

Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences Program
Student Handbook

2025 – 2026

Department of Graduate Studies in Health &
Rehabilitation Sciences

Bitonte College of Health and Human Services
Youngstown State University

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1 Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences Program Description

1.1 Overview

The Ph.D. in Health Science is a doctoral degree option through the Bitonte College of Health and Human Services involving cross-departmental collaborative instruction. The focus of the Ph.D. in Health Sciences is to prepare graduates to be competent educators and researchers in their respective health division and area of expertise.

1.2 Purpose of the Student Handbook

This student handbook represents current information pertaining to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Health Sciences program and is provided to inform and guide students, their mentors, and faculty through the PhD program in Health Sciences at Youngstown State University. It is designed as a supplement to the College of Graduate Studies Academic Policy Handbook available online at:

[Graduate Academic Policy Book](#)

This handbook contains program information, policies, and procedures but is subject to change; the program will notify students and provide updated pages as needed. Standards, as stipulated herein, meet or exceed those set forth in the Youngstown State University Graduate Bulletin and The Code: A Handbook of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct.

1.3 Mission Statement:

To prepare the next generation of Health Sciences scholars by providing an adaptable doctoral education that builds on each student's unique experience and supports their development as researchers, educators, and leaders

1.4 Vision Statement:

To be the program of choice for health professionals seeking a pragmatic pathway to scholarship – one that honors diverse clinical backgrounds, adapts to individual goals, and prepares graduates to generate meaningful research that impacts practice as well as education.

1.5 Student Learning Outcomes

By graduation from the Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences program, students will:

- Propose a research study utilizing appropriate statistical or assessment techniques to answer a question based on an identified gap in the literature.
- Apply scientific evidence to specific patient/client cases in their fields.
- Explain how psychosocial and mental & behavioral factors impact healthcare outcomes of various disease processes relate to their area of research.
- Design a study to answer an original research question regarding the teaching andragogy in Health Sciences education.
- Communicate their original research both verbally and through manuscripts submitted for publication in academic journals.

- Apply interdisciplinary research skills to solve current and future problems as professionals in Health Sciences.

1.6 Program Outcomes:

- 100% employment in the setting of choice be it university faculty position, post-doctoral fellowship or research facility within 15 months after graduation.
- 80% completion rate of the doctoral degree by 5 years after admission.
- Each graduate will have at least one accepted manuscript from their dissertation project and have at least one platform or poster presentation from their research efforts within 6 months after graduation.

1.7 Program Delivery:

- The program provides both 100% online or in-person delivery options. Many courses are available in person with synchronous online option.

1.8 Nondiscrimination Policy

Youngstown State University is committed to a campus environment that values all individuals and groups, and to non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all persons without regard to sex, race, religion, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, handicap/disability, or identification as a disabled and/or Vietnam Era veteran. The University is also committed to the principles of affirmative action and acts in accordance with state and federal laws.

Although the ultimate responsibility for maintaining a viable and effective affirmative action program rests with the President of the University, the key role in its execution is delegated to the Director of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, who periodically reviews the program, discusses grievances and charges of discrimination, if any, and makes recommendations toward the program's effectiveness.

The University uses all normal means of communication to make known its policies of equal opportunity and affirmative action.

Inquiries should be addressed to Youngstown State University's Director of Equal Opportunity, who is responsible for coordinating the University's programs for compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Inquires can be initiated in writing or by calling (330) 941-3370.

1.9 Accreditation

The Higher Learning Commission (230 S LaSalle St. #7-500, Chicago, IL 60604; Tel: 312-263-0456), an independent corporation accrediting degree granting educational institutions in 19 states, accredits Youngstown State University.

2 Admissions

2.1 Admission Criteria

Applicants should have a strong interest in the Health Sciences as a research career. Applicants should possess a master's degree or a clinical doctorate in an area related to

health sciences. Applicants with a bachelor's degree will be considered if they are exceptional and have completed at least six credits of graduate work and have a compelling research interests or experience in health sciences. Additionally, a track has been established for the current entry-level DPT students at YSU to enter the PhD program upon completion of the DPT program. All applicants to the program will be evaluated against the following:

Admissions will be completed by considering the student's individual research agenda as well as compatibility and availability of faculty to serve on dissertation committees.

