



DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION  
College of Health &  
Public Service

## **PhD STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Policies and Procedures for the  
PhD Program in Public Administration and Management**

**Academic Year 2017-2018**

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\*All elements of this handbook are good faith descriptions of program operation. However, program policies and procedures may be changed to serve the interests of the program. Students may be subject to such changes.

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the PhD program in Public Administration and Management is to prepare scholars who are dedicated to creating and disseminating new knowledge and to advancing the study and practice of public administration.

## **Goals and Objectives**

The PhD in Public Administration and Management is designed primarily for those interested in scholarly careers as researchers and teachers. The PhD program emphasizes theory, methods and research in the field to enable its graduates to become effective teachers and contribute to the development and dissemination of public administration knowledge. Since students entering the PhD program are expected to have satisfied the core requirements for a NASPAA-accredited MPA degree, the curriculum for doctoral students emphasizes analytic tools and theoretical issues confronting the study and practice of public administration.

The Department of Public Administration is committed to providing each student with honest feedback about scholarly performance and potential. Our goal is to help students reach their academic and professional potential. Students who complete the PhD program should expect to achieve the following objectives:

1. Students will comprehend and critique the scholarly literature of public administration and management with a strong emphasis upon one subfield specialization.
2. Students will participate in class instruction, which may include serving as a teaching assistant, teaching fellow, lab assistant, or lecturer.
3. Students will present research at a scholarly conference and submit an article for publication.
4. Students will apply for external funding.

## **Institutional Setting**

The University of North Texas (UNT) is the fourth largest educational institution in Texas and the largest and most comprehensive institution in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. UNT is classified as a Carnegie Tier 1 Research University, making it one of the top 115 universities nationwide in innovation, scientific research, and high-level scholarship. It is viewed as a leader among research universities in the United States for its diverse degree programs, quality research, and partnerships with public and private organizations. The university is comprised of twelve schools and colleges and is governed by its own Board of Regents. The Board of Regents also oversees the UNT Health Science Center in Fort Worth and the UNT Dallas campus.

UNT is located in Denton, a city with a population of 123,000, located 39 miles northwest of Dallas and 36 miles northeast of Fort Worth. The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area has a population of 7.1 million, which is expected to grow to 8 million by 2020. Denton is home to two state universities, the Region VI office of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and FEMA's National Processing Center (a telephone based center to receive and process claims following a disaster declaration). Its proximity to the north Dallas suburbs and to DFW Airport (27 miles) has also affected its growth and economic prosperity.

Of considerable importance to public administration students is the fact that the metropolitan area is a federal regional center (Region VI). The DFW area also has a large and active council of governments that includes approximately 200 local governments, has district offices for all major state agencies, and has numerous local, regional, and national offices of nonprofit organizations. For doctoral students, the North Texas area constitutes a vast urban laboratory with many opportunities for research.

## ADMISSIONS

Admission to the PhD program is a two-tiered process that requires applicants to make simultaneous application to the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies and to the department's PhD program. To be fully admitted to the PhD program, students must first be admitted to the Toulouse Graduate School and once admitted, students must receive admission to the department's PhD program.

### Admission Process and Requirements

1. Apply for admission to the Toulouse Graduate School (hereafter TGS) ([www.tsgs.unt.edu](http://www.tsgs.unt.edu))
  - a. Submit TGS application forms and pay associated fees.
  - b. Submit transcripts from all universities/colleges attended.
  - c. Meet minimum GPA requirements of TGS.
  - d. Submit complete GRE scores to the TGS.
  - e. Submit TOEFEL scores to TGS (international students only)
2. Apply for admission to the PhD program in the Department of Public Administration.
  - a. Submit department application form and personal statement (see website).
  - b. Submit three letters of recommendation attesting to the applicant's ability to complete doctoral-level studies and complete a dissertation.
  - c. Submit one academic writing sample of no more than 5,000 words.
  - d. Submit a current CV or resume.

The Department will review the portfolio of materials above to inform the admissions decision. Admission to the PhD program is based on an assessment of the applicant's academic ability and potential to meet the demands of a graduate program. The department uses multiple criteria to review each application. These criteria include, but are not limited to, the student's cumulative academic performance and potential as indicated by the quality of the student's undergraduate preparation for advanced study; the quality of their master's degree level of study; commitment to the study of public administration; potential to contribute significantly to the field of public administration through research, teaching, and service; and the extent to which the applicant's interests and professional goals correspond to those offered by the program and the faculty.

There are two categories of admission to the program: unconditional and conditional admission. First, an applicant may receive unconditional admission to the program if the portfolio provides evidence that the applicant is highly likely to complete all requirements of the PhD program. Unconditional admission is only available to students who have completed an MPA degree or the core MPA course equivalents from an accredited college or university. If an applicant has not completed an MPA, but is otherwise qualified, then the applicant may obtain a conditional admission. Students accepted into the program under conditional admission must complete leveling coursework. In most cases, leveling coursework constitutes 9 to 18 hours of coursework to be completed before beginning doctoral seminars in the department.

