic Ethics**

Students in the Bloomberg School of Public Health are expected to abide by the highest levels of academic and research integrity. Information on the Academics Policy of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health can be found at:

http://www.jhsphs.edu/offices-and-services/office-of-academic-affairs/academic-integrity/academic-ethics.html

The Department of Mental Health adheres to the School’s Academic Ethics. The faculty and students of the Bloomberg School of Public Health have the joint responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and guaranteeing the high standard of conduct of this Institution. An ethical code is based upon the support of both faculty and students who must accept the responsibility to live honorably and to take action when necessary to safeguard the academic integrity of this University.

Students enrolled in the Bloomberg School of Public Health assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to The Johns Hopkins University’s mission as an institution of higher education. A student is obligated to refrain from acts which they know or under the circumstances have reason to know, impair the academic integrity of the university. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating; plagiarism; knowingly furnishing false information to any agent of the University for inclusion in the academic records; falsification, forgery, alteration, destruction, or misuse of official university documents or seal; violation of the rights and welfare of human subjects in research; violation of the welfare of animal subjects in research; falsification of research results; and misconduct as a member of either School or University committees or recognized groups or organizations.

For a Mental Health student, abiding by the Academic Ethics code includes:

- Completing work on one’s own when an individual assignment or examination is given in a course.
- Providing proper attribution to others’ work by providing citations with quotations and giving proper references for all course assignments, data analysis projects, research proposals, dissertations and theses.

All members of the academic community are responsible for the academic integrity of the university. Students and faculty alike must work together to minimize the possibility of violations of academic integrity.

The faculty is responsible for the conduct of examinations, for announcing the ground rules for all work in a course at the beginning of the term in which the course is offered, and for the security of examination papers and teaching laboratories. Proctoring is at the discretion of the instructor.

A student with knowledge of any violation of academic integrity governed by the Bloomberg School of Public Health Constitution has an obligation to report such violations, including the identity of the alleged violator(s) to the appropriate faculty member, the Dean or to the Academic Ethics Board.

All members of the Johns Hopkins community are responsible for immediately informing the Academic Ethics Board of the Bloomberg School of Public Health of any suspected violations of its Constitution. The Ethics Board, composed of six students and four faculty members, is responsible for implementing its Constitution according to the procedures set forth therein. This includes formal hearings of suspected violations. Students and faculty should become familiar with the Constitution, copies of which can be obtained in the office of the associate dean responsible for student affairs.

To be approved for graduation, the student must have all outstanding charges of misconduct and violations of academic ethics resolved.

All students are required to take course 550.860.82 Academic and Research Ethics at BSPH (0 credit – pass/fail) in first term of registration.

**Academic Progress**

The performance and progress of each student is reviewed by the student’s adviser and the Coordinator for their degree. For MHS students, this is the MHS Program Director (Dr. Jeanine Parisi). For doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows, this is the Vice Chair of Education (Dr. Judy Bass). These directors, together with the Senior Academic Program Coordinator, review each student’s transcripts every quarter. When the academic achievement of any student comes into question, the appropriate director will bring this to the adviser’s attention (typically this involves a grade of “C” or lower). The adviser may consult with faculty and/or the Chair about the student’s progress. Satisfactory academic progress is described under academic standards above. Unsatisfactory or incomplete grades may constitute grounds for removal of a student from a degree program (see Dismissal Policy).

A student’s overall academic standing and progress will be judged not only on grades received, but also successful completion of other degree-specific milestones.

**Leave of Absence**

We recognize that it is sometimes necessary for students to take a leave of absence from their studies. An academic leave of absence refers to, and is limited to, students in a degree program requiring continuous enrollment who, while in good academic standing, are forced to withdraw temporarily from graduate work due to parental/family leave or reasons beyond their control, such as illness, military service, financial exigency, or pressing personal reasons justifying an interruption of the degree program. Students may be also given a leave of absence for other reasons (e.g., involuntary, medical leave).

As per school policy, leaves of absence are typically limited to one year except for military service. Students requiring additional terms of leave beyond the one year must reapply. Students who have had federal financial aid may be subject to additional restrictions and should check with the Financial Aid Office before extending a leave of absence beyond two terms. No more than two years of leave may be granted. The academic clock is stopped for periods in which the student is approved.
for leave of absence. The period is regarded as an approved break in study. No academic activities may be conducted during leave and this leave may not be used to avoid payment of tuition.

The failure of a student in a full-time program requiring continuous registration to register without obtaining an approved leave of absence status will be considered a withdrawal. The student considered to be withdrawn must be formally readmitted before resuming a program of study. Upon readmission, a student must be registered for a minimum of two consecutive terms prior to completion of their degree program.

Students planning to request a leave of absence must file a petition, which is signed by the departmental chairman, the student’s adviser, appropriate staff members in the area of Student Services, and the Office of Records and Registration. Prior to resuming the degree program, students on leave of absence must notify the department chairperson and the associate director of the Office of Records and Registration. Upon return from leave of absence status, students must register for a minimum of two successive terms before completion of their degree programs.