- Student with an interest in the Health Sciences and an interest in pursuing employment in academia, research, or clinical practice.
- Minimum overall 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) from a bachelor's or master's degree.
- Exceptions will be considered on an individual basis for a GPA of 2.7-2.99. This will mandate a provisional admission.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores of 290 on parts 1 and 2, and 3.5 writing score are recommended.
- All applicants applying with a current graduate degree will not be required to take the GRE but will be required to provide 1 example of academic writing. If the example does not satisfy the requirement of the admissions committee, an additional example of writing may be required.
- If required by the field, a current license to practice.
- Three letters of reference.
- Personal essay of why you are pursuing this degree and what area of research you are intending to pursue. This essay assists the admissions committee in matching applicants to health science programs and research faculty on campus..
- A Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 on a paper-based test; 80 on the internet-based test (IBT); or Band 6.5 on the IELTS (taking the academic reading and writing modules of the test) or the equivalent score on a similar test, or an undergraduate or master's degree from a university in the US (English speaking country).
- Students who anticipate that will be able to complete the program in 11 years or less as Full-time or Part-time students.

2.2 Application Process

Prospective students are required to submit the following:

- Completed online Application for the PhD in Health Sciences on the College of Graduate Studies website:
[College of Graduate Studies](#)
- A personal essay stating career goals, and specific interests and experiences as related to research and clinical practice.
- Contact information for three letters of reference from academics or work (at least one academic is required)

- Official Transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- A CV or resume stating work history, education, licenses and certifications, publications, presentations, grants, honors, and awards.
- GRE revised General Test taken within the last five years. Exceptions can be made for an applicant who already possesses a graduate degree. This exception is made by writing a request of waiver letter to the Dean of the Graduate College who will petition the Graduate College Exceptions Committee for approval.
- TOEFL scores or the equivalent for non-native English-speaking candidates
- One example of written work such as a course assignment, class or work project or a publication where the applicant is first author.

Admissions processes are consistent with College of Graduate Studies Academic Policy Book:

Admissions applicant selection decisions will be completed by the program admissions committee. The committee will consider the student's individual research agenda as well as compatibility and availability of faculty to serve on dissertation committees. The student's academic preparation will also be factored into the decision process. In the event that more applicants are there than number of students that can be accommodated, a ranking system will be used that compares Students enrolled in the program will be held to the academic standards established by the YSU College of Graduate Studies. These include a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale at the time of graduation and a restriction to no more than 9 credits of coursework with a C. Any course grade of D or F must be repeated and passed with a grade of a grade of C or better.

There will be an expectation that graduates will be positioned to apply for faculty positions in their areas of expertise. It will be expected that dissertation results will be submitted for publication at the time of defense, or soon thereafter.

2.3 Graduate Student Support

2.3.1 Financial Assistance

2.3.1.1 Financial assistance for tuition and fees

It is assumed that most students in this program will be practicing clinicians who are pursuing an advanced degree to enable them to change career paths. These students will most likely not require financial assistance because of the nature of their current employment. However, some students may wish to apply for financial assistance. The Graduate Academic Policy Book outlines financial opportunities in section III.D.1.

Since this program was designed for working healthcare professionals seeking to become researchers, there are no funding opportunities through this program. Other programs within the college may have funding available but this is not controlled by the PhD program. These opportunities may be available through the Graduate Assistant or Teaching Assistant in accordance with section III.d.2. Any student that receives an

assistantship would also need to be familiar with policies and procedures that cover the graduate assistantships as outlined in their policy book:

2.3.1.2 Financial assistance for research & travel

There is limited funding for the research process. Student research projects may be eligible for funding through the University Research Council (URC) grant process. External funding may also be an option. To learn more, visit the follow webpage:

[Research resources](#)

Funding for travel to conferences for general attendance or to present your research is limited for students. Up to \$300.00 may be available by request of the Dean of BCHHS's office.