The department does not offer a dual MPA/PhD option. Students admitted to the PhD program who subsequently elect to pursue an MPA degree at UNT must consult with the MPA Program Coordinator within the first 12 hours of enrolling in Master's-level courses to complete an MPA degree plan. That plan must be approved by the PhD Program Coordinator. Students opting to complete an MPA degree concurrent with the PhD degree should expect to add two years to their degree program. Students receiving a Hatton W. Sumners Scholarship must complete the full 42-hour MPA program before beginning the PhD program.

Prospective students are welcome to apply at any time. Official transcripts and test scores must be sent directly to the Graduate School by the institution and ETS, respectively. Letters of recommendation, the resume and personal statement can be sent directly to:

PhD Program Coordinator  
Dept. of Public Administration  
1155 Union Circle, #310617  
Denton, TX 76203

While applications may be submitted throughout the year, the program has Fall semester intakes only. Applications for the Fall semester will be considered until mid-July of each year or until the cohort is filled.

Applications received by February 1 each year will receive preference for funding such as scholarships, teaching positions and research fellowships. However, applications are reviewed when received. Moreover, early applicants will receive stronger consideration for financial support.

### **International Students**

In addition to the requirements for the degree program, international students must also submit (1) TOEFL scores and (2) an affidavit of financial resources. For more information on international applications, click here: <http://www.tsgs.unt.edu/admissions/international>. International students must also complete UNT language testing to be eligible for teaching positions and associated financial support.

### **Transfer Students and Hours**

Students may transfer into the PhD program from another institution. A student in the PhD program must complete all PhD core course requirements in the Department of Public Administration at UNT. A student may transfer a maximum of nine credit hours of elective course(s); the student is responsible for insuring that transfer courses fulfill UNT degree requirements. Students should submit appropriate information, such as a course syllabus, to the PhD program Coordinator for approval. Transferring of on-line credit hours will not be accepted.

## PROGRAM OF STUDY

The program of study requires the student to undertake advanced study in the major area of public administration and management, one of four minor fields, social science methods, and non-dissertation research hours. The first year of study provides the theoretical and methodological foundation for the second year study of a minor field and non-dissertation research. The third year of study includes a qualifying examination and successful defense of a dissertation proposal. The dissertation research should be defended by the end of the fourth year.

The PhD program requires 60 credit hours of course work beyond that received in completing the MPA degree. The PhD coordinator specifies the leveling courses after admission to the program. Course descriptions can be found in the Graduate Catalog.

1. **Major Field/Core Requirements (12 credit hours):** The Major Field/Core includes four doctoral seminars that are foundational to the study of public administration and management. The following courses are required and constitute the knowledge base for the major field component of the qualifying exam.
  - a. PADM 6010. Introduction to the Study of Public Administration
  - b. PADM 6015. Public Organization Theory and Research
  - c. PADM 6025. Institutional Context of Public Administration
  - d. PADM 6110. Public Management
  
2. **Research Methods (12 credit hours):** The doctoral program emphasizes the development of research skills that include statistical analysis and other methods appropriate for a student's field of study. The following courses are required as specified.
  - a. PADM 6035. Social Science Inquiry. (required of all students).
  - b. PADM 5510. Administrative Methods II. Graduates of UNT's MPA program cannot use these hours on their degree plan. As a substitute, they must take two electives from the list in Section 2e below.
  - c. One of the following courses in advanced regression: SOCI 6200 (Multivariate Regression), PSCI 6320, BUSI 6220, BUSI 6240, ECON 5640
  - d. One of the following courses as a research tool elective.
    - i. Quantitative Methods (Statistics)
      1. PSCI courses: 6340
      2. SOCI courses: 6200 (Structural Equation Models)
      3. BUSI courses: 6280
      4. DSCI courses: 5220, 5230, 5250, 5310
      5. ECON courses: 5645, 5650, 5655, 5660, 5670
    - ii. Qualitative Methods
      1. PADM 6710 (Field Research Methods)
      2. SOCI 6900 (Qualitative Research Methods)
      3. SCBS 6170 at UNT-HSC.
      4. JOUR 5260
      5. ANTH 5031, 5110
    - iii. Geographic Methods: PADM 6710, GEOG 5110, GEOG 5130, GEOG 5190