Academic Plans
The department recognizes that students and fellows come from different disciplines and are at varying developmental stages with respect to their careers. Explicit plans developed by students and fellows and approved by advisers foster investigation of the various training opportunities available within a flexible and developing career path, and help to monitor achievement of goals.

During the first quarter of each academic year, each master’s student, doctoral student and postdoctoral fellow will complete a plan describing how academic and career goals will be achieved through their learning experience in the department. The plan will contain broad, general goals to be attained during the entire experience at the Department of Mental Health; concrete objectives including specific products, so that it can be readily determined if the objectives are met; and methods and strategies for reaching the objectives. The plans will include a schedule for the year with projected dates for completion of objectives. If course waivers are to be requested, they should be included in the academic plans. A copy of the academic plan template is available from the advisers and the Senior Academic Program Coordinator.

The plan is prepared in collaboration with the adviser, and signed by the student or fellow and the adviser. The MHS Program Director will review all the MHS academic plans and the Vice Chair for Education will review all the doctoral student and postdoctoral fellow plans. Feedback on the plans will be provided to the advisers who will then relay any adjustments or further information back to the students. The Senior Academic Program Coordinator will keep a file of all plans.

After the student has passed the School Preliminary Oral Examination (usually in their 3rd year), work begins on the dissertation. At this time the Academic Plan is supplemented with written documentation of meetings of the thesis advisory committee, which must take place at least annually.

Mental Health Seminar Series
Attendance at the Mental Health Seminar Series is required for all MHS students and first year doctoral students. Credit is obtained for attendance via a one-course credit per term 330.604.01 Seminars in Research in Public Mental Health. All other students and fellows are expected to attend the Seminar Series throughout the course of their program to gain exposure to a wide range of mental health issues and research.

At the beginning of each term a schedule of speakers and presentation topics is shared with all of the students and faculty and is posted on the departmental bulletin board. Once per month, there will be a student-only session during this seminar time that coincides with faculty meetings. Topics for these sessions include grant writing, job search tips, reviews of recent seminars, etc. Students are welcome to suggest topics and formats. This is intended to provide students with an informal forum for peer communication and advice.

Course Evaluation Summaries
All courses offered for academic credit in the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, whether onsite or offsite, are evaluated by students. The mechanics of course evaluations are handled by the Office of the Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Research. This information is intended as a general guide only. To select the best courses to meet your needs, you should seek additional information from other students, the academic program coordinator, your academic adviser and teaching faculty.

Course Materials
Course materials will usually be posted in CoursePlus. In some courses, materials will be reproduced and put together in a book. The student will be charged for course fees which is the amount it cost to photocopystart.

Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) Public Health Learning Objectives
In 2016, CEPH (the main accreditation agency for Schools of Public Health) generated a new set of guidelines for curriculum standards for all students obtaining Masters and Doctoral degrees from Schools of Public Health. For MHS and PhD degrees, the curriculum standards include 12 specific learning objectives that need to be met through courses taken during the degree program. These learning objectives include gaining at least an introductory competency in the following 12 topic areas: 1) foundational principles of public health; 2) role of quantitative methods in public health; 3) role of qualitative methods in public health; 4) causes and trends in morbidity and mortality; 5) primary, secondary and tertiary prevention; 6) evidence for advancing public health knowledge; 7) essentials of environmental health; 8) biologic, genetic and infectious bases of disease; 9) psychological and behavioral factors in health; 10) social determinants of health; 11) globalization and health; and 12) essentials of one health.

To support MHS and PhD program in meeting this curriculum standard, Johns Hopkins School of Public Health has developed a series of 0.5 credit online courses for each of the 12 topic areas (course numbers 552.601.81-552.612.81). All students matriculating in the 2019-2020 academic year will need to meet this curriculum standard either through completion of the 0.5 credit courses or through completion of a regularly-offered course that has been approved by the Committee on Academic Standards as covering the required content. A copy of the approved courses is available from Dr. Parisi and Dr. Bass and is updated throughout the year as new courses are added. The academic plan completed by all MHS and PhD students at the beginning of each academic year has a section where each student can indicate how they are meeting each required competency.Decisions on which course to take should be made in conversation with the student’s adviser; questions about which courses meet which competencies can be addressed to the Vice Chair for Education (Dr. Bass).
Introduction to Online Learning

The Bloomberg School of Public Health offers courses in various formats, including a number of online classes. In order to be eligible to take an online course, students must complete the Introduction to Online Learning, which is offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning at the Bloomberg School. This non-credit mini course is a pre-requisite for all courses offered by this division and must be completed prior to the start of the term in which a student wishes to enroll in an online course. Since the School does not permit conditional and/or concurrent enrollment (that is, you must take the Introduction to Online Learning course prior to enrolling in an online class), the School requires all incoming students to take this non-credit course during or before the first term they enroll. For course dates and enrollment information, please visit the CoursePlus website (https://courseplus.jhu.edu/core/index.cfm/go/course.home/cid/90/).