2.3.2 Statistical support

Each student has the opportunity to select a statistician or methodologist as a dissertation committee member, thereby strengthening support for methods and statistics. The Mathematical and Statistical Consulting Center, 641 Lincoln Building, is available to provide statistical support for all student thesis/dissertation projects. The center will provide advice and guidance in developing methodology and data management. This data management can include appropriate data entry, data cleaning, selecting appropriate statistics to analyze, and statistical output interpretation. The Center will not run the analysis or write the reports for the students. Additional information can be found at the Mathematical and Statistical Consulting Center website:

[statistics resource center](#)

3 Program Requirements

3.1 Credit Requirements

A minimum of 90 credits beyond the bachelor's degree level is required for a doctoral degree at Youngstown State University. The PhD in Health Sciences has a recommended curriculum that contains at least 60 credits past the graduate degree level. The curriculum is comprised of courses at the 6000-8000 level. No undergraduate courses can be used to satisfy any of the degree requirements.

3.2 Transfer Credits

Any student wishing to transfer credits into the PhD program to satisfy curricular requirements may do so in accordance with the College of Graduate Studies policy. The Graduate College will allow up to 15 credits of transfer credit for programs requiring 60-89 credits. Please note that even though credits may be transferred to satisfy program requirements, the 90 credits post bachelor's standard must also be satisfied. Below is the link to the transfer of credit policy:

[Graduate transfer credit process](#)

Below is the form used to request transfer of credit for courses already taken:

[Transfer Credit application](#)

Any student who wishes to take a course from another institution to satisfy a curricular requirement of the PhD program while in this program may do so as a transient student. Application for transient student status must be made prior to enrolling in the course in question. Below is the form that should be completed before the student enrolls in a course to transfer:

[Transient Status application](#)

Once the course is satisfactorily completed as a transient student, it must then be transferred to YSU through the previously stated transfer credit process.

Please note that all courses transferred into the program are subject to approval by your academic advisor and the Graduate College.

3.3 PH.D. IN HEALTH SCIENCES CURRICULUM COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The following list of course descriptions are provided for your reference. Courses and descriptions are subject to change in an effort to maintain compliance with accreditation requirements. Any and all changes will be shared with enrolled students after university approval.

3.3.1 Field or Discipline of Interest (15 credits)

In consultation with the student's academic advisory in the program of interest, each student will determine what areas of expertise they want to pursue and the remaining 15 credits of program study will be determined.

As an example, a student could supplement with the certificate in Health informatics through the Health & Human Service program:

<https://catalog.ysu.edu/graduate/graduate-programs/certificate-health-informatics/#certificaterequirementstext>

or data analytics through Math & Statistics:

<https://catalog.ysu.edu/graduate/graduate-programs/certificate-dataanalytics/#certificaterequirementstext>

The following are a few of the courses that many students have taken but none of these are considered required for the degree.

HHS 6962 Healthcare Policy

The purpose of the course is to give students the skills necessary to understand all aspects of health and health care especially those related to Health Care policy and delivery. It will examine the supply of and demand for health services, and the analysis of health care systems and current, previous and potential future legislation relevant to health care. Topics will include Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, the Older Americans Act, and trends in health insurance coverage.

HRS 8965 Health Professionals as Community Resource and Advocates for Social Justice and Health Equity

Emphasizes the role of leadership, community organizing, strategic planning and marketing, health communication theory and practice in engaging diverse communities to create equity and improve community health.

HHS 6953 Health Behavior

A review of research studies, theories, and models which identify elements that influence behavior and determine factors which deter positive behaviors.

3.3.2 Research Design and Statistics (12 credits)

HRS 8921 Evidence Based Practice:

This course will help the student develop skills needed to formulate and answer clinical questions including: use of technology to obtain information, evaluation and application of the information for decision making needed to answer questions. Examine the application of current literature to clinical decision-making. Emphasis on written research communication methods: scientific writing, documentation and literature reviews. 3 credits

Or

HRS 8972 Qualitative Research Methods

This course is designed to provide students with the foundational knowledge about qualitative research methodology and how this method of research can be used in health and human service areas of research investigation. The course will focus on the theory and practice of conducting qualitative and mixed methods research. Learners will be introduced to each element of the design process from identifying research questions, theoretical frameworks, and various methods of data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and the ability to produce a qualitative research product. Data collection and analysis in qualitative research occur simultaneously, therefore, this course will examine data collection issues, ethics issues, bias, and beginning data analysis within the larger framework of qualitative research.