3. **Minor field (15 credit hours):** Four specializations or minor fields of study are available. Students are required to select one and only one minor field.
  - a. **Emergency Management**
    - i. Required courses
      1. PADM 5610
      2. PADM 5700 (Homeland Security)
      3. PADM 5700 (Challenges of Disaster Response)
    - ii. Six (6) hours of electives to be determined in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee.
  - b. **Financial Management**
    - i. Required courses
      1. PADM 5430
      2. PADM 5700 (New Regionalism)
      3. PADM 6400 (Public Financial Policy and Administration)
    - ii. Six (6) hours of electives to be determined in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee.
    - iii. Students with an insufficient background may be required to take PADM 5400/5420.
  - c. **Nonprofit Management**
    - i. Required courses
      1. PADM 5040
      2. PADM 5700 (Fund Development for NPOs)
      3. PADM 5700 (Topics in Nonprofit Mgmt)
    - ii. Six (6) hours of electives to be determined in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee.
  - d. **Urban Management**
    - i. Required courses
      1. PADM 5100
      2. PADM 5300
      3. PADM 5310
    - ii. Six (6) hours of electives to be determined in consultation with your major professor and advisory committee.
4. **Non-dissertation research** (12 hours): These are applied research hours designed to produce publishable scholarly work, dissertation proposal, and grants.
  - a. PADM 6700. Research practicum in which students assist faculty research projects and complete professionalization activities.
  - b. PADM 6700. Research practicum in which students produce a defensible manuscript independently or in collaboration with faculty. It is expected that the student would be the first author or major contributor when manuscript is submitted for publication. Students will also complete professionalization activities.
  - c. PADM 6700. Research practicum in which students produce a dissertation proposal and grant proposal for research funding.
  - d. PADM 6940. Directed research in public administration. All students are required to take 3 hours of PADM 6940 in Fall semester of the third year with their dissertation or field exam chair. The course is a readings course to help the student prepare for field exams and dissertation proposal.
5. **Dissertation hours** (9 hours minimum). Students must complete 9 hours of dissertation research. Students are eligible to register for dissertation hours once they have completed the core and field exam process.

The program is designed to be completed in four years for students who have completed an MPA and no more than five years for those conditionally admitted. We strongly expect students to finish in this time frame.

**Table 2. Suggested Curriculum for Students Entering in Fall 2017**

Year	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer Semester
1 <sup>st</sup>	PADM 6010 PADM 5510 Minor Field #1	PADM 6025 Research Methods class Minor Field #2	PADM 6700-1
2 <sup>nd</sup>	PADM 6035 Research Methods class Minor Field #3	PADM 6015 PADM 6110 Minor Field #4	PADM 6700-2
3 <sup>rd</sup>	PADM 6940 Minor Field #5 Core exam	PADM 6700-3 Field Exam Proposal defense	
4 <sup>th</sup>	PADM 6950 – 3 hours	PADM 6950 – 6 hours	

**Qualifying exam.** Once all course work has been completed, the student then must satisfactorily pass a qualifying examination. This consists of both written and oral portions to assess the student’s understanding of the field of public administration and the selected area of specialization. Successful completion of both components will lead to the student’s admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. Students may then enroll for a minimum of 9 dissertation hours.

**Degree Plan.** Once admitted to the doctoral program in public administration and prior to taking any graduate courses, a prospective student must seek advice from the doctoral program coordinator, who will serve as his or her graduate advisor during the first nine hours of graduate study. During the completion of that first nine hours, the student will be assigned a major professor by the doctoral program coordinator. The student will then acquire the major professor’s consent to serve, and file the appropriate paperwork with the department.

Doctoral students are responsible for seeing that a degree plan is filed before the beginning of the second year of study. Students obtain a blank degree plan form from the program coordinator, and the completed degree plan must be signed by the appropriate persons and must be filed with the Toulouse School of Graduate Study.

All work to be credited toward the doctoral degree must be completed within a period of 10 years from the date doctoral credit is first earned. Thus, for a student who would like to transfer doctoral level courses completed in another institution before enrolling at UNT, the 10 years would start from the year the course was taken, not the year the student enrolled at UNT. To be eligible for transfer, coursework has to have been taken at an accredited school/college, must have received graduate credit (correspondence work cannot be used), and must have received a letter grade (classes taken as P/NP or S cannot be counted).

Responsibility for reading catalog requirements and for knowing when the program has been completed rests entirely with the student. Application for graduation must be filed in the office of the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies before the appropriate deadline date in that particular semester and year (see Graduate School calendar).

**Residency Requirements.** To have the degree plan approved, every candidate for the doctoral degree must complete the appropriate residence requirement at UNT as prescribed by the individual departments and schools. The minimum residence requirement consists of two consecutive long terms/semesters at UNT (fall and the following spring, or spring and the following fall), or a fall or spring term/semester and one adjoining summer session/term at UNT. During the long terms/semesters a minimum of 9 hours must be taken. During the combined summer sessions/terms a minimum load of 9 semester hours must be taken. Some departments have established more stringent residence requirements appropriate to their programs. If a student elects to use Spring to the following Fall, the student cannot register during the intervening summer.

## STUDENT ADVISING AND ASSESSMENT

All students will undergo an annual review which entails the submission of an annual report that is evaluated by the PhD Coordinator and an advisory committee. The function of the review process is to provide advice and feedback regarding student performance. The annual process is described below.