Travel Funds for Professional Meetings

Doctoral students are encouraged to present at and attend professional meetings and conferences related to their area of study. Students on training grants have access to meeting funds through their training grant and should seek approval from the training grant PI. The Department sets aside a limited amount of funds for travel and registration fees for doctoral students who are not supported by training grants. Students and fellows can apply for travel support, after they have also applied for support from the conference or meeting itself, to the Senior Academic Program Coordinator who will obtain the approval of the Department Chair for each request. To be eligible, the student or fellow must have an accepted communication (i.e., poster or oral presentation) at the meeting or conference. The maximum amount for any one trip is $1,000 and students and fellows can only be supported once per year.

For access to Department funds, requests should be sent to the Senior Academic Program Coordinator via email listing the following information: Student name, name of conference, location of conference, dates of conference, breakdown of estimated expenses, type of presentation (poster, paper, etc.) and whether or not the student has requested scholarship funds from the conference. Once approval has been obtained and the trip is completed, receipts and proof of payment must be submitted to be reimbursed. Proof of payment can be in the form of a blinded credit card number (Example: Visa XXXX-XXXX-XXXX-1234) on the receipt, or a bank statement showing the charges and the account holder's name (You may black out any other charges not relevant to the trip). At least 30 days or more advance notice is requested for approval.

Travel Abroad

Students at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health may have an opportunity to supplement their education or conduct research in another country. These opportunities often enrich the academic curriculum, contribute to dissertation research, and allow application of knowledge obtained in the classroom to the world's communities. While the School encourages participation in these kinds of experiences, international tensions can be high. Therefore, students should seek information on conditions abroad before traveling.

The International Travel Resources portal site (https://my.jhsph.edu/Resources/ITR/Pages/default.aspx) is designed to provide tools and information to BSPH students who travel internationally in order to allow them to make informed personal decisions; to protect reasonably themselves from foreseeable harm; to increase their own level of health, safety, and security awareness; and to prepare for emergencies abroad. The site offers a wealth of useful links, travel resources, and insurance information in addition to State Department and Center for Disease Control travel advisories.

Students traveling to a less developed part of the world should be certain to contact their health care provider or the Johns Hopkins International Travel clinic to learn about recommended immunizations and other matters to guard your health. The International Travel Clinic is located on the East Baltimore campus and can be reached by telephone at 410-955-8931. Further information about recommended immunizations and prophylaxis is available at the CDC Website (https://www.cdc.gov/).

International students must contact the Office of International Services (OIS) well in advance of any travel to avoid compliance issues with their visa status. OIS may be contacted at 410-955-3371, or at https://ois.jhu.edu/About_OIS/Contact_Us/index.htm (https://ojis.jhu.edu/About_OIS/Contact_Us/).

Students who travel abroad as part of a practicum experience or as part of a research team must complete a Graduate Student Study Release and International Travel Checklist and leave the forms with Patty Scott, Academic Program Administrator for the Department of Mental Health.

General Resources

Office Supply/Stationery Orders

Doctoral students who are on a training grant will need to email their training grant director to get approval prior to requesting office supplies which will be paid for by the training grant. The student should forward the email with the training program director's approval to the Budget Assistant Candice Davis (cdavi108@jhu.edu) so the item(s) can be ordered. Students not on training grants should email the Senior Academic Program Coordinator for requests for paper and/or toner. Do not wait until the last minute to make stationery requests because not all items are kept on hand by the department and will likely need to be ordered.

MHS students who need paper or toner for the MHS student office should see Candice Davis (cdavi108@jhu.edu) in HH850.

Telephones

Telephones are not provided in student offices. If you run into a situation where you need a landline for a local call, please see Patty Scott and she can assist you with locating a phone for use.

Office Keys

All doctoral students and postdoctoral fellows are equipped with one office key, and one 8th floor common key that opens the copier room, kitchen, and 8th floor conference rooms. Students must return keys to HH850 upon their departure.

Learning Outcomes

PhD Program Description

The PhD program is designed to provide key knowledge and skill-based competencies in the field of public mental health. To gain the knowledge and skills, all PhD students will be expected to:

- complete required coursework, including courses that meet the CEPH competency requirements and research ethics;
- successfully pass the departmental comprehensive exam;
- select and meet regularly with a Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC) as part of advancing to doctoral candidacy;
• present a public seminar on their dissertation proposal;
• successfully pass the departmental and school wide Preliminary Oral Exams;
• complete a doctoral thesis followed by a formal school wide Final Oral Defense;
• participate as a Teaching Assistant (TA);
• attend Grand Rounds in the Department of Psychiatry; and
• provide a formal public seminar on their own research.

Each of these components is described in more detail below.