HRS 8935 Epidemiology in Health Sciences

This course will establish the historical foundation for clinical epidemiology and how the

discipline has helped to shape modern health care and healthcare research. The course will discuss various research designs and appropriate statistics germane to epidemiology. Common measures of effect will be discussed with appropriate interpretation of these effects. The student will be expected to implement their knowledge of the subject by designing or redesigning a study specific to epidemiological principles within their area of interest. 3 credits

Or

HRS 8972 Qualitative Research Methods

This course is designed to provide students with the foundational knowledge about qualitative research methodology and how this method of research can be used in health and human service areas of research investigation. The course will focus on the theory and practice of conducting qualitative and mixed methods research. Learners will be introduced to each element of the design process from identifying research questions, theoretical frameworks, and various methods of data collection, data analysis and interpretation, and the ability to produce a qualitative research product. Data collection and analysis in qualitative research occur simultaneously, therefore, this course will examine data collection issues, ethics issues, bias, and beginning data analysis within the larger framework of qualitative research.

CRJS 6945 Research Methods in Health and Human Services

A course that covers “an analysis of the design and execution of both quantitative and qualitative research in the human services, and the development of research designs most useful to human services research problems”. The three Learning Objectives pursued in this course are: 1) explain several research methods and their context; 2) apply research methodology knowledge to criminal justice issues; and 3) analyze and assess research methods involved with the generation of criminal justice knowledge. In doing all three, students will develop an expanded grasp of the relevance and importance of research methods. 3 credits

Or

HHS 6989 Health Research Methods

This course serves as an introduction to major methodological issues and basic statistics in the social scientific study of health and healthcare. Major topics include: developmental perspective and conceptualization of change, basic developmental research design, conceptualization of research problems, research design, measurement, and data analysis. This course should enable students to formulate research questions, design studies, and determine measurement devices and methods of analysis from a developmental perspective.

CRJS 6940 Statistical Techniques in Health and Human Services

A consideration of the courses of statistical information in the human resource systems and the limits of such data, with primary emphasis upon multivariate statistics and their application to the field. 3 credits

There are numerous other courses that can be taken here that will satisfy the requirement for research design and stats from other Health Sciences programs or the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

3.3.3 Teaching Instruction (3 credits)

HRS 8961 Classroom Management & Teaching Strategies in Health Sciences
(required)

Classroom management strategies for engaged learning using technology which benefit the diversity of Health Sciences student learners in today's classroom, are introduced. Learning assessment options are discussed (assignments, classroom activities and testing) including the use of rubric for grading and item analysis for test review and development. 3 credits

HRS 8960 Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction **(optional)**

This course introduces the organization and governance of the academic setting, university accreditation processes and orients to the 3 faculty roles (teaching, service and research) with emphasis on teaching to students pursuing careers in the Health Sciences. The course presents an overview of learning theories and curriculum development. Logistics for teaching on-campus, hybrid and online provided courses including use of a learning management system are provided. 3 credits (optional depending on current employment position)

HRS 8962 Mentored Instruction **(optional)**

Course is taken on an individual basis with an assigned faculty member during which the student assists in all teaching aspects of the undergraduate or entry-level course selected by the student. Individualized mentoring in the teaching-learning process is the focus of the course. Student will assist in course planning, syllabi construction, student facilitation, and student assessment. 3 credits (optional depending on teaching experience)

3.3.4 Electives, (electives are not a requirement but can be used as needed to fulfill the 60-credit requirement)

Courses from numerous other graduate programs in the BCHHS and other colleges at YSU will be accepted. 3 credits

3.3.5 Research Requirements (30 credits)

HRS 8970 Scientific Writing

This course will address four major areas of written communication for the scientific process: institutional review board, grant writing, thesis/dissertation, and writing for manuscript submission. This course will engage the student in the activity of writing clear and concise documents that are readable to large diverse audiences while remaining technically proficient. The course will address common pitfalls to written communication and will culminate in a project that is peer reviewed. 3 credits

HRS 8990 Graduate Research 1-9 credits (12 credits minimum but may be repeated up to 15 total credits)

HRS 8990 is a graduate research experience that will allow the student the opportunity to contribute to research that is directed by an individual faculty mentor and refine their thinking on research design and implementation. This course will facilitate the student's formulation of a potential dissertation topic.