1. Year One
  - a. Assessment
    - i. Annual assessment. Submit a digital copy of the annual report to the PhD Coordinator and Advisory Committee by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the Spring semester. Students will meet with an advisory committee by January 30<sup>th</sup> of the Spring semester.
    - ii. Successful completion of PADM 6700-001 (summer term).
  - b. Advisory Committee Selection
    - i. Student selects an advisory committee chair after November 25<sup>th</sup>.
    - ii. PhD Coordinator selects one member of the advisory committee.
    - iii. Those two faculty members select a third faculty member.
  - c. Advisory Committee functions:
    - i. Review and advise student on progress and selection of a minor field.
    - ii. Approve the degree plan.
2. Year Two
  - a. Assessment
    - i. Annual assessment. Submit a digital copy of the annual report to the PhD Coordinator and Advisory Committee by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the Spring semester. Students will meet with an advisory committee by January 30<sup>th</sup> of the Spring semester.
    - ii. Successful completion of PADM 6700-002 (summer term).
  - b. Advisory Committee Selection
    - i. Student selects three faculty to serve on a field exam and advisory committee after November 25<sup>th</sup>. Student should complete the field exam selection form and submit to the PhD Coordinator.
    - ii. Committee requires PhD Coordinator approval.
  - c. Advisory Committee functions:
    - i. Advise students on field courses and exam preparation.
    - ii. Help student prepare for dissertation committee selection.
3. Year Three
  - a. Assessment
    - i. Annual assessment. Submit a digital copy of the annual report to the PhD Coordinator and Advisory Committee by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the Spring semester. Students will meet with an advisory committee by January 30<sup>th</sup> of the Spring semester.
    - ii. Successful completion of qualifying exam.
    - iii. Successful complete of PADM 6940 readings course (fall)
    - iv. Successful defense of dissertation prospectus (spring)
    - v. Successful completion of PADM 6700-003 (spring).
  - b. Dissertation Committee Selection
    - i. Students must submit documentation declaring a dissertation committee by January 30<sup>th</sup> of the Spring semester.
    - ii. The committee should be no larger than four (4) persons and three (3) must be PADM faculty with authorization to sit on dissertation committees and must be approved by the PhD Coordinator.
    - iii. Once selected, any change to dissertation committee membership or major professor/chair must be approved by the PhD Coordinator.



#### 4. Year Four

##### a. Assessment

- i. Annual assessment. Submit a digital copy of the annual report to the PhD Coordinator and Dissertation Committee by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the Spring semester. Students will meet with an advisory committee by January 30<sup>th</sup> of the Spring semester.
- ii. Successful defense of dissertation.

- b. Any change to dissertation committee membership or major professor/chair must be approved by the PhD Coordinator.

#### 5. Beyond Year Four

- a. Annual assessment. Submit one hard copy and one digital copy of the annual report to the PhD Coordinator and Dissertation Committee by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the Spring semester. The dissertation chair will determine whether to convene a formal committee meeting, but all review materials must be routed to committee members and a formal assessment filed with the PhD Coordinator.
- b. Successful defense of dissertation.
- c. Any change to dissertation committee membership or major professor/chair must be approved by the PhD Coordinator
- d. All students are expected to successfully defend dissertation by the end of Year Four. Continued study and enrollment in the program will be monitored closely to ensure that the student is making adequate progress. Students who fail to complete a dissertation within six years of starting the program are not making adequate progress, which is grounds for potential dismissal from the program.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION, SUSPENSION, & PROGRAM DISMISSAL

All students must remain in good standing with the program. The Department retains the authority to dismiss students at any time if they fail to maintain good standing in the program. Good standing is a function of academic performance, successful completion of program milestones, and student behavior. The determination of good standing will be made by the doctoral program coordinator with the advice and consent of a faculty review committee.

**Academic Probation and Suspension.** The Toulouse Graduate School will place students on academic probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.0. Please see the graduate catalog for further information about academic probation and suspension.

**Program Dismissal.** The Department of Public Administration can deny a graduate student continued enrollment in the PhD program for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0.
- Receipt of two C grades in PADM 5510 (or its 6710 equivalent), PADM 6035, PADM 6010, PADM 6015, PADM 6025, or PADM 6110 results in automatic dismissal from the program.
- Failure to meet published departmental or University requirements.
- Failure to maintain satisfactory progress toward the PhD degree. This includes, but is not limited to, incompletes in course work, the failure to complete identified milestones in pre-dissertation research, or failure to make adequate progress in dissertation research.
- Failure in the qualifying examination or the final oral examination.
- A recommendation for dismissal by an advisory committee or PhD coordinator on the basis that continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the program.

The process for program dismissal begins with a recommendation for dismissal from a student's advisory committee or the PhD Coordinator made to a faculty review committee. Upon such a recommendation, the student will be notified, in writing, by the PhD Coordinator. The student will be invited to respond in writing and a meeting will be scheduled with the faculty review committee within 15 business days. If, following these deliberations, the recommendation for dismissal is upheld, the student will be dismissed from the program. Alternatively, the faculty review committee may place the student on probation with recommendations for corrective action or reject the recommendation. The student's advisory committee will be responsible for monitoring the results of implementing the recommendations.

## DOCTORAL EXAMINATION PROCESS

The qualifying examination tests student knowledge of the literature in the core courses and designated field. Passing the qualifying exam is required before a student is eligible to defend a dissertation proposal. The qualifying examination consists of two parts: a core curriculum exam and a field exam. Each exam has a written and oral component. The core curriculum exam consists of two 6-hour written exams followed by an oral exam in the substantive core at the University of North Texas. The core curriculum exam is taken in the first semester of the third year of the program. The field exam includes a written and oral exam that is taken in the second semester of the third year of the program. The form of the written field exam varies by field and is defined by a field exam committee. In each exam, the student will be expected to demonstrate the ability to recall important literature, critically evaluate the central issues and debates in each area, identify research gaps, and conceptualize trends and opportunities in future scholarship. All students must pass the core curriculum exam and field exam to be eligible to defend a dissertation proposal. Failure to pass the core and field exams by the end of the Spring semester of the third year results in dismissal from the program.

## **The Core Examination**

Only students who have completed all core course work, have completed the first two years of the cohort, and are in good standing (with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in the PhD program) may take the core examination. The student must resolve all incomplete grades in core courses prior to taking the core curriculum examination. The PhD coordinator will certify the successful completion of core course work and will administer the comprehensive examination. Students are not permitted to consult notes, books, photocopies, or any other materials during the written or oral core curriculum examination.

The core exam is taken in the week prior to the Fall semester of the third year. The core exam consists of a two-day written exam followed by an oral exam. The exam covers the issues and material presented in the core courses as previously defined. Each academic year, a five-member PhD Core Exam Committee (P-CEC) will be appointed by the department chair in consultation with the PhD coordinator to grade both the written and oral portions of the core exams administered during the academic year. The committee is composed of two faculty selected from those teaching in the PhD core during the past two years and three additional full or associate graduate faculty selected on a rotation basis. The term of appointment for committee members is one academic year. At the conclusion of the oral exam, the committee will meet to discuss the student's performance on the core exam, and each member of the committee will submit a vote of pass or fail to the PhD coordinator, who will compile the results. Three of five members of the Core Exam Committee must pass the student to complete the core curriculum examination successfully. The PhD Coordinator will report the results to the students by October 31.

### ***Retaking of Core Exam***

If the core exam committee believes that the examination lacks sufficient quality, the student can retake the examination one time in January of the third year. If the retaken core exam is of insufficient quality, then the student will be dismissed from the program with no option for a re-take.

## **The Field Examination**

Only students who have completed all core course work, have completed the first two years of the cohort, are in good standing (with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in the PhD program), and have passed the core examination may take the field examination. The student must resolve all incomplete grades prior to taking the field examination. The PhD coordinator will certify the successful completion of core exam and administer the comprehensive examination. The PhD Field Examination Committee (P-FEC) will consist of at least three public administration faculty members who have been selected by the student and certified by the PhD Coordinator. Field committees may include up to four members and one member may be outside the department.

The field exam is taken in the Spring semester of the third year. The exam will cover the issues and materials defined by the field exam committee. The form of the field exam will be determined by the field exam committee, but all field exams must begin with a written exam and conclude with an oral exam. Students must work with the field exam committee to define the parameters of the field exam. The field exam committee will first review the written field exam to determine whether a student should proceed to the oral exam component. Once the field committee permits a student to proceed to the oral exam, the committee will determine whether the student passes the exam at the conclusion of the oral component. A student passes the field examination with passing votes from two field committee members. If the field exam committee believes that the written examination lacks sufficient quality to warrant moving on to the oral examination, the student can retake the written examination one time in the Spring semester of the third year. The field exam committee will then determine whether the student should proceed to the oral field exam.

## ***Retaking of Field Exam***

If the retaken written field exam is of insufficient quality to proceed to the oral field exam, then the student will be dismissed from the program. Otherwise, the student will proceed to the oral field exam and the committee will determine whether the student passes as previously described. Once a student participates in the oral examination, he or she will either pass or fail the field exam with no option for a re-take.

## **ADVANCEMENT TO PhD CANDIDACY**

### **Prospectus and Dissertation**

The doctoral candidate must then submit a prospectus which justifies the subject for the dissertation, reviews the academic literature on that subject, and describes the research agenda and methods for the study. Once approved, the student may conduct research and write a dissertation that contributes new knowledge to the field. The dissertation is prepared under the supervision of a major professor and a dissertation committee, selected by the student with the approval of the PhD coordinator, and then defended orally before the dissertation committee.

Following successful completion of the written and oral comprehensive examinations, students are admitted to degree candidacy. Students with this status are then required to write a dissertation and have it approved by a departmental dissertation committee. The committee for the dissertation will include the major professor (who serves as committee chair), two other professors from the department, and an outside committee member. The student's dissertation committee chair and other participating faculty can help the student hone ideas for the dissertation. The doctoral student should think seriously about performing original research in addition to academic interests, current events, status of the literature, state of the field(s), potential questions to address, research methods (e.g., qualitative or quantitative), and feasibility of the project among other things.