HRS 8995 Dissertation 1-9 credits (18 credits minimum but may be repeated up to 24 total credits)

HRS 8995 is the culminating research experience of the Ph.D. program in Health Sciences. The student is expected to design, propose, conduct, analyze, report and defend a topic that is germane to their area of interest and expertise. This project should be meaningful and contribute to the body of literature in their profession. **Once enrolled in dissertation credits, you must be continually enrolled for at least 1 credit of 8995 until you complete your project to allow you access to university resources (including faculty mentorship). Exceptions to this rule can be made by petitioning the Program Director if a leave of absence is required.**

3.4 Comprehensive Examinations:

1. Satisfactory completion of the comprehensive examination will be required of all Ph.D. students wishing to complete the dissertation phase. Upon completion of the core coursework and electives, the comprehensive examination will be undertaken to demonstrate mastery of the foundational topics related to the curriculum in Health Sciences. We believe that the exam process should highlight the knowledge base in the general Health Sciences content as well as the discipline specific content for each candidate
2. The comprehensive examination will include 3 parts and will contain written portions for our key content area: teaching and assessment, biopsychosocial model in Health Sciences to include mental and behavioral health issues, and each candidate's specific area of expertise. The candidate is expected to show general and specific knowledge by relating the topics directly to their area of specialization.
3. To ensure that each candidate has a comprehensive knowledge of communication through multiple mediums, the student will select one topic area to address as an oral exam.
4. A committee of Ph.D. program faculty will write the examination questions with the assistance of the academic advisors for each student planning to take the exam. This will ensure that the questions are individualized to each student's course of study and ensure fair and equitable questions are included.
5. Grading of the preliminary exam will be performed by the core faculty and will result in either an unconditional pass, a conditional pass, a failure for each of the areas. The unconditional pass indicates that competency of that core area is achieved and no further work is required. A conditional pass indicates that further work is required and an appropriate remediation plan developed by the grading committee and academic advisor will be implemented. A failure will result in a

remediation plan that may require independent study or additional coursework and a retake of that portion of the comprehensive examination.

3.5 Dissertation Projects:

The dissertation committee will consist of 3 individuals. Any more than three members is possible but requires approval of the Program Director and Department Chairperson. The committee make-up will include:

1. A dissertation committee chairperson (research mentor), must meet the specific requirements for dissertation chairs as outlined in the department governance document consistent with Graduate Studies Academic Policy Book to ensure the rigor of the proposed project. This person does not necessarily have to be department faculty member but must be approved by the program director prior to initiating the dissertation project.
2. A person with known expertise in the area of interest for the candidate. This person does not have to be a core faculty member or even a faculty member at YSU but must be approved by the program director (or designee) before initiation of the dissertation project.
3. One committee member must be a faculty member from the Ph.D. program.
4. The 3 core committee members should approve any additional committee members before the proposal is made to the PD and Department Chair.

The dissertation project can take different forms allowing a flexible implementation model for the project write-up. There are three potential models for documenting your research work.

1. A traditional 5-chapter model where each chapter is a stand-alone document. The completed project will be published through the electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) system.
2. A specific hybrid model where you will produce traditional chapters 1-3 to show the foundation of creating a rigorous research project and will demonstrate a thorough understanding of your topic area. Upon completion of data collection, you will produce one or more manuscripts to be submitted for publication in lieu of traditional chapters 4-5.
3. A fully flexible output that is comprised of manuscripts for publication. A minimum of two manuscripts for peer-reviewed journal submission will be accepted but a three manuscript model is preferred. Manuscript acceptance will not be required, but evidence of manuscript submission will be a requirement (intent will be acceptable under certain circumstances).

The following is an example of what a flexible (option 3) dissertation model could look like:

Chapter 1: Introduction to the entire dissertation line of inquiry outlining the statement of problem and the specific aims and a brief overview of methodology.