Once agreement on the topic is reached among the student and participating faculty, the process of writing a dissertation begins with the preparation of a dissertation prospectus. The prospectus identifies a problem to be explored, draws on relevant literature to show the significance of the problem for public administration, sets forth a line of argumentation to be pursued or hypotheses to be tested, and describes the approach or methods and the data that will be employed in conducting the research. The student will work with their major professor to devise a suitable prospectus which can include the following:

- Topic of dissertation and salience
- Research question(s) and hypotheses
- Literature review of the field(s) illustrating history and current state of research as well as gaps and unanswered questions
- Research methods, including justification and feasibility of chosen method
- Institutional Review Board paperwork and approval (see <http://www.unt.edu/ospa/compliance/humans.html>) (pages as required).
- Game plan for completing dissertation, including major milestones and dates for accomplishment
- Prospectus Approval from Dissertation Committee

While drafting the prospectus, the student should keep in mind the importance of this document. The prospectus is a vital part of the dissertation process because it can often be adapted to serve as the introductory chapters of the dissertation. In addition, the content, organization and argument of the prospectus are strong determinants of the student's ability to successfully complete a dissertation.

Once the prospectus is completed, it must be defended orally by the student and approved by the student's dissertation committee prior to proceeding with dissertation research. Approximately two weeks prior to the prospectus defense, all members of the committee should be given a hard and electronic copy of the document for review. At this point, the prospectus defense is scheduled to allow for all members of the student's dissertation committee to be able to attend. The committee will meet behind closed doors to determine suitability of the prospectus. The dissertation committee must approve the prospectus defense with no dissenting votes and must then certify their acceptance in writing. If the candidate receives a grade of "unsatisfactory," the prospectus may be corrected. After passing the prospectus defense, the candidate will maintain continuous enrollment in dissertation hours each Fall and Spring semester until completing the research and writing of the dissertation. It will be the student's responsibility to ensure that the faculty is apprised of the status of the dissertation during this period and complete the research in a timely manner.

## **Dissertation Defense**

A final oral examination is scheduled for defense of the dissertation after the dissertation has been certified as ready for defense by the student's dissertation committee. The committee for the dissertation is the same committee for the prospectus. It includes the major professor (who serves as committee chair), and at least two other professors from the department. An outside committee member is optional. All members of the committee shall have the right to full participation and voting. The dissertation committee must approve the dissertation and the defense with no dissenting votes and must then certify their approval in writing.

When the dissertation committee accepts the completed (but unbound) dissertation and all degree requirements have been met, the department will schedule the dissertation defense. A minimum of two weeks will be allowed to verify requirements and publicize the examination date and time. Interested members of the university community will be encouraged to attend the final oral examination and will be permitted to question the candidate but shall have no voting rights as the committee will meet behind closed doors to determine suitability of the work. If the candidate receives a grade of "unsatisfactory," the defense may be repeated one time. Under no circumstances will the student be allowed to defend it more than twice.

Once a dissertation has been approved, defended, corrected, and edited as necessary, it is submitted by the student to the Graduate School. Students must be careful to prepare their dissertation in conformity to all Graduate School specifications, as stated in Toulouse School of Graduate Studies Dissertation and Thesis Manual, which can be found at [http://www.tsgs.unt.edu/graduation\\_process/Thesis%20Manual.Nov05.pdf](http://www.tsgs.unt.edu/graduation_process/Thesis%20Manual.Nov05.pdf). Other pertinent information about dissertation and related subjects can be found at [http://www.tsgs.unt.edu/graduation\\_process/index.htm](http://www.tsgs.unt.edu/graduation_process/index.htm).

## **Graduation Requirements**

Students are responsible for picking up a graduation packet and applying for graduation. The packet can be obtained in room 354 in the Student Eagle Services Building. Students should check the deadlines for graduation application (in the UNT catalogue or on the UNT website) and ensure that their information is submitted several months before the anticipated graduation ceremony.

## FINANCIAL AID AND AWARDS

The Department will work with prospective students to identify and apply for financial aid. In addition to Department and University sources, students are encouraged to explore funds that are available from federal and other sources.

### Department of Public Administration Doctoral Teaching Assistantship and Fellowship:

The Department of Public Administration provides a limited number of teaching assistantships (TAs) and teaching fellowships (TFs) for doctoral students. These positions are open to students in the first or subsequent years of graduate study and are awarded on a competitive basis. TFs will be expected to teach assigned courses at the undergraduate level and perhaps the MPA level; TAs are expected to work for 20 hours a week under the supervision of a faculty member to whom he/she is assigned. Each position carries a stipend. Graduate assistants and fellows are expected to perform their duties satisfactorily and to remain in good academic standing during the tenure of their appointments and must be in good academic standing to qualify for a renewal. Applications for funding and admission must be postmarked and received by the February 1 each year to be fully considered for funding.