Chapter 2: The first manuscript as submitted (accepted) for publication

Chapter 3: The second manuscript as submitted (accepted) for publication

Chapter 4: The third manuscript as submitted (accepted) for publication (this manuscript may be optional depending on the type of question being answered or research design employed)

Chapter 5: Summary chapter linking the projects together and providing the overall summary of how the manuscripts answered the specific aims outlined in chapter 1. In order for the logic and flow of the entire dissertation document to make sense, there may need to be a brief, written segue between manuscripts.

The dissertation project should be a logical outflow from the candidate's course of study (including electives and graduate research projects) and known area of expertise, or desired new line of inquiry. The dissertation project is meant to be rigorous and add new information to the body of Health Sciences Literature or seek to validate or support a current body of work. Each candidate will work with their academic advisor and dissertation committee members to finalize a course of action for the research project.

Dissertation procedure:

1. Formulate a general topic area with an academic advisor.
2. Select 3 committee members (additional committee members can be chosen with specific approval of the Program Director and the Department Chairperson).
 - a. Designate a committee chair: Chair and committee responsibilities can be found at: <https://ysu.edu/academics/college-graduate-studies/current-students/thesis>
 - b. File committee membership form with Graduate College: <https://ysu.edu/academics/college-graduate-studies/current-students/thesis>
3. Initiate literature search to finalize a specific purpose and specific aims.
4. Dissertation committee approves the specific project.
5. Candidate orally defends research proposal to the dissertation committee This proposal is chapters 1-3 in a traditional model or chapter 1 in the multi-manuscript model.
 - a. At this time, the committee approves the dissertation proposal chapters.
6. Candidate's project must go through the appropriate review board prior to beginning data collection.
 - a. **All projects involving human subjects must be approved by YSU's IRB. There are no exceptions to this rule.**
7. Candidate completes data collection.
8. Candidate completes data analysis and project write-up per agreed upon course of action.

9. Candidate orally defends completed project to the university community once readiness approved by the committee.
 - a. Defense should occur ideally 3 weeks prior to the semester deadline to submit dissertation which is Monday of the 14th week of the term for Fall and Spring.
 - b. An invitation to the defense should be sent out to the college faculty & students at least one week prior to the defense.
10. Committee determines what additional write-up requirements are needed for satisfactory completion.
11. Committee chairperson ensures that Graduate College policies are followed in final preparation of the dissertation process at the following webpage:
[Graduate College Processes for thesis/dissertation](#)
12. Dissertation committee electronically signs off on dissertation
13. Candidate is ready for graduation.

Oral Dissertation Proposal

Presentation: open to dissertation committee only with possible special guests based on expertise.

Candidate provides a presentation about the overview of the project that is clearly outlined in chapters 1-3 for a traditional model or chapter 1 in a manuscript model. These chapters are due for approval at this time. This proposal will include:

- Background and significance
 - Scope of the problem
 - What is known and how it is known
 - Knowledge gap
 - What has the candidate done so far
- Projected specific aims and hypotheses
- Methods for collecting or obtaining data
 - Complete description of methods including sample, sample size, procedures etc.
- Proposed statistical analyses of the data to answer the aims
- Plans for dissemination

Committee directly asks the candidate questions. Committee members can add to the answer provided after the candidate initially answers. Expert guests can join in the discussion.

Committee meets alone to discuss the project as proposed and decides if the scope of the project meets the expectations of doctoral level research and modifies as needed.

The committee agrees to the project and deliverables and this is conveyed to the candidate. The project can be modified slightly by IRB. Major changes will require a

committee meeting with consensus agreement. Minor changes to reflect inconsistencies with data acquisition as needed.

Dissertation Defense

Presentation: Open to the Public

- Chair introduces PhD student and the PhD committee. Gives ground rules
- PhD Student states acknowledgements, etc.
- 30 – 45 minute presentation
- PhD student thanks committee
- 20 minutes of questions from audience (moderated by the candidate)

Break

Committee has closed meeting with candidate

- 30 minutes to 1 hour of questions

Break

Committee meets alone to vote on acceptance

Committee meets with candidate to discuss results and course of action to complete

3.6 Timeline for Program Completion

The curriculum should take the student between 4-5 years to complete. We understand that many students fail to complete a degree program on time; therefore, the student will have up to 10 years to complete the PhD program. With 5 years from doctoral candidacy to completion of the dissertation. Please see the Graduate Academic Policy Book (item III.C.1) for further details.

Understanding that many people who undertake Ph.D. programs never complete, advisement services will be provided on an ongoing basis to encourage completion. The ability to take courses at a self-directed pace will be implemented to allow each student to complete their degree at a pace that is consistent with time allotted in their lives. Program policies exist that govern how rapidly feedback must be provided to each candidate on dissertation projects will also be provided to encourage quick turnaround times and rapid completion of projects. For students who complete all curricular work and successfully complete the competency exams can be granted a Master of Science in Health Sciences.

3.7 Access and Retention

Each student will be assigned an academic advisor upon admission into the program. The academic advisor will be a member of the graduate faculty in BCHHS. The academic advisor will assist the student in making curricular choices each semester during the program. They will also plan additional experiences that may assist the student in successfully achieving competence in their course of study and research interests. It is the academic advisor's responsibility to assist the student in credit transfer process, preparing the course of study leading up to successful completion of comprehensive examinations and dissertation, locating research opportunities including possible funding, revision of plans if needed, finding a dissertation mentor.

The student and academic advisor will prepare a tentative plan of study during the first semester in the program. This plan is a requirement in order to proceed to the second semester of courses.

3.8 Annual Review

Academic advisors and their doctoral students must submit a statement of Academic Progress Report (APR) at the end of each academic year (August 15). All APRs will be submitted to the Program Director who will in turn share with the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The annual report will be used to ensure that satisfactory achievement toward successful program completion has occurred. In the event that satisfactory progress is not being made, the Graduate College Dean, the Program Director and the Academic Advisor can use the APR to recommend changes to the curricular plan in order to rectify problems noted in the progress report.

3.9 Publication and Authorship

It is an expectation of the program that regardless of the dissertation pathway a student chooses, the student disseminates their work through platform presentation and/or manuscript submission/publication. Any proposed publication crafted or data gathered as a part of the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program must meet the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors guidelines for authorship. Team members involved in a submission should also maintain notes/minutes regarding the contributions of each member.

4 Program Policies and Procedures

4.1 Grading standard

Unless otherwise specified in the course syllabus, all PhD in Health Sciences courses are grading using the traditional grading system:

		Quality points
A = 90% – 100%	Excellent achievement of course objectives	4.00
B = 80% – 89%	High achievement of course objectives	3.00
C = 70% – 79%	Satisfactory achievement of course objectives	2.00
D = 60% – 69%	Minimal achievement of course objectives	1.00
F = 0% – 59%	Failure	0.00

4.2 Graduation requirements

4.2.1 Cumulative Grade Point Average

Graduation requirements follow the Graduate College requirements for the graduate degree. In addition, Ph.D. in Health Sciences students are required to achieve at least a 3.0/4.0 overall grade point average, obtain a "B" or better grade in all Ph.D. program courses, no "D" or "F" grade, and to successfully complete the Comprehensive

Examinations. Students may refer to the Youngstown State University Graduate Bulletin for further graduation requirement information.

4.2.2 Computer Literacy

Access to and ongoing use of a computer will be required for all students to complete the Ph.D., PT Program successfully. Each student is expected to acquire computer hardware and software appropriate to the program. Competency in the basic use of a computer and the ability to navigate and interact with the course and curriculum content is the responsibility of the student and a requirement for graduation.

4.2.3 Attendance

All of the Ph.D. in Health Science courses are designed to be taken in-person or synchronously online. Many courses from outside of the PhD program that fulfill academic requirements are in-person, synchronously or asynchronously online. Each student holds the responsibility to fulfill all class requirements, access recommended resources, and meet the appropriate deadlines for assignment submission and exams. Students are required to access and participate in their web-based class as defined by the course instructor. Policies regarding participation on discussion boards are defined in the course syllabus.