*The following Principles will guide the work assignment of Graduate Assistants.*

1. Graduate assistants include teaching fellows (TFs), teaching assistants (TAs), research assistants (RAs) and graduate student assistants (GSAs). The job description used by the Graduate School for these graduate assistant positions will be used by the department when making work assignments. Graduate assistants are expected to work 20 hours per week. Assignment of graduate assistants as RAs, TAs, TFs, or GSAs is dependent on departmental needs. In order to give PhD students exposure to the varied duties as emerging scholars, departmentally-funded graduate assistants may expect to serve at least one year as an RA and one year as a TF and/or TA.
2. RAs will be assigned to tenure-track faculty, not otherwise on a teaching track, on a rotating basis. Normally, RAs will be assigned to faculty for an academic year. RAs are expected to assist the faculty member to whom they are assigned by (1) conducting literature review, (2) collecting, cleaning, coding and analyzing data where appropriate, (3) working on manuscripts, grants and reports, and (4) other activities that expose the student to research and professional expectations in academic scholarship. Faculty who are assigned an RA are encouraged to produce a research product.
3. TAs will be assigned to tenure-track faculty taking into consideration faculty teaching loads and class sizes for both undergraduate and graduate classes. TAs are expected to assist the faculty member to whom they are assigned by (1) regularly attending the faculty member's classes, (2) serving as guest speaker on limited occasions, (3) grading papers and exams where appropriate, (4) proctoring exams, and (5) other instructional duties that expose the student to the instructional duties of the professoriate. TAs should not be primarily used for research purposes.
4. GSAs are typically assigned to help faculty teaching courses at the EOC lab, but other assignments are possible. GSAs are expected to assist the faculty member to whom they are assigned by (1) regularly attending the faculty member's classes, (2) helping students with the technology used in the classroom, (3) helping with the upkeep and maintenance of the lab computers, (4) proctoring exams, and (5) keeping the lab open for students working on homework and group projects as required by the faculty.
5. TFs are expected to teach up to two courses per semester. As the instructor of record for the course, TFs must demonstrate all the qualities of classroom instructors including: (1) prepare a syllabus (in consultation with a faculty member in that area of specialization), (2) being well-prepared for class, (3) engaging students in the course content, (4) evaluating student performance, (5) providing student with frequent feedback on mastery of the course material, and (6) complying with university requests for information. TFs will be observed and evaluated by a tenure-track faculty member during the first semester. Non-native speakers must be certified for language proficiency in the classroom per state law. TF's are encouraged to complete UNT's *Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Program (G-STEP)* program. More details can be found at <http://clear.unt.edu/gstep>.

6. At the end of each semester, faculty will be expected to complete an evaluation of the RA, TA, TF or GSA on a form provided by the chair.
7. Graduate assistants may be reassigned for cause such as instructional deficiencies in the classroom, failure to deliver adequate research assistance, or otherwise failure to meet expectations.
8. The allocation of graduate assistants in the Department of Public Administration is the responsibility of the department chair in consultation with the program coordinators and faculty.

### **Toulouse School of Graduate Studies Academic Achievement Scholarships for New Doctoral Students**

In recognition of their outstanding academic accomplishments, the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies will award a competitive \$1,000 Doctoral Academic Achievement Scholarship for the academic year to each qualifying new student who begins his or her study in a doctoral program at the University of North Texas during the academic year (Fall or Spring semester). Because these scholarships are competitive, international students and non-resident students who receive them will be entitled to pay Texas resident tuition for the term of their scholarships

### **Toulouse School of Graduate Studies Nationally Competitive Scholarships**

The Graduate School encourages its students to work with Dr. James Duban, Director, Office for Nationally Competitive Scholarships, to locate external scholarships and fellowships. Dr. Duban's office will work with interested students to determine which of the 650 national scholarships they may qualify for and help them develop the application materials to compete for the awards.

### **Toulouse School of Graduate Studies Graduate Fellowships for McNair Scholars**

The purpose of the fellowship program is to provide McNair Scholars with financial support through their first year of graduate study at UNT until they qualify for admission and/or funding for doctoral work. The fellowship award is competitive and is open to Scholars in any of the McNair programs in the United States who complete their bachelor's degrees as a McNair Scholar and who have not yet begun graduate study. McNair Scholars must apply and be admitted to a graduate degree program at UNT to qualify for the fellowship. The competition is open to McNair Scholars seeking admission to a UNT master's degree program or to a UNT doctoral program immediately upon the completion of a bachelor's degree.

### **Graduate Student Travel Grants**

Travel grants are offered by the Toulouse School of Graduate Studies, the Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer, and the UNT Graduate Student Council offer travel grants for qualified graduate students. Enrolled students in good standing who are pursuing master's or doctoral degrees may apply for Graduate Student Travel Grants to support the costs of their travel to national or international professional meetings this academic year. Funds will be available to support graduate students who:

- will be presenting peer-reviewed and accepted research or creative activity which the student authored/co-authored, created/co-created;
- are conducting or participating in workshops or professional development activities that will *substantially* enhance their professional skills or capabilities;

Students who receive any type of travel grant from the university must schedule a presentation of their paper with the faculty in order to receive necessary mentoring prior to the academic conference in question. Students who will present papers at conferences (but do not obtain university funding) are also strongly encouraged to schedule a meeting with faculty to improve content and presentation.