4.3 Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

Disciplinary Policy for Academic Progress or Professional Behavior

A student who is unable to meet or maintain minimal standards will be advised by program faculty under any of the following circumstances:

- Term GPA below a 3.0
- Overall GPA below a 3.0 for one or two semesters
- D or F in any program course the course must be retaken and a grade of A or B must be achieved; the student may need to take a leave of absence (LOA) until the course is offered again. Additionally, the student may be required to complete a faculty approved remediation plan which may include additional coursework and /or additional clinical experiences.
- Pattern of academic performance that is indicative of unsatisfactory progress within the program as indicated by examinations grades, assignments and other forms of assessment.
- Inappropriate professional behavior: minor infraction

4.4 Leave of absence

Students wishing to take a leave of absence (LOA) from the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program are expected to fill out and return the LOA form. Form can be found in appendix X or link. Any student who does not register for at least 1 credit during the course of a year (3 consecutive semesters) will automatically be placed on inactive status and will have to reapply as a former student before they can register for additional credits.

4.5 Suspension

Students enrolled in the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program have an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the university's function as an educational institution. Students can be suspended and/or dismissed from the Ph.D. in Health Sciences program for failure to meet academic standards, and/or unprofessional conduct. Please refer to [student code of conduct](#) for students right and responsibilities. A student who is not achieving satisfactory progress will be excluded from registration and suspended from the program under any of the following circumstances:

- Overall GPA below the minimum 3.0 after two semesters during which the student registered "Not in Good Standing."
- C, D, or F is obtained in a course repeated due to initial D or F
- Second D, F, or U at any time in the program.
- Pattern of academic performance that is indicative of unsatisfactory progress within the program as indicated by examinations grades, assignments and other forms of assessment.
- Receiving a Failing grade on any component of a Comprehensive Examination reexamination. The student may petition this dismissal to the Graduate College Dean for a third attempt of the comprehensive examination if sufficient extenuating circumstances are present.
- Inappropriate professional behavior: major infraction

4.6 Non-degree Seeking Students

A non-degree seeking student is one that wishes to take a course (s) in the Ph.D. in Health Sciences Program, but does not intend to pursue the Ph.D. degree at the time of application.

Because of the limited number of seats available in the program, preference for admission and registration will be given to degree seeking students. Non-degree seeking students are limited to taking a maximum of nine (9) credits of Ph.D. coursework. After 9 credits, students can discontinue taking courses, or request to transfer as a degree-seeking student in the Ph.D. program. To do this, the student must send a letter to the Program Director requesting consideration

BITONTE COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Department of Graduate Studies in Health & Rehabilitation Sciences
Doctor of Philosophy in Health Sciences,

Receipt & Acknowledgement of the Ph.D., Health Sciences Student Handbook

The Ph.D. in Health Science Student Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with and guide you through the YSU Ph.D., Health Sciences Program. This material will serve as a guide - it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention. The content of this material may be changed at any time at the discretion of the Ph.D. in Health Sciences. All policies for the Ph.D. in Health Sciences apply to both classroom and online courses. Please refer to the Graduate Studies Policy and Procedure Manual as well. [Graduate Studies Policy Manual \(Click here\)](#)

Please read the following and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of this material.

1. I have received a copy of the YSU Ph.D. in Health Science Student Handbook. (or downloaded it from the Web Site). I understand that the policies and rules described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the YSU Ph.D. in Health Sciences Program at any time.
2. I understand that my matriculation is terminable by myself at any time regardless of the length of my matriculation. My matriculation may also be terminable for infraction of any policy or procedure in this material in accordance with the established policy for such matters.
3. I understand that, should the content be changed in any way, the Ph.D., Health Science Program or YSU may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand any new policies.
4. I further understand that my signature below indicates that:
 - a. I have received a copy of the Ph.D., Health Science Student Handbook
 - b. I understand the above statements
 - c. I have read the material contained within the Ph.D., Health Science Student Handbook, and,
 - d. I agree to abide by the policies contained therein.

Student's Printed Name

Student's Signature and Date

Return to: YSU, Department of Graduate Studies in Health & Rehabilitation Sciences

Bitonte College of Health and Human Services,
Cushwa Hall, Room B324, Cushwa Hall, Fax: 330-941-1898
One University Plaza, Youngstown, Oh. 44555.

Attention: Ken Learman, PT, Ph.D.