### **Craig Raupe Scholarships**

Available for students in the Student Government Office Union 216B. This scholarship is for students attending a conference requiring fees or traveling expenses. All applications will be reviewed by a committee and each winner may be awarded up to \$250.

## **College of Public Affairs and Community Service Travel Money for Graduate Student**

The College of Public Affairs and Community Service offers travel money to graduate students each year. The amount and number of grants vary by year. For the 2005-2006 academic year, the College offered 25 grants at \$200.00 each. Information is available from the Dean's office.

## **Wachira Endowment For Public Service**

The purpose of this award, named for David Wachira, its primary benefactor and a 2013 graduate of the PhD program in Public Administration, is to provide financial support to doctoral students in Public Administration and Management.

Awards are available to currently enrolled PhD students for the following purposes:

- Academic scholarships for tuition and fees;
- Conference travel to present a paper.

Eligibility: Awards are open to any currently enrolled PhD student in the Department of Public Administration.

Award criteria:

Doctoral students must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 and be in good academic standing.

Students must have the endorsement of their major advisor or major professor when applying for an award.

Award process:

1. The Wachira Public Service Awards will be announced by September 15 of each academic year.
2. For each award cycle, the department chair will determine the amount of funding to be allocated.
3. Applications will be reviewed by the CDPC with recommendations made to the faculty for approval.
4. Application for a Wachira Public Service Award will be made on a form prescribed by the department and submitted to the department chair. Students are eligible for one award each academic year, but recipients are eligible for awards in subsequent years.

## **Outstanding PhD Student Award**

Given annually by the faculty to a doctoral student who has achieved an exemplary academic record and who has contributed to the advancement of their chosen field of study through their scholarship, teaching, and public service.

Eligible students must have:

- Been enrolled in the PhD program in the Department of Public Administration during the current academic year. Students graduating in the current calendar year are eligible.
- Advanced to ABD status, i.e. have passed the field exam.
- A cumulative GPA of 3.50 for the doctoral program including any transferred hours.
- Made contributions to their field of study or to the general study of public administration through (1) presentations of papers at colloquia and academic conferences, (2) publications, (3) awards, (4) teaching evaluations, (5) grants, (6) service to the department, university, or professional associations, or (7) other activities that have advanced the study and practice of public administration.

The selection process proceeds as follows:

1. Each April, the PhD Coordinator identifies those PhD students who are eligible for the award;
2. Eligible students are invited to submit their CVs in support of their nomination;
3. For each nominee, the PhD Coordinator circulates to the faculty their name, their cumulative GPA, CV, and teaching scores for each course taught while in the doctoral program;
4. No later than the May faculty meeting, the PhD Coordinator reviews the candidates and the faculty select a recipient. The award is normally presented in August at the inaugural fall event to welcome new and returning doctoral students;
5. The recipient receives a plaque and the addition of their name to a perpetual plaque maintained in the department office.



Performance Benchmarks

Expected date of completion	Task	Date of Completion	Title of Document (if applicable)	Certification by Professor or PhD Coordinator
Year 1, January	During 1st semester, PhD Coordinator assigns a major professor, in consultation with student. Student and major advisor complete and submit a degree plan to PhD Coordinator			
End of Year 1, August	Successfully complete at least 21 hours toward degree			
Year 1, Summer term	Complete Workshop (PADM 6700). Student will assist a faculty member on all or part of a research project (data collection, analysis, writing drafts) to be completed by August. Matching of students to faculty coordinated by PhD Coordinator.			
Year 2, May	Submit application for qualifying exam to PhD Coordinator			
End of Year 2, August	Successfully complete at least 21 more hours toward degree			
	Prepare for comprehensive exams			
Year 2, Summer term	Complete Workshop II. Students will take lead on a research project under supervision of a faculty member. Project should be of publication quality. Projects and faculty selection subject to review by PhD Coordinator.			
	During 2 <sup>nd</sup> year, make a presentation at a PhD Colloquium.			
Year 3, Fall term	Enroll in PADM 6940, Readings course with dissertation chair or field exam chair			
Year 3, November	Submit documents to PhD Coordinator declaring a dissertation committee			
Year 3, Fall term	Successfully pass qualifying exams (over the core courses)			
Year 3, Spring term	Complete Workshop III.			
Year 3, May	Successful completion of field exam.			
Year 3, June	Defend dissertation proposal with dissertation committee.			
Year 3, August	During year 2 and/or 3, present at least one paper at a regional or national conference.			
	Submit resume to dissertation advisor for approval.			
	Submit at least one manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal for publication.			
Year 4, June	Successfully defend dissertation.			